



Australian Government

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Businessline

Department of Veterans' Affairs

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Blue Book**

Section 1: Portfolio Overview

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SECTION 1 – PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW

1. VETERANS' AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW AND STRUCTURE	5
1.1. Repatriation Commission	9
1.2. Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC)	11
1.3. Department of Veterans' Affairs - Operational Structure - Organisational Chart	14 25
1.4. Veterans' Review Board (VRB)	26
1.5. Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA)	27
1.6. Specialist Medical Review Council (SMRC)	28
1.7. Australian War Memorial - Council - Director and Senior Management	29
1.8. Portfolio Executive Contact Numbers	31
1.9. Summary of Benefits and Services DVA provides to Clients	32
1.10. Veteran Community Numbers	37
2. ASSOCIATED INSTITUTIONS	39
2.1. Centre for Military and Veterans' Health	39
2.2. Australian Centre for Post-traumatic Mental Health	39
3. PORTFOLIO LEGISLATION	41
3.1. Legislation Administered by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs	41
3.2. Powers under the Key Legislation for the Minister for Veterans' Affairs	43
3.3. Different Statutory Office Holder Arrangements in the Portfolio	46
4. STATUTORY APPOINTMENTS	47
5. STAFFING OVERVIEW	49
5.1. Department of Veterans' Affairs	49
5.2. Australian War Memorial	50
6. OUTCOME/OUTPUT STRUCTURE	51
7. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	54
8. PLANNING	56
8.1. Department of Veterans' Affairs - Strategic Plan 2010-15 - Corporate Plan 2010-11 - ICT Strategic Plan 2010-15 - Workforce Strategy 2010-15 - Strategic Financial Plan 2010-15	56
8.2. Australian War Memorial Corporate Plan 2008-11	58

9. SERVICE CHARTERS	59
9.1. Department of Veterans' Affairs	59
9.2. Australian War Memorial	59
10. PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK	60
10.1. External Reporting	60
10.2. Fraud Control	60
10.3. Internal Audit	61
10.4. Risk Management	61
10.5. Protective Security	61
11. CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS ON EX SERVICE MATTERS	62
11.1. Background	62
11.2. Current Position	62
11.3. Prime Ministerial Advisory Council (PMAC)	63
11.4. Ex-Service Organisations Round Table (ESORT)	63
11.5. Current and Former Serving Members of the ADF Emerging Issues Forum	64
11.6. National Mental Health Forum	64
11.7. Operational Working Party	64
11.8. National Health, Aged and Community Care Forum	65
11.9. Deputy Commissioner Forums	65
11.10. Family Study Program Scientific Advisory Committee	66
11.11. Family Study Program Consultative Forum	66
11.12. Timor-Leste Family Study Program Consultative Forum	66
11.13. National Advisory Committee (VVCS)	67
12. DVA LINKS WITH DEFENCE	68
12.1. Defence/DVA Links Steering Committee	68
12.2. Defence/DVA Health Consultative Forum (HCF)	68
12.3. Lifecycle Advisory Group (LAG)	68
12.4. Single Access Mechanism (SAM)	69
12.5. Keeping in Touch Program	69
12.6. Purchasing of Hospital Procedure Centre Services	69
12.7. JeHDI Project	69
12.8. Un-recovered War Casualties	70
13. DVA LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES / ORGANISATIONS	71
13.1. Interdepartmental Working Group for Streamlining Administration of Transitioning and Former ADF Members	71
13.2. Heads of Workers' Compensation Authorities	71
13.3. Department of Human Services	72
13.4. Medicare Australia	72
13.5. Centrelink	72
13.6. Department of Health and Ageing	72

13.7. Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs	74
13.8. Department of Finance and Deregulation	74
13.9. Department of Treasury	74
13.10. Australian Government Actuary	75
13.11. ComSuper	75
13.12. Comcare	75
13.13. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations	75
13.14. Commonwealth Ombudsman	75
13.15. Office of the Privacy Commissioner	76
13.16. Department of Immigration and Citizenship	77
13.17. Australian Valuation Office	77
13.18. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	77
13.19. Australian Government Solicitor	77
13.20. Registrar of Birth, Deaths and Marriages	78
13.21. Service Delivery Arrangements in Regional Australia	78
14. COOPERATION WITH OVERSEAS VETERANS' AFFAIRS AGENCIES	79
14.1. Ministerial International Forum	79
14.2. Senior Officers International Forum	79
14.3. Australian – New Zealand Bilateral Committee	79
14.4. Commonwealth War Graves Commission	80
15. ANNUAL CALENDAR OF KEY FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	81
16. APPROPRIATIONS	82
16.1. Department of Veterans' Affairs	82
16.2. Australian War Memorial	84
17. DISCRETIONARY GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE	87
17.1. Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Grants Program	88
17.2. Training and Information Program (TIP)	89
17.3. Saluting Their Service Commemorations Grants Program	89
17.4. Veteran and Community Grants	89
17.5. Overseas Privately Constructed Memorial Restoration Program	90
18. GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS	91

Attachments:

Annual Reports:

- Department of Veterans' Affairs including the Repatriation Commission, Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission and National Treatment Monitoring Committee 2008-09. (separate book)
- The Australian War Memorial 2008-09

Services Charter:

- Department of Veterans' Affairs

Portfolio Plans:

- Department of Veterans' Affairs Strategic Plan 2010-15
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Corporate Plan 2010-11
- Department of Veterans' Affairs ICT Strategic Plan 2010-15
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Workforce Strategy 2010-15

Other:

- Portfolio Budget Statements 2010-11 (separate book)
- Treatment Population Statistics – Quarterly Report – June 2010
- DVA Pensioner Summary – June 2010

1. VETERANS' AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW AND STRUCTURE

The Veterans' Affairs portfolio is made up of a number of agencies and bodies responsible for carrying out government policy and implementing programs to fulfil Australia's obligations to war veterans, members of the Australian Defence Force and their dependants. They are:

- Repatriation Commission;
- Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC);
- Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA);
- VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service;
- Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG);
- Veterans' Children Education Board;
- Veterans' Review Board (VRB);
- Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA);
- Specialist Medical Review Council (SMRC); and
- Australian War Memorial (AWM).

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is the primary service delivery agency, responsible for developing and implementing programs that assist the veteran and defence force communities. The Department's day to day activities are directed by two Commissions – the Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC). These two bodies hold most of the powers under their relevant legislation which in turn are delegated to officers in the Department.

The management structure of the Veterans' Affairs portfolio has proven highly effective as a result of key personnel having multiple appointments. The Secretary of the Department is the President of the Repatriation Commission and Chair of the MRCC. The Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission, in addition to being a member of the MRCC, assists the Secretary in the management of the Department, undertaking the duties of a Deputy Secretary. The third member of the Repatriation Commission, the services member, is also on the MRCC.

Under the direction of the two Commissions, DVA provides wide-ranging programs and services that can be broadly grouped into three main areas – care including rehabilitation; income support and compensation; and commemoration and war graves.

Care including Rehabilitation

The Department is charged with providing high quality holistic care to members and former members of the Defence Force who have had a claim for liability for an injury or disease accepted under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA), *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) or *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA). Care extends also to members of the wider veteran community such as war widows/widowers and dependants. While the person is still enlisted in the Australian Defence Force (ADF), even if they have an accepted claim, Defence has prime responsibility for the majority of their health care. DVA provides care primarily through contracts and service arrangements with a wide range of service providers, including hospitals, doctors, specialists and allied health

professionals. It is one of the largest purchasers of health care access in the country. Access to treatment is on the basis of clinical need.

Rehabilitation services are provided to those with eligibility under the SRCA and the MRCA. With a rehabilitation focus, the SRCA and the MRCA aim to maximise the potential to restore a person who has an impairment, or an incapacity for service or work, as a result of a service injury or disease to at least the same physical and psychological state, and at least the same social, vocational and educational status, as he or she had before the injury or disease.

Access to health care services is initially provided for those conditions that are accepted as having been caused by military service, with eligibility determined by the legislation and identified through a series of Repatriation Health Cards. Clarification of a veteran's health entitlement or eligibility can be obtained by contacting the Department. Repatriation Health Cards are currently only issued pursuant to VEA and MRCA entitlements. Access to health treatment for SRCA clients is outside of the card arrangements as the SRCA has no provision for issuing of health treatment cards. Clients being assisted under the SRCA have access to 'reasonable cost' provisions where the Department will either reimburse them for the cost of approved treatment, or in some circumstances make arrangements with health care providers for direct billing of services to the Department.

Holders of a Repatriation Health Card for All Conditions (Gold Card) are entitled to treatment and care through DVA arrangements for all conditions, regardless of whether they are service-related. Where a veteran resides or travels overseas they are entitled to health care at DVA expense for their accepted disabilities only.

A Repatriation Health Card for Specific Conditions (White Card) entitles the holder to treatment through DVA arrangements only for specific conditions that have been accepted as service-related. The White Card is also issued to veterans and service members for the treatment of malignant neoplasia, pulmonary tuberculosis, post traumatic stress disorder or anxiety and/or depression, irrespective of whether these conditions are war-caused.

A Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Card (Orange Card) is issued to British, Commonwealth and Allied veterans, giving them access to Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) items at concessional rates. The RPBS includes a wider range of pharmaceutical items than the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

There are limits that apply to some types of services. For example, medical services are subject to the requirements of the Medicare Benefits Schedule. Where the proposed health treatment is new (for example, from new surgical techniques perhaps using robotic surgery), high risk or high cost, prior financial authorisation from DVA may be required. The details of whether a service requires prior financial authorisation are contained in the fee schedule. Where authorisation is required, the health provider submits a request to the Department with the clinical justification to provide the treatment. The request is assessed by a Departmental delegate. Input from a DVA-contracted clinical adviser may also be sought.

As well as ensuring adequate treatment options are available through access to doctors, specialists and hospitals, the Department places a strong emphasis on preventive health initiatives, such as Veterans' Home Care (VHC), which provides basic domestic assistance similar to that provided through Home and Community Care (HACC) program.

Reimbursement arrangements apply also for those MRCA clients whose injuries/conditions may not have yet stabilised and, hence, a health treatment card has not yet been issued. Even when injuries/conditions have stabilised, some clients may elect to remain on reasonable reimbursement arrangements. Where this occurs, the client may seek reimbursement from DVA for the cost of the service as listed in the Medicare Benefits Schedule.

Income Support and Compensation

The Department provides a range of payments to maintain and enhance the financial wellbeing and self-sufficiency of eligible members of the veteran community. The payments are broadly grouped as income support and compensation.

Income support pensions and allowances are means-tested payments which compensate eligible veterans and their dependants for premature ageing and loss of earning power. Income support benefits include service pension, partner service pension, income support supplement and associated allowances such as rent assistance and remote area allowance.

Service pension is broadly equivalent to the social security age and disability support pensions. It may be paid to a veteran or partner who has reached the qualifying age, or if a veteran is permanently incapacitated for work. The qualifying age is currently five years less than pension age. Income Support Supplement may be paid to an Australian War Widow/Widower (under the VEA) or a Wholly Dependant Partner (under MRCA) who satisfies the means tests. These payments are made under the VEA to allow veterans and their dependants to enjoy a standard of living similar to that provided by other Government income support programs.

Compensation payments under the VEA include disability pensions, war widows'/widowers' pensions, certain allowances and funeral benefits. Disability pensions include the General Rate of Pension (up to 100%), the Intermediate and Special Rate of Pension and the Extreme Disablement Adjustment rate of pension. These pensions are non means tested and not taxed.

Payments under the SRCA and MRCA compensate veterans, current and former serving members of the ADF for incapacity and impairment related to their Defence service. Benefits include incapacity payments for loss of earnings due to an accepted injury/disease (generally taxable) and permanent impairment payments for non-economic loss. Where an individual's death is accepted as service caused, payments may be made to dependant partners and children, other dependants and for funeral benefits. Under the SRCA permanent impairment and dependant payments are in the form of lump sums only, whereas under the MRCA options of lump sum, periodic payment or a combination of the two are available.

Weekly payments for children under both the MRCA and SRCA are also available where the child was wholly dependant and their parent's death was accepted as service caused. Both the VEA and MRCA provide additional compensation by way of

a children's education scheme to eligible children.

Originally DVA only administered compensation payments made under the VEA. However, since December 1999, DVA has provided a claims management service to serving and former members of the Australian Defence Force making claims under SRCA. With the introduction of the MRCA on 1 July 2004 the Department now processes claims under all three pieces of legislation.

In addition to pensions and allowances, assistance is available through Defence Service Homes (DSH) under which subsidised loans for housing and housing-related benefits are provided to eligible veterans through the DSH Loans Scheme, the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS), and DSH Insurance.

Commemoration and War Graves

The Department manages a comprehensive range of programs and activities aimed at commemorating the service and sacrifice of the men and women who served Australia and its allies in wars, conflicts and peace operations.

Initiatives aim to raise awareness of significant wartime anniversaries and to involve communities in commemorative activities. In recent years, commemorative missions have been held to coincide with key anniversaries and/or the dedication of overseas memorials.

The Department is the lead agency responsible for the planning and conduct of Anzac Day commemorations at Gallipoli, Turkey and Villers-Bretonneux, France, and supports Anzac Day services at a number of other overseas locations, including Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Thailand.

A commemorative grants program provides modest funds to assist local organisations and communities to preserve local wartime heritage, maintain or establish local war memorials and encourage community participation in commemorative events.

The Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG) provides official commemoration of individuals who have lost their lives in war or as a result of war and maintains those commemorations in perpetuity. The OAWG also constructs and maintains official memorials at overseas sites significant to Australia's military history. It supports non-Government memorials to Australian service (unofficial memorials) located outside Australia through the Overseas Privately Constructed Memorial Restoration Program.

The Director War Graves is a statutory appointment. The staff of OAWG are DVA employees.

1.1. Repatriation Commission

Establishment

The Repatriation Commission was established in 1918 and exists in its current form as a result of the proclamation of the *Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Act 1920*. When this Act and several other related Acts were replaced in 1986 by the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA), the Repatriation Commission was retained.

Functions

Under section 180 of the VEA, the functions of the Repatriation Commission are:

- to grant pensions and other benefits and provide treatment for veterans, their dependants and other eligible persons;
- to advise the Minister on the operation of the VEA; and
- generally to administer the VEA, subject to the control of the Minister.

The VEA authorises the Repatriation Commission to take all necessary actions in connection with the performance of its functions, duties and powers (section 181). The Repatriation Commission is vested with broad powers to enable it to do all things necessary or convenient to carry out its functions, duties and powers under the VEA. It also has specific powers to enter into contracts, deal with real or personal property, undertake building works and engage persons to perform services.

In relation to claims for pensions, benefits and treatment under the VEA, the Repatriation Commission is the decision-maker. It is the Repatriation Commission that has responsibility for deciding and, where permitted, reviewing individuals' entitlements to pensions, benefits and treatment in accordance with the VEA.

The Repatriation Commission delegates its powers to employees of the Australian Public Service (subsection 213 (1) of the VEA). In practice, these delegates are staff of the Department.

The Repatriation Commission currently provides services to almost half a million veterans and members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), their partners, widows/widowers and children.

The three main pensions administered under the VEA are:

- disability pension paid to veterans for war or defence caused injuries or diseases;
- war widows/widowers pension paid where the veteran's death is war or defence caused; and
- service pension which is an income support payment similar to disability and age pensions paid by Centrelink although eligibility is five years earlier.

Membership

The Repatriation Commission has three full-time members appointed by the Governor-General:

- the President, Mr Ian Campbell PSM, who is also Secretary of DVA, was appointed on 16 October 2008;
- the Deputy President, Mr Shane Carmody, was appointed on 15 June 2009;
- and

- the services member (generally known as the Repatriation Commissioner), Major General Mark Kelly AO was appointed on 1 July 2010.

Secretary's role under the VEA

Under the VEA the Secretary has very specific authority, namely:

- to provide the staff necessary to assist the Repatriation Commission (section 196);
- to undertake preliminary investigation of claims or applications for pensions before they are submitted to the Repatriation Commission for determination (section 17); and
- to prepare section 137 statements of evidence for submission to the Veterans' Review Board (VRB) in the event of an appeal to the VRB from a Repatriation Commission decision (section 137).

In addition, the Secretary is empowered to compel the provision of information from veterans and other persons, for the purpose of carrying out these investigations, and to obtain any other information that is relevant to the continuing entitlement of a veteran to receive a benefit under the Act (see sections 54A, 54AA, 127 and 128 of the VEA). The Secretary can also require the provision of tax file numbers from persons seeking income payments under the VEA (see section 128A).

Minister's role under the VEA

By virtue of subsection 180(2) of the VEA the general administration of the VEA is vested in the Repatriation Commission, 'subject to the control of the Minister'. The Minister can provide direction on a range of general matters concerned with the approach to be taken by the Repatriation Commission in the administration of the VEA. The Minister cannot direct decision makers in consideration of a claim. The Minister is specifically empowered by the VEA to make or approve a number of statutory instruments and determinations. These include such matters as the Treatment Principles, Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS), Veterans' Children Education Scheme (VCES), Guide to the Assessment of the Rates of Veterans' Pensions (GARP) and the Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation Scheme (VVRS).

The Minister is also responsible for recommending to the Governor-General appointments to certain offices under the VEA, for making submissions to Cabinet on budget allocations and on any desirable amendments to the VEA and for the carriage of amendments in Parliament. Recommendations to the Governor-General for the making of regulations and the signing of regulations are further consequential responsibilities of the Minister.

1.2. Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission

Establishment

The Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) was established under section 361 of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA).

Functions

The MRCC is responsible to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs for the general administration of the MRCA which provides services to current Australian Defence Force (ADF) members, Reservists and Cadets. The MRCC is also responsible for administering claims by ADF members, Reservists and Cadets under *the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA).

Section 362 of the MRCA sets out the functions of the MRCC which include:

- making determinations relating to the acceptance of liability for service related conditions, the payment of compensation and the provision of treatment and rehabilitation;
- minimising the duration and severity of service related conditions and promoting the return to suitable work;
- promoting research into the health of members and former members, the prevention of injury and disease and rehabilitation;
- providing advice to the Ministers and Secretaries of the Departments of Veterans' Affairs and Defence, Chief of the Defence Force and Service Chiefs, either on request or on its own initiative; and
- other functions that may be conferred on it.

Additionally, section 142 of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2004* (MRC(C&T)A) amended the SRCA to include the following further functions for the MRCC. These include:

- determining defence-related claims under the SRCA;
- arranging the payment of compensation and the provision of rehabilitation, as a result of the making of defence-related claims;
- maintaining contact with the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission and with Comcare to ensure that, as far as practicable, there is equity of outcomes resulting from administrative practices and procedures used by Comcare and the MRCC in the performance of their respective functions; and
- other activities relating to the determination or payment of defence-related claims that was previously the responsibility of Comcare.

Membership

The MRCC has five members:

- the Chair, who is also the President of the Repatriation Commission – Mr Ian Campbell PSM;
- the Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission – Mr Shane Carmody;
- another member of the Repatriation Commission nominated by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs – Major General Mark Kelly AO, currently Repatriation Commissioner;
- a person nominated by the Minister responsible for the SRCA – Mr Paul O'Connor, CEO, Comcare; and

- a person nominated by the Minister for Defence – Major General Craig Orme AM CSC, Head of People Capability, Defence.

Staff to assist the MRCC

The MRCC is vested with broad powers to enable it to carry out its functions. The MRCC has no staff of its own and relies on employees under the *Public Service Act 1999* (PSA) allocated to it by the Secretary of DVA and other specified persons including consultants. Section 384 of the MRCA allows the MRCC to delegate its functions or powers under that Act to individual members of the MRCC, staff assisting the MRCC, certain employees under the PSA, members of the ADF and consultants, or employees of consultants, to the MRCC. Section 152 of the MRC(C&T)A allows the MRCC to delegate its powers and functions under the SRCA to the same group of persons specified in section 384 of the MRCA.

Department's Role

The Department is required, under delegation from the MRCC, to undertake a compensation claims and rehabilitation case management function for claims and cases under the MRCA, and for Australian Defence Force related claims and cases under the SRCA. It also provides policy advice for consideration by the MRCC.

Minister's Role under the MRCA

The current Administrative Arrangements Order specify that the Minister is responsible for the administration of the MRCA except for the following aspects, which fall within the Defence portfolio responsibility:

- Chapter 3, Rehabilitation, insofar as it relates to the rehabilitation of serving members of the Australian Defence Force; and
- Chapter 6, Treatment for Injuries and Diseases, insofar as it relates to serving members of the Australian Defence Force.

The Minister is specifically empowered by the MRCA to make or approve a number of statutory instruments and determinations. These include such matters as the Treatment Principles, Education Scheme for dependent eligible young persons, Motor Vehicle Compensation Scheme and Guide to the Assessment of Rates of Veterans' Pensions (GARP).

The Minister is also responsible for recommending to the Governor-General appointments to certain offices under the MRCA, for making submissions to Cabinet on budget allocations and desirable amendments to the MRCA and for the carriage of amendments in Parliament. Recommendations to the Governor-General for the making of regulations and the signing of regulations are further consequential responsibilities of the Minister.

Minister's Role under the SRCA

The current Administrative Arrangements Order provide that the Minister is responsible for Part XI of the SRCA except for the following, which rest with the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations:

- subsections 143 (2) and (3) – copies of Defence-related claims from Comcare;
- subsection 144(4) – determinations made by Comcare;
- section 150 – guidelines issued by the Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (SRCC);
- subsection 153(2) – payment of trust moneys by Comcare;
- section 156 – liability of Comcare and the SRCC;

- section 158 – regulatory contributions determined by Comcare; and
- section 159 – modifications by Comcare to provisions relating to contributions.

Part XI empowers the MRCC to determine and manage claims under the SRCA relating to defence service, and to provide compensation and rehabilitation. The Minister is specifically empowered to give direction to the MRCC with respect to the performance of its functions or powers under the SRCA, except in relation to particular cases. The Minister has no authority to directly approve or rule on claims under the MRCA or the SRCA.

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1.3. Department of Veterans' Affairs

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) provides staff and administrative support to the Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) in discharging their responsibilities to veterans and other entitled people. The Secretary of DVA is also the President of the Repatriation Commission and Chair of the MRCC.

In addition, the Department administers the Government's Commemorations Program and the *Defence Service Homes Act 1918*, under which subsidised loans for housing and housing related benefits (including home insurance through the Defence Services Home Insurance Scheme) are provided to eligible veterans and ADF personnel.

Operational Structure

The Department has offices located in each state and territory including a network of DVA Veterans' Affairs Network (VAN) offices in each capital city plus some regional centres in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania.

Contract arrangements are in place in some other locations, where there is a need for services but it is not viable to have a DVA presence. These regional arrangements, with Centrelink, state and local governments. There are currently over 120 sites across Australia which offer information on DVA services.

The Department is organised along national lines, with a General Manager heading each Division and National Managers running each individual line of business. The Deputy Commissioners manage state specific issues and are responsible for the Rehabilitation and Compensation claims processing staff. The majority of its Executive is located in Canberra but it maintains a senior management presence in each state, with a Deputy Commissioner based in each state capital and in Darwin.

Deputy President Group – Mr Shane Carmody

VVCS—Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service

National Manager Mr Wayne Penniall

The VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service provides counselling and group programs to Australian veterans, peacekeepers and their families. While VVCS is part of DVA, it maintains separate client records to DVA, and its operations are perceived currently by the veteran community as independent of the Department. It is a specialised, free and confidential Australia-wide service.

VVCS staff and outreach counsellors are qualified psychologists or social workers with experience in working with veterans, peacekeepers and their families. They can provide a wide range of treatments and programs for war and service-related mental health conditions including post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The Department is responsible for the provision of services through the network of VVCS Offices. There are VVCS centres in all state/territory capitals as well as Townsville, Maroochydore, Southport, Lismore, Newcastle, Wodonga and Launceston. For more details regarding the VVCS – Veterans and Families Counselling Service, please refer to Section 5, Brief 1.1.

Deputy Commissioners

The Deputy Commissioners have primary responsibility for management of the Department's relationship with ex-service organisations and individual veterans in their state. This includes representing the Minister, Repatriation Commission and Department as required. They also play a key role in the identification and management of state-specific issues and in fostering relationships within state offices. Deputy Commissioners are members of the Department's executive management group and are represented on the various governance committees. Deputy Commissioners are responsible for the operation of VAN offices, Corporate Service Centres, Commemorations staff and Veterans' Service Centres in their states.

From the beginning of July 2010 the Deputy Commissioners assumed direct responsibility for the management of Rehabilitation and Compensation claims processing staff and performance in each location. Deputy Commissioners are also responsible for national lines of business including Men's Health Peer Education, Complaints Management, Veterans' Satisfaction Survey, Community Support such as Day Clubs, Freedom of Information (FOI), Veterans Services Centre, Client Liaison Unit, Aged Care and Veterans' Health Week.

The Deputy Commissioners are:

- NSW / ACT, Ms Jennifer Collins
- Victoria, Mr Mike O'Meara
- Queensland, Ms Alison Stanley
- Western Australia, Mr Russell McLaughlan
- South Australia, Mr Ian Kelly
- Tasmania, Ms Jan Hyde
- Northern Territory, Mr Malcolm Uhe

Support Division - General Manager: Mr Barry Telford

The Support Division's responsibilities include:

- developing policies and procedures on compensation, rehabilitation and income support matters;
- providing support and advice to the Minister, the Repatriation Commission, the MRCC, the Secretary and State offices; and
- delivery of income support payments to the veteran and Defence Force communities.

Rehabilitation and Entitlements Policy Group

National Manager Mr Adam Luckhurst

The Rehabilitation and Entitlements Policy Group consists of:

- Liability and Service Eligibility;
- Benefits, Payments and Rehabilitation;
- Costings and Implementation; and
- Communication and External Liaison Training Education and Support.

The Group provides administrative support, research, strategic policy advice and legislative support for income support, under the VEA, and, rehabilitation and compensation under the VEA, SRCA and MRCA. The Group also provides policy for the Training and Information Program (TIP) and training for both staff and the ex-service community across the three pieces of legislation.

Income Support Group

National Manager Mr John Sadeik

The Income Support Group is responsible for delivering income support payments, managing specific reviews, pensioner initiated reviews, and handling debt management. The Group consists of:

- Claims, Aged Care and Procedures;
- Payments, Bereavement , Advices and Debt Recovery; and
- Reviews, Systems and Governance

Research, Grants and Consultation Co-ordination Group

National Manager Ms Peta Stevenson

The Research, Grants and Consultation Co-ordination Group consists of:

- Consultation Framework Secretariat;
- F-111 Health Care Scheme;
- Nominal Roll Development and Maintenance;
- Strategic Research and Development;
- Statistical Services and Analysis;
- Grants and Bursaries;
- Departmental Management Information System; and
- Family Study Program.

The Group provides research support, development and management, consultancy on historical research, business intelligence services, statistical analysis and grants management.

Rehabilitation Compensation and Systems Support Group

National Manager Ms Sandy Bell

From 1 July 2010, a new model of management was introduced for Rehabilitation and Compensation business. The Deputy Commissioners now have responsibility for operational management and administration of benefits under the VEA, SRCA and MRCA for their location.

The Rehabilitation, Compensation and Systems Support Group supports the delivery of compensation benefits with responsibility for the appeals and reviews function, reporting, ministerial liaison, implementation of procedures and policies and quality assurance and training.

Systems Support is responsible for IT system development and delivery and day to day operational support, including maintenance and enhancements for a large number of departmental client related service delivery applications.

Clarke / MRCA Reviews

National Manager Mr Neil Bayles

The Clarke / MRCA Reviews Group was established to manage the revisitation of the Clarke Review and the Military Compensation Review.

It also now manages implementation of the Government response to the Parliamentary Inquiry Report into RAAF F-111 Deseal/Reseal workers and their families.

Services Division - General Manager: Mr Ken Douglas

The Services Division is responsible for the delivery of a wide range of services to the veteran and Defence Force communities.

Defence Services and Support

National Manager Mr John Fely

The Defence Support Services (DSS) Group provides a range of services to eligible members of the veteran and services community, including home loan subsidies and insurance benefits. Insurance benefits are offered through the Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme (DSHI) and home loan subsidy benefits are provided under the Defence Service Homes Loans Scheme (DSH). DVA administers, on behalf of the Department of Defence, the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS), under a fee-for-service arrangement, and the Defence Home Owner Scheme (DHOS), which was superseded by DHOAS and closed to applications on 30 June 2010.

The Group is responsible for forging strong links with the Department of Defence, to ensure a well coordinated and streamlined approach to supporting current and separated ADF personnel and their families. This work is managed under the auspices of the Defence/DVA Links Steering Committee. The forum is the focus for liaison between the two departments on significant policies and programs, such as transition services for separating ADF members.

The Group also manages the Interdepartmental Working Group (IWG) for Streamlining Administration of Transitioning and Former ADF Members. This Group includes representatives from a range of Federal Government departments that are involved in providing services and information to serving and ex-service members. The aim of the Group is to improve cooperation between the departments and create a smarter, whole-of-government approach to helping members deal with multiple agencies.

Primary Health

National Manager Ms Letitia Hope

Consists of the Contract Management and Contract Support Sections, the Medicare Australia Liaison and Contract Management Section (MALCM) and the Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre (VAPAC).

The Contract Management Section manages public and private hospital arrangements including negotiating and monitoring contracts with both State and Territory health departments and private entities. The Section also delivers information and support to health providers through education packages, newsletters and workshops.

The Contract Support Section includes the Medical and Allied Health Team, which is responsible for processing approximately 6000 requests for health treatment per

month from health providers, and for handling approximately 600 incoming phone calls per day, mainly from health providers. Contract Support also has an Information and Analysis Team which responds to most of the data requests from within the Group and to some external requestors.

VAPAC administers provider approvals for pharmaceutical items under the Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS). VAPAC's contracted pharmacists are available 24 hours a day and are also available to advise veterans about issues relating to their medications. VAPAC also takes calls from veterans and providers (doctors and pharmacists) arising from the Veterans' MATES program, which aims to maximise the quality use of medicines in the veteran community.

The Medicare Australia Liaison and Contract Management Section (MALCM) is responsible for negotiating, managing and monitoring compliance with the Memorandum of Understanding between DVA and Medicare Australia, and the administration of Gold, White and Orange Repatriation Health Cards and provider cards. MALCM supports Medicare Australia in the payment of treatment accounts and identifies and progresses opportunities to utilise new technology, in partnership with Medicare Australia. MALCM also has responsibility for the maintenance and development of all health systems within DVA.

Community Health

National Manager Mr John Geary

Community Health programs support people independently living at home. There are five key programs:

1) Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP): this program provides aids and appliances to entitled people whose needs have been clinically assessed. These aids minimise the impact of disabilities, enhance quality of life and maximise independent living.

HomeFront is a falls and accident prevention program to assist in identifying falls hazards in and around the home to support independent living.

Veterans' Home Maintenance Line (VHML) is a service providing free advice to the veteran community on general property maintenance matters and referral to reliable and efficient local tradespeople. The cost of work undertaken is not funded by the Department.

2) Veterans' Transport Services (Transport): transportation and or reimbursement of costs is provided to entitled people to travel to and from medical treatment or to medical appointments as a result of the Disability Pension and / or Invalidity Pension claims process.

3) Veterans Home Care (VHC) is a low level care program. Services include domestic assistance, personal care and safety related home and garden maintenance and respite care.

4) Community Nursing services are provided to meet an assessed clinical and/or personal care need.

5) Mental Health.

The Mental Health team is responsible for the implementation of the Department's Mental Health Policy as it relates to community based mental health care. An emphasis is placed on improving access to integrated and community oriented health care.

Primary Care Policy

National Manager Ms Judy Daniel

The Primary Care Policy Group has responsibility for health care related policy development and management including matters such as:

- managing the policy framework for the provision of public and private hospital services;
- medication management, including Veterans' MATES and Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS);
- e-health and health technology, including identifying opportunities to incorporate e-health into existing health business;
- maintaining links with other agencies and organisations to ensure DVA is aware of changes to broader policy in the public and private sector on health technologies, including the approval of therapeutic uses and implications for DVA;
- providing policy advice in relation to transport and ambulance services, as well as aids and appliances for daily living;
- implementation of new policy measures, including assisting in the drafting of amending legislation, developing new policy guidelines, and ensuring system and procedural changes achieve the intention of the new policy;
- new policy development in the areas of medical and allied health services, dental, hearing and optometric services; and
- prior approvals, cross portfolio costing – MBS, and provides secretariat support to the Repatriation Pharmaceutical Reference Committee (RPRC).

An important focus of the Group in forthcoming months is to monitor the potential impact of broader health reform on health care arrangements for the veteran community. The Group is also leading implementation of the Preventable Admissions and Improved Community Care Program, a \$152.7 million initiative announced in the 2010-11 Budget.

Community and Aged Care Policy

National Manager Ms Gail Yapp

Community Care Policy is responsible for developing and managing policy for the following community based policies and programs:

- the Veterans' Home Care program;
- broader home and community care issues such as carer and respite and program interactions with the Home and Community Program and other Department of Health and Ageing programs;
- the Community Nursing program; and
- the Exceptional Case Unit which deals with veterans and war widow/widowers with complex care needs who require community nursing services.

Mental Health Policy is responsible for:

- developing initiatives to support policy across a range of mental health issues, including suicide prevention, PTSD and alcohol use;
- co-ordinating the Government's response to the Dunt Study into Suicide in the Ex-service community; and
- supporting consultative mechanisms with the ex-service community on mental health.

Social Health Policy and Aged Care is responsible for:

- the development of community-based health and wellbeing initiatives that encourage and support healthy ageing including participation in regular physical activity, eating well, social activities and activities that have a positive impact on mental health;
- policy oversight of the Men's Health Peer Education program, Day Clubs, Carer & Volunteer Support programs; and
- managing aged care, homelessness and indigenous policy for the Department.

Corporate Division - General Manager: Ms Narelle Dotta

The Corporate Division's role is to provide a responsive corporate framework that supports all Divisions in delivering DVA business outcomes. The Corporate Division is responsible for:

- Human Resource Management;
- Financial Management;
- Information, Communication and Technology; and
- Parliamentary and Ministerial Office Support.

People Services Group

National Manager Mr Roger Winzenberg

This Group is primarily responsible for Human Resource Management and consists of Payroll, Recruitment and Workplace Relations; Working Environment and Consulting; Organisational Development and Planning; and Security. This Group supports managers and staff across the full range of operations, tactical and strategic people management issues and provides a flexible and efficient approach to business as well as effective delivery of day-to-day services (payroll, recruitment and OH&S/case management). The Group is also responsible for the Department's Workforce Strategy and Learning and Development requirements. Through the Security Section, it also manages the security of DVA properties, systems and staff.

Resources Group

National Manager/Chief Finance Officer Mr Graeme Rochow

This Group provides strategic and operational budget and financial management services for DVA. It is led by the Department's Chief Finance Officer who also acts as National Manager for the Group.

The Group consists of five main sections:

- External Budgets;
- Internal Budgets (which includes the Portfolio Management Team, with membership located in 5 state capitals);
- Financial Reporting and Policy;
- Financial Operations (which includes the Accounts Payable Team, located in Brisbane); and

- Property Operations.

This Group provides financial coordination, overseeing financial management, developing and administering financial policies and procedures and coordinating the portfolio's Budget package.

Parliamentary and Communication Group

National Manager Mr Richard Magor

This Group consists of Ministerial and Executive Support; Information and Records Management; Internal Communication and Publishing Services; and Media and Strategic Communication. The Group provides timely and effective support to the Minister, the Repatriation Commission and Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC), the DVA Executive and the Department by:

- managing the Department's external and internal communications by providing high quality advice and services in the areas of media liaison and issues management, strategic communication and implementation, internet and intranet content, e-forms and publication design and production;
- promoting and utilising cost-effective and best practice technologies to support and enhance service delivery;
- providing support and services that meet the legislative and machinery of government requirements for both the Department and the Minister; and
- providing DVA with records and information management capability which supports the achievement of business objectives and the provision of effective governance and accountability.

Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Solutions Group

National Manager/Chief Information Officer Ms Rhonda Tarry (acting)

This is the Group with primary responsibility for ICT in DVA. This Group consists of Infrastructure and Operations; Business ICT Services; ICT People and Processes; ICT Business and ICT Project Delivery. It is led by the Department's Chief Information Officer who also acts as National Manager for the Group.

This Group supports the Department's operations and improves program delivery through the provision of a range of cost-effective IT solutions and support services including:

- providing overall leadership and strategic advice to the Department on ICT issues and directions, such as whole-of-government initiatives and Gershon recommendations;
- providing the capability to develop, maintain and support DVA's ICT applications, services and infrastructure;
- managing contracts that DVA are responsible for; and
- providing a range of administrative support activities associated with governance and operational effectiveness, audit and risk co-ordination, strategic and business planning and performance reporting and enterprise architecture.

The services provided are a mixture of 'in-house' service delivery and contractual arrangements. The largest single provider is IBM for ICT infrastructure services and this is a long standing relationship. In the 2010/11 Budget, DVA received significant capital funding to support undertaking a major rationalisation of its information and communications technology, including transitioning to a shared arrangement with the Department of Human Services (DHS) for the provision of ICT infrastructure

corporate services. Implementation and cut over of services are scheduled to occur in 2011.

Executive General Manager: Sean Farrelly (acting)

Business Integrity and Legal Services Group

National Manager/Principal Legal Advisor/Chief Audit Executive

Ms Carolyn Spiers

The Business Integrity and Legal Services Group supports the portfolio to deliver corporate goals and to promote the highest level of business integrity by providing current and effective legislative, legal, procurement, audit, governance and compliance advice and frameworks.

Legal Services

Advising & Public Law - Advises on matters of Administrative Law; complex Freedom of Information (FOI) and Privacy; Acts administered by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs; and investigation of Compensation for Detriment caused by Defective Administration (CDDA) and Act of Grace matters.

Legislation & Instruments - Advises on the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003* and delegated legislation matters generally as well as Repatriation Medical Authority and Specialist Medical Review Council matters. Co-ordinates and advises on the legislation program and prepares drafting instructions for amendments to Veterans' Affairs legislation.

Litigation - Advises on all litigation involving the Department, the MRCC and RC; manages appeals made to the Federal and High Courts.

Contract Advisory Unit - Advises on contracting and procurement issues.

Audit & Assurance

Co-ordinates and manages the interaction between the Department and the Australian National Audit Office regarding its external Audit Program; Internal Audit Program activities (currently contracted through KPMG); the National Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and BCP activities; DVA Comcover insurance arrangements; promotion of and assistance with risk identification, assessment and management to support overall risk management in DVA. Provides secretariat services to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Business Integrity Intelligence

Co-ordinates compliance activities at whole of agency level and provides strategic business intelligence investigation.

Compliance

Investigates allegations of fraud. Responds to instances of potential non-compliant behaviour reported by internal/ external stakeholders, or proactively identified through intelligence led capability. Also provides independent data analysis and reporting for all business areas, including post payment monitoring of health services.

Commemorations Group

National Manager Mr Tim Evans

The Group commemorates the service and sacrifice of Australia's servicemen and women through a range of programs, projects and events. These initiatives recognise the special contribution of our servicemen and women to the nation and encourage the involvement of the community in commemorative activities and the preservation of our wartime heritage.

The Commemorations Group administers the *Saluting Their Service* Commemorations program which includes community awareness initiatives, advice, education resources, historical publications and websites, commemorative events, missions and visits, use of the word *Anzac*, community grants, and the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Commemorative Medallion. It also coordinates and manages the delivery of commemorative and related activities at Gallipoli and Villers-Bretonneux, France, most notably the annual Anzac Day ceremonies, and provides support for Anzac Day services at Isurava and Bomana in PNG, Sandakan in Malaysia, Hellfire Pass in Thailand, and at the Australian War Memorial in London.

Commemorations also leads and coordinates whole-of-government arrangements to mark the Anzac Centenary, including providing support to the recently established National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary. The National Commission will provide recommendations to Government on options for the broad scope and shape of commemorative, educative and interpretive initiatives and activities and the governance process for the commemorative program.

Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG)

Director Major General Paul Stevens AO (Rtd)

The Director of War Graves is a statutory appointment. The OAWG has four main functions. Firstly, it assists the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) to commemorate the war dead of World War I and World War II, and maintains the Commission's war cemeteries and other commemorations in Australia, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Norfolk Island. This responsibility is covered by a formal agreement between Australia and the Commission, signed on 1 January 1975.

Secondly, it provides and maintains official commemoration for Australia's war dead from conflicts other than the World Wars.

Thirdly, it implements Government policy for the perpetual commemoration of Australian veterans whose post-war deaths are accepted as being due to their war service.

Finally, on behalf of the Australian Government, it constructs and maintains memorials overseas at sites significant to Australia's military history.

The executive of OAWG is located in Canberra. It has nine works depots around Australia and employs local staff at three major war cemeteries in PNG.

Organisational Change Group

National Manager Mr Mark Harrigan (acting)

The Organisational Change Group (OCG) takes a cross-DVA approach to managing change and positioning DVA to meet future challenges. The Group has three sections – Change Analysis and Planning, Government Reforms, and the Project Management Office.

OCG contributes to the Department's long term strategic planning through the development, monitoring and implementation of change projects and strategies. The Group is responsible for reviewing and updating the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan and monitors whole-of-government reforms to service delivery and the APS for their impact on the Department.

The Group provides support to the Performance and Change Committee and has a role in maintaining and reviewing departmental governance structures. It also provides advice to staff on project management and maintains the Project Management Framework.

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DVA Organisational Chart as of 7 September 2010

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1.4. Veterans' Review Board

Establishment

The **Veterans' Review Board** (VRB) was established by the *Repatriation Legislation Amendment Act 1984* and began operations on 1 January 1985.

Functions

The VRB is an independent statutory tribunal that hears appeals by those veterans, members and former members of the Australian Defence Force, and their dependants who are dissatisfied with:

- decisions of the Repatriation Commission under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) concerning disability and dependants' pensions and attendant allowances;
- determinations of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) concerning rehabilitation and compensation; and
- determinations of a Service Chief under the MRCA concerning rehabilitation.

The VRB is the second level of the determining system. Under the system, delegates of the Repatriation Commission, the MRCC, or a Service Chief make the primary decision. The VRB may affirm, vary or set aside the decision under review and, where appropriate, substitute its own decision. If the applicant is not satisfied with the VRB decision, he or she can appeal further to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). Appeals against decisions of the Tribunal may be made to the Federal Court of Australia on questions of law.

Membership

The VRB comprises a Principal Member, Senior Members, Services Members and Members. All members of the VRB are appointed by the Governor-General and hold office for a period not exceeding five years. There are currently 39 members of the VRB: the Principal Member, 12 Senior Members, 14 Services Members and 12 Members. The Principal Member is a full-time appointee, one Senior Member is a full-time appointee and the other members are all appointed on a part-time basis.

Mr Douglas Humphreys was appointed Principal Member of the VRB on 22 March 2010 for a five year period. The Principal Member is responsible to the Minister for the operation of the VRB and the arrangement of its business. By an instrument of delegation under s212 of the VEA by a previous Minister, the Principal Member has the power to appoint, from time to time, a Services Member or other Member to act as a Senior Member, or to appoint a Services Members to act as another Member. The capacity of the Principal Member to be able to do this is very important for the efficient organisation of the day to day business of the Board.

The appointments of all current VRB members expire on 30 December 2010. A full merit selection process was completed in June this year and the selection committee report awaits consideration by the Minister. A separate brief will be provided on this matter.

Staff of the VRB

Staff assisting the VRB are employees of the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). There are currently 31 staff at the VRB.

1.5. Repatriation Medical Authority

Establishment

The **Repatriation Medical Authority** (RMA) is an independent statutory authority established in 1994 under section 196A of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA).

Functions

The role of the RMA is to determine Statements of Principles (SOPs) which set out causal connections, based on sound medical-scientific evidence, for particular kinds of injury, disease or death. These SOPs form the basis for the determination of claims lodged by veterans, serving members and their dependents with DVA under the VEA and *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA). SOPs are legislative instruments for the purposes of the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003* (LIA) and are subject to disallowance once tabled in Parliament.

Membership

Membership of the RMA consists of a Chairperson and four other members appointed by the Minister for a period of up to five years, but members are eligible for reappointment. The RMA is currently comprised of five eminent medical-scientific experts, each representing a specialty:

- Professor Ken Donald AO MBBS 1962, PhD UQ, FRCPA, FRCPath, FRACMA, FRACS as Chairperson;
- Professor Andrew Wilson B Med Sci 1979, MBBS (Hons) UQ 1981, PhD 1997 FFAPHM FRACP ;
- Professor John Kaldor, BA (Hons) WA 1976 PhD UC Berkeley;
- Professor Flavia Cicuttini, MBBS 1982 Monash, PhD 1993 (Melb) MSc 1995 (London) DLSHTM, FRACP, FAFPHM; and
- Associate Professor Gerard Byrne, BSc (Med) 1978, MBBS (Hons) 1980 UNSW, PhD 1997 UQ, FRANZCP.

All members are part-time. Professor Donald was first appointed in 1994 and his current term will expire on 30 June 2011. Professor Wilson was first appointed in October 2002, and his current term will expire in September 2010. Professor Kaldor was first appointed in February 2003 and his appointment will end in February 2011. Professors Cicuttini and Byrne were first appointed in July 2009 and their appointments will end in June 2012.

Staff to assist the RMA

Administrative and medical-scientific support is provided to the RMA by employees of DVA. There are currently 13 staff employed in the RMA Secretariat, on a full or part-time basis.

1.6. Specialist Medical Review Council (SMRC)

Establishment

The **Specialist Medical Review Council (SMRC)** was established under section 196V of the VEA.

Functions

The SMRC is an independent statutory body whose role is to review the contents of Statements of Principles (SOPs) and to review decisions by the Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) not to issue a SOP. The SMRC considers all of the material that was available to the RMA and any material that the applicant for review wants to make available. There are no legal questions decided by the SMRC and no lawyers may address the SMRC. The SMRC decides whether it would have made a different decision than the RMA on the basis of the same medical-scientific evidence.

Membership

The members of the SMRC are appointed by the Minister for a period of up to five years. Members are eminent medical practitioners and medical scientists, with at least 10 years experience and whose names are submitted by the professional colleges. When appointing Councillors the Minister must have regard to the branches of medical science expertise that are necessary for deciding matters referred to the Review Council. In respect of each of those branches, the Minister must ensure that, at any time, the number (not less than two) of Councillors having experience in that branch is sufficient for the proper exercise of the functions of the SMRC. One of the members is to be appointed as Convener.

The Convener of the SMRC is currently Clinical Associate Professor Jonathan Phillips who has held the position since March 2002. Professor Phillips' term was renewed in May 2010. Other members of the SMRC are selected by the Convener for the purposes of a specific review of a SOPs that is before the SMRC.

Staff to assist the SMRC

The Secretary of DVA provides staff and administrative support to the SMRC. This function is currently carried out within Rehabilitation and Entitlements Policy Group in the Support Division.

1.7. Australian War Memorial (AWM)

The Memorial was established by an Act of Parliament in 1925. The *Australian War Memorial Act 1980* established the Memorial as a corporation with perpetual succession, a common seal and the capacity to acquire, hold and dispose of real and personal property, and to sue and be sued. (A copy of the Act can be provided.)

The Act sets out the functions and powers of the Memorial, establishes the Council, sets out the terms and conditions of appointment of the Director, Memorial staff and consultants, and deals with general finances and the Australian War Memorial Fund.

Under section 5(1) of the Act, the functions of the Memorial are:

- (a) to maintain and develop the AWM as a national memorial of Australians who have died -
 - (i) on or as a result of active service; or
 - (ii) as a result of any war or warlike operations in which Australians have been on active service;
- (b) to develop and maintain, as an integral part of the national memorial, a national collection of historical material;
- (c) to exhibit, or make available for exhibition by others, historical material from the memorial collection or historical material that is otherwise in the possession of the AWM;
- (d) to conduct, arrange for and assist in research into matters pertaining to Australian military history; and
- (e) to disseminate information relating to -
 - (i) Australian military history;
 - (ii) the national memorial;
 - (iii) the memorial collection; and
 - (iv) the AWM and its functions.

Section 5(2) of the Act states:

‘The Memorial shall use every endeavour to make the most advantageous use of the memorial collection in the national interest.’

Council of the Australian War Memorial

Under section 9(2) of the Act, the Council is responsible for the policy and conduct of the affairs of the Memorial. The membership of the Council comprises the three Service Chiefs as ex-officio members and eight to ten members appointed by the Governor-General who takes account of their knowledge and experience of matters relating to the functions of the Memorial. Members are appointed in a part-time non-executive capacity for a maximum three-year period, and are remunerated according to the *Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973*. The Chairman of the Council is elected by the Council members. The Council meets quarterly; the next meeting is due to be held on 11 and 12 November 2010. As at September 2010 the Council is comprised of nine members.

On the second day of each Council meeting, a lunch is held at which you and your Chief of Staff are most welcome to attend. Other guests from time-to-time include diplomats and heads of related agencies.

Director and Senior Management

Director: Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) (Telephone: (02) 6243 4225)

The Director and CEO of the Memorial is responsible for the management of its affairs under the general direction of Council. The Director is appointed by the Governor-General under section 20 of the *Australian War Memorial Act 1980* and has the powers under the *Public Service Act 1999* of an agency head. The present Director's term is due to expire on 28 February 2011.

Three Assistant Directors head the functional branches of the Memorial.

Corporate Services:	Ms Rhonda Adler (Telephone: (02) 6243 4233)
Public Programs:	Ms Helen Withnell (Telephone: (02) 6243 4285)
National Collection:	Ms Nola Anderson (Telephone: (02) 6243 4297)

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1.8. PORTFOLIO EXECUTIVE - contact numbers

	work:	home:	mobile:
Repatriation Commission			
President:			
Mr Ian Campbell PSM	02 6289 6736	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Deputy President:			
Mr Shane Carmody	02 6289 6744	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Commissioner:			
MAJGEN Mark Kelly, AO (Retd)	02 6289 6733	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission			
Chair:			
Mr Ian Campbell PSM	02 6289 6736	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Members:			
Mr Shane Carmody	02 6289 6744	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MAJGEN Mark Kelly, AO	02 6289 6733	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MAJGEN Craig Orme, AM, CSC	02 6265 6902	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Mr Paul O'Connor	02 6275 0001	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Department of Veterans' Affairs			
Secretary:			
Mr Ian Campbell PSM	02 6289 6736	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Executive General Manager:			
Mr Sean Farrelly (A/g)	02 6289 1163	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
General Managers:			
Support Division:			
Mr Barry Telford	02 6289 6000	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Services Division:			
Mr Ken Douglas	02 6289 6129	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Corporate Division:			
Ms Narelle Dotta (A/g)	02 6289 4777	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Principal Medical Adviser:			
Dr Graeme Killer AO	02 6289 6399	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Principal Legal Adviser			
Ms Carolyn Spiers	02 6289 6003	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Deputy Commissioners:			
NSW Ms Jennifer Collins	02 9213 7178	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
VIC Mr Mike O'Meara	03 9284 6455	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
QLD Ms Alison Stanley	07 3223 8462	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
SA Mr Ian Kelly	08 8290 0585	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
WA Mr Russell McLaughlan	08 9366 8260	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
TAS Ms Jan Hyde	03 6221 6651	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
NT Mr Malcolm Uhe	08 8935 1457	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Office of Australian War Graves			
Director:			
MAJGEN Paul Stevens AO (Retd)	02 6289 6477	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Veterans' Review Board			
Principal Member:			
Mr Douglas Humphreys	02 9213 8603	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Australian War Memorial			
Director:			
MAJGEN Steve Gower AO, AO (Mil)	02 6243 4225	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

1.9. Summary of Benefits and Services Provided to Clients

Income Support

- A service pension can be paid to veterans on the grounds of age or invalidity, and to eligible partners, widows and widowers. Income support supplement (ISS) provides a regular income additional to the war widow's pension for Australian war widows and widowers. Income support pensions are subject to an income and assets test.
- Supplements and allowances which may be payable in association with service pension and ISS include pension supplement, rent assistance, and remote area allowance.
- Total budgeted expenditure for this program during the current financial year is \$3.021 billion.

Disability Compensation

- Disability pension is a tax-free benefit paid to Australian veterans who have had an illness or injury accepted by DVA as being caused by their service. The rate of disability pension payable depends on how severe the illness or injury is. Veterans who are unable to work solely because of the effects of their service related disabilities may be paid pension at the Special Rate (also known as 'T&PI').
- Supplements and allowances, which can be paid in association with disability pension, include clothing allowance, attendant allowance, recreational transport, and recognition of certain medals and decorations.
- Total budgeted expenditure for this program during the current financial year is \$1.545 billion.

War Widows and Widowers

- War widow's pension is paid to the partners of deceased veterans whose deaths have been accepted as service related or who had been receiving Special Rate pension, Extreme Disablement Adjustment, Intermediate rate, totally temporarily incapacitated or a pension increased by item 1 to 8 of section 27 of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) or were former prisoners of war. Pension can also be paid to dependent children of deceased veterans.
- Total budgeted expenditure for this program during the current financial year is \$1.886 billion.

Incapacity Benefits

- Incapacity benefits are taxable payments for economic loss due to the inability to work because of an accepted condition. Incapacity benefits can be made to current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) members including permanent and Reserve force members, Cadets, Cadet officers and instructors and declared members who are incapacitated for service or work as a result of an injury or disease that has been accepted under the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) or the *Military, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA).
- The budgeted expenditure for this sub-program during the current financial year is \$96.571 million.

Permanent Impairment payments

- If a person has an injury or disease as a result of ADF service, and if that injury or disease has left the person with some permanent impairment, then the person may be entitled to receive compensation for that impairment from DVA. This compensation is called permanent impairment (PI) payment.
- PI payments are paid as compensation for any permanent physical and/or mental impairment in combination with any lifestyle restrictions which may be suffered as a result of injuries or diseases which have been accepted by DVA under the SRCA or the MRCA as being related to ADF service.
- The budgeted expenditure for this sub-program during the current financial year is \$71.390 million.

Health Care

- The Department is a significant purchaser of health services for the veteran community, ensuring access to a broad range of health care and support services to meet the clinical needs of the Department's clients.
- In general, card holders are not charged for treatment provided although they may be asked to pay a contribution for the cost of pharmaceutical items, nursing home care and certain dental and optical services.
- Access to health care services is initially provided for those conditions that are accepted as having been caused by military service, with eligibility determined by legislation and identified through a series of Repatriation Health Cards. Clients need to have a clinical need for treatment. Total annual expenditure for health services including that provided via the Repatriation Health Cards is estimated at \$5.212 billion for 2010-11 year.

Medical Services (incl Dental)

- DVA funds medical and dental services for veterans on a fee for service basis. DVA fees generally represent the full payment for services, with no co-payment by the veteran.
- DVA funding arrangements for medical services generally mirror the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS), with funding provided at a higher rate. Applications to pay providers for non-MBS procedures or at higher than DVA rates are considered on a case by case basis, based upon clinical need.
- The total budgeted expenditure for this program during the current financial year is \$978.640 million.

Hospital Services

- DVA purchases hospital services from both the public and private sectors, ensuring access to a comprehensive range of inpatient, outpatient, emergency, and mental health hospital services for the veteran community.
- Almost 340,000 inpatient separations were purchased in 2009-10 for a treatment population of 257,566.
- As part of its purchasing arrangements, the Department has agreements and contracts in place with states and territories, and private hospital operators.
- Total budgeted expenditure for this program during the current financial year is \$1.709 billion.

Pharmaceutical Services

- DVA provides a comprehensive medication approval and advisory service which operates 24 hours each day.
- The Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre (VAPAC) receives about 35,000 phone contacts each month from providers, pharmacists and veteran patients.
- Also responsible for the successful Veterans MATES program liaison.
- Total budgeted expenditure for this program during the current financial year is \$453.661 million.

Veterans' Home Care (VHC)

- Veterans' Home Care is a low level care program designed to assist the Department's eligible clients who wish to remain living independently at home, but who need a small amount of practical help. VHC services include domestic assistance, personal care, respite care, and safety-related home and garden maintenance.
- The Department contracts with VHC assessment agencies to undertake the assessment, approval and coordination role for VHC services. The Department also contracts with service provider organisations throughout Australia to undertake the delivery of VHC services.
- Access to VHC services is not automatic. The process for determining eligibility and assessing the need for VHC services is achieved through a telephone assessment process by the VHC assessment agency.
- The budgeted expenditure for these sub-programs during the current financial year is \$116.653 million (inclusive of in-home respite).

Community Nursing

- DVA's Community Nursing program assists the Department's clients to continue living in their own homes with their clinical and/or personal care needs being met.
- Community nursing services are provided by contracted nursing providers using a mix of personnel, including registered and enrolled nurses and nursing support staff.
- A client will need a referral to access community nursing and/or personal care services through the Community Nursing program. Referrals for community nursing services can be sought from a client's Local Medical Officer, General Practitioner, a treating doctor in hospital, a hospital discharge planner or a VHC Assessment Agency.
- The budgeted expenditure for this sub-program during the current financial year is \$121.253 million.

Veterans' Home Maintenance Line

- The Veterans' Home Maintenance Line provides property maintenance advice and referrals to reliable and efficient tradespeople.
- The budgeted expenditure for this sub-program during the current financial year is \$0.339 million.

Residential Aged Care

- DVA provides the Australian government subsidy for entitled veterans and war widows and widowers living in residential aged care facilities. The subsidy is the difference between what the DVA client can afford to pay, based on their income and assets, and the cost of the accommodation and care that they receive. DVA also pays the entire income tested basic daily fee for all former prisoners of war.

While the second largest category of expenditure in DVA's health budget (\$1.136 billion), the Department's administrative role is confined to recording subsidy payments and, where sought, assessment of veterans' financial status for entry into a facility.

- A client considering moving into residential care must first be assessed by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT). An ACAT will assess the client's need for assistance to continue living at home or for residential care. The client's doctor can refer them to an ACAT for an assessment or they may refer themselves.

Counselling and Other Care

- DVA funds VVCS, veteran transport, Rehabilitation Appliance Program, and a range of allied health services for veterans on a fee for service basis. DVA fees generally represent the full payment for services, with no co-payment by the veteran. Hearing services are provided through a DVA arrangement with the Department of Health and Ageing's Office of Hearing Services.
- Total budgeted expenditure for this program during the current Financial Year is \$591.396 million.

Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP)

- The Department provides a broad range of medical aids and appliances (including home modifications), intended to assist entitled clients to be as self-reliant as possible in their own homes and minimise the impact of their disabilities and illnesses, to eligible clients under RAP. To access this program, the client can be referred by their medical practitioner to an appropriate health provider who will assess their clinical need and make recommendations to DVA.
- The budgeted expenditure for this sub-program during the current financial year is \$130.128 million. This includes HomeFront and Medical Grade Footwear (MGF).

HomeFront

- HomeFront is a falls and accident prevention program that provides Gold or White Card holders with a free annual home assessment and financial subsidy towards the cost of recommended appliances and minor home modifications such as retractable hose reels or non-slip strips on steps.
- The budgeted expenditure for this sub-program is \$6.7 million (Note - this figure is included in RAP program expenditure).

Repatriation Transport Scheme (RTS)

- The Department's clients may qualify for assistance with travelling expenses to attend a health provider for medical treatment within Australia. To receive travelling expenses a client must attend the closest practical health provider to their home.
- Clients may receive reimbursement for:
 - the use of a private motor vehicle or public or community transport;
 - taxi or air travel where this type of transport is necessary;
 - parking expenses; and
 - accommodation and meals.
- Booked Car with Driver (BCWD) services using contracted taxi and hire car providers are also arranged by the Department in certain circumstances. Eligible clients over 80 years of age may access this service to attend all approved medical treatment locations whereas those under 80 years of age are restricted to travel to specific locations.

- The Department also has arrangements with ambulance providers in all state and territories for veteran transport.
- The budgeted expenditure for this sub-program during the current financial year is \$169.049 million.

Military Health Care and Rehabilitation

- Rehabilitation is designed to assist a member or former member of the ADF injured or ill as a result of service. If the injury or illness can be linked to ADF service and a claim for liability has been accepted under the SRCA or the MRCA, DVA may provide rehabilitation services.
- The Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation Scheme provided under the VEA is a totally voluntary vocational rehabilitation scheme.
- The budgeted expenditure for this sub-program during the current financial year is \$10.992 million.
- Under SRCA, and for some clients under MRCA, treatment is funded by reimbursement of expenses for reasonable medical treatment (not via a Repatriation health card).
- The budgeted expenditure for these sub-programs during the current financial year is \$52.918 million.
- Total budgeted expenditure for this program during the current Financial Year is \$63.910 million.

Housing

- Subsidised loan assistance is available to eligible current and former ADF personnel. Depending on their circumstances, the Department's clients are able to apply for assistance through the Defence Services Homes Scheme (DSH) or the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS), which is administered by DVA on behalf of the Department of Defence. DVA also administers the Defence HomeOwner Scheme (DHOS), which was superseded by DHOAS and closed to new applications on 30 June 2010. In 2009-10, DVA paid \$3.5 million in DSH subsidies and, on behalf of Defence, paid \$43 million in DHOAS subsidies and \$4.3 million in DHOS subsidies.
- Defence Service Homes Insurance (DSHI) provides economical home and contents insurance to all persons who are eligible under the VEA and/or the above Schemes, regardless of whether they have a DSH or DHOAS loan. Currently DSHI has a portfolio of 76,320 building policy holders with a premium revenue of \$24.882 million.

1.10. VETERAN COMMUNITY STATISTICS

Summary of benefit recipients

	As at 30 June 2008	As at 30 June 2009	As at 30 June 2010
Service pension includes	202 539	191 025	179 242
• veterans	108 580	102 053	95 363
• partners	93 959	88 972	83 879
Income support supplement	82 550	80 521	77 584
Age pension	5 896	5 572	5 167
Commonwealth Seniors Health Card	9 279	8 390	7 269
Disability pension	134 311	128 146	122 355
War widow's/widower's pension	108 023	104 760	101 090
Homes insured	82 893	79 514	76 320
Housing loan subsidies	28 900	25 748	22 913
War Graves (Aust and PNG)	19 813	19 816	19 870
Post-war death, individual commemorations	282 198	286 765	291 918

DVA Clients at 30 June 2010

VEA major benefits		MRCA/SRCA major benefits	
Disability pensioners	122,355	Permanent impairment	2,522
War widows	101,090	Incapacity payments	4,303
Income support pensioners ⁽¹⁾	261,993	Health services	8,818
Other income support ⁽²⁾	21,830	Other	4,460
Gold Card holders ⁽³⁾	207,945	Gold Card holders	⁽³⁾
White Card holders ⁽³⁾	49,621	White Card holders	⁽³⁾
Orange Card holders	10,614		

1. Includes persons receiving Service Pension, Income Support Supplement or Age Pension.

2. Includes Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders and persons receiving Defence Force Income Support Allowance.

3. Some recipients of MRCA benefits may be entitled to a gold or white card. The total number of gold and white card holders shown under the VEA includes the small number of MRCA card holders.

Estimated number of surviving veterans as at 2008 - 2010

	June 2008	June 2009	June 2010
Australian forces			
World War I	1	0	0
World War II ⁽¹⁾	121,000	105,500	90,900
Korean War, Malayan Emergency & FESR ⁽²⁾	14,600	14,100	13,600
Vietnam War ⁽³⁾	49,400	48,700	47,900
Other pre-1972 conflicts ⁽⁴⁾	8,000	7,600	7,200
Post-1972 conflicts ⁽⁵⁾	5,100	5,100	5,100
Conflicts 1999 and after ⁽⁶⁾	40,000	45,000	50,000
Peacetime Defence Force ⁽⁷⁾	158,400	157,300	156,100
British Commonwealth & Allied ⁽⁸⁾	39,800	37,000	34,200
Total ⁽⁹⁾	421,000	400,000	379,800

1. Figures for World War II are based on nominal roll data.
2. Korean War, Malayan Emergency & Far East Strategic Reserve (FESR) are estimated from a 1984 Australian Bureau of Statistics Labour Force Survey. Where the veteran has more than one service, they are recorded by most recent conflict.
3. Figures for Vietnam are based on nominal roll data and include veterans with prior service in earlier conflicts.
4. Other pre-1972 conflicts include Japan Occupation Forces, British Commonwealth Occupation Forces, FESR Navy and a number of other minor conflicts. They are estimated from a 1984 Australian Labour Force Survey.
5. Post-1972 conflicts include Cambodia, Gulf War, Namibia and Somalia.
6. Conflicts that have occurred in 1999 and after, which include East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq, have been identified separately because there are unknown overlaps within and between these conflicts. Due to the lack of accurate information from the Department of Defence and the complexity of multiple deployments, these figures represent a best estimate at the time of briefing.
7. Peacetime Defence Force figures are based on Australian Defence Force data and record those with three or more years of service post-1972 who are potentially eligible under the VEA. It includes 'conflicts' related to peacekeeping operations. It may include unknown numbers of veterans with service in conflicts prior to 1972.
8. Figures are sourced from a 1984 Australian Bureau of Statistics Labour Force Survey. It includes British Commonwealth & Allied veterans with qualifying service. They were engaged primarily in WW2, Korea/Malaya and Vietnam.
9. Total includes those potentially eligible for a service pension and/or disability pension. All figures are rounded except for World War I. Components will not add exactly to total due to rounding and overlaps. Figures have been derived using the latest available mortality rates.

2. ASSOCIATED INSTITUTIONS

2.1. Centre for Military and Veterans' Health

The Centre for Military and Veterans' Health (CMVH) was established in 2003 as an initiative of the Department of Defence (Defence) and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

CMVH operates as a consortium within three universities - the University of Queensland (UQ), the University of Adelaide and the Menzies School of Health Research, Charles Darwin University - for the provision of a wide range of research and professional development services to DVA and Defence.

DVA contributes \$1 million per year (indexed) for the 10 years of the contract. Defence contributed \$900,000 in the first year and then contributes five military and one civilian position for the 10 years of the contract.

Specifically the services provided by the CMVH include:

- health and human performance research for both Defence and DVA, including elements of the DVA Family Studies Program and the Defence MilHOP studies;
- the operation of a strategic 'Think Tank';
- a range of e-health services; and
- post-graduate education and continuing professional development with a Defence health focus.

The Chairman of the CMVH Board is Major General Peter Arnison AC CVO (Retd), Former Governor of Queensland. DVA has two representatives on the CMVH Board: MAJGEN Mark Kelly AO, Repatriation Commissioner; and Mr Barry Telford, General Manager, Support Division. Defence has two representatives and the University of Queensland has four representatives.

2.2. Australian Centre for Post-traumatic Mental Health

The mission of the Australian Centre for Post-traumatic Mental Health (ACPMH) is to achieve significant improvements in the recognition, prevention, and treatment of mental health problems in past and present members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and other defined Australian populations.

DVA provides annual funding of \$1.01 million for research and specialist advice on veteran and military mental health services under a five-year funding contract with ACPMH, signed in March 2007.

ACPMH provides expert advice and general support to the Repatriation Commission and DVA. Centre personnel, who hold academic appointments at the University of Melbourne, report to the Head of the respective Department (Psychology or Psychiatry) on academic matters. In addition to specific research projects, ACPMH provides the following to DVA under their contractual arrangements:

- best practice guidelines for veteran and military mental health and treatment, as well as in post-traumatic mental health;
- expert advice regarding the development of guidelines for establishing, maintaining and measuring outcomes for treatment and psycho-educational programs;
- 'Linkage' work with the Australian Defence Force (ADF) concerning mental health issues; and

- Attendance at relevant program meetings as requested by DVA.

Quarterly meetings are held to assist with governance issues and monitor performance. ACPMH has worked collaboratively with DVA to implement world-class treatments in post-traumatic and general mental healthcare, as well as raising mental health awareness within the veteran community.

The Board of Management, which includes representatives from DVA, ACPMH, ADF and the University, oversees the work of the Centre and is Chaired by Professor Michael Vitale from Monash University. DVA representatives on the Board are MAJGEN Mark Kelly AO, Repatriation Commissioner and Mr Barry Telford, General Manager Support Division.

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3. PORTFOLIO LEGISLATION

3.1. Legislation Administered by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Key Legislation

The following legislation is administered by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs under the Administrative Arrangements Order (AAO) made on 1 May 2008.

◆ *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*

The *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) is the principal piece of legislation in the Veterans' Affairs portfolio. This Act provides for the payment of pension and other benefits to, and the provision of medical and other treatment for, veterans and their dependants.

◆ *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988, Part XI except for sections 143(2) and (3), 144(4), 149, 150, 153(2), 156, 158 and 159.*

This Part confers on the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission the functions of:

- (a) determining and managing claims under this Act that relate to defence service that occurred before the MRCA commencement date; and
- (b) managing the provision of compensation and rehabilitation provided as a result of the making of claims of that kind.

This Part also modifies the operation of the SRCA in relation to the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission and in relation to the liabilities of Comcare and the Commonwealth for members of the Defence Force.

◆ *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*

This Act provides for compensation and other benefits to be provided for current and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) who suffer a service injury or disease as a result of ADF service on or after 1 July 2004. The Act also provides for compensation and other benefits to be provided for the dependants of certain deceased current or former members whose death is the result of ADF service on or after 1 July 2004.

◆ *Australian War Memorial Act 1980*

This Act provides for the operation of the Memorial. The Act includes provisions relating to:

- the functions and powers of the Memorial;
- the appointment of Council members;
- the appointment of the Director;
- arrangements relating to staff; and
- the financial arrangements of the Memorial.

◆ *Defence Service Homes Act 1918*

This Act provides assistance to members of the Defence Force and certain other persons to acquire homes. The Act provides:

- eligibility criteria for assistance;
- the rates and terms of the assistance;
- an insurance scheme; and
- an agreement between the Commonwealth and Westpac to provide the assistance.

Other Legislation

- ◆ *A New Tax System (Bonuses for Older Australians) Act 1999*, parts 1 and 5 insofar as they relate to Veterans' Affairs Customers and Part 3
- ◆ *Anzac Day Act 1995*
- ◆ *Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests (Treatment) Act 2006*
- ◆ *Compensation (Japanese Internment) Act 2001*
- ◆ *Defence Act 1903*, in relation to paragraph 124(1)(qba)
- ◆ *Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Other legislation (2006 Budget and Other Measures) Act 2006*, item 33 of Schedule 7
- ◆ *Families, Community services and Indigenous Affairs and Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (2006 Budget Measures) Act 2006*, items 44 and 45 of Schedule 1
- ◆ *Household Stimulus Package Act (No. 2) 2009 – Schedule 4*
- ◆ *Military Memorials of National Significance Act 2009*
- ◆ *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2004*
- ◆ *Papua New Guinea (Members of the Forces Benefits) Act 1957*
- ◆ *Repatriation Institutions (Transfer) Act 1992*
- ◆ *Social Security and Other Legislation Amendment (Economic Security Strategy) Act 2008 – Schedule 4*
- ◆ *Social Security and Veterans' Entitlements Legislation Amendment (One-off Payments and Other Budget Measures) Act 2008 – Item 2 of Schedule 2*
- ◆ *Social Security and Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (One-off Payments and Other 2007 Budget Measures) Act 2007*, Item 2 of Schedule 2 and Schedule 5.
- ◆ *Social Security and Veterans' Entitlements Legislation Amendment (One-off Payments to Increase Assistance for Older Australians and Carers and Other Measures) Act 2006*, Item 2 of Schedule 2.
- ◆ *Veterans' Entitlements (Clarke Review) Act 2004*
- ◆ *Veterans' Entitlements (Transitional Provisions and Consequential Amendments) Act 1986*
- ◆ *Veterans' Entitlements (Rewrite) Transition Act 1991*
- ◆ *War Graves Act 1980*
- ◆ *War Precautions Act Repeal Act 1920*

3.2. Powers Under the Key Legislation for the Minister for Veterans' Affairs

The *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) provides that the Repatriation Commission shall, subject to the control of the Minister, have the general administration of the VEA (section 180). There is a specific requirement for the Repatriation Commission to provide the Minister with information concerning the operation of the VEA (section 180).

Similar to the situation under the VEA, under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) there is a specific requirement for the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) to provide the Minister with information concerning the operation of the MRCA (section 362).

Section 30 of the *Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests (Treatment) Act 2006* (APBNT(T)A), provides that the Repatriation Commission has the general administration of the APBNT(T)A, subject to the control of the Minister.

The VEA and MRCA provide that most administrative decisions affecting individuals, including the determination of entitlements for individuals, are taken by the Repatriation Commission or the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission, respectively, and not the Minister. For example, the granting of special rate pension (commonly known as the TPI pension) under Part II of the VEA and service pensions under Part III of the VEA are made by the Repatriation Commission and not the Minister.

The general administration of the legislation is vested in the respective Commission "subject to the control of the Minister". The Minister can provide direction on a range of general matters concerned with the approach to be taken by the Commissions in the administration of the VEA and the MRCA.

The Minister is specifically empowered to make or approve a number of statutory instruments and determinations. These include such matters as the Treatment Principles, the Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and a number of other specific schemes such as the Veterans' Children Education Scheme and the Guide to the Assessment of the Rates of Pensions (GARP) and the Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation Scheme.

The Minister is also responsible for recommending to the Governor-General appointments to certain offices, for making submissions to Cabinet on budget allocations and on any desirable amendments to the VEA and MRCA for the carriage of the amendments in Parliament. Recommendations to the Governor-General for the making of regulations and the signing of regulations are further consequential responsibilities of the Minister.

Significant powers of the Minister under DVA legislation include:

- making service determinations e.g. that certain service is warlike, thereby enabling a person with that service to receive entitlements under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) or the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA);
- approving schemes made by the Commissions e.g. under the VEA and the MRCA, education and training schemes for the children of service personnel that are made by the Commissions are of no effect until approved by the Minister. The Minister is also to approve schemes made by the Repatriation Commission under the *Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests (Treatment) Act 2006*;

- appointment of members of bodies e.g. the Minister appoints members of the Repatriation Medical Authority and the Specialist Medical Review Council (bodies established under the VEA); and
- varying insurance conditions under the *Defence Service Homes Act 1918* and reviewing decisions of the DVA Secretary under that Act.

Significant Minister powers such as approving schemes tend not to be delegated.

◆ ***Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 & Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004***

The Minister is responsible for the administration of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) and *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) under the Administrative Arrangements Orders.

◆ ***Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988***

The Minister is responsible for the administration of Part XI of the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) for defence related claims except for specific sections of this Part dealing with the roles and responsibilities of Comcare and the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations who has responsibility for the majority of this Act.

◆ ***Australian War Memorial Act 1980***

This Act provides for the operation of the Memorial. The Act includes provisions relating to:

- the functions and powers of the Memorial;
- the appointment of Council members;
- the appointment of the Director;
- arrangements relating to staff; and
- the financial arrangements of the Memorial.

◆ ***Defence Service Homes Act 1918***

The major powers assigned to the Minister are as follows:

- the power to delegate;
- approval of Guidelines for determining financial hardship when a borrower applies for a widow/widower advance, essential repair advance, or instalment relief;
- deferral of payment of subsidy to Westpac if it persistently fails to comply with the terms of the agreement;
- variation of Insurance Statement of Conditions and tabling of such variation in Parliament; and
- review of a decision which was made personally by the Secretary when an applicant appeals against the decision.

The decision-making Ministerial powers are delegated to Departmental officers as is the case with the Secretary's powers.

◆ ***War Precautions Act Repeal Act 1920***
The Protection of Word 'Anzac' Regulations

The Regulations provide that no person shall use the word 'Anzac' in connection with any trade, business, calling or profession, any entertainment etc, without the authority of the Minister.

◆ ***Customs Act 1901***

Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956

Regulation 4V provides that the importation of goods the description of which includes the word 'Anzac', or goods bearing the word 'Anzac', or advertising matter relating to those goods, is prohibited unless permitted by the Minister.

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3.3.Different Statutory Office Holder Arrangements in the Portfolio

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs appoints members of the Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) and the Specialist Medical Review Council (SMRC).

Appointments to other bodies in the Portfolio (DVA component) are made by the Governor-General.

The major appointments in DVA are to the Repatriation Commission, the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC), the Veterans' Review Board (VRB), the RMA, the SMRC, the Director of War Graves and the Council of the Australian War Memorial (AWMC).

For appointments to the Commissions and the VRB the Minister may request ex service organisations to submit lists of potential members and for appointments to the SMRC, the Minister must request appropriate professional bodies to submit nominees.

Appointments to the RMA and SMRC are on the basis of expert qualifications.

The AWMC is comprised of at least 8 members, 3 of which have automatic membership (Navy, Army, Air Force Chiefs).

The Minister may suspend a member of the Repatriation Commission and a member of the VRB and may terminate the appointment of a member of the RMA and a member of SMRC.

Membership of the relevant bodies may be for a period up to 5 years except for the AWMC where the maximum period is 3 years.

For members of the Commissions, the Minister has a specific statutory function if the Minister becomes aware of a member with a conflict of interest.

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4. STATUTORY APPOINTMENTS IN THE VETERANS' AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO AT AUGUST 2010

The following list shows the commencement and expiry dates for the major appointments in the portfolio.

Repatriation Commission:

* Mr Ian Campbell PSM	(President)	16/10/08	21/09/13
* Mr Shane Carmody	(Deputy President)	15/06/09	14/06/14
* Major General Mark Kelly AO (Retd)	(Commissioner)	01/07/10	30/06/15

Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission:

Mr Ian Campbell PSM	(Chair – ex-officio)		
Mr Shane Carmody	(Member – ex-officio)		
* Major General Mark Kelly AO (Retd)	(Member)	01/07/10	30/06/15
* Major General Craig Orme AM CSC	(Member)	25/02/09	24/02/14
* Mr Paul O'Connor	(Member)	25/11/09	23/08/14

Council of the Australian War Memorial:

* General Peter Cosgrove AC MC (Retd)	(Chairperson)	01/06/09	31/05/12
Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie AO DSC	(ex officio)		
Air Vice Marshal Mark Binskin AM	(ex officio)		
Vice Admiral Russ Shalders AO CSC RAN	(ex officio)		
* Mr Kerry Stokes AC		19/08/07	18/08/10
* Mr Ken Peacock AM		25/02/10	12/11/10
* Rear Admiral Simon Harrington AM RAN (Retd)		14/11/07	13/11/10
* Major General Bill Crews AO (Retd)		30/04/09	29/04/11
* Mrs Wendy Sharpe		25/05/08	24/05/11
* Mr Leslie Carlyon		30/04/09	29/04/12
* Rear Admiral Kenneth Doolan AO RAN (Retd)		12/11/09	12/11/12
* Mr Graham Edwards		03/06/10	02/06/13

Australian War Memorial:

* Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil)	(Director)	01/03/09	28/02/11
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Office of Australian War Graves:

* Major General Paul Stevens AO (Retd)	(Director)	13/04/09	03/12/10
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Veterans' Review Board:

* Mr Douglas Humphreys	(Principal Member)	22/03/10	21/03/15
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Note: There are 38 members of the VRB not shown. All appointments expire on 31 December 2010. A selection process has been undertaken and recommendations will be made to you separately. For further information please refer to brief provided in Section 2.

Repatriation Medical Authority:

# Professor Kenneth Donald	(Chairperson)	01/11/09	30/06/11
# Professor Flavia Cicuttini		01/07/09	30/06/12
# Professor John Kaldor		02/02/06	01/02/11
# Associate Professor Gerard Byrne		01/11/09	30/06/12
# Professor Andrew Wilson		01/10/05	30/09/10

Specialist Medical Review Council: appointed by Minister for Veterans' Affairs

# Professor Jonathan Phillips	(Convener)	01/07/10	30/06/12
# Dr Charles Stuart Guest		01/04/10	31/03/15
# Dr David John Longstaff Joske		03/03/06	02/03/11
# Mr Michael David Levitt		03/03/06	02/03/11
# Dr David Glen Newman		03/03/06	02/03/11
# Professor Ken Kiang Yong Ho		03/03/06	02/03/11
# Associate Professor Albert George Frauman		03/03/06	02/03/11
# Dr Gregory James Lockrey		03/03/06	02/03/11
# Professor Donald James Bourne St John AM		03/03/06	02/03/11
# Dr Michael Henry Jefford		03/03/06	02/03/11
# Professor Constatine Tam		01/02/09	30/06/11
# Dr Andrew Wirth		01/02/09	30/06/11
# Professor Andrew Edwin Grulich		01/02/09	30/06/11
# Professor Robert Graham Cumming		01/02/09	30/06/11
# Professor David Joshua Handelsman		01/02/09	30/06/11
# Professor John Funder AO		01/02/09	30/06/11
# Professor Geoffrey Owen Littlejohn		01/02/09	30/06/11
# Professor John Arthur Lewis Hart		01/02/09	30/06/11

Note: In addition to Professor Phillips role as Convener he has been appointed a Councillor until 30 June 2015.

* these appointments are made by the Governor-General

these appointments are made by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Red - appointments in red expire over the next six months.

5. STAFFING OVERVIEW

5.1. Department of Veterans' Affairs

The following tables provide an overview of staffing at DVA. The tables is made up of employees of the Department, including employees working in Defence Service Homes Insurance, Office of Australian War Graves, Repatriation Medical Authority, Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service and Veterans' Review Board. It also includes full-time statutory office holders.

- Table 1: total number of employees by actual classification and location
- Table 2: full-time/part-time staff at Canberra and State offices

Table 1. Number of employees by actual classification and location as at 30 June 2010

	NSW	QLD	SA	NT	TAS	VIC	WA	ACT	Total
APS 1	3	2	2		4			7	18
APS 2	42	16	6	1	1	9	6	5	86
APS 3	56	83	37	3	19	66	24	19	307
APS 4	41	58	16	2	7	39	15	51	229
APS 5	113	126	49	5	21	72	35	70	491
APS 6	65	73	27	2	11	74	23	154	429
EL 1	23	40	11		2	27	9	170	282
EL 2	8	20	2	2	2	5	1	78	118
GAPS	1					1		12	14
Legal 1	2					1		7	10
Legal 2						1		2	3
MO 3		2							2
MO 4		1							1
PAO 1								3	3
PAO 2								2	2
PAO 3		1						5	6
SPAO								1	1
SES 1	1	1	1			2	1	14	20
SES 2	1	1				1		5	8
Advocate	2	4	1			6	1		14
Statutory	1							5	6
Total	359	428	152	15	67	304	115	610	2050

Table 2. Full time and part-time employees by sex and location as at 30 June 2010 ⁽¹⁾

	NSW	QLD	SA	NT	TAS	VIC	WA	ACT	Total
Full time male	150	147	64	5	23	144	49	248	830
Full time female	176	238	71	9	31	121	54	293	993
Part-time male	2	2	2		2	9	1	11	29
Part-time female	30	41	15	1	11	30	11	53	192
Total	358	428	152	15	67	304	115	605	2044

1. Does not include statutory officers.

5.2. Australian War Memorial

Staffing Overview as at 30 June 2010

The staff of the Memorial are appointed or employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*.

	Ongoing		Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Non-ongoing		Casual		Total
	Full time		Part time		Full time		Part time				
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
APS Level 1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
APS Level 2	16.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	8.0	5.0	0.6	0.7	0.0	0.0	43.3
APS Level 3	10.0	10.0	0.0	0.6	4.0	10.0	0.0	0.7	0.2	0.6	36.1
APS Level 4	12.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.0
APS Level 5	8.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.0
APS Level 6	16.0	19.0	0.0	2.5	5.0	2.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	44.9
AWM BBB	1.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	3.8
AWM BB 1	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0
AWM BB 2	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
AWM BB 3	9.0	9.0	0.0	0.9	2.0	6.0	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	29.6
AWM BB 4	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
EL 1	16.0	16.0	0.5	0.8	3.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.1
EL 2	5.0	9.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.0
SES	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0
Stat Off Holder	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
Sub-totals	100.0	99.0	0.5	4.9	26.0	32.0	1.8	4.8	0.2	0.6	
TOTALS	199.0		5.4		58.0		6.6		0.8		269.8

Total Ongoing 204.4

Total Non-ongoing 64.6

Total Casual 0.8

Total Females 141.3

Total Males 128.5

6. OUTCOME/OUTPUT STRUCTURE

The Department's outcome/output structure consists of three outcomes and 16 programs. Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 relate to delivering services to the veteran community.

Each outcome contains a series of programs under which the Department's business is grouped. These are used to measure the Department's performance.

Outcome 1: Income Support and Compensation

Maintain and enhance the financial wellbeing and self sufficiency of eligible persons and their dependants through access to income support, compensation, and other support services, including advice and information about entitlements.

Program 1.1 – Veterans' Income Supports and Allowances:

Deliver a means tested income support pension and other allowances to veterans and dependants under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) and related legislation. There are five forms of income support paid under this Program:

- Service Pension (Age) and Invalidity Service Pension, similar to Age and Disability Support pensions paid by Centrelink;
- Partner Service Pension paid to partners of veterans;
- Income Support Supplement, paid to eligible war widow/ers;
- Social Security Age Pension paid to eligible disability pensioners and their partners, paid by DVA as an agent of Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; and
- Defence Force Income Support Allowance.

Income support payments provide a regular source of income for eligible veterans, partners, widow/ers with limited means.

Program 1.2 – Veterans' Disability Support:

Deliver disability pensions, allowances and special purpose assistance to eligible veterans under the VEA and related legislation. The program provides compensation to eligible veterans (including Australian merchant mariners) for the tangible effects of war or defence service. Eligible persons receive disability pensions and ancillary benefits.

Program 1.3 – Assistance to Defence Widow/ers and Dependants:

Deliver war widow/ers and Defence pensions, allowances and special purpose assistance to the dependants of veterans under the VEA and related legislation including the payment of war widow/ers claims for compensation.

Program 1.4 – Assistance and Other Compensation for Veterans and Dependants:

Deliver other allowances and assistance to eligible veterans and dependants under the VEA and related legislation including home support loans, funeral benefits, prisoner of war ex gratia payments on behalf of Commonwealth and allied countries.

The Department also provides assistance to the Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) community through Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) grants and funding the Training and Information Program (TIP) network.

Program 1.5 – Veterans’ Children Education Scheme:

Provide financial assistance to eligible students under the VEA Veterans’ Children Education Scheme (VCES) and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA), Education and Training Scheme (MRCAETS) to assist with their education needs.

Program 1.6 – Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Acts payments – Income Support and Compensation:

Provide incapacity payments, non-economic loss lump sum for injuries resulting in permanent impairment and payments to dependants of deceased employees under the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) and related legislation.

Program 1.7 – Adjustment to the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Acts Liability Provision – Income Support and Compensation:

Provide an updated actuarial assessment of the movement in the liability for income support and compensation under the rehabilitation and compensations Acts.

Outcome 2 – Health Care and Services

Maintain and enhance the physical wellbeing and quality of life of eligible persons and their dependants through health and other care services that promote early intervention, prevention and treatment, including advice and information about health service entitlements.

Program 2.1 – General Medical Consultations and Services:

Provide access to general and specialist medical and dental services to entitled VEA beneficiaries.

Program 2.2 – Veterans’ Hospital Services:

Provide access to hospital services for entitled beneficiaries through arrangements with hospitals in both the private and public sectors.

Program 2.3 – Veterans’ Pharmaceuticals Benefits:

The Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) will provide entitled beneficiaries access to a comprehensive array of pharmaceuticals and wound dressings for the treatment of their health care needs.

Program 2.4 – Veterans’ Community Care and Support:

The Department’s primary objective is to effectively manage community support and residential care programs, including development and review of policy and operational guidelines and procedures, and assessment of program effectiveness.

Veteran community care and support programs include the Veterans’ Home Care program and the Community Nursing Program.

The program also includes the provision of the Australian Government subsidy for entitled veterans and non widow/ers living in residential aged care facilities.

The objective of these programs are to support veterans to remain independent in their homes, and improve their quality of life health. The veteran community is ageing and increasingly requires higher levels of service. The provision of these

services helps to delay entry into residential aged care and maximises independence.

Program 2.5 – Veterans’ Community Care and Support:

Provide a wide range of allied health care services, including counselling and referral services for veterans and their families.

Program 2.6 – Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Acts – Health and other Care Services:

To arrange for the delivery of medical, rehabilitation and other related services under the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) and related legislation. This includes payment for medical treatment, rehabilitation services, attendant care and household services.

Program 2.7 – Adjustment to the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Acts Liability Provision – Health and other Care Service:

To provide an updated actuarial assessment of the movement in the liability for health and other care services under the Rehabilitation and Compensation Acts.

Outcome 3 – Commemorations

Acknowledgement and commemoration of those who served Australia and its allies in wars, conflicts and peace operations through promoting recognition of service and sacrifice, preservation of Australia’s wartime heritage, and official commemorations.

Program 3.1 – War Graves and Commemorations:

Acknowledge and commemorate the service and sacrifice of the men and women who served Australia and its allies in wars, conflicts and peace operations.

Program 3.2 – Gallipoli Related Activities:

Coordinate and manage the delivery of commemorative and related activities at Gallipoli.

7. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

DVA's governance arrangements acknowledge that strong governance establishes the systems, structures, controls and processes to enable the Department to meet its business intent within a business and legal framework that includes rules, regulations, accountability, authority, planning, conformance, and performance measurement and monitoring. It recognises that strong governance involves structures and processes, at the heart of which are people, committed to the following core governance principles, all of which are equally important:

- conformance and accountability;
- transparency/openness;
- integrity;
- stewardship; and
- leadership.

In DVA, corporate governance is achieved through the Department's management and committee structure. The primary committees are as follows:

Executive Management Group

The Executive Management Group (EMG) is concerned with DVA's internal management and determines and evaluates progress on its strategic directions. The EMG supports the Secretary in the discharge of his responsibilities, particularly to manage the Department's business in a way that promotes the efficient, effective and ethical use of Australian Government resources.

The membership of the Executive Management Group comprises the Secretary, Deputy President, General Managers, Deputy Commissioners and senior staff who hold a statutory or advisory function relevant to EMG. EMG will call other senior executive staff to attend in an advisory capacity as required.

Audit & Risk Committee

In 2009 the former Audit Committee was retitled the Audit and Risk Committee to more explicitly recognise that its functions cover risk assessment and integrity issues as well as audit. The Chair is an independent appointment and reports direct to the Secretary.

Staff & Resources Committee

The Staff and Resources Committee was created to provide independent advice and assistance to the EMG on all financial and staffing resourcing issues. The committee continues to focus on maintaining DVA's financial health and providing assurance that DVA's objectives and goals are achieved efficiently and economically. In 2009 the committee was refocussed to give additional emphasis to staff training and development, performance management and the proactive management of the expected continuing decline in staff numbers.

Performance and Change Committee

The Performance and Change Committee broadly covers the structural and operational parts of DVA business, and drives significant change to DVA's service delivery model and policy framework while ensuring that ongoing operations remain at high standards. This includes overseeing programs of change and business re-engineering. The PCC ensures that DVA's governance frameworks are effective and appropriate for DVA's business. This includes ensuring the performance monitoring system is aligned with DVA's

outcomes and the information provided by lines of business is appropriate to meet internal and external reporting requirements.

Information Committee

The Information Committee is primarily responsible for ensuring that DVA's information and communication technology (ICT) investment is governed appropriately, with the result that the Department has a cost-effective, sustainable ICT environment. The Committee is responsible for decisions on strategic sourcing arrangements, monitors ICT performance management, ensures ICT continuity by approving contingency and disaster management strategies and supports the implementation of effective ICT and communication risk management processes.

Early in 2010 the role of the Information Committee was expanded beyond its focus on ICT to include information and communication with the veteran community, the public and DVA staff. The expanded role includes setting direction and prioritisation for external and internal communications, setting internet, intranet policies and strategies, determining social networking strategies and guiding external communications strategies on reputation management.

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8. PLANNING

8.1. Department of Veterans' Affairs

Strategic Plan 2010-15

The Department has developed a five year strategic plan to outline the future directions of the Department. The plan is intended to provide DVA staff with a clear picture of DVA's future and is a foundation for business planning.

The plan outlines the case for change over the next five years, provides guiding principles for change and presents departmental issues and specific strategies for the future grouped into seven themes:

- communicating with our stakeholders;
- policy and program design;
- service delivery;
- organisational structures;
- people;
- information and communication technology; and
- financial sustainability.

The plan will be a living document, updated every six months with new data such as client demographics and staffing numbers and with new information that impacts on strategic directions. Progress against the plan will be monitored and reported to staff.

The Strategic Plan is supported by the Department's Corporate Plan 2010-11, the ICT Strategic Plan 2010-15, the Workforce Strategy 2010-15 and the Strategic Financial Plan 2010-15.

A copy of the DVA Strategic Plan 2010-15 is provided.

Corporate Plan 2010-11

The DVA Corporate Plan 2010-11 supports the DVA Strategic Plan 2010-15. While the Strategic Plan outlines the challenges for DVA over the next five years, the Corporate Plan outlines the direction and corporate priorities for 2010-2011.

The three strategic areas of focus are aligned to the Department's outcomes. These are:

- maintain and enhance the financial wellbeing and self sufficiency of eligible persons and their dependants through access to income support, compensation, and other support services, including advice and information about entitlements;
- maintain and enhance the physical wellbeing and quality of life of eligible persons and their dependants through health and other care services that promote early intervention, prevention and treatment, including advice and information about health service entitlements; and
- acknowledge and commemorate those who served Australia and its allies in wars, conflicts and peace operations through promoting recognition of service and sacrifice, preservation of Australia's wartime heritage, and official commemorations.

A copy of the Corporate Plan 2010-11 is provided.

Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Strategic Plan 2010-15

As DVA's older client group declines, DVA must actively manage the cost and risk of extending the useful life of VEA processing systems for at least 10 more years. In contrast, DVA's services must change to meet expectations of the growing base of younger clients through transforming underpinning business and ICT processing systems.

To meet these challenges, DVA must combine ICT cost-optimisation initiatives with transformation initiatives to better support DVA's future business operations. The ICT Strategic Plan therefore concentrates on three main focus areas:

1. Retaining but rationalising (cost and risk) some legacy processing systems that have a limited business life;
2. Modernising and transforming business processing systems for the ongoing and future client needs; and
3. Disciplined ICT Governance and streamlined programme, project and change management.

Major ICT projects to progress this work include:

- Shared Services arrangement with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide us with major ICT infrastructure and corporate "back office" services;
- Choice and Maintainability in Veterans' Services project to provide online self-service capabilities to the veteran community; and
- Rapid Re-platforming to convert several existing business applications in to a modern, standardised application environment.

A copy of the ICT Strategic Plan 2010-15 is provided.

Workforce Strategy 2010–15

The Workforce Strategy 2010–15 outlines what the Department plans to do to support our staff through the next five years and how DVA will shape the workforce required to deliver a nationally consistent, quality service to our clients. It underpins and will help the Department implement DVA's Strategic Plan 2010–15.

The Strategy includes priority actions to support the achievement of our preferred culture and our own individual capability development, through three directions:

- engage;
- develop; and
- attract and retain.

These three directions are supported by ongoing leadership development and form an integrated approach that aligns our people management practices to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.

A copy of the Workforce Strategy 2010–15 is provided.

Strategic Financial Plan 2010-15

The Strategic Financial Plan (SFP) provides a blueprint setting out the financial direction for DVA both now and into the future. The SFP will assist in meeting the Government's commitment to maintain a separate and appropriately funded Agency.

The SFP provides information and direction on the necessary strategies, risks, opportunities, governance and tools needed to achieve the Government's commitment to maintain a separate and appropriately funded DVA over the next 5 years.

The SFP looks at short, medium and longer term strategies that will assist in improving our financial viability over the coming years. In a climate of continued financial restraint, the sustainability of the Department will be achieved through pursuance of strategies.

The SFP is a rolling plan and is based on information currently available, including funding measures contained within 2010–11 Portfolio Budget Statements. The SFP will be updated bi-annually using the Department's financial forecasting model to include:

- results of the financial statement process;
- portfolio Budget Statements;
- portfolio Additional Estimates Statements; and
- any other events that have a material impact on the Department's financial forecasts.

A copy of the Strategic Financial Plan 2010–15 is provided.

8.2. Australian War Memorial

Corporate Plan 2008-11

The strategic direction and vision for the Memorial over a three year period is provided by the Corporate Plan. The plan includes, among other things, the outcome to be achieved by the Memorial, its vision, corporate priorities and values. The Corporate Plan, approved and issued by the Australian War Memorial Council, provides the framework for drafting the annual Business Plan and its related budget. This identifies the outputs that relate to the priorities: all activities are linked directly to these outputs and the associated performance targets. The Memorial has a number of other plans that focus on particular activities including: audit; business risk; business continuity; budget; fraud control; information technology; workplace diversity; collection development; collection documentation; collection conservation; gallery and site development.

A copy of the Corporate Plan 2008-2011 and Business Plan 2010-2011 are provided.

9. SERVICE CHARTERS

9.1. Department of Veterans' Affairs Service Charter

DVA launched its service charter in December 2006 after revising it to ensure its continued relevance and accurate reflection of the Department's evolving services and changing client populations. The charter sets out the standard of performance that clients can expect of DVA and how they can provide feedback to the department. The Veterans' Satisfaction Survey (VSS) is the Department's prime tool for measuring its performance against the service standards.

A copy of the Service Charter is provided.

9.2. Australian War Memorial Service Charter

The Memorial has a charter which represents a public commitment to deliver high quality services. The Memorial reports on its performance against its Service Charter obligations in its Annual Report. A copy of the Service Charter is provided.

A copy of the Service Charter is provided.

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10. PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

DVA's performance framework gauges performance against the outcomes set for it by the Government, assessing performance against:

- outputs and client service standards using timeliness, quality, quantity and cost indicators; and
- objectives relating to key result areas of effective service standards, partnerships, staff commitment, business performance and prudent financial and risk management.

The monthly performance scorecard, DVA Report Card, is the Department's strategic performance management tool. It is considered by the EMG each month and provides concise financial, operational and strategic information that allows senior management to monitor and oversee DVA activity and plan future directions. The performance measures in the Report Card are focused on matters of national and strategic importance.

The EMG also receives reports from each of the major governance committees. In addition, the Department uses audit services to evaluate its performance across a range of effectiveness, efficiency and financial standards based on risk management principles.

10.1. External Reporting

The Department's external reporting is communicated through two documents – the Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) and the Annual Report. These are the two primary accountability documents used by the Department. The Annual Report and the PBS are the principal formal accountability mechanism between the Government and the Department and from the Department, through Government to the Parliament.

The PBS is the Department's strategic document and is used to provide information on the department's use of its resources against its Outcomes for the next financial year as well as identifying the Budget measures affecting the portfolio. The Department receives these resources from the annual appropriation acts, special appropriations and revenue from other sources. In addition, the PBS identifies the performance indicators and evaluations to be used to assess the Department's performance against the Department's Outcomes. Currently, the measures used across all Outcomes to assess performance are quantity, price and quality.

The Annual Report is used to report the Department's achievements against the strategic goals and outcomes identified in the PBS. The Annual Report is essentially the Department's historic record and provides detail about the Department's performance in relation to the services it provides.

10.2. Fraud Control

The Department manages fraud risks actively through prevention, detection and control as well as by promoting compliance within the veteran and provider communities and by staff. DVA investigates fraud on its programmes and can refer cases for prosecution by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP). These types of cases may attract media attention.

The Department undertakes a regular fraud risk assessment and prepares a Fraud Control Plan biannually. The Department also has a Compliance Framework which sets out the objective of increasing voluntary compliance while using enforcement where there is clear intent to gain from non-compliance.

DVA works closely with Centrelink, Australian Taxation Office, Medicare Australia and the CDPP in fraud and compliance. The most common types of fraud investigated are veterans falsely claiming events occurred on service to obtain disability pension (particularly stressor events leading to acceptance of psychiatric disabilities), veterans in receipt of Special Rate Pensions who have not notified that they are in paid employment, and non-notification by service pensioners of changed financial circumstances. Less common instances include identity fraud and false claiming for payment by health providers for services not rendered. Instances of staff fraud are very minimal. There are no current cases.

10.3. Internal Audit

Internal audit services are currently provided by KPMG. The program covers strategic and operational risk areas including:

- a national performance review program;
- a national IT audit program; and
- State-based review programs.

The current contract will expire on 31 December 2012 with a possible two year extension.

10.4. Risk Management

DVA's *Risk Management Policy* is a key document in the Department's Risk Management Framework. It provides high-level direction on the Department's approach to managing risk, including the principle that risk management is the responsibility of all staff.

Risk Management Strategies builds on DVA's *Risk Management Policy* by providing guidance on implementing a systematic approach to managing risk. The strategies and activities outlined in this document are clearly linked to the objectives of the policy.

The Department regularly reviews its risk profile. The Audit and Risk Committee reviews the results of the exercise and monitors the progress of mitigation actions. The risk data collected during the process is also distributed to business units for use in business planning and provides a key resource for development of the internal audit work program and Fraud Control Plan.

10.5. Protective Security

The protective security function reports to the Staff and Resources Committee. Its objectives are to oversee the development, implementation and review of security policy and procedures; ensure DVA security policy and procedures have due regard to regulatory requirements and developments in Australian Government agencies; and evaluates DVA's operational environment and assess security exposure.

Since 2007, the Department has had a rolling program of improving security at physical premises as well as educating staff on security matters. The Department is adopting Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design techniques in its guidelines for client contact areas. All these measures are designed to provide staff, clients and providers with a safe and secure environment.

11. CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS ON EX SERVICE MATTERS

11.1. Background

On 9 April 2009, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Alan Griffin MP, announced new consultative arrangements for the veteran community. The consultation framework was developed following the Minister's release in February 2008 of a discussion paper seeking the views of the ex-service and defence communities and other stakeholders in relation to the establishment of the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters (PMAC) and on options for a new framework for consultation.

As a consequence, the *Consultation Framework of the Department of Veterans' Affairs* has been developed to provide a strong foundation for the Repatriation Commission, the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission and the Department to work closely with representatives of the ex-service and defence communities.

The framework consists of a high level strategic forum, the ESO Round Table, supported by four specific national forums that focus on program and service delivery areas, and State/Territory level forums to address specific local issues.

The aim is to establish an improved consultation framework that is more appropriate to the changing focus of the ex-service and defence communities as well as strengthening the level of the Department's engagement with these communities through a fresh approach to consultation. The new framework rationalises the subject-specific yet overlapping committees that had been put in place over a number of years.

11.2. Current Position

PMAC considers strategic issues affecting the ex-service and defence communities and reports to the Prime Minister through the Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

An ESO Round Table has been established and is complemented by four national forums that focus on program and service delivery areas, and State and Territory forums to address local and age/stage-of-life matters.

Of these four national forums, the Operational Working Party has a purely operational focus while the other three focus on policy and strategic issues.

Special interest or industry specific groups to address specific matters can be formed if required. No sub-group has been formed to date.

11.3. Prime Ministerial Advisory Council (PMAC)

PMAC's role is to consider and advise the Prime Minister and Government on strategic and complex matters impacting on the ex-service and defence communities. Members are not ESO representatives but individuals drawn from the ex-service and defence communities due to their involvement in and understanding of relevant issues. The Council has met eight times since it was appointed in September 2008.

PMAC's detailed goals are to:

- provide advice on major issues affecting serving and ex-serving members and their families with a view to facilitating a better future for those communities;
- review proposed legislation and its impact on serving and ex-serving members and their families, (where required);
- advise on ex-service matters which impact directly on the responsibilities of other Government departments; and
- consider and assist prioritising of issues raised or referred by the Prime Minister and/or the Minister.

PMAC does not have decision-making powers. While individuals and groups can make representations direct to PMAC in writing and electronically via a website, PMAC's main mode of operation is to respond to matters referred to it for consideration through the Minister.

11.4. ESO Round Table

The Chair of the ESO Round Table (ESORT) is the Chair of the two Commissions and Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

This forum is intended to enhance the capacity of the Repatriation Commission and Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission to address issues of strategic importance to the ex-service and defence communities and assist in setting strategic directions for the medium to long term, including:

- acting as the main forum for dialogue between the Commissions, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the leadership of the ESO and Defence communities;
- providing advice on how government can better facilitate a common approach to veteran and ex-service issues against the current background of ageing members, declining membership and multiple ex-service organisations not necessarily united in their common concerns;
- guiding strategic directions for the portfolio; and
- serving as the main body for consultation under the Legislative Instruments Act 2003 on the development of legislative instruments impacting members of the ex-service and defence communities under:
 - *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA)*;
 - *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA)*;
 - *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (SRCA)*;
 - *Defence Service Homes Act 1918*; and
 - *War Graves Act 1980*.

The Round Table has met once this year and meets again on 23 September. Meetings may be either face-to-face or via teleconference, with face-to-face meetings held in Canberra.

11.5. Current and Former Serving Members of the ADF – Emerging Issues Forum

This forum is chaired by the Commissioner. It:

- provides a mechanism for regular consultation and discussion about emerging issues affecting younger members and their families;
- assists in identifying priority issues that require consideration;
- considers how the Department engages with and provides services to younger members; and
- provides a mechanism to disseminate information about Departmental initiatives and other issues.

Departmental representation is made available as appropriate. The forum has the flexibility to invite additional participants relevant to the areas of focus or specific agenda items (including service specific and non-ESO aligned). For example, membership of this forum could include a representative of the Australian Federal Police (International Deployment Group) or the United Nations Police Association but such an extension has not been considered to date.

The “Emerging Issues Forum” (as it is usually referred to) has met face-to-face twice this year. If required, additional meetings may be via video or telephone conference.

11.6. National Mental Health Forum

This forum is chaired by the Commissioner. It:

- enables broad consultation on mental health issues;
- promotes a network between ex-service organisations, health providers, Department of Defence and DVA that support the adoption of recovery and wellbeing orientations to mental health issues. The focus is on prevention, early intervention, diagnosis, assessment, rehabilitation, treatment and relapse management;
- contributes to and is responsible for raising awareness of mental health issues; and
- provides a sounding board for advice on national mental health programs, services and initiatives, particularly as they affect the veteran community.

Departmental and expert representation is made available as appropriate. Additionally, the National Manager of the VVCS attends all meetings as an ex-officio member. The forum has the flexibility to invite additional participants relevant to the areas of focus or specific agenda items.

The Forum has met face-to-face twice this year. Additional meetings may be held via video or telephone conference, if required.

11.7. Operational Working Party

This forum is chaired by the Executive General Manager in DVA. The Operational Working Party (OWP):

- enhances the ex-service community’s understanding of DVA’s service delivery performance through information sharing and improved communication between DVA and the ex-service community;
- provides a mechanism for ex-service organisations to discuss concerns arising from operational issues; and
- identifies and provides recommendations for improvements in operational policy to promote quality and accountability in service delivery.

For this forum there is a need for broad representation that utilises the knowledge and expertise of individuals including those who are across day-to-day issues and with specific experience such as advocates or pension officers. The forum maintains the flexibility to invite representatives of other organisations or individuals as determined by the areas of focus or specific agenda items.

Departmental representation is made available as appropriate.

The Working Party has met face-to-face twice this year. If required, additional meetings may be held via video or telephone conference.

11.8. National Health, Aged and Community Care Forum

This forum is chaired by the Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission. The forum:

- is a link between ESOs, providers and DVA in the dissemination of information on health, aged and community care issues;
- provides information on the current and future aged care needs of veterans and war widow/ers and other members of the ex-service and defence community including carers;
- is a conduit for developing and proposing better practice residential and community care arrangements for the ex-service community;
- ensures that non ESO aged care service providers are aware of the special commemorative and cultural needs of their ex-service community clients;
- influences future policy directions regarding ageing for the ex-service community;
- monitors developments in the aged care industry and the aged care needs of the ex-service community, including access to residential care; and
- considers how the Department can better support people at home with community support.

Departmental involvement in this forum is available as appropriate but because of its remit this invariably includes the Repatriation Commission's Principal Medical Adviser, Dr Graeme Killer.

It is envisaged that Membership of this forum includes provider representatives from the aged and community care and health sectors (e.g. aged and community and residential care), however due to high level consultation this direction has not been adopted to date.

The forum has the flexibility to invite representatives from other organisations or individuals as determined by the areas of focus or specific agenda items.

The Forum has met face-to-face twice this year. If required, additional meetings may be held via video or telephone conference.

11.9. Deputy Commissioner Forums

The local Deputy Commissioner chairs the forum.

These forums provide a link for ESOs into the Department and are an avenue for the Deputy Commissioners to address ESO leaders and deliver consistent information to the ex-service community.

There is one major forum in each State and Territory.

Regional and local level consultation continues in each State and Territory but consultation at this level is not considered as part of the formal consultative framework.

Relationship between the ESO Round Table and PMAC

There is no formal relationship between PMAC and the ESO Round Table - they operate independently. The Secretary of DVA attends PMAC as a matter of course (subject to availability) and the PMAC Chair attends the ESO Round Table as an observer. Matters may be referred between the two bodies.

Lines of reporting

National Forum Chairs provide a regular report at the ESO Round Table. In regard to the State/Territory forums, the Deputy President provides a regular report on all State and Territory forums at the ESO Round Table. DCs may also refer matters directly to special interest or industry specific groups if they consider it appropriate to do so.

11.10. Family Study Program Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)

The SAC provides advice on scientific matters related to the conduct of the individual Studies being conducted under the Program. The SAC reports to the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Dr Graeme Killer and Ms Peta Stevenson (National Manager Research, Grants and Consultation Co-Ordination) attend these meetings as Departmental Advisors. Secretariat services are provided by the Departmental Family Study Program Team.

Formal meetings generally occur quarterly, with ad-hoc meetings as required. The last meeting was held on 22 July 2010.

11.11. Family Study Consultative Forum

The Consultative Forum for the Vietnam Veterans' Family Study is made up of individuals who have been nominated by a range of the most relevant Ex-service Organisations to represent the interests of participant groups in the Study.

Professor Bryan Rogers attends these meetings in his role as Independent Scientific Advisor to provide scientific advice as required. Dr Graeme Killer and Peta Stevenson attend these meetings as Departmental Advisors. Secretariat services are provided by the Departmental Family Study Program Team.

The last meeting was on 23 March 2010 with the next meeting likely to be held in September and subsequent meetings to occur more frequently as the study progresses.

11.12. Timor-Leste Family Study Consultative Forum

The Consultative Forum for the Timor-Leste Family Study is made up of individuals who have been nominated by Defence and the most relevant Ex-service Organisations to represent the interests of participant groups in the Study.

Professor Bryan Rogers attends these meetings in his role as Independent Scientific Advisor to provide scientific advice as required. Dr Graeme Killer and Peta Stevenson attend these meetings as Departmental Advisors. Secretariat services are provided by the Departmental Family Study Program Team.

The first meeting was 25 February 2010 and subsequent meetings generally will be held quarterly as the study progresses.

11.13. The VVCS National Advisory Committee

The VVCS National Advisory Committee (NAC) provides advice to the Minister on the needs of the veteran community and ways in which these can be addressed through the VVCS, as well as the operations and quality of outcomes delivered by VVCS.

The NAC supports the VVCS to develop programs and service delivery arrangements. The committee also provides guidance to the VVCS on issues and needs within the veteran and defence communities that impact on the delivery of VVCS programs. The NAC meets 3-4 times per year at various VVCS Centres. The current NAC Chair is Dr Tony Austin, AM.

For more information regarding the NAC, please refer to Section 5, Brief 1.2.

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12. DVA LINKS WITH DEFENCE

12.1. Defence/DVA Links Steering Committee

The Defence/DVA Links Steering Committee (DLSC) provides high-level strategic direction and policy development for the two agencies. The DLSC comprises the Deputy Secretary People Strategies and Policy (Department of Defence) and the Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission (co-chairs), the Repatriation Commissioner, Directors General Personnel (Army and Air Force), Director General Navy, DVA General Managers (Services and Support), Principal Medical Advisor (DVA), with other senior managers from Defence and DVA attending as required.

The DLSC's objective is to be a strategic direction setting body, with a specific focus on:

- setting high level joint Defence/DVA strategies and policies;
- identifying significant points of interaction and allocating issues to joint Defence/DVA working groups for action;
- setting the direction and priorities for, and overseeing the work of, joint Defence/DVA working groups (including the Health Consultative Forum); and
- defining future strategic relationships between Defence and DVA.

Recent issues progressed by the DLSC include:

- the delivery of the DVA Transition Support Service to medically separating ADF members and future support for ADF members;
- a keeping in touch program that will enable ongoing links between Defence, DVA and separated ADF members; and
- trialling the use of the ADF Separation Health Examination as the basis of a claim for liability or assessment of classification from DVA and/or ComSuper.

12.2. Defence/DVA Health Consultative Forum (HCF)

The Health Consultative Forum is a quarterly sub-committee reporting to the DLSC, which provides a focus on health issues of mutual interest to Defence and DVA.

The HCF is alternately chaired for Defence by Commander Joint Health, and for DVA by the Principal Medical Adviser.

The Terms of Reference cover joint interests in health policy, alignment and delivery of health services, health research strategy, and occupational and deployment health hazards.

12.3. Lifecycle Advisory Group (LAG)

The Lifecycle Advisory Group (LAG) oversees the Mental Health Lifecycle Package which is a joint Defence / DVA initiative. The package comprises strategic mental health initiatives targeted at each of the four stages of an ADF member's lifecycle (recruitment, service, transition, and resettlement). The DVA projects, being conducted through ACPMH, are the completed projects on the Transition Mental Health and Family Support Collaborative (Townsville), and on Hard To Engage Clients, the ongoing projects on Barriers to Rehabilitation, and on Training of Mental Health Workers, and the new projects being established on a Self-Care Trial, and proposed for a Transition Case Management Pilot.

12.4. Single Access Mechanism (SAM)

The DVA SAM team is the single point of access for DVA staff to request and access Defence records, for the purpose of DVA determining eligibility and compensation claims under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA)*, *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (MRCA)* and *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (SRCA)*. Defence has a SAM team that works in collaboration with the DVA SAM team.

A Service Level Agreement between Defence and DVA was created in December 2007 and outlines the responsibilities and service levels for both the Defence and DVA SAM teams. For the financial year 2009/2010, the DVA SAM team received and finalised more than 18,000 requests for Defence records and information.

12.5. Keeping in Touch Program

Approximately 5000 members separate from the ADF each year. If, at the time of separation, the member has not lodged a claim for compensation or is not accessing other services provided by DVA the ability to remain in contact is removed. If the separated member does not join the ADF Reserve, then Defence and the ADF are also unable to remain in contact.

This loss of contact creates a disconnect between Defence, ADF and DVA and may result in some members not accessing services and benefits to which they may be entitled. An example of this disconnect is lodgement of compensation claims many years post separation. This delay in lodgement leads to longer times taken to process the claim, as the ability to investigate and collect data many years post injury/onset of disease is more complex.

The 'Keeping in Touch' program will create a way for DVA and Defence to stay in touch with separated members and their families, providing support for their care and well-being beyond their time in the ADF, particularly around mental health. It will help these members remain informed and linked to necessary resources, as well as create an opportunity for them to keep in touch with each other after they leave military life.

12.6. Purchasing of Hospital Procedure Centre Services

DVA has contractual arrangements with the majority of private hospital and day procedure centres nation-wide, including mental health facilities, and these arrangements represent value for money for the Commonwealth. The collaborations between DVA and Defence allows Defence access to DVA's negotiated prices with individual facilities, should it choose to use them. DVA also has in place Health Services Arrangements with each State and Territory Government for the provision of hospital services through the public health system.

12.7. JeHDI Project

The purpose of the JeHDI project is to develop and implement an ADF electronic health information system, to be known as the JeHDI System. The System will link health data from recruitment to discharge and subsequent management in other agencies. Broadly the JeHDI system will be required to deliver functionality to provide care delivery enablement, health records management, care delivery management and healthcare capability governance.

JeHDI is an important project for DVA as the electronic availability of Defence health information has potential implications to the way in which DVA currently undertakes its

business. It is also consistent with other aspects of shared business activity already being considered by DVA and Defence.

12.8. Un-Recovered War Casualties

The Navy, Army and Air Force are each responsible for the location, recovery, identification and burial of their war casualties, including the casualties from previous conflicts whose remains were not recovered at the time. There is a high level of public interest in locating remains on the Western Front, in PNG, and more recently in Korea. The Army has established a small Un-recovered War Casualties Unit to cover this activity.

The Office of Australian War Graves responsibility is to provide commemoration of casualties once recovered, and it provides advice and direction to the Services on this matter.

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13. DVA LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES / ORGANISATIONS

13.1. Interdepartmental Working Group for Streamlining Administration of Transitioning and Former ADF Members

The IWG for Streamlining Administration of Transitioning and Former ADF Members was established as a result of the Government's commitment to examine ways of rationalising the administrative burden on veterans and ex-service personnel. It was an election commitment by the incoming government in 2007. The following departments/agencies are represented on the IWG:

- Australian Taxation Office;
- Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA);
- Department of Defence (Defence);
- ComSuper;
- Centrelink;
- Department of Human Services (DHS);
- Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations (DEEWR); and
- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FAHCSIA).

The Secretaries/heads of the above departments/agencies form the Interdepartmental Committee for the IWG and this committee is chaired by the Secretary of DVA. At the working level (IWG), the National Manager of Rehabilitation, Research and Development Branch in DVA chairs the meetings of departmental/agency representatives.

The first meeting of the IWG was in November 2007 and working level meetings of the IWG have been held every six weeks since. A wide range of items have been completed and include the following:

- development of a Transition Handbook that contains details and contacts for whole of government services. The handbook has been updated and the 2010 edition has now been released;
- medical reviews for ComSuper clients who are also DVA TPI pensioners have been exempted by ComSuper from further medical reviews;
- the treatment of ADF allowances by the Australian Taxation Office and Centrelink has been compiled into a table. This table is now being used by staff to provide consistent advice to ADF members and their families. The table is updated on an ongoing basis.

13.2. Heads of Workers' Compensation Authorities

The Secretary, as Chairman of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission, is a member of the Heads of Workers' Compensation Authorities (HWCA).

HWCA is a group comprising the Chief Executives (or their representatives) of the peak bodies responsible for the regulation of workers' compensation arrangements in Australia and New Zealand. HWCA meets three times per year and conducts workshops on cross jurisdictional issues before each meeting. DVA representatives attend the workshops, and the Rehabilitation and Entitlements Policy Group prepares meeting briefs for the Secretary and responds to meeting action items. DVA is also represented on a number of HWCA Working groups examining issues such as biopsychosocial rehabilitation, support for the long term disabled, permanent impairment compensation and management of clients with multi-jurisdictional coverage e.g. part time reservists are also covered by state based workers compensation schemes for their civilian employment.

HWCA's involvement with Safe Work Australia, in the context of the National Disability Strategy and the proposed national disability insurance scheme, keeps DVA abreast of important developments in workers' compensation.

13.3. Department of Human Services

DVA has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Human Services (DHS) for transition to a shared arrangement for the provision of DVA's ICT infrastructure corporate services. The transition planning for the new arrangements has commenced with implementation and cut over of services to occur in 2011.

A shared services solution provides considerable ICT savings for DVA. Partnering with another agency provides DVA with a significant opportunity to meet the strong direction from Government for coordinated procurement and leveraging Commonwealth investments in ICT infrastructure, economies of scale and purchasing power.

13.4. Medicare Australia

Medicare Australia is contracted via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide payment and related services (including the issue of treatment cards) to DVA health providers. A schedule under the MOU also allows Medicare Australia and DVA to collaborate on data analysis and investigations of fraud and non-compliance by providers and clients. Since its inception, the agreement has simplified invoicing arrangements for all DVA providers with more than 56% of all claims now being submitted online.

During June 2010 Medicare Australia began the distribution of new Repatriation Health Cards on behalf of DVA. This issue of cards is part of a four year cycle during which all DVA Repatriation Health Cards are reissued.

13.5. Centrelink

The largest service delivery agency contractor at the federal level is Centrelink, which provides services at 24 sites in NSW, Queensland, Northern Territory and South Australia. The designated Centrelink offices have online access to DVA information, special accommodation arrangements for veterans and staff trained to answer queries from veteran community members. These arrangements are formalised in an MOU with Centrelink.

The MOU is also used as the basis for other arrangements between DVA and Centrelink.

13.6. Department of Health and Ageing

DVA has direct links with the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) across a number of health programs including the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS), the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and prostheses. For instance, when the fees on the MBS increase, this has a flow on effect on the fees that DVA pays for medical services provided to veterans and war widow/widowers.

Current Position

DVA and DoHA have a Business Partnership Agreement for residential aged care which covers income support issues, statistics, financial arrangements and system matters.

DVA engages with DoHA in relation to key health reform areas, including hospitals, community care, aged care, primary care reform and eHealth. DVA also engages with DoHA in exploring opportunities on how DVA's experience and data can assist in the

formation of broader policies, such as the use of pharmaceuticals for patients with multiple or complex health care needs.

As a part of the engagement process with DoHA, DVA is a member of a number of committees, working groups and reference groups on community care and aged care issues which are either chaired by, or include, DoHA as a member. These include:

Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing

This is an advisory body to the Ministerial Conference on Ageing (MCA). Its role is to support the MCA by providing strategic advice on ageing issues and ensuring that policies and programs managed by state and territory governments are focussed on inclusion of older people.

Australian Health Ministers' Conference (AHMC)

The role of AHMC is to provide a forum for Australian Government, State and Territory Governments and the Government of New Zealand to discuss matters of mutual interest and promote a consistent and coordinated national approach to health policy development and implementation.

Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC)

AHMAC advises the Australian Health Ministers' Conference on strategic issues relating to the coordination of health services across the nation and as applicable, with New Zealand and operates as a national forum for planning, information sharing and innovation.

Aged Care Advisory Committee

This Committee is the major forum for consultation, discussion and advice on issues of relevance to aged care. It meets three to four times a year in Canberra.

Aged and Community Care Officials

This governance body will have its inaugural meeting on 8 September 2010, and is the amalgamation of the previous groups of Home and Community Care Officials, Aged Care Assessment Program Officials and Community and Aged Care Officials.

National Disability Strategy

The lead agency for the National Disability Strategy is the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). However, both DVA and DoHA provide support and contribute to the development of the strategy.

National Carer Strategy Joint Working Group

This is a joint working group led by DoHA and FaHCSIA which provides support to, and contributes to, the development of the National Carer strategy.

Building a National Aged Care System

This is a 2010-2011 budget initiative to overhaul how aged care services are provided. DVA is involved in consultations with DoHA in how to implement change.

Veterans' Home Care Reference Group

The Veterans' Home Care (VHC) Reference Group comprises 12 representatives from DVA-contracted VHC assessment agencies, DVA-contracted VHC service providers, a representative from DoHA and a representative from the peak representative body Aged and Community Services Australia. The Group meets twice yearly to discuss the VHC program and the community care issues that impact on this program.

Community Care Principles Working Party

Is responsible for the development of community care planning principles across all community care areas.

13.7. Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Commencing 26 March 1998, DVA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the then Department of Social Security (DSS) and Centrelink to deliver services to veterans on behalf of DSS (now the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs). Under these arrangements, veterans in receipt of a DVA disability pension and an age pension from Centrelink and their partners were given the choice of which agency would pay their age pension.

The rationale for the decision was to provide a 'one-stop shop' access to income support, medical treatment and compensation services to eligible veterans and their partners eliminating the need for them to deal with two separate government agencies. Around 9,000 veterans and their partners chose to transfer from Centrelink to DVA at that time and new claims for age pension can now be lodged at either DVA or Centrelink from disability pensioners and their partners.

In 2010, arrangements were made to allow DVA Special Rate disability pensioners to access Disability Support Pension from Centrelink without requiring additional medical investigation.

13.8. Department of Finance and Deregulation

DVA is in regular contact with the Department of Finance and Deregulation (DoFD) regarding the annual budget process. These activities include the development of New Policy Proposals, preparation of Cabinet submissions, budget adjustments, monthly/annual reporting and submission of the Departments Capital Management Plan.

This principal point of contact between DoFD and DVA is the External Budget Section which forms part of the Resources Group and reports to the Department's Chief Finance Officer.

13.9. Department of the Treasury

DVA has policy responsibility for the Home & Community Care Services for Veterans program. Payments under this program are classified as Specific Purpose Payments under the Federal Financial Relations Framework. Treasury receives the appropriation and make the payments to the States. These amounts are included in Treasury's Portfolio Budget Statements and Financial Statements, not in DVA's.

Estimates appropriated to Treasury for the Home and Community Care Program are:

<i>Home and Community Care Services for Veterans</i>	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	18,349	7,457	7,110	6,770

13.10. Australian Government Actuary

The Australian Government Actuary (AGA) provides actuarial valuations for income streams paid from self managed superannuation funds and life interests in estates.

The AGA also provides instructions used in compensation offsetting calculations under the VEA and separate instructions under the MRCA for the calculation of permanent impairment payments and benefits for wholly dependent partners.

13.11. ComSuper

Commonwealth Superannuation Administration - supplies information by arrangement to confirm the assessable public sector or Defence Force superannuation for pension claim and reassessment purposes under the VEA and for incapacity payments under the SRCA & MRCA.

13.12. Comcare

The CEO of Comcare, Paul O'Connor, is a member of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission.

DVA is represented on the Commonwealth Compensation Liaison Committee (CCLC), chaired by the CEO of Comcare or his deputy. The CCLC meets three times per annum and provides a means of consultation with stakeholders (including licensees under the SRCA and claimants' solicitors) in the management and resolution of disputes under the SRCA before the AAT. It provides a forum for stakeholders at which legal issues arising under the SRCA can be addressed.

DVA liaises with Comcare on matters of operational consistency and policy for the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA). DVA develops its policy in line with Jurisdictional Policy Advice prepared by Comcare.

13.13. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

DEEWR is responsible for legislative administration of the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) under the Administrative Arrangements Order, while DVA administers claims under Part XI of that Act. Any changes that DEEWR proposes for the SRCA therefore impacts on our business. In the event that DVA sees the need for a change to the SRCA it will liaise with DEEWR and Comcare.

Civilian participants in the British nuclear test in Australia have access to compensation under the SRCA-like administrative scheme which is administered by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). Any potential claimants under that scheme are advised by DVA to contact DEEWR's Safety and Compensation Policy Branch.

13.14. Commonwealth Ombudsman

The Commonwealth Ombudsman considers and investigates complaints from people who believe they have been treated unfairly or unreasonably by an Australian Government department or agency, including DVA.

DVA has a well-established relationship with the Ombudsman, which requires the Department to respond to investigations, which usually involves the provision of requested documents and information. The Deputy President is the single point of contact for Ombudsman's enquiries.

Investigations by the Ombudsman are conducted under the *Ombudsman Act 1976*. The Act gives the Ombudsman and delegated staff broad powers to obtain information.

The Ombudsman cannot override the decisions of agencies, nor issue directions to their staff. Disputes are generally resolved through consultation and negotiation, and if necessary, through formal recommendations by the Ombudsman to senior executives within DVA.

If the Department does not agree with the recommendations of the Ombudsman, the Ombudsman may publish a finding of administrative deficiency. Reports of administrative deficiency may also be reported to the Prime Minister or tabled in Parliament.

Number of Ombudsman approaches/investigations relating to DVA

In 2009-10 financial year, the Ombudsman received 167 DVA-related approaches and complaints. Not all approaches to the Ombudsman lead to investigation. The Ombudsman investigated 64 DVA-related approaches last financial year.

DVA usually takes remedial action where an investigation establishes that an error has occurred. This may involve reminding staff of their obligations, further training and improvements to systems and processes to prevent the error happening again.

In the 2009-10 financial year, DVA received three formal notifications of administrative deficiency from the Ombudsman. During the same period, DVA received a further three cases where the Ombudsman advised of the intention to record administrative deficiency. Formal notification for these three other cases has not been received.

13.15. Office of the Privacy Commissioner

The *Privacy Act 1988* applies to DVA as a 'record holder' and makes provision for the privacy of personal information in certain circumstances. DVA has an ongoing relationship with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner (OPC), which requires the Department to report on privacy breaches and respond to investigations by the OPC.

The Department investigated approximately 20 privacy breaches last financial year. The most common situation where a breach may arise is where mail intended for a particular client is erroneously sent to another client. This is usually the result of human error. The number of breaches is quite low, given the number of client and service provider interactions that the Department has per year. DVA takes remedial action when a privacy breach is discovered including reminding staff of their obligations under the Privacy Act and further training and improvements to systems and processes to prevent the breach happening again.

Privacy reforms:

Draft legislative changes, in response to the Australian Law Reform Commission's privacy inquiry, are currently being considered by the Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee with a final reporting date of 1 July 2011.

On 24 June 2010, an exposure draft containing the proposed Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) was released. The APPs will be the cornerstone of a new Privacy Act. The 14 APPs will replace the 11 existing Information Privacy Principles (which apply to Commonwealth agencies) and the 10 existing National Privacy Principles (which apply to certain private sector organisations). Many concepts that exist in the current Privacy Act will be replicated in the new Act.

The proposed APPs have been tabled in the Senate and referred to the Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee. DVA will respond in relation to the further stages as details of these are announced by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner.

13.16. Department of Immigration and Citizenship

DVA liaises with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) to check the departure date of a client who has left Australia or the visa status of a spouse of a client and information for the investigation of overpayments. DIAC also provides information upon request about residency status to assist the processing of pension applications.

13.17. Australian Valuation Office

The Department has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Australian Valuation Office covering valuation services. Title searches and valuations of assets, usually properties other than principal residence, are undertaken for clients who claim income support or whose entitlements are reassessed and who could be subject to the assets test. Valuations are also undertaken to determine the amount of assets held by our clients who are either planning to enter, or who have entered, aged care facilities.

13.18. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) and DVA have a MOU established in the context of a strategic partnership based on sharing expertise and statistical information. The purpose of this strategic partnership is to develop information sources, skills and frameworks conducive to developing and delivering world class health policies and services. Operational objectives include collecting and making use of relevant and reliable statistics and information, which are an essential element for delivering high quality health and aged care services to the Veteran community. AIHW may also be engaged to provide data matching services for research purposes.

13.19. Australian Government Solicitor

The Australian Government Solicitor (AGS) represents the Commonwealth in cases where a current or former Defence member claims civil damages against the Commonwealth (Defence) in respect of injuries sustained during their Defence employment – e.g., Melbourne/Voyager Collision. DVA provides information to the AGS on these cases in line with the privacy legislation.

The AGS is commissioned from time to time to place charges over real estate as security over payments made under the Pension Loans Scheme and for recovery of significant over payments.

The AGS converted to a government business enterprise in 1999 and ceased to be the sole provider of legal services to government agencies. However, the AGS continues to be the sole provider for legislatively defined ‘tied work’ which, broadly, refers to matters relating to the Constitution, Cabinet, national security and public international law. DVA and other agencies are not obliged to seek legal services from AGS in relation to non-tied work. DVA has formed a panel of 18 legal service providers, including AGS – published at <https://www.tenders.gov.au/?event=public.SON.view&SONUID=4795AB7B-094A-A716-0961741C93186ECA>.

13.20. Registrar of Birth, Deaths and Marriages

Verification of deaths, daily and monthly death matching for bereavement and payment purposes. Verification of deaths and related data may also be requested for research purposes.

13.21. Service Delivery Arrangements in Regional Australia

DVA has 15 small offices outside the capital cities providing advice and information services. Additionally, DVA contracts with Federal, State and local organisations for the provision of face-to-face service delivery to members of the veteran and defence communities in regional areas. The level of service provided depends on the veteran populations in the area and local needs. These arrangements provide access to DVA information and services in locations where it is not viable for DVA to establish its own offices. The largest contractor at the federal level is Centrelink. There are DVA Veterans' Information Kiosks in the Centrelink Customer Service Centres of Victor Harbour (SA), Port Pirie (SA), Port Lincoln (SA), Hervey Bay (QLD) and Alice Springs (NT).

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14. CO-OPERATION WITH OVERSEAS VETERANS' AFFAIRS AGENCIES

14.1. Ministerial International Forum

The Ministerial International Forum (MIF) is held approximately every 18 months and provides the opportunity for the relevant Veterans' Affairs Ministers (or their equivalent) in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America to discuss policy and legislative developments, as well as issues of mutual concern affecting veterans. The MIF enables the beneficial exchange of information and ideas to improve policy for veterans.

The last MIF was held in Wellington, New Zealand on 4-5 February 2010. The theme was *Modernising Veterans Legislation: The challenge of developing legislation that bridges the generation gap and meets the needs of an ageing veteran population and the needs of modern day veterans*. The next MIF will be held in late 2011 in Canada.

14.2. Senior Officers International Forum

The Senior Officers International Forum (SIF) supports the Ministerial International Forum and is comprised of senior officials from the veterans' administrations of the four Ministerial International Forum member countries, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America. The SIF focuses on the development of innovative solutions and approaches for service provision to veterans. The relationships established between SIF attendees have been enduring and productive.

The last SIF was held in Wellington, New Zealand on 8-10 February 2010 following the Ministerial International Forum. SIF members progressed discussions on the MIF theme.

The SIF is supported by a Research Working Group (RWG) and Business Innovation Group (BIG). The BIG is concerned with information sharing and possible collaboration on the management of significant issues and opportunities facing veterans' administrations. The RWG enables information sharing on the latest research affecting veterans and on opportunities for collaboration.

14.3. Australian – New Zealand Bilateral Committee

DVA is the lead Australian Government agency for the planning and conduct of Anzac Day commemorations at Gallipoli. It works cooperatively with other Australian Government agencies, New Zealand agencies and Turkish authorities, and through the DVA-contracted event provider.

The Secretary DVA co-chairs the Committee. Representatives from the Departments of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence and the Attorney General's Department and from Veterans' Affairs New Zealand, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry of Defence and New Zealand Police participate in the Committee. Meetings are held three to four times a year.

14.4. Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC)

The CWGC is responsible for the commemoration of the war dead of Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom from World War I and World War II. Australia has been a member of the Commission since its formation in 1917.

The CWGC cares for Australia's World war dead across the world except in Australia and PNG. Here the OAWG maintains the CWGC war graves and war cemeteries under an Agreement with the Commission signed in 1975. Australia pays an annual contribution to the CWGC based on the percentage of commemorations under its care that are Australian (6%). The OAWG has strong and constant links with the Commission.

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15. ANNUAL CALENDAR OF KEY FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF KEY ACTIVITIES *												
	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Budget Process Operational Rules released			*									
Prime Minister writes to portfolio ministers requesting submission of NPP's				*								
Preparation of Cabinet Submissions for ERC							→					
Expenditure Review Committee (ERC) sits									*			
Cabinet sits										*		
Preparation of budget documents									→			
Presentation of Budget / publication of Budget documents											*	
Preparation and publication of Annual Report	→								→		¹	→
Certificate of Compliance released			→									
Final Budget Outcome			*									
Senate Estimates				*							*	
Additional Estimates					→							
Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook				→								

* Please note - this timetable is based on current conventions and a standard budget year and may change with a change in Government.

¹ Financial Statements Hard Close

16. APPROPRIATIONS

16.1. Department of Veterans' Affairs

	2010-2011 \$000s	2011-2012 \$000s	2012-2013 \$000s	2013-2014 \$000s
Administered Special Appropriation				
Funeral Benefits	16,550	16,350	16,150	16,000
Act of Grace	111	110	111	114
PNG Pensions	76	76	76	76
POW (J)	25	25	25	25
POW (E)	50	50	50	50
Compensation Payments for BCAL Veterans (spec app)	2,070	1,967	1,868	1,775
Compensation for certain AFP personnel with O/S service	1,138	1,146	1,154	1,183
Interest Subsidy (Westpac)	3,000	2,600	2,200	2,200
War & Defence Widows Pension	1,876,990	1,836,312	1,818,060	1,803,017
Permanent Impairment (SRCA)	30,510	24,252	22,838	23,387
Benefits for Eligible Dependants (SRCA)	7,983	7,974	7,997	8,325
Incapacity Payments (SRCA)	62,946	61,354	60,022	62,483
Medical Examinations etc (SRCA)	3,373	3,276	3,195	3,259
Death Payments (SRCA)	1,730	1,728	1,733	1,803
Other Income Support and Compensation Related Payments (annual app) (SRCA)	2,866	2,803	2,754	2,828
Permanent Impairment (MRCA)	40,880	53,224	60,601	62,055
Income Maintenance Payments (MRCA)	33,625	41,012	49,092	51,105
Benefits for Eligible Dependants (MRCA)	1,140	1,139	1,143	1,190
Medical Examinations, fares etc (MRCA)	3,134	3,709	3,706	3,779
VCES (Veterans' Children Education Scheme)	18,301	18,156	18,036	18,560
Disability Pensions	1,488,364	1,465,758	1,450,058	1,436,133
Loss of Earnings	131	131	133	135
VAS (Vehicle Assistance Scheme)	738	742	748	748
Income Support Pensions	2,929,215	2,856,846	2,767,982	2,686,718
Telephone & Other Allowances	38,287	37,500	36,863	35,873
LMO Consultations	153,771	174,600	168,304	176,958
Specialist Consultations	144,281	142,399	142,085	143,634
Medical Services	545,330	556,785	568,765	581,568
Dental	110,177	116,902	122,929	129,392
Medical Services (SRCA)	22,161	21,410	20,714	21,130
Rehabilitation Services (SRCA)	6,802	6,194	5,270	5,375
Other Services (special app) (SRCA)	7,494	7,502	7,516	7,539
Medical Services (MRCA)	7,342	10,560	13,894	14,172
Rehabilitation Services (MRCA)	4,190	4,734	5,746	5,861
Other Services (special app) (MRCA)	736	736	738	740
Residential Care	1,157,919	1,230,505	1,301,955	1,386,721
Community Nursing	121,253	135,090	144,248	146,827
Veterans' Home Care	92,869	96,688	96,324	98,339
In Home Respite	23,784	24,274	25,220	25,749
Home Help	3	3	3	3
Carer & Volunteer Support	1,373	1,391	1,402	1,437
Travel for Treatment	163,089	174,756	184,598	188,474
Subsistence	5,960	5,933	5,974	6,123
Veterans and Veterans' Families Counselling Service (V&VFCS)	26,351	24,305	20,663	20,188
Nuclear Test Health Care Payments	20	70	69	81
Non-Institutional Care - Services	124,723	128,731	140,117	141,643
Non-Institutional Care - Products	80,825	83,816	88,297	89,691
Rehabilitation Appliances	130,128	128,252	128,504	126,869
Health Treatment for BCAL Veterans (spec app)	8,308	8,016	8,031	8,055
Health care & rehab for certain AFP personnel with O/S service	348	351	353	363
Public Hospitals	789,252	775,376	774,358	774,622
Private Hospitals	902,895	874,643	860,712	848,081
Psych	1	1	1	1
NH (POW)	2,826	2,887	2,987	3,009
Pharmaceutical Services	450,405	422,334	386,987	369,616
Total Special Appropriation	11,647,849	11,597,484	11,553,359	11,545,082

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
	\$000s	\$000s	\$000s	\$000s
Administered Appropriation Bill 1				
Other Income Support and Compensation Related Payments (annual app) (MRCA)	1,303	1,666	1,786	1,836
Ex Gratia Payments	-	-	-	-
Compensation and Legal Expenses - Outcome 1	1,562	1,560	1,560	1,606
Defective Administration	74	73	73	76
Payments to ESOs (BEST)	6,736	4,670	4,669	4,805
Veterans' Access to Community Information	862	889	887	914
Other Income Support and Compensation Related Payments (special app) (SRCA)	1,441	1,445	1,450	1,484
Recreation Transport Allowance	3,076	2,786	2,529	2,276
Medical Examinations, fares and expenses	10,572	10,337	10,119	9,917
Repayments of Maintenance Deductions	67	67	67	67
Grants-In-Aid (GIA)	145	145	145	145
Community Care Grants	1,712	1,741	1,740	1,795
Joint Venture (JV Grants)	1,331	1,354	1,354	1,396
JV (Day Clubs)	465	472	472	488
JV (Home Maintenance)	339	339	355	366
Counselling Support & Children's Assistance	5,371	3,624	2,845	2,309
Compensation and Legal Expenses - outcome 2	54	54	54	55
Veterans' Employment & Training (VETS)	571	574	579	579
Health & Medical Research	2,401	2,441	2,442	2,518
Gallipoli Related Activities	6,887	2,992	3,012	3,098
War Graves Care & Maintenance	19,512	13,655	13,758	14,149
OAWG Refurbishment, Reconstruction & Relocation	977	980	987	1,015
Compensation and Legal Expenses - outcome 3	5	5	5	5
Veterans' Commemorative Activities	6,595	6,546	6,569	4,312
Other Income Support and Compensation Related Payments (special app) (MRCA)	26	26	27	28
Total Appropriation Bill 1	72,084	58,441	57,484	55,239
Departmental Appropriation				
Bill 1 - Operating	286,952	281,598	286,871	290,877
Bill 1 - Departmental Capital Budget	15,747	13,864	17,864	17,864
Bill 2 - Capital	26,920	4,187	760	760
Total Departmental Appropriation	329,619	285,785	287,631	309,501
Total Appropriations	12,033,805	12,033,805	12,033,805	11,891,958

16.2. Australian War Memorial

	2010-11	Forward Estimate 2011-12	Forward Estimate 2012-13	Forward Estimate 2013-14
ANNUAL APPROPRIATION (Bill No. 1) Outcome 1	30,858	30,485	30,265	30,376
ANNUAL APPROPRIATION (Bill No. 2) Equity Injections:				
Collection Development & Acquisition Budget	7,209	7,209	7,209	7,209
Total departmental appropriations	38,067	37,694	37,474	37,585

Australian War Memorial Financial Summary As At 30 June 2010

The primary funding source for the Memorial is Government appropriation. In 2010-11 this totals \$38m (including capital funding) and represents approximately 82% of total funds for this financial year. The remaining 18%, totalling \$8.2m is raised by activities such as the shop, e-business, donations, sponsorships and other funding opportunities. The total available funding for 2010-11 is therefore \$46.2m.

The majority of these funds are required for “tied” or “fixed” activities over which there is little or no discretion. The table below gives an indication of how funds are used:

Activity	\$
Asset replacement funding:	
- Equipment	1.05m
- Software	0.53m
- Buildings	3.13m
- Collection	7.21m
- Exhibitions	2.22m
Salary costs	18.44m
Overheads (gas, electricity, water and sewerage)	2.13m
Building Maintenance and Works	1.74m
Cleaning and Security	1.42m
IT Hardware and lease costs	1.38m
Education, Visitor Services and Ceremonies	0.95m
Travelling Exhibitions	0.80m
Communication and Marketing	0.57m
Collection preservation, storage and administration	0.34m
Exhibitions development and maintenance	0.31m
Governance (Council and audit)	0.30m
Property Insurance	0.28m
Other (e.g. Military History; Corporate support activities)	3.40m
Total	46.20m

Current Position

	2010-11
Estimated budget allocation between Program Components:	Budget Year
	('000)
1.1.1 - Commemorative Ceremonies	509
1.1.2 - National Memorial & Grounds	5,197
1.1.3 - National Collection	24,490
1.1.4 - Exhibitions	5,535
1.1.5 - Interpretive Services	2,735
1.1.6 - Promotion & Community Services	2,258
1.1.7 - Research & Information Dissemination	3,138
1.1.8 - Visitor Services	2,415
Total program expenses	46,276

	2009-10	2010-11
Average Staffing level (number)	281	274

as per 2010-11 Portfolio Budget Statements

Contact Officer

Rhonda Adler

Assistant Director, Branch Head Corporate Services

Australian War Memorial

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17. DISCRETIONARY GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE

The Department administers the following discretionary grants programs:

- Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Grants Program.
- Training and Information Program (TIP).
- *Saluting Their Service* Commemorations Grants Program.
- Veteran & Community Grants.
- Overseas Privately Constructed Memorial Restoration Program.

The purpose of each of the grants programs, eligibility criteria, funding available and the current procedures for processing grant applications are set out below.

The Current Practice for Processing Grants:

- Funding packages containing a summary of applications and recommendations is prepared by the ACT office and forwarded to you for your decision.
- Following the decision, letters to the successful applicants, Government and non-Government Members of Parliament (MP) are despatched by the Department with your scanned signature.
- Letters to unsuccessful applicants are signed by the National Manager, Operations Support.
- Government MP letters are despatched five working days prior to the other letters to give the MP the opportunity to personally advise the organisation of the grant. A 'dummy' cheque is available should the MP wish to be involved in a grant presentation.
- Shell Government MP media releases and speech notes are provided by the Department's media section and sent electronically by your office.
- State media releases are also drafted and distributed in consultation with your media adviser.
- Grantees enter into an agreement accepting the grant and associated terms and conditions. Grant payments are made when this agreement has been signed and returned to the Department.
- Grantees are required to acquit the grant following completion of the project, usually within twelve months.

Ministerial Requirements

The previous Government introduced a number of grants-specific process, decision-making and reporting requirements applying to agencies and Ministers. These mandatory requirements are in addition to the general requirements of the Financial Management Act (FMA) and FMA Regulations.

The Government agreed that where a Minister exercises the role of a financial approver relating to a grant, they will not approve the grant without first receiving agency advice on the merits of the proposed grant.

The Government also agreed that decisions involving the award of grants within a Minister's own electorate (House of Representatives members only) will remain within the remit of the responsible Minister or other approver in the portfolio or agency concerned.

However:

- each time a Minister (House of Representatives members only) approves a grant in respect to their own electorate, the Minister will write to the Finance Minister advising the Finance Minister of the details; and
- where there is correspondence to the relevant grant recipient, a copy of this letter is sufficient. If there is no correspondence, Ministers will write to the Finance Minister advising of the decision as soon as practicable after it is made.

The Government further agreed that decisions involving the award of grants which the relevant agency has recommended be rejected, will remain within the remit of the responsible Minister. However:

- ministers will report annually to the Finance Minister on all instances where they have decided to approve a particular grant which the relevant agency has recommended be rejected. The report will include a brief statement of reasons (i.e. the basis of the approval for each grant);
- the report will be provided to the Finance Minister by 31 March each year for the preceding calendar year; and
- if a decision also relates to a Minister's own electorate (House of Representatives members only) the Minister will also include this information when writing to the Finance Minister.

17.1. Building Excellence in Support and Training Grants Program

The Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) grants program provides funding to ex-service organisations (ESOs) to assist veterans, their dependants and past and present members of the Australian Defence Force and their families in accessing pensions, compensation and welfare services.

BEST aims to promote access to a range of welfare services and to improve the quality of pension and compensation claims.

Funding is available for:

- employment of advocates, pensions officers and welfare practitioners and support staff by ESOs;
- computer software and hardware; and
- consumables and ongoing running costs.

BEST includes a small allocation of funds (\$145,000) to assist national ex-service organisations with their administration costs in recognition of the services that these organisations provide to the ex-service community.

There is one funding round each financial year and applications for funding for the following financial year must be lodged from 15 January to 28 February in the relevant state location of DVA.

Funding of \$4.187m was available for the 2010-11 BEST funding round. There were 231 applications requesting funding of \$8.032m and 184 grants totalling \$3.917m were approved.

17.2. Training and Information Program

The Training and Information Program (TIP) was first funded in the 1994-95 Budget. The role of TIP is to train and resource ESO practitioners. The aim of TIP is provide the practitioners with support in planning and delivery of training to mainly Pension and Welfare Officers. Training is contained in approximately 20 modules from welfare information to training on the specific pieces of legislation administered by the Department.

Each State and Territory Office has a TIP Coordinator who assists in the overall process. A TIP Chairperson (a member of an ESO) works with the TIP Coordinator and the state Training Consultative Group in the identification of training needs, delivery of training and other education programs.

17.3. *Saluting Their Service* Commemorations Grants Program

The *Saluting Their Service* (STS) commemorations grants program supports projects and activities that directly commemorate Australia's servicemen and women who served in wars, conflicts and peace operations.

Grants of up to \$3,000 are available for projects such as the preservation and display of wartime memorabilia, commemoration of significant wartime anniversaries and unit reunions, school initiatives and publishing unit histories where none exists.

Grants of up to \$4,000 are available to enable communities to refurbish or update existing memorials, construct new war memorials and repair vandalised memorials and upgrade security measures. Community, ex-service organisations, local government authorities and other bodies such as museums and schools may apply for grants.

Grant applications are assessed for eligibility against the guidelines and considered by the Commemorations Grants Advisory Committee (CGAC) which makes recommendations to you, the Minister, for decision. The CGAC is chaired by the Repatriation Commissioner and members include the National Secretary of the Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL), a representative from the Australian Local Government Association, the Australian War Memorial and DVA Staff.

Funding rounds are ongoing and the CGAC meets approximately two monthly. Urgent applications may be considered out of session.

There have been 401 grants approved to date in 2009-2010 totalling \$1.33m.

17.4. Veteran and Community Grants

Veteran and Community (V&C) grants provide seeding funds for projects that support a healthy, quality lifestyle for members of the veteran community and assist them to remain living independently in their own homes. Grants also fund initiatives that reduce social isolation, support carers and improve access to community care services.

V&C grants assist projects that will become sustainable and financially viable or for one off projects that have an ongoing health benefit for the veteran community. Funding is not provided for recurrent or ongoing financial assistance. Projects funded through V&C grants include:

- purchase of a vehicle, trailer and mowing equipment for a volunteer lawn mowing service;
- construction of an access ramp and toilets for the disabled at an ex-service organisation facility;

- purchase of equipment and furniture to establish a Day Club or Men's Shed; and
- employment of a project officer and venue hire to set up strength training or exercise classes.

Ex-service and community organisations, veteran representative groups and private organisations that can demonstrate a contribution to the welfare of members of the veteran community are eligible to apply for grants.

There are three funding rounds each year in July, October and March and applications must be lodged with the relevant state location of DVA.

Funding of \$3.508m is available in 2010-11 for V&C Grants.

17.5. Overseas Privately Constructed Memorial Restoration Program Grants

The Overseas Privately Constructed Memorial Restoration grants program commenced in 2007-08 and aims to assist Australian veterans and other individuals in the restoration and preservation of existing military unit and battle memorials, which have been constructed overseas.

Whilst OAWG is not responsible for these memorials, the Government has made funding available to assist with their restoration and preservation in the form of this grant. Any individuals, non-commercial organisations or community groups, who have an interest in seeing a particular pre-existing overseas memorial restored, can apply for the funding with their particular project plan.

To be eligible memorials must be directly commemorative of Australia's military involvement, including wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations. Memorials must be pre-existing, on public display and have been constructed by Australian Veterans, Veterans' associations or other associations that maintain existing memorials overseas recognising the contributions of servicemen and women. Funding will be granted for restoration only. Ongoing routine maintenance is not eligible.

Submissions from interested parties are forwarded to OAWG for assessment and all applications are considered by the grants committee prior to recommendations being provided to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. Approximately \$200,000 is available annually.

18. GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AAO	Administrative Arrangements Order
AAT	Administrative Appeals Tribunal
ACPMH	Australian Centre for Post-traumatic Mental Health
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AGS	Australian Government Solicitor
AIPSS	ADF Integrated People Support Strategy
AMA	Australian Medical Association
APPVA	Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association
ASASA	Australian Special Air Service Association
AVADSC	Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council
AWM	Australian War Memorial
BAC	Business Architecture Committee
BEST	Building Excellence in Support and Training
CDDA	Compensation for Detriment caused by Defective Administration
CDPP	Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions
CLU	Client Liaison Unit
CMVH	Centre for Military and Veterans' Health
CNIAC	Community Nursing Industry Advisory Committee
CPB	Curam Project Board
CWGC	Commonwealth War Graves Commission
DFISA	Defence Force Income Support Allowance
DFWA	Defence Force Welfare Association'
DLO	Departmental Liaison Officer
DMIS	Departmental Management Information System
DSH	Defence Service Homes
DSHI	Defence Service Homes Insurance
DHOAS	Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme
DSRS	Deseal-reseal
DVA	Department of Veterans' Affairs
EDA	Extreme disablement adjustment
EMG	Executive Management Group
ESO	Ex-service organisation
GARP	Guide to the Assessment of Rates of Veterans' Pensions
HACC	Home and Community Care
HCF	Defence/DVA Health Consultative Forum
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
ICTSG	Information, Communication and Technology Solutions Group
IDC	Inter-departmental Committee
ISS	Income Support Supplement
LIA	<i>Legislative Instruments Act 2003</i>
LMO	Local Medical Officer
MCRS	Military Compensation and Rehabilitation Service
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRCA	<i>Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004</i>
MRCC	Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission
MTAWE	Male Total Average Weekly Earnings
NATMOC	National Treatment Monitoring Committee
NERTAC	National Ex-Service Round Table on Aged Care
NVMHW	National Veterans' Health and Well-being Forum

OAWG	Office of Australian War Graves
PSA	<i>Public Service Act 1999</i>
PBS	Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statements
PMAC	Prime Ministerial Advisory Council
POW	Prisoner of War
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RACGP	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
RAP	Rehabilitation Appliances Program
RFT	Request for Tender
RGH	Repatriation General Hospital
RMA	Repatriation Medical Authority
RPBS	Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme
RSL	Returned and Services League of Australia
SAM	Single Access Mechanism
SIF	Senior International Forum
SMRC	Specialist Medical Review Council
SOP	Statements of Principles
SRCA	<i>Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988</i>
TIP	Training and Information Program
TPI	Totally and Permanently Incapacitated
VAN	Veterans' Affairs Network
VCES	Veterans' Children Education Scheme
VEA	<i>Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986</i>
VHC	Veterans' Home Care
VRB	Veterans' Review Board
VSS	Veterans' Satisfaction Survey
VVAA	Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia
VVCS	Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service
VVFA	Vietnam Veterans' Federation of Australia
VVRS	Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation Scheme

Section 2:
Matters for the
Minister's Attention
in the First Few
Weeks

SECTION 2 – MATTERS FOR MINISTER'S ATTENTION IN THE FIRST FEW WEEKS

1. ISSUES REQUIRING MINISTER'S DECISION	
Department of Veterans' Affairs	
1.1 Offsetting - Implications of the Smith Case	4
1.2 F-111 Health Scheme Authorisations	6
1.3 Veterans' Review Board (VRB) Appointments	7
1.4 Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) Reappointment	8
1.5 Special Medical Review Council (SMRC) Appointments	9
1.6 Approving Recommendations for <i>Saluting Their Service</i> Grants from the Grants Advisory Committee August Meeting	11
1.7 Building Excellence in Support & Training (BEST) Grants:	
1.7.1. Round 12 - Second Pass Assessment	12
1.7.2. Round 12 – Requests for Review of Decision	13
1.8 Veteran and Community (V & C) Grants	
1.8.1. July 2010 Round	15
1.8.2. Variation Requests for Previous Grants	17
1.9 Treatment Principles – Amendment Vaccinations for Overseas Travel	18
1.10 Senate Order for Departmental & Agency Contracts	19
1.11 Invitation to Minister for Veterans' Affairs to attend VIP Seoul Recapture Ceremony	20
Australian War Memorial	
1.12 Council of the Australian War Memorial Membership Vacancies	21
1.13 Appointment of the Director of the Australian War Memorial	23
2. ISSUES –DECISION NOT REQUIRED AT THIS STAGE	
Department of Veterans' Affairs	
2.1. Client Liaison Unit	24
2.2. Mental Health Issues	26
- Independent Study into Suicide in the Ex-Service Community (Dunt Suicide Study)	
- Operation <i>Life</i>	
- ADF/DVA Mental Health Lifecycle Initiatives 2006-07 Budget Measure Update – Improving Access to Preventative and Community Orientated Mental Health Care for the Veteran Community, Particularly Younger Veterans	
- Mental Health 06/07 Budget measure update	
2.3 Review of Military Compensation Arrangements	30
2.4 Special Rate Pension and Indexation Arrangements	33
2.5 Compulsory Retirement Age – Change for Military Super Payment Recipients	36
2.6 High Profile Case Management Protocol	38
2.7 Preventable Admissions and Improved Community Care Program	40
2.8 Future Transition Support Arrangements	42

Section 2: Matters for the Minister's Attention

2.9 Out of Pocket Pharmaceutical Costs for War Caused Disabilities	44
2.10 Ambulance – Implementation of Capitation Model for Payments to States/Territories	46
2.11 Health Reform – National Health & Hospitals Network	47
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2.13 ANAO Tabling of Direct Source Audit	50
2.14 Family Study Program (FSP) –Appointment of a New Member to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)	51
2.15 Summary of Correspondence Received in Caretaker Period	52
Australian War Memorial	
2.16 Australian War Memorial Funding	54
3. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS THAT MAY REQUIRE MINISTER'S ATTENDANCE	
3.1. RSL National Congress, Dubbo NSW - 14-15 September 2010	56
3.2. The Next Meeting of the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary to be held Thursday 30 September and Conclusion of the Public Submission Process	57
3.3. 60th anniversary of the Beginning of the Korean War Service and Reception - 23 October 2010	58
3.4. Papua New Guinea's Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel Day 3 November	59
3.5. Outstanding Invitations to Events	61

1. ISSUES REQUIRING MINISTER'S DECISION

1.1. Offsetting - Implications of the Smith Case

Background

Compensation offsetting is a statutory provision which was intended to ensure that a person is not compensated twice under separate schemes for the same incapacity. The intent of the offsetting arrangements has been understood and supported for nearly 40 years across numerous Governments.

To date, application of the legislation has required the delegate to consider whether the incapacity for which pension is paid and the incapacity for which compensation is paid are the same and, if so, offset the amounts. Consideration has not been given to whether the injury or disease from which the incapacity arises is the same in both cases.

Whilst the majority of offsetting cases arise from dual eligibility under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA), compensation from other sources including third party insurance claims and common law cases may also be subject to these provisions.

A recent Full Federal Court (FFC) decision questioned the application of the compensation offsetting provisions

[REDACTED]

Current Position

In December 2009, the FFC in *The Commonwealth of Australia v Smith* [2009] FCAFC 175 (*Smith*), considered the operation of compensation offsetting in section 30C of the VEA. Mr Smith's case involved a common law action against Defence and a VEA compensation claim.

The FFC interpreted section 30C as requiring consideration of the injury or disease for which pension and compensation is paid, as opposed to the incapacity arising from the injury or disease. In the particular circumstances of the matter, the FFC found that the injury or disease for which compensation and pension are paid need to be the same.

The initial response to this decision was to seek external legal advice on its implications.

[REDACTED]

In response to concerns raised by clients and the inconvenience caused by delaying payments, the Repatriation Commission has decided that, pending clarification [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the processing of offsetting claims is to continue utilising existing policies and procedures relying on a limited application of the *Smith* decision to other cases [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

The application of offsetting to compensation entitlements is a sensitive topic in the veteran community, often cited by those affected as an erosion of veteran's benefits. A complaint was also lodged by a veteran with the Commonwealth Ombudsman about the recent hold-up with payments [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Critical Dates

Nil. However, it is critical that this matter be given urgent consideration to ensure legislative amendment is progressed without delay.

Contact Officer

Adam Luckhurst
National Manager, Rehabilitation and Entitlements Policy
Support Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6677 or [REDACTED]

1.2. F-111 Health Scheme Authorisations

Background

The Scheme was established by the Australian Government in August 2005 to provide a one-off payment to an eligible participant in the F-111 Deseal/Reseal Program in recognition of the difficulties the person suffered in the environment in which he or she worked.

On 18 May 2010, the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs signed an instrument authorising DVA employees of certain classification to determine claims for payment under the Scheme.

Current Position

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs (and as Minister for Defence Personnel) has authorised certain Department employees to determine claims for payment under the F-111 Ex-Gratia Payment Scheme (the Scheme).

Action Required

It is recommended you sign a new instrument of authorisation to remove any doubt about the lawfulness of making payments under the Scheme because of a change of Minister. A brief for this purpose will be prepared within the next week.

Critical Dates

As soon as possible, to ensure claims can be determined for payment.

Contact Officer

Carolyn Spiers
National Manager, Business Integrity & Legal Services Group
Executive Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6003 or [REDACTED]

Graham Fleming
Director, Legislation & Instruments Section
Executive Division
Phone: (02) 6289 4747

1.3. Veterans' Review Board (VRB) Appointments

Background

In anticipation of the expiry of the period of appointment for all current Veterans' Review Board (VRB) members (with the exception of the Principal Member) on 30 September 2009 and it was proposed that a recruitment process be run prior to that date. However, with the resignation of the then Principal Member in mid 2009 it was necessary to postpone this process until the selection and appointment of a new Principal Member. Existing appointments were consequently extended to enable a full recruitment process to be undertaken by the new Principal Member. These extended appointments are now set to expire on 31 December 2010 and any further extension will require Cabinet consideration.

In addition, the release in mid 2009 of the *Independent Study Into Suicide in the Ex-Service Community* by Professor David Dunt, which contained a recommendation that mental health clinicians should sit on VRB hearings involving veterans with mental health-related conditions, led to the then Minister deciding that all VRB member positions (with the exception of the Principal Member) should be advertised to test the market for clinical mental health expertise.

In accordance with the *Merit-based Selection of APS Agency Heads and APS Statutory Office Holders* guidelines a national merit based selection process was undertaken to identify candidates for appointment. The positions were advertised in the national press in April 2010 and the then Minister wrote to national ex-service organisations seeking nominations for members with service backgrounds to be appointed.

Current Position

The selection process has been completed.

Action Required

You will be provided separately with a brief recommending candidates for appointment. Subject to your agreement these appointments will then be sent to the Prime Minister or Cabinet for consideration.

Critical Dates

15 September 2010 – to allow sufficient time for the statutory appointment process to be completed prior to the expiry of current appointments.

Contact Officer

For matters relating to the VRB - Doug Humphreys, Principal Member of the VRB,
Phone: (02) 9213 8603 or [REDACTED]

For matters relating to Statutory Appointments - Richard Magor, National Manager,
Parliamentary and Communication
Phone: (02) 6289 6041 or [REDACTED]

1.4. Repatriation Medical Authority Reappointment

Background

Professor Wilson is Executive Dean, Faculty of Health, Queensland University of Technology. In addition to his academic career, Professor Wilson has worked in senior public sector roles across state government jurisdictions. He was first appointed to the Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) on 1 October 2002 for a period of three years and was subsequently reappointed for five years on 1 October 2005. Professor Wilson is also appointed to act in the Office of Chairperson of the RMA during any period the Chairperson is absent or the office vacant.

Professor Wilson has indicated that he is available for reappointment for a further term of up to five years. The Chair of the RMA and the Secretary support the reappointment of Professor Wilson.

Shortly, a brief recommending Professor Wilson's reappointment will be sent to you for your consideration.

Current Position

Professor Andrew Wilson is a current member of the RMA. His appointment expires on 30 September 2010.

Action Required

Nil at this time. Shortly, a brief recommending Professor Wilson's reappointment will be sent to you for your consideration.

Critical Dates

Professor Wilson's current appointment expires on 30 September 2010.

Contact Officer

For matters relating to the RMA prior to 23 September 2010 - Ray Jessop, Acting Registrar
Phone: (07) 3815 9403

For matters relating to the RMA from 23 September 2010 onwards - Paul Murdoch, Registrar
Phone: (07) 3815 9403 or [REDACTED]

For matters relating to statutory appointments - Richard Magor, National Manager, Parliamentary and Communication
Phone: (02) 6289 6041 or [REDACTED]

1.5. Specialist Medical Review Council (SMRC) Appointments

Background

The SMRC is an independent statutory body established under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA). Its role is to review the contents of Statement of Principles (SOPs) issued by the Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) and to review RMA decisions not to issue a SOP.

When reviewing SOPs or decisions of the RMA, the SMRC considers all material that was available to the RMA when it created or subsequently amended a SOP, and any material that the applicant for review wants to make available. There are no legal questions decided by the SMRC and no lawyers may address the SMRC. The SMRC decides whether it would have made a different decision than the RMA on the basis of the same medical-scientific evidence.

The SMRC does not have a fixed number of Councillors. The number of councillors is determined by the number of reviews being managed by the Council at any one time.

The SMRC currently has 16 councillors, including the Convener, participating in five reviews. Of these councillors, four have been appointed by the Convener as Presiding Councillors to chair specific review councils.

One of the members is to be appointed as Convener. The Convener presides at meetings of an SMRC Review Council constituted for the purposes of a review. He provides, as a peer, guidance and counsel to the councillors appointed and selected on the basis of their medical science expertise in the injury, disease or death in the SOPs subject to review. The Convener provides the continuity and guidance necessary for the Council to ensure consistency of decision making.

Current Position

Associate Professor Jonathan Phillips is the Convener of the SMRC. He was appointed Convener in 2002 and his current term expires on 30 June 2012. He is a past-President of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) and was the Chairman of the Committee of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC). He is Associate Professor at the University of New South Wales, Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Adelaide, Associate Professor at James Cook University, and a past Director of Mental Health in South Australia.

It is anticipated that the Convener will be making recommendations to you for the appointment of up to an additional 12 councillors for three new reviews. These reviews are in respect of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Macular Degeneration which the Council plans to commence in October 2010, and for Malignant Neoplasm of the Brain which is due to be commenced in June 2011.

The members of the SMRC are appointed by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs for a period of up to five years. Members are eminent medical practitioners and medical scientists, with at least 10 years experience and whose names are submitted by the professional colleges. When appointing Councillors the Minister must have regard to

the branches of medical science expertise that are necessary for deciding matters referred to the Review Council.

Action Required

Nil at this stage. A detailed briefing on the proposed appointments will be provided on 20 September 2010.

Critical Dates

The next review is of the PTSD Statement Of Principles. Appointment of councillors needs to be made in the short term to ensure the review commences as proposed in October 2010.

Contact Officer

Adam Luckhurst

National Manager, Rehabilitation & Entitlements Policy Group

Support Division

Phone: (02) 6289 6677 or [REDACTED]

DRAFT

1.6. Approving recommendations for *Saluting Their Service* Commemorations Grants from the Grants Advisory Committee August meeting

Background

Grant applications are considered approximately every two months by the Commonwealth Grants Advisory Committee (CGAC) which makes recommendations to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. The CGAC is chaired by the Repatriation Commissioner. Its membership includes representatives of the Returned & Services League of Australia, Australian Local Government Association, Australian War Memorial and Department of Veterans' Affairs.

After each meeting of the CGAC, the Department prepares a schedule for your decision, which provides details on each application and includes the recommendations of the CGAC. The Minister makes the decision on each application. Following your decision, the Department prepares approval letters for your electronic signature, and non-approval letters for the signature of the National Manager, Commemorations.

Current Position

The Department received 143 applications for the meeting of the CGAC which was held on 27 August 2010.

The CGAC has recommended funding totalling \$302,323.00 (GST incl) for 129 of the projects and has not recommended funding for 14 projects.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Late September 2010 to advise all applicants. The next committee meeting will be held in late October 2010.

Contact Officer

Tim Evans
National Manager, Commemorations Group
Executive Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6068 or [REDACTED]

1.7.1. Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Grants Round 12 - Second Pass Assessment

Background

The then Minister decided to divide the BEST Round 12 (2010/11 financial year) into two assessment stages to ensure the Department distributed approved funds as quickly as possible to provide certainty for ESOs in being able to meet basic operating costs.

The two assessment stages are:

- Stage 1 - the initial assessment stage. Recommendations for Round 12 have now been approved. Grant agreements were issued in late June and, where signed agreements have been returned, payment has been made; and
- Stage 2 - a Second Pass Assessment of Round 12 applications with certain revisions of the criteria and priorities initially applied.

Second Pass Assessment

The items being considered under the Second Pass Assessment are the same as those under consideration when an ESO requests a review of the initial decision. (Please refer to Section 2, Brief 1.7.2)

Current Position

As part of BEST Round 12, a formal two-stage assessment process for all applications was introduced.

Action Required

Nil at this time. A brief seeking your approval of the Second Pass Assessments for Round 12 will be provided before the end of September 2010.

Critical Dates

The Second Pass Assessments are expected to be completed by mid-September 2010 and ESOs will be seeking release of any approved funds as soon as possible after decision.

Contact Officers

Barry Telford
General Manger, Support Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6000 or [REDACTED]

David Hollaway
Director, Grants and Bursaries
Support Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6131 or [REDACTED]

1.7.2. Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Grants – Round 12 - Requests for Review of Decision

Background

As part of the BEST Round 12 funding round, major Ex-service organisations and Round 11 BEST applicants were advised that a new process would be introduced to enable all applicants to request a review of the original Round 12 grant decision.

Review Mechanism

The review framework was that:

- a review option be offered to all Round 12 applicants, whether or not they were granted any funds;
- a review request must provide clear justification for reconsideration of funding on the basis that there would be a severe reduction in the service provided to the area currently supported if funding was not provided and that the service need could not be met by any other means, including a nearby ESO or DVA office;
- a review request must be lodged within two months from the date of notification. This would ensure that funds payable from a successful review could be paid and utilised well within the applicable grant period.

This two month request for review period finished at the end of August 2010.

The items to be considered under a request for a Review of Decision are the same as those applying to the Second Pass Assessment (refer to Section 2, Brief 1.7.1) and include:

- capital equipment:
 - computers and printers/scanners where the applicant has not received any items since before Round 9 (2007-08 financial year);
 - miscellaneous equipment including answering machines, external hard drives, surge protectors, fax machines and digital recorders;
 - office equipment including filing cabinets for new case files, excluding chairs and desks; and
- where an increase in the amount of travel, running costs and consumables above the previous year(s) was requested but not funded, an increase of CPI (2.9 per cent), equivalent to that used for salary increases, be applied.

Ten requests for Review of Decision have been received. One was approved prior to the Government adopting a Caretaker role and that request was approved by the then Minister and funding has been provided.

Action Required

A recommendation on the Requests for Review will be provided for your consideration in a separate brief.

Critical Dates

The brief will be sent for your consideration late September 2010. An early decision will enable ESOs to know their financial position and take action at the earliest possible time if the decision is to not approve funding.

Contact Officer

Barry Telford

General Manger, Support Division

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David Hollaway

Director, Grants and Bursaries

Support Division

Phone: (02) 6289 6131 or [REDACTED]

DRAFT

1.8.1. Veteran and Community Grants Program July 2010 Round

Background

Veteran and Community (V&C) grants provide seeding funds for projects that support a healthy, quality lifestyle for DVA clients and assist them to remain living independently in their own homes. Grants also fund initiatives that reduce social isolation, support carers and improve access to community care services.

V&C grants assist projects that will become sustainable and financially viable, or one-off projects that have an ongoing health benefit for the veteran community. Funding is not provided for recurrent or ongoing financial assistance such as for regular equipment replacement. Projects funded through V&C grants include:

- purchase of a vehicle, trailer and mowing equipment for a volunteer lawn mowing service;
- construction of an access ramp and toilets for the disabled at an ex-service organisation facility;
- purchase of equipment and furniture to establish a Day Club or Men's Shed; and
- employment of a project officer and venue hire to set up strength training or exercise classes.

The current policy is to have three funding rounds each year, in July, October and March. Applications must be lodged with the applicant's home State or Territory DVA office.

Funding of \$3.508 million is allocated in 2010-11 for V&C Grants.

Current Position

The Department is finalising the July 2010 Round of assessments. Eighty-one (81) V&C grant applications were submitted. The value of those grants that will be recommended to you for approval is \$1.227 million.

Action Required

Nil at this time. A brief will be provided to you once the new electorate information is confirmed by the Australian Electorate Commission, before the end of September 2010.

Critical Date

As soon as possible to enable projects to proceed as proposed.

Contact Officer:

Barry Telford
General Manger, Support Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6000 or [REDACTED]

David Hollaway
Director, Grants and Bursaries
Support Division

Phone: (02) 6289 6131 or [REDACTED]

DRAFT

1.8.2. Veterans and Community Grant Variation Requests

Background

Veteran and Community (V&C) grants provide seeding funds for projects that support a healthy, quality lifestyle for DVA clients and assist them to remain living independently in their own homes. Grants also fund initiatives that reduce social isolation, support carers and improve access to community care services.

Grants can be varied with your approval. The most common types of grant variations are:

- Extension of time to complete the project:
 - Building works delayed (by builder, council planning approval, heritage approval)
 - Lower than expected participation by the target group, for example, a project may have been approved for 10 bus trips, but only enough people to conduct 8 trips participated.
- New Direction for the Project
 - Change in ESO Executive (possible change in the aim or outcome of the project by the new Executive)
- Excess funds remaining:
 - Items costing less than quoted
 - Items for which funding is sought are no longer available so an alternative must be chosen
 - Items were donated rather than purchased
 - Lower than expected participation rate in the project
 - Building works plans were changed (e.g. by Council).

Current Position

There are currently two requests for V&C grants variations from previous rounds that require decision.

Action Required

Nil at this time. Details on the V&C grant variations will be provided in a separate brief before the end of September 2010.

Critical Date

As soon as possible. An early decision on the variation will enable grant recipients to take action at the earliest possible time.

Contact Officer

Barry Telford
General Manger, Support Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6000 or [REDACTED]

David Hollaway
Director, Grants and Bursaries
Support Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6131 or [REDACTED]

1.9. Treatment Principles – Amendment – Vaccinations for Overseas Travel

Background

A DVA Gold Card holder is eligible for treatment of all injuries and diseases. Eligibility for the card derives from a range of circumstances including disability pension at or above 100% of the General Rate, Prisoner-of-War status, having qualifying service and being 70 years of age or more, or being an eligible dependant. A DVA White Card holder is only eligible for treatment of injuries or diseases that have been accepted as service-related.

The Treatment Principles are set out in a legislative instrument made under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA). They describe the circumstances in which the Repatriation Commission may accept financial responsibility for the treatment of veterans and their dependants.

If a Gold Card holder contracts a disease (service related or not), DVA must pay for its treatment regardless of cost. Accordingly, apart from the health benefits for the card holder, prevention of a disease can be very cost-effective. To this end, the Repatriation Commission has proposed that Gold Card holders intending to travel overseas be eligible for appropriate vaccinations at DVA expense.

Current Position

The Repatriation Commission has made an instrument under the VEA which will enable DVA to pay for vaccinations for Gold Card holders who propose to travel overseas.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs is required to authorise the legislative instrument for this purpose.

Action Required

Nil at this time. A brief for this purpose will be provided within the next week.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

Carolyn Spiers
National Manager, Business Integrity & Legal Services Group
Executive Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6003 or [REDACTED]

Graham Fleming
Director, Legislation & Instruments Section
Executive Division
Phone: (02) 6289 4747

1.10. Senate Order for Departmental & Agency Contracts

Background

The Senate Order requires each department or agency to publish on its internet site within two months of the end of each calendar and financial year, an indexed list of contracts entered into over the previous 12 months. Departments are also required to advise the President of the Senate in writing of compliance with the Order and ensure this letter is tabled.

The Order requires that departments publish details of each contract estimated to be valued over \$100,000 that has been entered into and/or performed in the previous twelve months, including the provider details, any confidentiality provisions, the amount of consideration and the start and end date where available.

DVA has compiled a list of contracts meeting the terms of the Senate Order as amended at 31 August 2010.

The list covers all agencies under the DVA portfolio excluding the Australian War Memorial which is not an FMA agency and hence not subject to the Order. The list can be located on the DVA website at –

<http://www.dva.gov.au/aboutDVA/statrep/Pages/SenateOrderonGovernmentAgencyContracts.aspx>

Current Position

While the information was posted on the DVA website, the Senate Order also requires the Minister to send notification to the President of the Senate confirming compliance with the Order.

The notification was not sent during the Caretaker period.

Action Required

Nil at this time. A brief will be provided to you in the first week to ensure the President of the Senate is formally advised of DVA compliance with the Order.

Critical Dates

As soon as possible.

Contact Officer

Carolyn Spiers
National Manager, Business Integrity and Legal Services
Executive Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6003 or [REDACTED]

1.11. Invitation to Minister for Veterans' Affairs to attend VIP Seoul Recapture Ceremony

Background

On 10 May 2010 the Republic of Korea Minister for Patriots and Veterans Affairs, Mr Yang Kim, extended an invitation to the Hon Alan Griffin MP to attend the 60th anniversary of the Recapture of Seoul ceremony in Korea on 28 September 2010.

The ceremony program runs from 26 to 30 September, with the government of the Republic of Korea providing the Minister's airfare and hotel accommodation for the four nights.

A full itinerary for the program will be forwarded by Post when available.

Current Position

The Defence Attaché at the Australian Embassy in Seoul has advised that the Ministry for Patriots and Veterans Affairs (MPVA) has been made aware of the situation arising from Australia's recent election and the uncertainty of Ministerial representation at the ceremony in Seoul. The Department also notes that 28 September 2010 is the first sitting day for the 43rd Parliament. Should you decline the invitation, the MPVA will extend an invitation to the Ambassador.

Action Required

Advice as to whether the Minister will seek approval to attend the ceremony in Seoul.

Critical Dates

No later than 16 September 2010, so that Post can respond to the MPVA.

Contact Officer

Tim Evans
National Manager
Commemorations
(02) 6289 6068 or [REDACTED]

1.12 Council of the Australian War Memorial membership vacancies

Current Position

The Council of the Australian War Memorial currently consists of 12 members. That is, nine members and three *ex officio* members.

Appointments to the Council of the Australian War Memorial rest with the Minister, although advice can be sought from the Council Chairman. They are considered "significant" and are effected via instrument of the Governor-General. Accordingly, they can not be made during the caretaker period.

It is considered important that Council consists of members with a broad range of skills and expertise to ensure the effective governance of the Memorial. Currently there are members with backgrounds in finance or business management, the military, the arts and politics. The financial management experience that members of the Finance, Audit and Compliance committee have is considered to have been crucial to the past decade of successful development at the Memorial.

While the Council currently consists of nine members which meets the minimum membership required by the *Australian War Memorial Act (1980)*, three appointments will expire by 15 November 2010.

Unless the membership of Council is replenished, any Council meetings beyond this date would be held in breach of the Act, Part III S10 of which specifies that:

"The Council shall consist of [the three Service Chiefs ex-officio] and, not less than 8 nor more than 10 other members."

Accordingly, the filling of Council vacancies is a matter of urgency. The Council Chairman will provide you with a list of possible names for your consideration, and will discuss with you at the earliest opportunity.

The following Council appointments will expire by 15 November 2010:

Name	Current Term expires
Mr K Stokes AC	18 August 2010
Mr K R Peacock AM Chair of Finance, Audit & Compliance Committee	12 November 2010
Rear Admiral C S Harrington AM RAN (Ret'd)	14 November 2010

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for 11 and 12 November 2010.

Background

The Council of the Australian War Memorial is responsible under the Act for the overall conduct and control of the affairs of the Memorial, and policy with respect to any matter that is determined or endorsed by Council. Currently, Council meets quarterly, usually in March, May, August and November of each year. Due to budget constraints, Council has recommended reducing the number of meetings per year to three. However, the Finance, Audit and Compliance committee would continue to meet quarterly.

Section 2: Issues Requiring Minister's Decision

The Memorial functions as a statutory authority and is accountable to government through the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. Overall responsibility for Memorial management rests with the AWM Council. The Director of the Australian War Memorial is responsible to Council.

The current Council membership is:

Name	Current Term	
	From	To
Mr L A Carlyon	30 April 2009	30 April 2012
Major General W J Crews AO (Ret'd)	30 April 2009	30 April 2011
General P J Cosgrove AC MC (Ret'd) Chairman of Council	1 June 2009	1 June 2012
Rear Admiral Ken Doolan AO RAN (Ret'd)	12 November 2009	11 November 2012
The Hon. Graham Edwards	3 June 2010	2 June 2013
Rear Admiral C S Harrington AM RAN (Ret'd)	14 November 2007	14 November 2010
Mr Ken Peacock AM Chair of Finance, Audit & Compliance Committee	25 February 2010	12 November 2010
Ms W Sharpe	25 May 2008	24 May 2011
Mr K Stokes AC	19 August 2007	18 August 2010

Ex-officio members:

Lieutenant General K Gillespie AO DSC CSM Chief of Army	28 June 2008	28 June 2008
Vice Admiral R Crane AO CSM RAN Chief of Navy	4 July 2008	4 July 2008
Air Vice-Marshal M Binskin AO Chief of Air Force	4 July 2008	4 July 2008

Although not a Council member, the position of the Director is a statutory appointment. The current director is S. N. Gower AO AO(Mil), and his term expires on 28 February 2011.

Action Required

For information, and action as appropriate.

Critical Dates

December 2010.

Contact Officer

Rhonda Adler
Assistant Director
Branch Head Corporate Services
Phone: 02 6243 4233
Mobile number: [REDACTED]

1.13. Appointment of the Director of the Australian War Memorial

Current Position

The current Director of the Australian War Memorial, S. N. Gower AO AO(Mil), was appointed to the position on 1 March 1996. He has presided over a period of development over almost 15 years. The Director has been reappointed several times, the last one being on 1 March 2009. His term is due to end in March 2011.

The Minister is responsible for making a recommendation to Cabinet to ensure that the position of Director of the Australian War Memorial is suitably filled providing continuity of management for the Memorial.

The Council Chairman is available to give advice to the Minister on this recommendation.

Background

The Director is the CEO of the Memorial and is responsible for the management of its affairs under the general direction of Council. The Director is appointed by the Governor-General under section 20 of the *Australian War Memorial Act 1980* and has the powers of an agency head under the *Public Service Act 1999*.

Action Required

For information, a brief on the expiry of the current Director's appointment will be provided to you in Mid September.

Contact Officer

Rhonda Adler
Assistant Director
Branch Head Corporate Services
Phone: 02 6243 4233,
Mobile: [REDACTED]

2. ISSUES –DECISION NOT REQUIRED AT THIS STAGE

2.1. Client Liaison Unit

Background

A priority for DVA is to ensure its clients have access to the benefits and support services to which they are entitled. Often clients present with mental health issues and behaviours that include threats to harm themselves or others, aggression, frustration, anger, and sometimes complete withdrawal from a system that provides for their support. A significant initiative to assist DVA in achieving this goal was the establishment in 2007 of the Client Liaison Unit (CLU). The objective of this unit is to reach acceptable outcomes from the perspective of both those who are difficult or present with highly complex and/or multiple needs, and the Department.

The CLU is a national unit located in Melbourne and reports to the Deputy Commissioner, Victoria.

The Unit's objectives are to:

- Act as a single point of contact for difficult and vulnerable clients and to manage these clients' interactions with business groups;
- assist clients to interact with the Department during periods of increased needs; and
- identify shortcomings in business practices and procedures in order to promote improvements in service delivery.

These aims are achieved by:

- managing and maintaining relationships between clients and DVA through regular contact / communication;
- developing professional relationships with staff at all levels to enable a partnership approach to the resolution of escalated complaints;
- being proactive in responding to the needs of clients who are brought to the attention of the CLU through the referral protocols;
- developing a network of contacts beyond the Department to assist the client; and
- providing feedback to managers to assist with staff development and improvements to existing procedures.

The work of the CLU has highlighted the need for the development of standard protocols across DVA for dealing with security incidents and these have now been introduced. It has also highlighted the benefits of closer working relationships between business groups within DVA. The end result is a reduction in stress and confusion within the client population, and greater certainty and improved time management for staff in the business areas, as their direct contact with the most demanding of client is minimised.

The CLU was awarded an "Honourable Mention" in the 2008 ComCover Excellence In Risk Management Awards.

Successive reviews of DVA's handling of difficult or at risk clients (e.g. McLeod, Doogan) have included favourable references to the Client Liaison Unit. The Unit has also attracted favourable feedback from the Ombudsman's Office and various

Ex-Service Organisation Advocates.

Current Position

The CLU has functioned successfully for the past three years. Earlier this year, CLU Management initiated an internal review to assess the ongoing appropriateness of the Units practices and procedures – e.g. referral protocol, assessment arrangements, recording and reporting systems, care plans and exit strategies. The review sought to ensure the CLU continues to provide an effective service to those clients identified as requiring extra support. A draft report of the review has now been presented for management consideration. The report also included a set of recommendations for the Executive to consider.

The CLU is currently managing 49 active complex clients and monitoring a further 400 clients. The Unit has 6 highly trained staff able to handle difficult and at risk clients and have become a valuable resource for DVA. Its activities were recently broadened when the unit was tasked with conducting a telephone survey of widows of personnel who recently died in service with a view to obtaining feedback on the young widows' needs to inform DVA's service delivery in this area.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

The report on the review of the CLU will be finalised by end September 2010.

Contact Officer

Roger Siverson
Assistant Director VAN and CLU
Phone: (03) 9284 6503

Mike O'Meara
Deputy Commissioner, VIC
Phone: (03) 9284 6455 or [REDACTED]

2.2. Mental Health Issues

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) mental health services are provided across the three sectors of health delivery - primary (self-help, awareness and prevention), secondary (general practitioners, allied health providers) and tertiary (hospital based).

In addition to direct treatment and mental health services to veterans, DVA undertakes a number of initiatives at the population level in order to increase mental health literacy for veterans, providers and DVA staff around mental health issues experienced by veterans and current and former service personnel. Details of these initiatives are below.

1. INDEPENDENT STUDY INTO SUICIDE IN THE EX-SERVICE COMMUNITY (DUNT SUICIDE STUDY)

Background

The report into the Suicide Study and the Government response was released by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs on 4 May 2009 and are available at www.dva.gov.au. The Government accepted the 21 recommendations with one accepted in principle. \$9.5m was allocated over four years to implement the recommendations from this study. The Suicide Study was a 2007 government election commitment and has been welcomed by the Ex-service Community (ESO) community.

Current Position

As at 30 June 2010, six of 21 recommendations have been fully implemented and a further three recommendations have elements finalised. Work continues in progressing the remaining recommendations.

There are currently three requests for tenders (RFT) being finalised to implement the following recommendations:

- 2.1 – Review of Operation Life workshop – see below for details.
- 6.4 – Provision of psychological and psychiatric advice. The RFT closed on 26 July 2010 and the evaluation of tender responses is currently underway. It is anticipated that contracts will be finalised by early September 2010.
- 9.4 – Review of PTSD programs. The RFT is currently being finalised. The review is due to report in December 2010.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Date

Nil.

2. OPERATION Life

Background

Operation *Life* provides a framework for action to prevent suicide and promote mental health and resilience across the veteran community. Its major components include a choice of suicide prevention workshops and services for the veteran community. The then Government provided \$1 million over four years in the 2008-09 Budget to increase the number and type of suicide awareness training workshops.

In response to ESO concerns expressed about the level of, and resourcing for, the promotion of the suicide awareness workshops, qualitative research will be undertaken to identify the most effective way to promote Operation *Life* workshops. This research will also assess how to best deliver online suicide awareness training and resources.

Current Position

Two Operation *Life* research projects are currently being implemented:

- a review of Operation Life workshops conducted since May 2009 to ensure they are evidenced based (in response to a recommendation from the Suicide Study); and
- qualitative research to identify the most effective way to promote Operation Life workshops to the veteran community and assess how best to deliver online suicide awareness training and resources.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

- 14 October 2010 - scheduled meeting of Operation Life state and territory ESO Representative Group.
- December 2010 – outcomes of the research projects due.

3. ADF/DVA MENTAL HEALTH LIFECYCLE INITIATIVES

Background

The ADF/DVA Mental Health Lifecycle Package was a 2007 government election commitment. The package introduces a range of strategic mental health initiatives to improve and integrate mental health across an ADF member's lifecycle: entry, service, transition, into civilian life, and rehabilitation if required. The Government allocated \$2.2 million in the 2008-09 Budget to undertake these initiatives.

Current Position

Work is progressing on implementing the initiatives under the ADF/DVA Mental Health Lifecycle Package. Two projects under phase 1 have been completed:

- Transition Mental Health and Family Collaborative (Townsville); and
- Improved Treatment Options for Hard to Engage Clients.

The remaining phase 1 project – Study into Barriers to Rehabilitation – is currently underway and is expected to be finalised by the end of September 2010.

Learnings from the Phase 1 projects will inform the Phase 2 projects which include:

- Self-Care Trial for Hard to Reach Ex-Service Members (commenced in July 2010); and
- Transition (Complex) Case Management Pilot (currently being scoped).

The Lifecycle projects will assist DVA in improving mental health services to the ex-service community, including improved ways of facilitating access to treatment for those veterans who are not currently accessing treatment.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Completion dates:

- Study into Barriers to Rehabilitation – end of September 2010;
- Self-Care Trial for Hard to Reach Ex-Service Members – June 2012; and
- Transition (Complex) Case Management pilot – June 2012.

4. 2006-07 BUDGET MEASURE UPDATE – IMPROVING ACCESS TO PREVENTATIVE AND COMMUNITY – ORIENTED MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR THE VETERAN COMMUNITY, PARTICULARLY YOUNGER VETERANS

Background

In the 2006-07 budget, the former Government provided \$19.72 million to support DVA's mental health initiatives to strengthen community based care available to veterans, expand services available through VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) and facilitate linkages with the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) mental health initiatives.

Four key priorities have been developed to implement the 2006-07 budget measure. These are:

- achieve a greater level of shared mental health care coordination between general practitioners, the VVCS, allied health providers and the ADF;
- develop, implement and review communication, awareness, and education strategies;
- expand the range of mental health care resources available to veterans and serving ADF members at the self-care, primary and secondary care levels; and
- expand the range of mental health care services available to veterans and serving ADF members at the primary and secondary care levels.

Current Position

DVA is continuing to progress initiatives in the area of clinician education under the shared mental health care coordination framework. The priority over the next 12 to 18 months is to enhance and build on existing partnerships with other Government Agencies (including the Departments of Health and Ageing and Defence) and mental health providers by establishing linkages through training and education packages which raise the awareness of veteran mental health issues.

The final stage of a three year evaluation of DVA mental health initiatives being conducted by the Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health ACPMH over 2007-2010 is currently underway.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

October 2010 – final report of the evaluation of DVA Mental Health initiatives due.
June 2012 – initiatives developed under the budget measure will be finalised.

Contact Officer

Gail Yapp

National Manager, Community and Aged Care Policy Group

Phone: (02) 6289 6712 or Mobile: [REDACTED]

DRAFT

2.3. Review of Military Compensation Arrangements

Background

The Review of Military Compensation Arrangements was a 2007 election commitment. The Review is focused on the operation to date of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA), which provides compensation coverage for military service after 1 July 2004. The Review also considering the interaction between the MRCA and previous veterans' and military compensation legislation and any anomalies that exist.

On 8 April 2009, the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs announced the commencement of the Review and released the terms of reference.

Submissions to the Review were requested by 30 June 2009, though extensions were granted upon request. Sixty-eight submissions were received, 52 of which raised matters that were within the scope of the Review. In scope submissions have been published on the DVA website where permission was granted by the author.

A Steering Committee was appointed by the former Minister in July 2010 and is chaired by the Secretary of DVA in his capacity as Chair of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC).

The Steering Committee also includes senior executives from the Departments of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; Defence; Finance and Deregulation; and Treasury. Peter Sutherland, a visiting fellow from the Australian National University College of Law and an expert in military compensation, also sits as a member of the Steering Committee.

At the end of August 2010, the Steering Committee had met 27 times and will continue to meet regularly until the completion of the Review.

The Steering Committee has consulted nationally, holding public meetings and visiting Defence bases in each state and territory capital city, as well as Townsville.

Mr Frank Benfield and Mr Kenneth Kipping AM, two members of the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-service Matters (PMAC), have been attending meetings of the Steering Committee and consultative meetings around the country as observers. Other PMAC members were invited to attend public meetings held in their home state.

The Committee met on five occasions with a subcommittee nominated by the Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) Round Table. The ESO Round Table subcommittee is comprised of Mr John Hodges of the Returned and Services League of Australia, Mr Michael Quinn of the Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Veterans' Association of Australia, Mr Tim McCombe OAM of the Vietnam Veterans' Federation of Australia and Mr Ian Wills of Legacy.

The Department has been keeping PMAC and the ESO Round Table informed of the progress of the Review and the issues being considered.

Current Position

The Steering Committee has been working through the issues raised and is now drafting its report for presentation to the Government [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Action Required

For information. A fuller oral briefing can be provided on the issues before the Review. There is a strong expectation that the report will be made public, and you will need to consider when and how to release it.

Critical Dates

The Review was initially expected to report by 31 March 2010 but due to the complexity of the issues raised and the extensive consultation undertaken, is now expected [REDACTED]

Contact Officer

Neil Bayles

National Manager Clarke/MRCA Reviews

Support Division

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DRAFT

2.4. Special Rate Pension and Indexation Arrangements

Background

Broadly speaking, DVA pays income support pensions and compensation pensions, and a range of supplementary allowances.

Examples of income support pensions include Service Pension¹, Income Support Supplement and Age Pension. These payments are for those who have limited or no income from other sources such as wages, superannuation or investments. Income support pensions are means tested, meaning that the rate of payment varies according to the person's income and assets. They are also generally taxable.

An example of a compensation pension is the Disability Pension. Compensation pensions are not means tested and generally not taxable. The rate of payment varies according to the person's level of disability. Because there is no means test, Disability Pension can be paid to people receiving any level of other income. Disability pensioners may also receive an income support pension if their income (Disability Pension is not counted as income (except for rent assistance) and assets are below the relevant limits.

As at June 2010, around 63,000 out of 122,000 disability pensioners (less than 52%) were also receiving Service Pension. Service Pension entitlement is generally lost when income exceeds \$1,548.20 p/f (single) or \$2,370.00 p/f (partnered combined). The majority of disability pensioners not receiving Service Pension are likely to have income above these limits.

The Disability Pension is paid at different rates including Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA), Intermediate Rate and the highest rate which is the Special Rate of Disability Pension which is paid to recipients who are totally and permanently incapacitated (TPI).

Both Service Pension and Disability Pension are indexed in March and September each year. The way in which these pensions are indexed has changed over time and there have been several one-off increases in pension rates.

The single Service Pension maximum basic rate is indexed using the Consumer Price Index (CPI), Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE) and the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI). The pension MBR factor is derived from the increase in the single service pension maximum basic rate.

Prior to 1997 Service Pensions were indexed to CPI only. From 1997 Service Pensions were also benchmarked to MTAWE (the greater increase of the two methods was applied). From September 2009 PBLCI was also included (the greater increase of the three methods was applied). The Income Support Supplement commenced being indexed in September 2002 and is indexed using the pension MBR factor.

Prior to March 2004 all Disability Pension rates were indexed using CPI only.

¹ Service Pension is paid at the same rate as Age Pension but currently available five years earlier to eligible persons.

From March 2004, part of the Special Rate, Intermediate Rate and EDA rates of the Disability Pension were indexed using the pension MBR factor and the remainder were indexed using CPI only.

In July 2007, the Special Rate of the Disability Pension increased by a one-off amount of \$50.00 per fortnight and the Intermediate Rate by \$25.00 per fortnight. These adjustments were to bring these rates up to what they would have been had they also been indexed with MTAWA since September 1997 (as per Service Pensions).

From March 2008, the entire range of Disability Pension rates was indexed using the pension MBR factor. At the same time, the General Rate of Disability Pension was also increased by a one-off amount of over \$16.00 per fortnight.

The Harmer Review was announced in the 2007-08 Budget and resulted in further changes to income support pensions. The Harmer Review made no recommendations regarding disability pensions (compensation pensions) as they were not in the scope of the review.

The changes implemented in the pension reforms from 20 September 2009 included a \$60.00 per fortnight increase to the single Service Pension MBR, smaller increases to the single and partnered pension supplement rates, a new indexation method and a higher MTAWA benchmark for single Service Pensions. In total, the maximum single Service Pension rate increased by 11.4 per cent in addition to regular indexation. To ensure that the increase was directed to those people with lower incomes, the income taper rate (the rate at which additional income reduces the rate of pension) was increased from 40% to 50%. This clearly reflected the intention of the Harmer Review to provide increases only to those with the lowest incomes and who were under the most significant financial pressure.

Legislation for the Harmer Review excluded the impact of the \$60.00 per fortnight increase from the calculation of the common indexation factor applied to the Disability Pension (the pension MBR factor). This meant that the one-off increases in income support pension rates did not increase the MBR factor resulting in a subsequent increase in Disability Pension rates.

Current Position

The Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Servicemen and Women (the TPI Federation) is the main lobby group with an interest in the Special Rate of Disability Pension. For many years, they argued that Disability Pensions should be indexed by MTAWA as well as the CPI. Their primary concern was that Disability Pension rates maintain parity with MTAWA.

One-off increases in 2007 and 2008 and changes to Disability Pension indexation in 2004 and 2008 through the use of an indexation factor common to both Service Pension and Disability Pension (the MBR factor) satisfied the TPI Federation concerns at that time.

However, following the September 2009 one off increase of 11.4 per cent in the maximum single rate of Service Pension implemented following the Harmer Review, the TPI Federation have since been campaigning for a corresponding one-off increase to Disability Pensions.

The TPI Federation are of the view that the implementation of the Pension MBR factor as the common indexation method across income support and disability pensions was a commitment by government to maintain the parity of disability pensions with the single rate of Service Pension. They argue that the legislation preventing the application of both the one-off increase in the single rate of pension and the higher MTAWWE benchmark for single pensions to the Disability Pension index (the MBR factor) is in breach of a commitment to maintain Disability Pension parity with the single rate of Service Pension.

The Departmental view remains that the one-off increase in the single rate of Service Pension in September 2009 was not an indexation increase and therefore should not flow through to Disability Pension rates. The MBR factor was never intended to maintain parity between disability pensions and MTAWWE. The process for indexation is the only commonality between Service Pension and Disability Pension and is designed and intended to ensure that both Service Pension and Disability Pension rates increase by the same rate through indexation. MTAWWE is one element only in the calculation of the MBR factor.

Determination of the appropriate rates of payment for income support and disability pensions subject to separate consideration from time to time is (as considered by the Harmer Review for income support pensions). The September 2009 pension reforms were in recognition of the fact that the single Service Pension rate was too low and needed to be adjusted independently of indexation, similar to the one-off increases to Disability Pension rates in 2007 and 2008. The introduction of the common indexation factor was not intended to replicate one-off increases (like the September 2009 reforms) in one pension type, in another.

The total rate of Disability Pension generally increases by a higher percentage than the total rate of Service Pension. This is because the pension supplement component of Service Pensions is indexed with CPI only. The pension MBR factor is generally higher than the CPI increase due to the impacts of MTAWWE and PBLCI and is applied to the whole of the Disability Pension. Therefore, disability pensioners already benefit from better indexation arrangements than service pensioners.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Service pensions and disability pensions will next be indexed on 20 September 2010.

Contact Officer

Adam Luckhurst

National Manager, Rehabilitation & Entitlements Policy Group

Support Division

Phone (02) 6289 6677 or [REDACTED]

2.5. Compulsory Retirement Age - Change for Military Super Payment Recipients

Background

In October 2009, the then Minister for Defence Personnel announced that the Compulsory Retirement Age (CRA) for military personnel was being increased from 55 years to 60 years of age, with retrospective effect from 1 July 2007. This change has flow-on effects to those ex-ADF personnel retired on medical grounds since July 2007. In effect, it means their Military Superannuation (MilitarySuper) payments from ComSuper increase by some 20 per cent to take account of the increase in their nominal retirement age.

For DVA purposes, any increase to MilitarySuper payments results in:

- a dollar for dollar decrease in SRCA or MRCA incapacity payment entitlements paid by DVA;
- possible impact to Service Pension payments because the MilitarySuper payments are assessed as ordinary incomes; and
- possible impact on those also in receipt of Disability Pension, if this is already offset because of their incapacity payment.

Approximately 440 MilitarySuper recipients who are receiving, or have received, incapacity or income support payments over the period in question have received entitlements which will now require adjustments due to the change in CRA.

Routinely, ComSuper asks DVA to calculate the overpayment caused by a retrospective increase to Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme (MSBS) and the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefit (DFRDB) pension schemes. The bulk of the debt is then withheld from the ComSuper arrears payment. ComSuper is obliged to take 30 per cent income tax from any arrears, meaning mostly there remains a shortfall between arrears available to be withheld, and any DVA debt. In essence DVA has only 70 per cent of the arrears to cover any overpayment caused by the backdating of the ComSuper pension payment. For some people this means that the only change in their payments is the ratio of a fixed level of income being paid by the two agencies

Discussions between ComSuper, DVA and ATO officials are ongoing, with an objective of minimising disruption to DVA clients through developing an approach for the client which handles such matters administratively. In other words, tax payments and re-assessment implications are dealt with by the agencies so that individuals do not have to manage the process themselves and deal with multiple agencies.

Whilst DVA has received draft advice from the ATO that would result in the minimisation of impact on mutual clients, some further information and clarification are being sought by ComSuper before a formal ruling will be issued by the ATO. DVA has been advised that only the 2010-2011 financial year will be impacted for tax purposes by the changes to the income stream ratio.

Members of the ADF who retire or are discharged on invalidity grounds from the ADF are eligible for MilitarySuper payments. Depending on the individual circumstances payments can be a lump sum, indexed pension or a mix of both

options. The degree of incapacity as assessed by ComSuper results in a class of pension payment based on a percentage of final salary.

Action Required

For information. You will be provided with a detailed brief when final formal advice is received from the ATO.

Critical Dates

While there is no ‘due date’ for making these arrears payments and clearing any resultant overpayment, we are holding payments pending resolution of the matter. Situations where this is financial hardship are being dealt with on a case by case basis.

Contact Officer

Adam Luckhurst

National Manager, Rehabilitation & Entitlements Policy Group

Support Division

Phone: (02) 6289 6677 or [REDACTED]

DRAFT

2.6. High Protocol Case Management

Background

The High Profile Case Management Protocol is an agreement between the Department of Defence, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Centrelink and ComSuper for handling high profile ADF member entitlement matters. It is applied primarily in cases of overseas deaths or serious injury in service.

The High Profile Case Management protocol was introduced following the death of Private Kovco on 21 April 2006, when it became apparent that there was duplication of work and information transfer. Procedures to be following in future cases were issued on 17 May 2006 and were further revised following the death of Trooper Pearce on 8 October 2007.

Any one of the four agencies can suggest that the protocol be activated. However, generally such action is initiated by the Department of Defence (Defence Community Organisation - DCO) contacting DVA's Point of Contact, currently Ms Sandy Bell, National Manager, Rehabilitation Compensation and Systems Support. Ms Bell then notifies all DVA Executive and other relevant staff that the protocol has been activated and that she is the DVA Single Point of Contact. Your Office is notified at the same time and a brief provided once the Protocol has been activated.

Case officers are appointed by DCO, DVA and Centrelink, the three most important first response agencies in the case of a death, and information is shared between agencies. DVA then waits for DCO to advise that the family is ready to discuss a claim which may be several weeks after the death occurs.

DVA always offers to attend the family's home and advises the family representative or advocate what documents should be made available and what the claim process will entail. Generally, the home visits are undertaken by both the relevant Deputy Commissioner and a technical expert. As part of a process of reviewing the way DVA delivers service to younger clients (Brief 8.2 relates), DVA now undertakes significant work in advance of the first home visit. Known information is documented and information gaps and likely claims identified. The preparatory work assists to minimise the additional stress experienced by families as a result of the claims process and makes the claims process as fast as possible. Home visits take about 2 hours and the claim is determined within 1-2 days. Payments are made immediately after a claim is determined. Urgent priority is given to all High Profile cases.

Current Position

Nominated contact officers in each Department co-ordinate and monitor the Departmental input into any media, payment, entitlement or medical/rehabilitation treatment issues. A primary focus is to assist the client and proactively identify and resolve any issues which arise in the exchange of information between the Departments that is necessary in the processing of compensation, superannuation or other income support claims submitted by serving and former members of the ADF, and/or their dependants.

In addition, contact is maintained with the widows through the State and Territory based Deputy Commissioners to provide ongoing support and a point of reference for any subsequent issues. The Department is also trying to improve community

awareness of young widows' entitlements. Benefits such as the recognition of the Gold Card for younger people and, in particular, medical services such as orthodontic or gynaecology, have had difficulty in being recognised as entitlements by the broader community.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

Sandy Bell

National Manager, Rehabilitation, Compensation and Systems Support
Support Division

Phone: (03) 9284 6133 or [REDACTED]

DRAFT

2.7. Future Transition Support Arrangements

Background

The Transition Management Scheme (TMS) involves DVA providing additional transition support to medically separating Australian Defence Force (ADF) members. This has been a successful voluntary program which provides support to separating ADF members as they commence their civilian life.

TMS commenced in late 2000 and funding of approximately \$800,000 a year is provided by Defence. Feedback on the services provided has generally been positive, particularly in relation to the full-time permanent on-base support at Enoggera (Brisbane) and Lavarack (Townsville).

Over recent years, Defence has revised its model for delivering both rehabilitation and transition support services to separating ADF members. Defence believes that the ADF Rehabilitation Program is now enmeshed with the Defence transition service and that Defence is well positioned to deliver a comprehensive and integrated transition support service to the ADF complemented by its Integrated People Support Strategy introduced in 2007. As a result, in December 2009 Defence formally advised that it would not require DVA to provide on-base TMS services post 30 June 2010.

DVA had some concerns that this decision did not fully consider the breadth of DVA support being provided under the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for TMS and raised these concerns with Defence.

In June 2010, Defence and DVA agreed to continue TMS for a further 12 months (until June 2011) while additional work is undertaken to develop a 'whole of life' framework, to ensure ADF members receive medical, rehabilitation, claims and effective case management support. This framework is intended to ensure support for both medically separating ADF members and members separating for other reasons who may experience a service related injury or illness.

Defence is developing this new whole of life model to support injured or ill members throughout their ADF career, including transition and DVA is actively participating in the development of this model.

It is anticipated that the TMS SLA will continue while this new model is being developed.

Current Position

DVA will continue to provide transition support to ADF members under the TMS SLA for the period up to 30 June 2011. In the meantime, a new whole of life model to support injured or ill members throughout their ADF career, including transition is being developed jointly by the Department of Defence and DVA.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

John Fely

National Manager, Defence Support Services

Services Division

Phone: (02) 6289 6700 or [REDACTED]

Stuart Bagnall

Director Defence Links

Services Division

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DRAFT

2.8. Out of Pocket Pharmaceutical Costs for War Caused Disabilities

Background

The Coalition has committed to assist disabled veterans in receipt of 50 per cent of the General Rate of Disability Pension, or higher (including EDA and TPI), by removing their out of pocket pharmaceutical expenses. (*The Coalition's Plan For Real Action For Veterans And Their Families* 2010 Coalition Election Policy, "Increased assistance for veterans' pharmaceutical costs")

Implementation

The initiative will extend safety net arrangements to set to 30 the maximum number of prescriptions which require a co-payment contribution, and increase the pharmaceutical allowance by \$6 annually.

It should be noted that the pharmaceutical allowance was rolled into the Pension, Veteran, and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) supplements in September 2009. Pharmaceutical Allowance as an individual payment no longer exists in the VEA since the implementation of the Harmer Review. In addition, payments to veterans have traditionally been rounded 10 or 20 cents a fortnight. As an increase by \$6 annually is equivalent to 23 cents per fortnight.

Implementation will require arrangements for prescribing doctors and dispensing pharmacists to identify eligible veterans, and monitor the 30 eligible prescriptions, including implications for the safety net arrangements which currently operate on a family basis. There will also be processing (including significant system) implications for implementation of the targeted \$6 increase in pharmaceutical allowance.

Timetable

November 2010 – normal budget process for 2011-12 to start.

1 January 2012 – start date for initiative.

Legislation

The following legislation would require amendment to support this commitment:

- National Health Act 1953
- *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA);
- *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA); and
- Subordinate legislation for:
 - Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; and
 - Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Costings

The estimated cost of implementing the initiative is \$38 million from 2011-12 to 2013-14 based on the Coalition policy announcement. The Department will prepare a detailed brief on implementation of this initiative and detailed costings including year by year fiscal impact for submission to the Department of Finance and Deregulation and the Budget process.

Responsible area

RPBS

Judy Daniel
National Manager
Primary Care Policy Group
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Pharmaceutical Allowance

Adam Luckhurst
National Manager
Rehabilitation & Entitlements Policy Group
Phone: (02) 6289 6677 or [REDACTED]

DRAFT

2.9. Ambulance – Implementation of Capitation Model for Payments to States/Territories

Background

The Department has in place a variety of contracting arrangements with State/Territory government and a small number of private providers for the provision of emergency and non-emergency ambulance services to eligible veterans; with expenditure of \$74 million in 2009-10. These arrangements involve a diversity of fees and variable and complex billing arrangements across jurisdictions.

[Redacted]

As a consequence, the former Government decided to move to a uniform, streamlined approach across all jurisdictions for veteran ambulance services.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Contact Officer
Judy Daniel
National Manager
Primary Care Policy Group
Ph: (02) 6289 6418; [REDACTED]

DRAFT

2.10. Health Plan – Strengthening Local Health Services

Background

A summary overview of key election commitment health policies and plans is outlined below.

Hospitals

- a community-controlled public hospital system will be developed by transferring managerial decision making to community boards. With the CEO, local boards would set hospital budgets. The boards' selection and payment would be a matter for the states.
- Starting with the next round of National Healthcare Agreements in 2014, the Federal Government will fund an anticipated 40 per cent of the costs of public hospital services without any claw-back of GST. The exact proportion will be determined based on the Federal Government's share of public hospital funding at the time of implementation.
- Funding will be based upon activity based funding (or "casemix funding"), using the efficient price applied to each procedure or treatment performed in hospitals.
- 2,800 new public beds will be funded over the next four years, including 800 new mental health beds announced as part of the mental health plan.

Regional health

- This policy will double the number of medical rural bonded scholarships; create 100 scholarships for regional nurse practitioners; pay a \$10,000 annual bonus to nurse practitioners who practice in regional towns with no resident medical practitioner; and pilot a bonded scholarship scheme for rural and regional dentists.

GP services

- More after-hours GP services will be funded, with \$165 million to increase after-hours Medicare rebates and retain and strengthen the After Hours Practice Incentive Payment.
- Family GPs will be supported to provide better chronic and complex care, with \$350 million to increase Medicare rebates for longer consultations.
- Medicare rebates for practice nurses will be increased, with \$115 million to increase and expand Medicare rebates.
- The timeliness of diagnosis and treatment will be improved, with \$3 million for a clinical best practice GP referral process for Magnetic Resonance Imaging services.
- \$200 million for grants will be provided to existing GP practices to develop infrastructure for training and teaching rooms, accommodating additional doctors, expansion of integrated allied health services and multidisciplinary care and extension of after-hours opening times.

The National Health and Hospital Network governance arrangements of the former Government will not proceed, including Medicare Locals and Hospital Networks.

Further detail on health reform relating to e-Health and aged care may be found in those briefing pages.

Current Position

The Department will assess implications and opportunities of health policy and plans, in terms of the \$5 billion in health purchasing from the Veterans' Affairs portfolio.

Action Required

This is provided for your information at this stage. A brief will be provided for your consideration at a later stage. The types of assessments to be conducted by the Department will include:

- Flow on effects for the Department's purchasing of medical services, as any increase in Medicare rebates flows on to the medical fees for veterans' medical care; and
- How the development of national efficient prices could be used for the Department's purchase of public hospital services – with DVA contracts with states for hospital services expiring at 30 June 2012.

[REDACTED]

Contact Officer

Judy Daniel
National Manager, Primary Care Policy Group
Services Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6418 or [REDACTED]

DRAFT

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DRAFT

2.12. ANAO Tabling of Direct Source Audit

Background

DVA participated in an Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) audit on direct source procurement.

The objective of this audit is to assess the extent to which the agencies' decisions to procure goods and services using the direct sourcing method comply with the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines and other relevant legislation and policy.

The audit field work was undertaken between September 2009 and January 2010, and all documents and information were provided to ANAO by 7 May 2010.

On 18 August 2010, the ANAO provided a section 19 audit report to DVA for comment. DVA is required to provide its comments by 14 September 2010.

The Auditor-General must consider this response before preparing the final report.

The ANAO is expecting to table the final audit report in Parliament in September 2010.

The report indicates that DVA has lower than average direct sourcing procurement methods, but DVA's compliance documentation indicates the need for further improvement.

Current Position

The current timing of this Audit report will have the Auditor General table this report in Parliament in September 2010/October 2010.

Action Required

Nil at this time. A full brief will be provided as part of the Department preparing the Section 19 response.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

Carolyn Spiers

National Manager, Business Integrity & Legal Services Group

Executive Division

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2.13. Family Study Program (FSP) –Appointment of a new Member to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)

Background

The role of the FSP SAC is to provide advice on scientific matters related to the conduct of Family Study Program Studies. This committee meets approximately quarterly and also on an ad-hoc basis.

The SAC is made up of five members, one of whom has been able to provide only minimal input recently due to ongoing health issues.

SAC members are paid \$813 (ex-GST) per day. The additional expected cost of an extra SAC member over the remaining 5.5 years of the Program is expected to be between \$9,000 and \$15,000. This will be funded from the FSP budget allocation.

Current Position

The FSP SAC Chair has recommended that an extra member be appointed to the Committee in an ongoing role to:

- assist with workload sharing during the absence of one member due to ongoing health concerns;
- provide complimentary skills to the current SAC members in the field of child and adolescent mental health. This is especially relevant due to the younger age of the children of Timor-Leste veterans; and
- provide the perspective of a medical doctor to the SAC.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Action Required

Nil until a recommendation is made.

Critical Dates

Late August 2010.

Contact Officer

Peta Stevenson

National Manager, Research, Grants and Consultation Co-ordination Group
Support Division

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2.14. Summary of Correspondence Received in Caretaker Period

Background

During Caretaker the Department responded to all incoming correspondence addressed to the Minister. The response from the Department advised that the incoming Minister would be advised of the full range of views expressed in the correspondence.

Current Position

From 20 July 2010, during the Caretaker period the Department has responded to 560 pieces of correspondence that had been sent to the Minister. The top issues raised in the correspondence by registered subject were -

Disability Compensation

- Eligibility for Gold Card
- Eligibility for / review of entitlement for compensation
- Increases and/or indexation of pensions

Military Compensation

- Eligibility for assistance
- Eligibility for / review of entitlement for compensation

Commemoration Matters

- Nominal Rolls
- War Graves
- HMAS Sydney II
- Centenary of Anzac

Income Support

- Request for Service Pension
- Review of change to Service Pension
- Request to review overpayments

Health Services

- Funding under HACC arrangements
- Extension of pharmaceuticals
- Massage treatment
- Request for review of partial payment of services.

Complaints

- Regarding treatment from Medical Practitioners or at Hospital
- Regarding the Department

Grants

- Requests for funding
- Thank you for funding received

Service Delivery Matters

- Concerns raised with travel reimbursements / transport system.
- Suggestions to approval and referral systems

- Concerns with management of outsourced activities. i.e. VHC

Action Required

For information, to be aware of the issues that will be raised in correspondence you will receive as Minister.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

Richard Magor

National Manager, Parliamentary and Communication Group

Corporate Division

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Scott Weston

Director, Ministerial and Executive Support Services

Corporate Division

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DRAFT

2.15. Australian War Memorial Funding

Background

The Memorial has two funding sources – appropriation and non-government.

As Government appropriation for operational expenses has decreased the Memorial has sought to offset the impact by increasing its non-government sources of revenue. This has been successful but is becoming increasingly difficult given the current economic environment.

The Memorial has long recognised the need to reduce activities so as to operate within the available funding. This has led to an ongoing review of programs and staffing levels, with no option but to reduce both. In an attempt to insulate front-of-house activities from budget pressures, behind the scenes activities have been savagely cut over a period of several years. This strategy cannot continue as it carries with it considerable risks that must be recognised, including significant stakeholder dissatisfaction, damage to the Memorial's long standing reputation, potential for audit criticism, unstable staffing, and potential difficulties meeting legislative obligations.

The Memorial is facing potentially constraining, if not crippling, financial circumstances.

Current Position

The Memorial is the lowest funded major cultural institution, despite having the highest visitation.

The net impact of funding reductions and cost increases is over \$5m over the past 5 years.

Council and the Minister have been briefed on a regular basis on the implications of the Memorial's funding position. In the context of the 2009-10 Budget, a NPP was submitted, seeking an increase of \$5m p.a. to the base operational funding. This was not supported and the resulting budget was balanced through further reductions in programs and staffing.

In June 2010, the Minister sought an independent verification of the Memorial's budget position. Departments of Finance and Deregulation and Veterans' Affairs have been working with the Memorial to understand the funding arrangements and impacts. A report is yet to be provided.

Senior management and Council are already planning for the 2011/12 budget. Internal discussion about priorities is taking place in order to determine where further reductions will need to be made if additional funding is not secured. What can only be considered as draconian measures will now be introduced from 2011, including closing the Memorial (excepting the Commemorative Area) one day a week and closing the Research Centre on weekends, severely limiting public access to this pre-eminent national institution.

Other options being considered include reduced numbers of travelling exhibitions, reduced level of conservation programs, reduced servicing of public enquiries. Some core functions, such as printing of the Peacekeeping official histories, are not currently funded.

Based on forecast funding levels and the current average cost per employee, a loss of 22 positions is projected for 2011-12, resulting in some core functions no longer able to be delivered. Current forecasts reveal that the Memorial has no option but to reduce by a total of 53 staff over the next five years, representing around 20% of the current workforce. An organisation does not recover quickly from an erosion of core staffing levels, and the loss of key staff with considerable subject matter expertise will undoubtedly diminish the

Memorial's reputation during a time where community expectations will be at an all time high.

It should be noted that with the Centenary of the First World War fast approaching, the demand on the Memorial is expected to be significant. It is critical that additional resources be provided in order for the Memorial to be able to meet stakeholder demands and expectations.

The Memorial has increased gross non-government revenue sources e.g. catering, Shop, interest, e-Business, education programs, etc, but these have largely been consumed by related cost increases. The transfer of liability for all water and ground maintenance from the National Capital Authority as a result of that institution's funding cuts has not helped either.

Sponsorship funding in the past has been largely associated with capital projects. While this is greatly appreciated, it does not assist with ongoing operational and core program costs.

Public Programs budgets have been reduced by almost \$0.6m over the past 5 years.

Action required

For information

Contact Officer

Rhonda Adler

Assistant Director

Branch Head Corporate Services

Phone: 02 6243 4233

Mobile number: [REDACTED]

3. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS THAT MAY REQUIRE MINISTER'S ATTENDANCE

3.1. RSL National Congress 2010

Background

The RSL's National Congress is the culmination of annual congresses held by each of the League's State and Territory branches. The Minister for Veteran's Affairs is usually invited to open State and Territory congresses and to participate in discussions with individual RSL members. The Opposition Spokesman, members of the Repatriation Commission and senior departmental staff also usually attend. As well as formal proceedings, congresses usually involve an executive dinner.

In the past, while the Minister for Veteran's Affairs has been invited to attend the National Congress and dinner, on some occasions opening has been performed by the Prime Minister.

The National Congress, inter alia, considers motions raised by its members. The Department provides briefing on responses to motions involving Veterans' Affairs matters.

The Congress also ratifies the League's standing policies, which currently include:

- support for the concept of more generous compensation benefits for members and former members of Australia's defence forces who have served in war and warlike operations (qualifying service); and
- that the Australian Government should maintain an independent Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Action Required

The Minister will be invited to attend the next meeting of the National Commission in Melbourne on Thursday 30 September 2010.

Critical Date

17 September – close of public submission and late September for next meeting of the National Commission.

Critical Date

The end of August 2010, if you accept the invitation, in order that a brief can be provided before the event.

Contact Officer

Barry Telford
General Manger, Support Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6000 or [REDACTED]

3.2. The Next Meeting of the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary to be held Thursday 30 September and Conclusion of the Public Submission Process

Background

On Anzac Day 2010, the then Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP announced the establishment of a National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary. The commission was to undertake public consultation and make recommendations to Government on options for appropriate commemorations for 2014 - 18.

The Anzac Centenary is understood to include not only the centenary of the Gallipoli landings in 2015, but also other significant milestones that occur from 2014 up to and including the centenary of Armistice Day in 2018.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs convened the first meeting of the National Commission, held in Sydney on Tuesday 6 July.

For more information, refer to brief entitled "National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary" in Section 5, Brief 5.3.

Current Position

On 6 July 2010, the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary, together with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, launched the opening of a public submission process. The submission process asks all Australians to share their ideas on how the Anzac Centenary should be commemorated and recognised.

At the same time, DVA has contracted a market research company to conduct social research, and gain an understanding of the views, perceptions, knowledge and aspirations of the Australian people in relation to Anzac and commemoration and the Anzac Centenary 2014-18.

The submissions close on 17 September 2010 and the market research report is due in mid September. The National Commission will meet on 30 September in Melbourne to review the results of both the submission process and market research. This information will assist in their deliberations and subsequent recommendations to Government in early 2011 on options for appropriate commemorations for 2014-18.

Action Required

The Minister would attend the next meeting of the National Commission in Melbourne on Thursday 30 September 2010.

Critical Date

17 September – close of public submission and late September for next meeting of the National Commission.

Contact Officer

Tim Evans
National Manager, Commemorations Group
Executive Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6068 or [REDACTED]

3.3. 60th Anniversary of the Beginning of the Korean War National Service and Reception 23 October 2010

Background

Following a meeting between the Hon Alan Griffin MP, the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs, and His Excellency the Hon Yang Kim, Republic of Korea Minister for Patriots and Veterans Affairs on 27 July 2009, where they discussed plans for the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War, DVA formed an advisory group chaired by the former Repatriation Commissioner Brigadier Bill Rolfe AO (Retd). The advisory group consisted of representatives from the Korea veterans' ex-service organisations and was tasked with providing commemorative options.

On 4 May 2010 Minister Griffin approved the recommendations of the advisory group, including a national commemorative ceremony to be held on 23 October 2010 at the Australian National Korean War Memorial (ANKWM) in Canberra. The ceremony is to be followed by a dinner hosted by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

The Repatriation Commissioner also established a five-person committee to organise the national ceremony at the ANKWM on 23 October 2010. This committee is chaired by Korea veteran Brigadier Colin Kahn DSO AM (Retd). The committee is responsible for the organisation of the national ceremony at the ANKWM and is supporting the Korean War Veterans Association (NSW) Inc in arranging the dinner function. The committee will in due course submit a funding proposal to DVA for costs associated with the conduct of the ceremony.

Current Position

On 23 October 2010, a national service will be conducted at the Australian National Korean War Memorial on Anzac Parade to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War. A reception will also be held at the Rydges Hotel, Canberra, on the evening of 23 October 2010.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

23 October 2010 for both the national service and reception.

Contact Officer

Tim Evans
National Manager, Commemorations Group
Executive Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6068 or [REDACTED]

3.4. Papua New Guinea's Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel Day 3 November 2010

Background

On 9 August 2006, the then Government agreed to the commissioning of a commemorative Medallion to recognise surviving Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels in Papua New Guinea (PNG), and the widows of Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels. On 9 December 2008, the then Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, wrote to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, asking that DVA take forward as a matter of priority production of commemorative Medallions to recognise the contribution of the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.

On 28 April 2009, the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Commemorative Medallion was announced by Prime Minister Rudd at a joint press conference during the visit to Australia of Sir Michael Somare, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

Those eligible for the Medallion must have assisted Australian servicemen in PNG during the Second World War; been a civilian at the time of rendering assistance; been no younger than 10 years old at the time of rendering assistance; or be the widow or widower of a person meeting the above criteria. The Medallion is only available to living persons.

As no records of service exist, it is difficult to estimate the total number of Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels still living. Due to the lack of official records, applicants must be certified as being a Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel by two senior members of their community/village before being considered eligible for a Medallion.

It was originally estimated that there may be up to a total of 1,200 surviving Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels and surviving widows of Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels; however, due to the small number of applications received, this figure is too high. A batch of 1,500 Medallions was produced by the Royal Australian Mint at a total cost of \$35,546 and delivery took place in early July 2009.

The design for the Medallion is based on a photograph of Private George C 'Dick' Whittington being assisted by Papuan Raphael Oimbari. Copyright for the photograph is held by the Australian War Memorial and approval for its use has been granted.

The Medallion will not cut across, or supersede, the Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal's enquiry into Australian Government recognition of the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels, which was referred in line with a Senate motion moved by Senators Guy Barnett and Julian McGauran in June 2008. The Tribunal's enquiry has not yet begun due to other priorities.

On 23 July 2009, PNG Remembrance Day, the Hon Alan Griffin, the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs, presented the first Medallion to Wesley Akove in a ceremony at Bomana War Cemetery in Port Moresby. Following this presentation ceremony there was media interest regarding the Medallion in both Australia and PNG, and inquiries were received from potential recipients. Radio and print advertising throughout PNG also commenced.

Further Medallions were presented on 2 September 2009 (Battle for Australia Day) at a ceremony in PNG to applicants who had been assessed as eligible and verified by the PNG Government. The then Australian High Commissioner, HE Mr Chris Moraitis, officiated at this ceremony.

A third Medallion presentation ceremony occurred at the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby on 9 July 2010, where the Hon Bob McMullan MP, Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance, presented six Medallions to recipients on behalf of Minister Griffin.

A fourth Medallion presentation ceremony occurred at the Popondetta War Memorial, Popondetta on 29 July 2010 where 18 medallions were presented. The Australian High Commissioner, HE Mr Ian Kemish AM, presented the Medallions.

The Medallion has been advertised throughout PNG via English and Pidgin newspaper advertisements and community announcements on radio (from July to October 2009), and through an information mail-out in November 2009 to Provincial Level Governments (17 recipients), Local Level Governments (277 recipients) and Church organisations (81 recipients).

Current Position

To date, 45 Medallions have been approved for presentation by the PNG Awards Committee. Of these, 28 medallions have been presented at the ceremonies held at the Bomana War Cemetery, the Australian High Commission and at Popondetta. Two Medallions have been collected at the AHC. An additional 15 Medallions are yet to be posted or presented to the recipients.

Commemorations Group is currently planning to conduct a fifth presentation ceremony of the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Commemorative Medallions in Papua New Guinea on Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel's Day on 3 November 2010. It is likely there will be between 10 and 20 Medallions to be presented to confirmed Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

3 November 2010 for the presentations.

Contact Officer

Tim Evans
National Manager, Commemorations Group
Executive Division
Phone: (02) 6289 6068 or [REDACTED]

3.5. Outstanding Invitations to Events Received

It is the usual practice for the Minister to attend a wide range of functions in the veteran community and to meet with representatives from various ex-service and other organisations.

The Repatriation Commission and the Department is often represented at many of these events, either by a member of the Repatriation Commission for a national event or the relevant Deputy Commissioner for a local event in their state or territory.

The following table outlines a range of upcoming Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) events on both a national level and state/territory level that the previous Minister was invited to both before and throughout the Caretaker period. If you decide to attend any of these events the Department will provide a brief outlining specific details of the event or meeting.

Date	Organisation	Event details	Location	Time
14/09/2010	RSL National Headquarters	Official Opening 10:00 - 11:30am Dinner 7:00 - 9:00pm	Dubbo NSW	10:00 AM
20/09/2010	TPI Federation	Open and address the annual TPI Federation Congress	Quality Hotel Woden, Melrose Drive and Launceston St., Phillip ACT	9:00 AM
21/09/2010	TPI Federation	Attend TPI AGM Dinner 6:30 for 7pm	Quality Hotel Woden, Melrose Drive and Launceston St., Phillip ACT	7:00 PM
28/09/2010	Korean Government	Attend 60th Anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, Recapture of Seoul Ceremony	Seoul, South Korea	9:00 AM
30/09/10	Vietnam Veterans Federation Queensland Branch	State Congress	Royal United Services Hall, Victoria Barracks, Brisbane	n/a
1/10/10	Australian Society of Anesthetists	President' Reception	Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre	6.30 PM
10–12/10/10	The National Association of Extremely Disabled War Veterans	Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting	Hervey Bay RSL Club	n/a
13/10/2010	Korean Veterans Association of Australia	Korean War Commemorative Plaque Dedication	Laverton Base, Victoria	1:30 PM
15/10/2010	University of New England, Armidale	Attend Mary White Dinner or Valedictory Dinner	University of New England, Armidale	6:00 PM
20/10/2010	Nurses Memorial	Attend Nurses Memorial 60th Anniversary Dinner	RACV Club, 501 Bourke Street, Melbourne	7:00 PM
23/10/2010	National Commemoration in Canberra	60th Anniversary of outbreak of Korean War	Anzac Parade, Canberra	11:00 AM
30/10/2010	RSL WA Branch	Annual Congress	Mercure Hotel, Perth	6.30 PM
7/11/2010	Honouring	Unveiling of the Memorial in	Bruce Rock	9:00 AM

Section 2: Upcoming Meetings and Events

	Indigenous War Graves Inc	Honour of the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels of Papua New Guinea		
7/11/2010	RSL Victoria	Attend Annual RSL State Remembrance Service	Springvale Necropolis	2:30 PM
12/11/2010	Remembrance Driveway Committee	Sydney to Canberra Remembrance Driveway Dedication	TBC	12:00 PM
8/12/2010	Ex-Prisoners of War & Relatives Association	Attend the 65th Anniversary of their First Christmas in Freedom	TBC	12:00 PM

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Section 3: Key Stakeholder Information

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SECTION 3 – KEY STAKEHOLDER INFORMATION

1. MAJOR EX-SERVICE ORGANISATIONS (ESOs)	2
2. KEY PEOPLE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH	3
2.1. Ex-Service Organisations	3
2.2. Key Advisory Groups	3
2.3. Key Providers	4
2.4. Key Government Contacts	4
3. ESO CALENDAR OF EVENTS	5
3.1. National	5
3.2. New South Wales	7
3.3. Victoria	7
3.4. Queensland	8
3.5. South Australia	9
3.6. Western Australia	9
3.7. Tasmania	10
3.8. Northern Territory	10

Attachments:

- Directory of Ex-Service Organisations (DESO)

1. MAJOR EX-SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

DVA maintains a Directory of Ex-Service Organisations (attached) which lists ex-service organisations (ESOs) which are either:

- conflict based (e.g. British Commonwealth Occupation Forces);
- service based (e.g. Submariners Association Australia);
- disability based (e.g. Extreme Disablement Adjustment Associations);
- based on experience in service (e.g. Korea and South East Asia Forces Association of Australia); or
- from an allied country (e.g. Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association, Royal Marines Association, Netherlands Ex-Servicemen & Women's Association).

The Directory also lists the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Veterans & Services Association. There are numerous other small organisations that are not included in the Directory.

The following organisations are major ESOs with which you or your Office are likely to have regular contact. It is not intended that the list be exhaustive - there are many other organisations who will proffer advice or whose comments will be sought on policy matters.

- Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL);
- Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council (AVADSC);
- Legacy Australia National Co-ordinating Council;
- Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-servicemen and Women (TPI Federation);
- Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia (VVAA);
- Vietnam Veterans' Federation of Australia (VVFA);
- War Widows' Guild of Australia (WWG);
- Defence Force Welfare Association (RDFWA);
- Naval Association of Australia (NAA);
- Royal Australian Air Force Association (RAAF Association);
- National Association of Extremely Disabled War Veterans (EDA Association);
- Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans Association (APPVA); and
- Australian Special Air Service Association (ASASA).

2. KEY PEOPLE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH

It is suggested that you make contact with the following persons of particular organisations:

Name	Telephone
2.1. EX-SERVICE ORGANISATIONS	
Rear Admiral Ken Doolan AO RAN (Retd) National President, Returned & Services League of Australia Ltd (RSL)	(02) 6248 7199
State Presidents of the RSL: – Mr Don Rowe OAM (NSW) – Major General David McLachlan AO (Retd) (VIC) – Mr Doug Formby AM (QLD) – Mr Jock Statton OAM (SA) – Mr W G (Bill) Gaynor OAM RFD (WA) – Mr John King (ACT) – Mr Bill Kaine MBE (TAS)	(02) 9264 8188 (03) 9655 5555 (07) 3634 9444 (08) 8232 0322 (08) 9287 3799 (02) 6260 6344 (03) 6224 0881
Mr John Ryan OAM National President, Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Servicemen and Women (TPI)	[REDACTED]
Rear Admiral Ian Crawford AO AM (Mil) RAN (Retd) National President, Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council	(02) 9393 2323
Mr David Kelly Chairman, National Coordinating Council, Legacy Australia	(03) 9650 0213
Mr Ron Coxon OAM National President, Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia (VVAA)	[REDACTED]
Mr Tim McCombe OAM National President, Vietnam Veterans' Federation of Australia (VVFA)	(02) 9682 1788
Mr David Penson CSM National President, Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA)	[REDACTED]
Mrs Audrey Blood OAM National President, War Widows' Guild of Australia	(02) 6277 1066
2.2. KEY ADVISORY GROUPS	
Mr Allan Hawke AC Chair, the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters	[REDACTED]
National Commission for the Commemoration of Anzac Centenary The Rt Hon Malcolm Fraser PC AC CH The Hon Robert Hawke AC Rear Admiral Ken Doolan AO RAN (Retd) Major Matina Jewell (Retd) Mr Warren Brown Ms Kylie Russell	(03) 9654 1822 (02) 9357 2444 (02) 6248 7199 [REDACTED] (02) 9288 2512 [REDACTED]
Dr Tony Austin AM Chair, National Advisory Committee (NAC)	(02) 4946 9928
Dr Andrew Pesce President, Australian Medical Association (AMA)	(02) 6270 5400

Section 3: Key Stakeholder Information

2.3. KEY PROVIDERS	
Mr Chris Rex CEO & Managing Director, Ramsay Health Care	(02) 9433 3411
2.4. KEY GOVERNMENT CONTACTS	
The Hon. Francesco (Frank) Terenzini MP (NSW) Minister for Housing, Minister for Small Business Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs	(02) 9228 3777
The Hon John Brumby (VIC) Premier Minister for Veterans' Affairs Minister for Multicultural Affairs	(03) 9651 5000
Mr Hon Tony Robinson (VIC) Minister for Gaming Minister for Consumer Affairs Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs	(03) 8684 1400
The Hon Jack Snelling (SA) Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education Minister for Science and Information Economy Minister for Road Safety Minister for Veterans' Affairs	(08) 8226 8520
The Hon Bryan Green (TAS) Minister for Primary Industries and Water Minister for Energy and Resources Minister for Local Government Minister for Planning Minister for Racing Minister for Veterans' Affairs	(03) 6233 6454
Air Chief Marshal Allan Grant (Angus) Houston AC AFC Chief of the Defence Force <i>Contact through Captain Peter Laver</i>	(02) 62652859
Vice Admiral Russell Crane AO CSM RAN Chief of Navy <i>Contact through Captain Gregory Sammut</i>	(02) 6265 5163
Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie AO DSC CSM Chief of Army <i>Contact through Major Paul Smith</i>	(02) 6265 4231
Air Marshal Mark Binskin AO Chief of Air Force <i>Contact through Wing Commander Nathan Christie</i>	(02) 6265 5479

3. ESO Calendar of Events

It is the usual practice for the Minister to attend a wide range of functions in the veteran community and to meet with representatives from various ex-service and other organisations.

The Repatriation Commission and the Department would often be represented at many of these events, either by a member of the Repatriation Commission for a national event or the relevant Deputy Commissioner for a local event in their state.

The following table outlines a range of upcoming ESO events on both a national level and state/territory level. If you decide to attend any of these events the Department will provide a brief outlining specific details of the event or meeting.

3.1. National

NATIONAL EVENTS BY MONTH	DATE	LOCATION	TYPE
SEPTEMBER 2010			
RSL National Congress	14-15 Sep (Tue-Wed)	Dubbo	ESO
70 th Anniversary of Battle of Britain	15 Sep (Wed)	Various	COM
Closing date for submissions to the <i>National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary</i>	17 Sep (Fri)	National	DVA
Australian Federation of TPI Ex-Servicemen & Women Congress/AGM	20-23 Sep (Mon-Thu)	Quality Hotel, Woden	ESO
OCTOBER 2010			
National Health, Aged & Community Care Forum	1 Oct (Fri)	Canberra	DVA/ESO
National Advisory Committee for VVCS	5-6 Oct (Tue-Wed)	Townsville	DVA/MIN
National Association of Extremely Disabled War Veterans Inc Annual Conference	11 Oct (Mon)	Hervey Bay	ESO
National Mental Health Forum	14 Oct (Thu)	Canberra	DVA/ESO
War Widows' Guild of Australia National Council Conference plus AGM	19-20 Oct (Tue-Wed)	Sydney	ESO
National ceremony to commemorate the 60 th anniversary of the Korean War at the memorial on Anzac Parade	23 Oct (Sat)	Canberra	COM
Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia (VVAA) National Council	23 Oct (Sat)	Adelaide	ESO
Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA) National Executive AGM	End Oct TBC	TBA	ESO
NOVEMBER 2010			
Remembrance Day	11 Nov (Thu)	Various	ESO
Anniversary of the sinking of HMAS <i>Sydney</i>	19 Nov (Fri)	Various	COM
DECEMBER 2010			
JANUARY 2011			
FEBRUARY 2011			
WRAAC 60 th Anniversary	11-13 Feb (Fri-Sun)	Sydney	ESO

Conferences Held Biennially

- Ex-Prisoner of War Association of Australia National AGM 11 – 16 October 2010 in Brisbane.
- Korea & South East Asia Forces Association of Australia (K&SEAFA) October 2011
- Legacy AGM/National Conference in Port Macquarie 20-21 October 2011

LEGEND – DATE/EVENT TYPE

COM = Commemorative

DVA = DVA Hosted Function/Event

ESO = Ex-Service Organisation

MIN = Ministerial

GOV = Government

OTH = Other

PAR = Parliament

Dates that are Bolded Green are Parliamentary Sitting Days

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Local Events by State (As Advised by Deputy Commissioner's Office)

3.2. New South Wales

EVENTS BY MONTH	DATE	LOCATION	TYPE
SEPTEMBER 2010			
VVPPAA NSW Sub-Branch Conference	16 Sept (Thu)	Rooty Hill	ESO
OCTOBER 2010			
NOVEMBER 2010			
Remembrance Day Service	11 Nov (Thu)	Cenotaph	RSL
RSL State Branch Appreciation Lunch – tentative date	26 Nov (Fri)	Hyde Park Forum	RSL
Launch of 2011 Reserve Forces Day	27 Nov (Sat)	Victoria Barracks	ESO
DECEMBER 2010			
RSL State Branch Appreciation Lunch – tentative date	3 Dec (Fri)	Hyde Park Forum	RSL
DC's ESO Christmas Function	10 Dec (Fri)	DVA	DVA
JANUARY 2011			
FEBRUARY 2011			

3.3. Victoria

SEPTEMBER 2010			
Albury Legacy 78 th Annual Handover Dinner	18 Sep (Sat)	Albury	ESO
Story Writing and Art Competition Exhibition Launch	30 Sep (Thu)	Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital	DVA
OCTOBER 2010			
Dedication Ceremony for a VVAA Commemorative Plaque	2 Oct (Sat)	St Paul's Cathedral, Melb	COM
NOVEMBER 2010			
Harvester Day Club 10 th Annual Celebratory Luncheon	5 Nov (Fri)	Nth Altona	ESO
Annual Victorian RSL State Remembrance Service	7 Nov (Sun)	Springvale War Cemetery	ESO
National Final of Legacy Junior Public Speaking Award	8 Nov (Mon)	Telstra Corporate Centre, Lonsdale St, Melbourne	ESO
The Shrine Remembrance Day Dinner	10 Nov (Wed)	Melbourne Town Hall	COM
Remembrance Day Commemorative Service	11 Nov (Thu)	Shrine of Remembrance	COM
Remembrance Day Commemorative Service	11 Nov (Thu)	Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital	COM
Mens Health Peer Education National Workshop	22-23 Nov (Mon – Tues)	Melbourne	DVA
Story Writing and Art Competition Prize Presentation Ceremony	25 Nov (Thu)	Heidelberg Repat Hospital	DVA
DECEMBER 2010			
DC/ESO Christmas Function	8 Dec (Wed)	Vic State Office	DVA/ESO
JANUARY 2011			
FEBRUARY 2011			

3.4. Queensland

EVENTS BY MONTH	DATE	LOCATION	TYPE
SEPTEMBER 2010			
70 th Anniversary Lunch for Battle of Britain	12 Sep (Sun)	Townsville	ESO
Seafarers Week Committee – Annual Seafarers Memorial Service – St Johns Cathedral	12 Sept (Sun)	Brisbane	COM
Australian Veterans & Defence Services Council AGM	mid Sep	Brisbane	ESO
Australian Veterans Group Peacekeepers Day Service	14 Sep (Tue)	Harvey Bay	
Peacekeepers Day Memorial Service	14 Sept (Tue)	Brisbane	COM
Incapacitated Servicemen & Women's Assn AGM	mid Sep	Brisbane	ESO
Veterans Support Group (formerly Vietnam Veterans Federation Qld) State Congress	30 th Sept (Thu)	Brisbane	ESO
OCTOBER 2010			
Ex-POW National Conference	11 Oct – 16 th Oct	Brisbane	ESO
Australian Army Aviation Association QLD AGM	Mid Oct TBA	TBA	ESO
9th Australian Division Annual Reunion	23 Oct (Sat)	Brisbane	COM
Gunners Signallers Club – 93 rd Battle of Beersheba	30-31 Oct (Sat-Sun)	Brisbane	COM
Annual Qld Legacy Clubs AGM	29-30 Oct	Ipswich	ESO
Rats Of Tobruk Annual Luncheon	Late Oct	Brisbane	ESO
NOVEMBER 2010			
Remembrance Day Services			
Qantas 90th year Anniversary	16 Nov (Tue)	Longreach	COM
HMAS Sydney Memorial Service	19 Nov (Fri)	Brisbane	COM
2/14 Light Horse regiment (QLD Mounted Infantry) 150 th Birthday – Civic reception & Gala Ball	20 November (Sat)	Brisbane	COM
DECEMBER 2010			
Cairns ESO EOY Function	1st Dec (Wed)	Cairns	DVA/ESO
Townsville ESO EOY Function	2 nd Dec (Thu)	Townsville	DVA/ESO
QLD ESO EOY Function - Brisbane	PM – 3 Dec (Fri)	Brisbane	DVA/ESO
Gladstone/Rockhampton ESO EOY Function	8 Dec (Wed)	Rockhampton/ Gladstone	DVA/ESO
Opening of new DVA office	December date depends on finalisation of works	Townsville	DVA/ESO
JANUARY 2011			
FEBRUARY 2011			
Anglo-Boer War Memorial Service	Early Feb	TBA	ESO/COM
2/10 Field Regiment Memorial Service	Mid Feb	TBA	ESO

Note – The RSL in NSW, Victoria and Queensland have annual regional / district meetings. The dates of these meetings have not been included on this calendar, but can be provided if required. These meetings are generally attended by the Deputy Commissioner of the state.

3.5. South Australia

SEPTEMBER 2010			
Legacy Annual Dinner & Installation of President Elect	11 Sept (Sat)	Lockleys	ESO
Central Council of RSL Women's Auxiliaries – 48 th Annual Conference	24 Sept (Fri)	Adelaide	ESO
OCTOBER 2010			
State Conference of the Naval Association – SA Section	2 Oct (Sat)	Christie Downs	ESO
National Congress VVAA – Opening Ceremony	22 Oct (Fri)	Adelaide	ESO
Navy Week	Late Oct	Adelaide	COM
NOVEMBER 2010			
End of Year Tri-Service Reception – Senior Navy, Army & Air Force Representatives	5 Nov (Fri)	Adelaide	ESO
91 st Annual Dinner of the Mannum RSL Sub-Branch	7 Nov (Sun)	Mannum	ESO
Remembrance Day	11 Nov (Thu)	Adelaide	COM
National History Challenge State Presentation	TBA	Adelaide	DVA
DECEMBER 2010			
DC's Xmas ESO Function	6 Dec (Mon)	Adelaide	DVA/ESO
JANUARY 2011			
FEBRUARY 2011			
SA DC Consultative Forum	TBA	Adelaide	DVA
National Servicemen's Association Memorial Service	12 Feb (Sat)	Hilton	COM
Bangka Day Memorial Service – SA Women's Playing Fields Trust	13 Feb (Sun)	St Marys	COM

3.6. Western Australia

SEPTEMBER 2010			
Sandakan Memorial Service	14 Sep (Tue)	Boyup Brook, Perth	COM
RSL Nedlands President's Luncheon	23 Sep (Thu)	Perth	ESO
OCTOBER 2010			
Defence Reserves Support Council Awards	20 Oct (Wed)	Perth	DVA
Carers' Week – events TBA	25-29 Oct (Mon-Fri)	Perth	DVA
RSL State Congress (RSL advise there are no regional conferences in WA)	30 Oct (Sat)	Perth	ESO
RSL Albany Nurses Memorial Service	31 Oct (Sun)	Albany	COM
NOVEMBER 2010			
RSL Albany : Desert Mounted Corp Memorial Service	1 Nov (Mon)	Albany	COM
Remembrance Day	11 Nov (Thu)	Perth	COM
Perth Legacy AGM and Wreath Laying	16 Nov (Tue)	Perth	ESO
Anniversary of the Sinking of the HMAS Sydney	19 Nov (Fri)	Perth	COM
WWG Anniversary Service (proposed)	29 Nov (Mon)	Perth	COM
WWG Christmas Lunch (proposed)	29 Nov (Mon)	Perth	ESO
Perth Legacy Handover Lunch	30 Nov (Tue)	Perth	ESO
Australian Navy in Vietnam Memorial Service	30 Nov (Tue)	Perth	COM

DECEMBER 2010			
DC/ESO Christmas Function	7 (Tue)	Perth	DVA
JANUARY 2011			
FEBRUARY 2011			

3.7. Tasmania

SEPTEMBER 2010			
Battle of Britain Wreath laying	12 Sep (TBC)	Hobart	ESO
Peacekeepers Day	14 Sep (Tue)	TBA	COM
OCTOBER 2010			
Oatlands RSL Annual Lunch	TBA	Oatlands	ESO
Claremont RSL Annual Lunch	TBA	Claremont	ESO
Lenah Valley RSL Lunch	TBA	Lenah Valley	ESO
Royal Hobart Show (Veterans' Health in conjunction with ADF)	21 Oct (Thu)	Hobart	OTH
Navy Day	31 Oct (Sun)	George Town	ESO
NOVEMBER 2010			
Florence Nightingale Trust Tasmania Awards	TBA	Hobart	OTH
Remembrance Day ceremony	11 Nov (Thu)	Hobart	COM
ESO Xmas North West	25 Nov (Thu)	Ulverstone	DVA
ESO Xmas North	26 Nov (Fri)	Launceston	DVA
DECEMBER 2010			
ESO Presidents & ESO South Christmas function	2 Dec (Thu)	Hobart	DVA
RSL State Executive Annual Reception	TBA	Hobart	ESO
JANUARY 2011			
RSL Australia Day Awards	TBA	Hobart	ESO
FEBRUARY 2011			
Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Veterans Association State Conference	TBA	TBA	ESO
Cygnets RSL Annual Lunch	TBA	Cygnets	ESO
Defence Reserves Support Council / Royal Hobart Regatta event	TBA	Hobart	ADF
St Helens RSL dinner	TBA	St Helens	ESO

3.8. Northern Territory

SEPTEMBER 2010			
OCTOBER 2010			
NOVEMBER 2010			
ADF Transition seminar	4-5 Nov (Thu-Fri)	Darwin	DVA
Remembrance Day service	11 Nov (Thu)	Darwin	COM
DECEMBER 2010			
ESO Christmas function	10 Dec (Fri)	NT State Office	DVA
JANUARY 2011			
FEBRUARY 2011			
69 th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin	19 Feb (Sat)	Darwin	COM
Australia Army Birthday	26 Feb (Sat)	Darwin	OTH

Section 4: New Government Policies

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SECTION 4 – NEW GOVERNMENT POLICIES – IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Policy Commitments Briefings	
1. New Indexation Arrangements for Members of the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme (DFRDB)	2
2. Pharmaceutical Safety Net Extension - Increased Assistance for Veterans' Pharmaceutical Costs	4
3. Increased Recognition of Veterans' Widows and Wives	6
4. Support an Indigenous War Widow Awareness Program	7
5. Enhance Family Support Service for Defence Personnel, Veterans and Ex-service Personnel During Transition from the ADF	8
6. Expand the Building Excellence in Support and Training Program (BEST) and the Training and Information Program (TIP)	10
7. Review of Military Compensation Arrangements	11
8. \$100,000 Towards the Montevideo Maru Memorial	13
9. Support the Prime Minister's Advisory Council	14
10. APS Recruitment Freeze	16
11. Postpone the Introduction of e-health	17
12. Index Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC) Income Limits	18

A brief has not been prepared in this Section for the “Support the Centenary of the Gallipoli Landings” Commitment.

However, briefs on this topic are provided in Section 5 covering the National Commission for the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary (Brief 5.3) and the Anzac Centenary: 100 Years since the First World War (AWM) (Brief 9.2).

1. New Indexation Arrangements for Members of the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme (DFRDB)

Commitment

The Coalition has committed to indexing Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefit (DFRDB) pensions to the higher of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE) and the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI). The commitment appears to exclude other superannuation schemes such as the Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme (MSBS).

The commitment will impact on the rate of service pension and income support supplement (ISS) paid by DVA. These payments are income support payments. All income support payments are affected by a person's assessable income, which includes DFRDB/MSBS pensions. As the assessable income increases, the rate of the income support payment provided by DVA decreases. It is estimated that the average increase in the DFRDB/MSBS pension will be \$12.17 per fortnight.

It is estimated that around 13,500 DVA income support recipients also receive a DFRDB or MSBS pension. Of these, around 12,500 will have a rate reduction averaging between \$3.00 and \$3.50 per fortnight depending on the payment type. It should be noted that the Department's systems do not differentiate between DFRDB and MSBS for reporting purposes.

It is estimated that a small number of people (less than 10) will lose entitlement to service pension or ISS as their income will exceed the limit with the new indexation method. These people are likely to be receiving the minimum payment of \$30.60 per fortnight (single) or \$23.10 per fortnight (partnered). It is likely that most who lose entitlement to service pension or ISS will be entitled to the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC). The CSHC entitles the holder to concessional prices on pharmaceuticals under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and the seniors supplement. Seniors supplement is an annual payment of \$795.60 (single) or \$600.60 (partnered) paid in quarterly instalments.

The commitment may also impact on Gold Card holders. The Gold Card entitles the holder to free medical treatment in Australia for any medical condition regardless of whether or not caused by war or defence service. A veteran can be eligible for the Gold Card in many ways. In particular, if a veteran receives a rate of service pension that is reduced by less than the income and assets reduction limit, the veteran is eligible for a Gold Card. Around 70 veterans are expected to lose this particular type of eligibility for the Gold Card as their income increases and their rate of service pension reduces, however, most are likely to have other eligibility for the Gold Card. Around 15 veterans are anticipated to lose eligibility for the Gold Card on implementation of this commitment.

Incapacity payments under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) are also affected by the commitment. These payments are reduced on a dollar for dollar basis by the amount of any Commonwealth superannuation paid. It is estimated that around 1,400 clients will be affected with an average reduction of \$12.17 per fortnight in

their incapacity payment. These clients will effectively receive no benefit from the new indexation method.

Disability pensions paid under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) are also affected by the commitment, but only where the person also receives an incapacity payment under the MRCA or SRCA. Incapacity payments reduce disability pensions on a dollar for dollar basis. As the increased DFRDB/MSBS pension reduces the MRCA/SRCA incapacity payment, there will be a corresponding increase in the person's disability pension. These people will effectively receive the full benefit of the new indexation method. It is estimated that there will be around 300 people in this situation.

Implementation

No systems or legislative changes are required to implement this commitment. DVA currently has in place systems and processes to automatically receive the indexed rate of DFRDB/MSBS pensions and to update the rate of service pension, ISS, incapacity payment and disability pension as appropriate. These systems and processes will remain in place. Further system work and reviews of records will be required if the Department is to differentiate between DFRDB and MSBS.

Timetable

The first indexation date using the new method will be 1 July 2011.

Legislation

No legislative change will be required.

Costings (over four years)

The impact on service pension and ISS is estimated as being a saving of around \$3.3 million. The impact on incapacity payments is estimated to be a saving of around \$1.8 million. The impact on disability pensions is estimated to be a cost of around \$0.3 million. The Gold Card impact is estimated to be a saving of around \$0.8 million. The total saving from DVA programs is estimated to be \$5.6 million.

Costs and savings are based on data and payment rates as at 30 July 2010. Indexation has not been applied in calculating out year costs.

Departmental costs are currently being investigated.

Contact Officer

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2. Pharmaceutical Safety Net Extension - Increased Assistance for Veterans' Pharmaceutical Costs

Commitment

The Coalition has committed to assist disabled veterans in receipt of 50 per cent of the General Rate of Disability Pension, or higher (including EDA and TPI), by removing their out of pocket pharmaceutical expenses. (*The Coalition's Plan For Real Action For Veterans And Their Families 2010 Coalition Election Policy, "Increased assistance for veterans' pharmaceutical costs"*)

Implementation

The initiative will extend safety net arrangements to set to 30 the maximum number of prescriptions which require a co-payment contribution, and increase the pharmaceutical allowance by \$6 annually.

It should be noted that the pharmaceutical allowance was rolled into the Pension, Veteran, and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) supplements in September 2009. Pharmaceutical Allowance as an individual payment no longer exists in the VEA since the implementation of the Harmer Review. In addition, payments to veterans have traditionally been rounded 10 or 20 cents a fortnight. As an increase by \$6 annually is equivalent to 23 cents per fortnight.

Consideration will also be needed as to whether this measure is extended to eligible former serving members under the MRCA.

Implementation will require arrangements for prescribing doctors and dispensing pharmacists to identify eligible veterans, and monitor the 30 eligible prescriptions, including implications for the safety net arrangements which currently operate on a family basis. There will also be processing (including significant system) implications for implementation of the targeted \$6 increase in pharmaceutical allowance.

Timetable

November 2010 – normal budget process for 2011-12 to start.

1 January 2012 – start date for initiative.

Legislation

The following legislation would require amendment to support this commitment:

- National Health Act 1953
- *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA);
- *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA); and
- Subordinate legislation for:
 - Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; and
 - Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Costings

The estimated cost of implementing the initiative is \$38 million from 2011-12 to 2013-14 based on the Coalition policy announcement. The Department will prepare a

detailed brief on implementation of this initiative and detailed costings including year by year fiscal impact for submission to the Department of Finance and Deregulation and the Budget process.

Responsible area

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Pharmaceutical Allowance

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3. Increase Recognition of Veterans' Widows and Wives

Commitment

The Coalition will introduce several complementary initiatives to increase recognition of veterans' widows and wives, including establishing 'VWWInc', a dedicated website for networking, information and advice for veterans' widows and wives; conducting a national awareness campaign and holding an annual 'Recognition Award' event; and erecting a national memorial in consultation with Veterans' Widows and Wives.

Implementation

The initiative will be implemented in consultation with Veterans' Widows and Wives.

The website could be implemented by 1 July 2011 containing relevant information and tools. The information on the website would primarily consist of links to existing information and sources.

Timetable

A website could be implemented by 1 July 2011 containing relevant information and tools.

Legislation

No legislative change would be required.

Costings

It is estimated that creation of the website would cost around \$63,000.

Costs for the memorial will be negotiated based on the design and location of the memorial.

Contact Officer

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Website Issues:

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Support Division

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4. Support an Indigenous War Widow Awareness Program

Commitment

A Coalition Government will develop and implement an information and awareness program to help identify, contact and encourage eligible Indigenous war widows to apply for their entitlements.

Implementation

Unable to provide details until further information is available on this proposal.

Related DVA initiatives

The Department has implemented an Indigenous Veterans' strategy to encourage Indigenous veterans and their dependants to access their DVA entitlements and benefits. An Indigenous Veterans Liaison Officer was appointed in 2006 to implement the strategy. Since then, a number of Indigenous communities across Australia have been visited and linkages established to facilitate contact with the Department. Under the new focus greater attention would be given to identifying Indigenous war widows and facilitating their access to benefits and entitlements.

Timetable

Unable to provide details until further information is available on this proposal.

Legislation

Not applicable.

Costings

Unable to provide details until further information is available on this proposal.

Contact Officer

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5. Enhance Family Support Service for Defence Personnel, Veterans and Ex-Service Personnel During Transition from the ADF

We'll Be There Program

Commitment

The We'll Be There program will support Veterans, transitioning ADF personnel, and their dependent family members to make the transition from post-deployment and military life. The program will provide training and support for volunteer veterans and ex-service people, to be available 24 hours a day, to speak directly to veterans. This program will complement existing services provided by VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service, including The Stepping Out Program and the Veterans Line after-hours crisis support telephone counselling service.

Implementation

This would need to include a partnership with the Defence Directorate of Transition Support Services, and the joint Defence/DVA initiatives of Keeping In Touch Website, and the Support to Injured and or Ill Project currently being undertaken to facilitate access by defence personnel and their families during the transition period. This would include currently serving personnel who may be currently unable to access DVA and VVCS services.

Related DVA initiatives

DVA already has a long-standing history and experience in supporting volunteers through programs such as the Men's Health Peer Education Program, Training and Information Program and Day Clubs. DVA is in the process of exploring through the Carer & Volunteer Support Initiative, ways to better support ex-service organisations with issues such as retaining, recruiting and training of volunteers.

VVCS provides counselling and group programs to Australian veterans, peacekeepers and their families. It is a specialised, free and confidential Australia-wide service. VVCS would need to work with this initiative to ensure seamless referrals and support for veterans and their dependent family members who are identified as needing additional support.

Timetable

Unable to provide details until further information is available on this proposal.

Legislation

Not Applicable.

Costings

Note that there will be initial set up costs and then ongoing costs for elements of the program such as:

- Setting up an additional telephone counselling service
- Promoting the program;
- Recruiting, training and accrediting volunteers;
- Development of training and support for volunteers;
- Initial and ongoing training and support to volunteers;

- Rental and management of “family settings/venues” for the program;
- Provision of a debriefing and support services for volunteers;
- Development of early intervention programs;
- Increase in VVCS costs to manage the growth in referrals for clients who need more specific assistance; and
- Potential payment or re-imburement of volunteer costs, such as travel, telephone and incidentals.

Cost for an additional four telephone lines to those already provided for the Veterans Line Telephone counselling services would be approximately \$20,000.

Initial promotion of and training for this project is estimated at \$100,000.

No costing have been estimated for additional VVCS staffing or facilities at this stage.

Contact Officer

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6. Expand the Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Program and the Training Information Program (TIP)

Commitment

The Coalition will provide an additional \$7.5 million over the forward estimates years for the BEST and TIP programs. They will ensure funding is available to enable veteran and ex-service organisations to continue to deliver high-standard support and assistance to veterans, ex-service people and their families.

The funding will be applied in consultation with ex-service organisations and in line with the adoption of recommendations accepted as part of the Review of Advocacy Funding. The Coalition will respond to the recommendations of the review following the consultation period and discussions with ex-service leaders.

Implementation

Options for meeting the commitment to consult with ex-service organisations on the distribution of the additional funds will be addressed as a separate but integrated component of the report to Government on the Review recommendations and proposed response.

Timetable

[REDACTED]

Legislation

Not Applicable.

Costings

There will be no additional cost if the consultation with ex-service leaders uses the existing consultative framework. If the consultation was to be as extensive as the original round of consultations undertaken by the review team, the cost would be approximately \$30,000 - \$50,000 depending on the number of centres visited.

Contact Officer

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7. Review of Military Compensation Arrangements

Commitment

Many members of the veterans' community have expressed concern at the inflexibility of the current Act and the compulsory aspect of the rehabilitation requirement. The Coalition recognised the need to review legislation to ensure it is achieving the goals it was established to achieve.

The Coalition will engage in consultation with the veteran and ex-service community about the review recommendations and will ensure that the views of the ex-service community are considered as part of the implementation process.

Implementation

The committee's report is currently being prepared on the basis that it would ultimately be made public [REDACTED]

The Department has an existing consultative framework that could be utilised for this purpose. For example, consultation could be conducted via the Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) Round Table and the Prime Minister's Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters (PMAC).

Extensive consultation was undertaken during the review process. The committee held meetings at Defence Force bases and public meetings in every Australian capital city and Townsville. Two members of PMAC have sat as observers on the committee. The committee met on a number of occasions with a sub-committee of the ESO Round Table.

During the consultation process, and in submissions to the review, the committee has heard a range of views regarding the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA). There is a view that the MRCA needs to be more flexible and provide claimants with a greater range of choices. There are also views that the MRCA is too complex and needs to be simplified. The committee has been considering the best way to balance these potentially contrasting views.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

An increased focus of whole-of-person rehabilitation was one of the fundamental policy principles underpinning the MRCA. The committee is only aware of one submission (T&PI Federation) that has been critical of "compulsory rehabilitation" in the MRCA. Some other submissions have suggested improvement to rehabilitation processes.

Under the MRCA, a claimant's right to compensation (except treatment) can be suspended until the member undertakes rehabilitation. However, this power is used sparingly. It is important that rehabilitation be encouraged in order to restore a claimant to the same physical and psychological state, and the same social, vocational and educational status, as he or she had before the condition, to the extent possible. A rehabilitation program may include medical and bio-psychosocial rehabilitation as well as vocational rehabilitation if relevant, and is done in collaboration with the claimant to take account of their individual needs and circumstances.

[REDACTED]

Where a claimant has suffered a loss of income they will be eligible to receive incapacity compensation while he or she undertakes a rehabilitation program.

Timetable

[REDACTED]

Legislation

No legislation is required to complete the review. Legislative amendments will be required depending on the nature of the Government's response to the recommendations.

Costings

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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8. \$100,000 Towards the *Montevideo Maru* Memorial

Commitment

The Coalition will provide \$100,000 towards the *Montevideo Maru* Memorial to expedite the construction of the memorial in time for the 70th anniversary of the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru*.

Implementation

[REDACTED]

Legislation

Not applicable.

Costings

The proposed memorial is to be built in the grounds of the Australian War Memorial and a costing is not yet available, however, the total cost of the memorial is expected to be in the vicinity of \$500,000 to \$600,000. A grant of \$100,000 towards the memorial was provided to the Rabaul and *Montevideo Maru* Society by the previous government in July 2010.

Contact Officer

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9. Support the Prime Minister's Advisory Council

Commitment

A Coalition government will continue to support the Prime Minister's Advisory Council (PMAC). The Coalition supports initiatives that provide a clear link between ex-service organisations and the government.

To ensure that the ex-service organisations right across Australia can have their concerns heard by government, the Coalition will consider the option of the Council visiting each State and Regional centre. The aim will be to ensure ex-service organisations and individuals can raise issues of concern directly with the Council.

Implementation

Requires consideration of the existing Veterans' Affairs Consultation Framework.

The Chair of PMAC, Mr Allan Hawke, attends each meeting of the Ex-Service Organisation Round Table (members are National Presidents of the major ESOs) where he reports on PMAC considerations and also provides a conduit for Ex-Service Organisation Round Table (ESORT) issues to PMAC members.

PMAC members are also invited to participate, where appropriate, in departmental Reviews (e.g. Steering Committee for the Review of Military Compensation arrangements). PMAC is represented in the membership of the four National Consultation fora and individual members also attend the Deputy Commissioners' State Consultation fora in their home State or Territory.

PMAC has been established since 6 September 2008 and the Chair and members' terms of appointment are for three years and restricted to consecutive terms. There have been no changes in membership since its establishment and, given their appointments do not expire under current arrangements until September 2011, consideration would need to be given to this aspect of implementing the Coalition commitment.

Current members' availability to continue to participate on the Council may be impacted by this significant increase in time and commitment to the Council.

Timetable

[REDACTED]

Legislation

N/A

Costings

- PMAC meeting costs for 2009-10 were \$63,000, 2010-11 estimate is \$80,000.
- Extending to include face to face meetings in State, Territory and Regional centres is estimated to add an additional \$865,000 per year comprising;
 - \$235,000 to visit each State and Territory (eight) per year; and
 - depending on the Coalition's commitment to the number and frequency of visits to Regional centres in each State and the Northern Territory, an indicative cost would be \$630,000 to visit 3 Regional centres in each State and the Northern Territory each year.
- The above estimated costs do not include possible requirements to advertise fora meeting venues and dates in State, Territory and Regional Press.

Contact Officer

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10. APS Recruitment Freeze

Commitment

To reduce the APS workforce by 12,000 over two years to save \$4.2 billion.

Implementation

There will be no recruitment to fill jobs in non-service delivery (i.e. corporate) areas.

Timetable

Over two years.

Legislation

This policy will not require changes to legislation. However, as it will mainly affect corporate work, our capacity to meet our obligations under legislation such as the Financial Management and Accountability Act, Public Service Act, Freedom of Information Act, etc could come under some pressure.

Costings

N/A

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11. Postpone the Introduction of e-health

Commitment

Postpone the introduction of the personally controlled electronic health record (PCEHR) until the Budget is in surplus.

The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) is the lead agency for this commitment, although DVA is responsible for ensuring that veteran issues are represented.

Implementation

Details of deferred implementation of the PCEHR are to be confirmed.

The 2010-11 Budget provided \$466.7 million funding for the first two years of the PCEHR business case to be developed in consultation with all states and territories and the National e-Health Transition Authority.

Subject to progress in rolling out the core e-health infrastructure, the former Government was to consider future investments, as necessary, to expand on the range of functions delivered under an electronic health record system.

Timetable

Details of revised timetable to be confirmed by DoHA.

Legislation

N/A.

Costings

Details of revised costing to be advised by the Department of Health and Ageing.

Responsible area

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Primary Care Policy Group

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12. Index Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC) Income Limits

Commitment

The Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC) entitles a person to concessional prices on pharmaceuticals under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and the seniors supplement. Eligibility for the CSHC requires the person's adjusted taxable income to be below a defined income limit. The income limit is \$50,000 if single, \$80,000 for a couple, and \$50,000 for each member of an illness separated couple. These limits were set in July 2001.

The Coalition committed to indexing the income limits for the CSHC. This will result in additional people becoming entitled to a CSHC. The first indexation will occur on 1 July 2011. The limits will be indexed using CPI. This will affect the provision of CSHCs under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) and under the social security law.

Implementation

FaHCSIA will be the lead agency for this proposal.

Legislative and systems changes will be required to implement the commitment. There will be publicity through Vet Affairs and News for Seniors. This measure will also impact Centrelink CSHC holders under the social security law.

It is estimated that over 200 DVA clients will become eligible for a CSHC in 2011-12 as a result of the change, with over 800 DVA clients by the 2014-15 financial year.

Timetable

Changes will be put in place prior to the 1 July 2011 implementation.

Legislation

The VEA will need to be amended to allow the income limits to be indexed. Similar amendments are likely to be required in the social security law.

Costings

The DVA administered cost of this proposal is estimated at \$0.5 million. The costs have not been indexed. Departmental costs will be additional and are currently being costed. Medicare Australia will also have additional costs.

Contact Officer

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Section 5: Briefings by Division

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SECTION 5 – BRIEFINGS BY DIVISION

1. DEPUTY PRESIDENT	
1.1. VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service – Overview	5
1.2. The Role of the VVCS National Advisory Committee	7
1.3. VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service - Service Mix Review	9
1.4. Status of Tenders – Operation <i>Life</i> and Veterans Line	10
1.5. War Deaths and the Australian War Memorial’s Roll of Honour	12
1.6. State Government Minister’s for Veterans’ Affairs and Major Military Bases	14
1.7. Veterans Service Centre (VSC) – Phase 2	18
1.8. Complaints and Feedback Handling	20
1.9. Veterans’ Satisfaction Survey	21
1.10. Story Writing and Art Competition (SWAC)	22
2.SUPPORT DIVISION	
2.1. F-111 Deseal/Reseal Parliamentary Inquiry Report Implementation	24
2.2. Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Grants Program	28
2.3. Long Tan Bursary	31
2.4. Clarke Review	33
2.5. <i>Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004</i> (MRCA) - Benefits for Widows, Widowers and Eligible Dependants	35
2.6. Extension of War Widows Pension	38
2.7. Family Study Program	40
2.8. Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-service Matters (PMAC)	42
2.9. Gold Card – World War Two Veterans Without Qualifying Service	50
2.10. Rehabilitation and Compensation - Case Co-ordination	52
2.11. National Workload Management for Compensation Claims	54
2.12. Compensation and Benefits Relating to British Nuclear Testing Participation	56
2.13. Nature of Service	60
2.14. Nominal Rolls	62
2.15. Law Commission of New Zealand – Report of the Review of the <i>War Pensions Act 1954</i>	64

3. SERVICES DIVISION	
3.1. Veterans' Home Care – New Assessment Instrument	66
3.2. Status of Current Procurement Activities – Health Services: - Veterans' Home Care – Tender Process for Service Provision - Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP) – Overview of the Current Series of Tenders - Mobility and Functional Support (MFS) Tender - Home Medical Oxygen Therapy (HMOT) Tender - Medical Grade Footwear (MGF) Tender	68
3.3. Medical and Allied Health Services	74
3.4. Aged Care	76
3.5. Pharmaceutical Issues – Including Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, Veterans' Medicines Advice and Therapeutic Education Services and Travel Vaccinations for Gold Card Holders	78
3.6. Transport to Treatment – Overview of Current and Proposed Reform Initiatives	80
4. CORPORATE DIVISION	
4.1. Shared Services Arrangements with the Department of Human Services (DHS)	82
4.2. Choice and Maintainability in Veterans' Services (CMVS) Program	83
4.3. Information and Communications Technology Business-As-Usual Reinvestment Fund (BRF)	85
4.4. DVA Annual Report 2009 – 10: Production Timetable	87
5. EXECUTIVE DIVISION: COMMEMORATIONS GROUP	
5.1. Review of the Commemorations Program	88
5.2. <i>Saluting Their Service</i> Discretionary Grants Program	90
5.3. National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary	92
5.4. Imminent Release of a Request for Tender (RFT) for the Provision of Event Provider Services for Anzac Day at Gallipoli	94
5.5. Anzac Day 2011 Update - Gallipoli and Villers-Bretonneux	96
██	████
5.7. Historical Study of the Anzac Battlefield Area, Gallipoli, Turkey	99
██	████
5.9. Future Program for Papua New Guinea's Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel Commemorative Medallion Presentation	103
5.10. 60th Anniversary of Korean War 2010-2013	105
5.11. Consideration of Australian Involvement in Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary, 2011, of the Battle of Greece and Crete	107

5.12. Consideration of Australian Involvement in Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary, 2011, of the Siege of Tobruk	109
5.13. Presentation of Gallantry Medals and Unit Citations to Veterans at the Battle of Long Tan	110
6. EXECUTIVE DIVISION: OFFICE OF AUSTRALIAN WAR GRAVES (OAWG)	
6.1. Official Commemoration of War and Post-War Dead	112
6.2. Overseas Memorials	114
6.3. Western Front Interpretive Trail	116
6.4. Proposed New Zealand Memorial	119
6.5. Protection of the Kokoda Track	121
██	██
7. EXECUTIVE DIVISION: BUSINESS INTEGRITY AND LEGAL SERVICES GROUP	
7.1. Significant Cases	
7.1.1. James (chapter 25 GARPM)	125
7.1.2. Archer	127
7.1.3. Fellowes	129
7.1.4. Smith	130
██	██
██	██
7.4. Audit Program	134
7.5. Legal Aid	135
7.6. DVA Cases Currently within the Criminal Prosecution Process	136
7.7. ANZMI Website and Concerns Raised by the Ex-Service Community	137
7.8. Wearing of Incorrect Service Medals	139
7.9. Freedom of Information – Statistics and Reforms	140
7.10. Scheme for Compensation for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration (CDDA)	143
7.11. Act of Grace Claims	145
8. EXECUTIVE DIVISION: ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE GROUP	
8.1. Delivering Services to an Emerging Client Group and Links to Whole of Government Service Delivery Reform	147

9. THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL (AWM)	
9.1. Brief History of the Australian War Memorial	149
9.2. Anzac Centenary: 100 years since the First World War	151
9.3. Redevelopment of the Hall Of Valour	152
9.4. <i>This Company of Brave Men: The Gallipoli VCs</i> Touring Exhibition	153
9.5. Travelling Exhibitions Program	155
9.6. Official History of Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post-Cold War Operations	157
9.7. Memorials and the Plaque Dedication Program	160
9.8. Strategies to Develop the Collection	162
9.9. Roll of Honour Additions	164
9.10. Enterprise Content Management System	166
9.11. Significant Events and Key Activities in 2010	168

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1. DEPUTY PRESIDENT

1.1. VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service - Overview

Background

The VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service is a key part of the Department of Veterans' Affairs approach to community based mental health care providing counselling and group programs to all Australian veterans and their families. Originating in 1982 in response to the needs of the Vietnam veteran community, the organisation underwent a name change in 2007 to improve access by recent and current serving veterans and their families and to reflect changing client demographics.

VVCS, while part of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, maintains separate client records to DVA, and is perceived by the veteran community as independent of the Department in this regard. Client records are not shared, and DVA staff do not have access to VVCS files or records. Referrals to VVCS from DVA staff are made on the same basis as referrals from other agencies, and only with client consent.

VVCS offices are either located in premises separate from DVA, or are co-located but with separate entrances, waiting rooms, etc. The exception to this is Darwin, and the Department is currently examining options to provide more separation for VVCS clients in this location.

VVCS provides services to clients who may not have DVA eligibility. Examples are partners, and sons and daughters of veterans. VVCS also provides, under a contractual arrangement, services to some current serving members who are referred from the ADF. Some current serving members also self refer to VVCS due to their qualifying service (their veteran “status”).

The VVCS National Advisory Committee (NAC) provides advice to the Minister on the needs of the veteran community and ways in which these can be addressed through the VVCS, as well as the operations and quality of outcomes delivered by VVCS. The NAC supports the VVCS to develop programs and service delivery arrangements. The committee also provides guidance to the VVCS on issues and needs within the veteran and defence communities that impact on the delivery of VVCS programs. The NAC meets 3-4 times per year at various VVCS Centres. The current NAC Chair is Dr Tony Austin, AM. A separate brief regarding the NAC is attached.

Current Position

The VVCS is a specialised, free, confidential Australia wide service for all Australian veterans and their families who face life problems. It also provides, under an agreement with the ADF, some counselling services to existing service personnel and their families.

VVCS provides:

- direct (centre based) counselling and referral services;
- an outreach program to outer metropolitan, rural and remote locations;
- a toll-free, after-hours telephone crisis counselling service;

- health promotion, community development and liaison; and
- group program activities.

VVCS has 15 centres across Australia and operates an after-hours counselling support and crisis assistance telephone service, Veterans Line (phone: 1800 011 046).

Referrals to VVCS services

Referrals to VVCS can be made by:

- Veterans and/or members of their families can refer themselves; and
- Medical practitioners, other service providers, community agencies and ex-service organisations can provide written or verbal referrals to VVCS services.

Eligibility

Currently, VVCS provides services to:

- Australian veterans of all conflicts and peacekeeping operations as defined by the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA);
- Partners and dependent children under 26 years of age of veterans with issues arising from the veteran's service;
- war widows/widowers;
- ex-partners, within five years of separation;
- all children of Vietnam veterans regardless of age with psychological, emotional and social needs arising from the impact of their parent's operational or warlike service;
- ex-service personnel with a mental health condition, under VEA, *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*, and *Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1998* as a DVA-accepted disability and their family members;
- current serving members of the ADF who have been formally referred by the ADF under the Agreement for Services; and
- people with an interest in or concern for a veteran's welfare can seek advice.

Staff

There are 106 VVCS staff members across the 15 VVCS centres and the Central Office comprising 80 Professional staff members and 26 Administrative support staff.

In addition, VVCS contracts with about 560 outreach counsellors around Australia.

VVCS Centres.

VVCS centres are located in all capital cities, plus Albury/Wodonga Launceston, Lismore, Maroochydore, Newcastle, Southport and Townsville

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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1.2. Role of the VVCS National Advisory Committee

Background

National Advisory Committee Vision:

To provide quality, independent, consultation based advice to the Minister on the effectiveness of the VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service.

Terms of Reference

The role of the National Advisory Committee is to:

1. Deliver independent and distinctive advice to the Minister on the needs of the veteran community and ways in which these can be addressed through the VVCS.
2. Support the VVCS to develop programs and service delivery arrangements that are:
 - responsive to the mental health care needs of all Australian veterans and their families;
 - based on a health and wellness approach;
 - assist in liaison with other mental health agencies to facilitate a co-ordinated approach to mental health care; and
 - consistent with the government's mental health policy enabling VVCS to fulfil its role as key component of the Department of Veterans' Affairs delivery of community based mental health care.
3. Provide guidance to the VVCS on:
 - issues and needs within the veteran and defence communities that impact on the delivery of VVCS programs; and
 - strategic service delivery partnerships that will enable VVCS to play its part, with other providers in an integrated approach to mental health care.
4. Assess and report to the Minister on the operations and quality of outcomes delivered to the veteran community, through VVCS programs.

Terms of Appointment

Appointment to the National Advisory Committee of the VVCS is for three years. Ministerial appointments to the committee are made on the basis that while committee members may be members of interested organisations they do not serve on the committee as representatives of those organisations.

Minutes of these meetings are available on the Departments website, at this link <http://www.dva.gov.au/health/vvcs/nac/minutes.htm>

Current Position

The VVCS National Advisory Committee offers advice to the Minister on the operations of the VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service.

Current membership of the NAC:

Chairman	Dr Tony Austin - Vietnam veteran
Member	Prof Malcolm Battersby – Psychiatrist
Member	Mr Martin Carr – Peacekeeper
Member	Ms Bronwyn Fullick – partner and families
Member	Mr Robert Elworthy – Vietnam veteran
Member	Mr Tim McCombe OAM – Vietnam veteran
Member	Mr John Ryan OAM – Vietnam veteran
Member	Ms Tracey Negus – Daughter of Vietnam veteran
Member	Dr David Monash – General Practitioner
Ex-officio	Repatriation Commissioner – Major General Mark Kelly, AO
Ex-officio	Director, Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health – Prof Mark Creamer
Ex-officio	Defence Community Organisation representative – Mr Michael Callan
Ex-officio	National Manager, VVCS Mr Wayne Penniall

Current Issues

The committee has been considering whether VVCS should be created as a Statutory Authority to protect the independence of the VVCS. The committee is also considering adding a current serving ADF member to its membership, so that the needs of eligible serving members are more fully represented to the committee.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Meeting frequency

The Committee meets three times a year. Dates are set in advance. The next meeting is to be held on 5 – 6 October 2010 at the VVCS Townsville Office, Queensland.

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1.3. VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service - Service Mix Review

Background

Following discussion with the Minister's National Advisory Committee (NAC) of the VVCS, the Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission, a review is being undertaken by consultants to provide advice on the appropriate service delivery model for VVCS to meet the changing needs of the veteran and defence communities and their families.

The review included a number of focus groups across Australia and the receipt of submissions from VVCS clients, staff, ESO members and other stakeholders such as Defence. Sue Belsham and Associates are the independent consultants conducting the review. Terms of reference are below.

Terms of Reference

The review will inform on:

1. The effectiveness and efficiency of the current VVCS model of service delivery including the clinical and the administrative support capability;
2. The impact of existing and potential future client demand on workflows across VVCS centres;
3. The impact of existing eligibility criteria for access to VVCS and any real or potential gaps given the emerging needs of the veteran and defence communities;
4. Effective application of existing client utilisation data, data systems and reporting mechanisms to improve service planning and performance reporting requirements of the service; and
5. Potential for changes to the current service delivery model, mix of programs, clinical and administrative capability that will enhance, delivery of and improved access to, nationally coordinated but locally responsive evidence based mental health care through the VVCS.

A report for VVCS and the Repatriation Commission consideration is being finalised by consultants.

Current Position

The outcomes are currently being considered by the Deputy President and will be considered by the NAC.

Action Required

A detailed brief will be provided following analysis of the report by VVCS and the Repatriation Commission.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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1.4. Status of Tenders – Operation *Life* and Veterans Line

Background

Operation *Life*, the National Suicide Prevention Strategy for the Veteran Community was developed in 2007 as a framework for action to prevent suicide and promote mental health and resilience across the veteran community. The major components of the framework consist of a choice of suicide prevention workshops, as well as the provision of information on treatment services that are readily available to the veteran community.

The 2008-09 budget provided \$1 million over four years to expand the number of suicide awareness workshops available to the veteran community.

There are three workshops which have been available to members of the veteran community since May 2009:

- Safe TALK: suicide alertness for everyone – a four hour workshop;
- ASIST: applied suicide intervention skills training – a two day workshop; and
- ASIST Tune Up – a half day refresher workshop that consolidates and refines the learning from ASIST.

In the 2009-10 financial year, 19 Safe TALK workshops, 10 ASIST workshops and one Tune Up workshop were conducted across Australia with 372 participants.

The 2009 *Independent Study Into Suicide in the Ex-Service Community*, conducted by Professor Dunt recommended (Recommendation 2.1) that DVA should only implement suicide prevention programs that are evidence-based. As part of the Government's response to the Suicide Study, the Government agreed that a review of Operation *Life* workshops would be undertaken to ensure that evidenced based programs are being implemented. A select tender process occurred for the evaluation of the Operation *Life* Workshop resulting in a recommendation for a preferred tenderer, with negotiations to commence at the end of the caretaker period.

A second select tender process occurred to advise on improvements to the promotion and marketing of Operation *Life*. This is in response to concerns in the ESO community regarding their perception of the relatively low take up of the Operation *Life* workshops. This review will include focus groups of veterans to help determine what style and type of marketing would be most effective to improve promotion of suicide awareness workshops.

The Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service is supported by a reference group of ESO representatives who advise on Operation *Life*. This ESO group will support the evaluation activities undertaken by the researchers by promoting the evaluation and participating in the focus groups but is independent from the tender selection process.

Veterans Line

Veterans Line is the after hours crisis counselling service provided by the VVCS.. The service is designed to assist veterans and their families in coping with crisis situations outside of VVCS office hours. Counselling is provided free of charge. Veterans Line is provided by Crisis Support Services, and is based in Melbourne.

The same eligibility to access VVCS applies to Veterans Line:

- Australian veterans from all conflicts and peacekeeping operations;
- Partners and widows;
- Sons and daughters;
- Eligible ADF personnel.

Clients do not require a veteran's entitlement card to use Veterans Line. Information is not shared with the Department of Veterans' Affairs without a client's permission.

Veterans Line can be contacted on toll free number (national) on 1800 011 046. In 2009-2010, a total of 4,610 telephone calls were received by Veterans Line.

VVCS is also contracted separately by the ADF to provide an all hours support line to ADF members and their families. This commenced in November 2009 and is also provided by Crisis Support Services, and is based in Melbourne.

The current Veterans Line contract ceases 30 September 2010. A tender process has occurred and a recommendation for a successful tenderer has been finalised, with a new contract expected to commence on 1 October 2010. Negotiations with the successful tenderer will commence following the end of the caretaker period.

Current Position

VVCS is currently finalising three tender processes. These are a review of Operation *Life*, a tender to advise on improvements to the promotion and marketing of Operation *Life*, and a re-contracting of the Veterans Line, the VVCS after-hours crisis telephone counselling service.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

The Operation *Life* review was originally expected to be finalised by December 2010 but given some delays, will likely be finalised by March 2011.

Nil for the Operation *Life* marketing tender.
1 October 2010 for the Veterans Line tender.

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1.5. War Deaths and the Australian War Memorial's Roll of Honour

Background

The Australian War Memorial (AWM) is responsible for maintaining a Roll of Honour (ROH) which lists Australia's war dead. As part of this responsibility, the AWM determines eligibility criteria for inclusion on the ROH.

Decisions concerning eligibility for the ROH are different to decisions of the Commissions' which have statutory responsibility to determine whether or not a veteran's death is caused by 'warlike service'.

There has never been a consistent approach to post-conflict eligibility for inclusion on the ROH. For instance, the cessation of ROH eligibility based on the disbandment of the 1st AIF and 2nd AIF following the two World Wars effectively kept eligibility open for some years following the cessation of hostilities. ROH eligibility stemming from Australia's involvement in the Vietnam conflict extended to the departure of the last members of an RAAF relief detachment in April 1975, effectively keeping eligibility relating to service in Vietnam open for two years following the withdrawal of Australian combat elements in January 1973. For a number of other post-Second World War conflicts, eligibility ceased immediately upon armistice dates or the end of warlike operations involving Australian forces. Since 2004 the ROH has been updated annually by the AWM.

Public acknowledgement of a war death through inclusion on the ROH can be complex because a 'war death' may occur in several ways. Although the public expectation of a war death might well be a death directly related to combat engagement or as a result of some misadventure, the reality is that a war death could also be as a result of wounds received in combat or injuries sustained whilst deployed. These injuries can be mental or psychological as well as physical.

Inclusion of those who have died some time after deployment from a range of conditions may cause some confusion amongst members of the public when the numbers of people listed on the ROH differs from some figures used publically regarding fatalities on particular deployments or operations.

Current Position

The President/Chairperson of the Commissions' has recently written to the Major-General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) (Retd), Director, AWM raising this issue and the need to ensure there is a clear and effective policy concerning eligibility for the ROH and why names and numbers on the ROH may differ from other publicly used figures.

The AWM has offered assistance from the Department in working through the complex issues requiring resolution. Assistance may include provision of information concerning the statutory decision making of the Commissions as well as data concerning relevant war caused deaths.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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1.6. State Government Minister's for Veterans' Affairs and Major Military Bases

There is a Deputy Commissioner based in each capital city with responsibility for the DVA presence in that state/territory. The Deputy Commissioners also have direct responsibility for rehabilitation and compensation claims processing, corporate support, client contact and commemorations functions in their state. Each Deputy Commissioner also has responsibility for national function/s which vary for each position.

Deputy Commissioners work closely to build strong working relationships with key stakeholders in their State/Territory including ex service organisations, the veteran community and Defence representatives.

Each state government has different arrangements in regards to veterans issues. The Deputy Commissioners have regular interaction with the state appointees regarding veterans issues.

Victoria

The Victorian State Government Ministers for Veterans' Affairs are:

- Mr John Brumby MP - Premier of Victoria, Minister for Veterans' Affairs;
- Mr Tony Robinson MP - Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs; and
- Ms Liz Beattie MP - Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs.

In 2006, the Victorian Government established the Victorian Veterans' Council as an independent statutory body under the *Veterans Act 2005*. The Council, chaired by Major General Peter Haddad AO (Retd) has 11 members of which eight must be members of the ex-service community. The Council's main functions are to:

- Distribute the ANZAC Day Proceeds Fund to ex-service organisations for welfare activities;
- Distribute the Victorian Veterans Fund; and
- Advise the Minister for Consumer Affairs on the regulation of patriotic funds.

The key ADF locations in Victoria include:

- Puckapunyal is an Army training base in north central Victoria;
- HMAS Cerberus is a naval training establishment on the southern peninsula near Melbourne; and
- Bandiana is a military training base near Wodonga in northern Victoria.

New South Wales

Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs:

- The Hon. (Frank) Francesco Terenzini, BLegS DipTeach MP
Member for Maitland

At the RSL State Congress in May 2010, the State Government announced a commemorative council similar to the Anzac Centenary National Commission. The Council comprises former Deputy Premier John Watkins, former leader of the State Opposition and Navy Reserve lawyer Peter Collins, the State RSL President Don Rowe and a State RSL Vice President John Haines.

The key ADF locations in NSW / ACT include:

- Royal Military College, Duntroon, ACT – location of the Australian Army Officer Training Establishment;
- Holsworthy Barracks - Currently home to 2nd Commando Regiment, 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR), 17 Signals Regiment and 6th Aviation Regiment.
- Blamey Barracks (Kapooka), Wagga Wagga, NSW – location of the Army Recruit Training Centre;
- RAAF bases at Richmond, Wagga Wagga and Williamstown;
- Fleet Base East/Garden island; and
- RMC and ADFA/ ADF officer training.

Queensland

Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs is:

- Mr Simon Finn MP - Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Industrial Relations with special responsibility for Veterans' Affairs
Member for Yeerongpilly

The key ADF locations in Queensland include:

- Gallipoli Barracks Enoggera – location of HQ 7th Brigade has around 4500 ADF personnel on base;
- RAAF Base Amberley – has around 2200 ADF personnel on base; and
- Lavarack Barracks Townsville – location of HQ 3rd Brigade has around 4500 ADF personnel on base. Between November 2009 and April 2010 approximately 1200 Townsville troops returned from Afghanistan and East Timor.

Red Cross/Greenslopes Private Hospital

Since 1941 the Australian Red Cross (ARC) has occupied Commonwealth land opposite the Greenslopes Hospital and funded the construction of two buildings. Title is vested with the Repatriation Commission. There are heritage and zoning restrictions on the land as well as extensive asbestos in the buildings. There is also a considerable risk with the level of asbestos so close to a major hospital. Discussions are underway regarding a possible 99 year lease for the ARC for this land.

South Australia

A portfolio of SA Minister for Veterans Affairs was established in April 2008, following an announcement from the SA Premier that there were requests from Ex-Service Organisations for such a position to be established. The current SA Minister for Veterans' Affairs is:

- the Hon Jack Snelling MP Member for Playford

In December 2008 the then SA Minister for Veteran's Affairs announced the creation of the South Australian Veterans' Advisory Council. The council is chaired by Sir Eric Neal (former Governor of SA), includes representatives from a number of key Ex-Service Organisations within the State and it's purpose on a State level is three-fold:

1. provide advice to the SA Minister for Veterans' Affairs;
2. help take the views of ex-servicemen and women and their families directly to the Cabinet table; and
3. promote the wellbeing of the veteran community, encourage cooperation between veteran organisations and offer advice on commemorations.

A South Australian Veterans' Health Committee has also been created. This committee advises the SA Health Minister on veteran related health matters. It is chaired by Mr Jock Statton, President, RSL SA Sub-Branch.

The key ADF locations in South Australia include:

- RAAF Base Edinburgh which is home of 10 and 11 Squadrons, P3 Orions, which have seen service in the Middle East. 7RAR is in the process of relocating from Darwin to Edinburgh. It is anticipated that a majority of members will have seen Middle East service.

Western Australia

There is no State Government Minister for Veterans' Affairs in Western Australia.

The key ADF locations in Western Australia include:

- Fleet Base West – ½ RAN surface fleet and all RAN submarine fleet; and
- Campbell Barracks SASR – continual overseas deployment.

Tasmania

Tasmanian Minister for Veteran Affairs is:

- The Hon Bryan Green MP

He is assisted by the Tasmanian Veterans' Advisory Council (TVAC) which was formed on 1 September 2009 at the request of local Ex-Service Organisations. TVAC consists of Department of Premier and Cabinet staff, Ex-service members and interested community volunteers. Ex-service members and community members do not represent Ex-Service Organisations.

TVAC provide advice and support to the Tasmanian Government, through the Tasmanian Minister for Veterans' Affairs, on issues including:

- strategies to promote the wellbeing of all ex-service community members;
- providing a forum for the ex-service community to communicate directly with the Government through the Minister for Veterans' Affairs;
- encouraging cooperation across all veterans' organisations in Tasmania; and
- recognition and commemoration of the service of veterans.

Reserve Forces dominate the ADF presence in Tasmania supported by a small Permanent Force and Defence Public Service.

- Anglesea Barracks – Hobart;
- Patterson Barracks – Launceston; and
- Derwent Barracks – Glenorchy.

Tasmania has the only DVA staffed Day Centre in Australia. The Alice Elliott Day Centre currently provides day respite to 76 clients.

Northern Territory

There is no Minister for Veterans' Affairs in the Northern Territory.

The key ADF locations in the Northern Territory include:

- Robertson Barracks Darwin – location of 1st Brigade which is one of three deployable Brigades in Australia from which the bulk of overseas deployments come on a rotational basis (the other Brigades are located in

Brisbane and Townsville) The last major deployment of Darwin-based troops was in 2008-09 and the next will commence in the second half of this year;

- Darwin Naval Base – home of the Patrol Boat Group which is responsible for Australia’s border security; and
- RAAF Tindal (near Katherine) – the largest F/A-18 unit in Australia.

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1.7. Veterans Service Centre (VSC) – Phase 2

Background

The Veterans' Service Centre (VSC) is DVA's call contact centre. It consists of staffing groups in Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth DVA Offices and handles incoming calls from clients located in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Northern Territory and Tasmania. These staff work to the Deputy Commissioner in their respective location. There is also a small team who respond to general enquiry emails based in Tasmania working to the Deputy Commissioner. The VSC is supported nationally by a small team reporting to the Deputy Commissioner Queensland. National support is essential to ensure a consistent approach, as the VSC operates on one national call routing system which direct calls to the next available staff member regardless of where the call originates.

The VSC covers the full range of DVA services and benefits, some in more depth than others, but along with the Veterans' Affairs Network (VAN) offices it experiences the most diverse interaction with our client groups.

Prior to the establishment of the VSC, all capital city DVA Offices had a switchboard where staff answered all calls and transferred them to the most appropriate business area. DVA implemented the VSC in response to the growing number of clients who prefer to use the telephone to contact the Department. It was vital DVA found a consistently effective, nationwide approach to helping clients who telephone. More than 70% of contacts by clients with the Department is by telephone.

Phase 1 of the VSC was launched in May 2007, to handle incoming calls to DVA from clients in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. In March 2009, all Tasmanian general enquiry calls, together with a component of general enquiry calls to the Sydney and Brisbane DVA Office Switchboards, were redirected to the VSC.

The VSC was a very significant change in the way DVA conducted business. There is still work to be done in consolidating a call centre that works on behalf of all areas of DVA, and to maximise the linkages between our business practices and how we handle client enquiries.

Planning is underway to expand the VSC coverage of incoming calls to include all of the calls currently being taken by the Sydney and Brisbane DVA Office Switchboard and this is scheduled to be implemented within the next six months.

In conjunction with the plan to expand the VSC is a plan to combine the staffing and client contact resources of the VAN offices with those of the VSC to provide a greater, more flexible pool of trained staff available to support the veteran community. This model will respond to issues faced by the VSC and VANs, including jobs variety and enhanced job satisfaction, reduced client mobility, changes in communication methods, and maximising resources while providing a sustainable option for the future direction of veteran contact.

Current Position

The VSC aims to answer telephone calls and resolve issues, at the first point of contact, without the need for a call to be transferred. More than 75 percent of calls received by the VSC are resolved at the first point of contact and the rate of

abandoned calls is less than 5 percent. The VSC currently answers around 420,000 general enquiry calls and responds to around 6,000 emails annually. This volume will double when the VSC is taking all Queensland and New South Wales calls. VSC staff use the Client Contact Facility (CCF) which keeps a record of contacts and send tasks to other business areas in the Department resulting from information received through calls.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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1.8. Complaints and Feedback Handling

Background

Concerns were raised from the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office and the ANAO regarding DVA's complaints and feedback management process, including DVA's ability to track and record feedback. Funding was sought and approved for a complaints management team, an IT upgrade of the feedback recording system and training for staff.

In 2009-10 there were 1593 complaints and 567 compliments recorded. This is still a very positive outcome from the many millions of overall client transactions.

Current Position

From 1 July 2010, following on from training in the system and information sessions outlining staff obligations as per the newly developed Complaints and Feedback Management policy, staff began using an updated complaints and feedback recording system.

It is expected that the advent of the complaints management project, together with the improved awareness and promotion of DVA's complaints and feedback management system will result in an increase in complaints and compliments. However, the department is now more confident that staff are capturing and responding to feedback. This increased attention will enable DVA to continue to highlight and rectify possible inconsistencies in policy application and, consequently, service delivery.

At the end of 2010, feedback data for the first six months will be scrutinised and analysed. This type of analysis (which to date has not been available) will be conducted regularly to identify emerging issues or trends, further allowing DVA to improve service delivery.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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1.9. Veterans' Satisfaction Survey

Background

Veterans' Satisfaction Surveys have been undertaken every few years since 1995. Results have always been around 90-95% satisfied. In 2005, a decision was made to survey an under 45 age group separately.

Current Position

The Veterans' Satisfaction Surveys for the General Client Group and Under 45 Clients were conducted in March and April 2010 by Ipsos-Eureka Social Research Institute. The General Satisfaction Survey consisted of a questionnaire mailed to 5,045 clients in the health card holder, income support, and rehabilitation and compensation client groups. Survey recipients had the option of returning completed forms by mail or calling Ipsos-Eureka to respond over the phone. In total, 1,718 surveys were completed.

With DVA providing services and support to an increasing number of younger clients, the Department is using the survey process, as well as feedback from interviews with specific clients groups to assist with the re-design of its service delivery arrangements. An example of where this is occurring is in the support that the Department provides to young widow/ers and dependants of deceased ADF members. Further detail on how DVA is improving services to this group and on enhancements to services for an emerging younger client group is provided in Section 1, Brief 8.1.

The research for the Under 45 Veterans' Satisfaction Survey consisted of a quantitative telephone survey of 1,028 clients in the SRCA, MRCA and VEA client groups. In addition, a series of follow-up group discussions and depth interviews were conducted in Sydney, Brisbane and Canberra. These discussion involved a total of 16 participants.

In general, satisfaction has remained consistent with surveys held in 2008. The General Client Survey returned a satisfaction of 93%, with a 4% neutral response and 3% dissatisfaction response. The Survey of Clients Under 45 years old achieved a satisfaction of 55%, with a 23% neutral response and 22% dissatisfaction response.

In addition to the above surveys, this year the Client Liaison Unit (CLU) conducted structured telephone interviews with 13 recent Australian Defence Force (ADF) Widows who had been excluded from the Clients Under 45 years old survey program due to perceived heightened sensitivities among recent ADF Widow/ers and the developing nature of service delivery to this group. The CLU results provide clear directions for service delivery improvements.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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1.10. Story Writing and Art Competition (SWAC)

Background

Commencing in 1962 in Victoria, the Story Writing and Art Competition (SWAC) is now in its 48th year. It was originally a writing therapy exercise for returned soldiers at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital. It has since been expanded to include poetry, art, craft and photography. Last year, the competition attracted over 600 entries from some 300 entrants across Victoria. The Patron of SWAC is MAJGEN David McLachlan AO (Retd), RSL State President, Victorian Branch.

Each year the competition provides members of the Victorian veteran community with an opportunity to develop and apply their creative talents and skills to have their stories and other artistic endeavours publicly acknowledged. With agreement of the entrants, the true war time experience category stories are forwarded to the Australian War Memorial for encrypting and storage. A copy of the book, *BRAVO!*, which records the winning entries and is published annually, is sent to all participants, sponsors and the Victorian State Library.

Funding for SWAC has been raised through sponsorship provided by Victorian ex-service organisations and the corporate sector. Major sponsors of the SWAC include the RSL (Victorian Branch), Austin Health and 'Magic 1278' radio station. The Department of Veterans' Affairs funds the co-ordination of the activity and provides some administrative support.

Current Position

The SWAC is an annual competition for eligible members of Victoria's ex-service community and their families, and is unique to Victoria. There are a range of categories within each discipline to encourage the participation from as wide a cross section of the veteran community as possible.

The competition is overseen by a steering committee comprising a range of ex-service organisation representatives and chaired by a senior Departmental representative.

This year's competition commenced on 1 April with last entries being received on 30 July. A public exhibition of the entries is scheduled from 4-10 October along with a Prize Presentation Ceremony on 25 November. Some 200 veterans attend each of these functions.

Action Required

The Minister is invited to attend and speak at the Exhibition Launch and/or The Prize Presentation Ceremony, which are held at Austin Health's Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital campus.

Critical Dates

Exhibition Launch – Thursday 30 September at 2.00pm

Prize Presentation Ceremony – Thursday 25 November at noon.

Contact Officer

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DRAFT

2. SUPPORT DIVISION

2.1. F-111 Deseal/Reseal Parliamentary Inquiry Report Implementation

Background

Board of Inquiry

The Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) 24 F-111 aircraft, Australia's primary air strike weapon over the past four decades, required significant fuel tank repair and maintenance work from initial delivery in 1973. Repair work was carried out between 1973 - 2000 by F-111 fuel tank maintenance workers – primarily in formal deseal/reseal programs commencing in 1977, but also through ad hoc maintenance.

In 2000 the Chief of Air Force commissioned a Board of Inquiry (BOI) to examine an unusually high number of workers reporting health issues alleged to be related to chemicals used in the deseal/reseal process. The BOI researched over 1.5 million documents covering a period of 27 years and took statements from over 650 individuals. The BOI produced 53 recommendations, all of which were accepted by the RAAF.

In response to the BOI, in September 2001 Defence established an Interim Health Care Scheme (IHCS) that provided health care for a broad range of people who considered themselves potentially affected by the deseal/reseal activities, pending the outcome of a health study (see below). The IHCS was funded by Defence and administered by DVA. Access to the IHCS required the person to submit a claim for compensation. Funding for this scheme transferred to DVA in 2007.

Health Study

Also in 2001, the RAAF commissioned the Department to undertake a Study of Health Outcomes in Aircraft Maintenance Personnel (SHOAMP) on its behalf. This was conducted by the University of Newcastle whose Study findings were reported in 2004. The SHOAMP found an association between deseal/reseal involvement and a range of conditions, including depression, anxiety, subjective memory impairment and erectile dysfunction. There was also evidence, albeit less compelling, of an association between deseal/reseal involvement and dermatitis, obstructive lung disease and neuropsychological deficits.

2004-2005 Government Response

In December 2004 the then Ministers for Defence and Veterans' Affairs jointly announced a Government response to the SHOAMP findings, offering: a lump sum benefit to those affected by the exposure; and provision of a cancer and health screening and disease prevention program (later renamed the Better Health Program).

In August 2005, the Ministers announced further that the IHCS was to be replaced with the SHOAMP Health Care Scheme (SHCS) with modifications to the list of conditions covered, to align with the SHOAMP findings. Access to the SHCS still required submission of a claim for compensation and this allowed health care to be provided prior to finalisation of the claim. Details of the lump-sum payment scheme (ex-gratia payments) were also announced, with lump sums for those who had participated in the formal RAAF deseal/reseal programs, in acknowledgement of their 'unique working environment' (rather than because of any illness sustained).

Affected workers were classified into three ‘Tiers’ designating exposure levels or types of work, with Tier 1 participants receiving a payment of \$40,000 and Tier 2 participants receiving \$10,000. Tier 3 personnel do not receive a payment but like Tier 1 and 2 personnel were eligible to claim health care under the SHCS.

Also as part of the 2005 response, the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) invoked subsection 7(2) of the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA), thus providing a more beneficial standard of proof to Tier 1, 2 and 3 F-111 workers, in accepting liability for any of the 31 SHOAMP-related conditions without the claimant having to prove a causal link to service.

DVA implemented the 2005 Response, however, there was disaffection within the deseal/reseal community, especially amongst the ‘pick and patch’ workers (those who did fuel tank maintenance work outside of the formal programs) about the Response and its administration by the Department. The deseal/reseal workers were represented by a Deseal/Reseal Support Group which actively lobbied for a better response.

Parliamentary Inquiry 2008 to 2009

The Labor Government undertook at the 2007 Election to conduct an inquiry into the adequacy of the health, compensation and ex-gratia payment scheme for F-111 deseal/reseal workers and their families.

The Defence Sub-committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade conducted the Inquiry in 2008 and into the first half of 2009. The Inquiry handed down its report *Sealing a just outcome: Report from the Inquiry into RAAF F-111 Deseal/Reseal workers and their families* on 25 June 2009.

The Parliamentary Inquiry report made 18 recommendations relating to:

- health care and support for RAAF fuel tank entry maintenance workers and families;
- extending access to compensation using the provisions of sub-section 7(2) of SRCA;
- extending the ex-gratia payment scheme to all F-111 fuel tank entry maintenance workers, rather than just those in the formal RAAF deseal/reseal programs;
- occupational health and safety issues specific to Defence and the Australian Defence Forces; and
- continuing statistical analysis and review of health issues affecting personnel, and medical research to help understand the underlying factors for these medical conditions.

2010 Government Response

The previous Government announced in the May 2010 Budget a package of \$55 million over four years in response to the Inquiry Report.

The Government accepted 14 of the 18 recommendations.

Recommendations 3, 4, 5 and 6, relating to expanding eligibility for ex-gratia payments, were rejected on the grounds that such payments were a “simplistic lump sum payment solution” which did not make payments based upon need and hence compensated some who were not suffering from any adverse health conditions.

While the Response maintained the exclusion of Tier 3 personnel from the ex-gratia scheme, it did expand the definition of eligible personnel under Tier 3 to provide more personnel access to coverage under the SRCA sub-section 7(2) for the 31 SHCS conditions. This allows for an estimated additional 2,400 personnel, including the 'pick and patch' workers (those who did fuel tank maintenance work outside of the formal programs) and other trades, to seek compensation under SRCA and health care under the SHCS if their health has been adversely affected by one or more of the SHOAMP conditions.

To enable easier access to health care and compensation, the requirements for evidence to support claims were broadened, through the development of guidelines enabling statutory declarations to be considered as part of formal evidence. This facilitates the claims process for those whose official work-related records are unavailable. Also, registrations for the SHCS which initially closed on 20 September 2005, have been reopened from 11 May 2010.

Post 2010 Budget Progress

DVA is progressing reconsiderations of some 500 previously-rejected applications to determine Tier status. As at 31 August 2010, 364 claims have been reconsidered, with four being granted Tier 1 status, two Tier 2 status, 282 Tier 3 status and 76 found to have no Tier entitlement. In tandem, some 85 new Tier claims have been lodged with DVA since the implementation of the new F-111 measure announced in May 2010, and of these two have been accepted as Tier 1, three as Tier 3 and two have been found to have no entitlement.

A dedicated F-111 website, jointly hosted by DVA and Defence, was launched on Budget night 2010. The website provides comprehensive information on all F-111 matters and is updated weekly.

A press and radio advertising campaign started in early July 2010 but was suspended part-way through due to the calling of the election. The campaign was targeting the south-east and north Queensland areas, to encourage former F-111 maintenance workers to come forward to claim compensation and health care.

The Department has committed to holding regular meetings (every six weeks) with the Deseal/Reseal Support Group and other interested ESO representatives, to consult with them on implementation of the accepted recommendations and the review process being undertaken. The third such meeting was held on 12 August and it is anticipated that they will continue until December 2010, by which time most recommendations should have been fully implemented.

Current Position

In May 2010 the previous Government accepted 14 of the 18 recommendations of the 2009 Parliamentary Inquiry Report into RAAF F-111 Deseal/Reseal workers and their families. Implementation of these 14 recommendations started with the 2010 Budget announcement of 11 May 2010. DVA is responsible for implementing 10 recommendations, Department of Defence, three, and DVA-Defence jointly, one.

Action Required

For information. The reports, any background papers or briefing on implementation can be provided if necessary.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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DRAFT

2.2. Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Grants Program

Background

The BEST grants program provides funding to ESOs for pensions, compensation and welfare work to assist veterans, their dependants and past and present members of the Australian Defence Force and their families.

BEST aims to promote access to a range of welfare services and to improve the quality of pension and compensation claims. ESOs must be incorporated under the relevant State or Territory legislation or be sponsored by an incorporated ESO to be eligible for funding.

The Department encourages ESOs operating in the same region to adopt a co-operative approach to providing services to clients. This is expected to increase both their efficiency and their effectiveness, and to enable the Government to better target funding for areas of high need. The Department is aware that, particularly in regional or remote areas, co-operative arrangements are not always possible to establish. Therefore, each application is considered on its merits in the context of published funding priorities. Funding is available for:

- employment of advocates, pensions officers and welfare practitioners and support staff by ESOs;
- computer software and hardware; and
- consumables and ongoing running costs.

A BEST grant is intended to be a contribution to ESO costs in providing services to the veteran and defence communities. It is not to offset all costs and ESOs are expected to provide in-kind or other support to their pension, advocate and welfare officers, where they have the capacity to do so.

There is one funding round each financial year. Applications for funding for the following financial year are lodged from 15 January to 28 February.

Funding of \$4.817million was available for the 2010-11 BEST funding round. There were 231 applications requesting funding of \$8.032 million and 184 grants totalling \$3.917 million were approved.

Funding priorities

A set of priorities are used to decide which eligible applications to fund. The funding priorities for Round 12 (2010-11 financial year) are to support ESOs that:

1. can demonstrate a reasonably clear link between the funding sought and the demographics, geographical location and service needs of the veteran population to be assisted;
2. do not seek more funding than the total amount approved in the last Round of funding granted - with the possible exception of a salary increase to current Australian Public Service (APS) rates;
3. have a co-operative approach to service delivery; and
4. can demonstrate that support from an ESO, an ex-service club or from other sources (either financial or "in-kind") is being provided or is being sought.

Grant is approvals

Applications are considered by the Department's staff who make recommendations to you for decision. If you approve a grant, the applicant is informed by you in writing of the funding amount. The applicant is required to sign documentation, defining the terms and conditions of accepting the grant. The signed documentation must be received by the Department before the grant can be paid. The method of payment is by direct payment into the applicant's bank account.

Organisations are required to acquit the grant following the conclusion of the grant year. An acquittal form and guidelines is provided for this purpose to all successful applicants.

Information about all successful grants is published on the DVA Website within seven days of the grant agreement being signed by both parties.

If a grant is not approved, a letter of explanation is provided by the Department, inviting the applicant to discuss the reason for rejection in more detail, if required.

Ministerial requirements

The previous Government introduced a number of grants-specific processes including, decision-making and reporting requirements applying to agencies and Ministers. These mandatory requirements are in addition to the general requirements of the FMA Act and FMA Regulations.

Current Position

The bulk of the Round 12 BEST grants were approved on 4 June 2010. The three remaining applications required additional information and were approved on 19 July 2010.

Round 12 saw the introduction of:

- a second pass assessment of all Round 12 applications; and
- a process for applicants to request a Review of the Minister's decision.

The second pass assessment process is being finalised and a separate brief will be provided with the department's recommendations before the end of September 2010. Ten requests for Review of Decision have been received to date and they will also be submitted to you for your consideration before the end of this month.

Action Required

Nil at this time.

Critical Dates

As soon as possible for the second pass assessments and Requests for the review of decision to provide funding for affected ESOs the 2010-11 financial year.

December 2010 – Applications will open for Round 13 (2011-12) BEST Grants.

Contact Officers

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DRAFT

2.3. Long Tan Bursary

Background

The Long Tan Bursary (LTB) scheme was established in August 2000 in response to the findings of the Vietnam Veterans' Health Study that children of Vietnam veterans had a higher rate of suicide than the general population. It was preceded by the Vietnam Veterans Trust Education Assistance Scheme (VVTEAS), set up and administered by ESOs to disburse some of the funds of the Agent Orange Product Liability litigation in the United States. The VVTEAS was a means and merit-based program to help veterans' children with the costs of full-time post secondary education.

The LTB scheme is open to students in needy circumstances who are either planning to enrol or are already enrolled in tertiary education in Australia, in an approved course of one or more academic year's duration, including vocational courses.

Applications for LTB open annually on 18 August and close 31 October for the following academic year. Each year, fifty bursaries totalling \$450,000 are available across Australia but additional bursaries can be granted where funding allows. Further bursaries can be allocated where funds allow.

The number of bursaries and funding for the past three years are:

Year	No. of Bursaries	Funds Allocated \$
2008	50	450,000
2009	56	504,000
2010	56	504,000

Since 2003 the Scheme has been administered by the Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust (the Trust), a registered organisation sponsored by principal ESOs. Through a tender process, the Trust was recently selected to administer the LTB Scheme until 1 July 2013.

The Trust provides a list of recommended applicants to the Repatriation Commission for approval. Formal presentations to congratulate and publicly recognise the achievement of all LTB recipients are held in all States and Territories from April through until July each year and are organised jointly by the Department and the Trust.

We will discuss with your office your availability to attend and present the next group of certificates to Bursary recipients as the timeframe for the presentation ceremonies in 2011 approaches. The nature of and order of events at the presentation ceremonies will also be discussed with your office closer to the time.

Current Position

The LTB scheme provides bursaries of up to \$9,000 over three years to the children of Vietnam veterans to assist them with the cost of higher education. This year, 56 bursaries have been provided.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Date

Nil. The next series of presentation ceremonies will commence in mid-2011.

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DRAFT

2.4. Clarke Review

Background

In 2002 an independent Review of Veterans' Entitlements was undertaken by Justice John Clarke. This Review is often referred to as the Clarke Review. It made 109 recommendations in its report provided to the then Government in January 2003.

The Government responded to the review in May 2004 providing a package of measures costing at \$267m over five years.

In the 2007 election the Labor Party committed to revisiting the Clarke Review recommendations not accepted by the previous Government. The Review was initiated in September 2008 with submissions called by 1 December 2008. The Review was conducted by the Department over 2008 and 2009. 45 recommendations were carefully examined.

In consultation with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, various Government agencies and the Ex-Service Organisation Roundtable, the Department examined over 470 submissions received from the public as part of the revisitation process. On 11 May 2010, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs announced the Government's response to the revisitation of the *2003 Clarke Review of Veterans' Entitlements* (Clarke Review).

A total of \$36 million over four years has been committed to the response on the unimplemented Clarke recommendations. These measures are:

- Access to compensation and health care treatment under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) for former Australian defence personnel who participated in the British Nuclear Tests programs in Australia, with claims to be decided under the more generous 'reasonable hypothesis' standard of proof:
 - To date, approximately 20 claims have been received, mostly from widows;
 - The Department has prepared a suite of information products.
- Providing VEA access by classifying service by personnel on certain submarine special operations during the period 1978-92 as both qualifying and operational service:
 - Approximately 40 claims for a qualifying service determination have been received to date, with no claims for disability pension;
 - The Department has prepared a suite of information products;
 - The Department has been working with Navy on the provision of the necessary individual service information.
- Reducing the age of domicile of choice from 21 to 18 for British Commonwealth and Allied Veterans:
 - Only one claim has been received to date.
- Removing entitlement to claim for widow/ers who enter into a de facto relationship after the death of the veteran, aligning the provisions with those who remarry. This initiative will come into effect on 1 October 2010.

Although it was not a part of the revisitation of the Clarke Review, Australian Defence Force (ADF) service in Ubon, Thailand between 31 May 1962 and 27 July 1962 has also been reclassified from operational service to qualifying service as a result of a Defence Nature Service Review. The legislation referred to above contained the provisions for this initiative. The instrument of allotment that is now

necessary to give effect to this legislative change in classification has been signed by the Vice Chief of the Defence Force. As of mid August, the Department has received twenty claims relating to this reclassification of service.

Current Position

The Department is currently implementing the 2010 Budget measures which resulted from the Government's 2007 election commitment to revisit the unimplemented recommendations of the Clarke Review. Of the 45 original Clarke recommendations revisited by Government, three had been accepted earlier and already acted upon, an additional four were accepted, 12 rejected, four deferred, and a further 22 referred for consideration under the current review of Military Compensation Arrangements.

The *Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (2010 Budget Measures) Act 2010* which gave effect to the four accepted recommendations received Royal Assent on 29 June 2010. The Department is in the final stages of updating relevant materials and procedural guides to assist delegates with processing claims relating to the new eligibility measures, a small number of which have been received to date.

The Government deferred response to four recommendations. These recommendations relate to:

- the service of the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces (BCOF) during the period of 21 February 1946 to 30 June 1947 (two recommendations);
- the clearance of enemy wartime ordnance in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Pacific Islands, with a view to making a determination on such activities as non-warlike hazardous service; and
- service by ADF improvised explosive device disposal (IEDD) personnel in IEDD incidents be deemed non-warlike hazardous service.

Defence's Nature of Service Branch has commenced a review of the ordnance-disposal and IEDD matters [REDACTED]

As indicated above, the previous government decided to defer making a decision in relation to BCOF until after the August 2010 election. No election commitments were made in relation to BCOF by either party. It should be noted that the Repatriation Commission has considered this matter in depth and has concluded that there is no strong evidence that would support BCOF service being reclassified as Qualifying Service.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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2.5. Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA) - Benefits for Widows, Widowers and Eligible Dependants

Background

Members of the Australian Defence Force are covered by the MRCA, which provides a comprehensive range of benefits in the event of service-related injury, illness or death where the injury, illness or death relates to service on or after 1 July 2004.

Eligibility

Dependants as defined under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) are entitled to benefits where:

- the member's death has been accepted as being related to service;
- the deceased member was at some time during his or her life eligible for the Special Rate of Disability Pension; or
- the deceased member was at some time during his or her life assessed as having an impairment rating of 80 or more impairment points as a result of accepted injuries or illnesses.

A dependant must be among a class of persons listed in the MRCA and must have been wholly or partially economically dependent on the member at the time of death. This latter requirement is assumed to be met where a partner or eligible young person was living with the member at the time of death.

The list of eligible dependants includes:

- (i) the member's partner;
 - (ii) a parent or step-parent of the member;
 - (iii) a parent or step-parent of the member's partner;
 - (iv) a grandparent of the member;
 - (v) a child or stepchild of the member;
 - (vi) a child or stepchild of the member's partner;
 - (vii) a grandchild of the member;
 - (viii) the member's brother, sister, half-brother or half-sister; or
- (b) a person in respect of whom the member stands in the position of a parent; or
- (c) a person who stands in the position of a parent to the member.

There are also special definitions for eligible young persons (dependant of a member who is under 16 years or under 25 years and in full-time education) and for wholly dependent partners. These definitions provide different benefits as outlined below.

Benefits as at 1 July 2010

Benefits payable under the MRCA to widowed partners and eligible dependants are not means tested and are non-taxable and include:

- Either a lifetime periodic payment of \$354.80 per week to the wholly dependent partner (which is equal to the war widow's pension under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA)). An additional "MRCA supplement" of \$6.00 per fortnight will be paid separately unless an equivalent supplement is already being received as part of an income support payment; or
- The lifetime equivalent of the weekly payments as a lump sum based on the widow's age at the date of member's death (currently a maximum of \$597,447.72), plus a MRCA supplement.

- A maximum age-based tax free additional death benefit of \$125,319.80 payable to a wholly dependent partner when the death is directly related to service;
- Lump sum compensation of \$75,191.88 for the benefit of each dependent child;
- Ongoing weekly benefits of \$82.71 for each dependant child while they remain an “eligible young person” (this is generally until they are 16 years of age or up to 25 years of age if they remain in full-time education);
- A Gold Card for medical treatment for the wholly dependent partner and dependent children (while they remain an eligible young person);
- Compensation for journey and accommodation costs relating to treatment;
- Up to \$1,503.83 for a wholly dependent partner for the cost of obtaining financial advice on how best to handle financial affairs and compensation options;
- Funeral expenses of up to \$10,138.75 (unless funeral expenses are paid by the Department of Defence);
- Bereavement payments for 12 weeks at the rate of the member’s weekly permanent impairment and incapacity/Special Rate Disability Pension amounts prior to their death;
- Education assistance with each dependant child's education (The primary education rate is \$227.10 per year. Secondary/tertiary rates range from \$23.35 per week for a student aged under 16 and living at home up to a maximum \$188.50 per week for those aged 16 to 25 years, who are forced to live away from home for educational purposes);
- DVA paid benefits are subject to increases through regular indexation;
- The benefits for widows and widowers are not taxable;
- The benefits for dependant children made because of the death of the member are not taxable;
- The educational assistance benefits for dependant children are not taxable until after age 16;
- These benefits are payable in addition to any payments received from claims made under private insurance policies;
- Individuals may also be entitled to death benefits from Commonwealth superannuation. There is no interaction between the benefits available under the MRCA and superannuation entitlements from ComSuper; and
- Dependants are offered continuing advice and assistance by the Australian Defence Force (ADF), the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (up to five sessions per person) and by staff in the Department who deal with claims for compensation.

Interaction between MRCA benefits and Common Law action.

In the event that a widow/er pursues Common Law action against the Commonwealth or a third party for the death of the member, there is a requirement to repay the amount of compensation received. In addition, regardless of whether or not the action is successful, the widow/er will not be entitled to receive any further compensation from DVA in relation to the death. This includes access to medical treatment and so the Gold Card(s) will be recalled.

Action required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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DRAFT

2.6. Extension of War Widows Pension

Background

Over many years, there have been requests from some ex-service organisations to extend and make more generous the current provisions concerning eligibility for support for widows of veterans.

Longstanding policy across many Governments has been that a war widow's pension is paid to compensate widowed partners of veterans who have died as a result of war service or eligible defence service or where the veteran was eligible for one of the higher rates of disability pension at the time of their death or was an ex-prisoner of war. The war widow's pension is not subject to means testing and is not taxable. All war widows are issued with a Gold Card.

To extend eligibility for the war widow's pension and Gold Card to partners of veterans irrespective of the current eligibility criteria, would contradict the principle of compensating widows for the loss of their veteran partners due to the effects of service. This principle has been a feature of the war widow's eligibility for the pension and Gold Card since its introduction and has been supported by successive governments.

The Clarke Review undertook comprehensive analysis of a number of issues concerning eligibility for the war widow's pension. The Review did not recommend that war widow's pension be extended to the widows of veterans whose death was not service related. The then Government accepted the recommendations of the Review in this area which meant the longstanding approach was maintained.

In terms of Gold Cards for widows of veterans, the Clarke Review considered that the provision of the Gold Card where there is no relationship between the veteran's service and their death is not in keeping with the philosophy underpinning the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA). The Committee recommended that the Gold Card not be extended to all widows of veterans and the VEA continue to provide the Gold Card only to widows eligible for a war or defence widow's pension. The Rudd Government committed to revisiting the unimplemented recommendations of the Clarke Review but the issue of extending eligibility for war widow's pension was out of scope of the revisitation of unimplemented recommendations.

The average annual cost of a Gold Card over the next 12 months is expected to be around \$20,400 per person (those over 70 years of age). As at January 2010 there were approximately 156,400 widows of veterans without the Gold Card. To extend the Gold Card to these widows there would be an additional estimated cost of \$12.7 billion over four years.

Current Position

There have been calls over a long period that a war widow's pension and Gold Card be automatically available to a widow, regardless of whether or not the veteran's death was service related.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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DRAFT

2.7. Family Study Program

Background

In August 2007, the Australian Government announced \$13.5 million for DVA to establish the Family Study Program (FSP), an ongoing research program, originally expected to run between 2008 and 2016, to assess the impact of service on the health and welfare of the families of deployed personnel. The first study launched under the Program involves Vietnam veterans and the second study involves those deployed to Timor-Leste.

The FSP is supported by an Independent Scientific Advisor (ISA) and a single Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) that is chaired by the ISA, and a Consultative Forum (CF) for each of the studies currently underway.

The ISA is Professor Bryan Rodgers, a Professor at the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute (ADSRI) at the Australian National University. As well as providing advice to the FSP, Professor Rodgers Chairs the SAC. The SAC members are:

- Professor Ilan Katz (Social Policy Research Unit, The University of NSW);
- Dr Paul Jelfs, (Assistant Statistician, Social Analysis and Reporting Branch Australian Bureau of Statistics);
- Dr Lyndall Strazdins (Fellow, National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, The Australian National University); and
- Professor Elizabeth Waters (Jack Brockhoff Chair of Child Public Health, Melbourne School of Population Health, The University of Melbourne).

The ISA and SAC provide advice on scientific matters related to the conduct of FSP studies. After a study is completed, the SAC will approve a draft of the Final Report which will be presented to you through the Repatriation Commission.

The CF for the Vietnam Veterans' Family Study (VVFS) is made up of people who have been nominated by a range of ex-service organisations to represent the interests of participant groups in the Study. This includes Vietnam veterans, Vietnam era veterans, and children and partners of these veterans.

The members of the CF provide comment to DVA on issues that need to be considered in relation to the various Study groups and consult with their organisations/constituents to ensure veteran and defence community perspectives are understood and considered during the study. The Forum acts as the conduit between the ex-service community, the SAC and DVA.

The CF for the Timor-Leste Family Study (TLFS) is made up of people who have been nominated by Defence and ex-service organisations to represent the interests of participant groups in the Study. This includes Defence Families Australia, the Defence Community Organisation, the Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Veterans' Association and the Returned and Services League of Australia.

The Repatriation Commissioner chairs both CFs.

Current Position

The FSP was established in 2007 to study the intergenerational effects of service on families. The VVFS and the TLFS have already commenced.

VVFS

The VVFS consists of a number of study tiers, each of which will deliver a report on completion. The first of these reports, the Re-Analysis of the Sons and Daughters Project, is finalised and is available on the DVA web site. The final over-arching VVFS report is expected to be delivered before the end of 2012.

The table below shows the number of registrations for the main groups invited to participate in the VVFS as at 30 August 2010:

	Vietnam Veterans	Children	Vietnam era	Vietnam era children
Invited	10,000	N/A	10,000	N/A
Minimum target	3,000	1,800	3,000	1,800
Registrations	3,995	3,711	4,056	2,203
% of minimum target	133	206	135	122

Registrations are above the minimum targets but there is a risk that not all will participate in the main survey which will occur during the latter third of 2010. To mitigate loss of participants, strategies have been put in place, including the shortening of the study timeframe from eight to four years with no compromise to the scientific validity of the study.

TLFS

The second focus of the FSP is the TLFS. The TLFS involves the recruitment of up to 8,000 current and ex-serving members who deployed to East Timor during the period from 1999 to 2005, and their families.

The Centre for Military and Veterans' Health (CMVH) has been contracted to conduct the TLFS. Major data collection for the study is due to begin shortly. While the study is focussed on the effects on the families of serving members it will still be necessary to collect participation consent information, family member contact details and family study data from the serving and ex-serving members. The study is due for completion in June 2011.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Next critical date is the distribution of VVFS main study questionnaires before the end of 2010.

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2.8. Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-service Matters (PMAC)

Background

As a result of a key Labor 2007 election commitment, on 6 September 2008 the then Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, and the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs jointly announced the establishment and membership of PMAC. Its role was to consider and advise the Prime Minister and Government on strategic and complex matters impacting on the ex-service and defence communities. It was also envisaged that PMAC would provide the ex-service community with a greater voice at the highest level.

PMAC Terms of Reference are at Attachment A. Details of the Chair and Members are at Attachment B.

Current Position

PMAC has been operational since October 2008. It has met on nine occasions and last met on 15 and 16 June 2010. The original membership has not changed nor has the Chair, Mr Allan Hawke AC.

Action Required

For information. A full brief on future considerations relating to PMAC, such as the timing of the any changes to membership as its initial term of appointment (three years) expires, will be provided by the end of September 2010.

Critical Dates

Current members have been advised that a tele/videoconference will be arranged as soon as possible after the Election to discuss the current Key Issues Paper on the Review of DVA-funded ESO Advocacy and Welfare Services as any commentary on the publicly available Paper is due by 30 September 2010.

Prior to the Election, the next face to face meeting was scheduled for 8 - 9 November 2010.

Contact Officer

Peta Stevenson

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PMAC Terms of Reference

The Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters is a body established to consider and advise the Prime Minister and Government on strategic and complex matters. Its aim is to:

- provide advice on major issues affecting the ex-service and defence communities with a view to facilitating a better future for members of these communities;
- review proposed legislation and its impact on the ex-service and defence communities, (where required);
- advise on ex-service matters which impact directly on the responsibilities of other government departments; and
- consider and assist the prioritising of issues raised or referred by the Prime Minister and/or the Minister.

The effectiveness of the Council will be reviewed periodically.

Membership

The Council will initially comprise 14 members appointed by the Minister, however, the number of members is at the discretion of the Minister.

Members are chosen primarily on the basis of merit and are required to possess an appropriate background, broad experience and an understanding of issues affecting the ex-service and defence communities. Other factors including geographical, gender, conflict, generation, capacity to contribute and ability to work with other members will be taken into account.

Members' terms of appointment will usually be for three years and be restricted to consecutive terms. Reappointment of members may be staggered to provide continuity.

Representatives of the Department and subject matter experts may attend Council meetings at the request of the Minister or the Chair as required by matters under consideration.

The Chair

The Chair, who will be appointed by the Minister, will be independent of ex-service organisations and the Department.

Referral of Matters

Matters may be referred via the Minister for the Council's consideration, by:

- the Prime Minister;
- the Minister;
- the Department, including consultative committees; and
- members of the ex-service and defence communities.

Working Groups

Where required, working groups or issue-specific forums may be established on a time-limited basis to support the work of the Council. These groups could co-opt additional and/or specific expertise to consider and advise on matters referred by the Council. Consultative committees of the Department may be used for this purpose where the matter relates to the specific focus of a committee.


Meetings

Council will meet face-to-face two or three times per year and if required, hold additional meetings via video or telephone conference.

Secretariat Support

Secretariat support will be provided by the Department.

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PMAC Chair and Members

Mr Allan Hawke AC- Chair (ACT)

Mr Allan Hawke's public service at senior levels includes past appointments as Secretary of the Departments of Veterans' Affairs, Transport and Regional Services and Defence and High Commissioner to New Zealand. Mr Hawke is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Public Administration, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. The Australian Financial Review's "Boss" Magazine, named him as one of Australia's top 30 true leaders in its inaugural list in 2001. Mr Hawke served a three year term as Chancellor of the ANU from 4 February 2006 and now serves on a range of public and private sector boards. He has conducted several Government enquiries, is also involved in charitable, community and sporting organisations and was appointed a Companion in the Order of Australia in the 2010 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Mr Frank Benfield (QLD)

Mr Benfield enlisted in the Australian Regular Army in 1963 and rendered operational service in Vietnam. His defence service was in all States of Australia and overseas in Singapore, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. Following discharge in 1983, he worked with the Royal Thai Navy Air Wing in Thailand from 1984 to 1987. Mr Benfield's involvement in advocacy and welfare needs of veterans began in the 1970s when he co-founded an Association to tend to the needs of Army Aviation veterans of the Vietnam conflict. He established and maintained an advocacy role for veterans of all conflicts as a member of the Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia and the Vietnam Veterans' Federation of Australia. Since 1999, Mr Benfield has been a part-time Services Member of the Veterans' Review Board (VRB).

Group Captain Robert Black (RETD) AM RFD (SA)

Group Captain Black served as a Medical Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force Reserve for 46 years including duty in Butterworth, Rwanda, Bougainville and East Timor. He is a Doctor of Medicine, has a Master of Surgery and is a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS). After post graduate surgical training and research he held Academic Appointments in Sheffield, Perth (WA), Edinburgh, and Adelaide. He served on committees of a number of Medical and Surgical organisations, was an examiner for the RACS, a Board member and Medical Staff Chairman at RGH Daw Park, and a member and Chairman of the Specialist Recognition Appeals Committee. He was a Senior Visiting Specialist at Daw Park for 23 years, conducted a self employed private surgical practice until 2004 and was appointed a Services Member of the VRB in 2006.

Hon Graham Edwards (WA)

Mr Edwards served in Vietnam as a member of the Assault Pioneer Platoon of 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment. During his time in Vietnam, Pte Edwards was wounded on two separate occasions. On the second occasion, both of his legs had to be amputated following a land mine explosion.

When Mr Edwards returned to civilian life, veterans' welfare became an important issue for him and he also moved into public affairs and State politics. After 14 years in State Parliament, seven as a Minister with various portfolio responsibilities, he entered Federal Parliament in 1998, being elected to the House of Representatives for the seat of Cowan in Western Australia. He retired from politics at the 2007 Federal Election and continues to maintain a strong and active involvement in defence, disability services and veterans' issues. Most recently, Mr Edwards has accepted a position as a member of the National Disability and Carer Council. Mr Edwards was recently appointed to the Council of the Australian War Memorial.

Mrs June Healy OAM (NSW)

Mrs June Healy (nee Davidson) was a member of the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corp (RAANC) in 1954 before enlisting in the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC) in 1960. She was posted as Adjutant/Quartermaster at 31 WRAAC Barrack Melbourne and in 1962 to WRAAC School as Adjutant (ARA).

Mrs Healy became a member of the WRAAC Association and has served as National President. She is a foundation member of the Defence Widows Support Group, a former National Secretary of the Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL) and former National President of the War Widows' Guild of Australia. She has been a board member of the Heart Foundation (ACT) Division, past National President of the Council on the Ageing (Australia) and is currently Deputy President of the ACT Branch of the RSL.

Commodore Nick Helyer MBE RANR (NSW)

Commodore Helyer is a Royal Australian Navy (RAN) veteran of the Vietnam conflict. He retired from the RAN in 2000 after 35 years in uniform, four with the Royal Navy and 31 with the RAN. He has been an active member of the Reserve ever since.

He is the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust and a Director of the Mission to Seafarers, Sydney. Commodore Helyer is also currently the NSW member on the Legacy Co-ordinating Council (National). Commodore Helyer's previous involvement with the ex-service community includes roles as past President and Director of Sydney Legacy. He is also Patron of three ex-RAN Ship Associations.

Warrant Officer Peter Hind OAM (QLD)

Warrant Officer Hind joined the Australian Army Medical Corps in 1965, serving in Vietnam in 1966 and 1967. He joined the Australian Air Force in 1970, serving in Malaysia between 1971 and 1979 as a laboratory technician. In 1996, Warrant Officer Hind was appointed Air Command Warrant Officer. This appointment included duties as protocol Warrant Officer for two Governors of NSW, HE Admiral Peter Sinclair and HE Mr Gordon Samuels. In January 2000, Warrant Officer Hind travelled to East Timor to work with Aid Medicale Internationale and Timor Aid to establish a pathology laboratory as a non-government organisation.

Warrant Officer Hind continues to regularly return to East Timor to train personnel and maintain his laboratory which is still operating today. In January 2001, Warrant Officer Hind rejoined the Air Force to act as pathology technical advisor to the F-111 aircraft Deseal/Reseal Board of Inquiry. In September 2001, he was appointed as the Chief of Air Force Advocate to support the affected members of the F-111 aircraft Deseal/Reseal program. During this time, Warrant Officer Hind coordinated the mitochondrial research program on F-111 maintenance workers on behalf of Air Force. Currently, Warrant Officer Hind is the Deputy Director of the Military Claims Liaison Office, assisting serving members with their claims for compensation.

Mr Kenneth Kipping AM (QLD)

Mr Kipping is a renowned consumer advocate and supporter of the Australian Defence Force who has nearly 40 years' experience in the financial services industry. Mr Kipping is a former Chairman of the Army Credit Union and was a consultant to the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Defence Housing Authority, PNG Defence Force and to the Tongan Government during the initial deployment to the Solomon Islands. Mr Kipping has visited deployments in Rwanda, Middle East, Bougainville and East Timor.

He was instrumental in structuring Defence Health Term Life and Accident Insurance, optional insurance programmes designed specifically for ADF members and their families. In 2007, Mr Kipping was appointed as the RSL representative to the Review of the DSH Insurance Scheme. He was appointed by Chief Defence Force as the inaugural Chairman of the Australian Defence Force Financial Services Consumer Council, working closely with ASIC, the ACCC and Defence Families Australia for the betterment of Defence members and their families. He is a Director of the RAR Foundation and Defence Holidays (NQ). He continues as a 20 plus year member of the NQ Defence Reserves Support Council.

Ms Gail MacDonell (NSW)

Ms MacDonell is the partner of a Vietnam veteran. Several years ago, Ms MacDonell decided to study psychology to gain insight into problems of families of veterans and has attained a Bachelor of Psychology (Honours). She is currently studying for her PhD (Psychology) at the University of New England, investigating the psycho-social well being of partners of Australian combat veterans and the interaction between this well being and health outcomes for the Veterans. Ms MacDonell is a well respected member of the Partners of Veterans Association (PVA), being their National Health and Education Development Officer, and represents both the PVA and PMAC on the department's National Mental Health Forum. Ms MacDonell has been working with veterans and their partners and families on a volunteer basis since 1997.

Ms Anne Pahl (VIC)

Ms Pahl joined the RAN in 1988 and saw Operational service on the HMAS Jervis Bay as part of Operation Solace in Somalia during 1992-93. In 1999, she transferred to the RAN Active Reserve as Chief Petty Officer with the Defence Force School of Signals Maritime Wing at HMAS Cerberus. Ms Pahl actively represents the interests of veterans, particularly younger veterans and current ADF serving members. Ms Pahl has been a Board Member of the Victorian RSL State Executive since September 2003, is the RSL National Representative on the department's Current and Former Members of the ADF - Emerging Issues Forum, chair of the Victorian State RSL Young Veterans Forum, and chair of the State RSL Veterans' Affairs Aged Care Consultative Committee. She is also a member of the Heidelberg Repatriation Veterans Centre / Veterans Psych Unit Project.

Mr Philip Pyke (TAS)

Mr Pyke is an active member of the Australian Army Reserve with the rank of Major. He has served in the Middle East and Iraq in 2003, the Commonwealth Games (2006), Malaysia, East Timor in 2008 and more recently in the Solomon Islands.

Mr Pyke has had an extensive role in Defence public affairs across the three services and, in civilian life, was a member of Tasmania Police until 2008 when he resigned to take up a media and communications position with the Catholic Archbishop of Hobart. Mr Pyke takes an active interest in the welfare of veterans and their families, especially Reservists.

He is a member of the RSL Tasmania and the Defence Reserves Association, and is the Tasmanian State President for the Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Veterans' Association.

Ms Donna Reggett (QLD)

Ms Reggett is the partner of a long serving RAAF veteran who served as a peacekeeper in Somalia and is also a daughter of a RAN veteran who served in Vietnam. She is the PMAC representative on the department's Operational Working Party (OWP). Ms Reggett has undertaken studies in Counselling and Mediation at the Southern Cross University and is trained under the Department's Training and Information Program (TIP) as a Level Three Advocate. She is actively involved in the veteran and ex-service community as a pensions and welfare advocate for a range of ex-service organisations in the Ipswich district.

Brigadier Keith Rossi (RETD) AM OBE RFD ED (VIC)

Brigadier Rossi served in the Australian Army from 1937 to 1976, progressing from the rank of Private to Brigadier. He served in the Australian Army during World War Two in the Middle East and South West Pacific Area and later in Vietnam. Brigadier Rossi joined the RSL in 1943 and since that time has been involved at the Sub-branch level on committees, as President and, at Branch level, State Senior Vice President, State Executive member and RSL Historian. Brigadier Rossi has been the RSL Representative on pilgrimages to Gallipoli, the Western Front and Greece, and Chief Marshal, Anzac Day Ceremonies. Brigadier Rossi was also involved in Legacy as a Legatee, on the Pensions Committee, Commemorations Committee and Youth Employment Committee. Brigadier Rossi is a member of the Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia (VVAA).

Brigadier Neil Weekes (RETD) AM MC (QLD)

Brigadier Weekes served with the 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, in South Vietnam in 1968 as a Platoon Commander, where he was awarded the Military Cross (MC) for gallantry. He remained with the Battalion for its tour in Malaysia and Singapore during 1969-1971. He subsequently served in postings in Papua New Guinea and Malaysia, and retired after 31 years in the Army. Brigadier Weekes is currently the Patron of the Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia (Townsville Branch), Patron of the National Servicemen's Association of Australia (Townsville Branch) and Patron of the Townsville Branch of the RSL. He is also the Chair of the North Australian Military Heritage Association.

2.9. Gold Card – World War Two Veterans Without Qualifying Service

Background

Over many years, there have been requests from some ex-service organisations to extend and make more generous the current eligibility criteria for the Gold Card to include those who do not have qualifying service. With respect to World War Two qualifying service means that the person has incurred danger from hostile forces of the enemy.

Since 1 January 1999 all World War Two veterans aged 70 or older with qualifying service have been eligible for the Gold Card. In July 2002, this provision was extended to include all those with qualifying service from post-World War Two conflicts.

The distinction between qualifying service and other service has been the foundation on which the service pension and related health benefits under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) have always been based. There is considerable support for maintaining the distinction between veterans who incurred danger from hostile forces of the enemy (and therefore are considered to have rendered qualifying service) and those who did not. There is widespread belief that those veterans who were exposed to harm from enemy forces have been affected by that service in ways not quantifiable and should be provided with additional assistance.

Veterans who do not have qualifying service can still be eligible for the Gold Card. For example, veterans whose disability pension entitlement is assessed at or above 100 per cent of the general rate are eligible for the Gold Card regardless of where they served.

The 2003 Review of Veterans' Entitlements (Clarke Review) recommended that 'the Gold Card should not be extended to further categories of World War 2 veterans of the Australian armed services' and this was accepted by the then Government. The former Government committed to revisiting the unimplemented recommendations of the Clarke Review. However, the issue was out of scope of the revisitation of unimplemented recommendations.

The average annual cost of a Gold Card over the next 12 months is expected to be around \$20,400 per person (those over 70 years of age). As at January 2010 there were approximately 29,000 World War Two veterans without qualifying service and the Gold Card. To extend the Gold Card to these veterans there would be an additional estimated cost of \$2.36 billion over four years.

Current Position

There have been approaches over a long period for Gold Card eligibility to be extended to all veterans, regardless of the circumstances of their service.

World War Two veterans who served in Australia's defence force and mariners who served in Australia's merchant navy between 3 September 1939 and 29 October 1945, have qualifying service from that conflict and are aged 70 years or over are eligible for a Gold Card. World War Two veterans and mariners who are ex prisoners of war are also eligible for the Gold Card.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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2.10. Rehabilitation and Compensation - Case Co-ordination

Background

As part of an election commitment the Government appointed Professor David Dunt to carry out a study entitled Independent Study into Suicide in the Ex-Service Community, which was released on 1 May 2009. Professor Dunt identified 21 recommendations covering:

- broad issues of suicide to help identify ex-service members who are at an increased risk of self harm;
- common contributing factors among ex-service members who have committed or attempted suicide;
- the extent of suicide in the ex-service community;
- lifestyle or other factors that may be contributing to suicide in the ex-service community; and
- administrative reforms or initiatives to help combat suicide in the ex-service community.

One DVA specific recommendation accepted by the Government was to implement a system of Case Co-ordination for clients with complex needs who have caused, or may be in danger of causing, self-harm or harm to others.

In response to this recommendation, DVA implemented Case Co-ordination to assist those clients identified as at risk and/or having complex needs, to navigate DVA services and benefits and to engage with the broader community sector. The objective is to minimise the risk of self-harm and maximise quality of life by assisting clients to meet their overall needs. Clients with complex and multiple physical injuries (which may lead to mental health issues) are also included within the scope of this initiative.

DVA is fully aware of the community stigma that is often associated with mental illness and has worked carefully in developing a service for our clients that does not draw further attention to an individual's circumstances. When liaising with external stakeholders to DVA, the term 'complex needs' will be utilised when discussing a client's circumstances and the emphasis will be on providing a single point of contact for the client and their family.

Referrals to the service are made internally through DVA or the ADF. If an external person would like to refer a DVA client for case co-ordination they are advised to contact their local office and discuss the matter with the relevant Assistant Director or Manager. The Assistant Director will then determine if it is appropriate to initiate a referral.

Thirteen Case Co-ordinators have been appointed and are located in Brisbane (4), Melbourne (3), Sydney (3) and Perth (3).

Current Position

Case Co-ordinators assist clients identified at risk and/or having complex needs, to navigate Department of Veterans' Affairs' (DVA) services and benefits in order to minimise the risk of self-harm and maximise quality of life. They also provide a DVA single point of contact for the client and assist them and their families with other psychosocial needs external to DVA to help them enhance their quality of life.

Currently Case Co-ordination staff are working directly with over 300 clients based across the 4 sites (Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth).

The Case Co-ordinators began work in 11 January 2010 and early feedback to the Department indicates that clients are very appreciative of the support provided and that the service has generally resulted in positive re-engagement with both the Department and broader community services.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Program review due in the 2011-12 financial year.

Contact Officer

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DRAFT

2.11. National Workload Management for Compensation Claims

Background

On 1 June 2010 the Rehabilitation and Compensation Group consolidated the processing of compensation claims under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA), the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA), and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) into one Liability Determinations section. Prior to this, there were two separate claims processing areas – one processing claims under the VEA and one processing claims under the SRCA and the MRCA.

On 1 July 2010, Deputy Commissioners assumed direct responsibility for the management of compensation claims processing staff and performance in each location. Responsibility for national workload management – allocation of resources, establishing targets, setting expectations, redistribution of work, and the maintenance and enhancement of workload models – nevertheless remained with the new Rehabilitation, Compensation and Systems Support Group.

The need for a new approach to claims processing is evident from the reducing number of claims being received under the VEA and the increasing number of claim for the MRCA. The new model also means an ongoing presence of rehabilitation and compensation claims processing staff in all capital cities and Townsville. With the growth in MRCA numbers the need for staff to be resourced in across the country will exist for a very long time.

A national model developed for the processing of VEA claims now applies to all compensation claims. Under this model, a single national queue of claims is distributed according to resources across locations rather than on a strict state by state basis. To the extent possible, work is retained in the state of origin.

The allocation of resources takes into account intakes and disposals, optimum work holdings, projected staff availability, and productivity. It also makes allowances for the reduction of work on hand.

The national management of VEA claims delivered significant and measurable individual, location and national improvements in productivity, time taken to process cases (TTTP), the average age of outstanding cases (AAoO), and quality. It is expected that the same improvements will now be achieved in the processing of SRCA and MRCA claims.

Current Position

The allocation of claims for compensation under the VEA, SRCA and MRCA is co-ordinated nationally.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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DRAFT

2.12. Compensation and Benefits Relating to British Nuclear Testing Participation

Background

British Nuclear Testing (BNT) participants have lobbied successive Governments to gain access to the VEA to recognise the uniqueness of their service. The recent extension of *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) coverage has been criticised for not providing lump sum compensation, which the United States of America (USA) and Canada pay to their nuclear participants, and that it does not provide automatic access to the Gold Card. This criticism, coupled with recent developments in the United Kingdom (UK) relating to a class action by British test participants, has generated some media coverage comparing compensation between Australia and other countries including the USA, Canada, New Zealand, China, former Soviet Republics and France.

2010 Budget Initiatives

As part of a 2007 election commitment, the Labor Party committed to revisit recommendations of the Clarke Review of Veterans' Entitlements that were not acted upon by the previous Government. The Clarke Review recommended that the service of Australian participants in the British Nuclear Tests in Australia be declared 'non-warlike hazardous' service under the VEA.

In the 2010 Budget, the Government announced that it had accepted the Clarke recommendation to extend VEA coverage to ADF participants in the BNT program, and an amendment to the VEA enabling this initiative was given Royal Assent on 29 June 2010. The date of effect was 1 July 2010.

This initiative provides compensation and health care benefits for ex-defence force claimants whose medical conditions are accepted as related to their BNT service. Widows and widowers of deceased BNT participants are also eligible for benefits if their partner's death is related to BNT service or the BNT participant was eligible for disability pension at a rate above 100% General Rate. The more generous 'reasonable hypothesis' standard of proof applies to all claims.

Common Law Claims

The Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, which has responsibility for the administration of common law claims relating to the BNT program in Australia, have advised that there have been 75 Common Law claims, of which 2 have been successful (2 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel). Of this group, there have been six court decisions of which five found in the Commonwealth's favour and one out-of-court settlement.

In addition, in 1991, the Australian Government settled a further 18 claims for trespass and injury of indigenous persons living in northern South Australia (SA) at the time of the nuclear tests conducted at Maralinga and Emu Field, SA. These claims were settled in full. The claimants were identified during the Royal Commission into British Nuclear Tests in Australia (1984-1985) by a team of lawyers, scientists and historians advising indigenous groups during the Royal Commission.

In 1989, five indigenous participants were paid compensation under the SRCA-like administrative scheme, with only one additional non-Indigenous claimant being paid under this scheme to date.

Benefits provided to nuclear test participants in other countries

Comparison of benefits with other countries needs to be approached with caution in lieu of differences of detail and the different national compensation, health and welfare contexts in which they operate.

The compensation schemes available to nuclear test participants in the USA, UK, New Zealand and France are presumptive based which means that a list of conditions has been developed based on medical and scientific evidence. Where a person lodges a claim for a condition on the list, it is not necessary to have medical opinion attributing the claimed condition to service. The claim will be automatically accepted if diagnosis of the condition is confirmed and if the person is shown to be a nuclear test participant. However, both the UK and the USA have further requirements in relation to onset of the condition and degree to which it manifests which must also be satisfied in order for a claim to be accepted.

In addition, the USA and Canada offer lump sum payment schemes to their nuclear test participants. However, Canada is the only country which enables payment on the basis of being a participant only, rather than in respect of illness or causation, and is therefore more like an ex gratia scheme.

In the UK, Canada, New Zealand, France and the USA, compensation is also available where a service person can establish a connection between their injury or disease and their service, during a nuclear test or otherwise, according to the normal processes for that country.

The Department is awaiting clarification of what benefits are available to personnel who participated in or have been affected by nuclear tests in Russia and China following requests made through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Intergenerational Effects

The intergenerational health effects of the BNT program is an issue for some BNT participants and in May 2010 Senator Ludlam queried what compensation would be made available to second and third generations affected by their parents' or grandparents' exposure to radiation given 'the evidence of genetic effects of nuclear tests on children and grandchildren-the families and children of nuclear veterans'. There is limited knowledge of the intergenerational impacts of service.

In general, health studies of the children and grandchildren of service personnel who participated in atomic testing have not been undertaken, due to the complex practical and methodological issues involved in undertaking a scientifically valid study. Papers published by international researchers regarding the feasibility of conducting an epidemiological study to determine if there is an increased risk of adverse health outcomes in the children and grandchildren of people exposed to ionizing radiation state there are insurmountable difficulties:

- in finding and contacting a sufficiently large number of study subjects;
- in establishing an accurate measure of dose for each veteran;
- in detecting the extremely small potential risk at low doses;
- in identifying and reliably documenting reproductive outcomes over a 50 year interval; and
- in the measuring of other factors which may confound any observed relationship between radiation exposure and health outcomes in offspring.

Therefore, it appears that the children and grandchildren of Australian participants in the British nuclear tests do not provide a practical cohort for a scientifically adequate and epidemiologically valid study.

However, the children of Japanese atomic bomb survivors have been studied extensively by international researchers. The findings suggest that these children do not have an increased frequency of chromosome abnormalities nor major birth defects, considered in total or in any specific type. These children also do not have elevated mortality rates, in either childhood or adulthood, nor higher cancer incidence rates.

Court Action in the United Kingdom

On 5 June 2009 a decision by Justice Foskett of the British High Court of Justice dispensed with the three year statutory limitation on claims thereby allowing claimants to bring a group action against the UK Government for damages in respect of the nuclear tests program. This decision was in response to a group action involving 1011 British, New Zealand and Fijian servicemen and civilians. The UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) appealed against this decision. The appeal was heard in May 2010 and a judgment is yet to be handed down. The MoD is of the view that there are no grounds for compensation to be paid and that the court gave too much weight to the cytogenetic findings of New Zealand participants reported by Professor Rowland in 2007.

Representatives of former ADF participants in the BNT program have stated that they will be lodging a group action for damages against the UK Government. The Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement (ALRM) has also indicated that it is coordinating a group action for Indigenous Australians allegedly affected by the BNT program.

The ALRM recently approached the South Australian Government for financial support for their group action. Their request was declined as it was deemed to be an issue for the Federal Government. In an ABC Adelaide radio interview on 5 August 2010, it was reported that the ALRM's CEO had approached both State and Federal Governments for assistance but was reportedly advised that it was not their responsibility. Given that the Attorney-General's Department had previously indicated that the Commonwealth would only provide funding in specific exceptional circumstances, it appears that the request for funding was rejected on the grounds that it does not fall within the prescribed guidelines.

No common law action has been brought against the Australian Government. As the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism has responsibility for common law claims, the Australian Government's response to any such action in the UK courts also falls under their administration.

Current Position

From 1 July 2010, former defence personnel who participated in the BNT Program in Australia have had access to compensation and health care benefits under the VEA.

Prior to this, and still operating today, former defence personnel and Commonwealth employee participants of the BNT Program have had access to compensatory pensions and health care treatment under the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) for any conditions accepted as related to this service. Civilians, Indigenous Australians and pastoralists affected by the tests also have access to compensation

through the SRCA-like administrative scheme. Eligible Australian BNT participants are also covered for the cost of testing and treatment for any cancer. They do not need to have an accepted compensation claim to access health care for cancer.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

Neil Bayles

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Support Division

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DRAFT

2.13. Nature of Service

Background

Requests to NOSR (Nature of Service Review) are typically from former members of the defence force or their relatives. Requests are usually focussed on specific periods of service in particular locations with a view to service being reclassified in such a manner that provides additional eligibility for repatriation benefits. Each group of like claims requires historical, legal and policy analysis, undertaken by NOSR in consultation with other Australian government agencies; specifically DVA, the Department of Finance and Deregulation and less frequently the Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Department of Defence is responsible for the reviews as they have the relevant information and understanding of the individual service deployments.

In recent times, there has been significant concern by both the Repatriation Commission and central agencies as to the rigour and robustness of the NOS review process. Central agencies in particular have concerns that there is a growing tendency for periods of service to be reclassified to higher levels when there may be insufficient evidence for this based on criteria used at the time of the service.

A framework for the review and classification of services is currently being developed by Defence in conjunction with the relevant agencies concerned. It is expected that once this framework is endorsed by Government, some of these concerns will be able to be better managed.

Issues currently under consideration include:

■ British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) - Service with the British Commonwealth Occupation Force during the period 21 February 1946 to 30 June 1947. ■

- Operation Paladin

The then Minister for Defence announced on 13 May 2010 that he would be reclassifying a 33-day period of Operation Paladin in Lebanon as warlike service. A related outcome of this decision is that NOSB is now examining the appropriateness of the service classification of other periods during this operation during 'spikes' in the Arab/Israel conflict.

- Rifle Company Butterworth

Defence is proposing that the classification of service by Rifle Company Butterworth be changed from peacetime to hazardous for the period 1972-89 and is seeking the views of the Repatriation Commission on this proposal.

Nature of Service Board

Defence is proposing the establishment of a Nature of Service Board ('the Board') to ensure a consistent, transparent and robust process is applied to the consideration of claims relating to the nature of service for past military operations and other hazardous service.

The role of the Board will be to advise and make recommendations to the Minister for Defence and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs through the Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF) on the appropriate characterisation/classification of particular past service rendered by members of the ADF and certain civilians.

Defence is consulting with other departments on this matter and will be hosting a cross-agency workshop in September 2010. There is a concern across central agencies and this Department that the current process does not offer a consistent level of review and that long-term cost impacts and potential for the application of precedents are not adequately considered when reclassifications are proposed.

Current Position

The nature of service classification of Australian Defence Force (ADF) activities provides an essential underpinning of many aspects of veterans' benefits, as well as providing the basis for ADF-specific allowances and conditions. The NOSR, which sits within the Vice Chief of the Defence Force Group, is responsible for considering requests made to the Minister for Defence to reclassify past operations and for providing input for the ongoing classification of current operations.

NOSR also has carriage for the development of a classification process that can be applied to future Australian Defence Force operations.

NOSR looks to the Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) for input on the reclassification of past operations. Additionally, staff within the Department work closely with NOSB staff, particularly in relation to applications that require investigation of claimed service history. An ongoing meeting arrangement has been established that allows cooperation on current issues.

NOSR provides a dedicated research resource in the form of an Air Force reservist officer who investigates service history related to claims to this Department.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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2.14. Nominal Rolls

Background

The rolls for the Korean, Vietnam and First Gulf wars were compiled to support studies into the health and well-being of the veterans. A second round of data collection for the *Nominal Roll of Vietnam Veterans* was undertaken in 2006-07 to incorporate additional fields of information for the web publication.

The *World War Two Nominal Roll* was compiled as part of the Centenary of Federation Nominal Roll Project.

The Rolls for the Vietnam and Korean wars were previously published in book formats in 1996 and 1999, respectively. The *Nominal Roll of Vietnam Veterans* was also previously published electronically in floppy disk and CD format. The books, floppy disks and CDs are now out of print.

Before publication, advertisements were placed in national and ex-service organisation newspapers advising of the intent to publish. Veterans were, and are still, given the opportunity to request that their details are not displayed on the website. Veterans may also request that their name be returned to the website.

In the past, the numbers who served in particular conflicts were arrived at by Department of Defence and military historians based on assessments of various administrative documents. The processes of creating and maintaining a Nominal Roll brings greater surety to the number who participated in a conflict.

Current Position

The Department maintains three commemorative Nominal Roll websites that are interactive and independent of the Department's main website:

World War Two Nominal Roll www.ww2roll.gov.au

Nominal Roll of Australian Veterans of the Korean War ... www.koreanroll.gov.au

Nominal Roll of Vietnam Veterans www.vietnamroll.gov.au

In addition, the Nominal Roll for the First Gulf War resides on the Department's own website as static content web pages.

The following table shows the year each Nominal Roll was first published on the internet and the number of entries on each Roll:

Conflict	Year first published	Number of names (approx)
World War Two	2002	1.1 million
Korean War	2005	18,000
Vietnam War	2007	61,000
First Gulf War	2000	1,800

The Department's Nominal Rolls team fields requests for additions and amendments to the Rolls, as well as requests for information on a wide range of topics triggered by use of the websites. The websites are refreshed once a month to update the data.

Nominal Rolls are considered “works in progress”.

The Department also fields requests for the creation of Nominal Rolls for other conflicts. It was intended that the Centenary of Federation funding would create a single Nominal Roll of all who served since Federation. Funding was sufficient to create a Nominal Roll of those who served full-time during World War Two.

The publication of the Roll raised the expectations of those who served in other conflicts including those who served in the Malayan Emergency, Indonesian Confrontation and British Commonwealth Occupation Force. There are ongoing calls for the production of commemorative Rolls for those engagements. To a lesser extent, requests have also been received for a Roll of those who served in Ubon, Thailand, in the National Service, and those involved in peacekeeping operations.

The resource requirements for the creation of a Roll vary because of the unique circumstances of each conflict and the administrative and personnel arrangements of the period. The creation of a Roll is also dependent on the assistance of other organisations that hold the primary source documents.

For current ongoing conflicts, consideration would have to be given to matters such as the need to protect the identity of certain forces or individuals, as well as the risk of exacerbating frustration amongst older veterans whose service in particular conflicts is yet to be commemorated via a commemorative Roll.

While the Nominal Rolls are published as a commemorative function, they also support the statistical, compensation and health research functions of the Department. Nominal Rolls are not used as a substitute for the primary source document when processing eligibility for benefits. However, the expertise developed by the Nominal Rolls researchers can assist with establishing eligibility for difficult cases.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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2.15. Law Commission of New Zealand – Report of the Review of the War Pensions Act 1954

Background

On 1 June 2010 the Law Commission of New Zealand published its final report of the review of current legislation governing entitlements for New Zealand’s veterans. The review arose out of a recognition by the Law Commission that the current legislative framework was “...*outdated, unwieldy and no longer fits the needs of veterans...*”. The report, entitled *A New Support Scheme for Veterans* contains some 170 recommendations addressing issues including eligibility, evidential standards, health care, compensation, income support and rehabilitation.

The report proposes two schemes:

- **Scheme One** – similar to the current legislation and covers veterans and service personnel who have disabilities relating to service prior to 1 April 1974 and is similar to the *Veterans’ Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA). This Scheme will provide impairment compensation (via disablement pension), income support, health care independence assistance, rehabilitation and assistance to families through spouse pensions, funeral grants and education bursaries; and
- **Scheme Two** – applies to veterans on or after 1 April 1974 and is designed on modern principles of disability management to suit the needs of younger veterans. It is similar in concept to the *Military, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) with a focus on rehabilitation. Entitlements and benefits include rehabilitation, income replacement, impairment compensation, health care, independence assistance, transition assistance and family assistance (including surviving spouse lump sum, surviving spouse weekly income compensation, children’s lump sum, children’s weekly income compensation, funeral grant).

New legislation would allow for the creation of Statements of Principles (SoPs) and presumptive lists of medical conditions. An expert medical panel would have the power to adopt or amend the presumptive decision-making instruments. Any presumptive decision-making instruments would be based on “sound medical and scientific research”.

The report states that to create New Zealand’s own SoPs would require an enormous amount of work. It would be preferable to “borrow” as much research and decision-making material from the Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) as possible. Since tabling of the report, there has been no formal contact from Veterans’ Affairs New Zealand (VANZ) concerning possible discussions around use of the SoPs.

The New Zealand Government has 120 working days from the date of tabling to respond to the report. The response takes the form of a Statement to the House expected to be delivered in November.

Current Position

The report is currently being considered by the New Zealand Government.



Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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DRAFT

3. SERVICES DIVISION

3.1. Veterans' Home Care (VHC) – New Assessment Instrument

Background

Since the introduction of the VHC program in 2001, contracted VHC Assessment Agencies have used a standard assessment instrument to conduct phone-based assessments of veterans and war widow/widowers for VHC services. The VHC Assessment Instrument has had virtually no changes made to it since its introduction nine years ago. To meet the needs of the ageing veteran community and be in line with the assessment processes undertaken in the wider community care sector, the VHC Assessment Instrument has been revised and validated by an independent external assessment expert.

In revising the VHC assessment instrument, the aims of the project were to make the VHC assessment instrument:

- more user friendly, efficient and flexible;
- consistent, where appropriate, with the Home and Community Care program managed by the Department of Health and Ageing;
- improve the reporting of information for VHC assessment agencies and the Department;
- be flexible and expandable to meet more complex client needs; and
- ensure the assessment process determines an eligible veteran's needs for VHC services, but also has the capacity to determine when referrals to other more appropriate DVA and non-DVA services should be made.

The Department engaged Applied Aged Care Solutions Pty Ltd, as an external assessment expert, to validate the revised instrument. The validation process included a trial of the new assessment instrument with all 16 contracted VHC assessment agencies, together with feedback via a survey and telephone discussions and was completed in 2009.

Current Position

A revised VHC Assessment Instrument has been developed and validated by an independent assessment expert. The IT development to implement the revised VHC Assessment Instrument, as well as the training processes to support this implementation, are currently underway with an expected implementation date of 22 November 2010.

The risks associated with the implementation, including impact on clients, is very minimal. However, the Department has plans in place to mitigate against any potential risks associated with the implementation, including extensive testing of the IT changes, training of VHC assessment agencies and Departmental staff, a communications strategy and other measures.

Training on the revised VHC Assessment Instrument is currently being delivered around Australia to all VHC Assessment Agencies. Additional IT training on the revised VHC Assessment Instrument will be provided closer to the November 2010 implementation date.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Implementation of the revised VHC Assessment instrument will be in November 2010.

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DRAFT

3.2. Status of Current Procurement Activities – Health Services:

Most health services for the veteran community are procured on the basis of the *Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines* to ensure value for money. Given the extensive array of services available, regular and frequent procurement activities occur which may generate contact with the Minister's office by potential tenderers. This brief summarises current activity.

1. VETERANS' HOME CARE (VHC) – TENDER PROCESS FOR SERVICE PROVISION

Background

The previous VHC tender process was conducted during 2006. This process included concurrent Requests for Tender (RFT) for both the provision of VHC services and the provision of assessment and coordination services. The conduct of both tender processes at the same time resulted in confusion amongst potential tenderers as to which RFT to respond to. The timing of the implementation of the contracts from the tender process also resulted in difficulties being experienced with a fixed changeover date which required the transfer of a large number of veterans and war widow/widowers from unsuccessful to successful tenderers over the Christmas period. To overcome these issues, along with the separation of the two RFT, the 2011 VHC service provision tender process will implement new contracts on 1 October 2011. This implementation date will allow a two month overlap with the existing contracts to provide an orderly and managed changeover period for any required transfers of veterans and war widow/widowers between providers.

Current Position

The current contracts for the provision of VHC services expire on 30 November 2011. To ensure the uninterrupted provision of VHC services to eligible veterans and war widows/widowers, an open tender process will be conducted during 2011 to select suitable organisations to provide VHC services (Domestic Assistance, Personal Care, In Home Respite and safety related Home and Garden Maintenance) into the future. An additional service type (Social Support) is being implemented as a part of the Department's Preventable Admissions program (commencing in May 2011) and will also be included in the tender process. It is anticipated that the RFT will be released during February 2011 and the announcement of successful tenderers will be made by the end of August 2011.

The Department also contracts with 16 organisations to provide assessment and coordination services under the VHC program. These assessment services determine the type and amount of VHC services that a veteran or war widow/widower receives through the use of an on-line assessment instrument. The current contracts for the provision of VHC assessment and coordination services also expire on 30 November 2011. The Deeds of Agreement for the VHC Assessment Agencies that provide assessment and coordination services contain a clause permitting a contract extension of one year. This clause will be exercised, extending the contract expiry date to 30 November 2012. The tender process to deliver these assessment and coordination services will be conducted during early 2012.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

February 2011 - Tender release

1 October 2011 - Contracts commence

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2. REHABILITATION APPLIANCES PROGRAM (RAP) - OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT SERIES OF TENDERS

Background

The Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP) provides aids and appliances that assist entitled persons to be as self-reliant as possible in their own homes. The program aims to restore or maintain independence and minimise the impact of disabilities. Expenditure for RAP totalled \$111 million in 2008-09, with over 98,371 entitled persons receiving aids and appliances as invoiced through RAPTOR, the program's electronic invoicing system.

The RAP National Schedule of Equipment is pivotal to the RAP program. The Schedule lists about 270 aids and appliances available to the veteran community on the basis of clinically assessed. Most of the 270 RAP aids and appliances have been consolidated into major product groups that are managed through national or state based contracts.

RAP national procurement activities

On 20 January 2009 the Commissions noted and approved a submission outlining the broad scope of the procurement activities for RAP over the coming three years.

No.	RAP product group	Tender status	Expenditure for 2008-09
1	Continence	Completed. New contracts commenced 1 January 2010.	\$18.1 million
2	Personal Response System (PRS)	Completed. New contracts commenced 1 April 2010.	\$11.8 million
3	Home Medical Oxygen Therapy (HMOT)	Short contract extensions are being organised while long term contract negotiations are finalised with preferred tenderers.	\$4.3 million
4	Mobility and Functional Support (MFS)	Request for tender was released on 9 July 2010 with a lodgement deadline of 23 August 2010. Currently being evaluated.	\$61 million
5	Medical Grade Footwear (MGF)	Request for tender was released on 9 July 2010 with a lodgement deadline of 9 August 2010. Currently in final stages of evaluation.	\$4.8 million
6	Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)	Commissions gave an in principle agreement to exercise the option of extending the end date of the current contract until 31 March 2012. No action required at this stage.	\$2.25 million

Current Position

A series of tenders have been undertaken under RAP since January 2009. Solid progress has been made in relation to the RFT of the five major RAP product groups with two already finalised, one in the process of contract negotiation and the remaining two have been released to the market and are in various stages of evaluation.

There are a number of RAP items that are directly sourced at present but will be opened to a competitive tendering process. These include major home modifications, customised orthotic products, prostheses, low vision appliances and television hearing and viewing systems. Analysis of the current purchasing of these items and development of a procurement strategy will occur over the following 12 months.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

The tender exercises for MGF, HMOT and MFS need to be finalised before the current contracts expire on the following dates:

RAP product groups	End date of current contracts (including contract extensions)
Medical Grade Footwear	1 November 2010
Home Medical Oxygen Therapy	1 February 2011 (contract extension offers to 1 February 2011 have been confirmed by all current contracted suppliers. Deeds of Variation and associated details have been prepared and returned.)
Mobility and Functional Support	30 April 2011

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3. MOBILITY AND FUNCTIONAL SUPPORT (MFS) TENDER

Background

MFS is the largest and most complex product group within the RAP, representing about 60 per cent of overall expenditure. The MFS schedule includes about 17,000 items in over 160 categories, ranging from adaptive kitchenware to wheelchairs and hospital-style beds. Expenditure on MFS was \$73.7 million in the 2008-09 financial year, up 7.2 per cent from \$68.7 million in 2007-08.

These figures include expenditure on some product groups that are to be separately tendered, such as Diabetes products and Major Home Modifications (for example, large ramps and bathroom modifications), as well as items that have been supplied by non-contracted companies through manual accounts (including customised orthotics, wheelchairs, and recliners).

In 2008-09, more than 67,280 entitled persons were in receipt of MFS, an increase of 5.5 per cent from 63,788 in the preceding year. The expenditure per person treated in 2008-09 was approximately \$1,100 an increase of only 1.6 per cent on the previous year. Overall MFS workload is expected to peak within the next 12 months as the treatment population declines.

Current Position

All existing contracts for MFS products will expire on 30 April 2011. All contract extensions have been exhausted and the Government Procurement Guidelines direct the use of an open tender process.

Commission approval was granted on 6 July 2010 to approach the market with a RFT for MFS products. This RFT was released by the Department on 9 July 2010. The RFT seeks a number of national suppliers of MFS services. In the event that sufficient national supply cannot be contracted through this RFT process, DVA may choose to also contract one or more suppliers to each or several of the seven individual regions (states or territories) identified. An Industry Brief was conducted on 20 July 2010. Closure of the RFT is 23 August 2010.

MFS products are currently supplied by 21 contracted suppliers. There are no national suppliers and different supply processes exist in each of the states. There are five suppliers in Victoria, three in NSW and two in SA. There is only a single supplier in WA, in Tasmania and in Queensland. Queensland is supplied by a consortium of nine suppliers each with a specified supply region and effectively a separate contract.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

23 August 2010 - RFT closure

22 October 2010 - evaluation of RFT completed in readiness for Commission

1 May 2011 - date of new arrangements

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4. HOME MEDICAL OXYGEN THERAPY (HMOT) TENDER

Background

A tender for the supply of HMOT products was conducted in the first half of 2010. Under the former contract, the supply of HMOT was via three contracted suppliers:

- Air Liquide Healthcare (ALH), supplied in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia;
- BOC Medical Gases (BOC) supplied in Western Australia, Tasmania and South Australia; and
- WyMedical supplied in South Australia only.

All three organisations submitted tenders for the HMOT RFT.

Negotiations are presently under way with the successful tenders – ALH and BOC. Unsuccessful tenders have been provided a written response on the outcome.

WyMedical sensitivity – HMOT tender outcome

WyMedical has been providing HMOT products to the veteran community under contract for the last five years and had been a HMOT supplier to veterans for over ten years prior to the formal contractual arrangement [REDACTED]

WyMedical was unsuccessful in the recent HMOT tender process. A decision was made to offer WyMedical an extension of the current contract to continue to service its existing small veteran client base but not to take on new veteran clients. This would ensure that veterans currently serviced by WyMedical experience no disruption to their HMOT services.

The proposal to extend WyMedical's current contract to cover the existing veterans has been accepted.

Current Position

Whilst WyMedical was found to be unsuccessful in this tender evaluation, to minimise the disruption to services to those veterans it currently services the Department proposes to extend the current contract with WyMedical to continue servicing its existing veteran client base only.

Negotiations are presently under way with the successful tenders.

Unsuccessful tenders have been provided a written response on the outcome.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Contract negotiations 16 August 2010 with a start date within the next three months.

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5. MEDICAL GRADE FOOTWEAR (MGF) TENDER

Background

The objective of the MGF program is to provide MGF products and services of a high standard and clinically appropriate to address a deficiency or deformity in gait feet or limbs of an entitled person. Supply of some MGF products are subject to prior approval from the Department.

The supply of MGF is straightforward with DVA approved footwear prescribers (podiatrists) assessing the entitled person and completing an MGF prescription form which is forwarded to the Department's contracted suppliers. The supplier will then submit to the Department a request for financial approval for the recommended MGF.

On receipt of financial approval, the supplier will conduct all fittings necessary and provide the MGF to the entitled person.

The selection of MGF is made from the Department's MGF Register. The register lists over 467 lines of ready made and custom made footwear which have been assessed against the Department's MGF specifications by an expert panel of two podiatrists and an orthopedic boot maker. All MGF provided by the Department must meet these specifications which relate to width, depth, materials used in manufacture, quality of manufacture and torsion stability.

The register is updated at intervals of 18-24 months. The register was updated in 2009, triggered by the impending expiration of contracts.

Current Position

The current contractual arrangements with 79 suppliers in all states and territories provide adequate geographical coverage ensuring access to products throughout Australia. This is an industry typified by many small suppliers who tend to operate in small regions; usually local, but with a few offering state-wide or multi-state coverage.

The MGF RFT invites tenders for the supply and fitting of MGF to entitled persons. This process will involve an invitation for tenders to be submitted by suppliers (retailers) of ready-made MGF based on the footwear products listed on the register, as well as custom footwear suppliers for the manufacture, supply and fit of MGF. Closure of the RFT is 9 August 2010.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

9 August 2010 - RFT closure

17 September 2010 - evaluation of RFT to be completed in readiness for Commission

1 November 2010 - implementation of new arrangements completed

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3.3. Medical and Allied Health Services

Background

DVA arrangements for medical services mirror the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS). For Dental and Allied Health services, DVA utilises items in the MBS as well as maintaining additional DVA schedules of items and fees.

In 2006 agreement was made with the Australian Medical Association and the Pathology and Radiology industries in relation to fees. This resulted in the following arrangements for DVA fees.

[REDACTED]

From 1 November 2006, DVA fees for allied health consultations were aligned with the fees paid under the MBS Enhanced Primary Care (EPC) arrangements. As some fees were higher than the EPC there remains an inconsistency within Allied Health, some are paid at 100 per cent of the MBS, others are higher.

The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) is coordinating a whole-of-government exercise to review the MBS known as the MBS Quality Framework. A number of areas which are presently being considered under the framework including synovial injections, ophthalmology items and surgical options for obesity are of interest to DVA.

During the 2008-09 financial year, 95.3 per cent of the treatment population accessed Medical services, while 74 per cent accessed Allied Health Services.

DVA has a number of Advisory Committees and consultative forums with the health professionals, including Local Medical Officers (the legislative term for general practitioners), Dental, Optical and Allied Health. This framework provides a platform for discussion of issues, arising trends and new technologies – with fee issues raised by all groups at most recent meetings. The relationship between DVA and the AMA on its LMO Advisory Committee is one of the longest standing relationships in the Commonwealth.

The Department has also had preliminary discussions with the Department of Defence around whole-of-government approach to fee setting, particularly in relation to specialist services.

Current Position

DVA funds medical, optical, dental and allied health services for veterans on a fee for service basis, with DVA fees generally representing the full payment for service and no copayment by the veteran involved. Hearing services are provided through a DVA arrangement with the Office of Hearing Services.

These arrangements require provider acceptance of DVA fees as representing an adequate payment. Fee levels are an ongoing issue raised by individual providers and provider groups.

The Department is conducting a number of internal reviews in response to concerns from providers and/or the veteran community -

- Dental including implant policy - to reduce prior approval requirements and update implant policy;
- Alternative therapies - to consider whether DVA arrangements should expand to cover services provided by alternative therapy providers; and
- Optical - low vision aids.

DVA is also affected by DoHA changes to arrangements for the general population which can flow through to DVA through DVA links to the MBS. These include changes to be considered through the MBS Quality Framework, as well as other Government decisions.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Findings from Reviews, including Commission consideration will be provided in the latter half of 2010.

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3.4. Aged Care

Background

Residential Aged Care

Residential Aged Care services are managed by Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA). DVA has no direct responsibility for the provision of services. DVA holds the appropriation for the Commonwealth Subsidy for Residential Aged Care for all DVA Gold and White card holders and pays this to Medicare Australia. Residential Aged Care services are provided on a user pays basis where all residents are charged a basic daily fee and some residents pay an additional income tested fee, based on their capacity to pay. Some residents are also asked to pay either an accommodation bond or an accommodation charge based on the level of care required and the assets of the resident.

DVA Gold and White card holders pay fees on the same basis as every other Australian in residential aged care with the exception of former Prisoners of War (POWs) and Victoria Cross (VC) recipients who have their basic daily fees paid for by DVA and are not required to pay any income tested fees. Veterans with qualifying service do not have their disability pensions counted as income.

DVA has no formal role in monitoring care services provided to individual veterans in Residential Aged Care facilities. DoHA and the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency undertake this responsibility and conduct regular unannounced audits of these facilities. DoHA also operates the Aged Care Complaints Investigation Scheme. This scheme can be used by residents, carers, family, GPs etc. Complaints can be made openly, anonymously or confidentially.

DVA is advised of any sanctions against aged care homes that follow audits or investigations into complaints and is provided with the names of DVA clients in the homes affected. DVA liaises with DoHA in these cases. DVA also liaises with DoHA on issues raised by veterans and the veteran community.

Veterans, war widows or war widowers holding a DVA Gold or White health card and living in an aged care home remain entitled to many of the same health, dental and medical services that they were entitled to when living at home. When residents move to high (nursing home type) care their nursing and allied health needs are paid for and provided by the facility they are in. DVA funds all entitled medical care plus, in exceptional circumstances, may meet the costs of specialised allied health services and aids for veterans receiving high care. This includes the need for intensive rehabilitation following a serious illness, injury, surgery or trauma.

Ex-Service Organisations (ESOs) are not able to be provided with details of DVA funded residents in aged care homes due to privacy provisions. Residents can invite ex-service representatives to visit them. DVA is working with DoHA to improve the capacity of ESOs to visit members of the veteran community in aged care homes.

Community Aged Care Entitlements

DVA card holders are entitled to the same aged care packages at home as other members of the community. These are administered by DoHA and include Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs), Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) and Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia (EACHD) packages. To be eligible for this assistance the veteran/war widow(er) must be assessed for a package by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT, or ACAS in Victoria).

The only difference for the veteran community in relation to these packages is that from 21 August 2009 DVA pays the fees, including income tested fees, which former POWs and VC recipients are liable to pay for these packages. The former POW or VC recipient, or their family, should inform their provider about their status. The care provider then contacts DVA to confirm that the veteran is a former POW or VC recipient. DVA will cover both the basic daily fee and the income-tested fee.

Other Community Care services

The Department provides Veterans' Home Care (VHC) services to eligible veterans and war widows who wish to continue living at home, but who need a small amount of practical help. Services are subject to assessed need and include domestic assistance, personal care, safety-related home and garden maintenance and respite care.

The Department also provides community nursing services to eligible veterans and war widows through the Community Nursing program. Members of the veteran community with a clinically assessed need are eligible to receive services in the home that aim to restore or maintain the veteran or war widow's health and independence and help avoid premature or inappropriate admittance to hospital or residential care.

Current Position

The 2010-11 Budget appropriation to DVA for the Commonwealth subsidy for Residential Aged Care was \$1.14 billion. This subsidy contributes to the cost to the resident's accommodation and health care. The amount of the subsidy depends on the level of care required by the resident and the capacity of the resident to pay (income tested).

On 30 July 2010 DVA and DoHA signed a Business Partnership Agreement (BPA) covering the period 2010-2013. The BPA covers the exchange of information and financial responsibilities.

Productivity Commission Inquiry into Caring for Older Australians

The Productivity Commission is currently conducting a public inquiry into Caring for Older Australians with the aim of developing options for further structural reform of the aged care system so it can meet the challenges facing it in coming decades.

The Repatriation Commission provided a submission to the Inquiry in early August. The submission does not advocate for change. It details veteran numbers in residential aged care, DVA's role in community aged care and the issues of concern that have been raised by veterans.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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3.5. Pharmaceutical Issues – Including Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, Veterans’ Medicines Advice and Therapeutic Education Services and Travel Vaccinations for Gold Card Holders

Background

Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS)

The Department subsidises a range of pharmaceuticals under the RPBS to eligible veterans. Items available under the RPBS are generally those medicines available to the broader community as listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). In addition to PBS listed medicines, an extended range of medicines and wound dressings is also available exclusively to veterans as listed on the Repatriation Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits (RSPB).

Approximately 91.4 per cent of the veteran treatment population used the RPBS during 2009-10. The RPBS expenditure for 2009-10 was approximately \$488.68 million, representing a year to year change of 2.9 per cent. The number of RPBS listed items dispensed in 2009-10 was 13.87 million. The breakdown in the RPBS expenditure for 2009-10 comprised approximately 90.8 per cent PBS listed items and 9.2 per cent for RSPB items.

Veterans’ Medicines Advice and Therapeutic Education Services (MATES)

The Veterans’ MATES program aims to reduce medicines misadventure by veterans and to improve the health care of veterans by providing feedback information to medical prescribers, pharmacists and veterans about the quality use of medicines and quality prescribing.

Veterans’ MATES has been running since June 2004 when the University of South Australia (UniSA) was contracted to implement and deliver this program on behalf of the Department. In June 2010, the UniSA was recontracted to continue to provide this service over the next three years with an option to extend by a further two years. This new contract includes provision for the development and delivery of innovative projects consistent with the objectives of the Veterans’ MATES program.

The program uses dispensed prescription data and is used to provide direct patient-based feedback to medical practitioners regarding medications dispensed to their veteran patients. Veterans who meet target criteria are also mailed educational brochures.

Veterans’ MATES is widely recognised and viewed positively by its target audiences, with veterans, general practitioners and pharmacists all indicating strong satisfaction.

Travel Vaccinations for Gold Card holders

From 1 August 2010, new arrangements mean DVA will pay for overseas travel vaccinations provided within Australia for Gold Card holders.

Gold Card holders travelling overseas have not been entitled to be vaccinated under previous DVA arrangements unless partaking in official DVA commemorative activities. In response to matters raised with the former Minister by the veteran community, the Repatriation Commission has after consideration amended the policy to allow Gold Card holders to receive travel vaccinations at DVA expense.

These arrangements have yet to be communicated to the provider groups and veteran community. Communication materials have been prepared for dissemination to providers regarding this change and will be circulated shortly. Ex-Service Organisations will also be interested in hearing about this policy change, and the item can be placed on agendas for upcoming meetings.

Current Position

Pharmaceutical arrangements are ongoing and cover:

- the Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS); and
- quality improvement in medication management under the Veterans' Medicines Advice and Therapeutic Education Services (Veterans' MATES).

The Repatriation Commission has also recently extended the pharmaceutical arrangements to provide for Travel Vaccinations for Gold Card holders from 1 August 2010. This is yet to be communicated to providers and veterans.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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3.6. Transport to Treatment – Overview of Current and Proposed Reform Initiatives

Background

The purpose of the Repatriation Transport Scheme (RTS) is to provide a quality transport framework for eligible veterans to be able to travel to treatment.

Veterans with a Gold Card (or White Card for accepted disabilities) are able to use any form of transport available in their location which is appropriate, taking into account their medical needs and the cost effectiveness of one form of transport over another. In the vast majority of cases this involves short distance road travel via a private vehicle or taxi.

Veterans can arrange their own transport and apply to the Department to have all or part of their costs reimbursed. Alternatively, if the veteran meets certain criteria, the Department is able to arrange taxi transport via its Booked Car with Driver (BCWD) service.

Activity and expenditure for BCWD and reimbursement

Year	BCWD Passenger Trips	BCWD Expenditure (\$million)	Reimbursement Claims	Reimbursement Expenditure (\$million)
2008-09	798,222	\$41.6	193,280	\$21.1
2007-08	788,969	\$35.1	207,769	\$22
2006-07	740,000	\$29.2	220,000	\$23

During the 2008-09 financial year, 14 per cent of the treatment population utilised the travel reimbursement scheme, whilst 25 per cent utilised the BCWD scheme. As some veterans utilise both schemes, an evaluation of the 2008-09 data indicates that only 37 per cent of the total treatment population utilised the RTS in that period.

There are approximately 62 operational and four policy full time equivalent transport staff located in the Services Division at an annual expenditure of over \$4 million.

Current Position

The Department has commenced an internal review of the various components of the RTS. These include:

- responding to veteran and health provider criticism of an overly administered reimbursement scheme and complex claim form;
- replacing an outdated ICT system for taxi bookings;
- responding to health provider complaint of the time involved in making taxi bookings;
- reducing red tape for taxi and hire car providers when they tender for DVA business;
- revising rules on travel to the “closest practical” health provider; and
- responding to veteran issues around travel to common destinations such as pharmacies.

While the Departmental review is underway, the Choice and Maintainability in Veterans’ Services (CMVS) ICT development project has commenced, which will

introduce an on-line taxi booking capability. This project will also replace the existing outdated ICT system. The first release is scheduled for January 2011.

The Department wrote to transport providers and transport industry representatives (week of 17 August 2010) advising of a 12 month extension to the current contracts for BCWD and NSW Country Taxi Voucher Schemes. At the same time, these stakeholders were advised of progress with a previously announced initiative called *statutory registration*, a procurement model whereby transport providers could simply register with DVA for work rather than submit a tender. This new model is being deferred pending the outcomes of the transport review and analysis of synergies with the CMVS ICT system. The deferral of statutory registration may be criticised by prospective transport providers vying for DVA work.



Action Required

For your information. The Department will provide further advice in due course on progress with the internal review.

Critical Dates

1 January 2011 - the pilot of the Transport Booking and Invoicing initiatives project, as part of the CMVS program, is expected to be released to a single state.

April 2011 - subject to a successful pilot, the system will be rolled out nationally.

31 August 2011 - expiry of extensions for BCWD contracts.

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4. CORPORATE DIVISION

4.1. Shared Services Arrangements with the Department of Human Services (DHS)

Background

Due to reducing number of clients and Whole of Government ICT Gershon Recommendations, DVA has to significantly reduce ICT costs without directly impacting on service delivery obligations to veterans and their families. DVA is targeting ICT cost reductions of more than 15% (\$8-\$10Million).

DVA's ICT is currently made up of a mix of outsourced infrastructure services and in-house application software services. The highest expenditure is in back-office infrastructure services and the majority of these services is currently provided by IBM through a contract that expires in April 2011. DVA has explored alternative arrangements to find savings and has entered into an agreement with the Department of Human Services (DHS) for back-office ICT Infrastructure services.

In order to transition services from existing providers to DHS there are significant transition costs in 2010-11. These costs are being funded from the 2010-11 Business As Usual (BAU) Reinvestment Fund, with an allocation of \$21.7 million capital in 2010-11 and \$1.8 million capital in 2011-12.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between DVA and DHS for the transition phase. The transition to DHS will occur in stages completing by 30 June 2011. Delivery of DVA's services is not impacted. DVA client data and application systems will continue to be managed by DVA. A critical transition principle agreed is that there is to be no impact to DVA business operations and client services.

Current Position

DVA and DHS have commenced the transition of back-office, corporate information and communications technology support services from DVA's incumbent providers to DHS.

Action Required

For information

Critical Dates

12 July 2010	Memorandum of Understanding for Transition signed
30 September 2010	Project plan and detailed solution design finalised
8 April 2011	IBM contract end
30 June 2011	Transition of ICT shared services to DHS completed
31 October 2011	Project closure

Contact Officer

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4.2. Choice and Maintainability in Veterans' Services (CMVS) Program

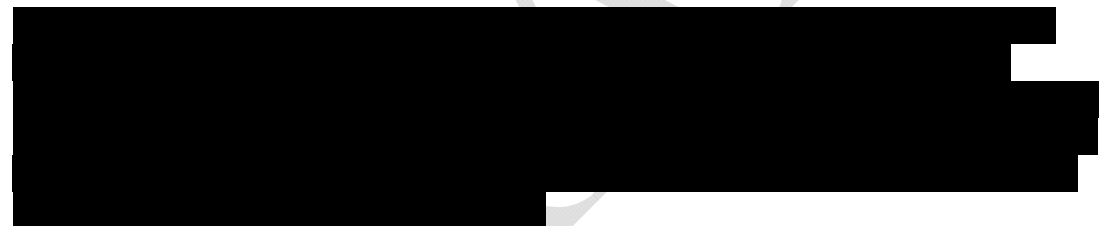
Background

DVA faces increasing pressure to modernise the way in which it interacts with clients and service providers, and the supporting Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) systems. This pressure comes from a number of sources, including:

- Dissatisfaction amongst younger clients with the accessibility and timeliness of DVA services;
- Increasing support risks posed by the Department's ageing ICT systems;
- Whole-of-Government initiatives such as the Service Delivery Reform; and
- Government expectations that DVA's costs will decline as its client base declines.

In order to address this DVA proposes to implement a 4-5 year program to:

- Provide self-service electronic transactions to veterans, their families and third-party providers, so that there is choice, reduced cost and increased efficiency in how veteran services are accessed and delivered;
- Re-engineer both the Department's service delivery processes and their enabling ICT systems, so that services are more cost-effective and timely;
- Implement solutions so that DVA staff, clients, service providers and other agencies are all provided with a consistent view of DVA client data; and
- Streamline and improve electronic data interfaces with other agencies.



In the meantime, DVA is conducting an internally-funded phase 1 pilot project to demonstrate the feasibility of the overall approach. This project, the Transport Booking and Invoicing Transformation (TBIT) Project, seeks to re-engineer the Department's processes for providing taxi travel to DVA-funded medical treatment, including providing an on-line booking service and replacing the ageing ICT system that currently processes bookings.

TBIT will release to a single state in January 2011. If funding is forthcoming, TBIT will be rolled out nationally in phase 2 - April 2011, along with the first components of the broader self-service strategy.

Funding issues



Current Position

DVA intends to implement a range of on-line self-service facilities for clients and service providers. This will be a five year program with a total cost of \$34.4 million.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

29 January 2011

Phase 1 - TBIT project release to a single state

30 April 2011

Phase 2 - Full TBIT project released nationally and first My-Account Service released

April 2011 – 2014

Phase 3 - 10 Progressively deploy more than 20 separate self-service My-Account functions.

Contact Officer

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DRAFT

4.3. Information and Communications Technology Business-As-Usual Reinvestment Fund (BRF)

Background

In 2008, the Government engaged Sir Peter Gershon to conduct a comprehensive review of the Government’s use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

One of the key outcomes of the review was a recommendation to reduce agencies’ “business-as-usual” (BAU) ICT spend by a total of approximately \$1.0 billion over four years. Half of these savings were to be quarantined and reinvested in agency ICT projects. In the 2009-10 and 2010-11 Budgets, the Business Reinvestment Fund (BRF) operated in accordance with these recommendations.

In the 2010-11 Budget, DVA received funding from the BRF for two projects:

- \$21.7 million over one year for the Shared Services Project (see Shared Services Arrangements with the Department of Human Services (DHS) brief); and
- \$4.7 million over two years for the Rapid Re-platforming project.

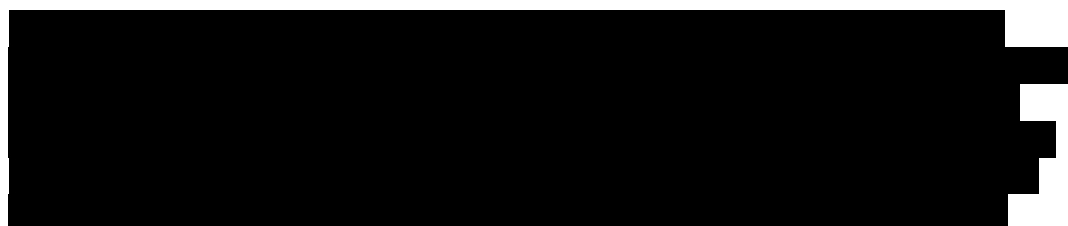


These BRF budget allocations and bids can be summarised as follows:

Bid	Funding sought (\$million)			
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Shared Services	21.7	-	-	-
Rapid Re-platforming	4.0	0.7	-	-
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

Current Position

As part of the 2010-11 budget process, DVA sought funding for a major on-line services program called the *Choice and Maintainability in Veterans’ Services (CMVS) Program*. This is a high priority initiative aimed at significantly improving the delivery of services to DVA’s younger clients. See CMVS brief for more details.



DVA has two ongoing projects currently funded by the BRF. These are the Shared Services Project and the Rapid Re-platforming project. These initiatives will reduce business as usual ICT costs for DVA.

Action Required

For information.

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DRAFT

4.4 DVA Annual Report 2009–10: Production Timetable

Background

The Department's Annual Report is prepared in accordance with 'Requirements for Annual Reports for Departments, Agencies and *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* (FMA) Bodies' as approved by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit in June 2010. The Department also complies with other relevant requirements such as the 'Guidelines for Presentation of Documents to the Parliament' (January 2010), which includes instructions for tabling.

The DVA annual reports have won awards from the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) for the past two years. The 2007–08 report was judged as meeting the requirements of the 'gold' standard and the 2008–09 report met the standard for 'silver'.

Current Position

The annual report is in draft and is scheduled for tabling in both houses by the end of October 2010.

Whilst the Annual Report is a Departmental Issue and signed off by the Secretary the Minister's approval is required to table the report. The report will be provided to you in late September 2010 to seek your approval to table. See timetable below.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

The production timetable is summarised below.

June–September	Departmental process: Drafting, editing and clearance rounds within the Department Design and layout of document, and rounds of proof corrections and Quality Assurance Proofreading and indexing (external) Executive clearance
23–30 September	Report to Minister's office with brief to approve tabling
1–25 October	Printing period, including round(s) of proof corrections, printing, binding, packaging and delivery to Parliament House
Tuesday 26 October	Tabling day

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5. EXECUTIVE DIVISION: Commemorations Group

5.1. Review of the Commemorations Program

Background

The review commenced in 2008 as a functional review of the nature and purpose of the Department's Commemorative activities. The review did not examine the Office of Australian War Graves or the Australian War Memorial, but took into account the activities undertaken in association with both of these entities within the portfolio.

The review considered:

- the continuing relevance of Saluting Their Service as a program description;
- domestic and overseas commemorative travel, including missions;
- accountability and transparency in program administration, including the administration of grants made under the program;
- administration of the legislation protecting the word 'Anzac';
- program priorities for promoting and maintaining public awareness and community engagement;
- funding relationships between the Department and the Australian War Memorial; and
- the integration of the elements of the program and future strategy.

The review has now been divided into two phases: Phase 1 to address functional issues and Phase 2 to address a number of strategic issues that have emerged since 2008 (e.g. commencement of planning for the Anzac centenary, the announcement of a Centenary of Anzac commission).

The functional review (Phase 1) indicates that the Commemorations Program has a range of effective programs in place and products designed to meet objectives.

Recommendations for change include the need to:

- integrate program elements;
- work more closely with the Australian War Memorial;
- develop common marketing and communication strategies and make better use of technology to reach audiences;
- improve the process of evaluating grants;
- implement new guidelines to assess applications for grants (including to review the limits of grant amounts and to make the criteria more stringent in order to encourage more applications which support the intention of the grants program).

Current Position

The current review should be considered as Phase 1, with findings focussing on functional improvements. Phase 2 will consider strategic directions, including 70th anniversaries of Second World War events and the Anzac centenary.

Action Required

For information. You will be provided by mid-September with a brief of the findings and recommendations emerging from the Phase 1 review.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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DRAFT

5.2. *Saluting Their Service* Discretionary Grants Program

Background

The *Saluting Their Service* Commemorations grants program supports projects and activities that directly commemorate Australia's servicemen and women who served in wars, conflicts and peace operations and promotes appreciation and understanding of the role that those who have served have played in shaping the nation.

The program provides support for diverse and enduring projects such as publishing unit wartime histories where none exists, restoration and upgrading of community war memorials, the preservation of our wartime history and school initiatives. The program is governed by guidelines which were developed after extensive consultation with ex-service organisations and the veteran community.

Grants of up to \$3,000 are available for projects such as the preservation and display of wartime memorabilia, commemoration of significant wartime anniversaries and unit reunions, school initiatives and publishing unit histories where none exists.

Grants of up to \$4,000 are available to enable communities to refurbish or update existing memorials, construct new war memorials and repair vandalised memorials and upgrade security measures.

Community, ex-service organisations, local government authorities and other bodies such as museums and schools may apply for grants.

Grants are not available for expenditure already incurred or ongoing expenditure; recurring activities such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day; travel and accommodation; construction and repair of buildings, including memorial halls and sporting facilities; purchase and hire of vehicles and equipment; maintenance of memorials and their surrounds; memorials to individuals; memorials located overseas; purchase of military hardware; educational materials where DVA projects already provide resources for schools; documentaries, CDs and videos; events to mark enlistment, graduation or the formation or anniversaries or associations.

The Commemorations Grants Advisory Committee (CGAC) considers each application and makes recommendations for your final consideration. The CGAC meets approximately every two months. On average, around 120 applications are considered at each meeting. As Minister you have the discretion to approve grants above the program guidelines limit of \$4,000.

The CGAC was established in 1996-97 by the then Repatriation Commissioner as an advisory group to provide an independent source of advice and assistance for assessing grant applications from ex-service and community organisations, local government authorities, schools and museums. The recommendations of the CGAC are sent to you as Minister for decision and final approval.

The CGAC comprises the Repatriation Commissioner and representatives of the Returned and Services League of Australia, Australian Local Government Associations, Australian War Memorial and the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Current representation includes:

- Major General Mark Kelly AO, Repatriation Commissioner (Chair)
- Derek Robson AM, National Secretary of the RSL
- Helen Withnell, Assistant Director, Australian War Memorial
- John Pritchard, Executive Director, Policy and Research, Australian Local Government Association
- Tim Evans, National Manager, Commemorations
- James Rogers, Director, Commemorative Programs
- Val Brewer, Senior Information Officer, Office of Australian War Graves

Saluting Their Service grants were one of the program elements considered under the Commemorations Review. The review proposes new guidelines to assess applications for grants (including reviewing the limits of grant amounts and making the criteria more stringent in order to encourage more applications which support the intention of the grants program).

Current Position

143 applications were considered at the most recent CGAC meeting, held on 27 August 2010. CGAC has recommended funding totalling \$302,323.00 (GST inclusive) for 129 of the projects and has not recommended funding for 14 projects.

Action Required

You will be provided a brief for your consideration by late September 2010.

Contact Officer

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5.3. National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary

Background

In September 2008, the then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd MP wrote to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs asking him to lead and coordinate whole-of-government arrangements to mark the centenary of the landing of Australian troops at Anzac Cove.

The Anzac Centenary is understood to include not only the centenary of the Gallipoli landings in 2015, but also other significant milestones up to and including the centenary of Armistice Day in 2018. Seed funding of \$2.3 million over four years was included in the 2010-11 Budget to plan the commemoration activities to mark the Anzac Centenary in 2015 with these costs to be met from within existing DVA resources.

National Commission

A National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary has been established to undertake public consultation and make recommendations to Government on options for appropriate commemorations to mark the Anzac Centenary in the period 2014-18.

The Commission membership was finalised in early July 2010 and comprises former Prime Ministers Bob Hawke and Malcolm Fraser, the National President of the Returned & Services League (RSL) of Australia Ken Doolan, editorial cartoonist and journalist Warren Brown, nurse and veterans' advocate Kylie Russell and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) member and peacekeeper Matina Jewell. The Commission has bi-partisan support.

The role of the Commission is to consider and provide advice to Government on options for how best to:

- acknowledge and commemorate a century of service and sacrifice by the men and women who have served Australia and its allies in war, defence and peace keeping; and
- explore the legacy of the First World War for Australians and what this means for the future.

The National Commission will also consider the interests of New Zealand, Turkey and the wider international community in centenary commemorations at Gallipoli on 25 April 2015, and the interests of the international community in commemorations to mark the centenary of Armistice Day on 11 November 2018.

At its first meeting on 6 July 2010 in Sydney, the Commission launched a public submission process calling for ideas to mark the Anzac Centenary, which is open until 17 September 2010. The Commission has asked all Australians to share their ideas on how the Anzac Centenary should be commemorated and recognised against one of six themes:

- Century of service;
- Community engagement;
- Infrastructure and capital works;
- Education, public awareness and community access;
- Commemorative services; and

- International relations and cooperation.

With the agreement of the National Commission, the Department has contracted a market research company to conduct focus groups considering commemoration and the Anzac Centenary.

These activities are designed to gain an understanding of the views, perceptions, knowledge and aspirations of the Australian people in relation to Anzac and commemoration and the Anzac centenary 2014-2018. Drawing on this information, which will be provided to them at the next commission meeting in Melbourne on 30 September, the National Commission members will meet in Canberra with key stakeholders on 14-15 October, including ex-service organisations, state and territory governments, representatives of local government, state and national cultural institutions and diplomatic and trade missions. The Commission will then consider the broad scope and shape of commemorative, educative and interpretive initiatives and activities, as well as the governance process for the commemorative program.

Inter Departmental Working Party

In 2009, DVA commenced initial discussions with State Governments around their Centenary planning and in September established an Interdepartmental Working Party (IDWP) comprising the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; Department of Finance and Deregulation; Department of Defence; Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts; Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; the Attorney General's Department; the Australian War Memorial; Australian Federal Police; National Archives of Australia; National Museum of Australia; and the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

DVA provides secretariat and material support for the National Commission and coordinates whole of government engagement through the IDWP.

Current Position

The National Commission is required to report to Government early in 2011.

Action Required

For Information.

Critical Date

Next National Commission meeting: 30 September 2010

National Commission meets with key stakeholders: 14-15 October 2010

National Commission reports to Government: early 2011.

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5.4. Imminent Release of a Request for Tender (RFT) for the Provision of Event Provider Services for Anzac Day at Gallipoli

Background

DVA went out to tender in June 2006 to seek the services of an event provider to assist with delivery of Anzac Day commemorative activities at Gallipoli for a period of four years, commencing with Anzac Day period 2006, with an option, which was exercised, for one additional year (2011).

Current Position

The contract with the event provider, Definitive Event ends on 30 June 2011. The Department plans to tender shortly to seek Event Provider services to assist with delivery of Anzac Day services at Gallipoli, Turkey commencing 1 July 2012 with optional contract extensions allowing the contract to be extended up until 30 June 2016.

It is anticipated that a decision on the outcome of the Request for Tender (RFT) process will be taken by the end of 2010, with a contract in place by early 2011 for commencement on 1 July 2011. This is to allow sufficient time for transition from the current to a new provider, if there is a change as a result of the RFT.

To allow a decision to be made by the end of 2010, the RFT needs to be issued in early September, with industry briefings occurring in late September and tenders closing in mid October. Assessment of tenders will then occur during November before decision on the preferred provider by the end of 2010.

The scope of the tender requirements are expected to require the successful tenderer to:

- provide advice and support on event planning and management and, in accordance with the governance arrangements, contribute to the development and implementation of an annual project management plan;
- source, implement and manage infrastructure and logistical support for commemorative activities at:
 - the Anzac Commemorative Site;
 - Lone Pine Cemetery;
 - subject to New Zealand agreement, Chunuk Bair; and
 - other additional sites on the Gallipoli Peninsula within the Anzac area that may be specified during the contract period;
- develop, produce, and disseminate information and interpretive products for those attending the commemorative activities;
- develop and deliver an overnight reflective program at the Anzac Commemorative Site to run from the evening of 24 April to the early morning of 25 April; and
- assist with media support activities.

The contract period is likely to be for a period of one year, with an option to extend by four years up to 30 June 2016. This is to allow the Department to assess the performance of the contractor after one year before committing to a contract that will include Anzac Day 2015, the centenary of the Gallipoli landings.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Early September 2010 –release of RFT documentation.

Late September 2010 – industry briefings.

Mid October 2010 – close of RFT.

November – December 2010 – assessment of tenders.

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5.5. Anzac Day 2011 Update – Gallipoli and Villers-Bretonneux

Background

Approximately 330,000 Australians served overseas during the First World War, and of them approximately two-thirds were killed or wounded. The legacy of these events has left a lasting impact on Australia, both as a national tragedy, and as a foundation for some of the crucial symbols of our national identity. There is considerable public interest in the appropriate commemoration of these events. Public and media interest in the Gallipoli and Villers-Bretonneux commemorations will continue to grow as we approach the centenary of the landing in 2015.

Turkey

Since formal services began to be organised at Gallipoli in the 1990s, this Department has been the lead Australian government agency for the Anzac Day Dawn Service (hosted in conjunction with New Zealand) and the Australian Service at Lone Pine. The Gallipoli Anzac Day services are managed through trilateral arrangements between the Australian, New Zealand and Turkish Governments and with Australian inter-agency support from the Australian Defence Force, Australian Federal Police, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Attorney General's Department.

In 2010 approximately 7,000 Australians and New Zealanders attended the commemorations at Gallipoli. This number was down on the 7,500 in 2009 due to the effects of the Icelandic volcano eruption. We anticipate a similar number to 2009 for the 2011 commemorations.

In 2009-2010 DVA spent \$3.3 million on the Gallipoli commemorations. This includes infrastructure, visitor facilities, orders of service, host broadcast arrangements and staff to manage the ceremony and provide visitor services and a reflective program for visitors overnight on 24-25 April.

France

Since 2008 the Australian Government has organised and funded the Villers-Bretonneux Anzac Day Dawn Service through the Department of Veterans' Affairs, with support from the Australian Embassy in France and the Australian Defence Force. The Australian Government also assists with the community services which have been conducted since at least 1961 in Villers-Bretonneux and since 1982 at Bullecourt. Crowds in the order of 1,500 - 1,800 regularly attend.

An estimated 5,000 visitors attended the Villers-Bretonneux service in 2008 and more than 3,000 in 2009 and 2010.

Funding of \$3.5 million over four years was appropriated through the 2008-09 Additional Estimates process to stage the Villers-Bretonneux Dawn Service. The funding provides for infrastructure, visitor facilities, orders of service, host broadcast arrangements and staff to manage the ceremony and provide visitor services.

DVA Staff and Roles

Between 20 – 24 DVA staff travel to Turkey each year to support the Anzac Day commemorations at the Anzac Commemorative Site (Dawn Service), Lone Pine and Chunuk Bair. Between 8 -10 DVA staff travel to France each year to support the Anzac Day commemorations at Villers-Bretonneux (Dawn Service) and Bullecourt.

In both Turkey and France their roles and responsibilities include management of the services, organising the ceremonial component of the services including the provision of a master of ceremonies, coordination with contractors and other government agencies, visitor liaison across the sites and access roads, supporting the visitor experience for people with special needs, media liaison, and managing and as required implementing business continuity arrangements. In Turkey, the role also includes coordination of joint commemorations with New Zealand government agencies.

Governance

DVA has established the Commemorations Program Board comprising the Secretary and members of the Repatriation Commission who meet regularly to provide strategic direction, oversight and governance for Anzac Day ceremonies at Gallipoli in Turkey and the Western Front in France.

DVA chairs Planning Committees, consisting of representatives from the Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet, the Australian Defence Force, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Federal Police, and the Attorney-General's Department, to coordinate arrangements for the services in France and Gallipoli. DVA co-chairs bilateral meetings with these Australian agencies and their New Zealand equivalents for the Gallipoli services and maintains a DVA Counsellor at Ankara to conduct liaison with the Turkish Government.

Current Position

DVA is the lead Government agency for the planning, conduct and delivery of the Anzac Day Dawn Service and the Lone Pine Service at Gallipoli and the Villers-Bretonneux service in France. Planning for the 2011 services in both Turkey and France is progressing.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

24-25 April 2011 – Anzac Day Commemorations at Gallipoli.

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5.7. Historical Study of The Anzac Battlefield Area, Gallipoli, Turkey

Background

Prime Ministers Howard and Erdogan announced on 26 April 2005 agreement to a joint historical survey of the Anzac area (including archaeological aspects) in the Gallipoli Peninsula Historical National Park. Prime Minister Clark later agreed to New Zealand participation.

DVA, following invitations to 15 Australian universities and two archaeological associations for the archaeological aspects of the survey, selected the proposal from Melbourne University's (then) Associate Professor Antonio Sagona and Associate Professor Christopher Mackie from the Centre for Classics and Archaeology. Dr Richard Reid, then DVA Senior Historian, and RADM Simon Harrington AM (Retd) were also nominated as Australian members of the team. New Zealand nominated Dr Ian McGibbon, Senior Historian, Ministry for Culture and Heritage. The team is also being supported by four Melbourne University students for the field work phases of the study.

The Joint Historical Study's progress has been very slow. The study was reinvigorated in October 2008.

The Australian and New Zealand historical study team members first met with Turkish members of the team in Canakkale, Turkey on 12 and 13 October 2009. This was the first meeting of team members. The objectives of this meeting were to develop and agree the draft study scope and timeframes for the conduct of the study

Current Position

A second visit to Turkey by the Australian and New Zealand historical study is planned for October 2010, and is proposed to undertake the first battlefield survey.



Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Planned October 2010 visit to Turkey by Australian and New Zealand historical study team.

Contact Officer

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5.9. Future Program for Papua New Guinea's Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel Commemorative Medallion Presentations

Background

On 9 August 2006, the Australian Government agreed to commission a commemorative Medallion to recognise surviving Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels in Papua New Guinea (PNG), and their widows. On 9 December 2008, the then Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, wrote to the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs, asking that the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) take forward as a matter of priority production of commemorative Medallions to recognise the contribution of the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.

On 28 April 2009 the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Commemorative Medallion was announced by the then Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, at a joint press conference during the visit to Australia of Sir Michael Somare.

Those eligible for the Medallion must have assisted Australian servicemen in PNG during the Second World War; been a civilian at the time of rendering assistance; been no younger than 10 years old at the time of rendering assistance; or be the widow or widower of a person meeting the above criteria. The Medallion is only available to living persons. Due to the lack of official records applicants must be certified as being a Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel by two senior members of their community/village before being considered eligible for a Medallion.

As no records of service exist, it is difficult to estimate the total number of Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels still living. It was originally estimated that there may be up to a total of 1,200 surviving Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels and surviving widows, however, due to the small number of applications received this estimate may be too high. 1,500 Medallions were produced by the Royal Australian Mint at a total cost of \$35,546 and delivery took place in early July 2009.

The design for the medallion is based on a photograph of Private George C 'Dick' Whittington being assisted by Papuan Raphael Oimbari. Copyright for the photograph is held by the Australian War Memorial and approval for its use has been granted.

The Medallion will not cut across, or supersede, the Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal's enquiry into Australian Government recognition of the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels, which was referred in line with a Senate motion moved by Senators Guy Barnett and Julian McGauran in June 2008. The Tribunal's enquiry has not yet begun due to other priorities.

On 23 July 2009, PNG Remembrance Day, the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs, presented the first Medallion to Wesley Akove in a ceremony at Bomana War Cemetery in Port Moresby. Following this ceremony there was media interest regarding the Medallion in both Australia and PNG and inquiries were received from potential recipients.

Three further Medallions were presented on 2 September 2009 (Battle for Australia Day) at a ceremony in PNG to applicants who had been assessed as eligible and verified by the PNG Government. The Australian High Commissioner, HE Mr Chris Moraitis, officiated at this ceremony.

A third Medallion presentation ceremony occurred at the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby on 9 July 2010, where the Hon Bob McMullan MP, then Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance, presented six Medallions to recipients on behalf of Minister Griffin.

A fourth Medallion presentation ceremony occurred at the Popondetta War Memorial, Popondetta on 29 July 2010. 18 Medallions were presented at the ceremony. The Australian High Commissioner, HE Mr Ian Kemish AM, presented the Medallions.

The Medallion has been advertised throughout PNG via English and Pidgin newspaper advertisements and community announcements on radio (from July to October 2009), and through an information mail-out, in November 2009, to Provincial Level Governments (17 recipients), Local Level Governments (277 recipients) and Church organisations (81 recipients).

Current Position

On the upcoming Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel's (FWA) Day, 3 November 2010, the Commemorations Group will deliver the fifth presentation ceremony for Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels. These presentation ceremonies have been formal services with DVA arranging and meeting the cost of attendance by Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels and family members. Commemorations Group is developing a strategy to manage the presentation of the Medallions past this point. It is likely that the strategy will include three options: the presentation of Medallions by the High Commissioner at functions he is attending, including Remembrance Day and FWA Day, where Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels are able to attend by their own means; presented to the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels by local PNG Government Administrators or Members of Parliament at local functions within the villages of FWA; and the posting of the Medallion direct to the recipient.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

3 November 2010. You will be provided with a brief.

Contact Officer

Tim Evans
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Phone: (02) 6289 6068 or [REDACTED]

5.10. 60th Anniversary of the Korean War 2010–2013

Background

In July 2009, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Hon Yang Kim, Republic of Korea Minister for Patriots and Veterans Affairs met to discuss plans for the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Korean War.

Following those discussions, the then Repatriation Commissioner, Brigadier Bill Rolfe AO (Retd), established an advisory group consisting of representatives nominated by the main Korea ex-service organisations in Australia to discuss proposed initiatives. Initiatives subsequently approved by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs included a national ceremony at the Australian National Korean War Memorial (ANKWM) followed by a reception scheduled for 23 October 2010, and funding for State-based anniversary commemorations.

State Based Commemorative Activities

State based commemorative ceremonies conducted in 2010 are:

- New South Wales – a memorial service on 27 July at the Korean War Memorial in Moore Park, followed by a luncheon;
- Victoria – a memorial service on 25 June at the Shrine of Remembrance, followed by a reception at the Shrine. The reception was paid for by the State Government;
- Queensland – a memorial service on 10 July at the Albert Community Hall, Broadbeach, followed by a luncheon and a memorial service and parade on 27 July at Korea Place, Bribie Island, followed by a luncheon at the Bribie Island RSL Citizens' Memorial Club;
- South Australia – a memorial service on 27 July at the Henley Beach Town Hall, followed by a luncheon at the Henley Hotel;
- Tasmania – a memorial service and wreath laying ceremony on 27 July at Anglesea Barracks, followed by a luncheon at the Soho Hotel; and
- Western Australia - a memorial service on 25 June at the Flame of Remembrance in Kings Park, followed by a luncheon at the Royal Australian Air Force Association Club at Bull Creek.

Other Initiatives

Re-release of "Out in the Cold"

The re-release of the Department's history of the Korean War "Out in the Cold" occurred in August 2010.

Australian War Memorial Conference "Korea: the forgotten conflict"

The Australian War Memorial is planning to hold a conference in October 2011 titled "Korea: the forgotten conflict" to mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War. 1951 was the year of the landmark Australian battles at Kapyong in April and Maryang San in October.

Family Members of Those Missing In Action

The Department is exploring what options may be available to support the family members of those Missing In Action wishing to participate in the national ceremony on 23 October 2010.

Presidential Letters

DVA has agreed to support the Korean Government in distributing a Presidential letter of appreciation to all surviving Australian Korean War veterans. The F111 Health Care and Nominal Roll Development Section coordinated the identification of all eligible Australian veterans and the distribution of the letters to them in June 2010. The Korean Embassy placed an advertisement featuring their poster “*Thank You Australia*” in the *Australian* Newspaper calling for any veterans who did not receive a letter to download an application form from the Embassy’s or the DVA website and lodge it with DVA so that a letter can be sent to them. Information on this process is available on both the Korean Embassy and DVA websites. There was also an article, as well as the Korean Government “*Thank You Australia*” poster, placed in the DVA newspaper *VetAffairs* informing veterans of the activities being undertaken at the national level to commemorate the anniversary and where to find out more information, particularly in relation to receiving the Presidential letter of appreciation.

Re-Visit Schedule

The Korean Government supports a re-visit program which assists veterans in returning to Korea to mark commemorative occasions.

Below are the dates, and numbers of veterans, participating in 2010 re-visits hosted by the Korean Government:

- 22 – 28 June, 6 veterans;
- 1 – 7 July, Youth Camp for Peace. The Korean Embassy conducted a selection process to identify suitable participants and selected one Australian to attend;
- August, visit of a Republic of Korea (ROK) Navy Warship to Australia. The Korean Government has invited 100 guests from the veteran’s community to a function hosted onboard the ship;
- 10 – 16 September, 6 veterans to commemorate the Inchon Landing. RAN Warships HMAS Toowoomba and HMAS Arunta will participate in the re-enactment of the landings at Inchon;
- 27 September to 3 October, 6 veterans to commemorate the recapture of Seoul;
- 13 – 18 October, 10 RAAF veterans; and
- 9 - 14 November, 10 veterans.

Current Position

Commemorations Group is currently active in supporting a range of activities commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Korean War and is working in liaison with the Korean Embassy in Canberra and the Korean veteran community to deliver these activities.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

23 October 2010 for the national service and reception in Canberra. You will be provided with a brief.

Contact Officer

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5.11. Consideration of Australian Involvement in Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary, 2011, of the Battle of Greece and Crete

Background

The Battles of Greece and Crete saw Australian and Allied forces fight valiantly alongside the peoples of Greece and Crete in the defence of freedom and democracy against tremendous odds. The continuing recognition of these battles is testament to the enduring friendships forged in those dark days and the debt we owe those who served.

In 2001 twenty-two members of the veteran community officially represented Australia in a commemorative mission to attend the dedication of the Australian Government constructed Hellenic-Australian Memorial at Rethymno, Crete. The dedication coincided with the 60th anniversary of the Battles of Greece and Crete. Led by the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the mission party travelled to Greece and Crete to participate in a range of commemorative events.

This group of Australian men and women represented and honoured more than 17,125 Australians who served with tenacity and courage in Greece and Crete between November 1940 and May 1941. The memorial acknowledges the contribution of Australians from all three military services to the campaigns in Greece and Crete.

The Director, Office of Australian War Graves, Major General Paul Stevens AO (Retd), met with local organisers of the commemorative services in Crete during July 2010 to identify opportunities for Australia to participate in the 70th anniversary commemorations.

Current Position

The Commemorations Program Review paper includes discussion regarding options for the conduct of future commemorative missions. It is anticipated that the 70th anniversary of the Battles of Greece, Crete and Tobruk in 2011 will attract expectations from the ex-service community for the conduct of commemorative missions. It is also likely that recommendations from the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary could include options for the conduct of commemorative missions relating to the Anzac Centenary.

Commemorations Group will provide a brief which will outline a range of options for commemorating the 70th anniversaries of the Battle for Greece and Crete. Options will include a commemorative mission in May 2011, the potential for subsidising veterans' travel to commemorative services in-country, national and state services and the development of commemorative material.

Expected commemorative activity dates in Crete are 16 to 22 May 2011, with the most important commemorations to be held on the 20 to 22 May. [REDACTED]

Action Required

For information.

Critical dates

Your consideration of options recommended in the forthcoming brief will be required by November 2010 to ensure adequate time for planning.

May 2011 for the commemorative services in Crete.

Contact Officer

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5.12. Consideration of Australian Involvement in Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary, 2011, of the Siege of Tobruk

Background

Between April and August 1941 up to 14,000 Australians were besieged in Tobruk by a German–Italian army. It was the first time during the war that the German forces received their first set back. The Australian casualties were 3,009 killed or wounded, and 941 taken prisoner.

There is some expectation from the veteran community that commemorative activities reflective of the significance of the Siege of Tobruk will be supported by the Australian Government.

The veterans who served during this period are aged between 85 and 95. Limited numbers may be fit for travel overseas and it is highly likely the 70th anniversary will be the final opportunity for an overseas activity to commemorate these events.

The Australian Government has conducted commemorative missions to most major First and Second World War battle areas, except for Tobruk.

A timeline of approximately 12 months is required to facilitate adequate time to plan, make bookings and finalise logistics with the host country, particularly Libya.

Current Position

The Commemorations Program Review paper includes discussion regarding options for the conduct of future commemorative missions. It is anticipated that the 70th anniversary of the Battles of Greece, Crete and Tobruk in 2011 will attract expectations from the ex-service community for the conduct of commemorative missions. It is also likely that recommendations from the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary could include options for the conduct of commemorative missions relating to the Anzac Centenary.

Commemorations Group will provide a brief which outlines a range of options for commemorating the 70th anniversary of the siege of Tobruk. Options will include a commemorative mission in November 2011, commemorative services in-country, national and state services within Australia and the development of commemorative material.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Ministerial consideration of options recommended in the forthcoming brief will be required by November 2010 to ensure adequate time for planning. The mission would most likely occur in November 2011.

Contact Officer

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5.13. Presentation of Gallantry Medals and Unit Citations to Veterans of the Battle of Long Tan

Background

A number of those involved in the 18 August 1966 Battle of Long Tan, have long considered that they were not appropriately recognised by the Australian Government and that the Commonwealth awards issued at the time to not be inclusive of all those involved in the battle.

Following an independent review of the Battle of Long Tan recognition in 2008, the Governor-General approved the following changes to [REDACTED]

Further, following an independent Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal inquiry, the then Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support announced the following in October 2009:

Delta Company, 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (6RAR), be awarded the Unit Citation for Gallantry for its performance at the Battle of Long Tan in August 1966.

Travel

While the Department of Veterans' Affairs has assisted Australian veterans with travel arrangements to attend commemorative activities, costs and arrangements relating to travel for veterans attending activities relating to Defence Honours and Awards is a matter for the Department of Defence.

The Governor General invited the three officers and members of D Company to Government House for a presentation on 18 August. The Department of Defence, however advised that the Australian Army would only cover travel costs associated with the movement of the three officers and not the remaining members of the battle. This decision received widespread adverse media attention.

Current Position

One Commander of the 18 August 1966 Battle of Long Tan, Vietnam, was awarded the medal of Gallantry at an investiture ceremony at Government House on Vietnam Veterans' Day, 18 August 2010. At the request of the remaining two Commanders, their medals were issued to them via post. The Hon Alan Griffin MP, in his capacity as Minister for Defence Personnel, indicated an intention to fund the travel of Long Tan veterans to the Enoggera Military Base in Qld (the home of 6RAR), for the presentation of Unit Citations in 2011.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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6. EXECUTIVE DIVISION: Office of Australian War Graves

6.1. Official Commemoration of War and Post-War Dead

Background

Since the first World War, the Australian Government has provided an official individual commemoration to Service personnel and veterans whose death is related to their service in war or conflict.

Current position

War Deaths

- The Australian Government commemorates the Australian dead of the two world wars through the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). As a member of the CWGC, Australia shares its operating costs, with a contribution of 6.05 per cent of costs based on the number of Australian war dead. As an agent of the CWGC, the Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG) maintains more than 75 CWGC cemeteries and plots and five memorials to the missing in Australia, Papua New Guinea, Norfolk Island and the Solomon Islands. Again as an agent of the Commission, the Office also maintains cemeteries for Dutch, German and Japanese war dead in Australia. These responsibilities are covered by a formal agreement between Australia and the Commission, signed on 1 January 1975.
- Separately, OAWG makes arrangements for the maintenance of the graves of Australian service personnel who died in conflicts in South Africa (Boer War); Korea (Korean War); South East Asia (the Malayan Emergency, Indonesian Confrontation, and the Vietnam War); and more recent conflicts. It also maintains the individual war graves of war dead from all conflicts located in Australian civil cemeteries.
- Until 1966, Government policy was that official commemoration of war dead would be provided in a war or military cemetery or on a memorial to the missing proximate to the place of death, except where the person may have died in a location where no war cemetery existed, in which case commemoration was provided in a civil cemetery. This policy meant that those who died overseas before 1966 were not repatriated, and it still applies to remains from pre-1966 conflicts whenever they are discovered. These remains are interred in the nearest practicable war cemetery.
- During the Vietnam War, the Government decided to repatriate those who died in conflicts short of war or defence emergency from 19 January 1966 onwards, if circumstances allowed and if the family so requested. This policy remains in place for current conflicts.
- In recent years, the six Australian casualties previously missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been recovered and repatriated for burial in Australia. Similarly, the two MIAs from the Indonesian Confrontation were recovered and repatriated in 2010. The twenty one Australian casualties of the Afghanistan conflict have also been repatriated to Australia for burial.

Death Following a War or Conflict

- Since 1922, veterans who have died after a war or conflict from a cause related to that war or conflict have been eligible for official individual commemoration. OAWG provides these commemorations in a civil or lawn cemetery, crematorium or an OAWG Garden of Remembrance, and maintains

them in perpetuity. Official commemoration is provided on the principle of equality between all veterans and so is provided in standard form.

- There are now over 290,000 post-war commemorations, and the workload grows as new commemorations are added to the task of maintaining existing memorials, many of which are ageing.

[REDACTED]. Legislation relating to Heritage and Occupational Health & Safety also affects the maintenance of the commemorations.

Tenure of Interment Sites

- In South Australia and Western Australia, State legislation permits the re-use of interment sites. This legislation potentially affects OAWG's ability to maintain the official commemoration of war and post-war dead in perpetuity.
- Where the tenure on graves of war dead has expired, it has been long-standing practice for OAWG to renew the tenure. For post-war dead, renewal of tenure is a family responsibility, and if the family does not renew and the grave is re-used, OAWG transfers the official commemoration to an OAWG Garden of Remembrance.
- In Western Australia, OAWG has signed an agreement with the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board to protect the graves of war and post-war dead in Perth.
- In NSW, the Crown Cemeteries Advisory Committee has been established to advise the NSW Government on changes to legislation to enable the introduction of limited tenure for graves. The OAWG is represented on this Committee and to date the NSW Government has indicated that war graves will be exempt from tenure.

Permission to use the Service Badge

- Under authority delegated by the Minister for Defence, OAWG may grant permission for veterans' families to use the relevant Service emblem on private memorials where a veteran is not entitled to official commemoration.

Provision of Information

- OAWG holds information about the burial locations of all those entitled to official individual commemoration. Upon request, OAWG obtains photographs of individual graves, war cemeteries and memorials for next of kin unable to travel overseas or within Australia. It also provides brochures, maps and information about commemorative sites and memorials for which it or the CWGC is responsible.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil

Contact Officer

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6.2. Overseas Memorials

Background

The Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG) is responsible for all official overseas Australian national war memorials. An official memorial is generally one that has been built and is maintained by the Australian Government, at sites significant to Australia's military history. A few privately-constructed memorials have become official over the years, but for the most part privately-constructed memorials are supported through the Overseas Privately-Constructed Memorial Refurbishment Grants Program. This program allocates approximately \$200,000 per annum in discretionary grants.

Current Position

OAWG maintains ten memorials on the old Western Front using the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) as an agent. In France, these include the Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux; the Australian Corps Memorial Park at Le Hamel; four Divisional Memorials; and the Australian Memorial Parks at Fromelles and Bullecourt. The Hill 60 Memorial, Ieper, and the 5th Division Memorial at Polygon Wood are located in Belgium. There are also memorials in Europe in London and at Rethymo on Crete.

In the Middle East and North Africa, there are official memorials at Tobruk in Libya, at Jerusalem in Israel, and El Alamein in Egypt. These are also maintained through the CWGC.

In the South East Asian region, OAWG is responsible for the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum and Walking Trail in Thailand, and the Sandakan Memorial Park in Malaysian Borneo. There are smaller official memorials located at Surrender Point in Malaysian Borneo, at Parit Sulong in mainland Malaysia, in Brunei, and on Bangka Island, Indonesia. The Hellfire Pass Memorial is maintained by locally employed staff supported by contractors. The other memorials are maintained by local contractors.

In Papua New Guinea memorials were constructed in 2002 at Isurava and Milne Bay, whilst the memorial at Popondetta was expanded. OAWG is also responsible for the battle-exploit memorial at the entrance to Lae War Cemetery. Local authorities maintain the Coast Watchers' Memorial at Madang. Other memorials are located at Cape Wom, Milne Bay, Wau, Sogeri, Madang, Kokoda and Rabaul.

The majority of memorials operate without incident, although maintenance costs are rising and OAWG will be seeking some further funding in this regard in the 2011-12 budget.

Current issues worthy of attention are as follows:

2. A Memorandum Of Understanding with Thailand covering the operation of the Hellfire Pass memorial Museum, which is located on Thai military land, has been in draft since the Museum opened in 1998. In general terms the MoU has not progressed because of changes in Government and constitutional provisions in Thailand over the period. Meanwhile the Museum continues to operate successfully on the basis of permissive occupancy and consultation. Currently, the Royal Thai Armed Forces and the Office of Australian War Graves are

involved in another round of negotiation of MoU provisions. Once the provisions are agreed at staff level the MoU will still have to be considered by both Governments, but it may be that the MoU will progress to signature in 2011.

3. Recently, Thai authorities closed a section of the walking track along the rail line that is connected to the Hellfire Pass Museum. This section is outside the area covered by the draft MoU. A separate brief on this matter is at serial 6.6
4. In 2009 a rock fall occurred on the walking trail associated with the Hellfire Pass Museum. No one was hurt. The OAWG has organised reports regarding the safety of the walking trail through Australian and Thai experts. Once these reports have been considered, further information will be forwarded for Ministerial consideration of options to ensure safety into the future.
5. The Australian War Memorial, London, located at Hyde Park Corner, was dedicated on 11 November 2003. In subsequent years there were issues related to flaking paint on the names etched into the memorial and leaks in the memorial's water feature. Both these issues have now been resolved.

Action Required

No action is required at this stage.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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6.3. Western Front Interpretive Trail

Background

The achievements and sacrifice of Australians on the Western Front are not as well known as they might be. More than 290,000 Australians served on the Front; 46,000 gave their lives. In recent years Governments of both persuasions have sought to foster a deeper appreciation for their service in the main theatre of conflict during WWI.

A proposal for an Australian Interpretive Centre on the Western Front had its genesis in a 2003 request from former Senator David MacGibbon to Prime Minister Howard. The Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG) commissioned a feasibility study of the proposal in 2005. Subsequently, the Howard Government allocated \$297,000 in the 2006-07 Budget for a strategic study of an Interpretive Centre. The study recommended the Australian National Memorial site at Villers-Bretonneux and estimated the cost at approximately \$38 million.

\$2.834 million was appropriated over 2007-08 and 2008-09 for concept design and the associated resolution of approvals, permits and French Government support. The work done confirmed a capital and operating cost for a single Centre of approximately \$35 million in the first five years of the project. It also confirmed that locating the Centre adjacent to the Australian National Memorial would permanently alter the aesthetics of the Memorial site. Ensuring the alteration was sympathetic to the site accounted in part for the high cost of the Centre. Another significant cost driver was that visitor numbers at Villers-Bretonneux compared to other areas of the Western Front are not high (approximately 20,000 versus approximately 150,000 in the 1916 Somme battlefields and 250,000 around Ypres). Therefore, the Centre had to be built with inclusions to attract tourists rather than service an existing demand.

Pozières on the 1916 Somme battlefields is the only other logical site for a stand-alone Australian Interpretive Centre. There are already two Australian memorials at Pozières, and there is no piece of Australian battlefield archaeology that could be exploited to rival the nearby Thiepval Memorial (British) or the Canadian memorial park at Beaumont Hamel and induce visitors to stop. The concept for a substantial Australian facility at Pozieres is thus difficult, and a major facility in this location would also defuse the focus on the National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux.

In June 2008, subsequent to an inspection of the site and further consideration of the alternatives, the then Minister (the Hon Alan Griffin) decided that a single Centre should not go ahead. He was concerned with the high cost compared to existing visitor facilities, and the high level of risk that, even with the proposed investment, a single facility at Villers-Bretonneux would not attract a significant increase in visitor numbers to the area to make it viable.

In the 2009-10 Budget, \$10 million was committed over four years (2009-10 to 2012-13) to establish an Interpretive Trail linking upgraded visitor attractions at seven former Australian WWI battlefield sites along the Western Front in France and Belgium.

This Project focuses on telling the story of Australians across the Front by assisting local authorities and communities to improve interpretive displays while upgrading existing museum facilities and, at a limited number of sites, construction of new

visitor facilities. This concept is complementary to the 2008 decision to hold an annual Anzac Day dawn service at the Australian National Memorial, Villers-Bretonneux, and the interest that ceremony and the impending centenary of the conflict will generate in the Western Front.

Current Position

The Trail is being established in partnership with local authorities, ensuring that the effect of the available funding is maximised. The objective is to ensure that all components of the Trail are completed by 2014.

The principles of cooperation are as follows:

- Each facility will be owned and operated by the local community or a local authority.
- While the Australian Government may provide funding to assist with initial concept and design studies, Australia expects that the capital costs of any development will take advantage of any EU funding which might be available and, thereafter, the Australian Government and the relevant French partners will share the costs on an equal basis.
- Development of Australian interpretive material for each facility will be funded by the Australian Government.

The project comprises the following seven components: (Project status is shown in brackets.):

- Major improvements to the Franco-Australian Museum at Villers-Bretonneux. (Concept design and estimates of cost completed. Next step is to establish a funding model and then proceed to detailed design. Meanwhile initial cost estimates will be submitted to the French regional funding authority in September 2010.)
- Relocation and upgrading of the existing Museum at Fromelles. (Concept design completed. Funding model established. Next step is the detailed design and documentation phase to confirm cost estimates for funding partners.)
- Refurbishment and upgrading of the Bullecourt Museum. (Concept design completed. Funding model established. Next step is the detailed design and documentation phase.)
- The establishment of an interpretive facility at Pozières. (Discussions in train as to an appropriate facility.)
- The establishment of an interpretive pathway at Mont St Quentin near Péronne. (Access to remnant German trench and initial cost estimates obtained. Next step is to agree the operating concept and submit cost estimates to the French regional funding authority in September 2010.)
- Improvement of interpretive material in conjunction with Belgian proposals for major extension of museums in Ypres and Zonnebeke. (Local Belgian authorities have already obtained full funding for the capital costs of museum redevelopment, and are not seeking an Australian contribution in this regard. Therefore, the project encompasses assistance with development of Australian interpretive material for display at each location. In Ypres this involves identifying the stories of a number of representative Australian soldiers who fought in the salient so that visitors can follow them as they move through the Museum. At Zonnebeke it

entails provision of a €200,000 grant to Zonnebeke from Trail Project funds.)

- Realignment of the road adjacent to the Australian National Memorial in order to improve visitor safety and access, and improvement to vehicle parking facilities. (Concept design and cost estimates completed. Next step is submission to the French regional funding authority and negotiation of cost split.)

Action Required

No immediate action is required. OAWG will provide regular briefings and seek advice on matters such as confirmation of the operating concept at Mont St Quentin. In April 2011, confirmation of the Australian Government's commitment of €200,000 to the museum extension project in Zonnebeke would provide an opportunity to make a further announcement relating to the Trail around Anzac Day.

Critical Dates

Nil

Contact Officer

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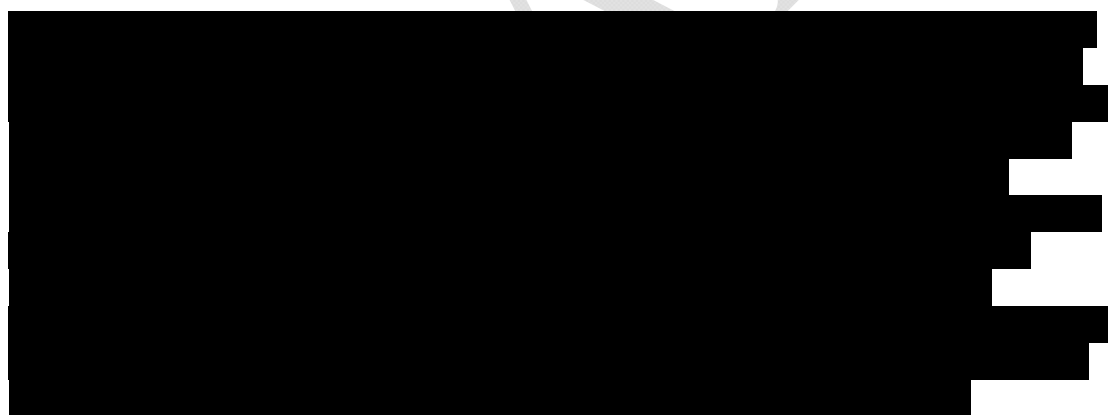
6.4. Proposed New Zealand Memorial

Background

In 2001 the New Zealand Government advised of interest in providing a site, within Wellington, for the construction of an Australian Memorial, which would be a reciprocal gesture for the New Zealand Memorial on ANZAC Parade, Canberra. No further action occurred because of difficulty in identifying a suitable site.

In 2007, the New Zealand Government announced funding to construct a Memorial Park in Wellington at the site of their National War Memorial. The Park included a provision for countries such as Australia to design and construct their own memorials. The Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG) sought funding of AUD\$5.005m in the 2007-08 Budget for design and construction of an Australian Memorial, and this was approved. The Memorial is intended to commemorate the ANZAC alliance, and Australia and New Zealand's shared military history.

The Australian Memorial has not progressed because the NZ Government has not finalised the Master Plan for the park, and until that happens the design parameters for the Australian Memorial cannot be specified. In its May 2010 Budget, the NZ Government committed NZD\$10 million towards interim landscaping of the Park. At the same time it announced that options to deal with the road that crosses the Park are still under consideration. OAWG envisages that when this options study is complete the Master Plan can be finalised and design of the Australian Memorial can commence.



Current Position

The Australian Government has appropriated AUD\$5 million for the design and construction of an Australian Memorial in Wellington, New Zealand. The proposed Australian Memorial will have a prominent position within the new Wellington Peace Park, which is to be developed by the NZ Government in the precinct of the NZ National War Memorial.

Action Required

No action is required at this stage. When the NZ options study is complete, the NZ Government will need to commit further funding for the park in a future Budget. If the request for additional Australian support is re-iterated, a decision could be made at that stage.

Critical Dates

Delays in New Zealand with the completion of a Master Plan mean that no date has been set for a dedication ceremony. The New Zealand Government currently envisages the Park will be opened in 2014-15. The Australian Memorial would be dedicated at the same time.

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DRAFT

6.5. Protection of the Kokoda Track

Background

The Kokoda Track is a very important location in Australia's military history. In recent years it has experienced a rapid growth in the number of trekkers and the estimated number now approximates 5,000 per annum.

The Track and the Ranges are home to thousands of people whose living standards are low and whose communities require sustainable development if economic opportunities such as forestry and mining are to be resisted. The Track also passes through the water catchment for Port Moresby, and through the Owen Stanley Ranges, which are important to the future economy of Papua New Guinea (PNG) in terms of carbon storage, biodiversity and tourism.

Following a perceived threat to the Track caused by mining exploration, in October 2007 the Government approved \$15.8m funding to assist PNG to protect the Kokoda Track. The majority of the funding (\$14.9m) was appropriated to the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) as the lead agency in a Task Force to work with PNG agencies to improve management of the Track, and in the longer term assist with World Heritage nomination for the Track and surrounding Owen Stanley Ranges.

DVA is a member of the Task Force with special interest in the military history of the Track. The funding announced in October 2007 included \$0.94M for DVA to develop a website on the Kokoda Track, with educational resources for teachers and students. This resource is now online. Part of the funding was also used for a documentary on the track that was screened in April 2010.

On 23 April 2008, PNG and Australia signed a Joint Understanding relating to the preservation of the historic values of the Track and the maintenance of its integrity. The objectives of the Agreement called for preservation of the social and cultural values of the area, while improving the quality of life in a sustainable way for those living in the track corridor.

Under the Understanding, PNG, DEWHA, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and AusAID implemented the Kokoda Development Program to begin the task of helping communities along the Track with the provision of water, sanitation, education, and health services. The same parties also restructured the Kokoda Track Authority to ensure a more equitable distribution of trekking fees and other trekking benefits. A code of conduct for tour operators has also been implemented.

From time to time DVA receives letters from landowners at Isurava seeking support because the Australian official memorial at the site is located on land made available by the community by agreement. OAWG deals with these issues in conjunction with the High Commission in Port Moresby, and the Kokoda Track Authority

Current Position

In May 2010, the Australian Government announced it would provide a further \$3.1 million in 2010/11, in addition to \$1.8 million provided in 2009/10, to improve safety for people travelling to and on the Kokoda Track. The safety initiatives include upgrading the road to Owers Corner; conducting risk assessments and installing safety

equipment at several airstrips; improving communications; and identifying the location of World War TWO explosives and how to best deal with them.

On 8 July 2010, PNG and Australia signed a Second Joint Understanding on Kokoda. It identifies five goals:

- a safe, well-managed Track which protects and promotes its special values;
- enhanced quality of life for landowners and communities through improved delivery of basic services and income generation;
- the wise use and conservation of the catchment protection area;
- building national and international potential of the Owen Stanley Ranges and Kokoda Region; and
- working with communities, landowners, industry and all levels of government to ensure that activities established under the Kokoda Initiative are sustained into the future.

DEWHA remains the lead agency in dealing with Kokoda Track related matters.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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7. EXECUTIVE DIVISION: Business Integrity and Legal Services Group

7.1. Significant Cases

7.1.1. JAMES

Background

This matter concerned the validity of Chapter 25 of the *Guide to Determining Impairment and Compensation* (GARP M). Lt James had made a claim under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) for a right knee injury suffered in February 2005. In assessing the amount of compensation, the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) took into account the effect of two earlier injuries affecting the lower limbs for which Lt James had already received compensation under the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA), as required by Chapter 25 of GARP M.

The Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), in its decision of 30 October 2009, determined that Chapter 25 of GARP M was valid.

Lt James appealed to the Full Federal Court (FFC). He claimed that:

- Chapter 25 of GARP M was not authorised by the MRCA or the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2004 (MRCC and TPA);
- even if Chapter 25 of GARP M was so authorised, it was not reasonably proportionate to the power given to the MRCC;
- section 13 of the transitional Act, which authorises Chapter 25 of GARP M, only applies to special rate disability pensions (SRDPs); and
- because, under some circumstances, the net compensation will be zero, the bar in the MRCA to a person lodging a common law claim should not apply in this case.

The FFC found, in its decision of 28 July 2010, that:

- GARP M is authorised by the MRCA and the MRCC and transitional Act;
- the application of the doctrine of ‘reasonable proportionality’ in Australian administrative law is doubtful, but is in any event inapplicable to this case;
- section 13 of the transitional Act, which authorises Chapter 25 of GARP M, does not only apply to SRDPs; and
- there is a clear intention in the MRCA to extinguish common law rights and to replace them with rights under the MRCA.

Current Position

This case confirms that the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission’s existing interpretation of the law is correct and there is therefore no need to alter the decision-making process.

Action Required

For information.

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7.1.2. ARCHER

Background

On 13 July 2010 the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) gave a decision in *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission and Trevor Archer*. The AAT affirmed the Veterans' Review Board's decision to grant compensation to Mr Archer.



Mr Archer's claim for compensation under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* ("MRCA") was rejected by a Delegate of the Commission on 19 September 2006. The decision was affirmed on reconsideration but on 4 September 2007 the Veterans' Review Board ("VRB") set aside the determination and substituted a decision that Mr Archer had suffered a "service injury" under s.27(c) of MRCA and accepted liability for four conditions. In March 2008 an application for review was made to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal ("AAT") for review of the VRB's decision. The principal reason for the application to the AAT was to clarify the meaning of rendering defence service for the purposes of the MRCA. If a literal interpretation of its provisions were to be applied, it could lead to the result that liability is imposed on the Commonwealth for (almost) any single injury that occurred to an ADF member on a base.

Current Position

A protective appeal has been lodged with the Federal Court as it is considered the AAT has far exceeded the linkage with service accepted by the High Court. The Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission is to continue with the appeal.

Implications:

In August 2005 the High Court in *Roncevich v Repatriation Commission* considered whether an injury, which occurred to Mr Roncevich when he fell out of a window following a mess function for senior non-commissioned officers, was defence service. He was not on duty and the Court considered whether the injury arose out of, or was attributable to, his defence service due to attendance at a mess function at which he had become intoxicated. While attendance was not compulsory, there was an expectation he would attend as the most senior NCO in the Army. The Court found that the event was a part of his defence service.

The decision of the AAT in *Archer* applied similar reasoning to find that the injury was related to defence service. The AAT noted that the injury occurred on a defence base, there was a drinking culture at the base, and a permissive attitude to alcohol being brought into and stored in accommodation areas. The AAT found taking these and other factors in account, that the accident was "very much army related".

This decision impacts on the *Military Rehabilitation Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) and the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) by extending ambit of activities to come within defence service. An effect of the decision is that if an injury occurs on a Defence base which has little or no connection with the member's service

then it will be compensable. It is considered this goes beyond the intention of both Acts and obviates the need for any personal responsibility by linking causation only to a temporal connection.

Action Required

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7.1.3. FELLOWES

Background

Ms Robyn Fellowes enlisted in the Australian Army in November 1986. In 1986 she suffered a work-related injury to her left knee and in 1987 she suffered a work-related injury to her right knee.

Ms Fellowes claimed compensation for her injuries under the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA). The Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) determined that Ms Fellowes suffered a degree of permanent impairment assessed at 10% as a result of the injury to her left knee and paid her compensation in respect of the permanent impairment.

A separate permanent impairment was not paid in respect of the right knee as the long standing approach since introduction of the Act in 1988 was to only compensate for overall incapacity.

On 23 September 2009, the majority of the High Court considered that permanent impairment resulting from an injury is to be identified by the effect of the injury on the functional capacity of a normal healthy person, and not by reference to the pre-existing capacities of the particular applicant for compensation.

The effect of this decision is that Ms Fellowes receives two permanent impairment payments one for her left knee and one for her right knee even those these injuries result in the same overall level of incapacity.

Current Position

DVA is not the responsible agency for the legislative administration of the SRCA. DVA is working closely with Comcare and the Department of the Employment and Workplace Relations (the agencies responsible for the SRCA) to examine the implications and extent of effect of this decision.

As it relates only to the same body part or system and the consequent compensation under the one Act, it is different in nature to the decision made by the Full Federal Court in relation to *Smith*. (See Brief in Section 5 – Brief 7.1.4).

Action Required

For information.

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7.1.4. SMITH

Background

In December 2009, the FFC in *The Commonwealth of Australia v Smith* [2009] FCAFC 175 (*Smith*), considered the operation of compensation offsetting in section 30C of the VEA. Mr Smith's case involved a common law action against Defence and a VEA compensation claim.

The FFC interpreted section 30C as requiring consideration of the injury or disease for which pension and compensation is paid, as opposed to the incapacity arising from the injury or disease. In the particular circumstances of the matter, the FFC found that the injury or disease for which compensation and pension are paid need to be the same.

Current Position

Full details of further issues arising in the Smith matter are covered off at Section 1.1 of the brief.

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7.4. Audit Program

Background

KPMG provides general audit and information technology audit services to DVA. The current contract commenced on 1 January 2010 for three years, with a possible two year extension to 31 December 2014.

The annual internal audit program is co-ordinated with the work of the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) and the Department's other assurance functions. It takes into account the Department's assessment of risk in the various business areas, but is based on the premise that no area of the Department should be exempt from examination. Generally, each business area is reviewed at least once every three years.

The 2010-11 Internal Audit Program has an emphasis on the accuracy and reliability of the Department's operational systems and the protection of its reputation and a direction of significant resources to management advice in respect of proposed activity. The bulk of the internal audit plan will address the core control systems of the Department – that is, those aspects of operation that would have the greatest impact should they be deficient.

Current Position

2010-11 Internal Audit Program Activities:

- Total 27 Reviews;
- 1 carried forward from 2009-10;

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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7.5. Legal Aid

Background

Eligible veterans and war widows are able to receive legal aid assistance in respect of certain *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) and *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) compensation claims before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) and the Federal Court. The granting of legal aid in such matters is not means tested, although applicants must satisfy a merits test. This is a generous approach to general legal aid where a person must satisfy a merit and means test.

Veterans' legal aid is delivered by the Commonwealth via State and Territory legal aid commissions. Responsibility for assessing individual applications for legal assistance lies with the officers of the relevant State or Territory legal aid commission.

Not all DVA matters are covered by funding for legal aid. Those that are excluded are income support matters, all compensation matters under SRCA and where compensation claims relate to peacetime service under the VEA and MRCA.

During the last two years, representations regarding the adequacy of legal aid funding available to veterans have been made to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. Some of the concerns have included:

- the complexity of DVA legislation;
- the adequacy of legal aid funding for representation at AAT hearings; and
- the use of external legal providers by the Repatriation Commission.

Current Position

Legal Aid policy is a matter for the Attorney-General's Department, but the Minister and the Department retain an interest in legal aid due to the special provisions available in veterans' matters.

Veterans' legal aid remains a Commonwealth priority under National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services made between the Attorney General and the State Attorneys-General.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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7.6. DVA Cases Currently within the Criminal Prosecution Process

Background

At 7 September 2010 there were nine cases at varying stages of the criminal prosecution process. Of these, four cases were within the court process and a further four cases were being considered by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP).

Of the four cases within the court process, two were referrals by the CDPP, one was via the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and one via the NSW Police Force. The AFP case was commenced within the previous 12 months, however the remaining three cases were all commenced more than two years ago.

The CDPP at 7 September 2010, was considering four cases, with only one of these being commenced by DVA more than two years ago.

[REDACTED]

Current Position

[REDACTED]

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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7.7. ANZMI Website and Concerns Raised by the Ex-Service Community

Background

The Australian and New Zealand Military Imposters (ANZMI) website seeks to expose people who purport to be veterans or those veterans whose service is inconsistent with the exploits claimed. However the ANZMI website is published in the United States of America, thus making any action in relation to offending material on this website more difficult. Although not confirmed, as no author names are used, it appears to be a website run by a number of Queensland veterans.

Complaints regarding material published on ANZMI website

Complaints are regularly received from members of the veteran community who are offended by the material published on the ANZMI website and other similar sites (for example, the Aussie Digger and Australian Veteran Matters websites). Often these complainants will ask the Minister to intervene to remove the offending material or to take some form of action to shut the relevant website down.

The Minister cannot provide assistance to veterans or other people who consider they are defamed by offending material published online by third parties. Neither the Minister, nor the Department, has the power to intervene on behalf of individuals named on third party websites such as ANZMI.

An aggrieved individual should, in the first instance, make a request to the website publisher to have the offending material removed. If the publisher refuses, further action may be taken by that individual.

If an individual believes that their reputation has been publicly damaged as a result of the information published online, they may be protected by defamation laws. Defamation law is a recognised constraint on freedom of speech. The aggrieved person should seek independent legal advice to pursue this option. It is inappropriate for Department to provide advice on this issue in individual cases.

Offended veterans may also contact the Australian Communication and Media Authority (ACMA), which responds to community concerns about offensive and illegal online material. ACMA administers a national regulatory scheme that includes investigation of complaints about prohibited online content.

Further, in the past there have been complaints suggesting the possible release of information by DVA to ANZMI. These complaints have not been substantiated.

Use of websites such as ANZMI in compliance work

At times members of the ex-service community ask whether the Department uses the ANZMI website for fraud investigations.

In investigating allegations of fraudulent behaviour, the Department explores all avenues of inquiry. This may or may not include websites like ANZMI. If such a website is used in an investigation, it is used as an indicator only, it is not relied upon as evidence as the authenticity of the online material cannot be verified.

Current Position

The ANZMI website is well known to the Department.

Neither the Minister, nor the Department, has the power to intervene on behalf of individuals named on websites such as ANZMI.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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7.8. Wearing of Incorrect Service Medals

Background

At times the Minister and the Department receive complaints or denunciations regarding the wearing of incorrect service medals by veterans or those claiming to be veterans.

It is an offence under the *Defence Act 1903* to falsely represent to be a returned soldier, sailor or airman, or to make improper use of service decorations. Those guilty of such an offence face a maximum penalty of 30 penalty points¹ or 6 months imprisonment, or both.

Allegations of breaches of the *Defence Act 1903*, including the alleged wearing of incorrect service medals, should be referred to the Department of Defence for investigation.

Current Position

The Minister and the Department support the correct wearing of service medals.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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¹ 1 penalty point = \$110, section 4AA of the *Crimes Act 1914*

7.9. Freedom of Information – Statistics and Reforms

Background

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) applies to DVA and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs to require the provision of access to documents in possession of the Department or Minister on request, subject to specific exemptions, and the publication of certain documents.

FOI statistics

In 2009-10, DVA received 5,185 FOI applications and finalised 5,264, with 4,572 granted in full. The following table shows the number of FOI requests by state in 2009-10.

FOI requests by state 2009-10

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	Total
Received	1,680	974	1,672	400	309	101	49	5,185
Finalised	1,686	991	1,723	402	313	105	44	5,264
Granted in full	1,477	831	1,530	352	282	89	11	4,572
Granted in part	5	2	3	1	2	0	16	29
Access refused	4	2	4	0	0	0	0	10
Transferred	148	125	130	41	27	9	0	480
Withdrawn	52	30	56	8	2	4	5	157
Outstanding	138	79	103	27	15	1	7	370

During 2009-10, there was a decrease in the number of requests lodged under the FOI Act compared to the previous three years.

In 2008-09, DVA received the 2nd most FOI applications with 5,944 applications received (22% of overall applications). This was down from 7,150 in 2006-07 and current figures continue to show overall reduction.

The trend of declining number of FOI requests over several years is shown in the following table.

Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and average cost 2007-10

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Requests received	7,150	6,491	5,944	5,185
Average time taken to process (days)	15.85	17.30	14.74	17.34
% refused in full or part	1.49	2.12	4.80	0.74
Average cost per request	\$198.90	\$201.36	\$207.71	\$232.81

Rising salary costs and the decrease in the number of requests have contributed to an increase on the average cost per request. In 2009-10, a total of \$15,192 in fees and charges were collected. The average time taken to complete a request was 17.3 days, a increase on the previous year. Of the requests finalised, more than 94% were processed within the 30-day statutory time limit.

Approximately 99% of requests received currently are for personal information.

FOI Reforms

On 7 October 2009, the *Freedom of Information (Removal of Conclusive Certificates and Other Measures) Act 2009* commenced. This Act repealed the power to issue conclusive certificates in the FOI Act and the *Archives Act 1983*. This does not impact on DVA operations.

On 13 May 2010, the Australian Information Commissioner Bill 2010 and the Freedom of Information Amendment (Reform) Bill 2010 passed through Parliament. The passing of these Bills completes the major reforms to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Key changes under the reforms include:

- establishment of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner;
- establishment of the Office of the FOI Commissioner;
- a change to the Objects clauses of the FOI Act;
- procedural changes – including changes to fees and charges, extensions of time and vexatious applicant declarations;
- revised exemptions and public interest test;
- introduction of an Information Publication Scheme;
- requirements regarding publication of information disclosed; and
- changes to the review/appeal processes.

The majority of measures, including establishment of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, will take effect on 1 November 2010. Different commencement times apply for:

- the Information Publication Scheme and new publication requirements, which will commence on 1 May 2011; and
- changes to bring forward the ‘open access period’ in the Archives Act 1983, which will begin on 1 January 2011 and will be phased in over a ten year period.

Effect of reforms on DVA

It is not anticipated that DVA will receive a significant increase in applications due to changes to fees and charges, as currently approximately 99% of requests received are for personal information and DVA generally waives the application fee in these cases.

The two changes that it is considered will most significantly impact DVA are the Information Publication Scheme and vexatious applicant declarations:

- The Publication Scheme will have a number of small impacts upon DVA. Although much of the information required to be published in line with the reform is already published by DVA on its website, the need to publish some additional may require the development of a page as a central point to display this information. Further guidance on the requirements of the Publication Scheme is expected leading up to commencement of the Scheme.
- The introduction of vexatious applicant declarations will, in appropriate cases, enable DVA to avoid substantial diversions of resources.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

- 1 November 2010 – commencement of majority of FOI reforms;
- 1 May 2011 - commencement the Information Publication Scheme and new publication requirements; and
- 1 January 2011 – commencement of changes to bring forward the ‘open access period’ in the Archives Act 1983.

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7.10. Scheme for Compensation for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration (CDDA)

Background

The Compensation for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration (CDDA) Scheme is an administrative scheme to enable Commonwealth agencies to compensate persons who have suffered detriment as a result of an agency's 'defective' actions or inaction, and who have no other avenues of redress. The Department of Finance and Deregulation has policy responsibility for the CDDA Scheme but portfolio Ministers have responsibility for decisions made under the CDDA Scheme.

The CDDA Scheme is explained in Finance Circular 2009/09 and Chief Executive Instruction 5.19.

Any individual, company or other organisation can submit a CDDA application. There is no time limit in which an application must be submitted.

Each case is determined on its own merits. Decisions are made at the discretion of the decision maker and payments are approved on the basis that there is a moral, rather than a legal, obligation to the person or body concerned.

The Minister for Finance has authorised the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Secretary of the Department to approve compensation payments under the CDDA Scheme – the Minister for amounts of \$50,000 or more and the Secretary for amounts up to \$50,000.

The CDDA Scheme is a mechanism of last resort and does not apply where an action could be taken at common law or where an administrative review mechanism could provide a remedy for the defective administration.

Defective administration is defined as:

- a. a specific and unreasonable lapse in complying with existing administrative procedures; or
- b. an unreasonable failure to institute appropriate administrative procedures; or
- c. an unreasonable failure to give to (or for) an applicant, the proper advice that was within the official's power and knowledge to give (or reasonably capable of being obtained by the official to give); or
- d. giving advice to (or for) an applicant that was, in all the circumstances, incorrect or ambiguous.

For the financial year ended 30 June 2010, 15 claims were considered; six were declined and total compensation of \$124,793.83 was approved in respect of nine claims.

Current Position

Where the actions or inactions cause loss to a client, the DVA may be liable to pay compensation to the client under the *Scheme for Compensation for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration* (CDDA Scheme).

As 1 September 2010, there are twenty-one CDDA claims with DVA in various stages of investigation or offers of settlement.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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7.11. Act of Grace Claims

Background

The Act of Grace power under section 33 of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* allows the Minister for Finance and Deregulation (Finance Minister) or delegate to authorise payments to individuals or other bodies where it is considered appropriate because of special circumstances. This power has not been delegated to other agencies.

An Act of Grace payment may be considered appropriate where the decision-maker is satisfied that:

- a loss has arisen directly from an alleged act or omission on the part of an agency/agent of the Australian Government; or
- the application of Commonwealth legislation or policy is alleged to have had an unintended, anomalous, inequitable or otherwise unacceptable result in the applicant's circumstances; or
- the matter is not covered by legislation or specific policy, but the Australian Government intends to introduce such legislation or policy, and it is considered desirable in a particular case to apply the benefits of the relevant policy prospectively.

An individual or other body can make an application for an Act of Grace payment. There is no time limit in which an application must be submitted. Each case is considered on its own merits. Decisions are made at the discretion of the decision-maker and payments approved on the basis that there is a moral, rather than a legal, obligation to the person or body concerned.

Act of Grace payments are described in Finance Circular 2009/09 and Chief Executive Instruction 5.18.

For the financial year ending 30 June 2010, 29 Act of Grace claims were considered/finalised, as follows:

Approved by Finance Minister or delegate	3
Declined by Finance Minister or delegate	14
Referred to Finance for decision; decision still pending	7
Withdrawn by claimant	2
Reclassified as CDDA claim	1
Responsibility of agency other than DVA	2

The total amount approved during 2009-10 was \$4,783.70. However, several Act of Grace payments that had been approved in previous financial years were also paid in 2009-10. Further, there are several ongoing Act of Grace payments within the DVA portfolio. The total amount paid for Act of Grace for 2009-10 was \$92,115.

Current Position

DVA's role is to provide a submission on the Act of Grace claim to the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance). The Minister for Veterans' Affairs has no power to intervene in decisions made on Act of Grace payments.

As 1 September 2010, there are fourteen Act of Grace claims relating to DVA cases. Eleven of these matters are with the Department of Finance and Deregulation for decision. The remaining three cases are currently being investigated.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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8. EXECUTIVE DIVISION: Organisational Change Group

8.1. Delivering Services to an Emerging Client Group and Links to Whole of Government Service Delivery Reform

Background

Service Delivery in DVA

The DVA Strategic Plan 2010-2015 is underpinned by a recognition that the Department's client base is becoming increasingly diverse. Since 1991 over 40,000 ADF members have been deployed overseas. This group of potential clients is approaching a similar size to the Vietnam group. Deployments have been getting larger and are changing in nature. Multiple deployments are increasing, with some personnel having served on five or more warlike operations. The number of female personnel is also increasing and currently comprise 7.5 per cent of deployed personnel with 2600 serving female veterans in receipt of an Australian Active Service Medal. This new generation of ADF members and their dependants means DVA clients now range in age from under one to over 100 years.

DVA has already responded to the changing needs of clients in a number of ways, most notably through the establishment of the Client Liaison Unit (CLU) (Section 2 Brief 2.1) and Case Co-ordination roles (Section 5 Brief 2.11). It also continues to review the way it delivers services to younger clients and is currently developing a new service model for dependants of deceased ADF members. An initial improvement has been the senior presence of the relevant Deputy Commissioner at the first meeting between the case assessor and widow or family. Recent widows and key ESO stakeholders will be consulted in the development of the service model. Service models for seriously injured ADF members, current or former serving members with complex/multiple needs and for use in the event of a mass casualty situation will also be developed. The service models will establish a nationally consistent approach to service delivery and improve integration with Defence and other agencies. A number of other initiatives are improving service delivery to DVA clients:

- The Consultation Framework (Section 1 Part 11) established in April 2009, provides a structure more appropriate to the changing focus of the ex-service and defence communities and strengthens engagement with these communities.
- The Choice and Maintainability in Veterans' Services program (Section 5 Brief 4.2) will provide DVA clients the option of self-service electronic transactions, whilst maintaining traditional channels for clients who choose to use them.

Whole of Government Service Delivery Reform

These changes are consistent with a whole of government focus on citizen-centric program design, a key element of the Commonwealth Service Delivery Reform. These major reforms were announced on 16 December 2009 by the then Minister for Human Services with the aim of making it easier for citizens to deal with Government by simplifying processes used to access services and information.

One of the first steps in the reform process was to undertake a merger of the agencies within the Human Service portfolio by 2011-12. The then Minister for Veterans'

Affairs issued a media release on 17 December, to make it clear that DVA was not a part of the merger.

While the reform agenda is being managed by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and reform activities are presently focussed on services delivered by agencies within that portfolio, DVA is providing input to the reform and monitoring any developments that may have an impact on DVA clients. The DVA Secretary is a member of the Secretaries' Committee on Service Delivery and DVA is also represented on the Service Delivery Reform Inter-Departmental Committee (SDR IDC) chaired by Human Services.

As part of its five year plan to improve the delivery of services, Human Services will look to implement formal case coordination arrangements as part of developing a customer needs framework. This work will commence in early 2011. DVA has presented a paper to the SDR IDC on how case coordination is used in DVA through the Client Liaison Unit and the Case Coordination Team. Human Services' work is also likely to be instructive for DVA. A number of other plans are being monitored for their potential to impact on and/or inform the way DVA delivers its services:

- Improvements to communication channels will result in a single Human Services portfolio website and phone number by the end of 2011. This may be extended to other service delivery agencies later.
- Human Services expects by February 2011 to have 21 co-located sites across Australia providing Medicare Australia and Centrelink services, and all 570 offices by the end of 2014. This will affect certain DVA services that are provided through some Centrelink offices. There are no plans to integrate DVA's VAN or VSC operations with those of Human Services, although a need for more linked Federal and State/Territory service delivery platforms by 2019 has been identified.
- Improvements to mobile and outreach services across Human Services are planned to commence in 2011-12. DVA will monitor this work closely as it may provide linkages that benefit its outreach program and establish stronger relationships with the 40% of DVA clients living outside of capital cities.

Current Position

The Department is continuing to review its service delivery models to adapt to changes in client demographics and in keeping with citizen-centric principles of the whole of government Service Delivery Reform.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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9. AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL (AWM)

9.1. Brief History of the Australian War Memorial

Background

The Australian War Memorial was opened in 1941 on Remembrance Day. Initially it was established to commemorate the sacrifice of Australians in what then was known as the Great War of 1914-1918.

Over 60,000 Australians died in that War and Charles Bean, an official war correspondent and later Official Historian, believed that there needed to be a national focus for their commemoration. He was most mindful that many of the grieving families and friends would not be able to travel overseas to visit war cemeteries. Until the Vietnam War, if a serviceperson fell overseas, burial took place there. Something symbolic was needed in Australia to permit the rituals associated with grief and memory to be performed. Bean had a vision that “we are out to make our war museum, our war gallery and our war library, if possible, not fine museums for Australia, but the finest the world contains”.

Bean and others were successful in gaining government support, and approval to collect relics for the planned memorial was given before the end of the war. After the war the collection, centrally stored in Melbourne, was enhanced considerably and elements were displayed in both Melbourne and Sydney. Art works were commissioned, as were the dioramas that have come to be so identified with the Australian War Memorial.

A site was selected in Canberra and a foundation stone laid, but delays in funding and in selecting a design took place. The latter ended as a combination of submissions by two architects (Crust and Sodersteen). By the time construction was completed, the Second World War had been underway for two years and the war in the Pacific was about to break out. Another 40,000 Australians would need to be commemorated.

The Memorial now commemorates all Australians who have died on, or as a result of active service, or as a result of any war-like operations, in which Australians have been on active service.

The sacrifice of Australians in war and the enduring effect on Australian society remain a most relevant story for all Australians. In 1997, to ensure that this story was being communicated effectively, especially to the younger generation, the Memorial embarked upon a major program of Gallery Redevelopment. This was preceded by several years of planning, including the preparation for Council approval of a Gallery Master Plan. The redevelopment is being undertaken in stages, and renewed galleries house displays that incorporate the latest in display techniques and state of the art technology.

During the life of the Memorial, key events have been:

Foundation Stone laid	25 April 1929
Memorial opened	11 November 1941
Hall of Memory opened	4 May 1959
Extensions to main building opened	31 March 1971
New Administration Building	24 November 1988
Interment of the Unknown Soldier	11 November 1993
Re-opening of the new Second World War galleries	11 March 1999
Re-opening of the Aircraft Hall	31 August 2000
Opening of ANZAC Hall	21 June 2001
Opening of the C.E.W. Bean Building:	14 April 2006
Opening of Conflicts 1945 to Today galleries	28 February 2008
Opening of Eastern Precinct	15 April 2010

The galleries of the Memorial are undoubtedly of world class and special emphasis has been placed in recent years on attracting a broad visitor demographic with particular emphasis on young Australians.

The Memorial is regarded as a leading institution in the cultural sector and its full-time staff are very active in related bodies. For example, the Director has been Chair of the Council of Australian Museum Directors (2000-2004) and, until recently was on the museum management board of the International Council of Museums, and the Memorial's former head of Photographs, Film and Sound (Patricia Sabine) was Chair of Museums Australia (the peak professional body) from 2005 - 2009.

Two particularly important annual activities for the Memorial are the national ceremonies conducted on Remembrance Day and Anzac Day. These are being attended by increasing numbers of Australians.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

Steve Gower
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9.2. Anzac Centenary: 100 years since the First World War

Background

The then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, announced on Anzac Day 2010 that a National Commission was to be established to review ideas and make recommendations to the Government on options to mark the Anzac centenary.

The Memorial is planning to submit a number of ideas to the National Commission – some of which the Memorial will develop and implement individually and others that will be in partnership with other significant and appropriate organisations.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has also convened an Inter-Departmental Working Party (IDWP) to plan activities to commemorate the centenary. The IDWP will be putting a submission to the National Commission.

The Memorial is represented on the IDWP by the Assistant Director, Branch Head Public Programs.

Current Position

The development and implementation of a range of appropriate activities and events to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of Australian involvement in the First World War in 2014-18 is considered to be of high importance for the Memorial over the coming years. A wide range of ideas are being considered and we are anticipating playing a lead role in the nation-wide commemoration of the centenary.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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9.3. Redevelopment of the Hall of Valour

Background

The Hall of Valour displays the Memorial's permanent collection of Victoria Cross (VC), 66 in all (63 Australia and 3 British) as well as other significant medal collections. It was originally opened in 1964 as VC Corner with 6 VCs on display. The Hall of Valour opened in 1981 with 28 VCs on display and was further expanded in 1984.

The Hall of Valour project is long overdue. The current Hall of Valour is one of the oldest galleries and the redevelopment has been planned for several years. The presentation of the current area lacks the uplifting ambience expected of such a significant place. It is intended this be remedied by the realisation of an outstanding concept proposed by leading architect Richard Johnson from Johnson Pilton Walker.

It will retain its main function in telling the story of Australia's VC recipients, but more appropriate materials and finishes will be introduced to lift the overall ambience of the space and better highlight the significance of the collection on display.

Current position

Senior management and Council have approved the final design for the new Hall of Valour which will ensure an engaging and uplifting ambience is created in which to tell the stories of Australia's VC recipients. Richard Johnson's design features the same sandstone and granite as used in the main building and makes reference to its art-deco artifices.

The Hall of Valour was closed to the public on 12 July 2010 and the Minister announced the project at a media briefing on 20 July 2010.

The Canberra based firm Manteena Pty Ltd has been appointed to provide construction management services and, following Ministerial approval of the Memorial entering into a contract with Manteena, they have commenced work. Furniture and collection material has been removed, hoardings have been put in place and demolition work has begun.

The present schedule envisages a completion date of December 2010, but this is dependent upon the absence of any major latent conditions which would require special treatment. Extensive engineering analysis has indicated the floor slab of the area requires strengthening, and this is being undertaken as a preliminary primary work.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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9.4. *This company of brave men: the Gallipoli VCs* Touring Exhibition

Background

The Hall of Valour project, and its associated dismount of displays, has enabled a special touring exhibition, *This company of brave men: The Gallipoli VCs*, to be staged. For the first time the nine VC medal groups awarded to Australians during the Gallipoli campaign are the central feature of a touring exhibition.

It has been fully sponsored by Mr Kerry Stokes AC and the Channel 7 Network Limited.

The tour commenced in Western Australia in March 2010, moved to the Northern Territory and South Australia and will continue to Victoria in August, Queensland in October and Tasmania in November before returning to the Memorial for re-installation in the new Hall of Valour.

There was some public comment regarding the tour not going to Tasmania or New South Wales. The Memorial endeavours not to make an issue of funding for touring or travelling exhibitions however, each exhibition has a budget and this one is no different. There is also a time consideration as there is limited time to travel the exhibition to as much of the country as possible during the redevelopment. The Memorial will not re-open the Hall of Valour without the nine Gallipoli VCs.

The tour has been extended to include Tasmania during November and December 2010.

Tour details are:

Gallery	City	State	Start	Finish
Western Australian Museum	Perth	WA	20 March 2010	2 May 2010
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory	Darwin	NT	8 May 2010	20 June 2010
State Library of South Australia	Adelaide	SA	25 June 2010	8 August 2010
Shrine of Remembrance	Melbourne	VIC	13 August 2010	26 September 2010
Queensland Museum South Bank	Brisbane	QLD	1 October 2010	14 November 2010
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery	Hobart	TAS	20 November 2010	17 December 2010

Current Position

This company of brave men: the Gallipoli VCs is a special touring exhibition currently on display at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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DRAFT

9.5. Travelling Exhibitions Program

Background

The Australian War Memorial's Travelling Exhibitions Program is designed to make the Memorial's collection accessible to all Australians through a nationwide outreach program.

Since its inception in 1997, the program has toured 39 exhibitions to over 410 host venues in every state and territory in Australia, with some 3.1 million people having viewed the exhibitions.

During 2009-10 seven exhibitions were on tour around Australia. For 2010-11 seven exhibitions will be touring to 23 venues. Three exhibitions are under development and four more are planned for inclusion in a forward program up to 2015. The Travelling Exhibitions Program has been allocated \$800,000 for 2010-2011.

The program has been highly successful. Over 3.1 million people have visited the exhibitions in major museums and galleries and small venues in regional and metropolitan locations across Australia. These include veterans, school groups, overseas visitors and people from throughout the wider community. Australia's participation in wars, conflicts and peace operations from the Anglo Boer War to recent conflicts, as well as key figures in our wartime history, have been the subject of these exhibitions.

A related highly successful initiative is the *Bring in your memorabilia* program, which was developed in 1999, as part of the Australian War Memorial travelling exhibitions *1918 Australians in France* and *Forging the Nation*. The *Bring in your memorabilia* program is intended to increase public awareness of Australia's military heritage, and to assist individuals and families with the identification and preservation of items which may be in their care. It has been so successful that the Department of Veterans' Affairs has continued to fund an additional series of programs to be run in conjunction with the other Memorial's travelling exhibitions.

A summary of the Travelling Exhibitions Program for 2010/2011 is detailed below:

EXHIBITION	NO. OF VENUES	STATES	TOUR DATES
<i>Of love and war</i>	3	QLD x 1; VIC x 1; TAS x 1	November 2010 – June 2013
<i>Framing conflict</i>	2	NSW x 1; SA x 2	November 2008 - March 2011
<i>A is for Animals</i>	4	NSW x 1, QLD x 3,	November 2010 -September 2011
<i>A Diggers Best Friend</i>	5	NSW x 2; VIC x 1; TAS x 2	December 2009 - May 2011
<i>Sidney Nolan: the Gallipoli series</i>	3	QLD x 2; VIC x 1	January 2010 - July 2012
<i>Icon & Archive</i>	2	NSW x 1; QLD x 1	April 2010 - May 2012

Current position

The Australian War Memorial's Travelling Exhibitions Program has been in operation since 1997. The Program is partially funded by *Saluting Their Service*, the Government's commemorations program, under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Veterans' Affairs. A forward program for travelling exhibitions in 2010-2015 has been developed.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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DRAFT

9.6. Official History of Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post-Cold War Operations

Background

Cabinet approved a submission from the Minister for Veterans' Affairs on 9 February 2004, and agreed to the appointment of Professor David Horner of the Australian National University (ANU) as Official Historian. The approved scope of the history was to include Australian participation in peacekeeping operations since 1947 and in other operations in areas of conflict since the end of the Cold War, with the exceptions of East Timor, Afghanistan (from 2001) and Iraq (from 2003). Cabinet agreed that the Official History team should have access to all relevant government records and that the history should be free of all censorship and direction, while reserving the right to prevent publication of information as set out in section 33(1) of the *Archives Act 1983*.

Current position

The Memorial is currently collaborating with the ANU to write a multi-volume *Official History of Australian Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post-Cold War Operations*. This will be Australia's fifth Official History series, following those dealing with the First and Second World Wars (the former edited by Charles Bean), Korea, and Southeast Asian conflicts (including Vietnam).

Progress

The manuscript of Volume 2, *Australia and the new world order: from peacekeeping to peace enforcement 1988–1991* was completed by Professor Horner and publication is expected in early 2011. The Memorial has provided \$25,000 from its own funds to publish this volume.

Progress continues to be made on remaining volumes, with authors completing research and writing of chapters. While significant progress has been made, the task has taken longer than originally anticipated and the departure of several authors and the addition of a further volume have led to an extended schedule of publication.

Further volumes will be published over the following years up to approximately 2013. Volume 6, *In their time of need*, covering Australian overseas emergency relief operations, is expected to be completed by late 2011. Publication is expected in late 2012 depending on availability of funding. At present the Memorial is not in a position to fund any further publication of this series.

Administrative support, provided by the ANU, for the project has been extended till the end of the year, but this position is occupied only on a part-time basis. Without further funding, it will be difficult for the project to complete the remaining volumes. Drs Londey and Connor are presently not funded by the project, but have committed to completing researching and writing their sections of the series while in their present employment. Dr Bou is employed by the Memorial, and while not funded by the project, he has committed to writing chapters for volume 4 in a part-time capacity.

Unfortunately, the Memorial is not in a position to fund the publication of any other volumes. However, we continue to explore external funding options for the publication of the remaining volumes of the series, and for the research and writing of a proposed volume related to peacekeeping missions in East Timor.

On 25 February 2007, the Prime Minister agreed to a proposal by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs to add a further volume to the series, to cover Australian participation in overseas humanitarian operations not arising from conflict. Professor Horner, two Memorial-funded authors, and four research staff commenced work in 2004. A further two authors commenced work in 2005 and 2007 respectively.

Funding

In June 2004, Professor Horner and his co-authors were successful in obtaining a \$1 million Australian Research Council grant to assist in writing the history. The Department of Defence has provided funds to cover Professor Horner's salary and research costs, and agreed to supplement the project's funds by over \$300,000 over three years, to cover the additional cost of researching and writing the volume on humanitarian operations.

Funding for the first five years of the project was as follows:

Australian War Memorial	\$1.3m	salaries, research and publication expenses, infrastructure support
Australian National University	\$0.7m	infrastructure support, some salary costs
Australian Defence Force	\$1.1m	salary and support for Prof. Horner; contribution to cost of humanitarian volume
Australian Research Council	\$1.0m	research staff and expenses

The project currently employs one ANU-based author and one part-time administration assistant, with a further author employed by the Memorial. Professor Horner's position continues to be funded by the Department of Defence.

Structure

The history will tell the story of Australian participation in over fifty peacekeeping and other missions from 1947 to the present day, and a similar number of overseas emergency relief operations. The series has been organised into six volumes, as follows:

Vol. 1	Dr Peter Londey (ANU)	Missions beginning between 1947 and 1987, including Indonesia, Kashmir, the Middle East, Congo, Cyprus and Rhodesia/Zimbabwe
Vol. 2	Prof David Horner (ANU)	Missions beginning between 1988 and 1990, including Namibia, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf and Kuwait
Vol. 3	Prof David Horner (ANU) Dr John Connor (ADFA)	Missions beginning in 1991 and 1992 including Iraq, Western Sahara, Cambodia and Yugoslavia
Vol. 4	Dr Bob Breen (ANU) Dr Jean Bou (AWM)	Missions beginning from 1993 onwards including Somalia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Haiti, Eritrea and Sierra Leone
Vol. 5	Dr Bob Breen (ANU)	Missions in the Pacific region since 1980, including Bougainville, Solomon Islands and other deployments
Vol. 6	Dr Steven Bullard (AWM)	Overseas emergency relief operations, including Papua New Guinea, Sumatra, Pakistan, Iran and various Pacific nations

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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DRAFT

9.7. Memorials and the Plaque Dedication Program

Background

Current memorials

Larger scale memorials, often featuring a prominent sculptural element are also used as commemorative devices in the Memorial's gardens. These include *Simpson and his donkey*, *Australian serviceman*, and *Sir Edward "Weary" Dunlop*, a work commemorating the medical staff who came to the aid of Australian prisoners of war in the Pacific in the Second World War as well as memorials to the British Commonwealth Occupation Force, Australian servicewomen, Australian Merchant Seamen, Bomber Command, Sandakan, and Animals in War. The most recently constructed is a National Service memorial which will be dedicated in a ceremony on 8 September 2010.

Council has agreed in principle to the inclusion of another two memorials whose progress is contingent on external fund raising.

War correspondents memorial

A proposal for a memorial to commemorate Australian war correspondents who served in war was first made by the C.E.W Bean Foundation in July 2004. Council has agreed in principle to the memorial, which will commemorate all those who have recorded the Australian experience of war, including media correspondents, official historians, photographers and artists. A site in the Memorial's grounds has been selected and preliminary planning is underway, with construction contingent on the Foundation raising the necessary funds.

Rabaul/Montevideo Maru memorial

On 21 June 2010 the Minister for Veterans' Affairs announced that \$100,000 would be offered to the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society towards the construction of a memorial at the Australian War Memorial.

The memorial will commemorate the tragedies that followed the Japanese invasion of the New Guinea Islands in early 1942, including Australia's greatest maritime disaster, the sinking of the Montevideo Maru with the loss of more than 1,000 lives.

The proposed site for the memorial will be in the Sculpture Garden, with final details still to be confirmed with site architect, Johnson Pilton Walker, to provide advice on the most appropriate location. Stakeholder consultation will be managed by the Advisory Group. There is one alternative group, the Montevideo Foundation, who will need to be consulted to confirm that all stakeholders have been accommodated. The estimated cost of the memorial is between \$500,000 and \$600,000 and will need to be secured by the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society before a formal contract can be signed by the Memorial.

Plaque dedication program

The plaque dedication program is designed to allow veterans' associations the opportunity to commemorate the active service of their unit, broadly defined as an Army battalion, RAN ship or RAAF squadron. Since its inception in 1998, the program has been strongly supported by the veteran's community.

To date 180 plaques have been installed in the Memorial's grounds, with a further 33 in various stages of development. In view of the continued interest in the program Buildings and Services continues to work closely with the Memorial's site development plan architects, Johnson Pilton Walker, to identify additional sites that will complement the Memorial's grounds.

The Memorial does encourage a ceremony to dedicate the plaque before installation. These ceremonies are arranged by the Memorial's Ceremonial unit and provide an opportunity for association members, relatives and friends to remember, in a fitting and dignified manner, the service and sacrifice of their unit. A dedication service is also seen as providing an ideal opportunity for a unit reunion and many Second World War unit associations usually take advantage of this opportunity.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs program *Saluting their Service* assists the Plaque Dedication Program by enabling associations to apply for funding to cover the cost of the plaque.

Current Position

Both the memorials and the plaque dedication program are major commemoration devices used in the grounds of the Memorial.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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9.8. Strategies to Develop the Collection

Background

The collection is the core of the museum and as such the continued development of the National Collection is a key activity for the Memorial.

The *Collection Development Plan* outlines strategies across each of the collecting areas:

- art;
- military heraldry and technology;
- photographs, film and sound; and
- official, private and published records.

Key strategies include:

Collection Coordination Group (CCG)

The Collection Coordination Group (CCG), established in 2007-08, includes representation by senior Defence personnel and is designed to coordinate collection activities between the Memorial and the Australian Defence Force. Amongst other things, this group has responsibility for coordinating access to operational areas by official artists and photographers, the identification and transportation of relics to Australia for the collection, and ensuring that records, especially digital records, are preserved for future reference.

Official War Art Scheme

The Memorial is responsible for the appointment of its official war artists, photographers and most recently cinematographers. Their role is to provide a record of the activities of the Australian Defence Force for inclusion in the Memorial's National Collection. The Memorial has a long standing tradition of commissioning official war artists and photographers, dating back to the First World War. Recent appointments have included Lyndell Brown and Charles Green (Middle East), Jon Cattapan (East Timor), and eX de Medici (the Solomon Islands).

Curator visits to ADF operations

CCG has coordinated three visits by Memorial curators to Iraq in 2008 (Mike Cecil), Iraq and the Persian Gulf in 2008 (Mal Booth) and Afghanistan in 2009 (Nick Fletcher). This was the first time since the Second World War that a staff member has been deployed overseas.

Official Records Working Group

The Official Records Working Group, a sub-committee of the CCG, which includes representatives from National Archives of Australia and Department of Defence, has developed protocols for the orderly transfer of material to the Memorial.

Collection in Action

This program identifies and tracks large technology items currently deployed by the Australian Defence Force, such as aircraft and ships, so that a detailed operational history and associated collection material can be acquired during their service.

Current Position

The Memorial has many strategies to ensure the continued development of the National Collection which are managed and coordinated by the Assistant Director, Branch Head National Collection.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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DRAFT

9.9. Roll of Honour Additions

Background

Policy for Inclusion on the Roll of Honour

Those included on the Roll of Honour (ROH) must have died during, or as a result of warlike service while a member of the ADF within prescribed periods of each conflict. Policies and decisions relating to the Roll are made by Council and informed by classifications of warlike service determined by the Department of Defence.

Remembrance Day 2010 inclusions for the Roll of Honour

In accordance with established practice (determined by the Memorial's Council) the names of any Australian soldiers that die and are eligible for inclusion, are added to the Roll of Honour at a small, dignified ceremony attended by family members held each Remembrance Day. Since Remembrance Day 2009, there have been 6 deaths.

Policy for Inclusion on the Commemorative Roll

The Commemorative Roll records the names of Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.

2010 inclusions on the Commemorative Roll

In 2010 there have been 12 additions to the Commemorative Roll, being Australians who died while serving with Allied forces in both World Wars (seven Second World War, five First World War).

Policy for Inclusion in the Remembrance Book

The Remembrance Book commemorates all those members of the ADF who died on operations after 30 June 1947 designated as non-warlike service, and its equivalent, including Hazardous, Peacekeeping and humanitarian peacetime service as well as Australian police who have died on peacekeeping operations.

2010 inclusions in the Remembrance Book

In 2010 there have been no further additions to the Remembrance Book.

Special cases

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

HMAS Warrnambool and the Second World War ROH

In March the Memorial responded to a Ministerial from Ms Jill Hall, the Member for Shortland (NSW) on the issue of commemorating four men who died serving on *Warrnambool* in September 1947. The activity was initiated by correspondence from a Mr Patterson who claims the men should be included on the Roll of Honour.

This has been an ongoing issue for many years and there is no change in the Memorial's position; i.e. they remain ineligible for the Roll of Honour because their deaths occurred after the cut-off date for the Second World War (30/6/1947) and they were not on 'warlike' service. In 2007 they were included on the newly-created Remembrance Book, which covers those who died during non-warlike service after 30/6/1947. The four names are also recorded on a bronze plaque in the Memorial's grounds. As far as the Memorial is concerned they are appropriately commemorated.

Current position

The Memorial continues to commemorate those members of the Australian Defence Force who have died on warlike operations in which Australia has been involved.

Additionally, in recognition of the importance of commemorating those who have died on non-warlike service and who are not eligible for the Roll of Honour, the Memorial has established the Remembrance Book.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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9.10. Enterprise Content Management System

Background

The Enterprise Content Management (ECM) project grew out of business needs to:

- improve the storage and management of digital assets which form part of the National Collection
- improve the management of electronic business documents
- improve management of the Memorial's public website
- improve search ability of all the Memorial's electronic material
- improve business workflows
- achieve Government *record keeping compliance*

In 2006 following a detailed analysis of requirements a project to develop an ECM system was approved as a corporate priority. The project budget is \$7.9m and is funded from existing internal sources, including depreciation reserves.

After an exhaustive tender process Alphawest Pty Ltd was selected to implement the ECM system. The ECM system is mostly comprised of a software product suite supplied by Interwoven.

A Project Steering Group (ECMPSG) was established at the commencement of the project and comprises the three Assistant Directors, Head of IT, and two representatives from Alphawest and is chaired by the Assistant Director, Branch Head Corporate Services (ADCS). The group meets monthly to monitor project progress and to enable subsequent direction on the project to be given through ADCS and the project manager. The Memorial's project manager (Head of IT) reports to senior management weekly.

There are four components being implemented to meet the identified needs listed above:

1. DAM – Digital Asset Management
2. EDRMS – Electronic Document and Records Management
3. Search – federated search across all electronic content
4. WCM – Web Content Management

Digital Asset Management (DAM)

The detail design, configuration work and testing of the system has been completed. Migration of digital Collection assets (approximately 2.1 million assets equalling 30 terabytes) into the new *MediaBin* DAM solution has just commenced and is expected to take three months to complete. A test of the migration process has been undertaken and proven to be successful.

Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRMS)

The detail design and configuration work has been completed and testing is due to commence on 30 August 2010. Memorial staff have been working with the contractors to develop computer based instructional guides which will assist uptake of the system and provide ongoing guidance for users.

Search

The focus, which has been on the DAM and EDRMS components to date, will shift to the Search component shortly to allow completion in December 2010.

Web Content Management (WCM)

The WCM component is being undertaken concurrently with the DAM, EDRMS and Search components but not under the Alphawest contract. An independent consultant, engaged by the Memorial, has reviewed the Memorial's WCM requirements and has confirmed a strategy to employ *Drupal*, an open source software environment which is suited to the size and nature of the Memorial's website management needs. The initial scope and design phase will commence during August 2010.

Current position

The Memorial is currently undertaking a major acquisition of new IT hardware and software to support the management of the Memorial's digital asset collection as well as electronic document and record management, web content management and enterprise-wide search.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

Contact Officer

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9.11. Significant Events and Key Activities in 2010

Significant events and key activities planned by the Memorial in 2010 include:

- The *Perspectives: Jon Cattapan & eX de Medici* exhibition displaying works by Official Artists, Jon Cattapan, East Timor and eX de Medici will be opened on 1 September 2010 in the Special Exhibition Gallery by Mr Andrew Sayers, Director of the National Museum of Australia.
- The dedication ceremony for the **National Service Memorial** will be held on Wednesday 8 September 2010 commencing at 11.30am with a march of National Servicemen up ANZAC Parade to the Memorial starting at 10.00am. The memorial will be unveiled by Her Excellency, the Governor-General, Ms Quentin Bryce AC and dedicated by the Right Reverend Dr Peter Hollingworth AC OBE.
- The ever popular *Big Things in Store*, which opens the Memorial's storage facility in Mitchell to the public, will be held again on 10 October 2010.
- The **Remembrance Day** ceremony will be conducted on 11 November 2010. A decision is yet to be made about who will deliver the Anniversary Oration the night before. The Commemorative Address during the ceremony will be delivered by Her Excellency, the Governor-General, Ms Quentin Bryce AC. It is anticipated that 2,500 people will attend the ceremony.
- In accordance with Council policy, six **additions to the Roll of Honour** will be unveiled on Remembrance Day 2010. A private family ceremony will be held with no media attendance. The additions are:

Name	Unit	Date of death
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

- *Stories of Love and war from the Collection of the Australian War Memorial* written by Rebecca Britt, Senior Curator, will be launched on 17 November 2010.
- The **Hall of Valour** was closed to the public on 12 July 2010 and the Minister announced the redevelopment project at a media briefing on 20 July 2010. The present schedule envisages a completion date of December 2010, but this is dependent upon the absence of any major latent conditions which would require special treatment.
- A major project continuing on from last year is development of an **Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system**. This ambitious project which will address a range of information management issues including digital asset

management (DAM), electronic document and records management (EDRMS), federated search, and web content management (WCM). The DAM component is currently at data migration stage which is expected to take approximately three months. The EDRMS and search components are in the final stages of development and testing. The WCM component is being completed in-house concurrently with EDRMS and search and is at the tender stage. The project has been challenging for the both the Memorial and the contractor, *Alphawest*, but there is a renewed momentum building towards the scheduled completion date of end-2010.

- The Memorial will continue to host a number of **plaque dedications** and **wreathlaying ceremonies** for veterans associations throughout the year, as well as **school wreathlaying ceremonies** during school terms. Both these programs are supported by the Department of Veterans' Affairs *Saluting Their Service* program.

Action Required

For information.

Critical Dates

Nil.

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