



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Veterans' Affairs**

**Minutes**

***Deputy Commissioners Consultative form – Tasmania***  
**Meeting Minutes**

***14 August 2024***

**Attendees**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Sally Dennington	Deputy Commissioner Tasmania
Kate Morris	a/g Executive Officer
John Hardy	RSL Tasmania
LTCOL Neil Grierson	Senior ADF Liaison Officer
Clare McCarthy	PVA- Tas PROXY
Christine Fisher	PVA – Tas
Kristy Broomhall	DPAC
Sandie Wilson	Mates4Mates
Cathy Starling	Mates4Mates
Elaine Devlin	Open Arms
Kyle Moyle	Open Arms

**Apologies**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
	Hobart Legacy
David Waddle	Advocacy Training and Development Program
Jenny Robertson	RAAF-A
Ray Williams OAM	TPI Assn
Kevin Evorall	Legacy Launceston
Brian Ellis	NAA- A
Brian Harper	VVAA – Tas
Don Ryan	VRG

**Guest Speaker**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Sarah Kennedy	DVA – Assistant Secretary Aged and Community Care Taskforce

## **Meeting commenced at 1400**

### **Business arising:**

Apologies noted and proxies welcomed.

Forum endorsed minutes from the meeting of 15 May 2024. Outstanding action item addressed in the endorsed minutes.

### **Agenda items submitted:** Nil

**Presentation:** Sarah Kennedy – DVA Aged and Community Care Taskforce.

The Taskforce was established in January 2024 due to the change in DVA client demographic.

The taskforce provides DVA home care services and Veterans Home Care to enable older Veterans to stay in their own home for as long as they would like to.

The Taskforce also helps with those who are in or moving into residential aged care.

The Taskforce is also working on an aged care strategy and is working with the Attorney General's office on how to tackle elder abuse.

Contact details for Sarah are available if any members want further information.

### **Deputy Commissioner update:**

Cabinet reshuffle: Matt Thistlethwaite has moved from his role as Assistant Minister Defence and Veterans' Affairs and Luke Gosling has become a special envoy for Defence, Veterans' Affairs and northern Australia. Sally to provide update on the role of special envoy when more information is released.

Luke Brown is currently in Canberra preparing to appear before the Senate Inquiry into the VETS Bill

Dr Jon Lane has been appointed to acting Chief Psychiatrist at DVA pending permanent appointment.

Sally is visiting Launceston next week to visit with several ESO's and DVA staff. Further visits to other parts of the state are in the planning phase.

There is a community consultation townhall on 19 August at 1330 with Ali McLaren DVA Deputy Secretary and Kahlil Fegan Repatriation Commissioner to discuss the National Consultation Framework 2024 review. Details to be forwarded to DCCF members via email.

Reminder that the Veterans Health Week grants close on 30 August 2024.

The Services Australia "Blue Gum" mobile services bus will be returning to Tasmania in October 2024.

The final report from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide is due to be released on 9 September 2024. Members noted that there was to be a closing event in Canberra around that time.

DVA will be releasing an Expression of Interest inviting veterans and family members to join the delivery team for ANZAC day events overseas in future years. Further information will be provided when it becomes available.

### **Attendee update**

#### **Senior ADF Officer:**

Defence has released its strategic plan which outline the priorities for the ADF. The focus is now for the fulltime force to focus on offshore operations and the reserve force to focus on the defence of Australia.

For Army in Tasmania, it will see its large reserve force undertaking training in the north of Australia.

For Navy in Tasmania, they will still focus on supporting Navy vessels visiting the state.

For Air Force in Tasmania, they will still focus on driver training and support to Operation Southern Discovery which is the Governments commitment to supporting the Australian Antarctica Program.

Construction at the Barracks is due to be completed 13 September 2024. The new call centre will be recruiting 35 fulltime positions.

LTGEN Natasha Fox will be visiting in September to speak to members about Defence Culture.

Air Force will be hosting the Battle of Britain commemorations in September 2024.

Anglesea Barracks will be having an open day 2 November 2024. Formal invites are to follow for ESO's who may wish to provide a stand on the day.

Employer Support Awards were held last month with 40 employers being nominated and 8 taking out an award.

#### **Partners of Veterans Association (PVA):**

PVA have their AGM on 4 September 2024 and are having difficulty finding people to fill positions. Will provide update at next DCCF on the outcome of the AGM.

PVA mentioned that they prefer the term Veterans, Partners and Families as Partners play a specific role in supporting their Veterans.

### **Mates4Mates (M4M):**

Cathy is finishing up with M4M's on 15 August 2024 and will be handing over the DCCF representation to Sandie Wilson, who is a Senior Liaison Officer from Launceston.

M4M have yet to determine if the Regional Manager role will be filled, but M4M will stay in Tasmania and there will be no change to the activities and services provided.

Sandie has been with M4M for 3 years and her aim is to develop and increase M4M services in the north and northwest of Tasmania.

### **Returned Services League:**

Huonville Veteran Hub is due to open in 2 months and will service 1600 Veterans in southern Tasmania.

Devonport Veteran Hub will open just after the Huonville site and RSL Tasmanian will invite the Minister for Veterans' Affairs to open both sites.

RSL Launceston has taken over the onsite restaurant space to build the Veterans Hub.

RSL Tasmania will be moving out of their current building in Hobart to make room for the Hub to be built.

Wynward and Queenstown locations will be built later and the Queenstown site to include housing.

### **Open Arms (OA):**

Kyle has joined OA as the Assistant Director Lived Experience and is part of the OA state leadership team.

OA is running two pilot programs, Stress, Resilience and Functioning and Building Strong Partnerships for Families. Flyers to be sent out with these meeting minutes.

OA is working out of the Burnie RSL Hub once a week.

OA has been working with Peacock House to secure mental health beds.

OA has teamed with Tasmanian Department of Health and Aging to pilot a centralised intake and referral service where a Veteran identifier is used to assist Veterans in need.

**Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC):**

DPAC's Veteran wellness voucher program has doubled to \$200.

Frank McDonald memorial prize has closed, the winners will be announced in October.

State reception for Veterans who have deployed within the past 12 months will be held in November.

**Meeting closed at 1525**

**Next meeting 13 November 2024, 1400**