



DVA GENERAL NEWS UPDATE

AIHW Report

- On 29 September, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) released the: Serving and ex-serving ADF members who have served since 1985: suicide monitoring 2001 to 2019 report.
- This is the fourth yearly update to this study.
- This year's update includes a significant expansion of the study population (from 223,000 to 373,500) and will include anyone with a single day of ADF service from 1 January 1985.
- This update reports 1,273 deaths by suicide among all service groups. These are deaths by suicide that occurred between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2019.
- This is an increase in 808 suicides, compared to the 465 reported in 2020. This increase in suicide deaths reported is driven by the introduction of the expanded population.
- It is important to note while the total number of suicide deaths has increased, the rates of suicide between the study populations of previous years remain similar.
- Similarly, the report's findings are consistent with previous years in terms of those groups that are considered more at-risk than the general population, for example those who discharge involuntarily on medical grounds, younger men, early leavers and those not of officer rank.

Preliminary report of the interim National Commissioner

- DVA welcomes the Preliminary Interim Report from the Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention.
- The Interim National Commissioner's report outlines more than 40 recommendations for the Government to consider. These recommendations not only highlight a number of areas where improvement could be made, but also a number of positive outcomes that have been achieved off the back of significant investment in reform and new initiatives by the Government in recent years.
- Dr Boss emphasises the significance of the Veteran Centric Reform Program, the great strides made by Defence and DVA in establishing the Joint Transition Authority and also the incredible benefits we have seen for veterans from the peer support program.
- The report will be considered as part of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.



Afghanistan

- For anyone in the veteran community who served in Afghanistan, know that your service is valued.
- You dismantled terrorism networks, saved lives, improved medical services, built infrastructure, and helped a generation of women and girls get educated.
- The situation in Afghanistan is confronting, and the health and wellbeing of the veteran community is at the forefront of our minds at this time. Our message to all of Australia's veterans and their families is that if you need support, please get in touch with us.
- We thank all Australia's veterans for their service, and thank the families who support them in their service to our nation.

Veterans' Health Week

This year, Veterans' Health Week (VHW) takes place 16–24 October with the theme 'Get Moving' (Physical Activity).

DVA has a list of events to help veterans and their families easily find an event in their local area. To find an event visit www.dva.gov.au/vhw

ATDP governance changes and reaccreditation of the Course in Military Advocacy

- The ATDP remains a collaboration between ESOs and DVA to provide and manage a nationally consistent training program for ESO advocates.
- The dissolution of ATDP's Strategic Governance Board (SGB) and Capability Framework Management Group (CFMG) is complete. Work is continuing with stakeholders to ensure the ATDP is able to continue delivering the program's assessment activities.
- A short-term working group has been formed to finalise the details required to keep ATDP assessment activities running and to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place between the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and volunteer ATDP facilitators and assessors.
- The recruitment, employment/management of advocates and the delivery of advocacy services remain the responsibility of ESOs. This is not affected by the changes to the governance of the ATDP and the increased role of the contracted RTO.
- ATDP's Course in Military Advocacy is overseen by the Australian Skills Quality Association (ASQA), which accredited the program in 2017. ASQA accreditation is for five years and reaccreditation is due in 2022.
- The ATDP is continuing to develop a level 3 wellbeing unit of competency for the Course in Military Advocacy. This will support ESOs and advocates wishing to extend their wellbeing services to veterans and their families.