



## Continuing to Support Veterans and their Families

This measure provides \$11.9 million to support continued access to valuable health and support programs for veterans and families.

This includes:

- Continuing to deliver the **Veteran Employment Program**
- Extension of the **Veterans – volunteer training in suicide recognition and intervention program** to 30 June 2026
- Extension of the **Veterans' Chaplaincy Pilot Program** to 30 June 2026
- Extension of the **Military and Veteran Psychiatry Training Program** to 30 June 2026
- Supporting **Invictus Australia** to 30 June 2026
- Supporting the **Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation** to 30 June 2026

### Why is this important?

#### Veteran Employment Program (VEP)

The VEP promotes positive employment outcomes for veterans and ensure veterans' skills and experiences are understood and valued by the wider community. This funding ensures fundamental elements of the VEP continue in 2025-26 FY. This includes delivery of the 2025 Prime Minister's National Veteran Employment Awards, the Veteran Employment Program website which hosts key resources for employers, veterans and families, and key outreach activities can continue.

#### Veterans – volunteer training in suicide recognition and intervention

Prevention of veteran suicide is a key priority for the Australian Government and the veteran community. Ex-service organisations, veterans, families, caregivers and friends play an important role in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of veterans.

Through this initiative, the Department of Veterans' Affairs will continue to deliver a national series of workshops and training sessions on topics such as mental health first aid and suicide awareness. The training aims to increase the capacity of the ex-service community to support veterans in distress.

#### Veterans' Chaplaincy Pilot Program (VCP)

VCP provides continuity of chaplaincy support after separation from the ADF – particularly for at-risk veterans and families – through the provision of pastoral care, spiritual health, and support for moral injury.

VCP chaplains also upskill the faith-based community to better provide support for moral injury and other veterans' issues, enhancing the veteran-centric support available in the community.

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### **Military and Veteran Psychiatry Training Program (MVPTP)**

MVPTP increases veteran access to psychiatrists who have specialist training in veteran and military health. Trainee psychiatrists who participate in the Program are trained in veteran and trauma-focused care.

### **Invictus Australia**

The benefits of sport for physical and mental health are widely acknowledged, including during recovery and rehabilitation.

This initiative provides an additional year of grant funding to Invictus Australia to continue to support wounded, injured or ill veterans on their recovery journey through participation in adaptive sports, including the Invictus Games and the Warrior Games

### **Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation**

Australian and international research shows that children in Defence and veteran families often experience additional challenges compared to their civilian peers, such as moving regularly with postings and having a parent away on deployment for extended periods.

This funding will support the Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation to continue to deliver mental health support to children aged 8 to 18 years old from Defence and veteran families through the *Defence Kids Program*.

## **Who will benefit?**

### **Veteran Employment Program**

The VEP encourages and supports employers to recruit and retain veterans and build veteran-inclusive work environments. This not only benefits the approximately 6,000 people moving from the Australian Defence Force every year but all veterans in the civilian workplace.

### **Military and Veteran Psychiatry Training Program**

Trainees will gain experience in delivering mental-health services to veterans. These skills enable more veterans to be treated by a workforce trained in the unique mental health challenges associated with military service.

The extension will allow for up to 20 places for trainees to complete their training.

### **Veterans – volunteer training in suicide recognition and intervention**

Veterans, caregivers, family members, and friends of veterans, along with volunteers who work with veterans and their families. Up to 2,000 participants are expected to participate in this training and support the veteran community.

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### **Veterans' Chaplaincy Pilot Program (VCP)**

The VCP is available to all transitioning ADF members, veterans and families in the three pilot locations of Townsville, Perth and Brisbane.

The extension will allow continuing support to be provided to the veteran community in these locations.

### **Invictus Australia**

Wounded, injured or ill veterans across Australia, and the sporting organisations that support them.

### **Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation**

Children aged 8 to 18 from both current and ex-serving ADF families. These children face challenges such as frequently settling into new locations and schools, the absence of a parent during deployment, and adjusting to their parent's separation from the ADF and the loss of their Defence community support system.

## **Date of effect?**

1 July 2025

## **How much will this cost?**

\$11.9 million, including:

- \$1.0 million to continue key elements of the Veteran Employment Program
- \$1.0 million to extend the Supporting Veterans – volunteer training in suicide recognition and intervention program
- The Budget has provided for extensions to:
  - the Military and Veteran Psychiatry Training Program (costs met from within existing funding), and
  - the Veterans' Chaplaincy Pilot Program (\$1.0 million met from within existing funding)
- \$3.3 million to continue to support Invictus Australia
- \$5.6 million to continue to support the Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation