



Media Release

The Hon Alan Griffin MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

VA081

Wednesday, 9 September 2009

MORE SUICIDE PREVENTION WORKSHOPS FOR VETERAN COMMUNITY

On the eve of World Suicide Prevention Day, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, is encouraging more of the veteran and ex-service community to take advantage of the expansion in the number of suicide prevention workshops available to them.

The Australian Government's VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service has increased the number of free Operation *Life* suicide prevention workshops for people who are concerned about family, friends, mates or others in the veteran and ex-service community.

“So far 119 participants have been trained in suicide prevention strategies at workshops over the past three months and I encourage more people in the veteran and ex-service community to register their interest in attending,” Mr Griffin said.

Operation *Life* is a strategy to prevent suicide and promote good mental health and resilience across the veteran community. Its major components include workshops providing introductory, intensive and refresher courses in suicide prevention. Welfare, pension officers and others from ex-service organisations and the veteran community are encouraged to attend.

Mr Griffin said World Suicide Prevention Day provided an ideal opportunity to promote the Government's work in suicide prevention and mental health, especially for veterans.

“The Government made a commitment to enhance suicide prevention and it has done this by expanding Operation *Life* and providing an additional \$9.5 million to implement the recommendations made following a major study by Professor David Dunt into suicide in the ex-service community.

“This is in addition to the Government's commitment of \$83 million over four years to address gaps identified in mental health care in the ADF and transition through discharge,” Mr Griffin said.

“Operation *Life* workshops are not treatment programs but are designed to help members of the veteran community to recognise someone who might be having thoughts of suicide and to link them in with appropriate help.”

To find out more about Operation *Life* workshops, contact VVCS on **1800 011 046** (during normal business hours) or visit www.at-ease.dva.gov.au.

World Suicide Prevention Day is held on 10 September each year to promote worldwide commitment and action to prevent suicide.

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The VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service can be contacted 24 hours a day, seven days a week on **1800 011 046**. To receive the Minister's media releases automatically by **email** subscribe at minister.dva.gov.au/subscribe.htm