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| ***Venue*: Level 9 Conference Room** **Lovett Tower, Canberra*****Date:* Thursday 22 March 2012** | **Meeting No. 17****RECORD OF MEETING** |

**Meeting Attendees**

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| **Minister for Veterans’ Affairs** |  |
| The Hon Warren Snowdon MPMr Ross BainMs Catherine Bergin |  |
| **Commission Members** |  |
| Mr Ian Campbell PSM | Secretary, Department of Veterans’ AffairsPresident, Repatriation CommissionChairman, Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission |
| Mr Shane Carmody | Deputy President, Repatriation CommissionMember, Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission |
| MAJGEN Mark Kelly AO DSC | Commissioner, Repatriation CommissionMember, Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission |
| MAJGEN Gerard Fogarty AM | Member, Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission |
| **ESO Round Table Members** |  |
| Mrs Audrey Blood OAM | War Widows’ Guild of Australia |
| Mrs Narelle Bromhead | Partners of Veterans Association of Australia |
| Mr Ron Coxon OAM | Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia |
| Mr Chris Hudson | Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Servicemen and Women |
| COL David Jamison AM (Retd) | Defence Force Welfare Association |
| LTCOL David Lewis AM (Retd) | Australian Special Air Services Association |
| Mr Tim McCombe OAM | Vietnam Veterans’ Federation of AustraliaNaval Association of Australia |
| AVM Roxley McLennan AO (Retd) | Royal Australian Air Force Association |
| Mr Allan Thomas JP | Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans’ Association |
| Mr Michael von Berg MC (Retd) | Royal Australian Regiment Corporation |
| Mr Charles Wright | Legacy Australia Council |
| **Apologies** |  |
| Mr Gordon Blake | Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council |
| RADM Ken Doolan AO RAN (Retd) | Returned and Services League of AustraliaRoyal Australian Regiment Corporation |
| Mr Paul O’Connor | Member, Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission |
| Mr Russell Pettis FAIM | Naval Association of Australia |
| Mr Mick Callan | Defence Community Organisation |
| **Proxies** |  |
| Mr Alex McNeill | Naval Association of Australia |
| Mr Mickey Michaelis | Returned and Services League of Australia |

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| **DVA Participants** |  |
| Dr Graeme Killer AO | Principal Medical Adviser |
| Ms Carolyn Spiers | Principal Legal Adviser |
| MAJGEN Liz Cosson AM CSC (Retd) | First Assistant Secretary, Client and Commemorations  |
| Mr Sean Farrelly | First Assistant Secretary, Rehabilitation and Support  |
| Ms Judy Daniel | First Assistant Secretary, Health and Community Services  |
| Ms Narelle Dotta | First Assistant Secretary, Corporate  |
| Ms Peta Stevenson | Assistant Secretary, Income Support and Grants |
| Ms Kym Connolly | A/g Assistant Secretary, Research and Development |
| Ms Danielle Cunningham | A/g Director, Grants, Bursaries and TIP |
| Mr Glen Yeomans | A/g Director, Statistical Services and Nominal Rolls |
| Dr Eileen Wilson | Director, Research and Development |
| Mr Jeff Norris | A/g Director, Compensation Offsetting Policy |
| Mr Bill Clisby | Executive Officer, Repatriation Commission |
| Ms Simone Williams | Graduate |
| **Secretariat** |  |
| Mr David Hollaway | Director, National Consultation Secretariat |
| Ms Donna Janssen | Assistant Director, National Consultation Secretariat |

**Item 1: Welcome and Membership Changes**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all members. Apologies were noted and changes to the forum’s membership discussed, particularly that Mr Greg Blyth (TPI) has resigned due to ill health and Mr Chris Hudson is acting National President, TPI, and that RADM Ian Crawford resigned from AVADSC and Mr Gordon Blake is now National President. The Chair also welcomed Mr Alex McNeill on behalf of Mr Russell Pettis and Mr Mickey Michaelis on behalf of RADM Ken Doolan.

**Item 2:** **Minutes and Actions Arising of Previous Meetings**

**Meeting 14, 24 November 2011**

**a) Minutes:**

The members accepted the minutes without change.

**b) Action items arising:**

Re: Action Item 5: Harmonised OH&S laws – DVA to check and advise the implications of the harmonised laws for VITA. DVA advised this Action Item was still in progress.

Action Item 1: Further to Action Item 5, Meeting 14, 24 November 2011 – DVA to check and advise the implications of the harmonised OH&S laws for VITA.

Re: Action Item 13: Liaise with Defence on the timing of the next meeting and the Defence Information Day. Members noted the Defence Information Day was timed to coincide the day after ESO Round Table (23 March 2012), and that some members of the ESO Round Table had accepted Major General Fogarty’s invitation to attend.

**Meeting 15, 9 December 2011 (BEST)**

Members accepted the minutes without change and noted that all Action Items were completed.

**Meeting 16, 24 January 2012 (BEST)**

The Chair advised that the minutes of the last ESO Round Table meeting will be distributed out of session. Members were advised that all Action Items were completed.

Action Item 2: Distribute Minutes/Actions Arising of ESO Round Table Meeting No. 16 (BEST), 24 January 2012 out of session to members

**Item 3: PMAC Report**

Members noted apologies received from Mr Callan due to illness.

**Item 4: Military Funerals**

As this item was listed on the Agenda by Mr Callan, members were not aware of the specific issue that Mr Callan wished to discuss with the ESO Round Table. Therefore, members discussed military funerals generally and advised of recent examples where families requested that no dignitaries or media attend. Members agreed that due to the solemn occasion military funerals should be in accordance with the family’s wishes.

**Item 5: Compensation Offsetting – Resources for Comment**

Members received an updated briefing from Mr Farrelly, Ms Stephenson and Mr Norris about DVA’s implementation of a number of actions to enhance the understanding of how offsetting works through provision of improved communication materials. Members were briefed on how DVA is working to clarify the applicability of the guidelines - not changing the way offsetting works but developing a range of resources to meet the information needs of clients and service providers. DVA is seeking feedback from the ESO Round Table and Operational Working Party on the resource material, particularly about the language used/ease of comprehension, accessibility, relevance and the fact sheets.

Action Item 3: Members to comment on the Compensation Offsetting communication resources (that were included in their Agenda Papers) by 3-4 April 2012.

**Item 6: History of Nominal Rolls (also discussed in conjunction with Item 8b)**

Members noted correspondence in their meeting folders from the RSL to the Secretary in which the RSL supports the preparation of nominal rolls for all operations involving Australian Service personnel since World War II, recalling that this issue was discussed by the ESO Round Table in 2011.

Members also received a comprehensive briefing from Ms Connolly and Mr Yeomans on the history of the development of nominal rolls, which were established to support DVA’s research priorities, particularly in the area of health studies; and to promote recognition of service and sacrifice. Members noted the general guide included in their papers which lists the steps involved in creating a Nominal Roll, from the initial research to the final publication. The Chair and Major General Fogarty acknowledged that modern day usage of such data was also a benefit of established Nominal Rolls but it was not customary / policy for Defence to produce ‘end of war’ lists. The Chair acknowledged the value of Nominal Rolls in preserving military history and culture but noted that neither DVA nor Defence have the mechanism to easily extract data due to their legacy systems that were originally designed for different purposes and differ across both organisations. The Chair agreed to report back to ESO Round Table on the costs that would be involved in producing a Nominal Roll and see where the ESO Round Table want to go from there, noting that neither Defence or DVA have funding for this.

Action Item 4: At a future meeting, ESO Round Table to be briefed on the financial costs of establishing a Nominal Roll.

**Item 7: Research Update**

Members received a briefing from Dr Eileen Wilson on DVA’s Research Program and noted the list of active and recently completed DVA research in their folders. Dr Wilson advised that in additional to strong research activities in the areas of aged care and health services, the research agenda is taking a broader and more strategic approach which will assist with understanding clients’ needs throughout their lives, as well as a holistic perspective, including transition, resilience, family and wellness issues. Members were also briefed about a follow up study to the 2003 Gulf War veteran cohort study. Members were particularly interest in research into mild traumatic brain injury and neurocognitive testing pre, during and post deployment. The Chair acknowledged that Defence and DVA are being proactive/strategic by looking at this issue now rather than waiting for a groundswell in years to come.

**Item 8: Round The Table – Members’ Submissions**

1. **Nominal Roll for Malaya Emergency, Operation Crimp and Borneo Confrontation
– raised by Mr von Berg (also discussed in conjunction with Item 6)**

Members noted the submission by the Royal Australian Regiment Corporation (Mr von Berg) requesting DVA to provide the actual or estimated costs that would be needed to establish a Nominal Roll. Further to discussions at Item 6, the Chair has agreed to present costings for establishing Nominal Roll at a future meeting of the ESO Round Table (Action Item 4 above refers).

Major General Fogarty also added that whilst the idea has some merit/applicability, funding is an issue. Major General Fogarty agreed to report back to ESO Round Table on Defence’s views.

Action Item 5: Defence update on approach to Nominal Rolls to be presented at a future meeting of the ESO Round Table.

**b) Impact of FTBA Changes on VCES/MRCAETS – raised by Mr McCombe**

Members noted the submission from the Vietnam Veterans’ Federation (Mr McCombe), as well as a submission from the TPI Federation tabled by Mr Hudson (under embargo until the Federation’s Conference on 26 March 2012) who are concerned about the Government decision to not increase the VCES and MRCAETS to the same amount as the Family Tax Benefit Part A (FTBA) – which is means tested – unlike DVA education allowances.

There was concern expressed that the maximum rate of FTB A for 16-19 year old full-time secondary students had increased. As a result some VCES and MRCAETS 16-17 year old full-time secondary students may choose to transfer to Centrelink to receive FTB A instead of a DVA education allowance.

The Chair and Mr Farrelly confirmed that the Government has taken a Budget decision which means that some secondary students currently receiving an education allowance from DVA may choose to transfer to Centrelink to receiver the higher rate available under FTB A. It is estimated that 290 VCES and MRCAETS students would be entitled to a higher rate of payment under FTB A. The Chair explained that to develop the capability to administer family tax arrangements within DVA would entail significant complexity.

If a student claims FTB A instead of Veterans Children Education Scheme or MRCAETS, they will still be entitled to receive extra education assistance from DVA in the form of additional tuition, guidance and counselling Mr Farrelly assured the ESO Round Table that DVA is working closely with Centrelink to make sure those who choose to move over to Family Tax Benefits are better off and DVA has a system to stay in contact with those children to make sure they are aware of/will receive any additional benefits they are entitled to.

Members suggested that that message is not being received clearly by affected families. DVA agreed to distribute its advice to affected families to members.

Action Item 6: Distribute to members DVA’s advice in relation to the effect of Family Tax Benefit (Part A) and DVA’s education scheme payments.

**Item 9: Discussions with Minister Snowdon**

Minister Snowdon updated the ESO Round Table about appointments to the Australian War Memorial Council and Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters. The Minister discussed commemorative activities planned for 2012 and the need to manage numbers and expectations especially in light of budgetary and health constraints of veterans.

The Minister also reminded of the upcoming Federal Budget, spoke about the Anzac Centenary program and the Support for Wounded, Ill and Injured Program and On Base Advisory Service and the importance of meeting the needs of younger serving families. The Minister has visited several bases in recent months and is very encouraged by the collaboration between both agencies and how well SWIIP and OBAS is being received.

The Minister announced the loan of the Long Tan Cross in August 2012 to the Australian War Memorial for 12 months, and that Australia is loaning the Menin Gate Lions to Belgium.

Members were interested in progress with the Vietnam Veterans Education Centre and ‘The Wall’ in Washington and asked to receive the list of Working Group members. The Chair agreed for BRIG Appleton to brief the ESO Round Table at its next meeting.

The Minister noted an issue raised about the Return from Active Service Badge for deceased and anomalies with the determination of Nature of Service which is outside operational war-like service so that soldiers who are killed overseas in these circumstances are not given due recognition.

Action Item 7: List of VVEC ‘The Wall’ Working Group members to be distributed to members

Action Item 8: The VVEC Working Party paper is to be distributed to members.

Action Item 9: BRIG Appleton to brief the ESO Round Table at its next meeting about the VVEC and ‘The Wall’

**Item 10: Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Grants**

Members received a comprehensive briefing from Mr Farrelly, Ms Stevenson and Ms Cunningham on the Review oif DVA-funded ESO Advocacy and Welfare Services (Review), BEST and Veteran and Community (V&C) grants.

Development of information pack to potential applicants

Recommendation 5 of the Review focussed on the development of an information pack to potential practitioners so they have a better feel for the work and time required of them and support they may expect. On 14 March 2012, DVA wrote to successful Round 13 applicants seeking their input to the information pack. 18 responses have been received to date, with all indicating that they are very interested in trial and have volunteered to participate.

Action Item 10: Distribute copy of 14 March 2012 letter to ESOs/State Commissions to members

TIP Governance

An independent consultant undertook a review of TIP governance as recommended in the Review. The outcomes have been discussed with Deputy Commissioners and TIP Chairs. The review paper and recommendations will be provided to Commission to formalise any changes in arrangements.

Service Delivery Integration Grant

Nine applications for Implementation Funding have been received, with another 23 expected before applications close on 4 April 2012. Ms Stevenson requested organisations meet that date as it will inform the approach to BEST Round 14 Recommendations to the Minister.

Veteran and Community Grants

The Review recommended that V&C grant rounds be reduced from three to two. Ms Stevenson advised that despite a reduction in grant funding, it is likely that there will be an underspend in 2011-12. The Department is currently working through a number of implementation options. A communication strategy will be developed to ensure all stakeholders are aware of any changes.

BEST

Ms Stevenson advised that following the outcomes of discussions at the December 2011 and January 2012 ESO Round Table meetings, seven members have provided feedback indicating that their preferred option for a funding formula is Option 2. There were some competing views with regards to the approach to some of the items within Option 2. Ms Stevenson advised members to remain mindful that there is still no clear direction for BEST Round 14. The team will continue to work on options for Round 14 with a focus on the assessment process for salary assistance which makes up 80% of expenditure. Members who have not provided their feedback yet were requested to respond immediately so that their views can be taken into account when finalising the assessment approach. .

Action Item 11: Members who have not yet responded, to immediately advise their intention to do so and/or submit their response so that it can be taken into account when finalising the assessment approach.

**Item 11: Round The Table – Members’ Submissions (continued)**

1. **Lateness of Section 137 reports – raised by Mr McCombe**Members noted DVA’s response tabled as a paper at the meeting which showed that during
2010-11, 87% of Section 137 reports were provided within 42 days, and for 2011-12 to date, 62% of Section 137 reports were provided within 42 days. Staff movements in Sydney and Brisbane offices caused some delays with work now underway to get back on target.
2. **The Connell Case – raised by Mr Mc Combe**Members recalled discussions at the last ESO Round Table meeting, where Mr McCombe spoke of the differences of opinion in regard to the application of the decision to Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) as well as Intermediate Rate (IR) veterans, and the submission from the Vietnam Veterans’ Federation (Mr McCombe). The Chair advised that further to the Full Federal Court decision in August 2011 that Mr Connell was entitled to Intermediate Rate pension under the *Veterans’ Entitlements Act 1986*, DVA has noted that the Court found that the interpretation of the Act was inappropriate and it has been agreed that all cases will be considered in that context. Members of the ESO Round Table were invited to bring any cases which had been rejected along the lines of the Connell Decision, to Mr Farrelly’s attention.
3. **Update of relocating VVCS offices – raised by Mr McCombe**Members noted DVA’s response to the issue raised by the Vietnam Veterans’ Federation (Mr McCombe) about the relocation of VVCS offices in Darwin, Lismore and Southport.
Mr Carmody updated members about DVA’s ongoing approach to improving/sourcing suitable accommodation (such as separate/private access points, ease of access for clients with mobility issues etc) in several states, especially to take advantage of renewed/new leasing arrangements on alternative/larger premises. DVA is confident of achieving good outcomes soon.
4. **Update of Application for Carers Allowance – raised by Ms Bromhead**Members noted DVA’s response to the ongoing issue raised by the Partners of Veterans Association (Ms Bromhead) in which she suggested FaHCSIA include additional questions on their Application for Carers Allowance form to sufficiently emphasise mental health issues. Ms Stephenson confirmed that the matter has been raised with FaHCSIA who are taking those suggestions on board in the broader context of the Government’s initiative to focus on the capacity of disabled people to return to employment, and that DVA will continue to work with FaHCSIA to look into PVAA’s concerns.
5. **Include eligible dependants in the Veterans’ Pharmaceutical Reimbursement Scheme (VPRS) – raised by Mr Wright**Members noted DVA’s response to the issue raised by Legacy Australia (Mr Wright) about eligible dependents not being included in the PRS. The Chair noted the VPRS was a government election commitment – linked to war cause disability which provides war widows and widowers and dependents access to the widest range of government-subsidised medicines and related items for any Australian, as well as access to a wide range of public and private health care services.
6. **Increase pensions for eligible dependant children of veterans under VEA to the same level as eligible children under MRCA where the veteran’s death is service related – raised by Mr Wright**Members noted DVA’s response that the Review of Military Compensation Arrangements did not recommend adjustments to the VEA orphan’s pension. Furthermore, if such a change were to occur this would result in pressure to increase other benefits under VEA so as to achieve parity with those available under MRCA, for example, travel reimbursement rates, funeral benefits, household services and attendant care allowances. This issue needs to be considered in the Budget context along with other priorities.

**Item 12: Understanding Military Culture**

Ms Cosson briefed members about a range of training programs conducted for all levels of DVA staff, which provide an opportunity to engage with staff so they understand what it means to serve our clients as well as their families. Ms Cosson particularly discussed the introduction of a new program: ‘Understanding Military Culture and Veteran Mental Health’. The two-hour course presented by experienced ex-serving members of the ADF, provides insights into military training and culture, as well as a broad range of veteran experiences and the impacts on the serving members and their families. Members expressed an interest in viewing the material. As the presentation includes imbedded videoclips, the Chair agreed for members of the ESO Round Table to arrive in Canberra earlier than usual for their next meeting so that they can receive the ‘Understanding Military Culture and Veteran Mental Health’ presentation. Ms Cosson suggested that members wait until they have received the presentation before deciding if it would be suitable for uploading to the Internet as it is designed to be viewed in a facilitated training session.

Ms Cosson also indicated that she would be briefing the Operational Working Party about the ‘Understanding Military Culture and Veteran Mental Health’ training.

Action Item 12: Next meeting of the ESO Round Table to be scheduled to facilitate members’ receiving the “Understanding Military Culture and Veteran Mental Health” training.

**Item 13: Veterans’ Affairs Consultation Framework – Forum Updates**

Members noted the written summaries/updates of recent Forum meetings. Reports were taken as read, and in particular Chairs advised the following:

1. **National Forums**
* Operational Working Party – as noted in agenda papers
* National Mental Health Forum
	+ The Chair asked the ESO Round Table to also view the YouTube clip ‘Now, After’ which is a 13 minute clip about a soldiers’ experiences and resultant post traumatic stress disorder. Ms Daniels’ team is working on developing a similar model based on Australian perspectives.
	+ MAGJEN Kelly advised that membership of all consultative forums will be the subject of a review by the Secretary and Minister.
	+ Dr Killer discussed the innovative Gold Coast Memory Clinic and development of a preventative approach to reduce the impacts of dementia.

Action Item 13: Members to view the YouTube clip “Now, After” at a future meeting. .

* Emerging Issues Forum
	+ EIF has been asked to comment on the development of a program targeted to the increasing cohort of female veterans similar to the very successful Men’s Peer Health Program, and to contribute ideas for the expansion of the Heart Health Program to ensure its relevance to our younger veterans; as part of this review appropriate delivery avenues will be considered.
	+ Mr von Berg discussed an emerging issue of 240-280 wounded soldiers who are being financially affected by the ATO’s ruling about tax components of salary from the time point of leaving surgery to coming home, citing an example of one soldier receiving a favourable outcome to their request for a Private Ruling. The Royal Australian Regiment Corporation will continue to work with Army and DVA to suggest legislative changes as Private Rulings on a case-by-case basis will be an administrative burden and may not result in consistent findings, as well as being psychologically disturbing for the soldiers.
	+ LTCOL Lewis asked if Peter King had raised the issue of ‘ceasing of treatments’ with the Department? LTCOL Lewis agreed to speak to Peter King again, and Ms Daniel agreed to get details from LTCOL Lewis. MAJGEN Kelly recalled previous legal advice that it could not be done under the legislation.

Action Item 14: LTCOL Lewis, Peter King and Ms Daniel to discuss issue around treatments ceased effects.

* National Health, Aged and Community Care Forum – as noted in agenda papers
1. **State Forums**

Members noted their folders contained summaries from meetings of the State Forums. Mr Carmody pointed out consistent themes are around OBAS, CVC, BEST funding and MyAccount and advised that the forums are operating well.

**Item 14: Departmental Strategic Initiatives/Outlooks**

1. **Neuromonics Tinnitus Trial – Ms Daniel**Members noted Ms Daniel’s briefing, including confirmation that the Commissions consider there are sufficient evidence of effectiveness and usability of the program for veterans to be reasonably confident that the program can deliver benefits to some veterans suffering from severe tinnitus. Access will require referral from an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist. The veteran’s audiologist will then assess the veteran’s suitability for the program and arrange access through the Department’s prior approval process.
2. **Coordinated Veterans Care Program – Ms Daniel**Members noted Ms Daniel’s briefing on the CVC Program which commenced in May 2011 and targets those who have congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease, pneumonia, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or diabetes. Members noted that 5,810 Gold Card holders have enrolled on the CVC Program, with a forecast of 17,000 by June 2014. Ms Daniel also advised that this program is pioneering the use of better management for chronic disease and is receiving good support from medical providers.
3. **Booked Car Services – Ms Daniel**Members noted Ms Daniel’s briefing on the Booked Car Scheme tender outcomes, particularly that an increased number of contracted taxi and hire car companies started providing transport services to eligible DVA clients on 1 March 2012. Members were asked to note that DVA has agreed standards of provision with contracted providers who undertake approximately 1 million car trips per year. Whilst DVA is pleased with how the new system is performing, members were requested to notify any issues so that DVA can carefully monitor the quality and performance of services provided and follow up where necessary.
4. **Telemonitoring Trial – Ms Daniel**Members noted with great interest Ms Daniel’s briefing on the In-home Telemonitoring for Veterans Trial, which will enable approximately 300 veterans who arechronically ill to have their health monitored by health professions without leaving their home. Initial locations for the trial will be Toowoomba (QLD); Coffs Harbour (NSW); Mandurah (WA); Armidale (NSW); Geraldton (WA) and Kingston Beach (TAS). It involves telemonitoring equipment being installed in veterans’ homes to measure vital signs (blood pressure, blood glucose etc) and securely transmit the data using the National Broadband Network. The data will be monitored by a practice nurse coordinator and veterans’ GPs. Participating veterans will also have access to video consultations with their GP or practice nurse coordinator. The Chair agreed a dvd on telemonitoring would be shown at the next meeting.

Action Item 15: Viewing of Telemonitoring Trial “clip” at the next ESO Round Table meeting.

1. **Assistance to Younger Widows – MAJGEN Cosson**Members noted MAJGEN Cosson’s briefing, particularly that younger widows have been contacted to see how they are tracking and if they have any special needs. Results have shown that everyone’s needs are quite different, some don’t seek assistance from DVA; and some need additional support such as help with childcare fees to enable return to work or study or assistance to gain driver’s licence/greater independence. The program is not to establish a dependency model but help them get back on track and help their families. Ongoing contact is to be retained without establishing a dependency. The Chair also advised that DVA is speaking to every widow where death occurred in service since 1999, and is looking at how to be innovative for younger veterans and their families.

Mr Wright said the program seemed to be working very well but there was uncertainty because of the ‘trial basis’. Ms Cosson confirmed that service coordinators maintain communication with the widows and they can report back to the Commission; childcare assistance will not just be discontinued but they need to recognise that they cannot rely on it indefinitely; DVA is keen to support or refer to another organisation. All widows are very special, but now there are a lot with young children; fortunately the low numbers enable DVA to manage individually on a case-by-case basis. Mr Wright also complimented the Deputy Commissioners in each State who work closely with families and ESOs.
2. **Support for Wounded, Injured and Ill Program (SWIIP) – MAJGEN Cosson**MAJGEN Fogarty discussed the main outcome that Defence hopes to achieve from SWIIP
ie to integrate a range of activities occurring through DVA and Defence, so that soldiers’ needs are met as well as their families through uniform service delivery. Whilst it is a complex system, Defence want to shield members from the complexities. The intention is to have serving members establishing contact with DVA back at the time of injury. Mr Carmody confirmed that the organisations are trying to build a seamless transition with really good continuity of care with same providers. This is linked to OBAS, in that intention is to reduce the time between the incident and the claim.

Mr Wright asked about the role of Defence Community Organisation. MAJGEN Fogarty confirmed that DCO is just one of the service providers, and through Medical Support Coordinators and members’ Commanding Officers, members’ needs will be met. If complex, the Commanding Officer will facilitate a meeting with the soldier and their family and relevant service providers. The Commanding Officer remains responsible for delivering the Individual’s Care Plan.

MAJGEN Fogarty also discussed Defence’s strategy to extend rehabilitation period out to five years, during which time injured/ill members will be retained and retrained. It is very important that ESOs understand where they can assist and the Defence Information Day will cover in more detail.

MAJGEN Cosson advised that DVA is having discussions with wounded veterans about their experiences with DVA and are learning critical lessons. A Practitioners’ Workshop was also recently held which considered draft Outcomes Reports about lessons learned from returned wounded and ill.

Members also discussed the management of reservists in these frameworks and noted the Deputy Commissioner of Victoria has recently reported on this issue for DVA’s consideration. The biggest challenge is determining what the level of support Defence gives, and educating employers of reservists as to what they need to be looking out for. In conclusion, MAJGEN Kelly advised that this process is looked after as part of OBAS and in the VANS. Anyone who is in client contact will be able to assist with consistent advice about what they can do to engage with DVA.
3. **On Base Advisory Service – MAJGEN Cosson**MAJGEN Cosson said it was very important to get closer to Defence personnel when they sustain their injury or return from service. On Base Advisors are now at 11 locations and have received 1800 enquiries since establishment October 2011, and 1100 this year alone. This has resulted in 133 claims being lodged, and 178 cases being referred to ESOs. MAJGEN Cosson said that connection with the ESO community is really important, and DVA will continue to work with Defence to ensure the Framework is working well.

**Item 15: Other Business**

**Clean Energy Household Assistance Package**

Ms Spiers briefed the ESO Round Table on legislative instruments being tabled in Parliament to allow supplementation to be given to DVA clients as a result of the introduction of the ‘carbon tax’. Ms Spiers outlined the three elements to the assistance package, including a one off lump sum, then fortnightly or quarterly supplementation and top-up in terms of education/advance. Members asked to receive a copy of the Instruments after they have been tabled in Parliament.

Action Item 16: DVA to provide members a copy of the Clean Energy Household Assistance package legislative Instruments once tabled in Parliament.

**Anzac Centenary 2015**

The Chair and Mr Evans discussed with members sensitivities around site limitations for the Anzac Centenary on 25 April 2015 and sought members’ views on participation by the general public as well as specific groups related to DVA and Defence, such as former serving veterans and widows [noting that peacekeeping will also have to be considered]; current serving ADF members, school children/young people, and descendants. Members agreed with the sensitivities involved and acknowledged the need for some form of control to ensure safety and security of visitors. It was noted that early advice to the public would be essential so that people can make arrangements, either to attend the 2015 Anzac Day ceremony at Gallipoli or choose to visit at another equally moving time, given that Australia’s involvement there spanned 25 April to mid December 1915.

**Anzac Cove Roadworks/Erosion**

The Chair briefed members on an Australian government commitment to build a wall along Anzac Cove (2m height x 900m length) to stop erosion and protect the road and battlefields - background information and photographs will be distributed to members.

Action Item 17: DVA to distribute background information and photographs of the Anzac Cove wall.

**Next Meeting**

The Chair advised members that the next meeting would be 8 May 2012 – Budget briefing.

The Chair closed the meeting at 4.20pm.

**Action Items – 22 March 2012**

*(Status updated as at 11.7.12)*

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| **Action Item** | **Agenda Item** | **Subject** | **Action** | **Responsibility** | **Status** |
| **1** | **2** | Minutes and Actions Arising of Previous Meetings:Meeting No. 14, 24 Nov 2011[Action Item 5] | Further to Action Item 5, Meeting No. 14, 24 November 2011, DVA to check and advise the implications of the harmonised OH&S laws for VITA | Ms StevensonMs Cunningham | **Completed**. Response received on 26.4.12 - included in members’ folders. |
| **2** | **2** | Minutes and Actions Arising of Previous Meetings:Meeting No. 16, 24 Jan 2012 (BEST) | Distribute Minutes/Actions Arising of ESO Round Table Meeting No. 16 (BEST), 24 January 2012, to members out of session | Mr FarrellySecretariat | **Completed.** Minutes emailed to members on 29.3.12. |
| **3** | **5** | Compensation Offsetting – Resources for Comment | Members to comment on the Compensation Offsetting communication resources included in Agenda papers by 3-4 April 2012. | MembersMr FarrellyMs StephensonMr Norris | **In Progress**. One comment received from APPVA and emailed to Ms Stephenson on 13.4.12. |
| **4** | **6** | History of Nominal Rolls[xref Item 8 below] | At a future meeting, ESO Round Table to be briefed on the financial costs of establishing a Nominal Roll | Ms DanielMs ConnollyMr Yeomans | **Noted**. To be scheduled on Agenda for Meeting 18 |
| **5** | **8a** | Nominal roll for Malaya Emergency, Operation Crimp and Borneo{xref Item 6 above] | Defence to update ESO Round Table on its approach to Nominal Rolls to be presented at a future meeting of the ESO Round Table | MAJGEN Fogarty | **Noted**. To be scheduled on Agenda for Meeting 18 |
| **6** | **8b** | The Government’s failure to pass on increase to Centrelink payments to eligible secondary students | Distribute DVA’s advice in relation to the effect of Family Tax Benefit (Part a) and DVA’s education scheme payments | Mr FarrellySecretariat | **Completed**. Letters emailed to members on 23.4.12. |
| **7** | **9** | Discussions with Minister SnowdonVietnam Veterans Educations Centre | Distribute list of Vietnam Veterans Education Centre ‘The Wall’ Working Group members to ESO Round Table | Ms CossonSecretariat | **Completed**. List emailed to members on 10.4.12. |
| **8** | **9** | Discussions with Minister SnowdonVietnam Veterans Educations Centre | The VVEC Working Party paper is to be distributed to members. | Secretariat | **Completed**. Paper emailed to members on 10.4.12. |
| **9** | **9** | Discussions with Minister SnowdonVietnam Veterans Educations Centre | Briefing about the VVEC and ‘The Wall’ from BRIG Appleton at the next ESO Round Table meeting | Ms CossonBRIG Appleton | **Completed**. Briefing was provided at Budget Briefing on 8.5.12. |
| **10** | **10** | BEST GrantsDevelopment of Information Pack to potential applicants | Distribute copy to members of 14 March 2012 letter to ESOs/State Commissions | Ms StevensonSecretariat | **Completed**. Letter emailed to members on 13.4.12. |
| **11** | **10** | BEST GrantsBEST Round 14 | Members that have not yet responded, to immediately advise their intention to do so and/or submit their response so that it can be taken into account when finalising the assessment approach | MembersMs Cunningham | **In Progress**. One comment received from APPVA and emailed to Ms Stevenson and Ms Cunningham on 17.4.12. |
| **12** | **12** | Understanding Military Culture | Next meeting of the ESO Round Table to be scheduled to facilitate members’ receiving the “Understanding Military Culture and Veteran Mental Health” training. | Ms CossonMs DottaSecretariat | **Completed**. Military Culture Overview was provided at the Budget Briefing on 8.5.12.Ms Cosson has advised that as the training is designed to be a facilitated discussion, it should not be uploaded onto the web. However, if organisations are interested in a workshop, we suggest they contact the Department. |
| **13** | **13** | Veterans’ Affairs Consultation Framework – Forum UpdatesNational Mental Health Forum | Members to view the YouTube clip ‘Now, After’ at a future meeting. | Secretariat | **Completed**. Members to view clip in August meeting. |
| **14** | **13** | Veterans’ Affairs Consultation Framework – Forum UpdatesEmerging Issues Forum | LTCOL Lewis, Mr Peter King and Ms Daniel to discuss issue around treatments ceased effects  | LTCOL LewisMr KingMs Daniel | Status update received 30.4.12.  |
| **15** | **14** | Departmental Strategic Initiatives/ Outlooksd) Telemonitoring Trial | Viewing of “clip” about Telemonitoring Trial at next ESO Round Table | Ms DanielSecretariat | **Completed**. Telemonitoring Trial update was provided at Budget Briefing on 8.5.12. |
| **16** | **15** | Other BusinessClean Energy Household Assistance Package | DVA to provide a copy of the Clean Energy Household Assistance Package legislative Instruments once tabled in Parliament | Ms Spiers  | **Completed.** The instruments were tabled in House of Representatives on 8.5.12 and in the Senate on 10.5.12. The links to each Instrument were emailed to members on 17.5.12. |
| **17** | **15** | Other Business:Anzac Cove Roadworks/Erosion | DVA to distribute background information and photographs of the construction of the Anzac Cove wall | Mr Evans | **Completed**. Information and photos were emailed to members on 13.5.12. |