MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT FOR AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE RESERVISTS WITH DISASTER RELIEF AND CERTAIN OTHER SERVICE

The expansion of non-liability health care eligibility to certain Reservists will provide treatment for any mental health condition without the need to link the condition to the person’s military service, without requiring a diagnosis, and separate from any compensation claim.

All current and former permanent full-time Australian Defence Force members are already eligible for mental health treatment, as are Reservists who have continuous full-time service (CFTS). This measure expands eligibility to include Reservists without CFTS but with domestic or international disaster relief or certain other service.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

This measure is important because:

- Exposure to trauma increases the risk of mental health issues.
- Early intervention improves health outcomes.
- It supports Reservists exposed to trauma as part of their Reserve duties.

Any mental health condition will be covered, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, alcohol use disorder and phobias.

Treatment will be delivered through the DVA White Card. Services available through this card include general practitioners, psychiatrists, psychologists, medication, public or private hospital treatment and counselling.

WHO WILL BENEFIT?

Reservists without CFTS who have been involved in:

- Disaster relief service;
- Border protection service; or
- A serious service-related training accident.

DATE OF EFFECT

This measure will start on 1 July 2018.

HOW MUCH WILL THIS COST?

The 2018-19 Budget provides $2.2 million over the forward estimates to support this initiative.