

### **Summary of Meeting – 7 March 2024**

The 66th meeting of the Department of Defence/Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Links Steering Committee (DLSC) was held on Thursday 7 March 2024. The following Policy, Programs and Initiatives were discussed at the meeting.

#### **Strategy**

In response to the Recommendation 3 of the Interim Report of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, DVA's Modernisation Program continues to roll out updates that streamline claims processing. This includes updates to MyService and piloting the Veteran Cards in the myGov Digital Wallet.

The draft Defence and Veteran Family Wellbeing Strategy has been provided to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs for consideration ahead of the public consultation phase. The Strategy and action plan have been designed with flexibility in mind to respond to emerging priorities.

DVA and Defence continue collaboration on development of the Defence DVA Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Revisions to the Defence-DVA Memorandum of Understanding are being finalised ahead of final review by Committee Members. A review of a replacement for the Support Continuum Performance Reports, the Transition System Performance Report (TSPR), has also received feedback and is undergoing final review by Committee Members.

The meeting agreed a Joint Research Framework for Health and Wellbeing can proceed to ratification by Defence and DVA.

#### **Performance**

Members noted progress of the Veterans' and Families' Hubs in a number of locations. Eight new Veterans' and Families' Hubs are being established across Australia. The implementation of the expansion is progressing. The new hubs are expected to be open by mid-2026, however it is likely that service delivery in some locations will commence before this time. All six of the initial established hubs are delivering support to veterans and families in Perth, Townsville, Adelaide, Darwin, Wodonga, Nowra, as well as the Caboolture (Southeast Queensland) Hub, which opened on 11 October 2023. Feedback on the Hubs program will involve widespread community input.

#### **Other Business**

An ADF/DVA cross-agency Action Plan 'Strengthening pharmaceutical treatment transition support,' that aims to ensure ADF members experience seamless access to medicines when veterans move from the ADF to DVA health funding systems, is in progress. The Plan aims to close a recognised gap in continuity of DVA funded treatment post discharge.