

Defence/DVA Executive Committee (DDEC) - Meeting Summary – 7 December 2021

The ninth Defence/DVA Executive Committee meeting was held on 7 December 2021.

The meeting was held at Russell Offices (Defence).

Meeting Attendees:

Members	
Mr Greg Moriarty	Secretary, Department of Defence
General Angus Campbell	Chief of the Defence Force
Ms Liz Cosson	Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs
Ms Justine Greig	Deputy Secretary Defence People Department of Defence
Ms Vicki Rundle	Deputy Secretary Veterans and Families Department of Veterans' Affairs
Ms Kate Pope	Deputy President Repatriation Commission Department of Veterans' Affairs
Observers	
MAJGEN Natasha Fox AM CSC	Head, People Capability Department of Defence
BRIG Wade Stothart DSC AM CSC	Head, People Capability (designate), Defence
Mr Stuart Smith	Defence Engagement Commissioner Department of Veterans' Affairs
Ms Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate, DVA
Mr Don Spinks AM	Repatriation Commissioner, DVA
Secretariat	
Ms Liane Pettitt	Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance, DVA

Agenda Item 1 - Opening Remarks and Introductions

Ms Cosson welcomed members to the 2021 DDEC meeting and thanked Defence for hosting the meeting at Russell Offices. Ms Cosson noted the continuing strong relationship between DVA and Defence. Ms Cosson thanked Defence and the ADF for the tremendous work undertaken this year in support of the Nation. Mr Moriarty and Ms Cosson noted that the cooperation has been particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters; as well as the withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Agenda Item 2 – Strategic Partnerships

Members agreed on the importance of collaborating on the implementation of the Government's priorities and supporting the work of the Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention and Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

- **2A – Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention Preliminary Interim Report**

Members discussed the implementation of the Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention Preliminary Interim Report and noted the joint work undertaken to date to brief the Government on options to respond to the Interim Report.

- **2B – Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide**

Members reiterated the commitment of both departments to continue to respond to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and the support being provided to current serving personnel, veteran and families.

Members also noted the significant work to date and documentation provided to the Royal Commission in response to notices to give and notices to produce as well structural arrangements that have been put in place in both departments to support this important work.

- **2C – Force Structure Plan**

Members noted the update from Defence on the Force Structure Plan.

- **2D – Claims Backlog**

Members noted the update from DVA on the Claims backlog, including initiatives underway to address the claims backlog, and also ensure veterans are supported while they are awaiting finalisation of their claims. This includes prioritisation, triage and additional support processes being put in place to support veterans who may be vulnerable or in need of financial or other support and services.

Members also noted DVA's update on trends in claims processing both by current serving ADF personnel and veterans.

- **2E – Joint Transition Authority**

Members noted the update from Defence on progress in implementing the JTA.

Agenda Item 3 – Budget

- **3A – MYEFO 2021-22**
- **3B – Budget 2022-23**

Members discussed the implementation of MYEFO 2021-22 measures and preparation underway for the 2022-23 Federal Budget.

Agenda Item 4 - Defence/DVA Links Steering Committee Report

Members noted the update on the Defence/DVA Links Steering Committee Report and commended the Links Steering Committee for their strengthened collaboration on matters impacting on both current serving and ex-serving personnel.

Agenda Item 5 – Other Business

Mr Moriarty and Ms Cosson noted the significant efforts and progress made in 2021 to support veterans and families and welcomed the opportunities 2022 would present to strengthen the partnership between Defence and DVA, particularly in the context of the 2022 Federal Election and the need to respond to the priorities of a returned or new Government.

Members congratulated MAJGEN Fox on her appointment and thanked her for her significant contribution as Head, People Capability, in strengthening the very strong and productive partnership between DVA and Defence on matters impacting on both ADF personnel, veterans and families.

Members also congratulated BRIG Stothart on his promotion to Head, People Capability.