

**OFFICIAL**



**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES  
DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**RACS MEMBER MEETING MINUTES Tue 12 and 13 Nov 2024**

1. The meeting was conducted at Russell Offices, Canberra.

<b>Attendees</b>		
<i>Members</i>		
1.	The Right Reverend s47F	Chair (ANG)
2.	The Venerable s47F	(Buddhist)
3.	The Reverend s47F	(Pres)
4.	The Reverend s47F	(APCCB)
5.	Rabbi s47F	(Jewry)
6.	s47F	(Sikh)
7.	Monsignor s47F	(RC)
8.	s47F	(Hindu)
9.	The Reverend s47F	(UCA)
10.	Imam s47F	(Islam)
<i>Guests</i>		
11	AIRCDRE Ehlers, BRIG Hayward (1500-1600, 12 Nov)	MoA Reviewers, Joint Support Services Division (JSSD)
<i>Secretariat support</i>		
12.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Staff Officer
13.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Admin Officer
14.	s47E(c)	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.

**ITEMS 1 & 2 – OPENING AND CHAIR WELCOME**

2. The Chair opened the meeting at 0900 and confirmed attendance. Venerable s47F delivered a devotion.

### ITEM 3 – AGENDA AND RACS MEMBER UPDATE

3. The agenda was adopted. RACS members shared individual updates since their last meeting.

### ITEM 4 – CORRESPONDENCE

4. Members acknowledged correspondence as tabled.

### ITEM 5 – MINUTES CONFIRMED

5. It was moved by Monsignor s47F and seconded by Rev'd s47F that the minutes of the RACS Member meeting held on 10 and 12 Sep 24 be confirmed. **CARRIED.**

### ITEM 6 - BUSINESS ARISING FROM RACS PREVIOUS MINUTES

6. The Chair led updates on the items and actions from 10 and 12 Sep 24 minutes:
  - a. Para 6c. Rev'd s47F and Rabbi s47F to review and make suggested changes to the character policy document through ADFCC. Rev'd s47F outlined findings on character and ethics training following his consultations and provided members with a report. Members discussed the scope, role and responsibility of RACS in influencing ethics and character awareness and training in the ADF. It was noted that RACS priority 9 should be reframed as 'monitor and contribute'.

**ACTION:** Rev'd s47F to invite DG CHAP Army at the next RACS and DGs meeting to provide information on the new ethical training that is being delivered at RMC.

**ACTION:** RACS Chair to raise with the CDF how RACS may influence and contribute to ADF ethics and character doctrine.

- b. Para 6d. A RACS Communication subgroup will be formed; members include Imam s47F, Rev'd s47F and Rev'd s47F. Paragraph 7.g of the agenda will cover this item.
  - c. Para 6f. The RACS survey working group will update the draft survey questions based on feedback provided on 10 September 2024 and the Chair will discuss with AVM Gunn. The Chair updated members that AVM Gunn recommended that RACS should work directly with the Spiritual Wellbeing Directorate as owners of the survey.

**ACTION** The Chair will engage the Spiritual Wellbeing Directorate with RACS' survey questions.

- d. Para 7. RACS Members have been allocated as leads for strategic plan priorities and are to provide an update at the 12-13 Nov 24 RACS meeting. Progress recorded in paragraph 9 of these minutes.
- e. Para 12. RACS members are to provide the Chair with any views on relevant Royal Commission recommendations for raising with AVM Gunn. The Chair explained that RACS' views were sent to AVM Gunn who thanked RACS for their contribution. AVN Gunn affirmed that the Government would respond to the Royal Commission in full and has already agreed to recommendation 122 to establish an Oversight Committee. **Ongoing**
- f. Para 12. The Chair to test with AVM Gunn if it would be of assistance to Defence in considering the Royal Commission that RACS prepare an information paper on how faith groups approach moral injury, suicide prevention and suicide postvention. The Chair updated the Committee that AVM Gunn would appreciate a paper.  
**ACTION:** Rev'd s47F will continue developing a paper on moral injury, suicide prevention and suicide postvention for initial presentation at the next meeting after consulting with RACS members to ensure that it represents multi-faith perspectives.
- g. Para 14. RACS members to review their planned travel schedules and provide any updates to s47E(c) by 15 Oct. They are to include Jan – Jun 25 travel.  
**Ongoing**
- h. Para 17. The Secretariat is to facilitate graphic design work on the agreed RACS symbol and share with the Committee for appropriate use. **Completed.**

## **ITEM 7: GENERAL BUSINESS**

7. **RACS Memorandum of Arrangements (MoA).** The MoA Review Team of AIRCDRE Ehlers and BRIG Hayward stated that the review is of the MoA, not of RACS, and would centre on governance, administration and finance. Alignment and support to the National Defence Strategy (NDS) and more broadly how RACS can support capability will be focused on and flowing from that will be finance. The review team noted the importance of data, measuring effectiveness, and succession planning. Some RACS members noted that they are providing more service than Defence is remunerating them for.

8. The reviewers will commence their task early next year with a view to conclude a draft MoA at the end of Q1. In the interim, it was agreed that the incumbent and incoming RACS Chairs will meet the reviewers to develop a 'first cut' draft.

**ACTION:** Chair and Rev'd s47F will engage with the AIRCDRE Ehlers and BRIG Hayward with a view to developing a first draft of an amended MoA for further consult with all Members ahead of the next meeting.

**ACTION:** the Secretariat to provide MoA reviewers with key documents to assist with their work, including the metrics reports, strategic plan, and value proposition.

*Day 1 concluded at 16:30*

*Day 2 (Wed 13 Nov) commenced at 0900.*

9. **Strategic Plan update.**

a. Priority 1: Lead: **all RACS members.** Actively seek to recruit additional high-quality chaplains from diverse backgrounds, particularly women.

All Members reported progress on their recruitment pipeline activities. Discussions covered CPE, security checks and reoccurring issues with the ADF Careers website.

**ACTION:** Rev'd s47F is to make representations to DFR on the need to update their website for faith group accuracy to support efficient and effective recruitment.

b. Priority 2: Lead: **all RACS members.** Targeted geographical and strategic engagements for recruiting and community relationships.

Some members reflected on their specific experiences with local organisations including local faith groups and engagements to create and strengthen community. Others mentioned defence relationships such as Regional Force Surveillance Units and Regional seminars were identified as activities that could be leveraged.

c. Priority 3: Lead: **Rev'd s47F** Strengthen mechanisms for annual positive endorsement of ADF chaplains.

Rev'd s47F discussed the opportunities to better utilise Defence's personal record program (PmKeys) to strengthen processes and reduce the administrative load on chaplains making the annual endorsement of chaplains more efficient.

**ACTION:** Rev'd s47F to engage with the ADFCC to ensure that all endorsement-related information is communicated to RACS with a view to assist them streamline chaplain endorsements.

d. Priority 4: Lead: s47F. Enhance ADF culture by advocating for the celebration of multi-faith events. Covered at para 13 of these minutes.

- e. Priority 5: Lead: **Rabbi** s47F . Improve the consistency of pastoral and spiritual care to chaplains and their families. Ongoing.
- f. Priority 6: Lead: **Right Rev'd** s47F Support DVA in providing lifetime well-being to Veterans.

The Chair updated members that DVA is in the progress of contracting a replacement project officer following s47E(c) retirement.

- g. Priority 7: Leads: **Rev'd** s47F **and Monsignor** s47F . Implement strategies to support chaplains transitioning to civilian life.

Rev'd s47F outlined early suggestions to support chaplains transitioning to civilian life, including RACS contacting the separating member to understand, assist and facilitate specific needs. Additionally, engagement with transitioning members to understand their lived experience was highlighted as important.

**ACTION**: Rev'd s47F and Monsignor s47F to develop action-orientated guidance material for RACS so that they can better support chaplains transitioning to civilian life.

- h. Priority 8: Lead: **Rev'd** s47F Contribute to KLE between ADF command and domestic and operational stakeholders.

Rev'd s47F and the Secretariat reported the slow progress which will be raised at the RACS and DG CHAP meeting of 14 November.

- i. Priority 9: Leads: **Rev'd** s47F **and Rabbi** s47F . Contribute to character and ethics development, particularly to ADFCC.

This item was discussed as recorded at para 6.a of these minutes.

- j. Priority 10: Lead: **Rev'd** s47F Contribute, when asked, to Defence committees that relate to care, well-being and spiritual support.

Rev'd s47F reported that he is identifying and making connections with relevant Committees for RACS attendance commencing CY 2025

- k. Priority 11: Lead: **Rev'd** s47F Upskill RACS members on implications and opportunities around the National Defence Strategy (NDS).

Rev'd s47F encouraged members to familiarise themselves with the executive summary of the NDS and outlined plans to hold a RACS meeting in Townville in mid-2025.

- l. Priority 12: Leads: **Rev'd** s47F **and Monsignor** s47F Develop and implement strategies for supporting the NDS in faith communities in garrison towns nationally.

Monsignor s47F noted early progress, including the s47F attending the Catholic retreat. Rev'd s47F and Chair also shared reflections on preliminary planning considerations for how to empower and utilise faith group communities to support Defence people and their families during times of conflict.

m. Priority 13: Leads: Rev'd s47F and Rev'd s47F Provide appropriate RACS response to the ongoing implications of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

10. The Chair informed the Committee that s47E(c), Senior Chaplain, Army Headquarters had provided RACS with some more detailed analysis of the Royal Commission's recommendations that relate to the scope of RACS' work. Members reflected on the analysis and identified some editorial changes that will be incorporated into the analysis that will be provided to HJSSD.

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**ACTION:** Chair to provide RACS' feedback to s47E(c) regarding his analysis.

**ACTION:** Priority leads are to prepare updates on progress of their respective priorities for presentation at the February 2025 meeting.

12. **RACS Chair Annual Report.** Members considered the Chair's draft annual report and accompanying covering brief for CDF. Following the discussion on the MoA Review, members agreed that it will be useful to include the broad scope of the review in the annual report: administration, finance and governance of RACS. Other editorial feedback was provided to the Chair.

13. **RAAF Credentialling.** DGCHAP-AF James Cox introduced the session by noting the different credentialling practises across the services, that the review into Airforce chaplaincy continues and the fact that when he commenced in the role there were no credentialing benchmarks. His intention is to find the very best candidates to help provide excellent Airforce chaplaincy capability. DGCHAP-AF introduced s47E(c) who presented on the composition of Airforce chaplaincy and the recruitment process. Following the presentation, members engaged DGCHAP-AF and s47E(c) on several recruitment-related matters.

14. **RACS Faith and Religious Events Communication Plan.** Imam s47F spoke to the

plan that was distributed to members prior to the meeting. Members expressed a range of views on the intended audience that they are trying to engage with, the key messages, and the mechanisms to utilise which included the CDF 'message of the day', service newspapers, and DG CHAP bulletins. Members agreed that messaging needed to be relevant to the ADF, brief and accompanied by photographs if service newspapers were to consider publishing their information. Further, material needed to be prepared and provided to the publishers at least two months prior to the significant date. Segmenting the year into quarterly periods to assist with the planning and preparation of material was agreed, as was preparing articles that covered several significant events.

**ACTION:** For publication in January, Venerable s47F is to prepare material for Lunar New Year.

**ACTION:** For publication in March Monsignor s47F and Imam s47F are to prepare an article about Lent and Ramadan respectively.

**ACTION:** For publication in the April – June period; Rabbi s47F and Rev'd s47F to prepare an article about Passover and Easter respectively.

15. **Faith Groups Response to the National Defence Strategy (NDS).** Members exchanged a range of views and ideas on how RACS can ignite contingency planning within the leadership of their faith group for support to the ADF and their friends and families during a time of conflict. During conflict it is likely that most ADF chaplains would be deployed and therefore engaging with community faith group leaders prior to conflict is prudent. A range of ideas were shared.

**ACTION:** Members are to begin engagement with their faith group leaders on conflict contingency planning.

16. **RACS Member Travel.** Members reviewed their forecast travel as outlined in the preparatory information for this meeting and undertook to provide s47E(c) with any additions and amendments. Following an update on the RACS budget, the Chair encouraged members to be circumspect on travel requests and plans. Leveraging travel for multiple activities was encouraged, as is the rationale for RACS to hold one of their 2025 meetings in Townsville.

**ITEM 8 - REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS AND CLOSE**

17. The next meeting will be in Canberra on 25-27 February 2025 (RACS and DGs on 27 February); the second meeting will occur 10-12 June 2025 in Townsville.

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**Right Reverend  
Chair**

**25 Feb 2025**

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**CAPT**

**Secretary**

**25 Feb 2025**



**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES**  
**DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**RACS MEMBER AND DGs MEETING MINUTES 14 NOV 2024**

1. The meeting was conducted at Russell Offices, Canberra.

**ITEM 1 – OPENING**

2. The morning devotion was provided by DGCHAP-N.

<b>Attendees</b>		
<b><i>RACS Members</i></b>		
1.	The Right Reverend s47F	Chair (ANG)
2.	The Venerable s47F	(Buddhist)
3.	The Reverend s47F	(Pres)
4.	Monsignor s47F	(RC)
5.	s47F	(Hindu)
6.	The Reverend s47F	(APCCB)
7.	The Reverend s47F	(UCA)
8.	Rabbi s47F	(Jewry)
9.	s47F	(Sikh)
10.	Imam s47F	(Islam)
<b><i>DG CHAPS</i></b>		
11.	PCHA Andrew Lewis	DGCHAP-N
12.	PRINCHAP Kerry Larwill, CSC	DGCHAP-A, Chair ADFCC
13.	PAC James Cox	DGCHAP-AF
<b><i>Guests</i></b>		
14.	Air Vice Marshal Lara Gunn (1000-1030)	Head Joint Support Services Division (JSSD)
<b><i>Secretariat support</i></b>		
15.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Staff Officer
16.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Admin
17.	s47E(c)	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.

## **ITEM 2 – CHAIR WELCOME**

3. RACS Chair, The Right Rev'd s47F opened the meeting at 0830; he paid tribute to PCHA Andrew Lewis and Venerable s47F who were both attending their last RACS and DG meeting. Members also took the opportunity to thank the Chair for his leadership of the Committee ahead of his tenure concluding on 31 December 2024.

## **ITEMS 3 and 4 –AGENDA AND MINUTES**

4. The agenda as proposed was approved. It was moved by Rev'd s47F and seconded by Rev'd s47F that the minutes of the RACS and DG CHAP meeting held on 11 September 24 were a true and accurate record. **CARRIED.**

## **ITEM 5 - CORRESPONDENCE**

5. All present noted the correspondence as tabled.

## **ITEM 6 – HEAD JOINT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION ADDRESS**

6. Head Joint Support Services Division (HJSSD), Air Vice Marshal Lara Gunn outlined some of the lines of effort underway following the release of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Report which to date has centred on legislative planning and cross-portfolio consultations to ensure recommendations can be actioned by those with the relevant 'levers'. It was noted that the Government is yet to formally respond to the recommendations, except for the oversight committee establishment (accepted), but preparatory work was important to give stakeholders trust and confidence.

7. AVM Gunn indicated that an opportunity exists for Defence Chaplaincy to undertake more targeted international engagements, including strengthening regional two-way visits. Therefore, an international plan consistent with Defence's overarching International Engagement Strategy will be developed by DGCHAPs and will be presented to the International Engagements Committee. Separately, AVM Gunn noted that the increased presence of foreign forces in Australia has triggered multi-faith chaplaincy support requests which are likely to continue as international agreements are struck with countries such as Japan and Singapore and with the implementation of AUKUS.

8. Owing to a busy end to 2024 and senior staff availability, the review of the Memorandum of Arrangements between the Commonwealth and the Faith Group peak Bodies (MoA) by AIRCDRE Ehlers and BRIG Hayward will commence in earnest early next year. Participants noted with AVM Gunn that AIRCDRE Ehlers and BRIG Hayward addressed RACS on 13 November and confirmed the scope of the review will centre on administration, financial and governance arrangements. Bishop s47F and Rev'd s47F (current and

incoming RACS Chair) will separately meet with the AIRCDRE and BRIG prior to the end of the year (4 December 2024) to discuss next steps.

9. Participants engaged HJSSD on the ongoing issues and delays in rectifying inaccuracies and missing information on the Defence Force Recruiting (DFR) website, the work that RACS is starting on how to support the National Defence Strategy (NDS), and Defence's efforts to address family and domestic violence. The Chair agreed to provide HJSSD with a status update on RACS' engagement with DFR on the website issues which are contractor related. Separately, HJSSD reflected that Defence was undertaking mobilisation scenario planning with a range of external stakeholders such as industry and academia. The NDS has unclassified scenarios that RACS may find useful. HJSSD reaffirmed that strategies and plans existed and will be updated to ensure Defence continues to be a leader in addressing family and domestic violence.

10. AVM Gunn thanked the Chair for his leadership and stewardship of RACS, and for engaging with her professionally during a steep learning period as she assumed the role of HJSSD. The Chair reciprocated and thanked HJSSD for her thoughtful engagement and support of chaplaincy.

**ACTION:** AVM Gunn undertook to prepare an explainer for national faith group leaders on the NDS.

**ACTION:** Chair to provide HJSSD with a status update on RACS' engagement with DFR on the website issues which are contractor related.

#### **ITEM 5 - BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS RACS and DGs MINUTES**

11. Business arising from the RACS Members and DGs meeting on 11 September 24:
- a. Para 6d. To establish a reading continuum relevant to ethics and character Monsignor s47F is to provide a foundational publication.  
**ONGOING.** Monsignor s47F updated members on progress.
  - b. Para 6f. DGCHAPs are to liaise with DFR to facilitate amendments to the website. It was noted that some inconsistencies remained.  
**ONGOING.** Rev'd s47F advised that deficiencies remain with the DFR recruitment website. DGCHAPs noted that they had engaged DFR to make changes however action was slow.
  - c. Para 11. DGCHAP-N will share information on Spiritual Care Australia (SCA) to RACS Members. DGCHAP-N provided participants with an update on Navy's relationship with SCA. **COMPLETED.**

- d. Para 16. DGCHAP-AF will provide his Strategic Intent to RACS. **COMPLETED.**
- e. Para 16. RACS (via Rev'd s47F ) will provide DGCHAP-AF with RACS' reflections and feedback on the EP-EBC Directive. **COMPLETED**
- f. Para 16. DGCHAP-AF will share the Air Force Suitability Assessment Form with RACS and the other DG-CHAPS, noting that it is not for wider dissemination.  
**ONGOING**
- g. Para 16. The RACS Secretariat is to organise a time with DGCHAP-AF to facilitate an Air Force chaplaincy credentialing briefing session with RACS. **COMPLETED**
- h. Para 20. RACS will send a letter of support to ADF Chaplains in the context of the Royal Commission. **COMPLETED**
- i. Para 20. RACS to send a letter of thanks to s47E(c) regarding his service progressing the Veterans' Pilot Chaplaincy Program. **COMPLETED**

#### **ITEM 8 - SERVICE AND ADFCC REPORTS**

12. **Navy Report** (enclosure 2). DGCHAP-N provided a brief overview of his report which was taken as read. He noted Navy's approach to supporting Compulsory Retirement Age (CRA) extensions, Maritime Spiritual Wellbeing Officer (MSWO) qualifications, posting plots for 2025, and reported that the Navy Chaplaincy budget phasings had been approved.

13. **Army Report** (enclosure 3). DGCHAP-A took his report as read. Recruitment remains sound but efforts must be maintained to ensure capability over the medium term. Advice on the Chaplain Corps emblem remains with the Chief of Army for decision. DGCHAP-A asked RACS to consider presenting some professional development material at Army Regional Seminars. The Pacific Faith Forum will occur 23-27 March 2025 in Canberra; an invite will follow for RACS to participate. DGCHAP-A noted the end of year functions occurring for Army chaplaincy, including the 111<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner. Army chaplaincy would like to engage with RACS on investigating what training Army chaplaincy could provide to community faith groups, examples include – notifications and how to support community veterans. DGCHAP-A to provide his Strategic Intent to RACS.

**ACTION:** DGCHAP-A to invite RACS members to the March 2025 Pacific Faith Forum.

**ACTION:** RACS to consider presenting some professional development material at Army Regional Seminars.

**ACTION:** DGCHAP-A to circulate the Army Chaplaincy Strategic Intent to RACS.

14. **Air Force Report** (enclosure 4). DGCHAP-AF took his report as read and noted that recruitment remains healthy, work is underway to enhance psychological safety, and addressing the ‘hollowness’ at the O5 level is a priority. He stated that Airforce chaplaincy will be supported by a new branch that has been established which has a “dotted line” to Airforce chaplaincy branch. He stated Canberra and Darwin have the greatest need for reserve chaplains.

15. **ADFCC Report** (enclosure 5). s47F Chair ADFCC summarised his report which was taken as read. Beyond the report, the Australian Bible Society has produced a new ADF Bible and is scheduled to be launched in early 2025 with RACS representation welcomed, and separately, the ADFCC is considering establishing a tri-service working group on international engagement.

**ACTION:** DGCHAP-A to invite RACS members to the launch of the Australian Bible Society-sponsored ADF Bible launch event once dates are confirmed.

#### **ITEM 9 – GENERAL BUSINESS**

16. **Recruiting Priorities Update.** As noted in the DGCHAPs Reports.

17. **Pastoral Care.** Meeting participants shared observations on support for ISTS, domestic violence, the complexity and intensity of chaplain’s work, challenges associated with transitioning to civilian life, mental health, the handling of complaints and disputes, and ongoing issues relating to fulfilling specific religious requirements and traditions in a defence service context. In conclusion, it was also noted by some that a level of weariness is affecting personnel owing to structural changes in response to the NDS.

18. **Women in Chaplaincy report (enclosed).** s47F thanked Venerable s47F for her contributions and separately acknowledged several recent ordinations. She stated that the leadership pipeline for women requires attention in the context of forecasted retirements. Other issues as reflected in the tabled report were discussed including the gender imbalance of RACS and the use of the term ‘padre’. It was proposed that RACS consider sponsoring an Advisor for Women to assist in their work. s47F also reflected on the *Addressing Disparity* paper provided to participants ahead of the meeting; it was acknowledged that the paper was well-researched. The Chair affirmed that women in chaplaincy will be included in his annual report to the CDF.

**ACTION:** In 2025 RACS to consider the merits of securing an Advisor for Women to support the Committee.

19. **Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Final Report.** The Chair outlined the work that RACS is undertaking, including preparing advice for AVM Gunn on how RACS can support various recommendations.

20. **RACS Strategic Plan update.** The Chair updated DGCHAPs on the progress in implementing the Strategic Plan, including plans to hold a RACS meeting in Townsville in mid-2025. Participants exchanged views on chaplain compliance and endorsements.

**ACTION:** RACS Secretariat to send the report regarding RACS KLE to DG CHAPs.

21. **RACS Memorandum of Arrangements.** The Chair outlined some of the key messages from AIRCDRE Ehlers and BRIG Haywards who attended the RACS meeting the day prior (13 November). Members acknowledged their exchanges with HJSSD on this matter earlier in the day.

22. **Operationalising Key Leader Engagement (KLE) protocol.** The Chair noted that progress on developing and operationalising a KLE protocol had been slow and flagged that he would request, via the ADFCC, that s47F HQ JOC attend the next meeting of RACS to provide an update.

**ACTION:** RACS Secretariat to invite s47F, through Chair ADFCC, to attend a RACS meeting to provide an update on KLE.

23. **VCPP Update.** The Chair provided a status update on the Project including that the pilot is due to conclude 30 June 2025. Next steps are a decision for Government.

24. **Confirm AD460s (enclosed).** Details of candidates were presented and acknowledged by all participants.

- a. s47F - Air Force, full time, Buddhist
- b. Reverend s47F - Air Force, part-time, Uniting
- c. Reverend s47F Air Force - Part-time, Uniting
- d. Reverend s47F - Navy, full time, Uniting
- e. Reverend s47F, Army, part-time, Uniting
- f. s47F - Navy, part time, Catholic
- g. s47F - Army, full time, Catholic
- h. s47F – Air Force, full-time, Catholic

- j. s47F - Air Force, part-time, Catholic
- k. Reverend s47F – Army, part-time Anglican
- l. Reverend s47F – Navy, part-time, Anglican
- m. s47F – Navy, full-time Hindu
- n. s47F – Army part-time, ACC

**ITEM 10 - CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS – NEXT MEETING DETAILS**

25. Members confirmed that the next RACS and DGs meeting will take place in person on 27 February, Canberra (RACS will meet 25-26 February). The second meeting will occur 10-12 June, 2025 in Townsville.

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s47F  
Right Reverend  
Chair  
27 Feb 2025

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CAPT  
Admin Officer  
27 Feb 2025

**Enclosures:**

- 1. Navy Service Report
- 2. Army Service Report
- 3. Air Force Service Report
- 4. ADFCC Report
- 5. Women in Chaplaincy report

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**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES  
DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**RACS MEMBER MEETING MINUTES**

**DAY 1 CONDUCTED AT RUSSELL OFFICES ON 25 FEB 2025**

**DAY 2 CONDUCTED AT BRINDABELLA PARK OFFICES ON 26 FEB 2025**

**ITEM 1 – OPENING**

1. RACS Chair, The Reverend s47F [redacted] CSM opened the meeting at 1300. The opening devotion was provided by s47F [redacted]

<b>Attendees</b>		
<i><b>RACS Members</b></i>		
1.	The Reverend s47F [redacted]	Chair (APCCB)
2.	s47F [redacted] The Right Reverend s47F [redacted]	(ANG)
3.	s47F [redacted] The Reverend s47F [redacted]	(Pres)
4.	s47F [redacted] Monsignor s47F [redacted]	(RC)
5.	s47F [redacted]	(Hindu)
6.	s47F [redacted]	(Buddhist)
7.	s47F [redacted] The Reverend s47F [redacted]	(UCA)
8.	s47F [redacted] Rabbi s47F [redacted]	(Jewry)
9.	s47F [redacted] s47F [redacted]	(Sikh)
10.	s47F [redacted] Imam s47F [redacted]	(Islam)
<i><b>Guests</b></i>		
	n/a	
<i><b>Secretariat support</b></i>		
11.	s47E(c) [redacted]	Secretariat, Staff Officer
12.	s47E(c) [redacted]	Secretariat, Admin
13.	s47E(c) [redacted]	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.
<i><b>Apologies</b></i>		
	n/a	

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**ITEM 2 – CHAIR WELCOME AND MEMBER INFORMAL UPDATES**

2. The Chair welcomed s47F (Buddhist) to his first RACS Members meeting. The Chair and members then acknowledged the immediate-past Chair, The Right Reverend s47F, for his leadership of throughout his tenure as RACS Chair.
  - a. The Chair then spoke to his strategic intent for his tenure
  - b. Each member then gave a brief informal update about personal and professional happenings in their spheres of influence.

**ITEM 3 – CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

3. The agenda as circulated was confirmed.

**ITEM 4 – CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4. It was moved by s47F and seconded by s47F that the Minutes of the previous RACS Members meeting held on 12 and 13 Nov 24 were a true and accurate record. **CARRIED.**

**ITEM 5 - CORRESPONDENCE**

5. All present noted the correspondence as tabled.

**ITEM 6 – REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS (Previously Business Arising)**

6. Outstanding Action Items were reviewed and updated (and now consolidated into Action Item Matrix at Enclosure 1).
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-01-01:** Chair to confirm with DGCHAP-A that he will Brief RACS on the new ethical training that is being delivered by RMC (as part of his Service Report at the next RACS meeting).
  - b. **Action Item MBR25-01-02:** Secretariat to provide RACS members with diagram depicting the various Wellbeing Directorates (including associated Defence census agencies) in JHC; DPG and the Services.
  - c. **Action Item MBR25-01-03:** Chair will re-engage the JHC Spiritual Wellbeing Directorate to align comms and the process regarding framing survey questions.
  - d. **Action Item MBR25-01-04:** Secretariat to email members a link to the Repository.
  - e. **Action Item MBR25-01-05:** Secretariat to source /supply new photo of RACS Chair for the RACS DRN internet site (and update details accordingly).
  - f. **Action Item MBR25-01-06:** Chair will re-engage DFR once the new Specialist Recruiter is embedded (and promulgate contact details to RACS Members).
  - g. **Action Item MBR25-01-07:** Chair to engage Chair ADFCC to ensure endorsement-related information is communicated to RACS with a view to streamlining Chaplain endorsements. End state is sameness of CHAPBR processes across the Services (esp. Police check, Professional Supervision, confirm active / suitable, WWCC/WWVP).
  - h. **Action Item MBR25-01-08:** Secretariat confirm publication dates and deadlines for the Service Newspapers and provide that advice to RACS members.

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*Day 1 concluded at 1630 following the formal RACS Photo shoot.*

*(CDF was a late apology due to competing operational needs.)*

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*Day 2 commenced at 0900*

**ITEM 7: GENERAL BUSINESS**

7. **RACS Strategic Plan update.** The Chair facilitated a review and update of Outstanding Action Items (now consolidated into Action Item Matrix at Enclosure 1).
8. **Priority 1: Lead: All RACS members.** *Actively seek to recruit additional high-quality chaplains from diverse backgrounds, particularly women.* Discussions covered barriers to recruitment; targets; waivers; facilitating endorsement of female Chaplains; problematic waiting periods with DFR process; external perceptions regarding how females are treated in Defence; leveraging morning tea events.
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-01-09:** Secretariat to re-issue the Women in Chaplaincy paper (via email) to RACS members.
  - b. **Action Item MBR25-01-10:** Secretariat to engage s47F to confirm dates for recruit-focussed morning tea events (late March in Canberra and in May in Brisbane) – and email details to RACS members.
9. **Priority 2: Lead: all RACS members.** *Target geographical and strategic engagements for recruiting and community relationships.* Discussion highlighted that the DFR Specialist Recruiter is key; travel to sensitive countries might be problematic for candidates; engaging NW Indigenous communities; need to set the bar high for qualifications, faith perspective and experience.
10. **Priority 3: Lead: Chair.** *Strengthen mechanisms for annual positive endorsement of ADF chaplains.* Discussed the need to manage WWCC and WWVP data; importance of professional supervision.
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-01-11:** Chair to engage DGCHAPS/DPG PMKeyS management with a view to capturing WWCC and WWVP checks on PMkeyS.
  - b. **Action Item MBR25-01-12:** Chair to engage Service DGCHAPs regarding their respective approaches to Professional Supervision, and report back at next meeting.
11. **Priority 4: Lead: s47F.** *Enhance ADF culture by advocating for the celebration of multi-faith events.* Discussion included leveraging Service Newspapers; positive experiences with specific religious celebrations and messaging.
12. **Priority 5: Lead: s47F.** *Improve the consistency of pastoral and spiritual care to chaplains and their families.* Discussion focussed on potential improvements; practical strategies; ongoing.

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- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-13:** Members to consider options and practical strategies to improve pastoral and spiritual care to chaplains and their families – and submit ideas to s47F by end April. s47F to consolidate and report back at next meeting.
13. **Priority 6:** Lead: s47F. *Support DVA in providing lifetime well-being to Veterans.* Discussion focussed on leveraging positive relationship with DVA Director Chaplaincy and potential to work collaboratively.
14. **Priority 7:** Lead: s47F. *Implement strategies to support chaplains transitioning to civilian life.* Discussion focussed on the paper written by s47F
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-14:** Secretariat to edit the document drafted by s47F and s47F titled *RACS Member Support to Chaplains Transitioning out of ADF* per RACS discussion at 25-01 Meeting – and email to members for comment (through Chair).
15. **Priority 8:** Lead: Chair. *Contribute to KLE between ADF command and domestic and operational stakeholders.* Discussion centred on recent KLE in Vanuatu; opportunity to provide trauma support for those involved in casualty / fatality rescue; also provision of specialist advice from the Sikh RACS member regarding wearing of jewellery and Sikh symbols in operational service.
16. **Priority 9:** Leads: s47F. *Contribute to character and ethics development, particularly to ADFCC.* Awaiting feedback from Service DGCHAPs.
17. **Priority 10:** Lead: Chair. *Contribute, when asked, to Defence committees that relate to care, well-being and spiritual support.* Ongoing.
18. **Priority 11:** Lead: Chair. *Upskill RACS members on implications and opportunities around the National Defence Strategy (NDS).* Discussion related to the need to have members equipped with the unclassified NDS material to facilitate communication with their respective faith groups; lessons from Ukraine; CNO training. A discussion around unrestricted service led to decision to issue legal advice for clarification.
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-15:** Secretariat to source unclassified NDS summary and email to members.
19. **Priority 12:** Leads: Chair and s47F. *Develop and implement strategies for supporting the NDS in faith communities in garrison towns nationally.* Discussion about using TVL as a model and engage with local Faith Group leaders.
20. **Priority 13:** Leads: s47F and Chair. *Provide appropriate RACS response to the ongoing implications of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.* Discussion centred on the benefits of the RACS Values document; development of a companion document relating to suicidality and the perspectives of Faith Groups.
21. **RACS Response to RCDVS.** The Chair spoke to this issue and invited RACS Members to frame a 300-word Faith Group Response to suicidality and moral injury for inclusion into a draft document titled: *RACS Response to and Support for Suicidality (Prevention, Intervention, Postvention) and Moral Injury in the ADF.*
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-16:** Members to frame and forward to s47F a 300-word Faith Group Response to suicidality and moral injury for inclusion into the document titled: *RACS Response to and Support for Suicidality (Prevention, Intervention, Postvention) and Moral Injury in the ADF.*

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- b. **Action Item MBR25-01-17:** s47F to establish and lead a Working Group on this issue, with support from s47F
- c. **Action Item MBR25-01-18:** Chair to engage CAF and provide him with a copy of the RACS Values Booklet
22. **NDS Contingency Planning.** The Chair opened discussion about what RACS needs to do to prepare their respective Faith Groups. The need for effective community engagement and availability of associated resources such as FAQ was discussed. The need to engage with local councils was discussed – including the use of worship centres in event of a disaster.
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-19** s47F to develop some FAQ relating to NDS Contingency Planning (from the perspective of local Faith Groups).
- b. **Action Item MBR25-01-20:** Members to consider options to have proactive conversations with Faith Group Leaders and community about how to deal sensitively with ADF personnel in their communities, and about contingency planning during a time of conflict.
- c. **Action Item MBR25-01-21:** Secretariat to send emails relating to legal advice concerning the Unrestricted Service Agreement (from Defence Legal) to RACS Chair for review.
- d. **Action Item MBR25-01-22:** Secretariat to coordinate online meeting between Chair, s47F and Defence Legal to discuss NDS Contingency Planning. Chair will report back at next meeting.
23. **RACS Diversity and Inclusion Statement.** s47F spoke to this document and the Chair invited members to comment on the draft. A few small amendments (no change in perspective or style) were discussed and unanimously agreed. The statement is considered to be a useful tool to engage potential Chaplaincy candidates, and potentially as a tool to assist in conflict resolution.
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-23:** Secretariat to amend *RACS Diversity and Inclusion Statement* per 25-01 RACS Meeting discussion and upload onto Repository.
- b. **Action Item MBR25-01-24:** Members to consider invitees to future RACS meetings to ensure appropriate representation for issues under consideration (i.e. female, indigenous, cultural).
- c. **Action Item MBR25-01-25:** Members to suggest special guest speakers (to Chair) for next meeting and beyond.
24. **RACS Budget and Days Allocation.** The Chair flagged his proposed model for budget allocation for current financial year. The Chair agreed to email individual members status of their allocations for travel up until 30 June. Budget allocations for next financial year will be confirmed once finalised budget is received. Chair is providing a brief to AVM Gunn regarding RACS budget model and FY 25/26 RACS resourcing.
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-26:** Chair will forward email to each RACS member detailing travel budget and RACS days allocation.
- b. **Action Item MBR25-01-27:** Chair to engage AVM Gunn re the RACS budget model.

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- c. **Action Item MBR25-01-28:** Members to email Chair with estimated dollar-value of in-kind/own-cost/self-funded RACS-related expenditure.
25. **RACS MOA Update.** The Chair and immediate past Chair briefed members on encouraging discussions with BRIG Hayward and AIRCDRE Ehlers. Another meeting is scheduled in the near future. AVM Gunn has indicated that she wants the MOA completed by end June 2025. Chair committed to keeping RACS members informed of developments.
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-29:** Chair to keep RACS members updated with developments relating to the MOA.
26. **Future RACS Meetings.** The Chair advised that the TVL meeting has been postponed. The 10-12 Jun 25 meeting will be online (3x half days). In person meetings are preferable whenever possible.
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-30:** Secretariat to issue formal calendar invites to RACS members for June online meeting.

**ITEM 8 – OTHER BUSINESS**

27. **ANZAC Way Initiative.** s47F briefed the Committee on this first pilgrimage in Australia for ADF Veterans. Wa o Canberra. Includes visit to AWM. 10-12 days. Walking through Brindabellas. Pilot program to be run 10-24 April 25
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-31:** s47F to email Secretariat a copy of the ANZAC Way initiative (Wagga-Canberra Walk).
- b. **Action Item MBR25-01-32:** Members to consider participants for the ANZAC Way initiative and email suggestions to Secretariat.
28. **Chaplain Field Kits.** The Chair advised that DGCHAP-A has asked all RACS members to consider what Chaplains would require in terms of equipment to run a field service iaw the various faith traditions, and email responses to Chair.
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-33:** Members to consider what your Chaplains would require in terms of equipment to run a field service iaw your faith tradition, and email responses to Chair.
29. **Submissions for Army Chaplaincy Journal.** Committee was requested to consider articles for publication.
- a. **Action Item MBR25-01-34:** Members to consider submissions for the Army Chaplaincy Journal.

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**ITEM 9 - CONFIRMATION OF ACTION ITEMS AND CLOSE**

30. The Chair confirmed Action Items (refer Enclosure 1), thanked members for their participation and advised that the next meetings will be held 10-11 June (RACS Members) and 12 June (RACS Members & DG's). The meeting was closed at 1600.

s22  
s47F  
Reverend  
Chair  
10 Jun 25

s22  
s47E(c)  
WGCDR  
Secretary  
10 Jun 25

**Enclosure:**

1. RACS Members Meeting Action Item Matrix

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**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES  
DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**RACS MEMBER AND DGCHAPs MEETING MINUTES 27 FEB 2025  
CONDUCTED AT BRINDABELLA PARK OFFICES CANBERRA**

**ITEM 1 – OPENING**

1. RACS Chair, The Reverend s47F opened the meeting at 0830. The opening devotion was provided by DGCHAP-N, PCHA Jason Wright.

<b>Attendees</b>		
<b><i>RACS Members</i></b>		
1.	The Reverend s47F, CSM	Chair (APCCB)
2.	s47F The Right Reverend s47F	(ANG)
3.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Pres)
4.	s47F Monsignor s47F	(RC)
5.	s47F	(Hindu)
6.	s47F	(Buddhist)
7.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(UCA)
8.	s47F Rabbi s47F	(Jewry)
9.	s47F	(Sikh)
10.	s47F Imam s47F	(Islam)
<b><i>DG CHAPS</i></b>		
11.	PCHA Jason Wright	DGCHAP-N
12.	PAC James Cox	DGCHAP-AF
<b><i>Guests</i></b>		
13.	AVM Lara Gunn (1000-1030)	Head Joint Support Services Division
<b><i>Secretariat support</i></b>		
14.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Staff Officer
15.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Admin
16.	s47E(c)	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.
<b><i>Apologies</i></b>		
	PRINCHAP Kerry Larwill, CSC	DGCHAP-A, Chair ADFCC
	s47F	Women in Chaplaincy

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**ITEM 2 – CHAIR WELCOME**

2. The Chair welcomed DGCHAP-N PCHA Jason Wright and s47F (Buddhist) to their first RACS meeting. The Chair and RACS members acknowledged the immediate-past Chair, The Right Reverend s47F, for his leadership throughout his tenure as RACS Chair. The Chair noted the apologies from DGCHAP-A and s47F (both attending Army Chaplaincy Leadership synch).

**ITEM 3 – CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

3. The agenda as circulated was confirmed.

**ITEM 4 – CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4. It was moved by s47F and seconded by s47F that the Minutes of the previous RACS and DG CHAP meeting held on 14 Nov 24 were a true and accurate record. **CARRIED.**

**ITEM 5 - CORRESPONDENCE**

5. All present noted the correspondence as tabled.

**ITEM 6 – REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS (Previously Business Arising)**

6. Outstanding Action Items were reviewed and updated (and now consolidated into Action Item Matrix at Enclosure 1).

- a. **Action Item DG25-01-01:** Chair will re-engage DFR once the new Specialist Recruiter is embedded (and provide the contact details to RACS members).
- b. **Action Item DG25-01-02:** DGCHAPs to liaise with DFR to facilitate amendments to the DFR website content to correct inconsistencies with Service-specific information.
- c. **Action Item DG25-01-03** s47F to establish and lead a Working Group to review ethics framework, resources and communication for use by ADCC in a student reading continuum. Report progress at next meeting. Working group comprises s47F
- d. **Action Item DG25-01-04:** Chair to engage DGCHAP-A out of session to discuss potential for RACS members being available to present professional development material at Army Regional seminars.
- e. **Action Item DG25-01-05:** Secretariat to ensure calendar invites are issued to the three DG CHAPs for the next online RACS Meeting (scheduled for 12 Jun).
- f. **Action Item DG25-01-06:** Secretariat to provide clarifying detail to RACS members regarding the 2025 Pacific Faith Forum.

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- g. **Action Item DG25-01-07:** Secretariat to provide clarifying detail to RACS members regarding the 2025 Australian Bible Society-sponsored ADF Bible launch.

**ITEM 7 - SERVICE AND ADFCC REPORTS**

- 7. **Navy Report.** DGCHAP-N tabled and spoke to his Navy Report (refer Enclosure 2).
- 8. **Army Report.** The Chair tabled the Army Report on behalf of DGCHAP-A who was an apology for this meeting (refer Enclosure 3).
  - a. **Action Item DG25-01-08:** Chair to engage DGCHAP-A and request he provides RACS with dates and locations for the forecast Army Regional Seminars.
- 9. **Air Force Report.** DGCHAP-AF tabled and spoke to his Air Force Report (refer Enclosure 4).
  - a. **Action Item DG25-01-09:** DGCHAP-AF to share the Air Force Suitability Assessment Form with RACS members and the other DGCHAPs (noting his request that it is not for wider dissemination).
- 10. **ADFCC Report.** The Chair tabled the ADFCC Report on behalf of DGCHAP-A who was an apology for this meeting (refer Enclosure 5). The Chair thanked ADFCC members for their work.
  - a. **Action Item DG25-01-10:** Secretariat to provide copies of CHAPPOL and the Confidentiality Enabling Support Product to RACS members.

**ITEM 8 – AVM GUNN ADDRESS TO RACS**

- 11. AVM Gunn thanked the RACS members for their ongoing contribution and spoke to some of the pressures that are being experienced by the ADF workforce (NDS and RCDVS contexts). She linked this with an appreciation of the effect on the workload of our ADF chaplains (particularly in field and operational contexts). The AVM also commented on budgetary pressures that are being brought to bear as the government manages the need to reposition geographically and manage new platforms. A general positivity in morale across the ADF workforce was noted.
  - a. **Action Item DG25-01-11:** Chair to engage AVM Gunn to source a copy of the UNCLASSIFIED NDS Mobilisation / Explainer.
  - b. **Action Item DG25-01-12:** Subsequent discussion centred on the value of AVM Gunn's engagement. Chair to engage AVM Gunn to pass on RACS appreciation for her high-value presentation and to thank her for taking the time to engage in this way.

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**ITEM 8 – GENERAL BUSINESS**

12. **Recruiting Priorities Update.** DGCHAP-N advised that he would like to recruit another Islamic Chaplain and he is actively welcoming other faiths. DGCHAP-N reported that NSW and WA are the current focus. DGCHAP-AF advised that ESL and WAG are priority areas for Air Force Chaplaincy.

a. **Action Item DG25-01-13:** Chair to engage DGCHAP-A and request he provides RACS with information on Army Chaplain recruiting priorities for the Reserves.

13. **Pastoral Care.** The Chair raised concerns (not related to Defence or the ADF) regarding acts of intimidation and hatred towards faith communities within communities. The Chair also spoke about a general perception that Chaplains are feeling valued and was encouraged by CA's definition of "Strong Soldier" includes a spiritual dimension. DGCHAP-N spoke about the high number of personnel that are serving "married separated" (i.e. unaccompanied) and asked that all be aware of the strain that this causes in the workforce. DGCHAP-AF spoke about the good work that is being done across Air Force and the Department to raise the awareness of psychological safety – which has been well received.

14. **Women in Chaplaincy Report.** <sup>s47</sup><sub>F</sub> tabled the Women in Chaplaincy Report (refer Enclosure 6) in lieu of <sup>s47F</sup> (who was an apology for this meeting). There was discussion regarding the need to ensure appropriate female voice in the RACS committee. The Chair asked <sup>s47</sup><sub>F</sub> to pass on to <sup>s47F</sup> RACS appreciation for her leadership and work in this domain.

a. **Action Item DG25-01-14:** RACS members to provide detail requested by <sup>s47F</sup> in the Retreat Table in her Women in Chaplaincy Report (refer Enclosure 6).

b. **Action Item DG25-01-15:** <sup>s47</sup><sub>F</sub> to engage <sup>s47F</sup> and express RACS appreciation for her leadership and work in the Women in Chaplaincy domain.

15. **Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.** The Chair briefly spoke to the work that RACS is undertaking, including preparing advice for AVM Gunn on how RACS can support various recommendations. DGCHAP-AF suggested that Chaplains could be better equipped to deal with people who have been affected by sexual abuse (in particular how they handle the issue at point of disclosure). <sup>s47</sup><sub>F</sub> recommended a book by Tim Hein titled *Understanding Sexual Abuse*.

a. **Action Item DG25-01-16:** Secretariat to email RACS members details of the book by Tim Hein titled *Understanding Sexual Abuse*.

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b. **Action Item DG25-01-17:** Secretariat to identify a Joint Transition Authority officer to brief RACS members on mechanisms for transition from ADF employment and related issues of which Chaplains should be aware.

16. **Operationalising Key Leader Engagement (KLE) protocol.** s47E(c) tabled his HQJOC Key Religious Leader and Community Engagement Report (refer Enclosure 7) and delivered a presentation to RACS, providing an update on KLE. He advised that Chaplaincy is now an invitee to the JOC planning process (because individual planners have had positive experience with Chaplains during previous planning and/or on operational deployments). The Chair thanked s47E(c) for his presentation and his work at JOC.

17. **Veterans' Chaplaincy Pilot Program Update.** s47F tabled and spoke to his Veterans' Chaplaincy Pilot Program Report (refer Enclosure 8). The pilot program has been deemed a success so the title of the ongoing program will be called the VCP (Veterans' Chaplaincy Program). s47F asked about gender diversity in the s47F responded that it is currently comprised of four males, but he is currently considering linking the VCP with the DVA Women's' Veteran Strategy. The Chair proposed the establishment of a Working Group to develop a simple multi-faith endorsement process. **All agreed.**

a. **Action Item DG25-01-18:** s47F to establish a Working Group (led by s47F and supported by s47F, s47F to develop a simple multi-faith endorsement process and report progress at next meeting.

b. **Action Item DG25-01-19:** Secretariat to send a calendar invite to s47F to attend next RACS Members Committee meeting.

18. **Confirm AD460s.** Details of candidates were presented as follows:

- a. s47E(c) – Army, part-time, CC
- b. s47E(c) - Navy, full time, Uniting
- c. s47E(c) Air Force, full-time, Uniting
- d. s47E(c) Air Force, full-time, Uniting

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**ITEM 10 – CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS AND CLOSE**

19. The Chair confirmed Action Items (refer Enclosure 1), thanked members for their participation throughout the day and advised that the next RACS Member and DGCHAPs meeting will be held **online on 12 June 25**. The meeting was closed at 1430.

s22  
s47F  
Reverend  
Chair  
12 Jun 25

s22  
s47E(c)  
WGCDR  
Secretary  
12 Jun 25

**Enclosures:**

1. RACS Member and DGCHAP Meeting - Action Item Matrix
2. Navy Service Report
3. Army Service Report
4. Air Force Service Report
5. ADFCC Report
6. Women in Chaplaincy Report
7. HQJOC Key Religious Leader and Community Engagement Report
8. Veterans' Chaplaincy Program.

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**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES  
DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**MINUTES OF RACS MEMBERS MEETING 25-02**

**DAY 1: CONDUCTED ON-LINE 10 JUN 2025 FROM 0900 – 1300 HOURS**

**DAY 2: CONDUCTED ON-LINE 11 JUN 2025 FROM 0900 – 1300 HOURS**

**ITEM 1 – OPENING**

1. RACS Chair, The Reverend s47F opened the meeting at 0900. The opening devotion was provided by The Right Reverend s47F (on servant leadership).

<b>Attendees</b>		
<i><b>RACS Members</b></i>		
1.	The Reverend s47F	Chair (APCCB)
2.	s47F The Right Reverend s47F	(ANG)
3.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Pres)
4.	s47F Monsignor s47F	(RC)
5.	s47F s47F	(Hindu)
6.	s47F s47F	(Buddhist)
7.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(UCA)
8.	s47F Rabbi s47F	(Jewry)
9.	s47F s47F	(Sikh)
10	s47F Imam s47F	(Islam)
<i><b>Guests</b></i>		
11.	PCHA Jason Wright	DGCHAP-N
12.	AIRCDRE Kaarin Kooij	DG JTA
<i><b>Secretariat support</b></i>		
13.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Staff Officer
14.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Admin
15.	s47E(c)	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.
<i><b>Apologies</b></i>		
	n/a	

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**ITEM 2 – CHAIR WELCOME AND MEMBER INFORMAL UPDATES**

2. The Chair welcomed RACS members to the meeting.
  - a. Each member then gave a brief informal update about personal and professional happenings in their spheres of influence.

**ITEM 3 – CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

3. The agenda as circulated was confirmed.

**ITEM 4 – CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4. It was moved by <sup>s4</sup><sub>7F</sub> and seconded by <sup>s4</sup><sub>7F</sub> that the Minutes of the previous RACS Members meeting held 25 and 26 Feb 25 were a true and accurate record. **CARRIED.**

**ITEM 5 - CORRESPONDENCE**

5. All RACS members present noted the correspondence as tabled.

**ITEM 6 – REVIEW AND UPDATE OF ACTION ITEMS**

6. Chair facilitated a review of all outstanding Action Items. The bulk of outstanding Action Items from previous Minutes were verified as completed (with six Action Items carried over: MBR25-01-03; MBR25-01-11; MBR25-01-12; MBR25-01-20; MBR25-01-24; MBR25-01-34;). New Action Items arising from this discussion follow:
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-02-01: Engage DG DFR.** Chair to engage DG DFR about opportunities to better leverage RACS, and invite DG DFR to deliver a presentation at a future RACS meeting.
  - b. **Action Item MBR25-02-02: Align the Service approaches to professional supervision.** Chair to engage the respective DGCHAPs with a view to providing RACS members with a consolidated document that details their respective approaches to professional supervision (e.g. Reservist access; frequency; funding; record keeping of compliance; etc.). This Action Item flowed out of MBR25-01-11.
  - c. **Action Item MBR25-02-03: Caring for Chaplains document.** Chair to load <sup>s47F</sup> document (titled *Caring for Chaplains*) in RACS Repository.
  - d. **Action Item MBR25-02-04: Understanding Suicide Paper.** Members to review and provide comment to Secretariat on <sup>s47F</sup> paper titled “*Advancing an Understanding of Defence and Veteran Suicide*” and recommend options on how to best make use of it in a Defence context (e.g. <sup>s47F</sup> suggested engaging the Spiritual Wellbeing Directorate). Due date: 15 Jul 25.
  - e. **Action Item MBR25-02-05: Understanding Suicide Paper.** Chair to engage AVM Gunn about the potential benefits of integrating the “*Advancing an Understanding of Defence and Veteran Suicide*” and other RACS publications into the Defence response to the RCDVS – and report her view back to RACS. Due date: 15 Aug 25.
  - f. **Action Item MBR25-02-06: Review FAQ relating to NDS Contingency Planning.** Members to review <sup>s47F</sup> draft FAQ relating to NDS Contingency Planning (produced per MBR25-01-19) and provide feedback to new WG comprising: <sup>s47F</sup> and <sup>s4</sup><sub>7F</sub> – by end July 2025. Secretariat to post draft FAQ into Repository.

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**ITEM 7: GENERAL BUSINESS**

7. **Navy Report.** DGCHAP-N submitted an apology for the RACS Members and DGCHAP meeting scheduled for 12 Jun 25, however he did table and speak to his Navy Report at this RACS Members Meeting on 10 Jun 25.
8. **RACS Strategic Plan 24/25 Review.** Chair facilitated a discussion on the extant RACS Strategic Plan – including a summary of encouraging progress against the priorities.
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-02-07:** Chair to re-engage with DPG with a view to encouraging inclusion of Jewish dates into the next production of the (2027) Defence diary.
9. **RACS Resources for FY 25/26.** Chair briefed RACS members about his engagement with AVM Gunn, including requested budget versus approved budget. Chair continues to lobby for allocation of days commensurate with the time required to fulfil the additional responsibilities of Chair (i.e. over and above routine RACS member responsibilities).
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-02-08:** Chair to email ASAP all RACS members with an individual summary of how the RACS allocated budget will be distributed to members for next FY (i.e. to clarify individual day allocation and travel allowance for FY commencing 1 July 2025.).
10. **RACS Endorsement of ADF Chaplains.** Chair outlined the requirements of all RACS members to provide positive endorsement of all serving Chaplains under their care. A detailed template will be provided and will be populated from information gathered from the DGs in regards to WWCC and Police Checks, Professional Pastoral Supervision and professional development. This endorsement will be due at the end of August 2025.
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-02-09:** Members to provide positive endorsement of their Chaplains by end August 2025.

*Day 1 concluded at 1300.*

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*Day 2 commenced at 0900.*

11. **RACS Strategic Plan for FY 25/26.** Chair facilitated a discussion on the draft update to the RACS Strategic Plan for FY 25/26. RACS members achieved consensus on the new draft - with four (4) updated Objectives and eleven (11) updated Priorities.
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-02-10:** Chair to consolidate the agreed edits into the draft RACS Strategic Plan for FY 25/26, publish into the Repository, and circulate the updated draft to RACS members for out-of-session comment.
  - b. **Action Item MBR25-02-11:** Members to engage with appropriate stakeholders in their spheres of influence regarding Objective 1 of the RACS Strategic Plan – in particular to clarify the context of “*families*”. Feedback to be provided to Chair by 15 July.
  - c. **Action Item MBR25-02-12:** Linking to RACS Strategic Plan Objective 3, establish a WG to initially explore stakeholder expectations and map requirements. (WG to be led by Chair and include s47F ).

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12. **Update on RACS MOA Review.** Chair advised that stakeholder engagement regarding the MOA Review is still in train. Expectation is that Chair & s47<sup>F</sup> will have another meeting with the star-ranked reviewing officers in July (date TBC). The Review will likely be finalised in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2025.

- a. **Action Item MBR25-02-13:** Chair to update members on outcomes of the July engagement with the reviewing officers at the next RACS member meeting.

13. **Update on Army Regional Seminar.** Chair encouraged RACS members to participate in the Army Regional Seminars whenever possible. Chair advised that he has been asked to present a 2-hour session on “*Grief, Loss and Trauma – in Military contexts*” to all Regional Seminars (in his capacity as SME, not as a RACS member, with Army to cover associated costs).

- a. **Action Item MBR25-02-14:** Secretariat to email RACS members with the dates and locations of the Army Regional Seminars.

**ITEM 8 – OTHER BUSINESS**

14. **Presentation on Chaplaincy aspects and support mechanisms from DG Joint Transition Authority (JTA).** A comprehensive presentation was delivered to RAC members by AIRCDRE Kaarin Kooij (DG JTA) with a primary focus on Chaplaincy aspects and support mechanisms – followed by a roundtable Q&A. The Chair thanked AIRCDRE Kooij for her presentation and taking time out from her busy schedule to engage in this manner.

- a. **Action Item MBR25-02-15:** Chair will consolidate further questions from RACS members and email to DG JTA for response.

15. **Presentation - Chaplain Lived Experience.** Army s47E(c) delivered a candid presentation to RACS members about her journey to becoming an Army Chaplain. (*Key messages from the presentation: I feel that Army is one of the most culturally safe places that I have experienced. Support from female Chaplain during the recruitment and assimilation stages was invaluable. I have confidence in the ADF mechanisms to resolve problems. I feel valued in my new Chaplain role. It's good to raise concerns with Army early – so you give them a chance to plan. Never underestimate the power of cake!*)

16. **Review & Refresh “Faith and Belief – A Guide to Religious Practice in the ADF.”** Chair invited members to review the 2021 version of the Guide as posted into the Repository – a WG was established comprising s47F. Chair moved that RACS members accept the proposed amendment from s47E(c) (refer pp 30-31 of meeting pack).  
**CARRIED.**

- a. **Action Item MBR25-02-16:** Members to review *Faith and Belief – A Guide to Religious Practice in the ADF* to identify if updates are needed – and submit proposed updates by email to the WG by 15 July.

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**ITEM 9 - CONFIRMATION OF ACTION ITEMS AND CLOSE**

17. The Chair confirmed Action Items (refer Enclosure 1), thanked members for their participation and confirmed that the next two meetings will be held as follows:

- a. In person (Canberra) on 15-16 Sep 2025; and
- b. Virtual (online) on 3-4 Dec 2025.

18. The meeting was closed at 1300 hours.

s22  
s47F  
Reverend  
Chair  
15 Sep 25

s22  
s47E(c)  
WGCDR  
Secretary  
15 Sep 25

**Enclosure:**

- 1. RACS Members 25-2 Meeting Action Item Matrix

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ENCLOSURE 1 TO:  
MINUTES OF RACS MEMBERS 25-02 MEETING  
HELD 10-11 JUN 25

**RACS MEMBERS 25-02 MEETING - ACTION ITEM MATRIX**

Action Item #	Responsible	Task	Status	Due
MBR25-01-03	Chair	Chair will re-engage the JHC Spiritual Wellbeing Directorate to align comms and the process regarding framing survey questions.	Ongoing	Next meeting
MBR25-01-11	Chair	Chair to engage DGCHAPS/DPG PMKeyS management with a view to capturing WWCC and WWVP checks on PMkeyS	Ongoing	Next Meeting
MBR25-01-12	Chair	Chair to engage Service DGCHAPs regarding their respective approaches to Professional Supervision, and report back at next meeting.	Ongoing	Next Meeting
MBR25-01-20	All	Members to consider options to have proactive conversations with Faith Group Leaders and community about how to deal sensitively with ADF personnel in their communities, and about contingency planning during a time of conflict.	Ongoing	Next meeting
MBR25-01-24	All	Members to consider invitees to future RACS meetings to ensure appropriate representation for issues under consideration (i.e. female, indigenous, cultural).	Ongoing	Ongoing
MBR25-01-34	All	Members to consider submissions for the Army Chaplaincy Journal	Ongoing	Next Meeting
MBR25-02-01	Chair	<b>Confirm data of Chaplains deployed.</b> Arising from discussion of correspondence tabled, s47 F requested data re Chaplain deployments from JOC. Chair to follow-up with JOC (i.e. with s47F ).		
MBR25-02-02	Chair	<b>Confirm DFR Specialist Recruiter Contacts.</b> Chair to confirm contact details of new DFR Specialist Recruiter and provide those details to RACS members.		
MBR25-02-03	Chair	<b>Engage DG DFR.</b> Chair to engage DG DFR about opportunities to better leverage RACS, and invite DG DFR to deliver a presentation at a future RACS meeting.		

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MBR25-02-04	Chair	<b><u>Align the Service approaches to professional supervision</u></b> . Chair to engage the respective DGCHAPs with a view to providing RACS members with a consolidated document that details their respective approaches to professional supervision (e.g. Reservist access; frequency; funding; record keeping of compliance; etc.).		
MBR25-02-05	Chair	<b><u>Caring for Chaplains document</u></b> . Chair to publish s47F document (Caring for Chaplains) and make available in RACS Repository		
MBR25-02-06	Chair	<b><u>Understanding Suicide Paper</u></b> . Members to review and provide comment to Secretariat on s47F paper titled “ <i>Advancing an Understanding of Defence and Veteran Suicide</i> ” and recommend options on how to best make use of it in a Defence context (e.g. s47F suggested engaging the Spiritual Wellbeing Directorate).		
MBR25-02-07	Chair	<b><u>Understanding Suicide Paper</u></b> . Chair to engage AVM Gunn about the potential benefits of integrating the “ <i>Advancing an Understanding of Defence and Veteran Suicide</i> ” and other RACS publications into the Defence response to the RCDVS – and report her view back to RACS.		
MBR25-02-08	All	<b><u>Review FAQ relating to NDS Contingency Planning</u></b> . Members to review s47F draft FAQ relating to NDS Contingency Planning (produced per MBR25-01-19) and provide feedback to new WG comprising: s47F and s47F – by end July 2025. Secretariat to post draft FAQ into Repository.		
MBR25-02-09	Secretariat	<b><u>Ensure subscription to Army Chaplaincy Journal</u></b> . Secretariat to ensure appropriate subscriptions to Army Chaplaincy Journal and coordinate hardcopy distribution to RACS members at in-person RACS meetings.		
MBR25-02-10	Chair	<b><u>Incorporate key religious dates into Defence Diary</u></b> . Chair to re-engage with DPG with a view top encouraging inclusion of Jewish dates into the next production of the (2027) Defence diary.		
MBR25-02-11	Chair	<b><u>Clarify RACS Member Days and Travel Allocation</u></b> . Chair to email ASAP all RACS members with an individual summary of how the RACS allocated		

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		budget will be distributed to members for next FY (i.e. to clarify individual day allocation and travel allowance for FY commencing 1 July 2025.).		
MBR25-02-12	Chair	<b>Update RACS Strategic Plan.</b> Chair to consolidate the agreed edits into the draft RACS Strategic Plan for FY 25/26, publish into the Repository, and circulate the updated draft to RACS members for out-of-session comment.		
MBR25-02-13	All	<b>Clarify context of “families” per Objective 2.</b> RACS members to engage with appropriate stakeholders in their spheres of influence regarding draft Objective 2 of the RACS Strategic Plan – in particular to clarify the context of “families”. Feedback to be provided to Chair by end July.		
MBR25-02-14	Chair: s47F s47F	<b>Establish RACS Professional Standards and Accreditation Working Group.</b> Linking to RACS Strategic Plan Objective 3, establish a WG to initially explore stakeholder expectations and map requirement (WG to be led by Chair and include s47F ).		
MBR25-02-15	Chair	<b>Keep RACS members updated regarding MOA Review.</b> Chair to update members on outcomes of the July engagement with the reviewing officers at the next RACS member meeting.		
MBR25-02-16	Secretariat	<b>Confirm dates and locations of Army Regional Seminars.</b> Secretariat to email RACS members with the dates and locations of the Army Regional Seminars.		
MBR25-02-17	Chair	<b>Consolidate RACS questions for DG DTA.</b> Chair will consolidate further questions from RACS members and email to DG JTA for response.		
MBR25-02-18	All	<b>Review &amp; Refresh “Faith and Belief – A Guide to Religious Practice in the ADF.”</b> RACS members to review the Guide and identify if updates are needed – and submit proposed updates by email to the WG by 15 July.		

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**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES  
DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**MINUTES OF RACS MEMBERS & DGCHAP 25-02 MEETING**

**CONDUCTED ON-LINE 12 JUN 2025 FROM 0900 – 1300 HOURS**

**ITEM 1 – OPENING**

1. RACS Chair, The Reverend s47F opened the meeting at 0900. The opening devotion was provided by DGCHAP-A, PRINCHAP Kerry Larwill, CSC.

<b>Attendees</b>		
	<b><i>RACS Members</i></b>	
1.	The Reverend s47F	Chair (APCCB)
2.	s47F The Right Reverend s47F	(ANG)
3.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Pres)
4.	s47F Monsignor s47F	(RC)
5.	s47Fs 4	(Hindu)
6.	s47F s47F	(Buddhist)
7.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(UCA)
8.	s47F Rabbi s47F	(Jewry)
9.	s47F s47F	(Sikh)
10.	s47F Imam s47F	(Islam)
	<b><i>DG CHAPS</i></b>	
11.	[KL] PRINCHAP Kerry Larwill, CSC	DGCHAP-A, Chair ADFCC
12.	[SP] AIRCDRE Steve Parsons, CSC, OAM	A/DGCHAP-AF
	<b><i>Guests</i></b>	
13.	s47F	Women in Chaplaincy
14.	s47F	Director Veterans' Chaplaincy, DVA
	<b><i>Secretariat support</i></b>	
15.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Staff Officer
16.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Admin
17.	s47E(c)	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.
	<b><i>Apologies</i></b>	
	PCHA Jason Wright	DGCHAP-N

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**ITEM 2 – CHAIR WELCOME**

2. The Chair welcomed members and in particular welcomed and acknowledged AIRCDRE Steve Parsons CSC, OAM who has been appointed by CAF as A/DGCHAP-AF until further notice.

**ITEM 3 – CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

3. The agenda as circulated was confirmed.

**ITEM 4 – CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4. It was moved by s47 F and seconded by s47 F that the Minutes of the previous RACS Members meeting held 27 Feb 25 were a true and accurate record. **CARRIED.**

**ITEM 5 - CORRESPONDENCE**

5. All present noted the correspondence as tabled.

**ITEM 6 – REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

6. The Chair facilitated a review of outstanding Action Items, with the following Action Items carried over or modified as follows (all other Action Items were verified as completed):

- a. **Action Item DG25-01-02:** Chair to engage DFR to correct inconsistencies with Service-specific information.
- b. **Action Item DG25-01-03:** s47 F, and s47 F to provide s47 F with a draft list of ethics texts from their respective Sikh, Jewish, and Hindu faith groups (to complement the Buddhist, Muslim, Protestant and Catholic texts already provided to the WG). s47 F to provide the full list to the ADF Chaplains College when it is complete.
- c. **Action Item DG25-01-04:** RACS members to engage s47 F with a list of their specific SME skills in order to better tailor RACS messages to the Army Regional Forums (by mid-July).

**ITEM 7 - SERVICE REPORTS AND ADFCC REPORT**

7. **Navy Service Report.** DGCHAP-N submitted an apology for this meeting, however he did table and speak to his Navy Service Report at the RACS Members 25-02 Meeting on 10 Jun 25 (refer Enclosure 2).

8. **Army Service Report.** DGCHAP-A spoke to his Army Service Report (refer Enclosure 3).

9. **Air Force Service Report.** SP tabled and spoke to his Air Force Service Report (refer Enclosure 4). SP then spoke to the future wrt the leadership and direction of the Air Force Chaplaincy capability and fielded questions from RACS members.

- a. **Action Item DG25-02-01:** Chair and s47 F to engage with SP (or his office team) on DGCHAP-AF processes re the identified Sikh candidate.
- b. **Action Item DG25-02-02:** Secretariat to confirm contact details for SP and email those to RACS members.

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10. **ADFCC Report.** DGCHAP-A tabled the ADFCC Report (refer Enclosure 5) and advised that DGCHAP-N has agreed to take on the role of Chair ADFCC. §47 noted that International Engagement was more than just engaging Religious leadership given the intertwining of culture and religion in many of our Pacific neighbours. The RACS Chair thanked DGCHAP-A for his leadership as Chair ADFCC during his tenure and also noted the positive news that several female Chaplains are now being considered for promotion for senior positions.

**ITEM 8 – GENERAL BUSINESS**

11. **Recruiting Priorities Update.** The Chair summarised areas of current focus:

- a. Specifically identifying the need to recruit in the Cairns, Canberra and Darwin areas
- b. Reserve capacity in PER, DAR, Cairns and TVL needs attention
- c. New candidates are coming from ADL, MEL, BRIS and SYD
- d. The need to focus on the north of Australia (consistent with NDS)
- e. Exploring options to leverage Reserve into fulltime Chaplaincy
- f. Some novel options are being explored to facilitate female CHAP recruitment.

12. **Pastoral Care.** The Chair and §47 noted that the Air Force Chaplain group is a focus for RACS pastoral care at the moment. §47 and §47 informed the meeting that their RAAF Chaplains felt cautiously optimistic with the direction set by AIRCDRE Parsons and thanked him for his leadership. §47 noted that there seems to be a weariness among some of the older ADF Chaplains who are close to the end of their career. §47 also noted that we need to do better to acknowledge their service in terms of recognition and closure. §47 also noted that RACS needs to explore options to better support Chaplains who are serving away from their family in a 'married separated' capacity.

13. **Confirm AD460s.** Details of Chaplain candidates were briefly discussed.

- a. **Action Item DG25-02-03:** Members agreed to provide Secretariat with AD 460 ASAP (by end June).

14. **HJSSD Address to RACS.** This presentation was cancelled because AVM Gunn was called away on urgent short-notice matters.

- a. **Action Item DG25-02-04:** Given the high value derived from her first address to RACS at the 25-01 meeting, Chair to engage AVM Gunn, inviting her to reschedule this second address.

15. **Women in Chaplaincy Report.** §47F tabled and spoke to the Women in Chaplaincy Report (refer Enclosure 6). RACS outlined some of the broader discussion and activities relating to the WCWG, and the benefit of keeping the WCWG apprised of those matters, as appropriate.

16. **Veterans' Chaplaincy Program Report.** §47 tabled and spoke to his Veterans' Chaplaincy Program Report (refer Enclosure 7). §47F spoke to the work of his WG (per Action Item DG25-01-18). Specifically, the process for Chaplains – both employed and volunteer – to be endorsed for DVA Chaplaincy. Members agreed to the Chaplaincy

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Credentialing Protocol document as tabled by MDP (Enclosure 8). Chair asked s47 F to pass on to stakeholders in DVA RACS support and appreciation for the DVA engagement.

- a. **Action Item DG25-02-05:** s47 F agreed to engage stakeholders to gauge support for the Chaplaincy Credentialing Protocol and report back at next meeting.

**ITEM 10 – CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS AND CLOSE**

17. The Chair confirmed Action Items (refer Enclosure 1), thanked members for their participation and confirmed that the next two meetings will be held as follows:

- a. In person (Canberra) on 17 Sep 2025; and  
b. Virtual (online) on 5 Dec 2025.

18. The meeting was closed at 1300 hours.

s22

s47F

Reverend  
Chair,

27 Sep 25

s22

s47E(c)

WGCDR  
Secretary

27 Sep 25

**Enclosures:**

1. RACS Member and DGCHAP 25-02 Meeting - Action Item Matrix
2. Navy Service Report (as tabled at RACS Members 25-02 Meeting)
3. Army Service Report
4. Air Force Service Report
5. ADFCC Report
6. Women in Chaplaincy Report
7. Veterans' Chaplaincy Program Report
8. Chaplaincy Credentialing Protocol for Chaplains to work for DVA

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ENCLOSURE 1 TO:  
MINUTES OF 25-01 RACS AND DGCHAP MEETING  
HELD ON 27 FEB 25

**RACS MEMBER AND DGCHAP MEETING - ACTION ITEM MATRIX**

Action Item #	Responsible	Task	Status	Due
DG25-01-01	Chair	Chair will re-engage DFR once the new Specialist Recruiter is embedded (and provide the contact details to RACS members).	Complete	By end March
DG25-01-02	DGCHAPs	DGCHAPs to liaise with DFR to facilitate amendments to the DFR website content to correct inconsistencies with Service-specific information.	Ongoing	Next meeting
DG25-01-03	s47F	s47F to establish and lead a Working Group to review ethics framework, resources and communication for use by ADCC in a student reading continuum. Report progress at next meeting. Working group comprises s47F	Ongoing	Next meeting
DG25-01-04	Chair	Chair to engage DGCHAP-A out of session to discuss potential for RACS members being available to present professional development material at Army Regional seminars.	Complete	Next meeting
DG25-01-05	Secretariat	Secretariat to ensure calendar invites are issued to the three DG CHAPs for the next online RACS Meeting (scheduled for 12 Jun) and similarly formalise process to issue electronic invites to RACS members.	Complete	Out of session before next meeting
DG25-01-06	Secretariat	Secretariat to provide clarifying detail to RACS members regarding the 2025 Pacific Faith Forum.	Complete	Out of session before next meeting
DG25-01-07	Secretariat	Secretariat to provide clarifying detail to RACS members regarding the 2025 Australian Bible Society-sponsored ADF Bible launch.	Complete	Out of session before next meeting
DG25-01-08	Chair	Chair to engage DGCHAP-A and request he provides RACS with dates and locations for the forecast Army Regional Seminars.	Complete	Next meeting
DG25-01-09	s47E(c)	DGCHAP-AF to share the Air Force Suitability Assessment Form with RACS members and other the DGCHAPs (noting his request that it is not for wider dissemination).	Closed	Next meeting
DG25-01-10	Secretariat	Secretariat to provide copies of CHAPPOL and the Confidentiality Enabling Support Product to RACS members.	Complete	Next meeting

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DG25-01-11	Chair	Chair to engage AVM Gunn to source a copy of the UNCLASSIFIED NDS Mobilisation / Explainer.	Ongoing	Out of session before next meeting
DG25-01-12	Chair	Chair to engage AVM Gunn to pass on RACS appreciation for her high-value presentation and to thank her for taking the time to engage in this way.	Complete	Out of session before next meeting
DG25-01-13	Chair	Chair to engage DGCHAP-A and request he provides RACS with information on Army Chaplain recruiting priorities for the Reserves	Complete	Next meeting
DG25-01-14	All	RACS members to provide detail requested by s47E(c) in the Retreat Table in her Women in Chaplaincy Report (refer Enclosure 6).	Ongoing	Next meeting
DG25-01-15	s47	s47 to engage s47E(c) and express RACS appreciation for her leadership and work in the Women in Chaplaincy domain.	Complete	Next meeting
DG25-01-16	Secretariat	Secretariat to email RACS members details of the book by Tim Hein titled <i>Understanding Sexual Abuse</i> .	Complete	Out of session before next meeting
DG25-01-17	Secretariat	Secretariat to identify a Joint Transition Authority officer to brief RACS members on mechanisms for transition from ADF employment and related issues of which Chaplains should be aware.	Complete	Out of session before next meeting
DG25-01-18	s47	s47 to establish a Working Group (led by s47 and supported by s47F) to develop a simple multi-faith endorsement process and report progress at next meeting.	Complete	Next meeting
DG25-01-19	Secretariat	Secretariat to send a calendar invite to s47F to attend next RACS Members Committee meeting.	Complete	Out of session before next meeting

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**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES  
DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**MINUTES OF RACS MEMBERS MEETING 25-03**

**DAY 1: HELD AT R1-6-D001 ON 15 SEP 25 2025 FROM 1200–1745 HOURS**

**DAY 2: HELD AT BP33-3-051 ON 16 SEP 25 2025 FROM 1215–1700 HOURS**

**DAY 3: HELD AT BP33-3-051 ON 17 SEP 25 2025 FROM 0830–1430 HOURS**

**ITEM 1 – OPENING [DAY 1]**

1. RACS Chair, The Reverend s47F opened the meeting at 1245 (which followed an informal lunch). The opening devotion was provided by s47F (Hindu perspective on destiny and divine intervention and the virtue of a meaningful life over a long one).

<b>Attendees</b>		
<b>RACS Members</b>		
1.	The Reverend s47F	Chair (APCCB)
2.	s47F The Right Reverend s47F	(ANG)
3.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Pres)
4.	s47F Monsignor s47F	(RC)
5.	s47F	(Hindu)
6.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Buddhist)
7.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(UCA)
8.	s47F Rabbi s47F	(Jewry)
9.	s47F	(Sikh) <i>virtual attendance</i>
10.	s47F Imam s47F	(Islam)
<b>Guests</b>		
11.	LTGEN Simon Stuart, AO, DSC	CA
12.	AVM Lara Gunn	HJSSD
13.	s47E(c)	DFR
14.	Ms Pip Weiland	A/DG MH&W
15.	s47F	Director Veterans' Chaplaincy, DVA
16.	s47F	Director Spiritual Health and Meaning
17.	s47E(c)	ADFA Chaplain
<b>Secretariat support</b>		
18.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Staff Officer
19.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Admin
20.	s47E(c)	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.

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**ITEM 2 – CHAIR WELCOME**

2. The Chair welcomed RACS members to the meeting.

**ITEM 3 – CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

3. The agenda, as circulated for the following three days of meetings, was confirmed.
  - a. Noting that ITEM 23 & 24, as scheduled for Wednesday (Mandatory Training Awareness for RACS members) will be swapped out for a briefing from A/DG MH&W Ms Pip Weiland on key recommendations from the Royal Commission on Defence and Veteran Suicide (RCDVS).

**ITEM 4 – MEMBER INFORMAL UPDATES**

4. Each RACS member gave a brief informal update about personal and professional happenings in their spheres of influence.

**ITEM 5 – CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES AND CORRESPONDENCE**

5. Moved <sup>s47</sup>F and seconded <sup>s47</sup>F that the Minutes of the previous RACS Members meeting held 10 and 11 Jun 25 were a true and accurate record. **CARRIED.**
6. All present noted the correspondence as tabled, in particular reflections provided on:
  - a. PACAF visit and engagement with RACS Chair, and
  - b. Korean Chaplain visit and engagement with <sup>s47</sup>F

**ITEM 6 – RACS MEMBER IN CAMERA SESSION**

7. The Chair invited all RACS members to an *in camera* session.

**ITEM 7 – REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

8. Chair facilitated a review of all outstanding Action Items:
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-01-03:** Open. Chair will engage the DG MH&W to align comms and the process for framing Defence survey wellbeing questions.
  - b. **Action Item MBR25-01-11:** Closed. Explore WWCC/WWVP checks for PMkeyS.
  - c. **Action Item MBR25-01-12:** Closed. Chair to engage the DGCHAPs re: Professional Supervision. This links to **Action Item MBR25-02-02.**
  - d. **Action Item MBR25-01-20:** Open. Members to consider proactive conversations with Faith Group Leaders and community about how to deal sensitively with ADF personnel in their communities, and about contingency planning during conflict. Chair advised RACS members to use the 2-page NDS summary document because that content is approved.
  - e. **Action Item MBR25-01-24:** Closed. Consider RACS representation.
  - f. **Action Item MBR25-01-34:** Closed. Submissions for Army Chaplaincy Journal.

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- g. **Action Item MBR25-02-01:** Closed. Chair to engage DG DFR about leveraging RACS, and invite DG DFR to deliver a presentation at a future RACS meeting. DFR s47E(c) presentation is scheduled for RACS on Wed 17 Sep 25.
- h. **Action Item MBR25-02-02:** Closed. Chair to engage the respective DGCHAPs re: approaches to professional supervision. This links to Action **Item MBR25-01-12**.
- i. **Action Item MBR25-02-03:** Closed. Chair to load s47F document (titled *Caring for Chaplains*) in RACS Repository.
- j. **Action Item MBR25-02-04:** Closed. Comment on s47F paper titled “*Advancing an Understanding of Defence and Veteran Suicide*” and recommend options on how to use it in a Defence context. New **Action Item MBR25-03-01:** s47F to engage editor of Army Chaplaincy Journal and Chair to engage AVM Gunn re publishing / leveraging s47F paper titled “*Advancing an Understanding of Defence and Veteran Suicide*”.
- k. **Action Item MBR25-02-05:** Closed. Chair to engage AVM Gunn about **Action Item MBR25-02-04** (above).
- l. **Action Item MBR25-02-06:** Open. Review BS’ draft FAQ relating to NDS Contingency Planning (produced per **Action Item MBR25-01-19**). s47F to lead working group to prepare draft responses to the questions.
- m. **Action Item MBR25-02-07:** Open. Chair to engage re incorporating Jewish dates into the hardcopy Defence Diary.
- n. **Action Item MBR25-02-08:** Closed. Chair to email RACS members with status of individual budgets.
- o. **Action Item MBR25-02-09:** Closed. RACS Members to provide positive endorsement of their respective Chaplains, as appropriate.
- p. **Action Item MBR25-02-10:** Closed. Edits into RACS Strategic Plan FY 25/26.
- q. **Action Item MBR25-02-11:** Closed. RACS Members to clarify context of families per Objective 1 of RACS Strategic Plan.
- r. **Action Item MBR25-02-12:** Closed. Explore stakeholder expectations wrt RACS Strategic Plan, Objective 3.
- s. **Action Item MBR25-02-13:** Closed. Chair to update members on outcomes of the July engagement with the MOA Reviewing Officers.
- t. **Action Item MBR25-02-14:** Closed. Confirm dates and locations for Army Regional Seminars.
- u. **Action Item MBR25-02-15:** Closed. Chair to engage DG JTA re RACS member questions arising from her presentation.
- v. **Action Item MBR25-02-16:** Closed. RACS Members to clarify context of families per Objective 1 of RACS Strategic Plan.

**ITEM 8: VISIT TO RACS BY CHIEF OF ARMY**

- 9. CA took opportunity to express his support of RACS’ aims – especially taking care of others and facilitating the ability of Army Chaplains to do so.
  - a. Army’s perspective is that there is an expanded role for spiritual and pastoral care.

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- b. CA spoke to Army's response to RCDVS – incorporating the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of all soldiers.
- c. CA considers that wellbeing is to be broadly considered from three perspectives:
  - (i) Individual.
  - (ii) Cohesive Teams.
  - (iii) Policy and practice.
- d. CA expressed his strong support for DGCHAP-A's Strategic Intent, and also for the newly released Land Domain Publication [LP 0.0.3 Chaplaincy in War](#).

**ITEM 9: PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, ACCREDITATION & ENDORSEMENT**

10. The Chair led a discussion to confirm the requirements of all RACS members to provide a positive endorsement on an annual basis for all ADF Chaplains under their care. The discussion noted:

- a. The need to balance the DGCHAPs requirement for endorsement of Chaplains in their respective Branch.
- b. The individual responsibility for ADF Chaplains to provide information to verify their good standing and currency.
- c. The need to obviate any real or perceived duplication of effort at the individual Chaplain level, the Service DGCHAP level, and the RACS level.
- d. A policy was needed re the security of the repository for this data storage.
- e. The model tabled by the Chair, as a catalyst for discussion with DGCHAPs.
- f. The feasibility/desirability of removing the "Levels" component from the model was discussed.

**ITEM 10: REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS (COMPLETED AT ITEM 7 ABOVE)**

**ITEM 11: CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS (REFER ACTION ITEM MATRIX, ENC 1)**

*Day 1 concluded at 1745.*

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*Day 2 commenced at 1310 hours following the RACS Member & DGCHAP Meeting.*

**ITEM 12: WOMEN IN CHAPLAINCY REPORT**

- 11. s47E(c) tabled and spoke to the Women in Chaplaincy Report (refer Enclosure)

**ITEM 13: HJSSD UPDATE**

- 12. HJSSD took the opportunity to engage with RACS and update them on current matters of import.
  - a. Introduced s47E(c), Director Governance and Corporate Services, accompanying HJSSD.
  - b. Provided a comprehensive update on RCDVS:
    - (i) 12 months since RCDVS Report was formally released.

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- (ii) December will mark 12 months since Government's response.
- (iii) Expectation that the October Senate Estimates will enquire on progress to date.
- c. Spoke in general terms about NDS and national mobilisation issues.
- d. HJSSD is keen for AIRCDRE Anker Brodersen to engage with RACS to discuss the role of Faith Groups in Australia.
- e. PNG Announcement; 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence from Australia; Treaty proposed; will keep RACS informed as this relationship matures; implications for Indo-Pacific and Asia Pacific relationships.
- f. Briefly touched on the audit into the Defence estate.
- g. RACS MOA update – not yet reached the draft stage. MOA likely to be a CDF-level document, with a Charter at Ministerial level.
- h. HJSSD flagged the Directive regarding moving away from off-site events where possible – preference is to use Defence estate options wherever possible.
- i. HJSSD flagged the Directive regarding limitations on Defence travel, financial prudence, and the need to use virtual options wherever possible. No significant changes to the RACS budget are expected. HJSSD's Office is tasked to draft a template with their requirements when justifying their RACS travel.

**ITEM 14: VETERANS' CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM (VCP) UPDATE**

- 13. DVA Director Veterans' Chaplaincy, Rev. s47F [REDACTED] tabled a Report to RACS (refer Enclosure 3) and spoke to his Report (via virtual link-up).
  - a. He now has regular engagement with DEPSEC DVA regarding the VCP.
  - b. Reported some encouraging engagement in Cooma NSW.

**ITEM 15: RCDVS RECOMMENDATION 78 ON MORAL INJURY**

- 14. s47F [REDACTED] tabled a handout and spoke to Recommendation 78.
  - a. Moral Injury now in DSM
  - b. MIST 3 is being conducted in Adelaide 20-22 October.

**ITEM 16: PRESENTATION - CHRISTIAN CHAPLAIN LIVED EXPERIENCE**

- 15. Navy CHAPs47E(c) [REDACTED] (ACC) delivered a powerful and engaging presentation titled "*Life is hard – I deserve stickers*" about her journey to becoming a Navy Chaplain.

s47F [REDACTED]

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**ITEM 17: STRATEGIC PLAN 2025/26**

16. Chair facilitated a discussion on the RACS Strategic Plan. Objectives 1-4 agreed.
17. Chair facilitated a discussion on the specified Priorities.
  - a. s47 F suggested that RACS members providing gifts, letters or other ‘thoughtful expressions’ could be an option for Priority 2
  - b. RACS Members noted the generally increasing pressure to self-fund to achieve the required standard of the RACS pastoral care – underscoring their commitment to the role.
  - c. RACS Members noted the wisdom of AIRCDRE Parson’s comment that ADF senior leadership is vague on what Chaplain endorsement is (and isn’t).

**ITEM 18: CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS (REFER ACTION ITEM MATRIX, ENC 1)**

*Day 2 concluded at 1700.*

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*Day 3 commenced at 0830.*

**ITEM 19: STRATEGIC PLAN 2025/26 (CONTINUED)**

18. Chair continued to facilitate a discussion on the RACS Strategic plan.
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-03-02:** Secretariat to post Ethical Text Resources List into the RACS Repository.
  - b. **Action Item MBR25-03-03:** Secretariat to invite Director Defence Indigenous Affairs to present to RACS with a view to identifying opportunities to explore interface (linking to Priority 9).
  - c. **Action Item MBR25-03-04:** Members to consider options for Service Newspaper articles to showcase faith specific and multi-faith events.
  - d. **Action Item MBR25-03-05** s47F to capture imagery for Hindu Celebration of Diwali to support a Service Newspaper article.

**ITEM 20: DFR PRESENTATION – RECRUITING ADF CHAPLAINS**

19. DFR Director Military Recruiting, s47E(c), delivered a comprehensive presentation to RACS (with virtual support from DFR Specialist Recruiter s47E(c)). s47E(c) acknowledged the role of Chaplains when he was a CO.
  - a. Spoke to DFR Recruitment and Media Strategy, and associated challenges.
  - b. Acknowledged the importance of RACS support in the Chaplain recruiting process and explored options to increase synergy between DFR and RAC – i.e. sharing OSB calendars.
  - c. Discussed options to streamline the recruiting process – esp. relating to credentialing.
  - d. **Action Item MBR25-03-06:** Secretariat engage JHC to source or develop a simplified list of medical disqualifying conditions to help RACS members to provide quality advice to potential Chaplain candidates.

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- e. **Action Item MBR25-03-07:** RACS Members to email DFR Specialist Recruiter <sup>s47E(c)</sup> regarding appropriate events, conferences, courses, open days etc. that DFR might reasonably be able to leverage as a recruiting opportunity.
- f. **Action Item MBR25-03-08:** RACS Members to email DFR Specialist Recruiter <sup>s47E(c)</sup> regular updates (i.e. monthly or bi-monthly) regarding promising <sup>s47E(c)</sup> that are being engaged by RACS.

**ITEM 21: RACS BUDGET AND MEMBER TRAVEL**

- 20. Chair spoke to the RACS budget.
  - a. Noted RACS Member pay diaries are being submitted regularly which allows for appropriate monitoring, budgeting and reporting to HJSSD.
  - a. Noted HJSSD's comments regarding the need for fiscal responsibility.
  - b. Noted that the Chair's engagement with the Army Regional Seminar has obviated the need for some of his scheduled travel – freeing these funds to address any identified shortfall in RACS Members travel.
  - c. In response to Defence retreats needing to be on Defence establishments, it is proposed that the next in-person February 2026 RACS meeting should be conducted on a suitable Defence establishment (meeting venue, mess and accommodation).
  - d. **Action Item MBR25-03-09:** <sup>s47E(c)</sup> to identify suitable Defence estate options for the Feb 26 RACS meeting and report back at the next meeting.

**ITEM 22: FLINDERS UNIVERSITY EVALUATION OF DVA VCPP PROGRAM**

- 21. Chair spoke to the Flinders University VCPP Evaluation Report.
  - a. The VCPP program is highly valued by veterans.
  - b. VCPP Chaplains deemed as trusted and competent by families.
  - c. <sup>s47E(c)</sup> noted that Secretary DVA is highly supportive.
  - d. Awaiting Government decision regarding funding.
  - e. Potential to leverage Chaplaincy cover in ex-Service organisations and Defence-adjacent organisations (RSL, SES, Police, Fire etc).

**ITEM 23: RCDVS PRESENTATION (IN LIEU OF MANDATORY TRAINING)**

- 22. A/DG MH&W Ms Pip Weiland delivered a valuable presentation to RACS regarding RCDVS with a focus on Recommendations 5, 9, 63, 68, 76, 77.
  - a. Chaplains are pivotal to management of high risk experiences.
  - b. **Action Item MBR25-03-10:** Secretariat to check all RACS policy and documents to ensure that there is no stigmatising language such as “malingering”, consistent with RCDVS Recommendation 63.

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- c. **Action Item MBR25-03-11:** Secretariat to source a copy of A/DG MH&W PPT slides and deposit in the RACS Repository for members to access.

**ITEM 24: MANDATORY TRAINING**

- 23. This Item was cancelled, due to requirements for individual members to complete training online.
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-03-12:** RACS Members to complete specified mandatory training online, pursuant to advice provided by the Secretariat.

**ITEM 25 – OTHER BUSINESS**

- 24. The Chair invited reflections on the past three days:
  - a. Busy and productive time together.
  - b. Valuable engagement with the Service DGCHAPs.
  - c. Excellent senior engagement.
  - d. Reverend <sup>s47F</sup> noted the gender balance of the Committee (albeit with increased efforts being made to secure the perspectives of women through reports and invited guests). She volunteered to prepare a report for discussion at the next meeting.
  - e. **Action Item MBR25-03-13:** Reverend <sup>s47F</sup> to prepare a report for discussion on RACS gender balance.

**ITEM 26 – CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS**

- 25. The Chair confirmed Action Items (refer Enclosure 1).

**ITEM 26 – CLOSE**

- 26. The Chair thanked members for their participation and confirmed that the next meeting will be held as follows:
  - a. Virtual (online) on 3-4 Dec 2025 (details will be provided with links by Secretariat).
- 27. The meeting was closed at 1430 hours.

<sup>s22</sup>  
<sup>s47F</sup>  
Reverend  
Chair  
03 Dec 25

<sup>s22</sup>  
<sup>s47E(c)</sup>  
WGCDR  
Secretary  
03 Dec 25

**Enclosures:**

- 1. RACS 25-03 Meeting Action Item Matrix

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2. Women in Chaplaincy Report
3. DVA Veteran's Chaplaincy Program Update

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ENCLOSURE 1 TO:  
MINUTES OF RACS MEMBERS 25-03 MEETING  
HELD 15-17 SEP 25

**RACS MEMBERS 25-03 MEETING - ACTION ITEM MATRIX**

Action Item #	Responsible	Task	Status	Due
MBR25-01-03	Chair	Chair will engage the DG MH&W to align comms and the process for framing Defence survey wellbeing questions	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-01-20	All	Members to consider proactive conversations with Faith Group Leaders and community about how to deal sensitively with ADF personnel in their communities, and about contingency planning during conflict. Chair advised RACS members to use the 2-page NDS summary document because that content is approved	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-02-06	s47F	Following the completed review s47F draft FAQ relating to NDS Contingency Planning (produced per <b>Action Item MBR25-01-19</b> ). BS to lead working group to prepare draft responses to the questions.	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-02-07	Chair	Chair to engage re incorporating Jewish dates into the hardcopy Defence Diary	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-01	s47F / Chair	s47F to engage editor of Army Chaplaincy Journal and Chair to engage AVM Gunn re publishing / leveraging s47F paper titled " <i>Advancing an Understanding of Defence and Veteran Suicide</i> ".	Open	Dec Meeting

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MBR25-03-02	Secretariat	Secretariat to post Ethical Text Resources List into the RACS Repository.	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-03	Secretariat	Secretariat to invite Director Defence Indigenous Affairs to present to RACS with a view to identifying opportunities to explore interface (linking to Priority 9).	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-04	All	Members to consider options for Service Newspaper articles to showcase faith specific and multi-faith events.	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-05	s4 7E	s4 7E to capture imagery for Hindu Celebration of Diwali to support a Service Newspaper article	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-06	Secretariat	Secretariat engage JHC to source or develop a simplified list of medical disqualifying conditions to help RACS members to provide quality advice to potential Chaplain candidates.	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-07	All	RACS Members to email DFR Specialist Recruiter s47E(c) regarding appropriate events, conferences, courses, R might reasonably be able to leverage as a recruiting opportunity.	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-08	All	RACS Members to email DFR Specialist Recruite s47E(c) regular updates (i.e. monthly or bi-monthly) regarding promising candidates that are being engaged by RACS.	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-09	s47E(c)	s47E(c) to identify suitable Defence estate options for the Feb 26 RACS meeting and report back at the next meeting	Open	Dec Meeting

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MBR25-03-10	Secretariat	Secretariat to check all RACS policy and documents to ensure that there is no stigmatising language such as “malingering”, consistent with RCDVS Recommendation 63	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-11	Secretariat	Secretariat to source a copy of A/DG MH&W PPT slides and deposit in the RACS Repository for members to access	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-12	All	RACS Members to complete specified mandatory training online, pursuant to advice provided by the Secretariat.	Open	Dec Meeting
MBR25-03-13	s47F	Reverend s47F to prepare a report for discussion on RACS gender balance.	Open	Dec Meeting

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**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES  
DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**MINUTES OF RACS MEMBERS & DGCHAPs 25-03 MEETING**

**CONDUCTED AT BP33-3-051 ON 16 SEP 2025 FROM 0830–1300 HOURS**

**ITEM 1 – DEVOTION**

1. RACS Chair, the Reverend s47F opened the meeting at 0830. The opening devotion was provided by the Reverend s47F (referencing Colossians 3:12-14).

<b>Attendees</b>		
<b><i>RACS Members</i></b>		
1.	The Reverend s47F	Chair (APCCB)
2.	s47F The Right Reverend s47F	(ANG)
3.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Pres)
4.	s47F Monsignor s47F	(RC)
5.	s47F s47F	(Hindu)
6.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Buddhist)
7.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(UCA)
8.	s47F Rabbi s47F	(Jewry)
9.	s47F s47F	(Sikh) <i>virtual attendance</i>
10.	s47F Imam s47F	(Islam)
<b><i>DG CHAPS</i></b>		
11.	[JW] PCHA Jason Wright	DGCHAP-N
12.	[KL] PRINCHAP Kerry Larwill, CSC	DGCHAP-A & Chair ADFCC
13.	[SP] AIRCDRE Steve Parsons, CSC, OAM	DG W&C & A/DGCHAP-AF
<b><i>Guests</i></b>		
	n/a	
<b><i>Secretariat support</i></b>		
15.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Staff Officer
16.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Admin
17.	s47E(c)	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.
<b><i>Apologies</i></b>		
	n/a	

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**ITEM 2 – CHAIR WELCOME**

2. The Chair welcomed Members.

**ITEM 3 – CONFIRM AGENDA AND MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

3. The Agenda was confirmed for this meeting, as circulated.

4. Additional to the Agenda, s47 informed Members that Bishop s47F, a highly respected advocate for the poor and marginalized, s47F delivered a short eulogy about Bishop s47F years of service as a priest and s47F years as a bishop within the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. Bishop s47F was noted for his compassion, humility, and consistent advocacy for those on society's margins. s47F

5. Moved by s47 and seconded by s47F that the Minutes of the previous RACS Members and DGCHAP meeting held 12 Jun 25 were a true and accurate record. **CARRIED.**

**ITEM 4 – CORRESPONDENCE**

6. All present noted the correspondence as tabled. Chair noted the positive engagement with the Commander Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) with s47F – IMA to the Command Chaplain – HQ Pacific Air Forces and Republic of Korea Armed Forces s47F Director Chaplaincy Policy Division, s47F with special note thanking s47F for his efforts.

**ITEM 5 – REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

7. The Chair facilitated a review of outstanding Action Items, with the following Action Items carried over or modified as follows (all other Action Items were verified as completed):

- a. **Action Item DG25-01-02:** Closed (Chair agreed to coord ongoing engagement with DFR as required).
- b. **Action Item DG25-01-03:** Closed s47F has provided a full list of ethics texts to the ADF Chaplains College.
- c. **Action Item DG25-01-04:** Closed. Completed.
- d. **Action Item DG25-02-01:** Closed. Chair has engaged SP on AF processes re identified Sikh candidate.
- e. **Action Item DG25-02-02:** Closed. Secretariat confirmed SP contact details.
- f. **Action Item DG25-02-03:** Closed. Members provided AD460 to Secretariat.
- g. **Action Item DG25-02-04:** Closed. Chair engaged AVM Gunn re addressing RACS.
- h. **Action Item DG25-02-05:** Open s47F to engage stakeholders to gauge support for the Chaplaincy Credentialing Protocol and report back at the Dec meeting.

**ITEM 6 – NAVY SERVICE REPORT**

8. DGCHAP-N tabled and spoke to his Navy Service Report (refer Enclosure 2).

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**ITEM 7 – ARMY SERVICE REPORT**

9. DGCHAP-A tabled and spoke to his Army Service Report (refer Enclosure 3).

**ITEM 8 – AIR FORCE SERVICE REPORT**

10. A/DGCHAP-AF (DG W&C-AF) tabled and spoke to his Air Force Service Report (refer Enclosure 4). SP thanked members, DGCHAP-N and DGCHAP-A for their collegiality.

**ITEM 9 – ADFCC REPORT**

11. DGCHAP-A tabled the ADFCC Report (refer Enclosure 5).

a. **Action Item DG25-03-01:** RACS members to review CHAPPOL with a view to identify opportunities to strengthen the policy before next meeting.

**ITEM 10 – RECRUITING PRIORITIES AND PASTORAL CARE**

12. Regarding recruiting priorities, the Chair summarised areas of current focus as presented in the respective DGCHAP Service Reports.

a. **Action Item DG25-03-02:** Secretariat to collate the recruiting priorities and communicate to RACS members out of session before next meeting.

13. **Confirm AD460s.** Members presented details of the following candidates:

Name of Candidate	Service	Type	Faith Group	Sponsor
s47E(c)	Navy	s47E(c)	APCCB (BAPT)	s47F
	Air Force		APCCB (BAPT)	
	Army		Uniting	
	Air Force		Catholic	
	Air Force		Catholic	
	Army		Catholic	
	Army		Anglican	
	Air Force		Anglican	
	Navy		Anglican	
	Army		Anglican	
	Army		Anglican	
	Army		Anglican	
	Air Force		Anglican	
	Army		Anglican	
	Army		Anglican	

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14. Regarding pastoral care matters to watch, the Chair noted that a significant proportion of ADF Chaplains are presenting with mental health or family issues or health issues. s47 suggested that vicarious trauma and/or compassion fatigue might be a contributing factor.

15. Additionally, s47 commented that anti-Semitism (i.e. from the public arena) is affecting the confidence and morale of Jewish ADF members and Chaplains.

**ITEM 11 – RACS ANNUAL ENDORSEMENT OF ADF CHAPLAINS**

16. The Chair noted the benefits of strengthening and standardising the process to confirm RACS annual endorsement of ADF Chaplains. The Chair then tabled a draft document designed to facilitate that outcome across the three Services.

17. RACS members and DGCHAPs noted that an agreed process would value-add by providing the Services with an auditable process that the DGCHAPs could trust.

- a. **Action Item DG25-03-03:** The RACS Endorsement and Accreditation Working Group to rework to the draft RACS Endorsement paper. Special items of note include: clarification around endorsement (i.e. what it is and what it isn't), and accommodation of Navy's requirement for duality across Chaplains / MSWOs.

**ITEM 12 – CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS AND CLOSE**

18. The Chair confirmed Action Items (refer Enclosure 1), thanked members for their participation and confirmed that the next RACS and DGCHAP meeting will be held as follows:

- a. Virtual (online) on 5 Dec 2025.

19. The Chair thanked RACS Members and DGCHAPs for their contributions and closed the meeting at 1215 hours.

s22

s47F

Reverend  
Chair, RACS

03 Dec 25

s22

s47E(c)

WGCDR  
Secretary

03 Dec 25

**Enclosures:**

1. RACS & DGCHAP 25-03 Meeting - Action Item Matrix
2. Navy Service Report
3. Army Service Report
4. Air Force Service Report
5. ADFCC Report

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ENCLOSURE 1 TO:  
MINUTES OF RACS AND DGCHAP 25-03 MEETING  
HELD ON 16 SEP 25

**RACS & DGCHAP 25-03 MEETING - ACTION ITEM MATRIX**

Action Item #	Responsible	Task	Status	Due
DG25-02-05	s47 F	s47F to engage stakeholders to gauge support for the Chaplaincy Credentialing protocol and report back at the Dec meeting.	Open	Dec meeting
DG25-03-01	All	RACS members to review CHAPPOL with a view to identify opportunities to strengthen the policy before next meeting.	Open	Dec meeting
DG25-03-02	Secretariat	Secretariat to collate the recruiting priorities and communicate to RACS members out of session before next meeting.	Open	Dec meeting
DG25-03-03	RACS Endorsement and Accreditation Working Group	The RACS Endorsement and Accreditation Working Group to rework to the draft RACS Endorsement paper. Special items of note include: clarification around endorsement (i.e. what it is and what it isn't), and accommodation of Navy's requirement for duality across Chaplains / MSWOs.	Open	Dec meeting

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**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES  
DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**MINUTES OF RACS MEMBERS 25-04 MEETING**

**DAY 1: VIRTUAL (MICROSOFT TEAMS) ON 03 DEC 25 FROM 0900–1300 HOURS**  
**DAY 1: VIRTUAL (MICROSOFT TEAMS) ON 04 DEC 25 FROM 0900–1300 HOURS**

**ITEM 1: OPENING [DAY 1] AND DEVOTION**

1. RACS Chair, The Reverend s47F opened the meeting at 0900. The opening devotion was provided by Monsignor s47F (focussing on the Catholic relationship with other religions and the importance of interfaith dialogue in a multi-faith world). Monsignor s47F also shared a copy of *Nostra Aetate* with RACS.

<b>Attendees</b>		
<b><i>RACS Members</i></b>		
1.	The Reverend s47F	Chair (APCCB)
2.	s47F The Right Reverend s47F	(ANG)
3.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Pres)
4.	s47F Monsignor s47F	(RC)
5.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Buddhist)
6.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(UCA)
7.	s47F Rabbi s47F	(Jewry)
8.	s47F s47F	(Sikh)
9.	s47F Imam s47F	(Islam)
<b><i>Apology</i></b>		
10.	s47F	(Hindu)
<b><i>Guests</i></b>		
11.	s47F	Director Veterans' Chaplaincy, DVA
12.	s47F	ADFCC Women in Chaplaincy WG
13.	s47F	Lived experience – female Chaplain
<b><i>Secretariat support</i></b>		
14.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Staff Officer
15.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Admin
16.	s47E(c)	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.

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**ITEM 2: CHAIR WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS**

2. The Chair welcomed RACS members to the meeting and thanked them for their ongoing work. Chair flagged CDF Order of the Day relating to not using phones in vehicles that are synched with the vehicle due to security considerations.

**ITEM 3: CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

3. The agenda for the following two days of meetings was confirmed, as circulated.

**ITEM 4: MEMBER INFORMAL UPDATES**

4. Each RACS member gave a brief informal update about personal and professional happenings in their spheres of influence.

**ITEM 5: CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

5. Moved s47F and seconded s47F that the Minutes of the previous RACS Members meeting held 15 and 16 Sep 25 were a true and accurate record. **CARRIED.**

a. Chair reminded Members the purpose of Minutes was to accurately and concisely record actions and decisions, and clarified the process to capture Action Items.

**ITEM 6: CORRESPONDENCE**

6. All present noted the correspondence as tabled.

a. **Action Item MBR25-04-01:** A WG consisting of s47F to determine a suitable way to provide authoritative statements on 'First Nations Spirituality' and 'Incidental Faith' for inclusion in the ADF publication '*Faith and Belief - A Guide to Religious Practice in the ADF*'.

**ITEM 7: REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

7. Chair facilitated a review of all outstanding Action Items:

a. **Action Item MBR25-01-03:** Closed.

b. **Action Item MBR25-01-20:** Closed. The Chair, s47F commented about proactive conversations with their respective Faith Group Leaders and community about how to deal sensitively with ADF personnel in their communities, and about contingency planning during conflict. This is now considered Business as Usual.

c. **Action Item MBR25-02-06:** Closed. s47F lead working group to prepare draft responses to the NDS Contingency Planning FAQ. This links to **New Action Item MBR25-04-02** Secretariat to re-title the FAQ document "*RACS Community Engagement Resource: FAQ - Contingency Planning for Community Faith Group Support in Response to NDS*" and post it into the Repository.

d. **Action Item MBR25-02-07:** Open. Chair continuing to engage re ensuring that Jewish key dates are incorporated into the hardcopy Defence Diary.

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- e. **Action Item MBR25-03-01:** Closed. s47F engaged editor of Army Chaplaincy Journal and Chair to engage AVM Gunn re publishing / leveraging RACS paper titled “*Advancing an Understanding of Defence and Veteran Suicide*” **New Action Item MBR25-04-03** MdP to re-engage of Army Chaplaincy Journal editor regarding his feedback on the need to the paper to be academically defensible (RACS has no intention of modifying the paper).
- f. **Action Item MBR25-03-02:** Closed. Secretariat posted Ethical Text Resources List into the RACS Repository.
- g. **Action Item MBR25-03-03:** Closed. Secretariat invited Director Defence Indigenous Affairs to present to RACS with a view to identifying opportunities to explore interface (linking to Priority 9).
- h. **Action Item MBR25-03-04:** Closed. Members considered options for Service Newspaper articles to showcase faith specific and multi-faith events.
- i. **Action Item MBR25-03-05:** Open. s47F to capture imagery for Hindu Celebration of Diwali to support a Service Newspaper article (this was held over, given s47F was an Apology for this meeting). **New Action Item MBR25-04-04:** All RACS members to be proactive in encouraging ADF Chaplains to capture appropriate photographic images relating to their work especially during the holiday and festive season.
- j. **Action Item MBR25-03-06:** Closed. Secretariat engaged JHC to source or develop a simplified list of medical disqualifying conditions to help RACS members to provide quality advice to potential Chaplain candidates (deemed not feasible).
- k. **Action Item MBR25-03-07:** Closed. RACS Members emailed DFR Specialist Recruit s47E(c) regarding appropriate events, conferences, courses, open days etc. that DFR might reasonably be able to leverage as a recruiting opportunity.
- l. **Action Item MBR25-03-08:** Closed. RACS Members emailed DFR Specialist Recruiter s47E(c) regular updates (i.e. monthly or bi-monthly) regarding promising candidates that are being engaged by RACS.
- m. **Action Item MBR25-03-09:** Closed. s47E(c) identified suitable Defence estate options for the Feb 26 RACS meeting and report back at the next meeting.
- n. **Action Item MBR25-03-10:** Closed. Secretariat checked all RACS policy and documents to ensure that there is no stigmatising language such as “malingering”, consistent with RCDVS Recommendation 63 (none identified).
- o. **Action Item MBR25-03-11:** Closed. Secretariat sourced a copy of A/DG MH&W PPT slides and deposited in the RACS Repository for members to access.
- p. **Action Item MBR25-03-12:** Open. RACS Members to complete specified mandatory training online, pursuant to advice provided by the Secretariat. (Note: s47F and s47F had IT issues to be followed up by Secretariat).
- q. **Action Item MBR25-03-13:** Closed. s47F prepared a report for discussion on RACS gender balance. **New Action Item MBR25-04-05:** A Working Group be established (s47F lead; Chair; s47F) to explore gender-balance options for RACS.

**ITEM 8: FAITH GROUP SPIRITUALITY CONFERENCE FEEDBACK**

- 8. General discussion regarding the importance of Faith Group Spirituality Conferences (formerly called Retreats). Feedback regarding use of Defence facilities was generally positive – but need to allow flexibility to cater for Faith Group distinctives.

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- a. **Action Item MBR25-04-06:** Chair to engage DGCHAP-N regarding funding for Navy Chaplain guest speakers.
- b. **Action Item MBR25-04-07:** All RACS members will prepare a 1-2 page report regarding observations of their respective Faith Group Spirituality Conferences, formerly called Retreats (what was positive; what was problematic; changes required by your Faith Group; additional comments as appropriate). Chair will then prepare a covering overview ready for consideration at next meeting.

**ITEM 9: STRATEGIC PLAN 2025/26**

9. Chair facilitated a discussion on the RACS Strategic Plan.
  - a. s47 F commented that recruiting delays has caused the loss on at least one applicant.
  - b. Some RACS members noted that Pastoral Care was being inhibited by the constrained budget.
- b. The RACS Strategic Plan remains relevant as a *guidance to action* document.

**ITEM 10: CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS AND CLOSE DAY 1**

10. Chair confirmed Action Items from Day 1 (refer Enclosure 1), thanked Members for their contributions and closed the meeting for the day at 1300 hours.

*Day 1 concluded.*

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*Day 2 commenced at 0900 hours.*

**ITEM 11: CHAIR OPENING REMARKS - DAY 2**

11. The Chair welcomed RACS members to the meeting (Day 2) and thanked them for their ongoing work in support of the ADF (in session and out-of-session).

**ITEM 12: DISCUSSION RACS ANNUAL REPORT TO CDF**

12. The Chair facilitated a discussion on the RACS Annual Report to CDF. The draft 2025 Report has been framed around normal metrics, but has been delayed due to commitments of CDF. RACS members noted the value of the CDF Report as a basis for a summary communications from RACS to ADF Chaplains.
  - a. **Action Item MBR25-04-08:** Chair will prepare a draft Annual Report and circulate to members for comment by 12 Dec 25, comments to be received by COB 16 Dec 25. Chair to issue Report to CDF by 19 Dec 25 and prepare a summarised version suitable for release to ADF Chaplains at the same time.

**ITEM 13: RACS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, ACCREDITATION AND ENDORSEMENTS**

13. The Chair tabled Version 6 of the draft RACS Professional Standards, Accreditation and Endorsements Paper. Key focus is endorsement and the mechanism to achieve that outcome (encompassing initial, ongoing, and dis-endorsement). Chair clarified that RACS Members do not have the authority to separate one of their Faith Group Chaplains from the

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ADF, however they do have the power to endorse / dis-endorse. The respective Services have their own personnel / administrative systems to deal with separation. RACS members agreed that it was a strong draft and some minor edits for clarity were proposed. The Chair noted these changes and undertook to update the document to Version 7 and issue to RACS members and DGCHAPs for the meeting the following day.

**ITEM 14: VETERANS' CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM (VCP) UPDATE**

14. DVA Director Veterans' Chaplaincy, Rev. s47F tabled a Report to RACS (refer Enclosure 2) and spoke to his Report.

- a. Notably, the Defence – DVA links Steering Committee is now chaired by CPERS. This provided an opportunity to engage CPERS about RACS connection to DVA.

**ITEM 15: PRESENTATION - FEMALE CHAPLAIN LIVED EXPERIENCE**

15. Army Chaplain s47E(c) (Anglican), delivered an excellent presentation titled: "*I don't mind what you call me—just call me when you need me*" about her experiences and perspectives as a female Chaplain in Army. Chaplain s47E(c):

s47F



**ITEM 16: WOMEN IN CHAPLAINCY REPORT**

16. s47F tabled and spoke to the Women in Chaplaincy Working Group Report (refer Enclosure 3). The Chair thanked s47F for her advocacy in the Women in Chaplaincy domain and noted s47F significant support.

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**ITEM 17: CHAPPOL DISCUSSION**

17. Chair facilitate a discussion on the extant version of CHAPPOL, in order to prepare members for a discussion on CHAPPOL that is scheduled for the RACS Members and DGCHAP meeting tomorrow (5 Dec). The Chair will prepare a brief of the collated agreed points and forward to the DGCHAPs and RACS members for discussion.

**ITEM 18: RACS BUDGET AND MEMBER TRAVEL**

18. Chair spoke to the RACS budget.
- a. Noted RACS member pay diaries are continuing to be submitted regularly which allows for appropriate monitoring, budgeting and reporting to HJSSD.
  - b. Noted that there is some scope for cross-levelling of available days. Travel budgets are regularly monitored to enable full use of available resources.
  - c. Reminded RACS members to log and provide details to the Chair of Faith Group funded or personally funded RACS work and travel for collation.
  - d. Clarified that travel for Faith Group Spirituality Conferences (formerly called Retreats) comes out of RACS member's budget allocation.
  - e. **Action Item MBR25-04-09:** s47E(c) [redacted] to provide RACS members with an update to confirm budget expenditure and use of days before the Feb 2025 meeting.

**ITEMS 19 & 20: CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS; NEXT MEETING AND CLOSE**

19. The Chair confirmed Action Items from Day 1 and 2 (refer Enclosure 1).
20. The Chair thanked members for their participation and confirmed that the next meeting will be held as follows:
- a. In person at HMAS Kuttabul in Sydney 16-17 Feb.
21. The meeting was closed at 1300 hours.

s22 [redacted]  
s4/f [redacted]

Reverend  
Chair

16 Feb 2026

s22 [redacted]  
s4/E(c) [redacted]

WGCDR  
Secretary

16 Feb 26

**Enclosures:**

- 1. RACS Members 25-04 Meeting Action Item Matrix
- 2. DVA Veterans' Chaplaincy Program Update
- 3. Women in Chaplaincy Working Group Report

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ENCLOSURE 1 TO:  
MINUTES OF RACS MEMBERS 25-04 MEETING  
HELD 3-4 DEC 25

**RACS MEMBERS 25-04 MEETING - ACTION ITEM MATRIX**

Action Item #	Responsible	Task	Status	Due
MBR25-02-07	Chair	Chair continuing to engage re ensuring that Jewish key dates are incorporated into the hardcopy Defence Diary.	Open	Feb Meeting
MBR25-03-05	s4 7E	s4 7E to capture imagery for Hindu Celebration of Diwali to support a Service Newspaper article (this was held over, given s4 7E was an Apology for this MBR25-04 meeting).	Open	Feb Meeting
MBR25-03-12	All	RACS Members to complete specified mandatory training online, pursuant to advice provided by the Secretariat.	Open	Feb Meeting
MBR25-04-01	s47F	A WG consisting of s47F to establish a suitable way to provide authoritative statements on 'First Nations Spirituality' and 'Incidental Faith' for inclusion in the ADF publication <i>Faith and Belief - A Guide to Religious Practice in the ADF</i> .	Open	Feb Meeting
MBR25-04-02	Secretariat	Secretariat to re-title the FAQ document " <i>RACS Community Engagement Resource: FAQ - Contingency Planning for Community Faith Group Support in Response to NDS</i> " and post it into the Repository.	Open	Feb Meeting

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MBR25-04-03	s47F	s47F to re-engage editor of Army Chaplaincy Journal regarding the RACS paper titled “ <i>Advancing an Understanding of Defence and Veteran Suicide</i> ” regarding his feedback on the need to the paper to be academically defensible. (RACS has no intention of modifying the paper).	Open	Feb Meeting
MBR25-04-04	All	All RACS members to be proactive in encouraging ADF Chaplains to capture appropriate photographic images relating to their work especially during the holiday and festive season.	Open	Feb Meeting
MBR25-04-05	s47F Chair; s47F	A Working Group be established s47F Chair s47F to explore gender-balance options for RACS	Open	Feb Meeting
MBR25-04-06	Chair	Chair to engage DGCHAP-N regarding funding for Navy Chaplain guest speakers.	Open	Feb Meeting
MBR25-04-07	All	All RACS members will prepare a 1-2 page report regarding observations of their respective Faith Group Spirituality Conferences, formerly called Retreats (what was positive; what was problematic; changes required by your Faith Group; additional comments as appropriate). Chair will then prepare a covering overview ready for consideration at next meeting.	Open	Individual Reports to Chair by 19 Jan Chair Covering report for Feb Meeting
MBR25-04-08	Chair	Chair will prepare a draft Annual Report and circulate to members for comment by 12 Dec 25, comments to be received by COB 16 Dec 25. Chair to issue Report to CDF by 19 Dec 25 and prepare a summarised version suitable for release to ADF Chaplains at the same time.	Open	19 Dec 25
MBR25-04-09	s47E(c)	s47E(c) to provide RACS members with an update to confirm budget expenditure and use of days before the Feb 2025 meeting	Open	Feb Meeting

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**RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE SERVICES  
DEFENCE PEOPLE GROUP**

**MINUTES OF RACS MEMBERS & DGCHAPs 25-04 MEETING**

**CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY ON 5 DEC 2025 FROM 0900–1300 HOURS**

**ITEM 1: OPENING AND DEVOTION**

1. RACS Chair, the Reverend s47F opened the meeting at 0900. The opening devotion was provided by The Reverend s47F focussing the virtue of patient endurance – especially in the midst of suffering and difficult circumstances (referencing Ecclesiastes).

<b>Attendees</b>		
<i>RACS Members</i>		
1.	The Reverend s47F	Chair (APCCB)
2.	s47F The Right Reverend s47F	(ANG)
3.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Pres)
4.	s47F Monsignor s47F	(RC)
5.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(Buddhist)
6.	s47F The Reverend s47F	(UCA)
7.	s47F Rabbi s47F	(Jewry)
8.	s47F	(Sikh)
9.	s47F Imam s47F	(Islam)
<i>DG CHAPS</i>		
10.	[JW] PCHA Jason Wright	DGCHAP-N
11.	[KL] PRINCHAP Kerry Larwill, CSC	DGCHAP-A & Chair ADFCC
12.	[SP] AIRCDRE Steve Parsons, CSC, OAM	DG W&C & A/DGCHAP-AF
<i>Apology</i>		
13.	s47F	(Hindu) s22
<i>Guest</i>		
14.	AIRCDRE Anker Broderson CSC	Representing CPERS/HJSSD
<i>Secretariat support</i>		
15.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Staff Officer
16.	s47E(c)	Secretariat, Admin
17.	s47E(c)	HQ JSSD, Defence People Group.

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**ITEM 2: CHAIR WELCOME**

2. Chair welcomed RACS Members and DGCHAPs.

**ITEM 3: CONFIRM AGENDA AND MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

3. The Agenda for this meeting was confirmed, as circulated.
4. Moved by s47F and seconded by s47F that the Minutes of the previous RACS Members and DGCHAP meeting held 16 25 were a true and accurate record. **CARRIED.**

**ITEM 4: CORRESPONDENCE**

5. All present noted the correspondence as tabled.

**ITEM 5: REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

6. Chair facilitated a review of outstanding Action Items (with all outstanding Action Items verified as completed):
  - a. **Action Item DG25-02-05:** Closed.
  - b. **Action Item DG25-03-01:** Closed.
  - c. **Action Item DG25-03-02:** Closed.
  - d. **Action Item DG25-03-03:** Closed.
7. Chair requested a New Action Item be raised, as follows (refer Enclosure 1):
  - a. **Action Item DG25-04-01:** ADFCC will consider the RACS paper regarding CHAPPOL edits (as tabled in the RACS Member and DGCHAP 25-04 December meeting) including DGCHAP-A's comment that faith discussions can be initiated in a gentle and respectful manner (s47F), and provide feedback as soon as practicable prior to next RACS Member and DGCHAP meeting, scheduled for 18 Feb 2026.

**ITEM 6: NAVY SERVICE REPORT**

8. DGCHAP-N tabled and spoke to his Navy Service Report (refer Enclosure 2).

**ITEM 7: ARMY SERVICE REPORT**

9. DGCHAP-A tabled and spoke to his Army Service Report (refer Enclosure 3).
10. Chair requested a New Action Item be raised, as follows (refer Enclosure 1):
  - a. **Action Item DG25-04-02:** Noting that s47F has recently joined RACS, the Secretariat is to consolidate details of RACS discussion, decisions and advice relating to changes to Army's Chaplaincy symbology and to provide to s47F as soon as practicable prior to next meeting, scheduled for 18 Feb 2026.

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**ITEM 8: AIR FORCE SERVICE REPORT**

11. A/DGCHAP-AF (DG W&C-AF) tabled and spoke to his Air Force Service Report (refer Enclosure 4). s47F noted that a sense of optimism is permeating across the Air Force Chaplaincy Branch regarding the changes that are occurring in the Branch.

**ITEM 9: ADFCC REPORT**

12. DGCHAP-A (Chair ADFCC) tabled the ADFCC Report (refer Enclosure 5). RACS Members noted that Air Force CHAP s47E(c) is advanced to DIV 4 and is appointed Chair of the ADFCC Women in Chaplaincy Working Group.

**ITEM 10: RECRUITING PRIORITIES AND PASTORAL CARE**

13. Regarding recruiting priorities, the Chair summarised areas of current focus as presented in the respective DGCHAP Service Reports.

14. **Confirm AD460s.** Members presented details of the following candidates:

Name of Candidate	Service	Type	Faith Group	Sponsor
s47E(c)	Army	s47E(c)	Presbyterian	s47F
	Army		Anglican	
	Army		Anglican	
	Army		Anglican	
	Army		APCCB (ACC)	
	Army		APCCB (BAPT)	
	Air Force		APCCB (ACC)	
	Army		Uniting	
	Army		Uniting	

15. Regarding pastoral care matters to watch, the Chair noted that a significant proportion of ADF Chaplains are dealing with familial illnesses (aged parents, spouse, and children) but also noted that Chaplains are generally expressing fulfilment in their role. s47F noted that Jewish Chaplains are largely younger and therefore a key challenge is finding balance between family and work demands. s47F noted that the Uniting cohort is largely older and is therefore experiencing normal aged health issues. DGCHAP-A noted the older Chaplains on SERVOP C are getting very tired (and compared the resilience of the older versus younger Chaplains).

16. Recruiting Priorities were identified FNQ/Cairns/Darwin/Perth – SERCAT 3 Nowra/Cairns/Darwin/Tindal – SERCAT 7 – Anywhere.

**ITEM 11: RESPONDING TO A NATIONAL CRISIS CPERS PRESENTATION**

16. AIRCDRE Anker Broderson (representing CPERS/HJSSD) delivered a high-level and thought provoking presentation to RACS. Given that RACS Members are considering their role and implications against the backdrop of the National Defence Strategy, the presentation was timely and helpful. In particular, it informed how Members might appropriately engage with their respective Faith Group leaders at the highest levels within Australia (and internationally).

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**ITEM 12: PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, ACCREDITATION & ENDORSEMENTS**

17. The Chair tabled the draft RACS Professional Standards, Accreditation and Endorsements Paper (Version 7) for discussion. DGCHAPs expressed that they were encouraged by the intentionality relating to the Accreditation and Endorsement elements. It was agreed that the next steps will be to:

- a. focus on information management – in particular the simplest way to gather the data to reduce impost on the Services and the DGCHAPs, and
- b. for the RACS Working Group to continue work on Stage 2 of this Project (which includes the exploration of the need for an accreditation framework if needed).
- c. **Action Item DG25-04-03:** Chair will staff the draft RACS Professional Standards, Accreditation and Endorsements Paper to HJSSD (AVM Lara Gunn) as a model that is agreed by DGCHAPs and RACS Members. Chair will also brief HJSSD that the proposed COA is for the RACS Working Group to continue work on the practical application of the Endorsement Framework (IT mechanisms etc) and to explore the need for further development of an accreditation framework.

**ITEM 13: CONFIRM ACTION ITEMS AND CLOSE**

18. The Chair confirmed Action Items (refer Enclosure 1), thanked members for their participation and confirmed that the next RACS and DGCHAP meeting will be held as follows:

- a. In-person meeting on 18 Feb 2026 at HMAS Kuttabul, NSW (timings TBC).

19. The Chair thanked RACS Members and DGCHAPs for their contributions and closed the meeting at 1300 hours.

s22

s47F

Reverend  
Chair, RACS

18 Feb 26

s22

s47E(c)

WGCDR  
Secretary

18 Feb 26

**Enclosures:**

1. RACS & DGCHAP 25-04 Meeting - Action Item Matrix
2. Navy Service Report
3. Army Service Report
4. Air Force Service Report
5. ADFCC Report
6. RACS Professional Standards, Accreditation and Endorsements Paper (Version 6)

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ENCLOSURE 1 TO:  
MINUTES OF RACS AND DGCHAP 25-04 MEETING  
HELD ON 5 DEC 25

**RACS & DGCHAP 25-04 MEETING - ACTION ITEM MATRIX**

Action Item #	Responsible	Task	Status	Due
DG25-04-01	ADFCC Chair	ADFCC will consider the RACS paper regarding CHAPPOL edits (as tabled in the RACS Member and DGCHAP 25-04 December meeting) and provide feedback as soon as practicable prior to next RACS Member and DGCHAP meeting, scheduled for 18 Feb 2026.	Open	Feb meeting
DG25-04-02	Secretariat	Noting that <sup>s47</sup> <sub>F</sub> has recently joined RACS, the Secretariat is to consolidate details of RACS discussion, decisions and advice relating to changes to Army's Chaplaincy symbology and to provide to <sup>s47</sup> <sub>F</sub> as soon as practicable prior to next meeting, scheduled for 18 Feb 2026.	Open	Feb meeting
DG25-04-03	RACS Chair	Chair will staff the draft RACS Professional Standards, Accreditation and Endorsements Paper to HJSSD (AVM Lara Gunn) as a model that is agreed by DGCHAPs and RACS Members. Chair will also brief HJSSD that the proposed COA is for the RACS Working Group to continue work on the practical application of the Endorsement Framework (IT mechanisms etc) and to explore the need for further development of an accreditation framework.	Open	Feb meeting

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