



**Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee
Australian Veterans' Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First) Bill 2019
Defence Families of Australia submission**

Defence Families of Australia is the official government advisory body which represents and advocates for families of current serving ADF members. All members of the Executive are partners themselves of current serving members.

DFA is pleased that families are thanked in the current wording of the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant. This recognition of families should remain in any future versions.

On behalf of Navy, Army and Air Force, Defence Community Organisation, or DCO, offers a broad range of programs and services to help Defence families manage the military way of life. Defence support DCO because it is acknowledged that Defence is a unique way of life and that informed and strong families add to capability.

According to the 2017 ADF Families Survey report, "81 per cent of partners indicated that they had experienced some form of career or employment sacrifice, while only 11 per cent said that their career or employment had been unaffected" (page 13)¹. The report also says, "Around one half of families believe that the demands of ADF service have a negative impact on their families. This is particularly pronounced in geographically separated families (where the ADF member is on an unaccompanied posting)" (page 28).

These are just a few areas where families can make sacrifices in support of the ADF member's service. Acknowledging this contribution to our nation is vitally important.

¹ 2017 ADF Families Survey report is available on the DFA website at: www.dfa.org.au