

DEFENCE DVA EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY – 30 August 2018

The sixth Defence DVA Executive Committee meeting was held on 30 August 2018 in Russell Offices, ACT.

Attending members:

Mr Greg Moriarty (Chair)	Secretary, Department of Defence
Ms Liz Cosson AM CSC (Co-chair)	Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs
General Angus Campbell AO DSC	Chief of the Defence Force
Mr Mark Cormack	Chief Operating Officer, Department of Veterans' Affairs
Ms Justine Greig	Deputy Secretary Defence People, Department of Defence

Observers:

Mr Craig Orme DSC AM CSC	Deputy President Strategy, Department of Veterans' Affairs
Rear Admiral Brett Wolski AM	Head People Capability, Department of Defence
Air Commodore Steve Martin AM	Acting Director-General Veterans' Support Branch, Department of Defence

Agenda Item 1 – Opening Remarks and Introductions

Mr Moriarty welcomed members and noted that the relationship between Defence and DVA was in a good state and provided a sound base moving forward in support of veterans. Ms Cosson agreed and thanked Defence for its ongoing commitment to supporting DVA and looked forward to continuing the relationship as DVA transforms. Ms Cosson also noted that this would be the last Defence DVA Executive Meeting that RADM Wolski would attend and thanked him for his strong support over the last three years.

The summary of the previous meeting was accepted and it was noted that the two action items from the previous meeting would be closed following the report back at Agenda Item 5.

Agenda Item 2 – Budget Outcomes

Ms Cosson briefed the Committee members on the key funding initiatives from both the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook and the 2018 Federal Budget.

Ms Cosson outlined the Veteran Centric Reform agenda, and Mr Moriarty noted that Defence remained strongly committed to supporting DVA and was keen to be engaged in DVA's planning. Mr Moriarty undertook to ensure that the new Defence CFO, Mr Steven Groves, engaged his DVA counterpart to allow him to both understand DVA's processes and to build a direct relationship.

The committee then discussed their respective grants programs and agreed the need to ensure appropriate alignment.

The Committee noted the update and the importance of the two Departments continuing to work together to improve the way veterans and their families are supported.

Agenda Item 3 – Government Priorities Including Current Reports and Inquiries

- a. **Invictus Games.** Mr Cormack provided an update on planning for the upcoming Invictus Games. Planning was well advanced, including for the four key events, and senior representation from both Departments is being finalised.
- b. **Parliamentary Inquiries.** Mr Cormack noted the Senate Inquiry into the use of the Quinoline anti-malarial drugs Mefloquine and Tafenoquine in the ADF was ongoing with the next public hearing scheduled for 31 August 2018 in Townsville. General Campbell advised the Committee that Defence had declined an offer to submit an additional submission to the Inquiry.
- c. **Prime Minister’s Veterans’ Employment Program.** Mr Cormack provided an update on the Prime Minister’s Veterans’ Employment Program. Mr Orme noted the need to integrate work under this program with other initiatives underway in either Defence or DVA, such as improvements to transition and the introduction within Defence of the Total Workforce Model, as part of a more holistic package of support.
- d. **Productivity Commission.** Ms Cosson provided an update on the Productivity Commission’s Inquiry into Compensation and Rehabilitation for Veterans. In response to the Commission’s Issues Paper, both DVA and Defence have now made written submissions.
- e. **Transition Taskforce.** Ms Greig noted that the report from the Transition Taskforce had now been released by Minister Chester and advised that Defence and DVA had already commenced implementation of key recommendations.

The Committee noted the updates.

Agenda Item 4 – Defence and DVA Collaboration

- a. **Transition Health Assessment and Special Forces Pilot.** Ms Cosson provided an update on these two pilot programs, noting both evidenced the close cooperation between Defence and DVA and, while the evaluation of each program is still underway, both appear to have delivered good outcomes. The Committee noted that the challenge ahead was how to translate the outcomes from the pilots across the ADF and acknowledged potential significant resource impacts.
- b. **Veteran Centric Reform Decision Ready Conditions.** Ms Cosson noted the work undertaken by DVA to identify 40 conditions that are now decision-ready. This was the result of considerable consultation with Defence and has resulted in a significant reduction in the time taken for a determination for relevant claims. Mr Orme noted that this work leveraged work done by Army, in particular and that DVA was now engaged with Navy and Air Force to further expand the number of conditions.
- c. **Early Engagement Model.** Ms Cosson provided an update on the implementation of the Early Engagement Model and noted that DVA now knows all members who enlist in or are appointed to ADF. Under the Early Engagement Model, DVA has now registered over 15,500 new clients. Ms Cosson also noted that work to expand the Early Engagement Model continues and that DVA had received policy approval to go forward with a proposed legislative change that would allow the CDF to submit a claim on behalf of a member. Ms Cosson also noted that work on improving information sharing arrangements between Defence and DVA continued.

The Committee noted the updates.

Agenda Item 5 – Defence / DVA Links Steering Committee Report Back

Ms Greig provided an update on the outcome of the Defence DVA Links Steering Committee deliberations. Key achievements over the last 12 months included:

- a. Endorsement of the Transition Taskforce Report and Action Plan, with a joint brief provided to the Minister's office on 11 May 2018.
- b. The Female Veterans Policy Forum and Veterans' Families Policy Forum which was held on 10-11 October 2017.
- c. Endorsement of the research proposal involving re-analysis of data from the Centre for Military and Veterans' Health deployment health studies on anti-malarial use.
- d. Endorsement of clear communication channels to advise the serving and ex-serving community of research on anti-malarial use, including ensuring publicly available material is easily accessible.
- e. Implementation of White Cards issued to transitioning ADF members utilising data received from Defence under the Early Engagement Model.
- f. Commencement of six month Special Operations Forces pilot on 30 November 2017 at Holsworthy Barracks, focusing in the claims space. Claims are being resolved by DVA and the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation prior to discharge, resulting in transitioning members being more financially secure.
- g. Commencement of the Transition Health Assessment project on 3 October 2017 at Holsworthy Army Barracks. The pilot involved all members transitioning from Holsworthy during the trial period who agreed to participate.
- h. Agreement to six monthly updates on portfolio reviews being undertaken by DVA as part of the Governments' response to the report of the Senate Inquiry *'The Constant Battle: Suicide by Veterans'*. At the request of the Minister, the Progress of Implementation tables are accessible on the DVA website and will be updated quarterly.

The Committee noted the report back.

There being no further business, Mr Moriaty closed the meeting.