



Royal Commission Implementation Committee

Meeting Overview

10 June 2025

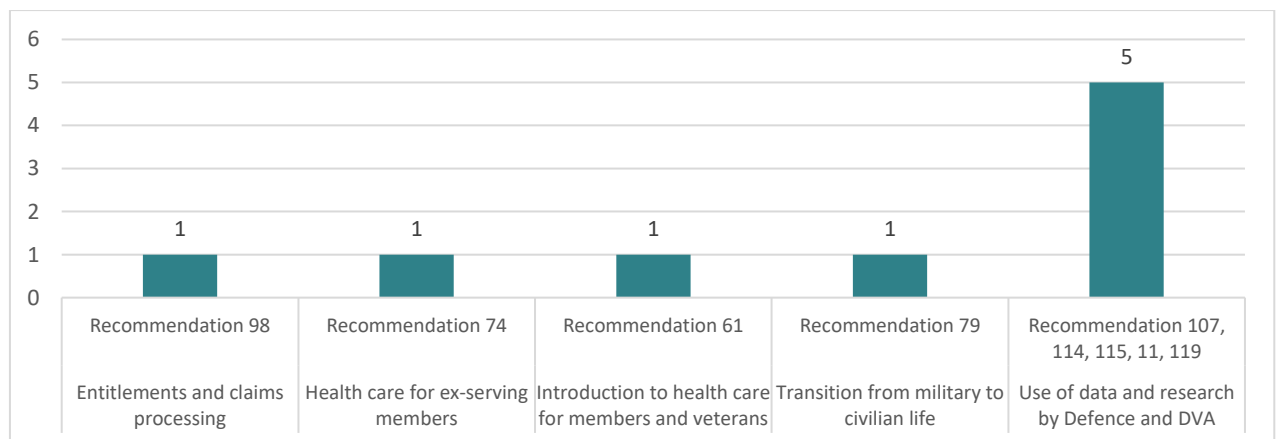
Welcome, apologies and conflict of interest

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Royal Commission Implementation Committee (RCIC) met on 10 June 2025 to discuss activities under way to support the delivery of DVA led or joint-led Recommendations.

Forward Work Plan

RCIC members discussed the Forward Work Plan and agreed to minor amendments to further strengthen alignment with the Defence Program Board.

Reaccommodation for discussion by theme



Performance Report

RCIC members considered the draft performance report, which is intended to support tracking of the overall delivery of the DVA response to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (Royal Commission).

The RCIC highlighted the value of aligning the report with similar reporting produced by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) and Defence, including the incorporation of key milestones to support consistency and transparency.

Veterans' Ministerial Council Priorities

The RCIC noted the ongoing engagement through the Commonwealth, State and Territory Committee (CSTC), supporting coordinated involvement of state and territory governments in implementing the Government's response to Royal Commission recommendations.

Wellbeing Agency and Ex-Service Organisations (ESO) Peak Body co-design update

The RCIC noted the update on the co-design of the new agency focused on veteran wellbeing and a national peak body for ESOs.

The DVA Taskforce has completed Phase 1 and is nearing completion of Phase 2 of its consultation and co-design processes, with Phase 3 now underway, reflecting continued progress across this work.

Update from Defence

The RCIC noted the update from the Chief of Personnel, Department of Defence and Deputy Secretary, Defence People, acknowledging the complexities associated with dependent and interdependent recommendations, including legislative considerations, and the importance of continued collaboration to progress these areas.

May RCIC out-of-session request

The RCIC considered the out-of-session request circulated on 21 May 2025, including project plans and progress updates for the following recommendations:

Recommendation 61: Establish a Brain Injury Program

- RCIC members considered progress in responding to Recommendation 61 and noted that several initiatives are underway. The RCIC noted DVA is progressing a commissioned literature review and actively engaging with Defence on this topic to ensure alignment of actions and shared research findings.

The RCIC **ENDORSED** the project plan for Recommendation 61.

Recommendation 79: Ensure that respect for and recognition of service are embedded throughout Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs

- RCIC members noted Defence and DVA are working together to ensure respect and recognition is a continuum throughout an individual's career, transition, and supporting individuals to age well.
- The RCIC was advised that Defence and DVA have agreed strategic principles to guide the response to the recommendation. This includes recognition across all life stages and linkages across existing activities including those being implemented in response to the Royal Commission, to minimise survey fatigue. This approach will also inform improvement to recognition and respect beyond commemorations and more focused support for other stakeholder groups such as health service providers, employers, and educators.

The RCIC **ENDORSED** the project plan for Recommendation 79.

Recommendation 98: Strengthen Department of Veterans' Affairs performance targets for claims processing timeframes and improve transparency

- The RCIC noted that DVA has given careful consideration to Recommendation 98 with a range of activities having been completed or underway to address the recommendation, including a review of the DVA Performance Reporting Framework and Passage of the *Veterans' Entitlement, Treatment and Support Bill (Simplification and Harmonisation) 2024*.

The RCIC **ENDORSED** the project plan for Recommendation 98.

Recommendation 107: Establish the National Veterans' Data Asset

- RCIC members noted that DVA is continuing to work towards implementation of the recommendation and is currently considering the impact of data sharing legislation, the need for community engagement and consideration of key learnings from the National Disability Data Asset.
- RCIC members considered the work that has been undertaken, including development of a new data set for serving member data to be linked into the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) – Person Level Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA) environment.

The RCIC **ENDORSED** the project plan for Recommendation 107.

Update on recommendations

RCIC members considered and discussed the following recommendations, noting progress to date and agreed next steps:

Recommendation 74: Clarify the application of the Privacy Act to veterans to determine whether amendments are necessary

- The RCIC noted the recommendation provides an opportunity to enhance DVA's legislation in relation to information and data sharing to improve health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for veterans and their families. RCIC members also noted that options are being considered, with further advice required from an appropriate legal expert.

The RCIC **ENDORSED** the project plan for Recommendation 74.

Recommendation 114: Defence and DVA to prioritise research into veteran health and wellbeing and publish their workplans

Recommendation 115: Defence and DVA to publish their research into veteran health and wellbeing

Recommendation 116: Improve the quality, evaluation, translation and sharing of research findings.

- The RCIC considered Recommendations 114, 115 and 116 collectively, noting their shared focus on strengthening research and evaluation. The RCIC noted that DVA and Defence are working together on establishing an interdepartmental working group to coordinate responses and drive a coherent approach to implementation.
- The RCIC considered the interdependencies between recommendation 114, 115 and 116 with recommendation 117, noting the establishment of an expert committee on veteran research will ensure all research and evaluation work is supported through strategic oversight and robust and effective strategic governance processes.

The RCIC **ENDORSED** the project plan for Recommendation 114, 115 and 116.

Recommendation 119: Improve understanding of veteran health by adding questions to Australian Bureau of Statistics surveys

- The RCIC noted that DVA is continuing to work with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) on how data can be used to improve understanding of veteran wellbeing.

The RCIC **ENDORSED** the project plan for Recommendation 119.

Any other business

RCIC members agreed to introduce a report at the commencement of each meeting noting the number of Defence members and veterans who have lost their lives to suicide, reinforcing the importance of maintaining focus on the purpose and intent of the Royal Commission.

The next meeting of the RCIC is scheduled for 23 July 2025.