



# Operational Working Party July 2025

## Operational Working Party Meeting

The Operational Working Party (OWP) met virtually on Thursday, 10 July 2025.

## DVA Critical Initiatives

### Legislative Reform Transition Process Update

Further to ESORT's decision on 17 June 2025, OWP members noted the intention to focus OWP's work on preparation for, and conduct of, transition to the harmonized legislation arrangements contained in the Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025 on 1 July 2026. OWP members noted consideration of issues relation to compensation and welfare advocacy would be pursued principally through the ESORT Advocacy Working Group, in consultation with the Institute of Veterans' Advocacy.

OWP members noted the update from DVA on legislation reform implementation including:

- commencement of the single review pathway to the Veterans' Review Board on 21 April 2025
- work underway to develop new training modules for the Course in Military Advocacy
- work underway to update and improve access and search capability in the Consolidated Library of Information and Knowledge (CLIK)

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- ICT system enhancements in place (for transport reimbursements) and in preparation
  - communications and engagement planning for veterans, families, advocates and other stakeholders, and
  - consideration of legislation establishing the Defence and Veterans' Services Commission by the Senate.

OWP members undertook to provide feedback to the department on:

- additional necessary training modules
- topics requiring further public education or explanation
- identified mis or dis-information about the new arrangements to facilitate publication of corrections, and
- the preferred approach for engaging OWP members in the CLIK refresh project.

### **Proposed Amendments to GARP M**

Members noted the update on the amendments required to be made to the Guide to Determining Impairment and Compensation 2016 (GARP M) to transition to a harmonised legislation framework under the VETS Act.

In particular, DVA provided a proposal to translate impairments under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988* (DRCA) into a baseline impairment rating, to allow for the assessment of any increases in impairment in relation to claims lodged after 1 July 2026 under the MRCA.

DVA will undertake a period of targeted consultation via various external consultative forums for two weeks, commencing mid-July 2025, to ensure community views are taken into account.

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## **Approach to Presumptive Liability**

Members noted the update on 'Presumptive Liability' under the VETS Act. DVA confirmed the Government has approved the inclusion of current arrangements that are spread across existing legislation and or Commissions policies. These will include more than 100 conditions that will be able to be determined on a presumptive basis, subject to the veteran having a confirmed diagnosis and having rendered service of the relevant type and timeframe and/or having met relevant onset criteria as defined in a legislative instrument.

DVA will include the exploration of additional opportunities for expanding presumptive liability arrangements into its ongoing policy development processes, including the requirement for Government approval. Future additions will be based on evidence, including input from ex-service organizations, Defence, expert bodies, data, and epidemiological analysis. Recommendations will be made considering issues affecting entire cohorts of veterans or instances where there is an unusual prevalence of conditions among Australian Defence Force (ADF) cohorts compared to the general population.

## **Updates provided for Information**

### **Claims Processing Update**

The most recent claims reporting data can be accessed through the DVA Claims Processing Webpage: <https://www.dva.gov.au/claim-processing>, which encompasses all key metrics relating to the claims process.