

Government actions in relation to veterans and veterans' families since the Transition and Wellbeing Research Programme data were collected in 2015

- The 2018-19 Budget delivered \$100 million in additional funding to veterans and their families.
- The funding will help fund reform DVA processes to ensure veterans and their families receive the services and support they need during transition.
- Included in the new funding is:
 - \$10.8 million in increased payments for veterans' study
 - \$4.3 million for additional services to help veterans enter the workforce
 - \$4 million for the ongoing implementation of the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program, and
 - a \$2.2 million expansion of mental health treatment for Reservists without the need to link the condition to the person's military service.
- The 2017-2018 Budget delivered more than \$58 million in additional mental health support for serving and ex-serving ADF members and their families, including:
 - expanded access to mental health care;
 - an expansion of services to families; and
 - two new suicide prevention initiatives to pilot new approaches to supporting vulnerable veterans experiencing mental health conditions.
- In October 2017, a \$31 million package of support was announced as part of the Government's response to the Senate Inquiry into Suicide by Veterans and Ex-service Personnel and the Jesse Bird Inquiry, including:
 - \$16.1 million over four years for a new Veteran Payment for financially vulnerable veterans claiming mental health conditions;
 - \$7.1 million over four years to extend support for families of veterans;
 - \$2.1 million over four years for an annual health assessment for ex-serving ADF members for the first five years post-discharge;
 - \$4 million over two years to pilot a case management service for transitioning or recently discharged ADF members; and
 - \$1.7 million over two years to undertake a scoping study to professionalise veterans' advocacy.

Since the research was conducted in 2015, government agencies including DVA and Defence have invested in a range of programs targeting transition, suicide prevention and support for families.

Transition Taskforce

- For most people the transition process, even when challenging or stressful, is managed well. But Defence and DVA recognise that for some transition can be a period of significant change and result in increased vulnerability to physical and mental health stresses.
- The transition process may not be the cause of a mental disorder. Some people may not identify or recognise they have a mental health concern until they have left the ADF and for others a mental disorder may not develop until after their military service.
- DVA has established a Transition Taskforce to ensure that current and future veterans and their families have the support that they need to transition effectively.
- The purpose of the Taskforce is to identify the barriers to effective transition, and to suggest actions to portfolio Ministers that address those barriers.
- Understanding the experience and challenge of transition, particularly for those who served during 2010-2014 including the prevalence of mental disorders and pathways to care will inform targeted policy and programs to meet the needs of current serving and transitioned ADF members and their families.

The Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program

- The Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program was launched on 17 November 2016 to raise awareness of the unique skills and experience that veterans can bring to the civilian workplace and increase veteran employment opportunities.
- Under the Program, an Industry Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment has been established, comprised entirely of industry. Its task is to develop practical measures for Australian businesses to attract and retain veterans, and it has made some significant progress which was outlined in its report to Government in October 2017.
- Annual awards are being established to recognise the achievements of Australian businesses and other organisations (including ESOs) in supporting and employing veterans and spouses of serving ADF members, and veterans who are making significant contributions to their workplace. The inaugural Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Awards was held on 28 March 2018.
- The Program includes a range of Government initiatives. Of note, the Government's jobactive website has been upgraded to facilitate the identification of suitable jobs for veterans and the APSJobs website now provides resources to assist veterans seeking a job in the APS.

Defence Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

- Since 2009, Defence has invested over \$252 million in the provision of mental health care and support to ADF members. Through implementation of the Defence Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2023, Defence will continue to improve the level of

awareness among ADF members about access to early intervention, treatment and rehabilitation programs.

- Defence also has in place significant mental health awareness, prevention and early intervention initiatives that target the stigma surrounding mental illness. These include web based information, mandatory awareness training for all ADF members, mental health input to command and leadership training, and national initiatives in areas of peer support, family engagement and enhancing access to specialist mental health care.

Centenary of Anzac Centre

- Phoenix Australia – Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health is operating a government-funded \$6 million Centenary of Anzac Centre at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne.
- The new centre delivers on a 2016 election commitment by representing one of the most significant investments into the research of military-related PTSD in Australia.
- The Anzac Centre will undertake pioneering research and provide expert advice to practitioners nationwide who are supporting veterans with PTSD.

RESTORE (Rapid Exposure Supporting Trauma Recovery) trial

- Phoenix Australia – Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health is conducting a study of Intensive Prolonged Exposure Therapy for posttraumatic stress disorder, on behalf of DVA, Defence and the National Health and Medical Research Council.
- Prolonged Exposure is believed to be one of the most effective treatments for PTSD.
- The trial will address barriers to care by in part influencing DVA and Defence policy that supports the delivery of evidence-based treatment by health providers nationwide.