

# Defence and Veterans' Service Commission

## Agency Resources and Planned Performance

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# Defence and Veterans' Service Commission

## Section 1: DVSC Overview and Resources

### 1.1 Strategic Direction Statement

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (RCDVS) recommended (Recommendation 122) that a new entity be created to address a gap in the system-wide oversight of the Defence and veteran ecosystem. The RCDVS found:

*"Current oversight mechanisms do not enable system-wide visibility to reveal what is and is not working to reduce rates of suicide and suicidality among serving and ex-serving ADF members. Opportunities are being lost for systemic reforms to prevent suicide and suicidality among this cohort. In the absence of a new entity, oversight will remain fragmented and the impact of interventions may be limited."<sup>1</sup>*

The Defence and Veterans' Service Commission (DVSC) commenced operation on 29 September 2025. The Commissioner and the Commission are separate to, and independent from, all government and non-government entities in the Defence and veteran ecosystem.

In accordance with recommendations from the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee review, the Government prioritised introducing amended legislation to the Parliament in the form of a stand-alone Act that will further clarify and strengthen the independence and transparency of the Commission, including the appointment of the inaugural Commissioner by the Governor General. This Bill was introduced to Parliament on 27 November 2025.

Key functions performed by the Defence and Veterans' Service Commissioner include:

- Monitoring, inquiring into and reporting on matters including:
  - data and trends regarding suicide and suicidality among serving and ex-serving ADF members;
  - systemic factors relating to the Australian Government's administration of policies, programs, systems and practices that contribute to suicide and suicidality among serving and ex-serving ADF members; and
  - the state of the Defence and veteran ecosystem, as it relates to the prevention of suicide and suicidality.
- Oversee, inquire into and report on the Australian Government's implementation of the Government's response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.
- Promoting understanding of suicide risks for Defence members and veterans, and factors that can improve their wellbeing, including through engaging with people with lived experience and promoting that lived experience.

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<sup>1</sup> . Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, Final Report Volume 6, Chapter 30, p. 280.

The Commissioner will also:

- conduct inquiries and advise on matters requested by the Minister; and
- work with coroners to understand issues contributing to Defence and veteran deaths by suicide.

The DVSC will not inquire into or intervene in individual matters, including claims for entitlements, complaints or appeals against another entity. The DVSC does not replace or duplicate the responsibilities or duties of existing agencies. The DVSC is focused on influencing system-level reforms as envisaged by the RCDVS.

In 2025-26 the DVSC will focus on:

- engaging with people who have an interest in, and who can provide insights to inform our future work including ex-service organisations, government entities, people with lived experience and researchers;
- establishing a framework, processes and procedures for monitoring, overseeing and reporting on the implementation of the recommendations made by the RCDVS;
- establishing advisory bodies with a mix of skills, experience and expertise, including people with lived experience of suicide and suicidality, relevant areas of expertise and experience serving in the Defence Force; and
- building staffing, capability, systems and governance.

The DVSC will also undertake an independent inquiry into military sexual violence arising from Recommendation 25 of the RCDVS and in accordance with a request from the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel made under section 110ZFB of the *Defence Act 1903*. The Minister engaged the Australian Human Rights Commission to undertake initial consultation on the terms of reference for the inquiry and asked for the inquiry to commence by mid-2026. Planning and preparation for this inquiry will be a focus in 2025-26.

### **Senior Executive Changes**

- Ms Penny McKay commenced as the Acting Commissioner of the Defence and Veterans' Service Commission on 22 September 2025; and
- Three SES officers are on secondment to the DVSC while merit-based recruitment rounds are completed.

## 1.2 DVSC Resource Statement

**Table 1: DVSC Resource Statement - Budget Estimates for 2025-26 as at Additional Estimates February 2026**

	2024-25 Actual Result \$'000	2025-26 Budget Estimate \$'000 <sup>[a]</sup>	2025-26 Proposed Additional Estimates \$'000	2025-26 Total Estimate at Additional Estimates \$'000
<b>Departmental</b>				
Departmental appropriation	-	7,453	-	7,453
Departmental capital budget	-	1,991	-	1,991
Total departmental annual appropriations	-	9,444	-	<b>9,444</b>
<b>Total departmental resourcing</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,444</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,444</b>
<b>Total resourcing for DVSC</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,444</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,444</b>
				<b>2024-25</b>
<b>Average staffing level (number)</b>				<b>22</b>

**Note**

a. Includes measures published in the Explanatory Memorandum to *the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2025-26 and Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2025-26*.

## Annual Appropriations

**Table 2: Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2025-26**

	2024-25 Actual Result \$'000	2025-26 Budget Estimate \$'000	2025-26 Revised Estimate \$'000	Additional Estimates \$'000	Reduced Estimates \$'000
<b>Departmental programs</b>					
Outcome 1 - Defence and Veterans' Service Commission	-	9,444	9,444	-	-
<b>Total departmental</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,444</b>	<b>9,444</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total administered and departmental</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,444</b>	<b>9,444</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 3: Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 2025-26**

There is no *Appropriation Bill (No. 4)* for the DVSC. The DVSC was established in September 2025.

## 1.3 Budget Measures

### 2025-26 Budget Measures and Other Budget Adjustments

**Table 4: DVSC 2025-26 Measures Since Budget**

	Program	2025-26 Budget Estimate \$'000	2026-27 Forward Estimate \$'000	2027-28 Forward Estimate \$'000	2028-29 Forward Estimate \$'000
<b>Payment measures</b>					
Establishment of the Defence and Veterans' Service Commission <sup>[a]</sup>	1.1				
Departmental payments		9,957	10,393	12,024	12,172
<b>Total</b>		<b>9,957</b>	<b>10,393</b>	<b>12,024</b>	<b>12,172</b>
<b>Total payment measures</b>					
Departmental		9,957	10,393	12,024	12,172
<b>Total</b>		<b>9,957</b>	<b>10,393</b>	<b>12,024</b>	<b>12,172</b>

**Note**

a. Measure relates to an election commitment identified in the 2025 Explanatory Memorandum to the *Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2025-26* and *Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2025-26*.

## Section 2: DVSC Revisions to Outcomes and Planned Performance

### 2.1 Budgeted Expenses and Performance for Outcome 1

**Outcome 1: Improve suicide prevention and wellbeing outcomes for serving Australian Defence Force members and Veterans by providing independent oversight and evidence-based advice to the Australian Government and Parliament, including by monitoring, inquiring and reporting on reforms to systems affecting ADF members and Veterans.**

#### **Outcome 1 Strategy**

The Commission commenced operation on 29 September 2025 and the Corporate Plan for the Commission is yet to be developed.

#### **Linked Programs**

The Commission is an independent oversight agency.

## Outcome Expense Statement

**Table 5: Budgeted Expenses for Outcome 1**

	2024-25 Actual Result	2025-26 Budget Estimate	2026-27 Forward Estimate	2027-28 Forward Estimate	2028-29 Forward Estimate
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Program 1.1: Defence and Veterans' Service Commission</b>					
Departmental expenses	-	-	-	-	-
Departmental appropriation	-	7,453	10,034	11,695	11,843
<b>Departmental total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,453</b>	<b>10,034</b>	<b>11,695</b>	<b>11,843</b>
<b>Total expenses for program 1.1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,453</b>	<b>10,034</b>	<b>11,695</b>	<b>11,843</b>
	2024-25	2025-26			
<b>Average staffing level (number)</b>	-	22			

## Contributions to Outcome 1

### **Program 1.1: Improving suicide prevention and wellbeing outcomes for serving Australian Defence Force members and Veterans.**

The Commission commenced operation on 29 September 2025 and the Corporate Plan for the Commission is yet to be developed.

## Section 3: DVSC Explanatory Tables and Budgeted Financial Statements

Section 3 presents explanatory tables and budgeted financial statements which provide a comprehensive snapshot of DVSC's finances for the 2025-26 budget year, including the impact of budget measures and resourcing on financial statements.

### 3.1 Explanatory Tables

**Table 6: Third Party Payments to and from Other Agencies**

There are no third party payments for DVSC. The DVSC was established in September 2025.

## 3.2 Budgeted Financial Statements

### 3.2.1 Budgeted Financial Statements

**Table 7: Comprehensive Income Statement (showing net cost of services) for the period ended 30 June**

	2024-25 Actual Result \$'000	2025-26 Budget Estimate \$'000	2026-27 Forward Estimate \$'000	2027-28 Forward Estimate \$'000	2028-29 Forward Estimate \$'000
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Employee benefits	-	4,398	5,921	7,277	7,369
Suppliers	-	3,055	4,113	4,418	4,474
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,453</b>	<b>10,034</b>	<b>11,695</b>	<b>11,843</b>
<b>LESS:</b>					
<b>OWN-SOURCE INCOME</b>					
<b>Total own-source income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net (cost of)/contribution by services</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(7,453)</b>	<b>(10,034)</b>	<b>(11,695)</b>	<b>(11,843)</b>
Revenue from Government	-	7,453	10,034	11,695	11,843
<b>Surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Australian Government</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) attributable to the Australian Government</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 8: Budgeted Departmental Balance Sheet (as at 30 June)**

	2024-25 Actual Result \$'000	2025-26 Budget Estimate \$'000	2026-27 Forward Estimate \$'000	2027-28 Forward Estimate \$'000	2028-29 Forward Estimate \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>					
Non-financial assets					
Land and buildings	-	1,145	1,145	1,145	1,145
Intangibles	-	846	1,205	1,534	1,863
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>2,350</b>	<b>2,679</b>	<b>3,008</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>2,350</b>	<b>2,679</b>	<b>3,008</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>2,350</b>	<b>2,679</b>	<b>3,008</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>					
Parent entity interest					
Contributed equity	-	1,991	2,350	2,679	3,008
<b>Total parent entity interest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>2,350</b>	<b>2,679</b>	<b>3,008</b>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>2,350</b>	<b>2,679</b>	<b>3,008</b>

**Table 9: Budgeted Departmental Statement of Cash Flows (for the period ended 30 June)**

	2024-25 Actual Result \$'000	2025-26 Budget Estimate \$'000	2026-27 Forward Estimate \$'000	2027-28 Forward Estimate \$'000	2028-29 Forward Estimate \$'000
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>					
<b>Cash received</b>					
Appropriations	-	7,453	10,034	11,695	11,843
<b>Total cash received</b>	-	<b>7,453</b>	<b>10,034</b>	<b>11,695</b>	<b>11,843</b>
<b>Cash used</b>					
Employees		4,398	5,921	7,277	7,369
Suppliers	-	3,055	4,113	4,418	4,474
<b>Total cash used</b>	-	<b>7,453</b>	<b>10,034</b>	<b>11,695</b>	<b>11,843</b>
<b>Cash used</b>					
Purchase of property, plant, and equipment and intangibles	-	1,991	359	329	329
<b>Total cash used</b>	-	<b>1,991</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>Net cash from/(used by) investing activities</b>	-	(1,991)	(359)	(329)	(329)
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>					
<b>Cash received</b>					
Contributed equity	-	1,991	359	329	329
<b>Total cash received</b>	-	<b>1,991</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>Net cash from/(used by) financing activities</b>	-	<b>1,991</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash held</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	-	-	-	-	-

**Table 10: Departmental Statement of Changes in Equity - Summary of Movement (Budget Year 2025-26)**

	Retained Earnings \$'000	Asset Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000	Contributed Equity/ Capital \$'000	Total Equity \$'000
<b>Opening balance as at 1 July 2025</b>					
of which:					
Attributable to the Australian Government	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Attributable to non-controlling interest</b>					
<b>Transactions with owners</b>					
<b>Contributions by owners</b>					
Departmental Capital Budget (DCB)	-	-	-	1,991	1,991
<b>Sub-total transactions with owners</b>					
<b>Estimated closing balance as at 30 June 2026</b>					
Less: non-controlling interests	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Closing balance attributable to the Australian Government</b>					
	-	-	-	1,991	1,991

**Table 11: Statement of Departmental Asset Movements (Budget Year 2025-26)**

	Asset Category			\$'000
	Buildings	Computer Software and Intangibles	Total	
<b>As at 1 July 2025</b>				
<b>Opening net book balance</b>				-
<b>CAPITAL ASSET ADDITIONS</b>				
Estimated expenditure on new or replacement assets				
By purchase - appropriation equity	1,145	846	1,991	
<b>Total additions</b>	<b>1,145</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>1,991</b>	
<b>As at 30 June 2026</b>				
Gross book value	1,145	846	1,991	
<b>Closing net book balance</b>	<b>1,145</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>1,991</b>	

**Table 12: Departmental Capital Budget Statement (for the period ended 30 June)**

	2024-25 Actual Result \$'000	2025-26 Budget Estimate \$'000	2026-27 Forward Estimate \$'000	2027-28 Forward Estimate \$'000	2028-29 Forward Estimate \$'000
<b>NEW CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS</b>					
Capital budget - Act No. 1 and Bill 3 (DCB)	-	1,991	359	329	329
<b>Total new capital appropriations</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>329</b>
<i>Provided for:</i>					
Purchase of non-financial assets	-	1,991	359	329	329
<b>Total Items</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>PURCHASE OF NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>					
Funded by capital appropriation - DCB	-	1,991	359	329	329
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF CASH USED TO ACQUIRE ASSETS TO ASSET MOVEMENT TABLE</b>					
Total purchases	-	1,991	359	329	329
<b>Total cash used to acquire assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>329</b>

### **3.2.2 Notes to the Financial Statements**

The DVSC was established in September 2025. No budget or financial statements have previously been published.