



RCDVS Defence Implementation Program Board Update

Date: 14 October 2025

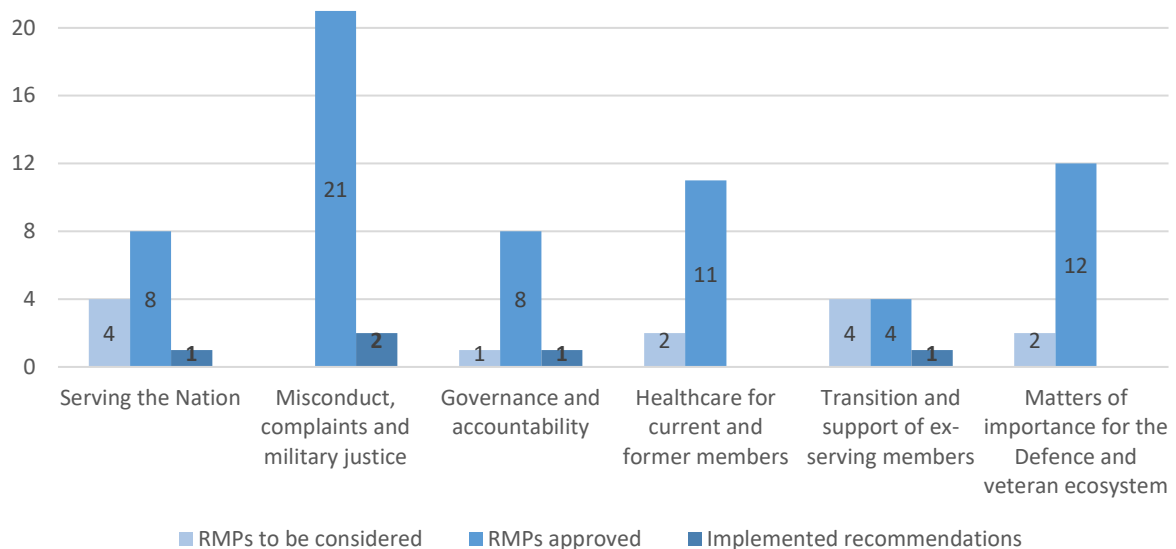
The RCDVS Defence Implementation Program Board (the Board) met on 14 October 2025 to discuss the progress of the RCDVS Defence Implementation Program and consider a number of Reform Management Plans (RMPs). RMPs not approved will be the subject of further planning and consideration based on feedback 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 64 RMPs approved with a further 13 RMPs to be considered or reconsidered. Of the 64 approved RMPs, five have been implemented (recommendations 6, 29, 34, 55 and 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 10 - Develop service-specific action plans to implement the Defence Respect@Work Framework - **Approved**

Governance and accountability

- Recommendation 60 - Improve strategies for harm prevention and early intervention by sharing quality data with Comcare - **Approved**

Health care for serving and ex-serving members

- Recommendation 64 - Establish an enterprise-wide program to monitor and prevent physical and psychological injury - **Approved**
- Recommendation 78 - Prevent, minimise and treat moral injury - **Approved**

Transition and support for ex-serving members

- Recommendation 83 - Increase opportunities for members to gain civilian qualifications from Defence training and education - **Not approved**

Matters of importance to the whole Defence and veteran ecosystem

- Recommendation 110 - Review Defence's data assets and address issues with their quality, management, integration and use - **Approved**
- Recommendation 111 - Achieve a 'gold standard' rating for Defence datasets related to suicidality and suicide - **Approved**
- Recommendation 114 - Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to prioritise research into veteran health and wellbeing, and publish their workplans - **Approved**
- Recommendation 115 - Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to publish their research into veteran health and wellbeing - **Approved**
- Recommendation 121 - Enable research into the health and wellbeing of Defence families - **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 10 - Develop service-specific action plans to implement the Defence Respect@Work Framework

The RCDVS recognised the Respect@Work Framework as an excellent starting point to address many of the cultural challenges in the ADF and that by strengthening protective factors, mitigating risk factors and addressing the underlying cultural drivers of unacceptable behaviour and sexual misconduct, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) will be a stronger, more capable military organisation.

The Board noted that Defence is implementing this recommendation jointly with the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC).

The Board considered how the proposed implementation approach varies from the wording of the recommendation. Consistent with the Government Response, the Respect@Work Action Plans will extend beyond the three Services (Navy, Army and Air Force) and be required for all Groups in Defence.

The Board acknowledged that the initial Service-specific Respect@Work Action Plans would be completed by the end of 2025 and that Action Plans would continue to evolve in 2026.

The Board considered how this work will support improved mental health and wellbeing, a reduction in workplace harassment, implementation of comprehensive wellbeing programs and enhanced reporting of unacceptable behaviour.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 10.

Governance and accountability

Recommendation 60 - Improve strategies for harm prevention and early intervention by sharing quality data with Comcare

The RCDVS Final Report identified issues with Comcare's access to Defence sites and information in order to undertake inspections. The RCDVS indicated that this recommendation would enable Comcare to access relevant psychosocial harm data, not already available through existing regulatory mechanisms and powers, prior to the establishment of the National Veteran's Data Asset (Recommendation 107) for which Comcare are to gain access (Recommendation 58).

The Board noted that Defence is implementing this recommendation jointly with Comcare and acknowledged the interdepartmental engagement occurring.

The Board considered the data aggregation and controls proposed, including that any data and analysis will be provided by Defence prior to the Defence and Comcare Suicide and Self-Harm Working Group Meetings and Defence Liaison Forums. Comcare will consider this information to inform activities such as in relation to Recommendation 57, which requires that Comcare undertake periodic reviews of Defence determinations of service nexus for suspected suicide and attempted suicide.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 60.

Health care for serving and ex-serving members

[Recommendation 64 - Establish an enterprise-wide program to monitor and prevent physical and psychological injury](#)

The RCDVS Final Report identified that Defence has not adequately resourced or prioritised injury surveillance and prevention. The Board acknowledged that effective monitoring and prevention of physical and psychological injury will foster lifelong Defence and veteran wellbeing.

The Board considered how Defence will develop a comprehensive and enduring framework to establish an enterprise-wide injury surveillance and prevention program. The Board considered the work currently underway that will be built upon, including learnings from projects such as the Defence Injury Prevention Program (DIPP) and Data Sharing and Analytics Solution (DSAS).

The Board noted the need to baseline the current state of surveillance and injury prevention systems across Defence and acknowledged this will be used to inform the framework.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 64.

[Recommendation 78 - Prevent, minimise and treat moral injury](#)

The RCDVS Final Report identified Moral Injury as a significant risk factor within the Defence and veteran communities for suicidality, and that implementation of effective strategies to address Moral Injury would likely contribute to the prevention of deaths by suicide.

The Board noted this recommendation is being implemented jointly with the Department of Veterans' Affairs. The Board acknowledged the work currently underway to build a holistic approach to Moral Injury prevention, including current engagement in international research.

The Board considered the lines of effort to implement this recommendation, focussing on education and training, research to support early identification and treatment of Moral Injury and an emphasis on holistic wellbeing.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 78.

Transition and support for ex-serving members

[Recommendation 83 - Increase opportunities for members to gain civilian qualifications from Defence training and education](#)

Program Board outcome: The Board did **not approve** the RMP for Recommendation 83.

Matters of importance to the whole Defence and veteran ecosystem

[Recommendation 110 - Review Defence's data assets and address issues with their quality, management, integration and use](#)

The RCDVS Final Report found Defence's data governance to be ineffective. It recommended change to provide assurance that Defence has appropriate datasets and data management practices in place to inform its suicide prevention efforts and to support the development of a high-quality National Veterans' Data Asset (Recommendation 107).

The Board discussed that Defence will review and update data policy artefacts, incorporating learning from Recommendation 111 activities where relevant, to ensure that appropriate support, governance and assurance is applied to these artefacts and include more tangible guidance in the relevant frameworks.

The Board considered how Defence will drive improvements to Defence's data management practices, targeted toward priority people datasets.

The Board acknowledged this recommendation was noted by Government and may be subject to further advice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Commonwealth Taskforce in their next report.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 110.

[Recommendation 111 - Achieve a 'gold standard' rating for Defence datasets related to suicidality and suicide](#)

The RCDVS Final Report stated that Defence should act immediately to remediate the quality of key suicide, suicidality and self-harm datasets and act to rectify specific data, so that each dataset can be gold rated.

The Board considered how Defence will implement an approach to manage its suicide, self-harm and suicidality datasets in accordance with best practice and seek to set the 'best practice' standard for data management, investigating what measureable processes and controls would be appropriate given the complexity of Defence's datasets.

The Board considered the need to scope and establish a central data asset register for all datasets, and establish a data custodian framework to ensure Enterprise Data Custodians understand their accountabilities and responsibilities.

The Board acknowledged this recommendation was noted by Government and may be subject to further advice from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Commonwealth Taskforce in their next report.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 111.

Recommendation 114 - Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to prioritise research into veteran health and wellbeing, and publish their workplans

The RCDVS Final Report identified a need for Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to provide transparent communication regarding the health and wellbeing research agenda, alongside the outcomes of research undertaken by, or for, Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The Board noted this recommendation is being implemented jointly with the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the plan for both departments to publish a Health and Wellbeing Research Agenda. The Agenda will show research priorities on issues affecting the health and wellbeing of current and ex-serving members and strengthen community trust through transparency, enhanced research effort and utility, and contribute to the prevention of suicide and suicidality.

The Board acknowledged the linkages with other research recommendations, including recommendation 62 - establish a research translation centre for Defence and veteran health care; recommendation 115 - Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to publish their research into veteran health and wellbeing, and recommendation 116 - Improve the quality, evaluation, translation and sharing of research findings.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 114.

Recommendation 115 - Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to publish their research into veteran health and wellbeing

The RCDVS Final Report highlighted that Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs should change their policies on the publication of research findings to make more information publicly available and adopt a publication by default policy to support transparency.

The Board noted this recommendation is being implemented jointly with the Department of Veterans' Affairs and acknowledged the linkages with other research related recommendations.

The Board considered Defence's approach to revise its overarching human research guidance (the Defence Health Research Management System) to include policy to guide the governance of health and wellbeing research. The Board noted work underway to create an externally facing webpage detailing Research Committees and Groups, Research Projects, and Research Publications.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 115.

Recommendation 121 - Enable research into the health and wellbeing of Defence families

The RCDVS identified a need for a program of research specifically focused on understanding the role and influence of families in the lives of current and ex-serving members, and how families can be supported.

The Board acknowledged this is a gap in research and there is no current research that considers the indicators of family readiness for current and ex-serving members.

The Board considered the approach to implement this recommendation, including conducting a literature review of research over the last 10 years to understand wellbeing and risk and protective factors in current and ex-serving families. The Board noted this analysis would be used to provide an evidence-base for further actions to enable the implementation of future funding conducted by Defence, the *Department of Veterans' Affairs*, *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare*, the *Australian Bureau of Statistics*, and the *Australian Institute of Family Studies*.

The Board noted that this recommendation identifies several Departments and agencies as having a role in the implementation of this recommendation. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Taskforce representative agreed to review this recommendation further to consider the whole of government approach.

Program Board outcome: The Board **approved** the RMP for Recommendation 121.

Other business

The Board considered items pertaining to its governance functions including its forward work plan, updates to the Program Governance Framework and consideration of recommendation closure.