



Minutes

Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest and Action Items

The Chair opened the meeting acknowledging country, veterans, current serving Australian Defence Force Personnel and welcomed observers. Members **NOTED** apologies as listed at Annexure A and no conflicts of interest were raised.

Members **NOTED** that the minutes from the previous meeting on 10 July 2025 were endorsed out-of-session on 8 August 2025 and published on the DVA Website on 26 August 2025.

Members **AGREED** to close action items 2025OWP/A17, A18, A19, A20, A21, A22, A23, A24, and A25.

Members **NOTED** that the action items 2025OWP/A03 remain in progress

Agenda Item 2 Member Submission - DVA Telephone System Progress update on changes to DVA Telephone System and missed call logs (The Australian Special Air Service Association)

Members **NOTED** the member submission provided by the Australian Special Air Service Association regarding the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Telephone system progress update on changes to DVA Telephone System.

Members **ACKNOWLEDGED** the role of the Veterans' Access Network (VAN), which handles about 60% of calls to 1800 Veteran for general inquiries and **NOTED** that VAN is a functional unit of DVA.

Members **DISCUSSED** that while VAN provides general information, DVA officials cannot provide individualised claims advice, which must be referred to advocates.

Members **DISCUSSED** the potential of technology, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) search tools, to assist client self-service.

Members **ACKNOWLEDGED** that an AI tool is already live on the DVA Website as a test feature and will be extended to CLIK.

Agenda Item 3 Legislative Reform Transition Process - General Update

Members **NOTED** that Schedule 9 is subject of the *Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025* (VETS Act) is subject to a Senate Inquiry.

Members **ACKNOWLEDGED** ongoing system changes updates ahead of the 1 July 2026 cutover date, including improvements to the Special Rate Disability Pension (SRDP) processing system, and efficiencies expected through the transition to the Integrated Support Hub (ISH) Rehabilitation and Compensation system.

Members **DISCUSSED** training strategies, with a focus on ensuring advocates are informed of upcoming changes and **NOTED** the development of PowerPoint video style modules to support advocates.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2025OWP/A26	Provide a redacted example of campaign letter regarding Schedule 9 and a standardised response.	Policy and Research

Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Advocate Training Module: Single Ongoing Act

Members **NOTED** the proposed advocate training module for the Single Ongoing Act, designed to provide an overview of the VETS Act and its broad implications for veterans and families and **AGREED** to review and provide feedback on the draft training module by Friday, 5 September 2025.

Members **NOTED** that case studies will continue to play an important role in training and communication.

Members **AGREED** that the training content should be published broadly once refined (and outside ATDP training structures).

No.	Action	Assigned to
2025OWP/A27	Secretariat to circulate to members the Single Ongoing Act Module presentation with the accompanying script for their review and feedback by Friday, 5 September 2025.	Secretariat

Agenda Item 3.2 Proposed Advocate Training Module: DVA and CSC Superannuation Payments and Processes

Members **NOTED** the proposed advocate training module Commonwealth Superannuation and DVA Compensation Payments and **AGREED** to review and provide feedback on the draft training package by Friday, 5 September 2025.

Members **HIGHLIGHTED** the importance of clear advice to veterans on financial implications, including the need to consider professional advice early in the process.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2025OWP/A28	To seek members' comments on the Commonwealth Superannuation and DVA Compensation Payments training package out-of-session.	Secretariat

Agenda Item 3.3 Updated fee schedule for medical reports for initial liability claims

Members **NOTED** proposed changes to medical report fees and the action that will be taken by DVA to ensure compliance.

Agenda Item 4 CLIK Upgrade Engagement

Members **NOTED** the information provided regarding the Consolidated Library of Information and Knowledge (CLIK) and the planned approach for updating the resource with the impending implementation of the VETS Act and the enhanced MRCA.

Agenda Item 5 Other Business

Members **NOTED** upcoming events, including the release of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Final Report anniversary on 9 September 2025 and National Suicide Prevention Week.

Members **ACKNOWLEDGED** the Minister for Veterans' Affairs is expected to make a formal statement in Parliament in the week commencing 1 September 2025.

Members **NOTED** the anticipated release of the latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report on Defence and Veteran Suicide on 9 September 2025.

Agenda Item 6 OWP Communique

Members were provided the OWP Communique following the meeting for endorsement and publishing on the DVA website.

Meeting closed: 12:50pm

Members	
Andrew Kefford PSM	Chair, Deputy Secretary, Policy & Programs
Tara Cavanagh	Deputy Chair, First Assistant Secretary, Client Benefits
Vanessa Cheng	Air Force Association
FLTLT Rod Hutchings	Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association
Michael Carlon JP	Australian Special Air Services Association
John McNeill	Australian Veterans Alliance
Jenny Gregory OAM	Australian War Widows Inc
Narelle Bromhead OAM	Partners of Veterans Association of Australia Inc.
Keely Dreghorn	Returned and Services League of Australia
Clem Russell OAM	The Royal Australian Regiment Corporation
Max Ball	Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia
Bill Roberts OAM JP	Vietnam Veterans' Federation of Australia
Presenters	
Luke Brown	First Assistant Secretary, Policy and Research
Tara Cavanagh	First Assistant Secretary, Client Benefits
Jane Stuart	Assistant Secretary, Client and Information Access
Linda Sharrock	Director, Client Benefits
Observers	
Sophie Gribben	A/g Assistant Secretary, Benefits Policy
Secretariat	
Brad Clarke	Assistant Director, International & Stakeholder Relations
Julie Hackett	Senior Secretariat Officer, International & Stakeholder Relations
Apologies	
Bob Connor	Legacy Canberra