



A simpler claims system for the veteran community

From 1 July 2026, all new compensation and rehabilitation claims are determined under a single ongoing Act — the improved *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA).

Moving to a single Act system creates one compensation claims pathway and one set of rules for new claims. This reduces complexity, supports more consistent decision-making and helps make the claims process easier to understand and navigate.

MRCA claims processing is already improving. In 2025-26, the average allocation time for MRCA Initial Liability claims reduced to around 14 days, compared with 332 days in 2022-23. Allocation is when DVA starts processing a claim. For MRCA Initial Liability claims, the average time from lodgement to determination was 145 days, including 99 days with DVA and 46 days awaiting external information. These figures do not include presumptive liability claims, which can be determined in less than 14 days.

As all new claims move into the single ongoing MRCA pathway and older claims under the previous system continue to be worked through, overall processing times are expected to improve further.

How the single Act system simplifies claims

The legislation reform that came into effect on 1 July 2026 creates a simpler veterans' entitlements system. It makes it easier for veterans, the families of veterans and advocates to access the support they need, when they need it.

All claims lodged on or after 1 July 2026 for compensation and rehabilitation are now determined under a single ongoing Act (MRCA), regardless of the service that related to the claimed injury, disease or death. This means there is one compensation claims pathway and one set of rules for all new claims.

The reform reduces legislative complexities, simplifies administration and improves consistent decision-making. This supports a streamlined claims experience and more efficient claims processing over time.

Veterans with similar circumstances can now move through the same compensation claims pathway. This makes the process easier to understand and navigate, while supporting more consistent engagement with DVA throughout the claims journey.

The changes also introduce presumptive liability for 180 injuries and diseases known to have a common connection

with military service. For eligible conditions, veterans and dependants may not need to prove the causal connection between their condition and their service, reducing the amount of evidence required to support a claim and providing access to treatment sooner. If a condition does not qualify for presumptive liability, it can still be assessed through the standard claims process.

Why was the change made?

The previous tri-Act system was complex and often difficult to navigate. The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide identified this as a source of confusion and stress for veterans and the families of veterans. The move to a single ongoing Act helps simplify the claims process and improve access to support.

Existing payments and entitlements continue

Veterans and dependants receiving payments or entitlements before 1 July 2026 did not need to take action and do not need to do anything now to continue receiving their support.

Under 'grandparenting' arrangements veterans and dependants who were receiving payments or entitlements before 1 July 2026 continue to receive them or have automatically been transitioned on to more beneficial arrangements. Existing benefits are not reduced because of the new legislation. Those who have questions about how the changes apply to their individual circumstances can contact DVA on **1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)** or visit dva.gov.au/legislation-reform

What are the benefits of the single Act system?

- ✓ Presumptive liability for over 180 conditions.
- ✓ A simpler compensation claims pathway through a single ongoing Act.
- ✓ A single set of rules makes decision-making consistent.
- ✓ Entitlements are easier to understand.
- ✓ Evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the reforms, with a review by the Senate Committee after 12 months.

More information

Visit dva.gov.au/legislation-reform for information about the single Act system or dva.gov.au/making-a-claim for information about presumptive liability eligibility, how compensation claims are assessed, the evidence considered, and how decisions are made.