



Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

A young boy with light brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a blue denim shirt, is smiling. He is holding a framed black and white photograph of a soldier in military uniform sitting in a field. He is also holding a military medal with a colorful ribbon. The background is a lush green wall of foliage. A large green geometric shape is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# Corporate Plan 2020 -21

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

The Department of Veterans' Affairs acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia and their continuing spiritual and cultural connection to land, sea and community.

### **Acknowledgement of Service**

We respect and give thanks to all who have served in our defence force and their families.

We acknowledge the unique nature of military service and the sacrifice demanded of all who commit to defend our nation.

We undertake to preserve the memory and deeds of all who have served and promise to welcome, embrace, and support all military veterans as respected and valued members of our community.

For what they have done, this we will do.

Published by the Department of Veterans' Affairs  
August 2020  
P04165

# Secretary's introduction

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Corporate Plan 2020–21 will guide the department's implementation of its purpose and key activities, and enable us to measure and assess our performance over the next four years.

DVA is continuing the most significant transformation in its history. We are changing the way we interact with and provide services and support to veterans and their families to enhance wellbeing in all of its dimensions.

Our journey is informed by significant reviews, inquiries and research into DVA's business and service offerings. We have responded with appropriate change and improvement to our business processes, culture, operating model, and systems to provide better quality and more easily accessible services and support.

We continue to focus assistance on at-risk veterans and those with mental health conditions. Our Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and National Action Plan—co-designed with veterans and their families, partners, governments, the community and the private sector—looks to reduce the risk of suicide and improve mental health and wellbeing. Grassroots initiatives including six new Wellbeing Centres and a Psychiatric Assistance Dogs Program demonstrate practical solutions to enhance wellbeing outcomes for the veteran community.

DVA will work closely with the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention and support a new Veteran Family Advocate to give families of veterans a greater voice in policies and programs affecting health and wellbeing.

DVA staff have maintained continuity of service delivery to veterans and families against a backdrop of significant challenges, including the widespread bushfires in 2019–2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has necessitated change and opened opportunities for DVA, driving innovation across our service spectrum including how we commemorate important milestones, how we deliver services and how we interact with our stakeholder community.

We continue to build our understanding of the impacts of military service on those who serve and their families. Commemorative activities and events help to raise community awareness and understanding of the service and sacrifice of those in uniform, and this in turn helps promote strong veteran wellbeing outcomes.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Liz Cosson'.

**Liz Cosson AM CSC**

Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs

# Purpose

The purpose of the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is to support the wellbeing of those who serve or have served in the defence of our nation, and their families, by:

- partnering with organisations and individuals to help design, implement and deliver effective programs and benefits, which enhance wellbeing of veterans and their families.
- providing and maintaining war graves and delivering meaningful commemorative activities to promote community recognition and understanding of the service and sacrifice of veterans.

## What wellbeing means to DVA

Wellbeing is one of the central elements of DVA's purpose. DVA's veteran-centred wellbeing approach, based on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's (AIHW) person-centred wellbeing model, reflects the aspects of veterans' lives that influence their wellbeing today and into the future. It includes assumptions that wellbeing is holistic, is centred on the individual and that wellbeing changes across the whole-of-life continuum.

The model in Figure 1 focuses on the experiences and outcomes for the individual, rather than on specific services or the broader health and welfare system.

We work to enhance the wellbeing of veterans and their families by supporting their transition back to civilian life, providing treatment, enabling rehabilitation for service related conditions, and assisting them to engage in programs with a wellbeing focus.



Figure 1: Wellbeing model

DVA provides support and services which aim to improve wellbeing outcomes. To achieve our purpose we will do our best to collaborate with other organisations and agencies on behalf of veterans and their families to ensure their particular needs are considered.

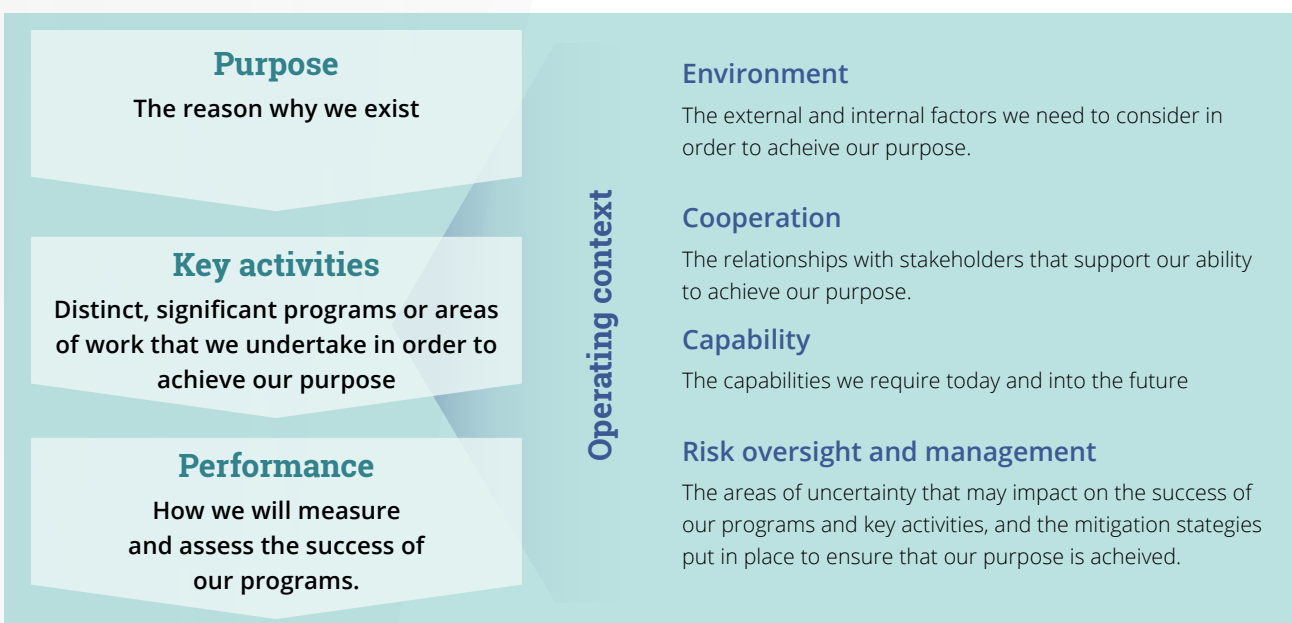


Figure 2: How the elements of our corporate plan integrate

# Operating context

DVA's operating context influences our ability to achieve our purpose, and successfully meet our performance targets. Our ability to adapt, and to work within the controls that we have, is critical to our ability to achieve our purpose.

Our Corporate Plan presents how we plan to manage our risk profile, influence and leverage off our government and stakeholder partners, and discern how best to invest in our capability to ensure we are ready for changes to our operating environment.

## Environment

Our success is contingent on our ability to anticipate and adapt within an evolving environment, while maintaining our focus on enhancing wellbeing outcomes and promoting community understanding, recognition and respect for the service and sacrifice of veterans.

Key environmental factors include:

- a complex legislative framework
- the changing needs and expectations of veterans and their families
- the outcomes of external reviews and enquiries
- broader Australian Public Service reforms
- the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on operations in Australia and overseas
- economic uncertainty.

We recognise there will be interest in our response to COVID-19. We have placed this analysis towards the end of the section. This provides readers a background understanding of the other environmental factors that impact our operations.

We strive to put veterans and their families as our first priority, and acknowledge the diversity of their needs and requirements, and the unique nature of military service. Our success depends on maintaining an open dialogue with veterans and their families, being empathetic, and remaining flexible, open to change and focused on continuous improvement.

### Complex legislative framework

DVA administers the following Acts and their instruments:

- *Defence Act 1903*, in relation to paragraph 124(1) (qba)—relating to service graves
- *Defence Services Home Act 1918*
- *Protection of the word "Anzac" Act 1920*

- *Papua New Guinea (Members of the Forces Benefits) Act 1957*
- *Australian War Memorial Act 1980*
- *War Graves Act 1980*
- *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA)
- *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988* (DRCA)
- *Anzac Day Act 1995*
- *Compensation (Japanese Internment) Act 2001*
- *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) except to the extent administered by the Minister for Defence
- *Veterans' Entitlements (Clarke Review) Act 2004*
- *Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests and British Commonwealth Occupation Force (Treatment) Act 2006*
- *Military Memorials of National Significance Act 2008*
- *Australian Veterans' Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First) Act 2019*
- *Treatment Benefits (Special Access) Act 2019*

The complexity of our legislative framework has been commented upon, most recently by the Productivity Commission, which suggested that the system needs to be simplified.

### Changing needs and expectations of veterans and their families

The veteran community has changed significantly in the past two decades. This has been driven by the duration and nature of recent military conflicts, and the changing demographics of our veterans.

Our veteran community has changing expectations. In part this is due to the shift from a pension-based focus under the VEA to a rehabilitation and compensation based focus under the MRCA. Societal and technological changes over the last two decades have also altered the way veterans and their families expect to engage with DVA. Expectations have shifted toward simpler and more accessible engagement through the use of technology.

DVA's success is dependent on knowing our veterans and their families and making it easier for them to access benefits and services. Through engagement with veterans and their families, DVA has been able to tailor its programs to better meet their needs.

Veteran Centric Reform—Putting Veterans and their Families First Program is delivering improved access

to services and supports for veterans and their families and we are seeing a continued growth in DVA claims numbers. Clearer content on our website and successful deployment of enhanced digital functionality in the MyService platform has also resulted in a substantial increase in the number of online claims submitted. While this has improved the user experience, claims processing systems require refinement to continue to meet expectations of veterans and their families.

DVA now knows more veterans through measures including the Veterans Recognition Program. This has led to greater engagement by veterans who previously did not interact with DVA, and greater awareness of the benefits offered. Our degree of success will become clear once the results of the 2021 National Census, which will include an identifier of whether someone has served, have been published.

In 2021–22, we expect to develop more targeted measures of success, once the extent of the proportion of the population who have served but are unknown to DVA becomes clear.

Along with the change in demographics and the expectations of veterans and their families, there has also been a shift in the broader community's expectations of DVA, and of government more generally. In the veterans' affairs portfolio, this has been reflected in heightened awareness and an expectation of greater transparency and accountability when it comes to the treatment outcomes of veterans and their families. This has created additional interest in DVA from a range of sources, including the media, the parliament and the ex-service community.

## Outcomes of external reviews and inquiries

In recent years, DVA has been the subject of a series of reviews and inquiries. Major reviews currently under consideration by government include:

- The Productivity Commission report. *'A Better Way to Support Veterans'* (July 2019), which considered how the current compensation and rehabilitation system for veterans operates, how it should operate into the future, and whether it is 'fit for purpose'.
- The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade *Inquiry into Transition from the Australian Defence Force* (April 2019).
- *The Veterans' Advocacy and Support Services Scoping Study* (December 2018) which investigated how veterans and their families are assisted to access

entitlements and services, and ways to improve advocacy services.

The majority of findings from these reviews validate DVA's transformation. Key recommendations also provide the opportunity to consider how DVA can better meet the needs of veterans and their families in the future.

## Australian Public Service reform

A broader APS reform agenda is underway aimed at making agencies more productive, inclusive, diverse, and better able to meet the Government's needs and obligations to taxpayers.

The Independent Review of the APS and reforms such as the Shared and Common Services Programme; Public Management Reform Agenda; Welfare Payments Infrastructure Transformation; and Streamlining Government Grants Administration (SGGA) program have, and will continue to, influence DVA at the strategic, organisational and operational level. Newer initiatives as part of the APS reform agenda including the APS Digital Professional Stream, will influence our people capability investment to meet our longer-term capability needs.

DVA is collaborating with other agencies, including Services Australia and the Department of Defence, to ensure our digital footprint supports veterans and their families accessing DVA supports and services, while providing easy to read information on user friendly sites and platforms. We are exploring innovation opportunities to increase connectivity of information and are leveraging and re-using technology which meets the needs of veterans, their families and the department.

## Impact of and responses to COVID-19

COVID-19 has presented a number of unprecedented global challenges. DVA's primary focus is the health and wellbeing of Australia's veteran community. The Australian Government, including DVA, has had to adapt and innovate. It will be critical for the 2020–2024 period that DVA supports broader government policies, noting this may impact the timeline of our broader reform agenda.

COVID-19 has changed the way veterans interact with their health care providers. As part of the whole-of-government response, temporary telehealth arrangements will ensure veterans continue to access critical health services. This will help to reduce the risk of community transmission of COVID-19 as well as provide protection for patients and health care providers. The Government is working with General Practitioners, allied health providers,

consumer groups and other health experts to review the implementation, use, and impact of the temporary telehealth arrangements, with options for an extension under consideration. DVA will align its arrangements with any whole-of-government approach.

Significant work has been undertaken to enable flexible working arrangements for our staff. This has accelerated DVA's move to a more digitally-enabled workforce, providing improved risk management and ensuring business continuity. DVA has rolled out mobile computing solutions and implemented collaboration and workload management tools to enable our workforce to meet service delivery needs while working remotely. DVA is well connected to other APS agencies' responses to the pandemic through the Chief Operating Officers Committee.

During the response phase, DVA managed present and emerging risks, captured lessons learnt and the initiatives undertaken. This work is informing future business improvements during and after emergence from the pandemic. DVA is exploring which positive changes to its ways of doing business can be built into future operating models.

COVID-19 will continue to have an impact on the way we deliver commemorative services at home and overseas.

## Overseas operations

DVA's operations are far reaching and include engagement in many countries, particularly in relation to the work of the Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG) and the Commemorations Directorate.

The Commemorations Directorate manages the significant international commemorations annually in Turkey and France, and supports other local commemorations in Papua New Guinea, Malaysia and Thailand.

The OAWG has responsibility for the ongoing management of a significant number of Australian national war memorials overseas on behalf of the Australian Government. This work requires close engagement with host nations.

There is an ongoing challenge for DVA to consider the risks of doing business in each country and ensuring that appropriate mitigation strategies are in place to maintain operations that reflect Australian Government standards and expectations. DVA's close working relationship with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Defence underpins our work.

## Capability

We recognise that our skills, expertise and collaboration with others goes a long way to achieving our purpose.

This section outlines how we will continue to develop these capabilities to respond to our changing operating context and achieve our purpose.

### Workforce Capability

We invest in our workforce, recognise current gaps and future capability requirements, and have the strategies and plans in place to address our needs.

Effective workforce and capability planning is essential to our successful transformation outlined in DVA's Future Business Operating Model. This is currently guided by the Enterprise Strategic Workforce Plan and will be guided, in the future, by the Organisation Capability Strategy.

### Enterprise Strategic Workforce Plan

The Enterprise Strategic Workforce Plan is an assessment of the impact of DVA's transformation activities on our current workforce capacity and capability. It considers how to both maintain 'business as usual' outcomes whilst transforming for the future.

In addition to DVA's core functions of service delivery and policy development, the plan identifies key skillsets and roles we require going forward. It also identifies activities that must be undertaken to ensure our workforce is appropriately supported during significant change.

The plan has four areas of focus, with strategies developed for each area:

**The journey ahead**—The impact of change on the workforce will be proactively managed to minimise capacity constraints. To ensure the change is sustainable, governance frameworks around systems and processes are necessary for effective knowledge management.

**The right skills**—DVA's workforce will need to be adaptive to change and uplifted in critical skills. Building this workforce requires effective talent management, supported by strategic sourcing decisions such as utilising APS or non-APS labour. Six critical skills have been identified (Digital Ability, Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Analysis, Change Management, Leadership and Business Process Improvement). These do not necessarily reflect their inherent criticality to the delivery of DVA

business, but rather they are either required by a significant portion of the department, or require a long lead time to build competency. DVA will focus its attention in developing these skills through the Organisation Capability Strategy.

**The right place**—Principles that guide recruitment activities across Australia are required to support consistent decision making regarding DVA's geographic footprint and achievement of workforce outcomes.

**Productive and engaged workforce**—DVA's staff experience must be aligned to our defined objectives to ensure staff are retained and motivated to deliver high quality work. Culture and ways of working must embrace innovation, supported by a robust ICT infrastructure.

### Organisation Capability Strategy

Acknowledging DVA's transformation agenda and dependencies that need to be re-evaluated and matured over time, we are in the process of developing an Organisation Capability Strategy. The strategy will meet interim goals in the new operational model and define streams for staff skills development and talent retention, to achieve the department's broader strategic drivers and longer term high performance vision.

The new capability strategy will support the Future Business Operating Model and the Enterprise Strategic Workforce Plan, address critical skills gaps across the organisation, support the attraction and retention of high performing staff, provide meaningful measures for success and align the business to proactively manage capability development into the future.

### ICT capability

Having the right mix of capability is important now more than ever. COVID-19 has changed not only how our staff work, it is also important to have the right systems in place for DVA to interact with veterans and their families and our partners to ensure we can deliver timely services and support. As Services Australia is the provider of ICT for DVA, the Services Australia Technology Plans, overlaid with the Services Australia/DVA ICT roadmap 2018–2022, will guide delivery of technology solutions into the future. DVA's ICT Guiding Principles, to be considered as part of Services Australia's Technology Plan for DVA, are:

### Simple, user-focused systems

- We will focus on providing intuitive, easy to use veteran and family focused systems which make it easy for DVA to deliver its services, and convenient for veterans and their families to access them anytime, anywhere, on any device.
- We will enable better service delivery to veterans and their families through improved ICT systems.
- We will reduce time to implement new technology, whilst exploring whole of Government technology capabilities.
- We will focus on operating fewer, more modern systems.

### Modern and common business systems

- We will enable DVA's business systems, which will be standard, secure and consolidated.
- We will enable adaptable technology to meet changing DVA's environment.
- We will reduce our legacy system footprint by transitioning to newer technologies

### Extensible and Adaptable Architecture

- We will allow innovation through an architecture that supports adoption of new technology without costly re-engineering of existing systems.

### Work collaboratively

- We will collaborate with other government agencies and the private sector to ensure ICT solutions benefit veterans and their families, providers and staff.
- We will make it easier for service providers to interact with the department using technology.
- We will continue to benefit from the Government's common and shared services program.

### Make evidence based decisions

- We will consult with DVA business and other relevant stakeholders to ensure future ICT improvements are based on evidence. Invest in areas that will provide the best user experience and DVA productivity returns.
- We will consult with Shared Services Partners to determine new ICT capabilities available and leverage these capabilities
- We will deliver outcomes through normalising digital innovation and process design to improve business value and benefits realisation.
- We will make effective use of our data through automation of management information.



## Risk oversight and management

Effective risk management is integral to achieving our objectives and supporting our purpose over the life of this plan. DVA is committed to promoting a proactive risk culture that considers threats and opportunities.

### Our Risk Management Framework

DVA's Risk Management Framework provides the necessary foundations and organisational arrangements for facilitating this culture and managing risk across the department. The framework sets out our systems of risk oversight and management in accordance with section 16 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy. It is aligned with the International Standard on Risk Management, ISO 31000:2018 Risk management—Guidelines, and Commonwealth best practice guidance. The framework includes the policy, risk appetite statement and tolerances, and guides the identification, management and reporting of risks where they may impact our business at the strategic and operational level.

The implementation of a single framework across DVA contributes to strengthening management practices, decision-making and innovation. We have specific risk management roles and regular reporting. All staff have a general responsibility to manage risk and must complete basic online risk management training.

DVA has created a Chief Risk Officer at the Senior Executive level. Risk management oversight is also incorporated into departmental executive governance committees. The Risk and Fraud Management Committee provides support, oversight and internal assurance to the Secretary and Executive Management Board (EMB) through the People and Culture Committee, and provides information to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) through the Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC). The ARC and its sub-committees—the Financial and Performance Statements Sub-Committee and ISC—provides independent, external advice to the Secretary on the appropriateness of DVA's system of risk oversight and management.

## Enterprise risks

DVA has identified eight enterprise risks that impact on the achievement of our purpose. The Secretary and the EMB have oversight of the enterprise risks. Each risk is reviewed by an Enterprise Risk Owner (SES Band 2) at least twice each year and reported to the EMB. Risk assessments are collated in a central Enterprise Risk Register, managed by the Legal Services and Audit branch. All enterprise risks also undergo an annual assurance review by an Enterprise Risk Assurer (SES Band 3 or equivalent) with a report to the EMB.

Table 1: Enterprise risks and key mitigation strategies.

Enterprise risks	Mitigation strategies
<p><b>1. Wellbeing—Failing to deliver programs which aim to improve the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families. Mitigation strategies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DVA has a governance committee framework that supports decision making and monitoring performance, which contributes to its ability to deliver effective programs and resolve issues.</li> <li>• The Program Performance Assurance Strategy assesses programs' key controls to ensure they are operating efficiently and effectively.</li> <li>• Programs Funding management ensures the allocation of government funding is adequately and sufficiently budgeted for health and well-being programs.</li> <li>• Sound management of procurement and contracts of all health and community services provides for the effective provider relationships and delivery of services and products.</li> <li>• Veteran and family communications and engagement through various support frameworks allow veterans and their families access to care and entitlements that is responsive and tailored for their specific needs.</li> </ul>

Enterprise risks	Mitigation strategies	
<p><b>2. Policy—The inability to provide strategic and evidenced based policy advice to government.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DVA is developing a Whole of Life Wellbeing Framework to better align our understanding and support for veteran wellbeing with policy development and advice to government.</li> <li>• A Veteran Family Advocate role is being created in DVA to draw on the advice of families of veterans to assist in developing policy and programs that are contemporary with a focus on mental health and transition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategic Research Framework and the development of sophisticated data management and actuarial analytics capability provides reporting on the recent past and future lifetime financial liabilities of the veteran community. The model's projections will reliably inform policy development, program evaluation, budget estimates and segmentation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Finance—Funding is insufficient to effectively and efficiently deliver the department's outcomes.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our internal and external business planning and budgeting processes provides regular monitoring and reporting of DVAs financial expenditure.</li> <li>• The EMB and other governance structures enables executive oversight of the delivery of departmental and portfolio activities.</li> <li>• Working with the relevant Commonwealth entities to seek Cabinet authority to support reform initiatives and secure funding for critical change programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DVA applies an enterprise portfolio project management framework to prioritise, select, and sequence investment activities.</li> <li>• The Enabling Services Improvement Project is being developed to standardise procedures for budget forecasting and lead to more accurate and consistent financial estimates.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Technology—The inability to provide reliable, responsive, fit-for- purpose and cost effective digital services.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dedicated Shared Services and Technology branch within DVA maintains oversight and administration for our working relations with Services Australia and other partners.</li> <li>• Enterprise Solution Architecture ensures tactical and operational objectives of DVA are achieved in a way that derives value from technology investments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of forums inform strategic direction and guide DVA to deliver fit-for-purpose solutions.</li> <li>• A dedicated requirements managements office together with incident and escalation management, CISO cyber security, disaster recovery and business continuity management and remote working arrangements provide additional mechanism to safeguard our digital services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Commemorate—The inability to deliver appropriate, successful, dignified and solemn commemorative activities.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All DVA commemorative activities have stringent governance arrangements with Executive and Commemorations Program Board oversight and documented security, safety arrangements and event contingency planning and delivery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media and issues management and communication planning supports effective media partnerships and community involvement.</li> </ul>

Enterprise risks	Mitigation strategies	
<p><b>6. Workforce—The inability to provide a professional, engaged and flexible workforce to meet our operational requirements.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DVA has an Enterprise Strategic Workforce Plan and workforce strategy to enable DVA to manage its changing environment and challenges, through increasing capability for staff to be flexible, innovative and adaptive.</li> <li>• A formal agreement on pay and conditions is established jointly by DVA and our employees through an enterprise agreement. This agreement is applied through DVA policies, guidelines and advice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support, resources and tools for leaders (at all levels) is being developed through DVA's culture program and organisational change management, to ensure all staff are supported through DVA's transformation.</li> <li>• A variety of recruitment, performance, leadership, and training programs exist to support DVA's workforce with skills improvement and personal development.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Claims—The inability of DVA to effectively engage and deliver claims processing, entitlements and services to veterans and their families.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance structures, committees and reporting provide oversight and assurance of our service delivery.</li> <li>• Review of current workforce provisioning and practices to meet the demand of benefits processing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Income Support and Compensation Quality Management Framework provides assurances to internal/external stakeholders and audit and risk committees as required and contributes to learning and development, and process improvements.</li> <li>• A robotic process automation trial is underway to remove low value manual processing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Partnering—Failing to capitalise on strategic partnering arrangements with other entities, including Commonwealth Government entities and engaging with stakeholders.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DVA has a wide range of critical partnership contracts/agreements with public and private providers to deliver services as well as shared services agreements with other government agencies.</li> <li>• Veteran Centric Reform is seeking to transform DVA operations and broaden DVA's sourcing approach and partnerships. Pilots are underway to ascertain innovative and best-practice service delivery strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our engagement with other Commonwealth departments, including Defence, Services Australia, Health and Social Services, is fundamental to ensuring that the needs of veterans and their families are considered across government.</li> <li>• DVA also works to engage constructively with ex-service organisations and representatives of veterans and their families to deliver support and services which respond to their needs.</li> </ul>

## Cooperation

Our ability to cooperate and partner with organisations and individuals is critical to enhance wellbeing outcomes for veterans and their families.

DVA is limited in its ability to influence wellbeing outcomes by both legislation and resources. Some categories of wellbeing, such as housing, education, social connection and employment, are areas that DVA has an indirect influence, limited to activities such as advocacy and grants. This is why cooperation between DVA and other government agencies and the community is important.

## Government partnerships

DVA has strong relationships with government partners and stakeholders to work together to support current and former ADF members and their families as they move out of service and into the next stage of their lives.

## Defence

DVA and Defence work together to provide care and support for ADF members at all stages during their career with the ADF and as they transition to civilian life. Defence has the lead in supporting current serving ADF members and their families, while DVA has the lead in supporting veterans and their families. Recognising that responsibility for the delivery of this support is shared, DVA and Defence have established a lasting framework through a Memorandum of Understanding for the Cooperative Delivery of Care and Support.

Transitioning to civilian life can be a challenging time for some ADF members and their families. DVA works with Defence, with a focus on training, employment, physical health and mental wellbeing during this time to ensure that this is a seamless and positive transition.

DVA and Defence continue to improve information sharing to ensure veterans can access the services they require. This includes sharing information about DVA services to encourage serving members to engage with the department, as well information sharing with Defence to identify veterans' eligibility.

DVA has leveraged the extensive work undertaken by Defence in procuring health services for ADF members under the Defence Health Services Contract with Bupa. Using piggybacking contract clauses, DVA has established its own contract with Bupa to access a range of health services for veterans. The contract

is tailored to meet DVA's specific requirements, it compliments existing services across DVA and Open Arms—Veterans & Families Counselling, and allows for DVA business areas to procure various health services, including clinical and mental health services, for the benefit of veterans on an as-needed basis.

## Services Australia

Services Australia deliver and maintain the majority of DVA ICT systems in a shared services arrangement. In addition to this DVA has partnered with Services Australia to deliver our transformation program, making it faster and easier for veterans and their families to connect with DVA, no matter where they live in Australia. By working together, DVA and Services Australia are continuing to provide more opportunities for veterans and their families to manage their business with DVA through user-friendly online, telephone and face-to-face services. DVA and Services Australia also work together to review and rationalise shared services arrangements between the agencies.

DVA's transformation process is supported by the Transformation Program Board which includes representatives from a range of agencies such as the Digital Transformation Agency, the Department of Health and Services Australia to manage the successful implementation of the program.

## Other Australian Government partnerships

DVA also works with the departments of Social Services, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Home Affairs, Education, Skills and Employment, Attorney General's, Prime Minister and Cabinet (including International Division and Protocol and International Visits Branch), as well as the Australian Federal Police, the Australian Government Actuary, the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, the Australian Tax Office, Comcare, and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

### State and territory partnerships

DVA engages with state and territory government veterans' Ministers through the Veterans Ministerial Council and their respective public service departments through the Commonwealth, State and Territory Committee. Both groups provide an opportunity to coordinate and integrate support for veterans and their families across Australia.

### International partnerships

DVA represents the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in Australia to ensure that the service and sacrifice of Australia's servicemen and women is commemorated and remembered in cemeteries across the world.

### Engagement with veterans and their families

DVA engages with veterans and their families to ensure we gain an understanding of the unique nature of military service, and to hear feedback about the experience of accessing DVA services.

We are committed to understanding the circumstances, needs and service delivery preferences of veterans and their families, so that we can place them at the centre of everything the department does. The National Consultation Framework facilitates this by providing a formal consultative structure designed to facilitate effective communication between the veteran and ex-service community, the Repatriation and Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commissions, and DVA.

The needs of veterans and their families remain at the centre of our transformation planning and delivery. Products and solutions are co-designed and tested with current and former serving ADF members, and we are making sure that we are implementing and delivering solutions that meet the needs and expectations of the veteran community.

On 5 February 2020, the Government announced the establishment of a Veteran Family Advocate to directly engage with the families of veterans, to improve the design of all veteran programs and services, including mental health supports and services. The Veteran Family Advocate will be embedded within the statutory frameworks that oversee the veterans' compensation and rehabilitation system, through membership and participation on the Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission. The Veteran Family Advocate will develop and foster productive relationships across Government and the veteran community, including the Department of Defence, ex-service organisations, and particularly with organisations and individuals representing the interests of veterans' families.

# Performance

## Performance reporting framework

The Corporate Plan is DVA's primary planning document and covers a rolling four-year period. It sets out the direction for how we will work, build our capability and engage with risk to deliver our purpose. Our Corporate Plan is a key component of our performance framework.

DVA has an integrated planning, budgeting and reporting process. This plan:

- is aligned to our outcomes, strategies, and priorities
- is aligned to the Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS)

The department's PBS for 2020–21 will set out DVA's three outcomes, their programs and the performance indicators used to monitor achievements against the deliverables. The performance indicators that will be reported in the PBS are included in this plan and have been aligned to our purpose and activities to demonstrate how success will be measured. Additional qualitative measures have been added in the plan to provide a holistic view of how success will be measured to achieve our purpose.

All the performance criteria in this plan will be reported in the Annual Performance Statements within the 2020–21 annual report. The Annual Performance Statements report our actual performance for the year against the performance measures and targets in our Corporate Plan and Portfolio Budget Statements, and provides analysis of the extent to which we have achieved our purpose and the factors that contribute to the outcome.

There have been a number of reviews undertaken over the last 12 months focusing on DVA's performance measures, including an ANAO audit. The feedback from these reviews have been incorporated in the performance measures and this Corporate Plan.

The priorities and key activities that are outlined in the Corporate Plan will flow through to our division and branch plans, and finally into our Individual Performance Agreements. This flow provides a clear line of sight from our purpose to the work of the individual.

## Outcomes

**Outcome 1:** Maintain and enhance the financial wellbeing and self-sufficiency of eligible persons and their dependants through access to income support, compensation and other support services, including advice and information about entitlements.

**Outcome 2:** Maintain and enhance the physical wellbeing and quality of life of eligible persons and their dependants through health and other care services that promote early intervention, prevention and treatment, including advice and information about health service entitlements.

**Outcome 3:** Acknowledgement and commemoration of those who served Australia and its allies in wars, conflicts and peace operations through promoting recognition of service and sacrifice, preservation of Australia's wartime heritage, and official commemorations.

## Measuring performance

Good performance information demonstrates how DVA is meeting its purpose through the activities we undertake.

We will achieve our purpose through three outcomes. Each outcome will be achieved through activities that support their accomplishment. How we perform in undertaking those activities is monitored through performance measures and targets.

The department may be involved directly in implementing national policy, while at other times we use our funding and policy role to focus on improving outcomes through delivery of services by states and territories, General Practitioners, specialists and allied health professionals, ex-service organisations and a range of public, private and not-for-profit organisations.

DVA has a range of performance measures that assess all aspects of the department's performance. Below is a summary of how these are measured.

### Timeliness

These measures assess the time taken to process claims to ensure DVA is promptly responding to requests for benefits. Targets are set as an improvement over prior year's performance to ensure DVA is continually improving.

### Quality correctness rate

Quality assurance assessments are conducted monthly on a statistical random sample by quality assurance officers using assessment criteria relevant to the

function i.e. initial liability, permanent impairment and incapacity etc. All aspects of the claim are assessed for correctness including eligibility, entitlements received, decision making and processing. Quality assurance officers are separate to delegates who process claims to ensure independence. All findings, recommendations or comments are recorded in the quality assurance system. All results are reported quarterly. Errors are deviations from the entitlements an eligible veteran or family member should have received. Errors may involve both financial and non-financial impacts, including for example, failure to formally notify a decision.

### Client satisfaction

Client satisfaction is measured through a quarterly independent survey by ORIMA Research<sup>1</sup>. Clients are either statistically selected at random or as a census of all clients within a program and the survey has a confidence interval of 95%. Over 6,000 clients were surveyed in 2019–20 through an online survey.

### Quality of service

These measures provide a comparison of the number of clients accessing services compared to the number of complaints recorded about being unable to access services or the quality of the service. This data is obtained from Services Australia. A report from a database of all client feedback identifies the number of complaints for the program. This is assessed annually.

Program	PBS outcome
<b>Enhance wellbeing</b>	
1.1 Deliver veterans' income support and allowances	1
1.2 Deliver veterans' disability support	1
1.3 Deliver assistance to Defence widow/ers and dependants	1
1.4 Deliver assistance and other compensation for veterans and dependants	1
1.5 Deliver the Veterans' Children Education Scheme	1
1.6 Deliver income support and compensation under DRCA and MRCA	1
2.1 Provide access to general medical consultations and services	2
2.2 Provide access to veterans' hospital services	2
2.3 Provide access to veterans' pharmaceutical benefits	2
2.4 Provide access to veterans' community care and support	2
2.5 Provide veterans' counselling and other health services	2
2.6 Provide access to health, rehabilitation and other care services under DRCA and MRCA	2
<b>Understanding and respect for the service and sacrifice of veterans</b>	
3.1 Provide and maintain war graves	3
3.2 Deliver commemorative activities	3

<sup>1</sup> This is a specific survey for clients receiving benefits. DVA also undertakes an annual Client Satisfaction Survey on a broad range of topics with results publicly available on the DVA website.



## Enhance wellbeing

### Our purpose

Support the wellbeing of those who serve or have served in the defence of our nation, and their families by partnering with organisations and individuals to help design, implement and deliver effective programs and benefits, which enhance wellbeing of veterans and their families

### Our outcomes

#### Outcome 1

Maintain and enhance the financial wellbeing and self-sufficiency of eligible persons and their dependants through access to income support, compensation, and other support services, including advice and information about entitlements.

#### Outcome 2

Maintain and enhance the physical wellbeing and quality of life of eligible persons and their dependants through health and other care services that promote early intervention, prevention and treatment, including advice and information about health service entitlements.



## Our key activities

- Work with Defence to provide a seamless and positive transition for veterans and their families to civilian life with a focus on training, employment, physical health and mental wellbeing.
- Administer the Strategic Research Framework (SRF) and drive a program of applied research focusing on the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families, supporting a data-driven approach to policy development, service delivery and decision-making.
- Make arrangements with medical, dental and allied health providers throughout Australia to ensure veterans and their families have access to a comprehensive range of services.
- Make it easier for veterans and their families to access the right information, services and support by continuing to improve and enhance systems and processes delivered by the Veteran Centric Reform—Putting Veterans and their Families First Program.
- Establish a national network of Veteran Wellbeing Centres by 2022 which deliver integrated support to veterans and their families from government, business and community partnerships.
- Provide grants to support a variety of wellbeing initiatives, including those that support veterans' social support and connection to the wider community.
- Provide income and financial support and compensation payments, to eligible veterans and their families
- Provide veterans and their families with access to mental health care services, including primary prevention through counselling and complex care coordination.
- Enable veterans and their families to access support for housing assistance via Defence Service Homes Insurance
- Implement a Provider Engagement Framework to improve our engagement and communication activities with DVA's health providers enabling them to deliver effective programs that enhance the wellbeing of veterans and their families.
- Provide veterans and their families with access to education and skills development.



## Our performance measures

The performance measures and targets are shown in the tables below. We will monitor and report on our performance against each measure in the annual performance statements from 2020–21 to 2023–24, indicated by the table below.

### Program 1.1: Deliver veterans' income support and allowances

Income support provides a regular means-tested payment for eligible veterans and their dependants with limited means. While the veteran population is reducing in size, the activities undertaken within Program 1.1 are becoming more complex due to the increasing sophistication of the personal financial arrangements and circumstances of veterans and their families, these are reviewed regularly.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.1.1.1	Timeliness: The percentage of new claims processed within 30 days	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.1.2	Timeliness: The percentage of pensioner-initiated reviews (PIRs) processed within 10 days <sup>2</sup>	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.2	Quality: Correctness rate	New Claims: >95% PIRs: >95%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.3	Client satisfaction: The percentage of clients satisfied with the level of customer service they received when accessing their entitlements	80%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Program 1.2: Deliver Veterans' disability support

Provides compensation in the form of disability pensions and ancillary benefits to eligible veterans for the tangible effects of war or defence service.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.2.1	Timeliness: The percentage of claims processed within 100 days	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.2.2	Quality: Correctness rate	>95%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.2.3	Client satisfaction: The percentage of clients satisfied with the level of customer service they received when accessing their entitlements	80%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Program 1.3: Deliver assistance to Defence widow/ers and their dependants

The war widow/ers pension is part of a compensation package made in recognition of the special circumstances to compensate a widowed partner of a veteran, where there was a connection between the veteran's death and service. Eligible children are also provided with financial support.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.3.1	Timeliness: The percentage of claims processed within 30 days	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.3.2	Quality: Correctness rate	>95%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.3.3	Client satisfaction: The percentage of clients satisfied with the level of customer service they received when accessing their entitlements	80%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>2</sup> Reviews of a pensioner's entitlements as a result of the client updating their personal or financial circumstances.

#### Program 1.4: Deliver assistance and other compensation for veterans and dependants

Delivers other allowances and assistance to eligible veterans and dependants under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) and related legislation including home support loans, funeral benefits, prisoner of war ex gratia payments and payments on behalf of Commonwealth and allied countries. Assistance is also provided to the ex-service community via Building Excellence in Support and Training grants and the Training and Information Program.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
<b>Funeral benefits</b>							
1.4.1.1	Timeliness: The percentage of claims processed within 10 days	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.4.1.2	Quality: Correctness rate	>95%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.4.1.3	Client satisfaction: The percentage of clients satisfied with the level of customer service they received when accessing their entitlements	80%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Defence Service Homes Insurance</b>							
1.4.2	Policyholder satisfaction: The percentage of policyholders satisfied with the service provided when their claim for damage to their home has been finalised <sup>3 4</sup>	>90%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

#### Program 1.5: Deliver Veterans' Children's Education Scheme

Under the Veterans' Children Education Scheme and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act Education and Training Scheme, education allowances are paid to eligible children of ADF members who have died or been severely injured as a result of service. The schemes provide financial assistance, student support services, guidance and counselling for eligible students undertaking primary, secondary and tertiary full time study within Australia.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.5.1	Timeliness: The percentage of claims processed within 28 days	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.5.2	Quality: Correctness rate	>95%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.5.3	Client satisfaction: Percentage of responses to the annual Education Schemes Satisfaction Survey indicating that students thought the support provided helped them reach their academic potential <sup>5</sup>	>75%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.5.4	Quality (achieving the Schemes' outcomes): Percentage of students progressing through each level of their education or career training <sup>6</sup>	>85%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>3</sup> New measure for 2020-2024.

<sup>4</sup> Policyholder satisfaction is measured through a monthly survey sent to 100 randomly selected policyholders who have recently had a claim finalised.

<sup>5</sup> All clients are sent an online survey to complete each year. The survey asks clients to rate the support provided to them by DVA staff on a scale of: "made no difference to academic outcomes"; "effective"; or "very effective".

<sup>6</sup> Students' level of education is collected and compared in November and March to identify whether a student has progressed in their education i.e. advanced from one year level to the next. Progression indicates the Scheme is supporting clients to achieve their education goals.

### Program 1.6: Deliver income support and compensation under DRCA and MRCA

Provides compensation to eligible veterans and dependants under the *Safety, Rehabilitation Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988* (DRCA), the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) and related legislation.

The DRCA (and MRCA for injuries since 1 July 2004) provides coverage for injured ADF members to support their return to health, work and independence. There is also compensation for eligible dependants, and MRCA health care and other ancillary benefits.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.6.1.1	Timeliness: The percentage of DRCA liability claims processed (determined) within 100 days	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.6.1.2	Timeliness: The percentage of DRCA permanent impairment (PI) claims processed (determined) within 100 days	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.6.1.3	Timeliness: The percentage of DRCA incapacity claims processed (determined) within 50 days	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.6.2	Quality: Correctness rate of DRCA claims	Liability: >95% PI: >95% Incapacity: >95%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.6.3.1	Timeliness: The percentage of MRCA liability claims processed (determined) within 90 days <sup>7</sup>	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.6.3.2	Timeliness: The percentage of MRCA permanent impairment claims processed (determined) within 90 days <sup>1</sup>	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.6.3.3	Timeliness: The percentage of MRCA incapacity claims processed (determined) within 50 days	Percentage increase over previous year	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.6.4	Quality: Correctness rate of MRCA claims	Liability: >95% PI: >95% Incapacity: >95% N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.6.5	Client satisfaction: The percentage of clients satisfied with the level of customer service they received when accessing their entitlements	80%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Program 2.1 Provide access to general medical consultations and services

DVA has arrangements in place with medical and dental practitioners in both the public and private sectors to deliver a comprehensive range of services throughout Australia, provided in hospitals, providers' rooms and in the homes of veterans and their families. To ensure that eligible veterans and dependants are able to access necessary services, DVA will either pay for travel to the nearest service provider or pay a provider to travel to other locations to provide services to eligible veterans and dependants.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
2.1.1	Quality of service: The proportion of clients accessing services against the total number of clients who have registered a complaint in relation to unmet access and/or quality.	>99%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>7</sup> Target days for these performance criteria have been changed from 100 days to 90 days

**Program 2.2: Provide access to veterans' hospital services**

Provide access to inpatient and outpatient hospital services for eligible veterans through arrangements with private hospitals, day procedure centres and mental health hospitals, as well as all public hospitals operated by the state and territory governments.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
2.2.1	Quality of service: The proportion of clients accessing services against the total number of clients who have registered a complaint in relation to unmet access and/or quality.	>99%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Program 2.3: Provide access to veterans' pharmaceutical benefits**

The Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme provides eligible veterans with access to a comprehensive range of pharmaceuticals and wound dressings for the treatment of their health care needs, including items available to the broader Australian community under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
2.3.1	Quality of service: The proportion of clients accessing services against the total number of clients who have registered a complaint in relation to unmet access and/or quality.	>99%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Program 2.4: Provide access to veterans' community care and support**

Manages community support and residential care programs for eligible veterans, including the Veterans' Home Care program and the Community Nursing program, which aim to support people to remain independent in their homes and improve their quality of life and health. Program 2.4 also provides subsidies and supplements for eligible veterans living in residential care facilities.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
2.4.1	Quality of service: The proportion of clients accessing services against the total number of clients who have registered a complaint in relation to unmet access and/or quality.	>99%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Program 2.5: Provide veterans' counselling and other health services

Provides a wide range of mental and allied health care services, including counselling and referral services for veterans and their families. The program also supports eligible veterans and their families with funding for aids and appliances, and travel for treatment.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Access to services							
2.5.1	Quality of Service: The proportion of clients accessing services against the total number of clients who have registered a complaint in relation to unmet access and/or quality.	>99%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
Travel							
2.5.2	Target percentage of claims for reimbursement processed within the Service Charter timeframe (28 days) <sup>8</sup>	95%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.5.3	Degree of complaints about arranged travel relative to the quantity of bookings	<0.05%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
Open Arms							
2.5.4	Percentage of clients provided an appointment with a Veterans & Families Counselling Service (Open Arms) clinician within two weeks of initial assessment.	>65%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.5.5	Client satisfaction <sup>10</sup>	>80%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.5.6	Open Arms Client Assist Contact Centre responsiveness capability	80% <sup>9</sup>	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation Service							
2.5.7	Clients with successful return to work <sup>11</sup>	>50%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>8</sup> Target percentage for this performance criteria has been changed from 100% to 95%

<sup>9</sup> Client satisfaction is measured by a questionnaire. Satisfaction questionnaires are offered by clinicians at the end of the period of counselling. All clients who answer 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' to the question 'How satisfied were you with the counselling provided to you?' will be measured as satisfied. The questionnaire is not compulsory for clients to complete.

<sup>10</sup> Percentage of calls received by the Open Arms Client Assist Contact Centre to be answered in less than 180 seconds.

<sup>11</sup> This measure is assessed by calculating the number of clients who returned to any form of work at the closure of the rehabilitation plan, over the total number of plan closures for the period.

**Program 2.6: Provide access to health, rehabilitation and other care services under DRCA and MRCA**

Arranges for the provision of rehabilitation, medical and other related services under DRCA, the MRCA and related legislation. The services include payment for medical treatment, rehabilitation services, attendant care and household services.

No	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
2.6.1	Timeliness: The percentage of rehabilitation assessments that were made within 30 days of referral for assessment	75%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.6.2	Quality: Percentage of clients where rehabilitation goals were met or exceeded	75%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.6.3	Client satisfaction: An annual survey of client satisfaction with the rehabilitation program <sup>12</sup>	75%	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>12</sup> Client satisfaction is measured through a monthly independent survey by ORIMA Research of DVA clients who have recently completed the rehabilitation program. With an average of 115 clients surveyed each month in 2019-20 via an online survey, there was a 20% response rate.

## Understand and respect

### Our purpose

Support the wellbeing of those who serve or have served in the defence of our nation, and their families by providing and maintaining war graves and delivering meaningful commemorative activities to promote community recognition and understanding of the service and sacrifice of veterans.

### Our outcomes

**Outcome 3:** Acknowledgement and commemoration of those who served Australia and its allies in wars, conflicts and peace operations through promoting recognition of service and sacrifice, preservation of Australia's wartime heritage, and official commemorations.





## Our key activities

This outcome will be achieved through activities that support its accomplishment.

- Provide and maintain war cemeteries, war plots, gardens of remembrance, memorials to the missing and other individual official commemorations for those eligible veterans who have died as a result of their service to Australia in wars, conflicts and peace operations.
- Maintain official national memorials overseas and operate interpretive centres in France, Thailand and Malaysia.
- Continue to recognise and acknowledge the contribution of veterans and their families through the distribution of the Veteran Covenant: Oath, lapel pin and discount card (promoting access to a range of benefits from participating businesses).
- Deliver commemorative events to enable the community to better understand, acknowledge and commemorate the service and sacrifice of those who have served Australia in wars, conflicts and peace operations.
- Develop and distribute educational resources and information to promote an increased understanding of Australia's wartime history

## Our performance measures

The performance measures and targets are shown in the tables below. We will monitor and report on our performance against each measure in the annual performance statements from 2020–21 to 2023–24, indicated by the table below.

### Program 3.1: Provide and maintain war graves

Acknowledges and commemorates veterans' service and sacrifice, and promotes an increased understanding of Australia's wartime history. To meet the Government's commitment, the Office of Australian War Graves cares for and maintains official commemorations and sites of collective official commemoration to the standards set by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

No.	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
3.1.1	<p>Official commemorations, war cemeteries, war plots and gardens of remembrance are maintained in accordance with Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) specifications.<sup>13 14</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95% of official commemorations are inspected at least once annually to ensure they continue to meet the CWGC standards</li> <li>• 95% of official commemorations that no longer meet the standard (through either environment factors, vandalism or aging) are to be replaced or refurbished within the following industry average timeframes: graves &lt; 6 months; columbarium or niche placement &lt; 4 months; garden of remembrance plaque &lt; 3 months.</li> </ul>	<p>95%</p> <p>95%</p>	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>13</sup> New measure for 2020–2024.

<sup>14</sup> Official commemorations (graves, headstones, bronze plaques) are maintained in accordance with the CWGC standards (each commemoration type has different specifications).

**Program 3.2: Deliver commemorative activities**

Commemorative activities are delivered to enable the community to better understand, acknowledge and commemorate the service and sacrifice of the men and women who have served Australia in wars, conflicts and peace operations.

No.	Performance criteria	Target	PBS page	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
3.2.1	<p>Commemorations are conducted to the satisfaction of the Australian public and Government as evidenced by:<sup>15</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commemorative event quality: Commemorative events are conducted to commemorate veterans' service in a dignified, solemn and respectful manner.</li> <li>Grant applications for the Saluting Their Service program are received from across a wide spectrum of groups in the community, including ex-service organisations, education, not-for-profit and other groups, and from a broad spread of locations around Australia.<sup>16</sup></li> <li>The Minister for Veterans' Affairs provides feedback annually on the degree of the Government's satisfaction with the outcomes of commemorative activities using a rating scale of very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.</li> </ul>	<p>The number of discrete complaints is less than 1% of the estimated audience for any one event.</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>15</sup> New measure for 2020-2024.

<sup>16</sup> The Saluting Their Service (STS) Commemorative Grants program is designed to preserve Australia's wartime heritage and to involve people throughout the nation in a wide range of projects and activities that highlight the service and sacrifice of Australia's servicemen and women.



