



THE HON DAN TEHAN MP
MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE PERSONNEL
MINISTER ASSISTING THE PRIME MINISTER FOR CYBER SECURITY
MINISTER ASSISTING THE PRIME MINISTER FOR THE CENTENARY OF ANZAC

8 November 2017

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

Veterans' Ministers meeting

The second Roundtable of Ministers responsible for veteran issues has reinforced the need to coordinate effort across all levels of government to ensure the successful transition of those Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel moving from military to civilian life.

Issues discussed at the Roundtable included improved transition, mental health and suicide prevention, improving employment outcomes for veterans, veteran accommodation and assisting veterans who had been incarcerated.

The Roundtable was updated on initiatives in the Federal budget to enhance veteran rehabilitation and transform the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) as well as the expanded package of mental health support worth \$31 million that was announced as part of the Government's response to the Senate Inquiry into veterans' suicide.

A commitment by all governments was given to information sharing across agencies to assist in improving transition across all jurisdictions.

States and Territories agreed to examine the feasibility of collecting data on veteran incarceration and to promote non-liability health care for any mental health condition to those who have served one day in the full-time ADF.

As a step towards destigmatising Post Traumatic Stress, Ministers agreed to refrain from using the term disorder and agreed to encourage their ministerial health colleagues to do the same.

The Roundtable supported the establishment of a Veteran Support Services Accreditation Association that would enable Ex Service Organisations delivering services to veterans to obtain formal accreditation.

The Roundtable reached consensus on a common definition of veteran that is to be recognised by all jurisdictions. It was agreed that a veteran would be defined as 'a person who is serving or has served in the ADF'. Ministers agreed use of the term veteran should not be limited by the definitions contained in existing legislation.

Ministers agreed there needed to be a question about veterans in the next Australian Census. This will assist all levels of government to better support services and support to veterans and their families.

Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) can be reached 24 hours a day across Australia for crisis support and free and confidential counselling. Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 8 8241 45 46). VVCS is a service founded by Vietnam veterans.

Ministers agreed to establish a working party to explore the harmonisation of veterans' concessions across jurisdictions.

The Ministers also agreed to mark the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day in 2018 with a nation-wide campaign to acknowledge a minute's silence at 11am.

The next Veterans' Ministers' Roundtable in 2018 will occur in conjunction with the Transition Symposium and the Invictus Games in Sydney.

Federal Minister for Veterans' Affairs the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Veterans Affairs New South Wales the Hon David Elliott MP, Minister for Veterans Victoria the Hon John Eren MP, Minister for Housing, Veterans Issues and Youth Western Australia the Hon Peter Tinley AM MLA, Government Whip South Australia the Hon Tom Kenyon MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, Community and Veterans' Affairs Tasmania Ms Sarah Courtney MP, Minister for Veterans Australian Capital Territory Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA and Assistant Minister for Veterans Affairs representing the Chief Minister Northern Territory Mr Tony Sievers MLA attended the Roundtable. Given Queensland is in caretaker mode, Queensland was represented by the Department.

Media enquiries:

Minister Tehan's Office: Byron Vale, 0428 262 894

Department of Veterans' Affairs Media: 02 6289 6466