



# Establishing the Agency for Veteran and Family Wellbeing

The Australian Government has provided \$78 million over four years from 2025-26 (and \$7.5 million per year ongoing) to establish a new executive agency focused on veteran and family wellbeing within the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), to be operational from 1 July 2026.

This also includes:

- \$38.9 million over three years from 2026–27 to further support the Veterans' and Families' Hubs program to improve the ongoing financial sustainability of the Hubs.
- \$2.9 million over three years from 2026-27, and \$1.1 million per year ongoing, for a cultural transition program to support veterans to transition from military to civilian life.

Through the new agency for veteran and family wellbeing there will be a renewed focus on successful transition, community connection, and improving wellbeing outcomes for veterans and families of veterans. This delivers on recommendation 87 of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, which called for the establishment of an agency within DVA focused on veteran wellbeing, to address the systemic challenges identified by the Royal Commission.

The agency will also provide for the coordinated delivery of other Royal Commission recommendations, including:

- Recommendation 80 – DVA to take responsibility for supporting members to transition out of the ADF
- Recommendation 81 – developing a DVA-funded program to support ADF members' wellbeing during transition to civilian life
- Recommendation 86 – ongoing funding to support the operations of Veterans' and Families' Hubs.

The vision, purpose and functions of the new agency were developed through consultation and co-design with veterans, families, ex-service organisations and service providers. In line with this, the agency will focus on the overall wellbeing of veterans and families of veterans, while providing wrap around support for at risk veterans as they transition out of the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

The agency will also strengthen access to supports across the nation – working with the DVA Veteran Access Network, Open Arms, and the Veterans' and Families' Hub network to make sure there is sufficient, sustainably funded, reliable, coordinated and accessible support.

The new agency will have a remit for complex case management, wellbeing service coordination, referral concierge services, and a hotline.

Agency services will be scaled up over time and evaluated for effectiveness to ensure the agency is meeting the needs of the veteran community. The agency will take responsibility for transition supports that are currently shared between the Departments of Defence and Veterans' Affairs, to provide continuity of support to Defence personnel as they transition out of the ADF, so they don't fall through the gaps.

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Through the consultation and co-design process, the veteran community told us the new agency needed to have a local presence across Australia, enabling enhanced support for more veterans and families of veterans in the communities where they live. The new agency will work with Veterans' and Families' Hubs across the nation to link the agency to communities and to support Hub sustainability.

The new cultural transition program will support ADF members to build and maintain wellbeing during the transition from military to civilian life. This will include piloting and evaluating exemplar programs in different locations as envisaged by the Royal Commission.

## Why is this important?

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide identified that many veterans and families of veterans face significant challenges as they transition from the ADF, including mental health issues, elevated suicide risks and a strain on relationships.

The latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare statistics also identified a similar issue, with the cohort most vulnerable to suicide remaining those who transition out of the ADF involuntarily, including through medical or disciplinary grounds.

The new agency will deliver on Recommendation 87 of the Royal Commission and provides for the coordinated delivery of related recommendations 80, 81 and 86.

The agency will support serving ADF personnel, veterans and families of veterans to plan and prepare for transition to civilian life and navigate the veteran support eco-system. The agency will improve referral pathways and integrate supports provided by DVA, Defence, and ex-service and community organisations.

## Who will benefit?

All Australian serving members, veterans and families of veterans.

## Date of effect?

The new agency will be operational from 1 July 2026.

## How much will this cost?

\$78 million over four years from 2025-26, and \$7.5 million per year ongoing.

The cost of this measure will be met from savings identified in the Defence portfolio.