

### **Australian War Widows Inc**

Australian War Widows Inc believe that the decision of DVA to change the information that is provided in their veteran death reports and to no longer provide partner details or addresses in the monthly death reports has a detrimental affect on grieving war widows and can lead to depression and even suicidality.

Sadly, the information needed to contact the families of both veterans and also now war widows is unavailable. After reading about the Privacy Act and how it relates to DVA it seems that addresses are not classified as sensitive and it quite clearly states that the information of a deceased individual is not regulated by the Privacy Act.

Although DVA has stated that they appreciate the important work ESO's do to support family members at the difficult time of losing a loved one it is imperative that organisations such as Australian War Widows is able to offer support as early as possible to a bereaved widow.

In the Defence Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024 the first three goals support this submission

1. Promote and assist wellbeing
2. Improve mental health and wellbeing through prevention and early intervention
3. Facilitate timely access to quality care and support

It must also be important for veterans to know that when they pass away that their partner is made aware early of the support that is available to them.

Too many war widows in Australia are suffering because ESO's like ours are unable to support them at their greatest time of need.

We would like to see that submissions such as ours make a meaningful addition to the new Defence Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and that at least addresses can be published on the deceased veterans list.