



MILITARY PERSONNEL DIVISION

Joint Transition Authority 2023-24 Progress Report



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Summary of changes

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Transition

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Verb

The journey of a veteran and their family from an Australian Defence Force service-centred life to a predominantly civilian life.

Acknowledgement of Country

Defence acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands, seas and air in which we live, work and train. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and emerging. We also pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have contributed to the defence of Australia in times of peace and war.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Joint Transition Authority's (JTA) mission is to support Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and families to be better prepared for, and achieve positive outcomes from, their transition journey. The JTA executes this mission through synchronisation, integration, assurance, and the provision of member-facing supports. The JTA is partnered in this mission with the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), and the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC).

The JTA mission aligns to the Defence Corporate Plan,¹ the Defence Interim Workforce Plan² and to the objectives of the 2024 National Defence Strategy.³

To deliver on its mission the JTA leverages whole-of-government collaborations, data analytics, governance arrangements, assurance activities and stakeholder engagement practices to drive evidence-based reform and continuous improvement of the transition system. In Financial Year (FY) 2023-24, the JTA has undertaken policy development, system optimisation and program reforms to support better outcomes for transitioning members and families.

ADF member wellbeing remains foundational to transition policy and program evolution. Underpinned by the 2023 Veteran Transition Strategy, and the shared vision it articulates for best-practice transition outcomes, the JTA's focus on wellbeing has influenced the reforms achieved in 2023-24.

Demand for JTA transition supports remains high, reflecting the mandatory nature of participation in the transition process, and the JTA's individualised approach to transition curriculum design. The JTA continues to innovate across transition systems, programs, stakeholder engagements and communications to improve ADF member and family awareness of, and access to, transition support offerings.

Through collaboration with partner agencies DVA and CSC, and across whole-of-government, the JTA is also positively participating in broader systemic reform throughout the continuum of Commonwealth transition supports.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (Royal Commission) has, since its establishment in 2021, examined *inter alia* transition through both operational and lived-experience testimony and submissions. Defence, and in particular the JTA, has continued its program of work throughout the Royal Commission remaining alert to the stakeholder commentary over the period.

Through collaboration, and its own programs of reform, the JTA has continued to deliver results aligned to the six priorities of the 2023 Veteran Transition Strategy.

¹ 2023-2027 Defence Corporate Plan, August 2023, Performance Measure 4.2 - 'Defence supports Australian Defence Force members and their families by providing access to support services and programs.'

² Defence Interim Workforce Plan 2023-2024, Objective 6 - 'Enhance the synchronisation of transitions throughout the transition ecosystem.'

³ 2024 National Defence Strategy, 35 - 'Defence will continue to drive reform to improve the mental health and wellbeing support for its people, as well as for ADF families who play a vital role in supporting ADF members and veterans.'

2. 2023-24 TRANSITION AT-A-GLANCE

FY 23/24	Permanent	Reserves
By Service		
Navy	1,152	250
Army	3,069	1,497
Air Force	1,173	554
By Transition Mode		
Voluntary	3,289	1,858
Involuntary Medical	1,798	185
Involuntary	307	258
By Rank Group		
Junior Ranks	3,418	1,237
SNCOWOs	963	350
Officers	1,013	714
By Age Group		
17-29	2,393	571
30-49	2,275	989
50+	726	741
By Gender		
Female	1,015	366
Male	4,379	1,935
Total Separated	5,394	2,301

Table 1: Demographic break down of Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel transferring or separating from the ADF

3. ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST THE VETERAN TRANSITION STRATEGY

2023 Veteran Transition Strategy

The 2023 Veteran Transition Strategy (Strategy) was created and published in 2023 and details a shared vision for the veterans' experience, setting six priorities for the transition system to follow through to 2026. The Strategy, launched by the Minister for Defence Personnel on 22 August 2023, provides the guiding vision for inter-agency optimisation of the transition system. The aligned Defence-DVA wellbeing factors underpin the six priorities outlined in the Strategy. These priorities align to the JTA's mission and provide a framework for the purposeful evolution of transition policy and practice.

Priority 1: Veterans and their families prepare and plan early for transition

Transition Preparedness

Transition preparedness is a key driver of positive post-transfer / separation outcomes and can enable an improved transition experience through the early identification of risks and opportunities. Three key factors comprise baseline transition preparedness for ADF members and families:

- the completion of the administrative requirements set out in Defence policy prior to a member's final date of service.
- the need for emotional acceptance of the different way of life that will come with transition (particularly where separation is initiated by Defence).
- the knowledge of, and preparedness to access, support and assistance throughout the transition journey.

The JTA gauges preparedness for transfer / separation through a number of mechanisms that include Chain of Command engagement, Joint Health Command and Defence Rehabilitation reports, individual welfare management, and a member's completion of the Transition Preparedness Questionnaire (TPQ).

The TPQ is a suite of questionnaires circulated to members at or prior to their transfer or separation decision, within the two weeks prior to their final day of service, and six months post-their final day of service.

The TPQs survey a member's circumstances, satisfaction and preparedness for transition by asking a series of questions aligned with the agreed Defence DVA Wellbeing Factors. The insights provided by the TPQ combined with the transition interview sessions conducted enable more effectively targeted interventions to support ADF member and family transition goals and outcomes, delivering an improved overall experience.

In 2024, the TPQ was integrated into the digitised AC853 *Application to Transfer Within or Separate from the ADF* process with responses loaded into JTA's Information Management System (IMS). Assurance mechanisms ensure TPQ responses are used to inform the development of individual Transition Plans. Further reforms, including the potential to integrate with the Defence / DVA Data Sharing and Analytical Solution (DSAS) will occur in 2025.

Transition Preparedness Summary Project

The Transition Preparedness Summary (TPS) uses information from the TPQ to assess a member's transition preparedness against the wellbeing factors. The TPS is intended to provide Commanders and Transition staff with a snapshot of the areas where an ADF member may require support, facilitating informed conversations between the member and their commander and support individual welfare management during the transition process.

User Acceptance Testing concluded in May 2024. With some further system modifications and amendment to the ADF Transition Manual, the TPS is expected to go live in Quarter 1 of 2025.

Digitisation of Transition Business Processes

Digitisation of JTA business processes assists members to access and undertake transition activities. The digitised application to separate / transfer from the ADF (AC853) is now accessible on personal electronic devices giving members more flexibility in managing their transition. The integration of the TPQ into the digitised AC853 also supports earlier transition case creation.

Separation of the DM042 *Medical Transition from the Defence Force CSC Certificate of Capacity* from the Transition Health Examination process is subject of review in order to facilitate the provision of the DM042 to CSC in a timely manner. The DM042 is critical for CSC when assessing medical impairments. DVA can also use the DM042 as evidence in lieu of a medical certificate from a medical officer, general practitioner, or specialist to support the delegate to approve incapacity payments related to DVA accepted conditions.

Priority 2: Veterans and their families are aware of and able to access support appropriate to their needs

ForceNet

ForceNet is a Defence-owned cloud based secure electronic communications platform connecting registered users within secure online communities or groups independent of the Defence Protected Network. ForceNet is available as a web browser and mobile application. Registered users include Defence members and their sponsored families.

Major capability enhancements during the reporting period include support for foreign languages, a new discussion forum capability, complaint system improvements, upgrades to the Army Career Management site, and new static content pages including the *Defence Culture Blueprint* and *Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets* information. Additionally, the Veterans Temporary Employment Register has been included on the ForceNet Home page alongside numerous enhancements to the overall user experience. Registered user count at 30 June 2024 was 91,942 with approximately 1.582 million annual site visits. A number of initiatives underway are expected to increase ForceNet usage as a communications tool in 2025.

JTA Events Published on the External Facing Website

The JTA conducts an annual program of events to support transition awareness and provide a mechanism for incorporating stakeholder feedback into forward planning. ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars (Seminars), and JTA Stakeholder Forums (Forums), are foundational engagement activities that directly target key audience segments. The dates, times, locations and registration process is publicised to command chains internal to Defence, on the web and via social media.

ADF Member and Family Transition Seminar Platform - Virtual

Defence encourages all ADF members to include their family⁴ in their transition journey. Partners and family members are able to attend ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars, which provide access to transition presentations from Defence and other transition eco-system⁵ stakeholders, and to exhibition hall booths. The JTA has leveraged the *EventsAir* platform used by Defence to manage registrations for ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars and to host virtual Seminars. The revised

⁴ Veteran Transition Strategy, 22 August 2023, Appendix C, 30-31 - 'The term (family) in the context of this strategy, refers to the people who have supported a veteran's ADF service, regardless of the time their association with the veteran commenced, and on which the veteran relies to support them in their transition'.

⁵ Ecosystem: Veterans and their families, Defence including the Joint Transition Authority, DVA, CSC, ex-service organisations, veteran support and community groups, research and academic bodies, state, territory and other government agencies, and industry and employers.

registration process has improved reporting and education regarding the value of these forums, and communications to the Chain of Command.

ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars - Civilian Literacy

To further support ADF members and their families' preparedness for transition, in October 2023 the JTA published additional presentation material to support Civilian Literacy. The presentation supports ADF members to understand the differences between service life and civilian life with particular reference to cost comparisons (e.g. medical care, income protection insurance etc.).

ADF Member and Family Transition Guide

The JTA publishes the ADF Member and Family Transition Guide (Guide) annually. It is available to members and families in both hard copy and online and provides information on a range of things to consider during transition, including the available services and supports. The key challenges of managing the Guide are the currency of the information, version control once in circulation, and distribution limitations. The current online version is a PDF flipbook, which presents some functionality and accessibility limitations. In 2024, the JTA commenced development of an ADF Transition App to provide a comprehensive and accessible online information source for members and Veterans (see Section 7 'What's Next for JTA').

Transition Individual Welfare Boards

In late 2023, Defence's Individual Welfare Board policy was amended to incorporate a transition context. Throughout 2024, JTA has developed tools, including the aforementioned Transition Preparedness Summary (TPS) for Command level welfare support. This system, with automation, policy, and processes is expected to be refined throughout 2025.

Priority 3: Families are engaged through transition

Families in Transition

ADF members are encouraged to include their family in their transition journey. Partners and family members are encouraged to attend transition coaching sessions with their ADF member, providing an opportunity to contribute to the development of post-service goals. The introduction of after-hours transition coaching in mid-2023 is now embedded in the transition system, providing additional scope for family participation in the transition process.

During 2023-24, the JTA has supported the development of the Defence and Veteran Family Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan.

Priority 4: Veterans and their families have access to employment, education and skills opportunities

Career Transition Training Support for Employment

The high usage of Career Transition Training continued in 2023-24, validating the decision to expand its usage to include funding for 'meaningful engagement'. Further work to synchronise the use of Career Transition Training and Recognition of Prior Learning is to occur in 2024-25.

Australian Public Service (APS) Employment for Veterans

After consultation, in September 2023 Defence launched the Veterans Temporary Employment Register, supporting ADF members who were yet to secure civilian employment. The purpose of the Register is to provide APS employment to veterans on a non-ongoing basis. This means, in addition to providing employment support to veterans, the APS benefits with the retention of highly valuable skills.

The DVA Veteran Employment Pathway (VetPaths) is an employment pathway for Veterans into the APS that supports ex-ADF members to establish an ongoing and meaningful APS career, while enriching the APS through the unique skills, experience, and perspectives veterans bring. The 2024-25 pathway provides 12 months of targeted support for participants and their families. More information on VetPaths is available via this website- [Continuing to Serve VetPaths – the APS Veteran Employment Pathway | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](#).

Priority 5: Financial wellbeing for veterans and their families

The focus throughout 2023-24 has been to assure financial security post separation for those being medically separated from Defence. Defence has continued to work with DVA to prioritise claims for medically separating personnel. This includes, in the vast majority of cases, delaying a member's separation until DVA has made a determination on at least one claim (for a separating medical condition). A DVA liability accepted claim provides the trigger to consider eligibility for additional DVA benefits.

Defence / CSC Memorandum of Understanding

The inaugural Defence / CSC Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was finalised in June 2024 and includes service provision metrics and standards to establish benchmarks for assurance activities. Through this agreement, the JTA and CSC (along with DVA) will work in partnership to help support veterans and their families. Importantly, key metrics which reflect the processing of claims were agreed, and will be reported quarterly.

Priority 6: Veterans and their families feel supported and recognised

Respect and Recognition

Recognition of a member's ADF service during their transition journey contributes to positive member experiences. The inclusion of 'Respect and Recognition' as an aligned Defence-DVA Wellbeing Factor demonstrates its importance. The JTA is undertaking a comprehensive Respect and Recognition reform comprising five key elements: service medallions, testimonials, certificates of appreciation, post-separation base access and retention of service ID.

Service Medallions. Since 2015, medallions have been used by Navy as a form of recognition for those who have served for more than four years. Leveraging an extant Navy policy and process, after a number of prototypes, Air Force and Army have approved a medallion design for their Service. Pending shipping and distribution, medallions are expected from Quarter 1 2025 for all ADF who have served more than four years. Command chains will have the option to consider awarding a medallion where a member does not meet the eligibility criteria, enabling case-by-case consideration.

Testimonials. The purpose of the testimonial is to provide a summary statement on the character and/or skills of the transitioning member to enable its use as a reference when seeking future employment. The testimonial is two paragraphs in length. The first paragraph provides a values statement wrapped within a Service-specific narrative. The second is an optional short paragraph on the member, written by the member's former Unit. This has been made available for Command teams throughout 2024.

Retention of Service ID. In 2024, the ADF Member and Family Transition Guide was amended to reflect the policy supporting the retention of an ADF Identity Card (also known as a Service ID). The corner of the card is clipped rendering it void for practical purposes. An ADF member's Service ID often holds significant value for a member. Its retention is to support bridging the loss of identity ADF members can experience when leaving the ADF.

4. ADDRESSING THE SHIFTING STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The New Military Personnel Organisation

In accordance with the Defence Strategic Review⁶, the new Military Personnel Organisation (MPO) within Defence People Group was created in July 2023. This established the Defence People Group diarchy consisting of the Chief of Personnel (CPERS) and the Deputy Secretary Defence People Group (DEPPSEC DP).

The MPO mission is *'to provide, manage and prepare ADF personnel in order to enable the integrated force in competition and conflict'* through recruitment, career management, education and development, and the provision of health, wellbeing, capabilities and support services across the ADF workforce.

CPERS in conjunction with DEPPSEC DP is tasked with delivering an integrated Defence People System. CPERS commands the MPO to *'provide, manage and prepare ADF personnel in order to enable the integrated force in competition and conflict.'*

MPO supports the generation of people capability to ensure that the Services and Joint Capabilities Group (JCG) can deliver their mission, and other Groups can deliver the priorities set by Defence. The MPO comprises Military Personnel Division (MPD), Joint Health Command, Joint Support Services Division, Reserve and Cadet Support and the Australian Defence College.

The MPD in conjunction with Services, JCG and VCDF Group, delivers an integrated workforce system, that is optimised to best support our people, and to staff the warfighting domains and enabling capabilities. MPD is led by Head Military Personnel. It brings together Defence Force Recruiting, Navy, Army and Air Force career management and personnel branches, and the Joint Transition Authority.

New Transition Support Services Contract

Following the conclusion of the previous contract for delivery of Transition Support Services, and a procurement process, in Financial Year 2023-24 the JTA contracted a new service-delivery provider.

In accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules, the re-tender of the Transition Support Services contract appeared on AusTender on 20 October 2023. The re-tender sought to procure services to support current and former members of the ADF, and families, to transition from military service to civilian life.

Signed in May 2024 to enable the six-month contract transition period, the new contract has inherent flexibilities that will allow capitalisation of opportunities as the prevailing strategic environment evolves. It will also enable incorporation of the anticipated Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Final Report recommendations.

Stakeholder Engagement

Whilst the creation of the MPO supports synchronisation internal to Defence, the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide highlighted the requirement for increased stakeholder engagement across the entire transition ecosystem that includes the states and territories, ex-Service organisations (ESO), and other government departments. The JTA coordinates an annual program of Stakeholder Forums in key regional areas of Australia. Forum attendees include representatives from

⁶ Ch11 of the [National Defence: Defence Strategic Review](#) recommended 'ADF personnel management should be centralised into a single integrated system that is headed by a Chief of personnel reporting directly to Chief of Defence Force'.

Commonwealth agencies, State and Territory entities, commanders and personnel specialists, and ESOs. The JTA conducted 11 Forums across 2023-24.

Key topics identified at the national level through the Stakeholder Forums include a lack of preserved time for transition activities while still serving, limited understanding of the suite of transition support services on offer, and a need for clearer messaging around state and territory support services. Forum feedback has also identified knowledge gaps around service provision and re-locating between states, and the need to build a shared understanding of the support available for vulnerable / at-risk cohorts (medical and administrative separations).

Identification of program and system risks and opportunities through the Forums supports the JTA's continuous improvement efforts and add to the broader evidence-base for reform.

Throughout 2023-24, JTA staff provided presentations, media articles, information pieces, direct liaison, and social media excerpts addressing a wide-ranging audience. Material was incorporated into Service newspapers, replicated on other organisation websites, printed in ESO publications, and provided at ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars. Presentations were also made to State and Territory based entities and other government committees.

Understanding the Veteran Experience

JTA facilitated *Understanding the Veteran Experience* (UVE) workshops for DVA officials during 2023-24, with support from the single Services. These workshops provided DVA the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of contemporary ADF service through amplifying the voice and lived experience of serving ADF personnel. This provides the DVA workforce with a better understanding of military life that they can incorporate into DVA business processes in a practical and constructive way. A further workshop occurred in July 2023 and Defence and DVA are currently in consultation regarding an on-going program of UVE events.

The OASIS Townsville - Op Navigator

The Australian Government made a \$4.7million election commitment in 2022 for *The Oasis Townsville* to develop 'Op NAVIGATOR', an online tool / smartphone app to assist ADF members to better develop a 'transition life-plan'. Although, as the grant authority, the Department of Industry, Science and Resources manage the grant, Defence have conducted five visits to *The Oasis Townsville* during 2023-24 to support the progress of activities contributing towards app design and development. Defence expects refinement of the application to continue during the development phase.

Additional Support to Involuntarily Separated Personnel

Defence has long acknowledged the requirement to focus transition support to vulnerable cohorts, and this resulted in the development of the Defence Force Transition program in 2017. However, as the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide highlighted there remains a need to focus on involuntarily separating ADF members – members separating for medical, administrative or both reasons. In 2024, the JTA commenced a scoping activity to consider additional support mechanisms for these members. Eight concepts were identified for development. This work has since evolved and is being developed and deployed as part of the Future Transition Operating Model (see Section 7).

5. GOVERNANCE

JTA governance arrangements within the Defence-DVA-CSC partnership, and more broadly across whole-of-government, remain crucial to the delivery of its mission. Through these arrangements, the JTA continues to deliver meaningful reforms, supporting the synchronisation, integration and assurance of transition policy and practice across the Commonwealth. JTA governance arrangements also support effective interface within Defence, and with the Executive and Committee functions of the Australian Parliament.

In 2023-24, the JTA worked closely with its partner agencies through a number of key committees, and through the development and delivery of key projects associated with the Veteran Transition Strategy, and the Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This has included JTA Synchronisation Forums, JTA Steering Groups, the Defence Links Steering Committee and the Joint Transition Oversight Panel led by the Chief of Personnel and the Secretary of DVA, with membership from Defence, DVA, CSC, Services Australia and Department of Health and Aged Care.

A range of continuous improvement projects and operational working groups supplement these structures, with representatives from Defence, DVA and CSC.

Information Management System (IMS) Improvements

The JTA and the single Services use differing information management tools to track and manage transitioning ADF personnel. In 2023-24 JTA commenced the integration of information from across the single Service platforms to enable a common set of data points and, where practical, integration into a single information system. A number of matters have become apparent through assurance activities, therefore additional improvements have also been made to the JTA's Information Management System (IMS). These range from 'complex case flagging' to automated routine reporting of 'open cases'.

The ADF Transition Manual

The ADF Transition Manual (Manual) is a key process and transition administration resource for Commanders and Defence stakeholders supporting ADF members who are transferring or separating from ADF service. In 2024, the Manual was updated to expand upon 'transition readiness' and further guidance on escalation processes throughout the eco-system.

Defence / DVA Memorandum of Understanding

The Defence / DVA Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Defence and DVA in June 2024. The MoU reflects the progression of the Defence and DVA relationship, better supports jointly developed strategies (such as the Defence and Veteran Wellbeing Strategy), and demonstrates an increased emphasis on assurance across the wellbeing continuum.

Review of the supporting Schedules within the MoU is underway with work expected to be complete in Quarter 2 2025.

Redesign of Health Claims Process in CSC

CSC's redesign of its health and claims process has multiple elements, intended to make it easier for customers to engage with CSC. The new process includes proactively engaging with members prior to their transition, providing one-on-one consultations via video or phone, reducing requirements for the completion of forms, providing support to help complete forms where necessary, giving early guidance on medical evidence needed to support applications, and referring members to support services if needed. On boarding, and follow up 'aftercare' services, provide information on member pensions or preserved member journey.

CSC has also enhanced its website for a simplified customer, stakeholder, support person and inter-agency experience. CSC continues to explore ways of simplifying its claims processes as part of 'Business as usual continuous improvement'.

Conflict of Interest / Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets

The introduction of the Defence Amendment (Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets) Bill into the Commonwealth Parliament in September 2023 foreshadowed changes to ADF member accountabilities regarding employment conflicts-of-interest at transition. Following examination by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, the *Defence Amendment (Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets) Act 2024* achieved assent on 8 April 2024. The JTA continues to provide ADF members with information regarding their obligations pursuant to this legislation, and policy-driven conflict-of-interest declaration processes, through transition coaching, the ADF Member and Family Transition Guide, and the ADF Transition website.

6. ASSURANCE AND DATA

During 2023-24, the JTA conducted a focussed series of assurance activities that have supported the evidence base for reform. These activities contribute to a level of confidence within Defence and across whole-of-government that transition systems and programs are fit-for-purpose and operating effectively.

The JTA has established an Assurance Framework that leverages the Veteran Transition Strategy's vision to better align the transition ecosystem, and monitors the compliance of the transition processes and procedures detailed in the ADF Transition Manual and supporting policies.

A critical component of the JTA Assurance Framework is the *Recommendations Register* that facilitates tracking of both internally- and externally-generated recommendations that relate to transition services and member experiences. Monthly reviews include accountable officers providing updates on 'open' recommendations.

There were ten assurance activities under the 2023 Interim Assurance Plan. These activities initially focussed on areas of service delivery within the JTA such as Seminar attendance, completion of Post-Transition Surveys, transition readiness and complex case management.

The 2024 Assurance Framework has broadened the scope of the activities across the wider transition ecosystem and, in accordance with Defence Interim Workforce Plan,⁷ includes combined assurance activities with cross-agency partners. Assurance activities completed during 2024 have concentrated on business procedures and processes associated with the AC853-3 *ADF Application for Transition Activities*, the AF020 *ADF Transition and Civil Recognition - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Candidate Application – Transitioning ADF Personnel*, Transition Preparedness Questionnaire completion rates, and individual case reviews of involuntary separations.

Consultation has commenced with both DVA and CSC to consider the feasibility of further joint inter-agency assurance activities. Development of a Veteran Transition Strategy Evaluation Framework by LaTrobe University (Melbourne), which DVA is sponsoring and the JTA is supporting, will inform feasibility considerations.

The JTA has already undertaken substantial work to develop a set of metrics to support assurance against the Veteran Transition Strategy and the Defence-DVA and Defence-CSC MoUs. A revamped Support Continuum Performance Report, now known as the Transition System Performance Report, will support reporting against the Veteran Transition Strategy deliverables and other joint Defence / DVA strategies.

Defence is working collaboratively with DVA and other key stakeholders across the transition ecosystem to further develop evaluation mechanisms to effectively monitor progress in delivering on the vision proposed in the Strategy, including its broader ambitions, indicators, and strategic objectives. The aligned Defence-DVA Wellbeing Factors will guide these mechanisms and, where possible, will align baseline outcome measures with the measurable key performance indicators in existing strategies across the transition ecosystem.

Data

The JTA continues to evolve data collection and analytics across the transition system to identify trends, assure services are meeting the needs of the transitioning ADF members and families, report performance on an on-going basis, and build an evidence-base for reform.

A complex set of interconnected data sources contribute to JTA reform and strategic planning, and inform system and program design. These include JTA's Information Management System, Transition

⁷ Defence Interim Workforce Plan 2023-2024, Deliverable 6.3 '*Develop an assurance framework with cross-agency partners to initiate combined assurance activities across the transition ecosystem to identify continuous improvement opportunities.*'

Preparedness Questionnaires, the Post-Transition Survey, Transition website analytics and outputs from assurance activities.

The introduction of the JTA Monthly Transition Report in September 2023 provides ongoing surveillance of transition data, assisting the JTA to interrogate factors that influence efficacy, and identify insights, trends and risks.

Regular sharing of transition data across Defence, DVA and CSC means the three agencies are now able to better queue their services by understanding when, where and who is transferring / separating from service.

Defence / DVA Data Sharing and Analytical Solution

Defence and DVA have progressed the Defence / DVA Data Sharing and Analytical Solution (DSAS), which is underpinned by a complementary Wellbeing Framework. The DSAS and Wellbeing Framework aim to reduce lifetime compensation and support costs by providing insights through an evidence-based feedback loop.

The DSAS combines Defence and DVA health, safety and workforce data for serving and ex-serving ADF members to support ADF injury prevention and management, and provide insights into current and future veteran support systems. DSAS will continue to roll out through 2024-25.

A consent management system is required for successful rollout of DSAS. Defence and DVA have achieved in-principle alignment to seek opt-in consent from current serving members for the DSAS, with a longer-term opt-out consent approach pending the realisation of proposed legislative reform.

DVA are continuing to pursue complementary work to link DVA data into the Australian Bureau of Statistics Person Level Integrated Data Asset to enable holistic wellbeing insights regarding Veterans and their families.

Veteran Electronic Information Exchange Data Management Agreement.

The Defence, DVA and CSC Veteran Electronic Information Exchange (VEIE) went live on 23 May 2022, and enables direct two-way flow of personnel record data between the agencies. In 2023-24, a new Data Management Agreement was developed. The updated agreement will place greater emphasis around the assurance of data privacy / consent matters, and will commence in 2024-25. The VEIE encompass:

Early Engagement Model

An automated push of a limited set of ADF human resource, enlistment, separation, and administrative data to DVA to enable the creation of client profiles, the issuing of a Veterans' White Card for free mental health treatment for eligible transitioning members who have not otherwise engaged with DVA, and the Annual Veterans' Health Check. The Early Engagement Model also facilitates civilian GP health assessments.

MyService and Qualifying Service Applications (QS App)

Automated consent-based applications that interface with Defence One to confirm a veteran's personal details and extract a limited set of operational service data, allowing DVA to create client files and confirm 'qualifying service'.

Defence- DVA Electronic Information Exchange (DDEIE)

An automated, consent based system for the exchange of a defined and limited set of Defence One, Work Health and Safety, Health and service history data, between Defence, DVA and CSC for the determination of claims, compensation and provision of support to veterans.

Single Access Mechanism – Request Management System (SAM RMS)

In December 2023, the Defence Single Access Mechanism team, which enables the flow of individual member information between Defence, DVA and the CSC, integrated into the Joint Transition Authority. The SAM RMS is a consent-based, automated request / response system enabling non-digitised and archived records, digitised health records held by Defence, and / or claims requiring a Defence determination, to go to DVA and CSC.

Modernisation of DVA and CSC access to ADF longitudinal health records is being progressed under Joint Project 2060, Phase 4 – the Health Knowledge Management (HKM) System. The initial rollout of HKM (garrison support element) is expected to occur in Quarter 4 of 2024. DVA and CSC's access to the HKM is planned to be via a new portal, scheduled to go live in Quarter 1 of 2025.

Access to ADF Health Records

Manual and e-Portal, consent-based access to the Defence electronic Health System and the Health Knowledge Management (HKM) System. This allows DVA and CSC to access ADF health records for the determination of veteran claims and compensation.

7. WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE JTA

Many program reform activities that commenced in this reporting period will continue into 2024-25, many with delivery and implementation expected over the next 12-18 months. This work is summarised below.

Future Transition Operating Model

Whilst the JTA has achieved policy and *broad* process alignment across Defence over the past three years, there is more that can be done. The complex system, whilst well-meaning in terms of trying to ensure available support, is often confusing for ADF members and their families. This is particularly the case where divisions/units comprise personnel from Navy, Army and Air Force, as single Services can have differing requirements through the transition process.

The development of the Future Transition Operating Model (FTOM) will continue to be a strong focus. The FTOM aims to deliver a single interface across Defence transition supports for the transitioning member. The development of a Service level Agreement articulating clear accountabilities and responsibilities across the Defence transition eco-system is underway. There is a high level of expectation that the three Services, Joint Capabilities Group and the Military Personnel Organisation will agree and sign off prior to the commencement of Phase One of the FTOM.

The FTOM will further consolidate Defence's transition service delivery into the JTA (including functions previously undertaken by single Services), transforming transition centres and introducing additional ADF, APS and contractor staff to provide additional support to members, families, and their Chain of Command. The JTA Transition Support Officer is the primary support for the member and their family through the transition process. The JTA Transition Support Officer also supports the member's Chain of Command to ensure the fulfilment of their responsibilities to support the member's welfare. In essence, a member's Chain of Command retains accountability for member welfare, and the JTA is accountable for all transition preparedness functions. The new operating model will introduce tiered support to ensure that members receive an appropriate level of support based on their individual needs and circumstances.

Implementation of the FTOM is expected to occur in a phased approach over 18 months, with an Organisational Capability Review (OCR) proposed to be undertaken after Phase One implementation. The OCR will seek to validate the proposed organisational structure required for successful implementation.

Individual Transition Plan

The purpose of the individual Transition Plan is to formalise the preparation activities that a member will undertake to be as prepared as possible before starting their civilian way of life. The JTA will update the individual Transition Plan to integrate into the JTA's Information Management System to better align with the Transition Preparedness Questionnaire structure. This will assist to better manage and track the transitioning member's journey towards their transition goals against the aligned Defence-DVA Wellbeing Factors. This activity will support the development of the FTOM, transition preparedness certifications, and changes to the AC853-2 *Transition Clearance* form.

Transition Preparedness Certification

The JTA will establish a 'prepared to transition' certification requirement for every separating / transferring member. The amended AC853-2 *Transition Clearance* form, amended individual Transition Plan, Transition Preparedness Summary, and the integrated Information Management System will all contribute to the certification process. The expectation is that certification will be a two-part process with the Chain of Command certifying a member is prepared for transfer/separation from a welfare perspective, and a JTA representative will certify a member is prepared to transfer/separate from a

transition preparedness perspective. Contingent on resourcing, business process digitisation, and the rollout of the FTOM, the JTA expects implementation in late 2025.

Certificates of Appreciation

The Certificate of Appreciation (introduced 29 September 2024) acknowledges a member's service whilst providing tangible evidence for a projected final cease date of permanent or full-time service. On occasion, veterans ceasing full-time service are required to provide evidence to access civilian supports and/or employment, which is facilitated through the Certificate of Appreciation.

Career Transition Training (CTT) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Through a series of assurance activities and receipt of feedback the JTA has identified a need to refine CTT and RPL to meet the original intent of supporting employment and/or meaningful engagement for transferring/separating members. Qualifications and/or training must be timely and aligned with the transition goals of the member. CTT and RPL must therefore be integrated into the member's individual Transition Plan. Policy and process changes are required to ensure alignment with the abovementioned FTOM, as well as ensuring a needs based and synchronised approach is taken. There is scope to consider increasing the breadth of veteran RPL opportunities offered via Registered Training Organisations, universities, and the states and territories through their TAFEs.

ADF Member and Family Transition Guide App

The development of an App for the ADF Member and Family Transition Guide is intended to increase user engagement and provide a better experience to transitioning members and their families. Consistent with the Veteran Transition Strategy, this approach supports family engagement and increases awareness of supports to assist in preparing for transition.

The Guide App will allow JTA to update information easily and in real-time to ensure that Guide content remains accurate. The App also facilitates a multi-media approach in presenting information appropriate to different adult learning styles.

Pay and Conditions Manual, ADF Transition Manual and the Military Personnel Manual

Through stakeholder engagement, assurance activities and direct feedback, the JTA has identified a number of policy gaps, inconsistencies and/or ambiguity. These range from increasing the entitlement for transition related absences, travel approvals, funding approvals for CTT, accessing housing/removal entitlements and the conduct of Individual Welfare Boards for transition purposes. JTA has identified a dedicated resource to develop, test, and implement the required policy/guidance changes, which aim to support members as they move to a predominantly civilian way of life.

Ex-Serving Member Base Access

Whilst there is provision in place for ex-serving personnel to gain access to the communal areas of a base (red Defence Common Access Card (DCAC)) for up to three years with sponsorship, this has yet to be formally implemented. Implementation must consider the expanding security requirements for bases and the practical capacity for DCAC sponsors to fulfil their accountabilities. More work is required to support DCAC sponsors to meet their accountabilities.

Business Process Improvements

There are a number of business improvement activities underway, scheduled for implementation, or forecast for development. These include: automation and digitisation of processes and forms, the development of singular systems to commence transition administration, amending forms to ensure they are appropriate for reservists as well as permanent serving personnel, assuring completion of transition activities, transition date variations, applications to extend 'retirement age', automation of advice to DVA and CSC, and triaging of escalation activities (eg matters pertaining to transition

extension, housing, removals, DVA and CSC claims etc). Continuous improvement remains core to the JTA.

Training for JTA Staff

To support the JTA's on-going efforts to improve transition systems and programs, a review of the current training continuum for Transition Support Officers is underway. This is in addition to the cultural sensitivity training introduced in November 2023. The review will use case studies to focus on the Transition Preparedness Questionnaire, the aligned Defence-DVA Wellbeing Factors, transition readiness, and complex case identification and escalation.

Transition Preparedness Questionnaire Baseline, Identification of Readiness and Complexity

The JTA's continuous improvement ethos is driving further evolution of the Transition Preparedness Questionnaires. This will be supported by a number of assurance activities to further test the questions, algorithms used, and cut-off scores that are used throughout the transition ecosystem in supporting risk identification and development of Individual Transition Plans.

Transition System Metrics and Evaluation

JTA is supporting a DVA-led LaTrobe University project to provide longitudinal metrics on the transition ecosystem. Structured data collection throughout a member's transition journey will allow Defence and DVA to identify risks and opportunities. Work is also underway, with DVA, to review and update the transition system metrics collected and presented to the Defence Links Steering Committee.

Post Transition Survey

The JTA provides a customer satisfaction survey every three months for two years post transfer / separation. The Post-Transition Survey re-design will encourage improved participation rates, and encourage ex-Serving members to reach back into Defence for support. It will also support transition assurance and reform by reviewing the purpose and structure of the Survey to ensure it aligns with the member and their family needs, and the JTA's future objectives and reporting requirements. In consultation with the Services, the review will seek to develop a contemporary set of questions relating to the member's 'Unit Support' experience, and interrogate the efficacy of the circulation tempo and duration (quarterly for two years). Defence are scoping use of this mechanism to collect ongoing data to allow trend analysis aligned to research undertaken by DVA in 2023 (Online Transition Support Services Survey).