

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH



Current Items of Interest

8 March 2024

RSL WV Sub-Branch Ordinary General Meeting on Tuesday 5 March 2024.





THE HON MATT KEOGH MP
MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE PERSONNEL

28 FEBRUARY 2024

MEDIA RELEASE

CONSULTATION NOW OPEN ON VETERANS' LEGISLATION REFORM

The Albanese Government has today released exposure draft legislation which will simplify and harmonise the century old veterans' entitlements, compensation and rehabilitation system.

The current system is difficult to understand and complex to administer. The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide found the system was "so complicated that it adversely affects the mental health of some veterans and can be a contributing factor to suicidality."

Following consultation, the draft legislation will simplify the veteran compensation system, with all claims to be considered under a single Act. Under the new system:

- All new claims for compensation and rehabilitation from the date of commencement would be assessed under a single Act, an improved *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act (MRCA)*;
- The *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988* would be closed to new claims following commencement of the new arrangements;
- All benefits being received under existing schemes will continue unaffected under grand-parenting arrangements. Any new claims after the commencement date (including claims for worsening of pre-existing conditions) will be assessed under the improved MRCA.

There will also be a number of improvements including:

- introduction of a new Additional Disablement Amount to provide similar benefits as the Extreme Disablement Adjustment for those post retirement age;
- making the higher travel allowance under MRCA available to all veterans and for all kilometres travelled;
- providing a pathway for veterans currently only covered by DRCA to qualify for the Specialist Medical Review Council and a Gold Card if they have a new claim accepted and
- increasing the general funeral allowance to \$3,000 with the amount previously set at \$2,000.

Today's release of draft legislation follows the Government's earlier consultation on a pathway to simplify the veterans' legislative framework, and provide better support to veterans and their families. Feedback from that consultation has guided the proposed changes announced today.

I welcome feedback and submissions from the veteran community and general public on the draft Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Bill 2024, submissions close on 28 April 2024.

More information on the proposed legislation changes, and opportunities to provide feedback can be found here – [Veterans' Legislation Reform – Exposure Draft Consultation | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](#)

MEDIA CONTACT: media.team@dva.gov.au



Highgate RSL Sub-Branch ADF Sword Raffle (value c. \$1500) Choice of Navy, Army or Airforce pattern

Highgate RSL Sub-Branch in Western Australia is conducting a raffle with your chance to win this brilliant, brand new **ADF Officer's Sword** with scabbard. Your choice of Navy, Army or Airforce pattern made to military specification. Package includes tan leather sword bag and sword knot. Value c.\$1500 kindly donated by *Sword World*.



To enter, contact any Highgate committee member to buy a ticket **OR** simply click on the link [HERE](#) and fill out the details on the form provided. Tickets are \$20 each with only 300 on sale. The raffle will be drawn 20th May 2024 at 1215pm at Anzac House, Perth WA, with the results of the draw published on 3rd June at: <https://highgate-rsl.org.au/> Upon confirmation of pattern selected, the prize will be couriered FOC to the winning ticket holder.

Permit No. LS221191424

'Connecting Up'

' For the information of members, the Sub-Branch has revitalised its registration with a non-profit community support program called 'Connecting Up'. Through this program, members can access donated and/or significantly discounted computer software products. The products of most likely interest to members would include software from Microsoft and Adobe (both for Windows and Mac operating systems). In some instances, they can be discounted by up to 80%.

The Connecting Up public website can be accessed by members at [User account | Connecting Up](#) where general information about available products can be found. Access to prices cannot always be found at this website, nor can direct orders be placed through it by individuals. This can be done only by our Sub-Branch contact officer who can sign into our account with Connecting Up. If interested, please contact our member, Andre Bobets, on 0412 266 047. He will be happy to provide detailed product pricing details and the associated purchasing protocols.'

Sufferings of War and Service



For Every Drop Shed in Anguish, a new sculpture recognising and commemorating the suffering caused by war and military service, was dedicated at a public ceremony on 22 February 2024.

The Australian War Memorial has worked with veterans and their families and advocates to commission this work of art, which represents those affected by operations and during training; in war and on peacetime service.

Created by artist Alex Seton, *For Every Drop Shed in Anguish* will provide a place at the Memorial for those who have experienced and witnessed the ongoing trauma

that can result from service, and for Memorial visitors to reflect on this experience.

“Every droplet has a unique shape, defined by its delicate surface tension, as if about to burst. Their rounded liquid forms suggest blood, sweat or tears — for every drop ever shed in anguish. Most importantly, when touched these forms reveal themselves to have an inner strength and resilience that provides hope and promise of healing.” - Alex Seton, artist

(courtesyAWM)

Sufferings of War and Service sculpture, *For Every Drop Shed in Anguish*, Dedication Ceremony

[Sufferings of War and Service sculpture, For Every Drop Shed in Anguish, Dedication Ceremony -](#)

Ben Farinazzo

[Ben Farinazzo: Ambassador | Advocate | Speaker](#)

A proud Australian with Italian and Aboriginal heritage, Ben's journey from

serving in the Australian Army to overcoming seemingly insurmountable challenges

is a testament to the strength and resilience of the human spirit. He battled posttraumatic

stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and a broken neck and back, to

represent Australia in indoor rowing and powerlifting at the Invictus Games

Sydney 2018, winning two gold medals.

Ben is an Australia Day ambassador, advocate and speaker for several national charities and organisations to help improve the mental health and wellbeing of

Australians, particularly our veterans. He uses his journey to shine a light of hope on those who are still experiencing times of darkness.

At the core of his journey is his family: his wife and three children, who are his pillars of love, strength, and

support.



Ben's Dedication Ceremony Speech

Introduction

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to share these words on behalf of our committee. Before I begin, we would like to recognise our strong and resilient veteran community, whilst also acknowledging that there are those among us suffering the physical and psychological impact of war and service. We would like to thank Alex Seton for this meaningful sculpture, the first of its kind at the Australian War Memorial. We would also like to acknowledge a special group of people who have shared this journey with us, every step of the way – without their dedication, compassion and support we would not be here – please join me in thanking the team at the Australian War Memorial.

We will remember them. Yet many feel forgotten.

Here at the heart of the Australian War Memorial we remember those who have fallen. The Roll of Honour consists of a long series of bronze panels recording the names of over 103,000 members of the Australian armed forces who have died during, or as a result of, their service.

Attention is rightly given to those who died during war. However, there are many who survived and are left suffering from physical and psychological wounds, and there are many that also have seen and unseen wounds as a result of their service. Many have not been acknowledged and many have felt forgotten.

There are those who suffer physical wounds. Those who have served and wear pins, not only on their chests but in their knees, shoulders, and backs. From jumping in and out of vehicles, ships, subs and aircraft, to lifting and lugging equipment, to being shot at, blown up or smashed up in some bloody accident. Those with ringing ears, choking chests, missing limbs, acquired brain injuries, strokes, broken bones and blown-up bodies. Living with the knowledge that many of these 'scars' will serve as constant reminders of discomfort, disfigurement, and pain.

We acknowledge you. This sculpture serves to remind us that you are not forgotten. There are those who suffer psychological wounds. Those who have served and carry not only packs but anguish, trauma, incessant nightmares, panic attacks, anxiety, depression, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Labels for unseen injuries, that when left untreated can spread like cancer consuming the mind, tearing apart relationships, and destroying lives.

Many have found ways to reclaim their lives but will remain forever changed. Many have battled shame and guilt to seek help, only to be turned away and left feeling as though they have been tossed to the curb and abandoned, not only by those that they served with, but by the country that they fought for.

Tragically, some after carrying the suffering of war and service way too long, way too far – having fought a good fight – have died by suicide. This is a national disaster and in many cases could have been prevented. We as a committee, acknowledge the efforts of those to bring about much-needed change, knowing that it will never bring back our children, our loved ones, or our mates. There is still so much more that needs to be done.

We acknowledge you. This sculpture serves to remind us that you are not forgotten.

These dew-like marble droplets, spread across these green waves reminds us of the ripple effect on families, carers, loved ones, friends – our kids – and the profound impact on our communities, our country and future generations.

Those who check on their friends and loved ones daily, making sure that they have showered and eaten.

Those who reach out to friends because they have reached wit's end and don't know what to do anymore.

Those who just need a space to cry and cry and cry so that they can then wipe back the tears, step back into the house, and get ready for dinner.

To all of you who have tried, and tried, and tried – and nothing seems to work – and you feel empty and alone having lost that loved one forever.

We acknowledge you all. Every single one of you and this sculpture serves to remind us that you and them are not forgotten.

For some this sculpture represents a place to grieve and a timeless reminder of the long-term cost of war and service.



For some the stunning white and red veins of iron ore reflect their journey of blood, sweat and tears and a place of peace, solitude, and reflection.

For some touching these beautiful droplets of discarded marble reveals an inner strength, a resilience, and the gleaming light off the surface surrounded by trees and singing birds brings with it a promise of hope and healing.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by saying, we acknowledge that everyone's life experience is different and that everyone moves through the suffering of war and service in their own way, at their own pace.

We have learnt that the blood, sweat, and tears shed by those who have served, and their loved ones is best done with the support, recognition and embrace of the community.



Whereas in the past there was no place for acknowledgement, no place for our community, us, to come together to recognise the sufferings of war and service – we are grateful that we now have this new sculpture aptly titled *'For Every Drop Shed in Anguish'* to bring our community closer together.

A place and sculpture that serves to remind us that we, our families, our loved ones, our friends, and our mates are not forgotten.

(Photos courtesy AWM)



ANZAC DAY 2024



On Thursday 25 April 2024, the [Australian War Memorial](#) will mark the Gallipoli landings in 1915, as well as commemorating all Australians who have served and died in military operations.

The 2024 Anzac Day commemorative program includes:

- Dawn Service at 5.30 am
- RSL ACT Branch Veterans' March at 9.30 am. Those wishing to participate must read the guidelines and register to march.
- Last Post Ceremony at 4.30 pm

LEARN MORE

<https://www.actrsl.org.au/commemorations>



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care



Hearing Services Program Survey

The Department of Health and Aged Care administers the Australian Government Hearing Services Program. The program provides subsidised high-quality hearing services and devices to eligible Australians.

We want to hear from you



The program has been delivering hearing services for over 20 years. We are reviewing and exploring ways the program can be improved, to make it better for you and simpler for providers.

If you receive subsidised hearing services, we have created an online survey to get your feedback on possible changes to these services.

Timing

The survey will open on **19 February 2024** and close on **1 April 2024**.

It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete and your responses will help inform this review.



Have your say

Use the QR code to go to the survey or visit our website and click the survey link health.gov.au/hear



health.gov.au/hear

Revisit Korea 2024 -

For the information of you and your Korean Veteran Members and their families.

“Dear all,

Hope this finds you well. Thank you for your patience, I am writing to announce Re-visit Korea Program 2024 to you.

The Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs of the Republic of Korea has proposed to invite Veterans and their family members to participate in Revisit Korea 2024.

The proposed dates for this year are April, July and November.

Quotas to Australians can be found on the information attached, which is inclusive of carers.

Please have a thorough read of the information given, and fill out the application form attached and return it to me no later than **Friday 15th March, 2024.**

My email address and postal address can be found below.

Please note that the schedule could be subject to change, then we will inform you as soon as we get updated.

It would be grateful if you could spread this news to anyone else who would be interested and eligible.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have!

Best regards,

Blair


유혜림 Blair Hyelim Yu (Ms.)

주호주국방무관부 실무관 Research Officer

Office of the Defence Attaché,

**Embassy of the Republic of Korea
113 Empire Circuit**

Yarralumla ACT 2600



Relaxation and Stress Management

<Time> 9:30am – 4:30pm
<Date> Friday 15th March
<Location> Wagga
1 day

This program will provide information, skills and tools to assist participants to identify and manage stress and develop relaxation and mindfulness skills that can assist in everyday life.

Topics include:

- understand the stress response and why relaxation is important
- develop skills in relaxation and mindfulness and develop focused attention.

Who can attend:

Current and ex-serving ADF members, partners, adult children.

Registration closes: 01/03/2024




Find out more or register your interest by contacting Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling on **1800 011 046** or visit **www.openarms.gov.au**.

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*A service founded by Vietnam veterans,
now for all veterans and families*

P 04552



Managing pain

<Time> 9:30am – 4:30pm

**<Date> Thursday 21st &
Friday 22nd March**

<Location> Woden

This is an educational and skills based program which assists participants to develop an understanding of pain and focus on strategies to improve their experience of pain.

Topics include:

- develop effective pain management strategies including long-term pain management strategies
- understand the relationship between thoughts, behaviour, lifestyle factors and pain.

Who can attend:

Current and ex-serving ADF members, partners, adult children.

Registration closes: **04/03/2024**



Find out more or register your interest by contacting Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling on **1800 011 046** or visit **www.openarms.gov.au**.

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INVICTUS
AUSTRALIA



Defence Community Sports Day

So many sports, all in one place! Join Invictus Australia for a thrilling Family Sports Day at Tuggeranong Archery Club. Come & Try Archery, Wheelchair Sports, Pickleball, Electronic Sports, Table Tennis, Indoor Rowing, Drone Racing and more... Family friendly festival atmosphere created by organisations passionate about defence. Face painting , fairy floss and fun - see you there!

When: Saturday 23rd March 2024

Time: 11am - 3pm

Where: Tuggeranong Archery Club
299 Soward Way, Greenway, ACT

Who: This is a FREE activity for the Defence Community – Serving, former serving & family members

Email us for more info:
ddimmock@invictusaustralia.org

Ready to have fun!

Register via the QR code



MAJOR
PARTNERS:



NEC



CROSSFIT KARUNA

Intro to CrossFit - West Gosford

Invictus Australia and the team at CrossFit Karuna would like to invite you to an Intro to CrossFit Night. This family friendly event is designed to accommodate people of all abilities and fitness levels. Come on down and see what CrossFit is all about.

- When:** 13 March 2024
- Time:** 6.30pm - 8.00pm
- Where:** CrossFit Karuna
304 Manns Rd, West Gosford NSW
2250
- Who:** This is a FREE activity for the Defence Community – Serving, former serving & family members
- Provided:** Coaches & Equipment, please bring towel and water



Ready to join!

Scan QR code for registration.

Email us for more info:
jmartyn@invictusaustralia.org

INVICTUS
AUSTRALIA


CROSSFIT
KARUNA



12 Week Group Fitness Program with UTS

Invictus Australia and the University of Technology Sydney are seeking dedicated participants to join us on a 12 week fitness journey in Holsworthy on Wednesday mornings. This program is open to all members of the defence community including families and of all fitness levels.

When: 21 Feb 24 - 15 May 24

Time: 9.30am - 10.30am

Where: TBC - Holsworthy LGA

Who: This is a FREE activity for the Defence Community – Serving, former serving & family member

Provided: Exercise fitness program from UTS staff and students.



Ready to join in!

Register via the QR code

Email us for more info:
jmartyn@invictusaustralia.org

**INVICTUS
AUSTRALIA**
UNCONQUERED TOGETHER





(not)parkrun Walking Group

Invictus Australia and Soldier On would like to invite all current and former serving military members and their families to join us for a Not Parkrun Walking Group in Maitland. This group is for all ages and abilities. Join us for a walk followed by a coffee at Lavenders cafe.

When:

Friday 19th Jan, 2nd & 16th Feb, 1st, 15th & 29th Mar, 12th & 26th Apr

Time:

9.30am – 11.00am

Where:

Maitland Riverside Carpark

Who:

All former and current serving military members and their families.

To find out more email jmartyn@invictusaustralia.org

INVICTUS
AUSTRALIA
UNCONQUERED TOGETHER

SOLDIER
ON

medibank
parkrun



**COFFEE CATCH UP
EVERY FRIDAY 10-12**

Members and guests are welcome to join us for a chat and enjoy freshly brewed coffee & cake with former service mates. Every Friday from 10 to 12 in The Corey Room, Level 2A, of the Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley Street, Holder.

The Eddison Day Club will continue to meet for a lunch each Friday at noon until we can once again meet as a reinvigorated Day Club.

Come and join us for lunch at Canberra Irish Club 6 Parkinson St, Weston ACT 2611



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information
or access to our services
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Visit us on the web at
www.rslwoden.org.au

Office hours are
9am-3pm Mon-Fri

PS.

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Interest or The Serviceman?*
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