



Media Release

Senator the Hon Michael Ronaldson
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC
Special Minister of State

Senator the Hon David Johnston
Minister for Defence

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VA094

VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR DEFENCE COMMUNITY

A video reminding Australian Defence Force members that support is available no matter what stage of their career they are at was launched today at the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Veterans' Mental Health.

The video provides a platform to start a new conversation with serving members, with the central message being that while you may not need help now, you might need it down the track and there are many avenues through which you can get help.

This video stresses that DVA and Defence have a shared responsibility to look after defence members and their families now and into the future and it is a responsibility that both Departments take seriously.

The video is one of many activities being rolled-out in the coming weeks as part of a wider education campaign to re-engage the defence and veteran community and their families with information on the support and services available to them.

The Government is committed to tackling the mental health challenges facing veterans and their families. Since being elected, the Government has expanded assistance for veterans and their families to the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS), increased access to treatment for mental health conditions and expanded the reach of the Department's social media and online assistance presence.

To that end, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs is also launching the *Support when you need it* campaign, which is targeted at new veterans and encourages them to contact the VVCS in tough times and utilise the services available to them.

VVCS counsellors have an understanding of military culture and can help to address concerns such as relationship and family issues, anxiety, depression, anger, sleep difficulties, PTSD and alcohol or substance misuse, with the aim of finding effective solutions for improved mental health and wellbeing.

DVA and Defence have also jointly funded a \$5 million Transition and Wellbeing Research study to improve how we help veterans now and into the future.

To view the video visit www.youtube.com/user/DVAAus
For more information on the Review of Military Compensation Arrangements, visit the DVA website www.dva.gov.au

Media inquiries: Senator Ronaldson: Jordi Procel 02 6277 7820 or 0448 232 908
Senator Johnston: Rebecca Horton 02 6277 7800 or 0477 389 554
Department of Veterans' Affairs Media: 02 6289 6203

Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) and Veterans Line can be reached 24 hours a day across Australia for crisis support and free and confidential counselling. Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 8 8241 4546)

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