



RCDVS Defence Implementation Program Board Update

Date: 11 September 2025

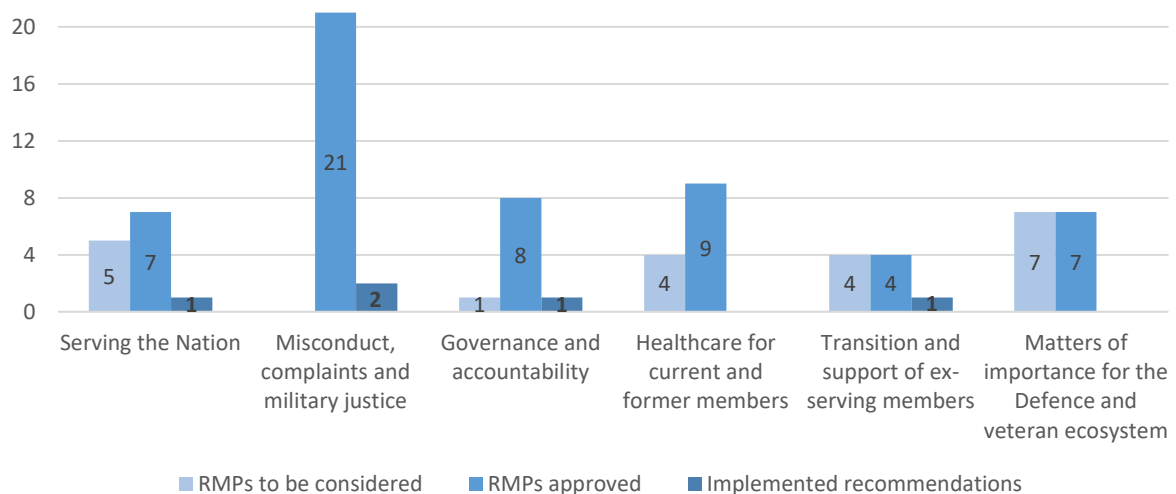
The RCDVS Defence Implementation Program Board (the Board) met on 11 September 2025 to discuss the progress of the RCDVS Defence Implementation Program and consider a number of Reform Management Plans (RMPs). RMPs not approved will be the subject of further planning and consideration based on feedback provided by the Board. Implementation activities for approved RMPs are underway and progress of these activities will be reported to future Program Boards.

Progress on Defence Recommendations

Following the Board there have been 55 RMPs approved with a further 22 RMPs to be considered or reconsidered. Of the 55 approved RMPs, five have been implemented (recommendations 6, 29, 34, 55 & 84).

Each recommendation has been grouped within a thematic framework. The progress of RMPs against this thematic framework is detailed below.

Progress on Defence Recommendations by Theme



Reform Management Plans Considered

Serving the Nation

- Recommendation 5 - Support all serving members to decompress, rest and reintegrate, especially after high-risk experiences - **Not approved**
- Recommendation 6 - Improve the procedural fairness of the military employment classification system - **Approved**

Misconduct, complaints and military justice

- Recommendation 28 - Coordinate governance, assurance and policy functions of the military justice system - **Approved**
- Recommendation 29 - Establish a new role to improve training and communication on conducting inquiries - **Approved**
- Recommendation 32 - When requested, conduct a merits review when a member's service is terminated for the reason 'retention-not-in-service-interest' - **Approved**

Health care for serving and ex-serving members

- Recommendation 61 - Establish a brain injury program – **return to Board with updates.**
- Recommendation 67 - Align Defence's clinical governance framework with the national model framework - **Approved**
- Recommendation 76 - **Not approved**
- Recommendation 77 - **Not approved**

Matters of importance to the whole Defence and veteran ecosystem

- Recommendation 117 - Establish an expert committee on veteran research - **Approved**

Program Board Outcomes

Acknowledgement of Defence members and veterans who have died by suicide

The meeting opened with an acknowledgement of the Defence members and veterans who have died by suicide, including any notifications that have been received since the previous meeting. This acknowledgement reinforces to the members of the Board why the timely and effective implementation of reforms is so important.

Serving the Nation

Recommendation 5 - Support all serving members to decompress, rest and reintegrate, especially after high-risk experiences

Program Board outcome: The Board did **not approve** the RMP for Recommendation 5.

Recommendation 6 - Improve the procedural fairness of the military employment classification system

In response to the RCDVS recommendation to improve the procedural fairness of the military employment classification system an examination of the Military Employment Classification Review Board system was conducted. This review sought to identify ways to improve the transparency of decision-making, and provide greater procedural fairness for ADF personnel throughout the Military Employment Classification process. A series of process changes resulted in the Military Employment Classification – Determination (MEC-D) being implemented in January 2025, this replaced the previous Military Employment Classification Review Board.

The Board considered the policy changes that have taken effect and what additional steps can be taken to ensure the update policy is fully understood and applied correctly. The Board also considered the need to balance a straightforward and efficient separation process for members who 'agree' with the MEC-D and enhanced fairness for members who do not.

The Board discussed the need for further communication to support ADF members to understand the changes implemented.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 6.

Misconduct, complaints and military justice

Recommendation 28 - Coordinate governance, assurance and policy functions of the military justice system

The RCDVS drew attention to a number of weaknesses relating to the governance and assurance of the military justice system (MJS). Defence was aware of these issues and acknowledged them during the hearings. The RCDVS rightly observed that 'there is a human cost to the current invisibility of the effectiveness and efficiency of the military justice system.'

The Board considered the progress made to better understand the issues that face Defence in achieving coordination of the governance, assurance and policy functions associated with

the MJS. The Board considered ongoing work by the MJS Assurance Branch, the Director General Military Justice Assurance and other military justice stakeholders to progress key documents such as the MJS Assurance Framework.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 28.

[Recommendation 29 - Establish a new role to improve training and communication on conducting inquiries](#)

The RCDVS examined the conduct of Fact Finds and Administrative Inquiries within the ADF, and identified significant shortcomings. The RCDVS recommended the establishment of a Joint Workforce Employment Capability Manager (JWECM) to review the effectiveness of training, policy and communications in Fact Finds and Administrative Inquiries.

The Board was advised the ADF Inquiry Officer Manager Directorate was formed in July 2025. The Board considered how this Directorate will engage with Training Authorities to deliver on the intent of Recommendation 29.

The Board noted that ongoing work is required to continue reducing timeframes of inquiries as delays to resolution can increase stress for individuals.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the Reform Management Plan for Recommendation 29.

[Recommendation 32 - When requested, conduct a merits review when a member's service is terminated for the reason 'retention-not-in-service-interest'](#)

This recommendation addresses concerns that the redress process available to ADF personnel who are faced with involuntary separation requires strengthening. It comprises two parts – with Part a dealing with enhancing existing redress of grievance (ROG) processes, and Part b being an assessment of the feasibility and desirability of an external merits review process for involuntary separations.

The Board acknowledged the Reform Management Plan was co-designed with the Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force, the Attorney General's Department and the Royal Commission Implementation Taskforce within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The Board considered how policies relevant to the redress of grievance process can be made clearer and easier to action for affected members.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 32.

Health care for serving and ex-serving members

[Recommendation 61 - Establish a brain injury program](#)

The Board approved a RMP for Recommendation 61 in May 2025 however sought additional information on some elements of the plan.

The Board was advised on the different but complementary approaches being taken by Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to reduce the occurrence and impact of neurocognitive conditions on serving and ex-serving military personnel.

The Board considered the role of the Defence – DVA Brain Injury – Expert Advisory Panel and the role they will play in assisting in the development of a baseline testing program for ADF entrants and a neurocognitive program.

The Board was advised that a literature review was underway to ascertain if previous analysis, which identified no link between antimalarial medications and neuropsychiatric conditions or brain injury, remained accurate.

The Board requested that the RMP be updated to include further details on recommendation scope and return for future consideration.

Program Board outcome: RMP for Recommendation 61 to **return with updates**.

Recommendation 67 - Align Defence's clinical governance framework with the national model framework

The final report of the RCDVS highlighted the importance of enhanced clinical governance, robust quality improvement, performance metrics and partnerships, as key enablers to provide a high quality, effective and resilient health system.

The Board considered how to best align Defence's Clinical Governance to the National Model Clinical Governance Framework (2017), developed by the Australian Commission on Safety Quality and Health Care (ACSQHC).

The Board acknowledged the update to Defence policy in May 2025 that aligned Defence clinical governance with the national model and noted this marked a partial completion of Recommendation 67 and considered the work required to achieve full implementation.

The Board acknowledged that a clinical governance expert has been engaged by Defence and work aligned to this recommendation was underway at the time of the Final report release.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 67.

Recommendation 76 - Develop a postvention framework with experts and those with lived experience of suicide bereavement

Program Board outcome: The Board did **not approve** the RMP for Recommendation 76.

Recommendation 77 - Develop a suite of postvention resources in collaboration with stakeholders

Program Board outcome: The Board did **not approve** the RMP for Recommendation 77.

Matters of importance to the whole Defence and veteran ecosystem

Recommendation 117 - Establish an expert committee on veteran research

The RCDVS Final Report recommended that both Defence and Department of Veterans' Affairs develop and publish research work plans on veteran health and wellbeing (Recommendation 114). Recommendation 117 is required to achieve this. This expert advisory group will utilise the Defence Lived Experience Framework and the Lived Experience Advisory Forum to ensure that the lived experience is being considered safely. The Board discussed the need to include a holistic view of lived experience.

The Board considered the need to establish an expert advisory group on health research in order to effectively create and use the data sets required by Recommendation 106 and 107.

It was noted that Defence and Department of Veterans' Affairs are working closely with Defence on this recommendation.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 117.

Other business

The Board considered items pertaining to its governance functions including update of its Charter.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet representative provided a verbal update on the taskforce's progress in working with Government on recommendation implementation.