



Australian Government

Defence

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation

Services Australia

Department of Health and Aged Care

VETERAN TRANSITION ACTION PLAN



To defend Australia and its national interests in order
to advance Australia's security and prosperity
www.defence.gov.au



Useful contacts

Defence

Transition Centres

Transition Centres are located on or near most major bases and provide outreach services to other locations.

www.defence.gov.au/adf-members-families/military-life-cycle/transition/transition-centres-contacts

Defence Member and Family Helpline

The Helpline is available 24/7 with specialist support staff including Defence Social Workers, Military Support Officers and Family and Education Liaison Officers.

1800 624 608

www.defence.gov.au/adf-members-families/crisis-support/helplines/defence-member-family-helpline

ADF Financial Services Consumer Centre

The ADF Financial Services Consumer Centre offers impartial, professional financial education and relevant resource materials to all ADF personnel, to assist them to make informed decisions and plans about their financial affairs and empower them to improve their financial situation throughout their careers and post-service.

www.adfconsumer.gov.au

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Veteran Support Office

Veteran Support Officers (VSOs) are DVA staff members and located on Defence bases around Australia. VSOs provide education on DVA supports and services, help in navigating MyService and completing claims submissions, and offer support and guidance to transitioning members and families.

www.dva.gov.au/get-support/transitioning-civilian-life/veteran-support-office

Veterans' and Families' Hubs

Veterans' and Families' Hubs deliver integrated support to veterans and families and improve access to local services, which may include wellbeing support, advocacy, employment and housing advice, social connection and physical and mental health services. Veterans' and Families' Hubs are open to all current and former serving ADF members, including Reservists, and families.

www.dva.gov.au/get-support/health-support/work-and-social-life-programs/work-and-social-support/veterans-and-families-hubs

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling

Open Arms is the leading provider of free mental health assessment and counselling for ADF members, veterans and families. It offers both individual and relationship counselling to help build strong and healthy relationships at all stages of family life.

1800 011 046

www.openarms.gov.au

Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation

CSC Contact Centres and Website (General information on superannuation benefits)

CSC provides superannuation services, including retirement benefits as well as superannuation benefits relating to death and invalidity.

CSC's contact centres are available to provide information on superannuation benefits:

www.csc.gov.au/Contact-us

CSC's website also has useful calculators, tools and information relevant to veteran's superannuation:

www.csc.gov.au

Vets Hub

Vets Hub is a single front door supporting the superannuation journey of veterans and families, during ADF service and their lives after service.

www.csc.gov.au/Vets-Hub

(L-R) Flight Lieutenant Sophia Maling, Lieutenant Isabella Negus, Lieutenant Vicky Nguyen and Major Andy Carroll-Keays prior to embarking as part of Pacific Partnership 2022 on US Naval Hospital Ship, USNS *Mercy*, San Diego in California.



Acknowledgements

The Australian Government acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters, skies and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and to their community leaders, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We also pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have contributed to the defence of Australian in times of peace and war.

We acknowledge and honour those who have served or are currently serving in the Australian Defence Force. We pay our respects to their families and loved ones.

We acknowledge those who contributed to the development of the Veteran Transition Strategy and, in turn, this Action Plan. Thank you for assisting how the transition experience can be further improved for veterans and families.

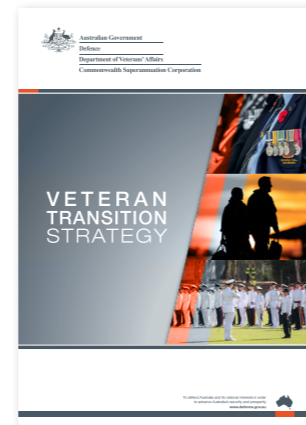
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Improving the transition experience

The Veteran Transition Strategy, released by the Australian Government on 22 August 2023, sets a shared vision for the transition ecosystem to best prepare and support veterans and families to transition well from Australian Defence Force (ADF) service and go on to live fulfilling civilian lives.

The Strategy aims to assist transitioning veterans and families to achieve positive wellbeing outcomes in each of the domains outlined in the agreed Wellbeing Framework between Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) below.



The Strategy defines transition as the journey of a veteran and their family from an ADF service centred life to a predominantly civilian life. It goes beyond the point a veteran separates from, or transfers from full-time service within, the ADF.

Transition is not only about meeting a series of practical needs; it is a journey of identity, a series of emotional and cultural adjustments, and possible adjustment and evolution of familial and societal relations.

As transitioning veterans and families all have their own diverse experiences and needs, the way an individual defines transition and the associated period will vary from person to person.

The Strategy outlines six priorities for the transition ecosystem to work towards, with a view to improving both the transition experience and transition outcomes of veterans and families:

- Veterans and families plan and prepare early for their transition
- Veterans and families are aware of and able to access support appropriate to their needs
- Families are engaged through transition
- Veterans and families have access to employment, education and skills opportunities
- Financial wellbeing for veterans and families, and
- Veterans and families feel supported and recognised.

Objectives of this Action Plan

Since the Strategy's release, the key Australian Government agencies and a Commonwealth Corporate entity involved in transition (Defence, DVA, Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, Services Australia and the Department of Health and Aged Care) have been working together on a series of integrated foundational activities to realise the intent of the Strategy, guided by the cross-agency Joint Transition Oversight Panel (JTOP).

The Veteran Transition Action Plan (Action Plan) sets out the actions the key Australian Government agencies involved in transition aim to achieve to improve the transition experience and outcomes for veterans and families over the course of the Strategy. Some actions may contribute to a range of the priorities and success factors; however, they have been placed against the success factor they most significantly contribute to for the purpose of this Action Plan.

The Action Plan is sufficiently flexible to enable broader transition ecosystem stakeholders, such as state/territory governments and ex-service organisations, to see where their activities fit within the Action Plan and/or to inform their own efforts. Work to improve the integration between the Australian Government and states/territories to deliver more connected transition supports for veterans and families is underway. Moreover, flexibility in the Action Plan allows program delivery to adapt to changing government priorities and strategic circumstances.

Engagement, co-design and/or consultation with veterans and families who have lived experience of transition, and broader transition ecosystem stakeholders, will be essential to the effective delivery of some actions to ensure they meet the diverse needs of veterans and families who are transitioning.

Alignment with contemporary evidence

The Action Plan aligns with evidence from contemporary research and recommendations for improving the transition experience and outcomes for veterans and families. Details of the contributing evidence is outlined within the Veteran Transition Strategy.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide released its Final Report on 9 September 2024. The report highlighted the scale, contributing risk factors and overarching drivers of suicide and suicidal distress, inclusive of the period of transition from ADF service into predominantly civilian life. The report recommendations specific to transition (Recommendations 80, 81 and 87) have guided actions and underlying activity to support them.



Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Work is underway to develop an evaluation framework for the Strategy, inclusive of this Action Plan. This will provide an opportunity to embed monitoring, evaluation and reporting for continuous improvement across the transition ecosystem to better assist veterans and families through their transition to civilian life.

A range of activities contribute to each of the actions within this Action Plan. A number were identified and commenced during the course of the Royal Commission while others have been informed by the Final Report. While supporting broader evaluation of the Strategy, reporting against the Action Plan will provide detail on the range of activity that is occurring to improve the transition experience.

Departmental responsibility for each of the actions may change over time, particularly in considering recommendations from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and any ongoing consultation. Such changes will be identified through updates to this Action Plan.

The Strategy has been developed, and sits alongside the Defence and Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Defence and Veteran Family Wellbeing Strategy. Some commonalities exist across the three strategies, which all aim to improve interrelated aspects of the wellbeing of veterans and families, guided by the agreed Wellbeing Framework, through different phases of their ADF journey and into civilian life.

Our priorities and actions

Priority One:

Veterans and families plan and prepare early for their transition

Preparing and planning for transition early in a veteran's service journey to support long-term wellbeing and preparedness for life after service.

Success Factor 1.1: Veterans and families understand why it is important to prepare and plan for their transition.

Actions	Responsible Agency
1.1.1 Promote early engagement with Government transition services during ADF service, such as ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars and lodging DVA claims at the point of injury or treatment, through cross-agency and broader ecosystem collaboration as appropriate.	Defence & DVA
1.1.2 Implement transition reform to provide a single interface for members and families to visit and access information about transition at any point in their career.	Defence

Success Factor 1.2: Veterans and families are provided accessible, relevant and targeted information, opportunities and training throughout their service to prepare for a predominately civilian life.

Actions	Responsible Agency
1.2.1 Promote member and family attendance at an ADF Member and Family Transition Seminar through service, particularly within 12 months before leaving the ADF.	Defence
1.2.2 Improve delivery of accessible, relevant and targeted information through Commonwealth department/entity communication channels to improve quality and usefulness of services provided for both veterans and families.	All
1.2.3 Explore the potential for cross-agency integration of information to improve the identification and anticipation of individual needs to help veterans and families better prepare and plan for their transition.	All

Success Factor 1.3: Veterans and families are better prepared to adapt to the changes transitioning from an ADF service-centred life to a predominately civilian life can bring.

Actions	Responsible Agency
1.3.1 Use feedback mechanisms to monitor, evaluate and make improvements about educating members and families about the changes transition can bring; from a series of practical needs, such as establishing civilian housing, employment and healthcare, to emotional and cultural adjustments, and stabilising of social and family relationships.	All
1.3.2 Explore and trial new approaches to enable better preparedness for transition (for veterans who have complexity with their DVA claims and who are seeking additional help in navigating DVA and CSC administrative processes).	Defence, DVA & CSC
1.3.3 Promote member access to the Defence Force Transition Program education and support modules throughout their ADF career.	Defence

Success Factor 1.4: Veterans and families have access to health and wellbeing services whilst in service to assist them to prepare for their transition and understand the support networks available to them after service.

Actions	Responsible Agency
1.4.1 Facilitate members undertaking a Transition Health Examination within 6 weeks prior to separation and handover to the civilian healthcare system via DVA/CSC (inclusive of Defence-funded GP appointment).	Defence
1.4.2 Ensure medically separating veterans are registered with the DVA Rehabilitation Program prior to separation.	Defence

Success Factor 1.5: Veterans and families are connected to local communities, peer networks and organisations supporting Defence communities.

Actions	Responsible Agency
1.5.1 Promote the benefits of members participating in cultural reintegration and social connectivity programs.	Defence & DVA
1.5.2 Promote member engagement with local communities to build, maintain and grow civilian connections during and after service.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 1.6: Veterans and families are encouraged to lodge claims whilst in service so that they can experience a simple and timely claims process for financial compensation and health support.

Actions	Responsible Agency	
1.6.1	Extend planned separation date to support medically separated members to process their Initial Liability claims with DVA and CSC.	Defence
1.6.2	Promote members' and transitioning veterans' ability to lodge claims through delivery of education and Initial Liability claims processing assistance.	Defence & DVA
1.6.3	Review systemic business processes with a view to reducing the burden of information management on individuals.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 1.7: Veterans are informed and encouraged to continue to serve in a Reserve capacity where possible.

Actions	Responsible Agency	
1.7.1	Promote ADF Reserve & Employer Support programs, including schemes and awards.	Defence
1.7.2	Encourage and support employers to be recognised as a Veteran Friendly Employer or Veteran Employer of Choice under the Veteran Employment Commitment to assist them in attracting and retaining ADF Reservists in civilian employment.	DVA

Priority Two: Veterans and families are aware of and able to access support appropriate to their needs

Simplifying transition information and support so that veterans and families can navigate and access the services appropriate to their needs at the right time.

Success Factor 2.1: Veterans and families have easy access to contemporary, understandable, relevant and connected information across the transition ecosystem.

Actions	Responsible Agency	
2.1.1	Review and update transition communications as necessary, including communications for different cohorts, to make it easier for veterans and families to understand their entitlements and receive the support they need, when they need it and from the most appropriate agency.	All
2.1.2	Promote transition services across agencies, where appropriate, so transitioning veterans and families can access support appropriate to their needs when they need it.	All
2.1.3	Develop publicly available service standards for DVA transition services so that veterans and families are aware of the standards they should expect.	DVA
2.1.4	Develop contemporary communication channels to enable access to information.	Defence

Success Factor 2.2: Veterans and families experience the right service at the right time across the transition ecosystem through the enhanced use of information, data and insights.

Actions	Responsible Agency	
2.2.1	Develop and implement a joint evaluation and assurance framework across Defence and DVA to monitor the effectiveness and performance of transition programs and services across the transition ecosystem.	Defence & DVA
2.2.2	Undertake research to understand the service access needs, experiences and barriers of diverse veteran cohorts, commencing with culturally and linguistically diverse veterans.	DVA
2.2.3	Enhance interagency data sharing arrangements to better support transitioning veterans and families and reduce the burden on them to have to retell their stories.	All
2.2.4	Continue to engage with veterans and families to understand their experience and use of transition services to continuously improve the transition experience.	Defence & DVA
2.2.5	Pilot a program to develop and test national referral pathways between DVA and organisations supporting the Defence community.	DVA
2.2.6	Promote services identified by veterans and families as beneficial to the transition experience.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 2.3: Veterans and families have access to appropriate and relevant rehabilitation services, and they can access wellbeing services, including mental health to assist them with the process of transition and adjustment into a predominantly civilian life.

Actions	Responsible Agency
2.3.1 Support the implementation of the Defence and Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and associated action plans to guide improvements in the mental health support provided to veterans and families during transition.	Defence & DVA
2.3.2 Facilitate referral to the DVA and Open Arms-sponsored programs and other supports to provide members and families with skills to navigate the transition process and adjust to a predominantly civilian life.	Defence

Priority Three: Families are engaged through transition

Engaging and supporting families through their veterans' transition into a predominately civilian life.

Success Factor 3.1: Families are informed and included in decisions through the transition to a predominately civilian life.

Actions	Responsible Agency
3.1.1 Partner with Defence Member and Family Support to promote the Defence Family Portal (<i>under development</i>), to provide targeted transition support information for families.	Defence
3.1.2 Review and/or develop web-based information to assist families and veterans to better understand the medical separation process.	Defence & DVA
3.1.3 Encourage family attendance and involvement in the ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars.	Defence

Success Factor 3.2: Families are supported by a transition ecosystem that understands and recognises the role that family plays in a veteran's life.

Actions	Responsible Agency
3.2.1 Support the implementation of the Defence and Veteran Family Wellbeing Strategy and associated action plans to guide improvements in the transition support provided to Defence and veteran families.	Defence & DVA
3.2.2 Identify and promote initiatives to support partner employment.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 3.3: Veterans are educated on the importance of family involvement, but the transition ecosystem recognises that veterans will seek different levels of family engagement in their transition.

Actions	Responsible Agency
3.3.1 Promote the benefit of family involvement when making initial contact with a member to provide transition support.	Defence & DVA
3.3.2 Enhance and refine the family-specific presentations delivered at the ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars using a continuous improvement approach.	Defence
Refer to Action 3.1.3.	

Success Factor 3.4: Families receive direct communications in regards to transition and understand the process and entitlements available for themselves as well as for their veteran family member.

Actions	Responsible Agency
3.4.1 Identify and improve communications and alternative channels with families through transition.	All
3.4.2 Improve the timeliness and effectiveness of information to enhance the transition experience for families, informed by the Defence and Veteran Family Wellbeing Strategy.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 3.5: Families have appropriate access to transition and wellbeing support and services through the transition to a predominately civilian life.

Actions	Responsible Agency
3.5.1 Collaborate across agencies to improve support to veteran families through transition and in civilian life.	All
3.5.2 Promote out of hours delivery of transition support services to encourage greater engagement with families.	Defence & DVA

Priority Four: Veterans and families have access to employment, education and skills development opportunities

Enhancing education, skills and civilian employment opportunities for veterans and families.

Success Factor 4.1: Veterans and families are supported during their ADF careers and have access to career support programs to consider and prepare for alternative career pathways following their transition to a predominately civilian life.

Actions	Responsible Agency
4.1.1 Promote member access to the Defence Force Transition Program education and support modules, and transition support services, throughout their ADF career.	Defence
4.1.2 Deliver the Veteran Employment Program using a continuous improvement approach.	DVA
4.1.3 Build the evidence base to understand the civilian employment opportunities, barriers, experiences and needs for veterans and families to inform future initiatives.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 4.2: Veterans have a good understanding of the civilian employment landscape and civilian employers recognise the valuable skills of veterans through engagement and information sharing between Defence and industry bodies.

Actions	Responsible Agency
4.2.1 Promote the Veteran Employment Commitment through the Veteran Employment Program and provide resources to educate employers, veterans and families about the skills and value that veterans and families can bring to their organisations, and how to recruit and retain them.	DVA
4.2.2 Explore improvements to civilian recognition of military knowledge, skills and experience.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 4.3: Veterans and families are supported by career advisers and lived experience in making the transition to civilian employment.

Actions	Responsible Agency
4.3.1 Recognise, celebrate and promote veteran, partner and organisational achievements in civilian employment.	DVA
4.3.2 Explore opportunities, including lived experience, to extend support when moving to civilian employment, through networks and partnerships.	DVA & Defence

Success Factor 4.4: Defence, DVA, State and Territory Veterans' Affairs and ex-service organisations develop consistent and coordinated approaches to veteran employment.

Actions	Responsible Agency
4.4.1 Undertake research to understand the civilian employment opportunities, experiences, barriers and needs for veterans and families.	Defence & DVA
4.4.2 Actively work with key stakeholders, including Not for Profit organisations, with a view to sharing information and resources and gaining contemporary advice regarding approaches to veteran employment.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 4.5: Veterans are supported to translate their ADF skills and qualifications for civilian employment.

Actions	Responsible Agency
4.5.1 Explore and/or provide opportunities to better support veterans into study or translate their skills for employment.	DVA
4.5.2 Support the translation of ADF skills and qualifications for civilian employment, retraining, further education or other rehabilitation activities for veterans with a DVA Rehabilitation Plan to assist them to be competitive in the employment market, and to secure and sustain civilian employment.	DVA

Refer to Action 4.2.2.

Success Factor 4.6: Veterans are meaningfully engaged in employment or other activities that directly aligns to their transition goals.

Actions	Responsible Agency
4.6.1 Seek ways to connect veterans and organisations to achieve veteran employment outcomes, working in partnership with other organisations as relevant.	DVA
4.6.2 Promote the Defence Veterans Temporary Employment Register to educate transitioning members on opportunities available within Defence.	Defence
4.6.3 Promote the Veteran Employment Pathway (VetPath) as an avenue for veterans seeking to establish a career in the Australian Public Service.	DVA
4.6.4 Promote the development and use of Defence supports to foster meaningful engagement or employment which aligns with individual skills and goals (e.g. Career Transition Training, Recognition of Prior Learning, Defence Force Transition Program).	Defence

Success Factor 4.7: Veterans are aware of employment opportunities in a Reserve capacity and the ability to return to full time service where able.

Actions	Responsible Agency
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Refer to Action 1.7.1.

Priority Five: Financial wellbeing for veterans and families

Empowering veterans and families to achieve a sense of security and an ability to meet financial needs.

Success Factor 5.1: Veterans and families can identify their unique needs, financial goals and better understand their circumstances to improve their financial wellbeing as they transition to a predominately civilian life.

Actions	Responsible Agency
5.1.1 Seek to enhance financial planning tools so transitioning veterans and families understand the financial implications of leaving the ADF to enable them to have a sound financial plan.	Defence, DVA & CSC
5.1.2 Encourage veterans and families to plan early and develop self-agency to enable them to adapt to changes in financial circumstances and achieve their financial goals across different ages, career pathways and circumstances.	Defence, DVA & CSC
5.1.3 Extend planned separation date to support medically separated members to process their Initial Liability claims with DVA and CSC for income security.	Defence

Success Factor 5.2: Veterans and families are aware of and have access to the suite of services available to them to support their financial wellbeing.

Actions	Responsible Agency
5.2.1 Build awareness among transitioning veterans and families of the cross-agency impacts of receiving benefits, including the interactions between different benefit types (e.g. DVA incapacity benefits, CSC invalidity benefits, and social security benefits).	Defence, DVA, CSC & Services Australia
5.2.2 Promote financial support services for the financial wellbeing of veterans and families over their entire transition journey, and into their life after service.	Defence & CSC
5.2.3 Progress the modernisation of DVA's technology and digital channels, including improving the status transparency for all claim types and harnessing co-design insights for improvement opportunities in MyService.	DVA

Success Factor 5.3: Veterans and families are able to make informed decisions with regard to their civilian financial wellbeing to maximise wellbeing and security after transition.

Actions	Responsible Agency
5.3.1 Provide quality impartial and targeted financial education through their ADF career and in life after service.	Defence, DVA & CSC
5.3.2 Promote availability of Defence financial contribution for eligible members towards professional financial advice.	Defence

Priority Six: Veterans and families feel supported and recognised

Building a positive transition culture that supports veterans and families transitioning to a predominately civilian life and recognises and values their ADF service.

Success Factor 6.1: Veterans and families are supported by a positive and respectful transition culture that recognises their diversity of experiences, giving them the confidence to proactively engage with support services through their transition to a predominately civilian life.

Actions	Responsible Agency
6.1.1 Promote key messages, programs, services and supports through a variety of channels throughout a veteran's military career and through transition.	All
6.1.2 Promote the strengths and diversity of veterans and families to enhance their engagement in the Australian community through transition and beyond.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 6.2: Veterans and families are supported by a transition ecosystem that normalises transition as a standard aspect of ADF service.

Actions	Responsible Agency
6.2.1 Embed respect and recognition of veterans and families in transition services and programs.	Defence & DVA

Success Factor 6.3: Veterans and families are encouraged to build civilian connections through initiatives that improve community engagement with the ADF and recognise and value their ADF service.

Actions	Responsible Agency
6.3.1 Promote the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant, which serves to recognise and acknowledge the unique nature of military service and the contribution of veterans and families.	DVA
Refer to Action 1.5.2.	

Success Factor 6.4: Formal recognition by the ADF hierarchy of a veteran's service occurs at the point of transition.

Actions	Responsible Agency
6.4.1 Enhance the recognition of service provided to veterans leaving the ADF to include an appropriate farewell and recognition of a veteran's service.	Defence

Success Factor 6.5: Veterans consider engagement as a Reservist to maintain a connection with the ADF and the social connections it provides.

Actions	Responsible Agency
6.5.1 Refer to Action 1.7.1.	



We acknowledge and honour those who have served or are currently serving in the Australian Defence Force.

We pay our respects to their families and loved ones.



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