



Minutes

Members	
Liz Cosson	Chair, Secretary
Natasha Cole	A/g Deputy Chair, Deputy Secretary, Veterans' and Families Services
Kate Pope	Deputy President Repatriation Commission
Don Spinks	Repatriation Commissioner
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocacy
Stuart Smith	Defence Engagement Commissioner
Professor Jenny Firman	Chief Health Officer
Mark Harrigan	Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operation Officer Division
Leanne Cameron	First Assistant Secretary
Mark Garrity	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement and Support Services Division
Janice Silby	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Clients' Benefits Division
Rachel Goddard	First Assistant Secretary, Transformation Division
Veronica Hancock	First Assistant Secretary, Veterans Services Design Division
Presenters	
Graeme Rochow	Assistant Secretary, Finance and Property Branch – <i>Item 3.1</i>
Roger Winzenberg	Assistant Secretary, People Services Branch – <i>Item 3.2</i>
Catherine McDonald	Assistant Secretary, Communications Branch – <i>Item 3.4</i>
Monita Lal	Assistant Secretary, Channel Strategy & Digital Enablement Branch – <i>Item 5</i>
Liane Pettitt	Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary and Governance Branch – <i>Item 12</i>
Bronwyn Worswick	General Counsel - <i>Item 18</i>
Observers	
Tim Bayliss	Chief of Staff, Office of the Secretary and Commissions
Traci-Ann Byrnes	First Assistant Secretary, Department of Defence
Secretariat	
Maureen s 47F	Director, Governance and Ministerial Events Section
Peggy s 47F	Assistant Director, Governance and Ministerial Events Section
Apologies	
Mark Fraser	First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations, Communications & Parliamentary Division
Vicki Rundle	Deputy Chair, Deputy Secretary, Veterans' and Families Services

Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were **NOTED** from Mark Fraser and Vicki Rundle. Members declared no conflicts of interest.



The Chair discussed, and sought feedback from members regarding the revised organisational structure. The members advised that they had discussed the proposed changes with the senior staff in their branches, including the placement of the Procurement and Grants functions moving to the Chief Finance Officer (CFO). It was noted that key functions would be discussed with the new CFO on his commencement on 11 March 2021. The Chair noted the comments provided and requested that conversations continue within the branches of the upcoming structure changes.

It was noted that the two new divisions, Portfolio Implementation and Assurance and the Chief Financial Officer would report directly to the Secretary.

The Chair provided members with an update on recent discussions and items at the Secretaries Board Meeting.

The Chair advised the members that the DVA Strategic Priorities will be the focus of the upcoming Executive Leadership Group workshop. The outcomes from those discussions will feed into the new DVA Strategic Plan.

Agenda Item 2 Minutes and actions of previous meeting

Members **ENDORSED** the minutes from the meeting on 11 December 2020 with no changes.

Members **AGREED** to close action items; 2020/A126, 2020/A128 and 2020/A129.

The Chair requested that Item 2020/A41 be reviewed with an option to finalise.

Action items 2020/A41, 2020/A124, 2020/A125 and 2020/A127 were to remain in progress.

No.	Decision
2021/D01	Members ENDORSED the minutes from the meeting on 11 December 2020.

Agenda Item 3 COO Update

Agenda Item 3.1 Financial Snapshot and Budget Pressures

Members were provided with a high level summary of the Departmental financial position as at 11 February 2021. Members **NOTED** the 11 February 2021 financial snapshot and the summary page provided. Members **NOTED** the January administered financial position and the commentary explaining the results.

Members **DISCUSSED** and **NOTED** the pressures and opportunities presented by Divisions. Members also **DISCUSSED** the priority spends presented by the Divisions and noted the priorities discussed. The decisions taken will be summarised and provided to the Secretariat by Mark Harrigan and Graeme Rochow.

Agenda Item 3.2 Workforce Information

Members received an update on the current workforce situation, and **DISCUSSED** the mid-year workforce dashboard. Members were advised that Indigenous staff and staff with a disability are more likely to identify themselves in the Census than when completing the initial paperwork when entering DVA. This results in difficulties with recording actual staffing figures.



Members discussed and noted the concerns around the retention of staff, particularly graduates. This retention issue might be linked to staffing caps and budget pressures within DVA. The members agreed that a strategy around recruitment and staff retention is a priority, and the Chair will meet to discuss these matters with Mark Harrigan & Roger Winzenberg.

Members were advised that only 77 per cent of staff have a current performance agreement in place. The members requested they be provided with the names of the staff without agreements in their branches so that this can be resolved. The Chair requested that out dated staff Performance Agreement details be sent to the appropriate FAS's for follow up.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A01	Send out-dated Staff Performance Agreement details to the appropriate FAS's for follow up.	Roger Winzenberg

Agenda Item 3.3 Integrity Framework

Members were provided an update of the draft Department of Veterans' Affairs Integrity Framework which has been developed in consultation with the People Services Branch, the Integrity Assurance and Security Branch, the Legal Services and Audit Branch. Members were advised that the drive behind developing the framework came out of a paper driven by Stephen Sedgwick AO which made 10 recommendations. Members noted that the report is viewed from a whole of government perspective, confirming the importance of a partnership across all agencies.

Members **NOTED** that the proposed Framework would form the basis of a standing item at the DVA Integrity Sub Committee (ISC) meetings, which will provide regular updates to EMB.

Members discussed ways to implement a method to measure integrity. Members discussed methods of communication to the whole organisation around culture; suggestions included training and upskilling of team leaders and middle management, and a statement being added to Performance Agreements.

The Chair requested that General Counsel and Roger McNally in consultation with the Chair of the ISC collaborate on a way to measure integrity within the DVA workforce.

Members **ENDORSED** the proposed Department of Veterans' Affairs Integrity Framework and governance reporting mechanisms.

Members **NOTED** that the Australian Public Service Commission 'Integrity in the Australian Public Service' e-learning module will be included in the Department of Veterans' Affairs mandatory training when available.

No.	Decision
2021/D02	Members ENDORSED the proposed Department of Veterans' Affairs Integrity Framework and governance reporting mechanisms.



No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A02	General Counsel, Roger McNally in consultation with the Chair of the ISC collaborate on a way to measure integrity within the DVA workforce.	Bronwyn Worswick Roger McNally

Agenda Item 3.4 Strategic Communications Framework

Members **NOTED** how the Framework outlined has split DVA's communication approach into four key themes, allowing focus on these areas and ensuring communication is targeted and more effective. The new model allows flexibility and a more targeted communication style, ensuring a focus on strategically communicating key DVA initiatives.

Members discussed and provided feedback on the proposed Framework and Key Narratives. It was noted that the Department does not assist veterans in finding a job after leaving the military. Mark Harrigan suggested using purpose 1, 2, 3, and 4 theme for focus, so not to cause confusion with the general-purpose statements that appear in the Annual Report. Stuart Smith raised the need for a Vision Statement with the Chair advising that the Framework was still to be reviewed by the Minister. Transition Seminars could also be included in the Communication Channels or Communication Products and Face to Face to Communication Channels.

Members **NOTED** that the new model is a living document that allows flexibility and a more targeted communication style, ensuring a focus on strategically communicating key DVA initiatives.

EMB **ENDORSES** the Strategic Communications Framework in-principle, noting the Strategic Plan will evolve following the budget and Minister's session with the Communications team.

No.	Decision
2021/D03	EMB ENDORSES the Strategic Communications Framework in-principle, noting the Strategic Plan will evolve following the budget and Minister's session with the Communications team.

Agenda Item 4 Policy Implementation Committee of Cabinet

Members were advised of the establishment of the Policy Implementation Committee of Cabinet (PIC) which was announced by the Prime Minister October 2020. The PIC is chaired by the Prime Minister and the intention is to track implementation of government initiatives across all portfolios to ensure they are delivering outcomes for Australians.

The PIC considers a whole of government partnership and solutions focused approach to support the identification of a clear objective and metrics to track progress; early identification of major risks to policy delivery; cross-portfolio integration and consistency of approach; accountability and co-ownership; and the implementation focus (PIC is not a forum for spending or policy decisions).

Members **NOTED** that DVA is scheduled to present to PIC on 13 April 2021 about the veteran support system including services provided to veterans and families. Members agreed that this presents a valuable opportunity to shape the agenda and future meeting content.



Members **NOTED** that the Policy Implementation Committee of Cabinet (PIC) would now sit with First Assistant Secretary, Traci-Ann Byrnes.

Agenda Item 5 VCR Strategy Update

Agenda Item 5.1 VCR Channel Strategy

Members **NOTED** the update provided on the revised Channel Strategy which has informed year 4 work and planning for Veteran Centric Reform in years 5 and 6. The intent of the Channel Strategy is to provide a view of how DVA can bring together its channels to deliver a consistent experience for veterans and their families. The strategy looks at how to optimise what DVA has for our clients and staff to achieve this.

Members discussed channel methods used and the changes proposed, noting minor changes such as toning down the language on slide 4 Intense Service Support and moving priority 4 to priority 1.

Janice Silby raised questions around single view of person and workflow managers as well as managing workloads for staff, and whether this needed to be captured. Also raised was the consolidated staff experience, concerning vulnerable indicators for staff, and when staff should be phoning clients.

Members **ENDORSED** focus areas of the revised strategy.

Members agreed to Monita Lal, Assistant Secretary Channel Strategy and Digital Enablement work with Catherine McDonald, Assistant Secretary Communications to develop and engagement strategy.

The Chair requested that Monita Lal, Assistant Secretary Channel Strategy and Digital Enablement work with Catherine McDonald, Assistant Secretary Communications to develop and engagement strategy.

No.	Decision
2021/D04	Members ENDORSED the focus areas of the revised VCR Channel Strategy noting the discussion on the language on slide 4.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A03	Monita Lal, Assistant Secretary Channel Strategy and Digital Enablement work with Catherine McDonald, Assistant Secretary Communications to develop an engagement strategy.	Monita Lal Catherine McDonald

Agenda Item 5.2 Correspondence Strategy

Members were provided with an update on the draft Correspondence Strategy. The correspondence strategy takes a deeper dive into the approach to deliver correspondence as part of the overall channel strategy. Specifically, looking at how DVA can rapidly use digital to shift away from our paper-channels.

Members **ENDORSED** the Department of Veterans' Affairs Correspondence Strategy.

No.	Decision
2021/D05	Members ENDORSED the Department of Veterans' Affairs Correspondence Strategy



Agenda Item 6 Implementation, assurance and measuring our performance

Agenda Item 6.1 VCR – Following Gateway ANAO

Members **NOTED** that in recent months the Veteran Centric Reform - Putting Veterans and Their Families First (VCR PVFF) Program has undergone multiple external assurance activities including the 2020 Mid Stage Program Review known as a Gateway Review. Members also **NOTED** the Australian National Audit Office review into the Effectiveness of the Department of Veterans' Affairs planning and management of the Veteran Centric Reform Program.

Members **DISCUSSED** the outcomes of the recent reviews of the Veteran Centric Reform - Putting Veterans and Their Families First Program. Members **AGREED** the need for a stronger reporting and action orientated management approach to Veteran Centric Reform - Putting Veterans and Their Families First projects.

No.	Decision
2021/D06	Members AGREED the need for a stronger reporting and action orientated management approach to Veteran Centric Reform - Putting Veterans and Their Families First projects.

The Agenda Item 6.2 Corporate Plan

Members received an update on implementation, assurance, and measuring DVA performance measures following internal (KPMG) and external Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) audits in 2019-20.

Members **NOTED** the audit focus (both internal and ANAO) on DVA corporate plan and performance statements for 2019-20 that identified significant lessons for the Department including improving our Corporate Plan, focusing on performance measures, key activities, risk analysis and capabilities. Members were advised that continued demonstration of updating measures is required to satisfy the ANAO, who are returning to DVA in December 2021.

Members **NOTED** the implication of these findings and the need for a cultural shift across the Department to use the Corporate Plan and performance reporting process to reflect and improve the Department's governance and planning.

Members were advised of the importance of timings to our reporting cycles, and suggestions were made to review other department's cycles for guidance.

Members also **NOTED** that Finance & Property Branch will work with business areas to review all performance measures and provide some future options for Executive Management Board consideration.

The Chair **NOTED** the importance of this matter and requested it be added to the Special EMB meeting agenda, prior to the ELG workshop day.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A04	Reporting Corporate Plan to be added to the Special EMB meeting agenda, prior to the ELG workshop day.	Secretariat Kent Gawler



Agenda Item 7 Review of Claims Processes & Procedures

Members **NOTED** the draft report of the Review of Compensation Claims Processes and Procedures and high-level implantation plan.

Members **NOTED** that in November 2020, the Secretary requested a Review of Compensation Processes and Procedures be undertaken by Luke Brown, Deputy Commissioner Tasmania, to ascertain if any changes could be recommended to assist with managing the growing number of applications in the compensation claims area. The draft report makes 7 recommendations which the members reviewed, and will be provided to the Secretary in a brief for final approval, along with the high-level implementation plan. Actions outlined will commence and be completed within the indicative timeframes.

Members **NOTED** that increasing backlogs and times taken to process for DVA compensation claims is a sensitive issue for various stakeholders and under intense scrutiny. While the report makes recommendations to assist with more efficient processing, it does not address fundamental structural issues, such as funding mechanisms. Members were advised to focus on parts of the claims process where there may be a bottleneck, in the first instance.

Members **NOTED** that a second stage of the review process will commence. It is intended that this second stage of the review will look at potential for work unit reorganisation and make suggestions for amendments to mechanical or administrative provisions of DVA administered compensation legislation (i.e. cost neutral) in order to improve administration and claimant experience.

Members **AGREED** that the recommendations from the report into Claims Processing be scheduled for presentation to the Repatriation/MRC Commission meeting.

The Commissioners frequently liaise with veterans and clients on various items including claims processing and there is a need for accurate information. The Chair requested that Key points around transition and claims processing be provided to the Commissioners. The Department will continue to work with Defence around early notification of transitioning members.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A05	Members agreed that the recommendations from the report into Claims Processing be scheduled for presentation to the Repatriation/MRC Commission meeting.	Luke Brown

Agenda Item 8 Strategic Items for Future EMB

This item was deferred until guidance can be provided from the Repatriation Commission members. The Commissions will meet to discuss the forward work agenda for Commissions with the Chair requesting any strategic issues be provided for discussion.

Agenda Item 9 Benefits Realisation Update (SI)

Members **NOTED** that Benefits Realisation papers about the wide suite of actions and benefits related to medico-legal initiatives, and medical evidence in general, were presented and discussed at the January 2020 and July 2020 Executive Membership Board meetings. The current paper provided an update on the



2020-21 financial year Medical Evidence Expenditure and the progress of the Medical Information Gathering Services procurement.

Members **NOTED** that the expenditure patterns and savings indicate the focus on the use of existing medical evidence and compliance with the DVA policy on the use of treating doctors are continuing to achieve their aim.

Members **NOTED** that medical evidence expenditure continues to meet savings expectations; and **DISCUSSED** the procurement status for new contract arrangements for medical information gathering which will be implemented by August 2021.

Members **AGREED** to remove this update from the EMB Forward Work Plan, as this is now an implemented program.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A06	Secretariat to remove this update from the EMB Forward Work Plan, as this is now an implemented program.	Secretariat

Agenda Item 10 Departmental Priorities & Government Commitment Update (SI)

Members **NOTED** the update on the Departmental Priorities and Government Commitments and Minister's Priorities. Members were advised that this is the first report to EMB that now includes Budget Measures.

Members were advised that of the 34 Commitments, 14 have been completed, 17 are on track, 1 has COVID impact and 2 are at risk – VCR and Anti Malaria Assistance.

Members were advised that these quarterly reports are provided to the Prime Minister, and recommend greater accuracy.

Agenda Item 11 Commissions Considerations & Decisions

Members **NOTED** the information provided on Commissions Considerations and Decisions for the Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (Commissions') which were circulated Out-of-Session.

Member were advised that four submissions have been circulated for urgent Out-of-Session decisions by members. These will be formally ratified at the meeting scheduled for Thursday, 18 February 2021. The next Commission Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Friday, 26 February 2021.

Agenda Item 12 Other Business

There was no other business raised by members.

The following items were below the line, information updates. Members were asked to read and **NOTE** the information provided, and only discussed by exception.

Agenda Item 13 Compensation Claims Update Dashboard

Members received an update on the Compensation Claims Dashboard. Members **NOTED** that progress with claims during December 2020 has been impacted by the shorter reporting period, the shutdown and



the standard practice of not sending unfavourable decisions in the weeks leading to Christmas. Furthermore, staff and hence processing have been impacted by the major release of Process Direct and associated system errors.

Members were advised that the teams continue to refine claims allocation strategies, utilise existing liability capabilities and build MRCA/DRCA skills and Tri Act capabilities to deal with the MRCA IL claims backlog.

Agenda Item 14 Client Interactions Dashboard

Members **NOTED** that due to the scheduled dates for Executive Management Board (EMB) meetings in 2021, there may be a lag of one month in the Client Interactions Dashboard information provided to EMB.

The dashboard provided is produced by consolidating existing monthly reporting metrics across the CESS division, and presenting them in a Client Benefits Division reporting template customised to reflect the nature of CESS business. The dashboard provides a wide cross-section of data covering the provision of general information, access to specific programs, as well as high level client supports.

Members **NOTED** the productivity across the Client Engagement and Support Services Division for the month of December 2020.

Agenda Item 15 Client Feedback Update (SI)

Members **NOTED** the monthly Client Feedback update is produced by extracting feedback data recorded in the Client Feedback Management System. The Feedback update provides a wide cross section of feedback data covering complaints, compliments and suggestions across divisions, feedback categories, performance standards as well as trends over time.

Members **NOTED** that the paper provided was completed using data current as at 18 January 2021.

Agenda Item 16 People Engagement (SI)

This item was not discussed as it was below the line and a verbal update only. Members **NOTED** that this item now sits within the Chief Operating Officer Division.

The Chair requested this item be removed as a standing item on the EMB Forward Work Plan.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A07	Secretariat to remove this update from the EMB Forward Work Plan.	Secretariat

Agenda Item 17 Internal Audits (SI)

Members **NOTED** that the Internal Audit progress on the Departments addressing of Internal Audit recommendation is monitored by the Audit and Risk Committee. The Internal Audit Service Provider is now Ernst and Young, who are going through their on boarding process. The next Internal Audit follow-up update provided to the Integrity Sub-Committee will be tasked out to the Branch Coordinators in February, for the May meeting. Members were advised that there have been 13 Internal Audit Reports completed since the previous update to the Executive Management Board.

Members **NOTED** that the ANAO Audit of the Veterans Centric Reform (VCR) Performance began in July 2020 and has concluded with DVA receiving the S19 Report in December 2021. DVA is validating the



information contained in the S19 Report to respond to the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) by 1 February 2021. Overall, the ANAO concluded that the implementation of the VCR Program to date has been largely effective. DVA's planning for reform was partially effective with DVA significantly improving the provision of services to veterans.

Members **NOTED** that remediation work is continuing and tracking well for the open C Financial Statement findings and 2 bilateral performance audit findings. The 2020-2021 Financial Statement Audit is underway with fieldwork ramping up over the next two months.

The Chair requested that this item be listed as a standing item above the line at future EMB meetings. Secretariat to note and action.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A08	Secretariat to list this item as a standing item above the line at future EMB meetings.	Secretariat

Agenda Item 18 Governance Committee Reports (SI)

Members **NOTED** the topics discussed at the February committee meetings. The Client Services Committee was held Friday, 12 February 2021, Policy Committee was held Thursday, 4 February 2021 and the People & Culture Committee meeting will be held Friday, 26 February 2021.

Members **NOTED** that as requested in 11 December 2020 Executive Management Board (EMB) meeting (2020/A129), the EMB will now receive a monthly updates on the Portfolio Investment and Implementation Committee (PIIC) meetings. The PIIC meeting was held Wednesday, 3 February 2021.

Agenda Item 19 EMB Forward Work Plan (SI)

Members **NOTED** the update provided on the EMB Forward Work Plan for 2021 and had no additional items to add for future meetings.

The meeting closed at 4.35pm. The next EMB meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 9 March 2021.

Special EMB – Pandemic Decision Summary

Monday 11 January 2021

Revisit Defence Notifications Distribution List – Secretary

Decision One – Revisit the 21 December 2020 discussion on the DVA distribution list for Defence Notifications

The Special EMB was asked to:

1. **Discuss** the DVA distribution list for Defence Notifications.

OUTCOME:

Item to come back for discussion and agreement at Special EMB once actions are complete.

ACTIONS:

1. Leanne Cameron to develop a process map of the Defence Notifications and Hot Issues Briefs (HIB) process for presentation at Special EMB.
2. Leanne Cameron to recommend appropriate recipients for the distribution list for Notification of Casualty (NOTICAS) and Fatality Casualty (FATALCAS) Defence Notifications, and for the distribution list for notifications of suspected suicide/misadventure identified through other avenues. This will be provided for review and agreement at Special EMB.
3. Leanne Cameron to recommend appropriate recipients for the distribution list for Hot Issues Briefs (HIBs) for review and agreement at Special EMB.
4. Leanne Cameron to address the possibility of one area having responsibility for all of these distribution lists.
5. Liane Pettitt to seek extension on tasking from Minister's Office on DVA's Bereavement Package.

Notes:

- The Secretary noted that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the distribution lists for the NOTICAS and FATALCAS notifications as well as HIBs, as the conversation that occurred on 21 December 2020 had led to some confusion. The distribution list that was finalised at that meeting appeared to be the HIB distribution list rather than the Defence Notifications distribution list.
- It was noted that the Defence Notifications distribution list should be appropriately limited, whereas the distribution list for HIBs should be broader as HIBs should be used for a broader range of issues than just suspected suicide/misadventure.
- Leanne Cameron noted that once a Defence Notification is received, the Veteran Service Officers (VSOs), Triage & Connect or Service Coordination teams reach out to other relevant areas (such as CBD), therefore it can be a more contained list which doesn't require a broad range of Assistant Secretaries and First Assistant Secretaries on the list.
- Kate Pope noted that this would be in line with privacy requirements, ensuring that information is only received where it is relevant to the position and/or there is a need for that person to action something in relation to the notification.
- Stuart Smith and Gwen Cherne noted that the Defence Engagement Commissioner and the Veteran Family Advocate should be included in the distribution list for Defence Notifications as relevant to their roles and stakeholder engagement responsibilities.

- Leanne Cameron noted that this could be looked at in a layered approach; initial notifications from Defence should be contained to a small number of individuals who need to immediately action them. These individuals then reach out to who needs to be contacted. Differentiation between FATALCAS and NOTCAS is not required as these are closely monitored and are actioned quickly. It will be good to map this and then have another discussion as we are talking around several different issues that are being conflated.
- Stuart Smith recommended that wherever possible, it would be best for positions (rather than people) to be nominated as part of these distribution lists – noting that this might not align with actual email protocols/creation.
- There was discussion of the tasking from the Minister's Office to provide visibility to him on what DVA provides to families following death/suicide of a veteran. Leanne Cameron noted that this will need to be revisited as the tasking that came through to her was different and the cleared response is therefore not appropriate and will be revisited.
- The Secretary asked about Deputy Commissioner involvement in supporting families, particularly in the case of suspected suicide/misadventure, and requested that this be addressed as part of the response to the Minister's Office.



Minutes

Members	
Liz Cosson	Chair, Secretary
Vicki Rundle	Deputy Chair, Deputy Secretary, Veterans' and Families' Services
Kate Pope	Deputy President, Strategic Policy and Planning
Don Spinks	Veteran Engagement Commissioner
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Stuart Smith	Defence Engagement Commissioner
Professor Jenny Firman	Chief Health Officer
Mark Harrigan	Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operating Officer Division
Leanne Cameron	First Assistant Secretary, Mental Health and Wellbeing Services Review
Tim Evans	For A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement and Support Services Division
Natasha Cole	First Assistant Secretary, Clients' Benefits Division
Traci-Ann Byrnes	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations & Transformation Division
Veronica Hancock	First Assistant Secretary, Veterans' & Families' Policy Division
Glen Casson	Chief Finance Officer Division
Presenters	
Roger Winzenberg	Assistant Secretary, People Services Branch – <i>Item 3.1 & 3.2</i>
Sharon s 47F	Director, People Services Branch – <i>Item 3.2</i>
Janice Silby	Assistant Secretary, Income Support – <i>Item 5</i>
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff & Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance Branch – <i>Item 8</i>
Observers	
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff & Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance Branch
Secretariat	
Maureen s 47F	Director, Governance and Ministerial Events Section
Peggy s 47F	Assistant Director, Governance and Ministerial Events Section
Faith s 47F	A/g Senior Secretariat Officer
Apologies	
Mark Garrity	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement and Support Services Division
Mark Fraser	First Assistant Secretary

Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest - Minutes and actions of previous meeting

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and an apology from Mark Garrity was **NOTED**. Tim Evans represented Mark Garrity. Members declared no conflicts of interest. The Chair thanked members for their support with the Senate Estimates hearings. The Chair opened the meeting by providing a high level update to members on items being considered by Government as part of the Budget process.



The Chair also discussed recent developments in Parliament regarding the motion calling for a Royal Commission into Veterans Suicide.

Members discussed the need for dedicated resourcing if a Royal Commission is established. .

Members **ENDORSED** the minutes from the meeting on 15 February 2021 with an amendment to the apologies.

Members **AGREED** to close action items; 2020/A41, 2020/A124, 2021A/01, 2021/A05, 2021/A06, 2021/A07 & 2021/A08. Action items 2021/A02, 2021/A03 & 2021/A04 were to remain in progress.

No.	Decision
2021/D09	Members ENDORSED the minutes from the meeting on 15 February 2021 with an amendment to the apologies.

Agenda Item 2 Financial Snapshot

Members were provided with a high level summary of the Departmental financial position as at 23 March 2021. Members **NOTED** the 23 March 2021 financial snapshot and the summary page provided. Members **NOTED** the 28 February 2021 administered financial position and the explanatory commentary provided.

Members also **DISCUSSED** the priority spends presented by the Divisions and at the EMB 15 February meeting. Members to provide any further priority spends to the Chief Finance Officer for review.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A05	Members to provide any further priority spends to the Chief Finance Officer for review.	Members

Agenda Item 3.1 Workforce Information

Members **NOTED** the 28 February 2021 Workforce Dashboard and the data relating to the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) diversity cohorts, including variances that exist between our SAP data and census data relevant to these cohorts.

Members were advised that the Australian Public Service Commission has set diversity cohorts targets for agencies to meet. These cohorts are Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander, Disability and Generational Equity & Gender Equity.

DVA tracks the number of staff in its various diversity cohorts and members **NOTED** the variances between the data in the Human Resources Management System and the recent Census results.

Agenda Item 3.2 Diversity in DVA

Members were provided an update on Diversity projects, broader Australian Public Service (APS) Diversity and Inclusion initiatives and a proposed resourcing profile to effectively progress this work within DVA.



The APSC released its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce strategy in July 2020. In response, DVA released the Gurru Ngali strategy that establishes the work required to achieve the outcomes set by the APSC.

Members **NOTED** that the APSC strategy has three strategic focus areas, Cultural Integrity, Career Pathways and Career Development and Advancement. There are a total of 23 projects within the APSC Strategy to be achieved by the end of 2021 and a total of 63 outcomes to be achieved by 2024.

Members **NOTED** that as at 28 February 2021 DVA was underrepresented in each classification except SES. Significant work will be undertaken in the coming months and years to create an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee Value Proposition, a proactively managed talent pipeline and increase our identified roles.

Members **DISCUSSED** the current resourcing for the Diversity & Inclusion team, which consists of an ongoing APS6 and an APS5. The team requires more senior representation at the EL1 level to lead engagement with the APSC and other APS agencies, guide DVA's commitments in its diversity strategies, and support the existing staff. In addition to the permanent EL1, an APS6 and APS5 are required to deliver strategic outcomes relating to Disability, Diversity pathways, Gender, Mature age and LGBTQIA+ initiatives. The current team of two is at capacity delivering Gurru Ngali initiatives, the diversity calendar and the diversity communications/administration. These APS positions are proposed as non-ongoing for a period of 12-18 months to establish and drive key strategy outcomes.

Members **NOTED** the Diversity Update and key initiatives, and **AGREED** to additional resourcing, including a component of temporary resourcing, to progress required diversity initiatives.

No.	Decision
2021/D10	Members AGREED to additional resourcing, including a component of temporary resourcing, to progress required diversity initiatives.

Agenda Item 4 Risk Management Report

Members **NOTED** the Enterprise Risk update as at 22 February 2021, and **NOTED** the Fraud Policy function move to the Integrity Assurance and Security Branch is now finalised.

Members also **NOTED** the Comcover 2021 Risk Management Benchmarking Program and Survey update.

Members were provided with an update on the Chief Risk Officer role and the Department of Veterans' Affairs Risk Policy. Following the latest organisation restructure and Mark Fraser's extended leave, the role of DVA's Chief Risk Officer will need to be allocated to a new SES officer. Members discussed and **AGREED** that this responsibility will be attached to the role of Chief Operating Officer. As the current Chief Operating Officer, Mark Harrigan will be DVA's Chief Risk Officer.



Agenda Item 5 Student & Income Support

Members were provided with a status report update across the incidents since the November 2020 Income Support Phase 1 (Ph1) Major Release and the overarching status of the Year 4 Income Support Phase 2 Project. Members **NOTED** the status of incidents since the November 2020 Income Support Phase 1 Major Release and areas of concern.

Members were advised that an area of concern has been on incidents surrounding letters, with over 8,617 letters awaiting to be sent to clients whilst awaiting fixes. There is an active resolution plan to ensure fixes are applied on a regular basis and has been escalated to senior executive to ensure the letter fixes remain as the priority.

Members **NOTED** the issues arising ahead of the March 2021 Statutory Increase (SI). Since the November 2020 Major Release, client's income and asset data were moved into Process Direct. There have been approximately 6,000 clients processed and subsequently there has been significant number of high priority issues raised that have impacted some of these veterans' entitlements. Services Australia are continuing to resolve as many priority issues as possible as there is a risk that clients could be incorrectly paid. Work is being undertaken to identify the clients impacted.

Members **NOTED** the refresher training that has been made available and on-site support for staff since the November 2020 Income Support Phase 1 (Ph1) Major Release. Over the course of January and February 2021, 24 refresher training sessions were conducted with 154 staff in total who attended.

Members **NOTED** the delivery status for Year 4 Income Support Phase 2 Project.

The Chair on behalf of the EMB members, thanked Janice Silby, Assistant Secretary Income Support Branch on the successful results and achievements within the team.

Agenda Item 6 Transformation Report

Members were provided with an update on key transformation activities and **NOTED** that the Veteran Centric Reform – Putting Veterans and their Families First (VCR-PVFF) Program is progressing at pace toward the end of Year 4 of VCR.

Members **NOTED** additional functionality in MyService will continue to be developed. Three releases occurred in March 2021. The transfer of the remaining functionalities from MyAccount to MyService is scheduled for June 2021 and that MyAccount will be decommissioned in 2021-22 financial year.

Members **NOTED** the Australian National Audit Office report into the effectiveness of the DVA planning and management of the VCR PVFF Program was received on 22 December 2020. The report was tabled in Parliament on 9 March 2021. Four recommendations were made targeting: strengthening business cases; improving processes for addressing the programs' under-performance; refining the use of risk processes; and increasing benefits reporting. DVA has accepted all recommendations.



Agenda Item 7 Other Business

There was no other business raised by members.

The following items were below the line, information updates. Members were asked to read and **NOTE** the information provided, and only discussed by exception.

Agenda Item 8 Departmental Priorities & Government Commitment Update (SI)

Members **NOTED** the update on the Departmental Priorities and Government Commitments and Minister's Priorities. Of the 34 Government Commitments, 15 have been completed, 17 are on track, one is at risk (Assistance for Veterans Prescribed anti-Malarial Medications) and one has been cancelled due to COVID 10 restrictions.

Parliamentary and Governance Branch are working with Strategic Policy to develop a 2021-22 Departmental Strategic Priorities Report. This information will be provided to EMB member's out-of-session.

Agenda Item 9 Compensation Claims Update Dashboard

Members received an update on the Compensation Claims Dashboard. Members **NOTED** the focus this year is on MRCA and DRCA IL claims and associated backlog.

Agenda Item 10 Client Interactions Dashboard

Members received an update on the Client Interactions Dashboard. Members **NOTED** the productivity across the Client Engagement & Services Division for the month of February 2021.

Agenda Item 11 Client Feedback Update (SI)

Members **NOTED** the monthly Client Feedback update for February 2021.

Agenda Item 12 Strategic ICT

Members **NOTED** the Shared Services & Technology Front Door initiative to better support Department of Veterans' Affairs staff with ICT and shared service.

Agenda Item 13 Governance Committee Reports (SI)

Members **NOTED** the topics discussed at the February committee meetings. The Client Services Committee meeting will be held Thursday, 15 April 2021. The Policy Committee was held Thursday, 4 March 2021. The People & Culture Committee was held Friday, 26 February 2021. The Portfolio Investment and Implementation Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, 17 March 2021 was cancelled.

Agenda Item 14 EMB Forward Work Plan (SI)

Members **NOTED** the update provided on the EMB Forward Work Plan for 2021 and had no additional items to add for future meetings.

The meeting closed 12.45pm. The next EMB meeting is scheduled for Monday, 10 May 2021.

Special EMB – Pandemic Decision Summary

Monday 1 February 2021

Decision One – Notifications of Deaths – Leanne Cameron and Leonie Nowland

The Special EMB was asked to:

1. **Agree** to limit the distribution to DVA staff and Commissioners who have a need to know;
2. **Agree** to the reduced list for distribution to include: Secretary and COS; Deputy Secretary and EO; Commissioners, FAS Cameron; AS CCS; CCS Directors.

OUTCOME: Special EMB

1. **Agreed** to limit the distribution to those who need to know;
2. **Agreed** to the proposed reduced list with the addition of the Clinical Assessment Team in Open Arms.
3. **Supported in Principle** the inclusion of Deputy Commissioners (DCs) in contacting families of the deceased, and **Noted** that further work would be done to define the role and scope of the Deputy Commissioners.

ACTIONS: Leanne Cameron and Leonie Nowland to work with Deputy Commissioners, and bring a process that includes the DCs back to Special EMB for confirmation.

Notes:

- This decision is about pulling back the notification list to being the chain of command from the Early Engagement Team, straight up to the Secretary (including Commissioners) – Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Leanne Cameron (FAS), Leonie Nowland (AS CCS) , Stuart **S 47F** (Director Veteran Support Office), the Early Engagement Team, and the Commissioners. The Open Arms Clinical Assessment team to be added as they will immediately check to see if the individual or family is in active counselling with Open Arms.
- Included with the Decision Map are also flows so everyone you can see how notifications are actioned at different points and where areas that need to know or action are brought in.

Decision Two – Hot Issues Brief (HIB) Distribution – Leanne Cameron and Leonie Nowland

The Special EMB was asked to:

1. **Agree** to expand the scope of Hot Issues Briefs (HIBs) to include identification of broader risks and issues to DVA.
2. **Agree** to the Deputy Secretary, Deputy President and COO determining whether an issue requires a HIB.
3. **Agree** to AS Parliamentary & Governance to distribute the HIB appropriately, depending on the subject matter, but noting HIBs should go to the Senior Executive as a minimum.

OUTCOME: Special EMB

1. **Agreed** to expand the scope of HIBs noting that the purpose is a short, sharp alert.
2. **Agreed** to the Deputy Secretary, Deputy President and COO determining whether a HIB is required.
3. **Agreed** to moving responsibility of distribution of HIBs from the Executive Officer to the Deputy Secretary to AS Parliamentary & Governance.

ACTIONS: NIL

Notes:

- HIBs were originally intended for early notification about urgent issues, including high impacts on clients and potential media issues that would make its way to the Minister's attention. This has become quite narrow over time. This request seeks to revise the purpose of HIBs to be broader and include more general topics of interest for the Minister, and move the responsibility of the distribution.
- Current responsibility for the distribution of HIBs sits with the Executive Office to the Deputy Secretary. This request seeks agreement to move this responsibility to Liane Pettitt (AS Parliamentary & Governance).
- The purpose of a HIB is to quickly share important information with full briefing to follow, where required.
- Veronica Hancock noted that there is potential for HIBs and Question Time Briefs (QTBs) to run into each other, having Liane's team manage the HIBs will help eliminate this possibility. Normally find QTB is briefing tool of choice for Parliament sitting days with HIBs the tool of choice on other days.
- SEMB agreed to expand the scope of HIBs but noted that the purpose is a short, sharp alert. Depending on the nature of the issue some things will be followed up by a brief.

Discussion – Role of the Deputy Commissioners

- The Secretary asked for discussion and consideration around the role of Deputy Commissioners (DCs) in contacting the family of veterans who have died by suspected suicide or misadventure.
- The Secretary would like to see a senior DVA person involved at the point where the Service Coordinators and Open Arms makes contact with the family. The flow on contact would then fall to the Service Coordination team but this leaves a senior point of contact for the family if required. Training and support will be given to the DCs where required.
- Leonie Nowland noted that this is a difficult conversation as the family may be angry and often this anger is directed towards a soft target (DVA). The offer of support may not be appropriate in all circumstances. We may need to implement a process in the Service Coordination protocols to ask families of ex-serving if they want to be contacted by the DC.
- Gwen Cherne agreed that early DC contact might not be appropriate. DC contact should be four to six weeks out from the date of death.
- For information – when there is a death in service, DVA would rarely speak to the family early on, we take the lead from Defence Community Organisation as to when the family is ready and often this is only after several weeks. The purpose of this interaction/conversation is to ensure that they have everything they need from a DVA perspective.
- Gwen Cherne noted that we need to ensure there is supervision in place for Open Arms and DCs to provide internal support.
- Vicki Rundle noted that the Secretary wants us to look at a stronger role for DCs but this discussion is very salient and that there is a bit more work to be done on the role of DCs.
- Leanne Cameron noted that we need to be careful that we are not introducing DCs to a situation where the death is not service related or where there is nothing DVA can offer/do, and supported consideration being given to timing.

- Natasha Cole noted that until a person puts in a claim we don't know whether there may be benefits payable. The DCs are well aware of this so it is possible for DCs to manage expectations in these situations. DCs will be fine with a lot of cooperation and assistance as appropriate.
- Gwen Cherne noted that even if the death is not service related it goes a long way for people to know that people in DVA care. The DCs are most likely to know the services in their area that DVA cannot provide in a civilian space. They can also escalate issues to the Commissioners where appropriate who can escalate matters to the Secretary where required. Sometimes elevation can assist families that are really struggling.
- Leanne Cameron confirmed that the Service Coordinators will always give families information about other supports available so even if the DC is not involved in a case they will get this information.

Productivity Placemat – Client Health & Wellbeing – Jason Howden

No decision was sought for this agenda item.

The Client Health & Wellbeing Placemat with data updates from October, November and December 2020 was presented for review and discussion.

NOTES:

- Claims for financial hardship increased substantially from June/July 2020.
- Natasha Cole noted that people have become more aware of this criteria as we have been promoting it. There is more understanding of this provision now than when it was introduced in Nov 2019. There are no other changes that would have aggravated people's financial positions that we are aware of.
- Big increase in Open Arms referrals and counselling sessions.
- Leanne Cameron noted it has increased by 50% against the same time last year but we have been quite upfront and public about this. A number of things are being put in place to make sure wait times aren't blowing out, including BUPA.
- Jason Howden noted there is a good news story for telehealth and transport with people taking this up. Good story for moving people onto a different channel and maintaining service levels.



Minutes

Members	
Liz Cosson	Chair, Secretary
Vicki Rundle	Deputy Chair, Deputy Secretary, Veterans' and Families' Services
Kate Pope	Deputy President, Strategic Policy and Planning
Don Spinks	Veteran Engagement Commissioner
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Stuart Smith	Defence Engagement Commissioner
Professor Jenny Firman	Chief Health Officer
Mark Harrigan	Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operation Officer Division
Leanne Cameron	First Assistant Secretary, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services Review
Mark Garrity	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement and Support Services Division
Natasha Cole	First Assistant Secretary, Clients' Benefits Division
Ken Corke	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations Transformation Division
Veronica Hancock	First Assistant Secretary, Veterans' & Families' Policy Division
Glen Casson	Chief Finance Officer Division
Traci-Ann Byrnes	First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce Division
Rachel Goddard	First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations Transformation Division
Presenters	
Roger Winzenberg	Assistant Secretary, People Services Branch – <i>Item 4</i>
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff & Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance Branch - <i>Item 7</i>
Observers	
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff and Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary and Governance
Kristy Egan	A/g General Counsel, Legal Services and Audit
Secretariat	
Peggy ^{s 47F}	Assistant Director, Governance and Ministerial Events Section
Faith ^{s 47F}	A/g Senior Secretariat Officer
Apologies	
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Mark Fraser	First Assistant Secretary

Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and members declared no conflicts of interest. An apology was noted from the Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner, Gwen Cherne.

The Chair opened the meeting by providing a high level update to members on items for discussion at the Executive Leadership Group meeting scheduled for 4pm Monday, 10 May. The Chair will provide the



members with an update on the Royal Commission, Budget and the Minister's expectations for the Department.

Agenda Item 2 Minutes & actions of previous meeting

Members **ENDORSED** the minutes from the meeting on 29 March 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D11	Members ENDORSED the minutes from the meeting on 29 March 2021.

Members **AGREED** to close action items; 2021/A03, 2021/A04 and 2021/A5.

Action item 2021/A02 will remain in progress.

Agenda Item 3 Financial Snapshot

Members **NOTED** that the month end processing for April had only recently been completed and were provided with a high level verbal summary of the Departmental financial position to the end of April 2021.

Members **NOTED** that the monthly finance report will go to a Special Executive Management Board meeting to be held after 12 May 2021.

Members **NOTED** that the Chief Financial Officer and/or the Chief Accountant will meet with each Divisional First Assistant Secretary to discuss their Year to Date results and forecasts.

Agenda Item 4 Workforce Snapshot

Members **NOTED** the Workforce snapshot dashboard as at 31 March 2021.

Members **NOTED** the Average Staffing Level (ASL) data shown under the new organisational structure, and that paid Full Time Equivalent and ASL data is now shown under the new organisational structure. There are no comparisons to Divisional targets as the 2020-21 ASL cap of 1615 has not been split up to the new structure. Divisional target comparisons will not be available until the 2021-22 Financial Year commences.

Members **NOTED** the Diversity results from the Workforce dashboard, and discussed ways to increase Indigenous employment, retention and staff awareness within the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). The Chair reminded the members to continue to have discussions with their staff about embracing diversity within the workplace.

Members were advised that the Darwin DVA office has taken considered actions to increasing Indigenous employment, and through engagement with the Tribal Elders and the Department of Defence, are working effectively to increase employment opportunities in that region.

Members **NOTED** the potential of this concept and the Chair will follow this strategy in the national office. Meetings will be held to progress this issue.



No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A06	Meeting to be arranged for the Chair to meet with Defence representatives, Tribal Elders and the DVA Diversity team to address possible Indigenous employment opportunities within DVA/National Office.	Veronica Hancock

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A07	Add discussion of Diversity regarding Indigenous employment pathways to EMB FWP for June meeting.	Secretariat

Agenda Item 5 Internal Audits

Members **DISCUSSED** the outcomes of the most recent Internal Audit report provided to the Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC) and **NOTED** the progress of the current Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) audits, in particular the Veteran Centric Reform (VCR) Program Audit

Members **NOTED** that there have been four Internal Audit Reports completed since the previous Executive Management Board update.

Members were advised that there are 108 total open recommendations that relate to Internal Audit reports conducted by the former internal audit provider: 36 are assessed as High priority; 21 have been extended to more than six months and 22 have been outstanding for more than 12 months.

Members **NOTED** the concerns relating to the 22 outstanding recommendations, and agreed that timeframes need to be emphasised and adhered to. Members were advised that some of the outstanding recommendations are requiring support from other agencies, including but not limited to Services Australia.

Members **NOTED** the concerns relating to the 22 outstanding recommendations. Members agreed the importance of working through the outstanding recommendations to identify items that can be closed. Members also **AGREED** to leverage the Proximity contract to assist in reviewing all audits and reviews to enable a better understanding of what items may be closed and importantly which items require action.

Members **NOTED** that the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) has received the final report for the ANAO Annual Performance Statement Audit. DVA has six open findings. The ANAO concluded that DVA's performance measures were appropriate but they could not make a full determination due to unavailability of data. DVA will work with Services Australia to provide information relating to our performance measures in particular third party data from Telstra / Genesys.

Planning for the development of the 2021-22 Internal Audit Work Plan is well advanced with consultation with the Senior Executive nearing completion.

Members were advised that the next update on the status of open Internal Audit recommendations will be provided to the May ISC meeting.



Agenda Item 6 Commissions Considerations & Decisions (SI)

Members **NOTED** the information provided on Commissions Considerations and Decisions from meetings held 17 March, 26 March and 9 April 2021 of the Repatriation Commission (RC) and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) and the MRCC Subcommittee.

Members **NOTED** that at the RC/MRCC meeting held 17 March 2021, there were six matters for consideration and six submissions for decision by members.

Members **NOTED** that at the RC/MRCC Subcommittee held 26 March 2021, there was one matter for consideration and four submissions for decision by members.

Members **NOTED** that at the RC/MRCC meeting held 9 April 2021, there were seven matters for consideration and five submissions for decision by members.

Agenda Item 7 Departmental Priorities & Government Commitment Update (SI)

Members **NOTED** the update on the Departmental Priorities and Government Commitments and Minister's Priorities. There are thirty seven commitments: sixteen are complete, nineteen are on track and zero at risk.

Members were advised that the office of Prime Minister & Cabinet will track all relevant actions/measures from the May budget meeting and will be included in next month's report.

Members **NOTED** that the Portfolio Implementation Committee dashboard will be included in these reports in future.

Members discussed the format of the report and were advised that this has been considered and a work around is in process.

Agenda Item 8 Other Business

The Chair reinforced the positive engagement that the department provides in relation to Veterans Suicide.

The Chair reminded members of the importance of record keeping and to be prepared to respond to requests from the Royal Commission.

The following items were below the line, information updates.

Agenda Item 9 Compensation Claims Update Dashboard

Members received an update on the Compensation Claims Dashboard and **NOTED** the focus this year is on MRCA and DRCA IL claims and associated backlog.

Members were advised that the recruitment of additional labour hire staff has been finalised with the majority of staff to join the Department of Veterans' Affairs and undergo the relevant delegate training.



Members were advised that the Implementation Plan, and the Simplification for Applications for Increase, are scheduled for the Commissions meeting Friday, 14 May 2021.

Agenda Item 10 Client Interactions Dashboard

Members received an update on the Client Interactions Dashboard. Members **NOTED** the productivity across the Client Engagement & Services Division for the month of March 2021.

Agenda Item 11 Client Feedback Update (SI)

Members **NOTED** the monthly Client Feedback update provided for March 2021.

Agenda Item 12 Governance Committee Reports (SI)

Members **NOTED** the topics discussed at the April and May committee meetings. The Client Services Committee meeting was to be held Thursday, 15 April 2021. The Policy Committee was held Tuesday, 13 April 2021. The People & Culture Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, 19 May 2021. The Portfolio Investment and Implementation Committee meeting scheduled for April was cancelled. The 11 June agenda is currently under draft. The meeting's focus will be on the delivery of all of the 2021-22 Budget measures and the governance arrangements being considered to oversee this.

Agenda Item 13 EMB Forward Work Plan (SI)

Members **NOTED** the update provided on the EMB Forward Work Plan for 2021 and several additional items to be added for future meetings.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A08	Add Strategic Plan to EMB FWP – Date to be provided to EMB Secretariat.	Kate Pope Secretariat

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A09	Add Regionalisation to EMB FWP – Date to be provided to EMB Secretariat.	Mark Harrigan Secretariat

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A10	Add Performance Measures to EMB FWP – Date to be provided to EMB Secretariat.	Glen Casson Secretariat

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A11	Add Portfolio Investment & Implementation Committee (PIIC) schedule to EMB FWP for June meeting.	Ken Corke Secretariat



No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A12	Deep Dive into Reviews & Audits (Proximity) to EMB FWP. To be brought back to EMB for discussion. Date to be provided to EMB Secretariat.	Kate Pope Secretariat

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A13	Add Single Service Offer to EMB FWP – Date to be provided to EMB Secretariat.	Mark Harrigan Secretariat

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A14	Add Royal Commission Update as Standing Item to EMB FWP	Secretariat

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A15	Add National Commissioner Update as Standing Item to EMB FWP	Secretariat

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A16	Add Bupa Update to June EMB meeting.	Prof Jenny Firman Leanne Cameron Secretariat

The meeting closed at 2.40pm. The next EMB meeting is scheduled for Monday, 7 June 2021.

Special EMB – Pandemic Decision Summary

Monday 15 February 2021

Discussion – ESORT

The Special EMB met to:

- **DISCUSS** the agenda and format for ESORT on Wednesday 17 February 2021.



Minutes

Members	
Liz Cosson	Chair, Secretary
Vicki Rundle	Deputy Chair, Deputy Secretary, Veterans' and Families' Services
Kate Pope	Deputy President, Strategic Policy and Planning
Don Spinks	Veteran Engagement Commissioner
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Stuart Smith	Defence Engagement Commissioner
Professor Jenny Firman	Chief Health Officer
Mark Harrigan	Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operation Officer Division
Leanne Cameron	First Assistant Secretary, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services Review
Mark Garrity	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement and Support Services Division
Natasha Cole	First Assistant Secretary, Clients' Benefits Division
Rachel Goddard	First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations Transformation Division
Ken Corke	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations Transformation Division
Moir Campbell	On behalf of: First Assistant Secretary, Veterans' & Families' Policy Division
Glen Casson	Chief Finance Officer Division
Traci-Ann Byrnes	First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce Division
Presenters	
Roger Winzenberg	Assistant Secretary, People Services Branch – <i>Item 4.1 & 4.2</i>
Sharon s 47F	Director, People Strategy – <i>Item 4.2</i>
Nicole Ingram	General Counsel, Legal Services and Audit – <i>Item 5</i>
Joumana El Hassan	Assistant Secretary, Shared Services & Technology – <i>Item 6</i>
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff & Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance Branch <i>Item 12</i>
Observers	
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff and Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary and Governance
Nicole Ingram	General Counsel, Legal Services and Audit
Secretariat	
Maureen s 47F	Director, Governance and Ministerial Events Section
Peggy s 47F	Assistant Director, Governance and Ministerial Events Section
Faith s 47F	A/g Senior Secretariat Officer
Apologies	
Veronica Hancock	First Assistant Secretary, Veterans' & Families' Policy Division
Rachel Goddard	First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations Transformation Division
Mark Fraser	First Assistant Secretary



Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

The Deputy Chair, Vicki Rundle welcomed everyone to the meeting and members declared no conflicts of interest. Apologies were noted from Veronica Hancock, First Assistant Secretary, Veterans' & Families' Policy Division and Rachel Goddard, First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations Transformation Division.

Secretary Update:

The Chair thanked the members for their assistance at the senate estimates hearings, and advised them of the upcoming meetings she will be attending.

The Chair provided members with an update on recent meetings held with the Minister and advised that the conversations were focused on the Royal Commission, workforce, grants and claim backlogs.

The Chair advised that the Departments governance is being re-examined, and that Rachel Goddard will commence work in this space shortly.

Agenda Item 2 Minutes & actions of previous meeting

Members **ENDORSED** the minutes from the meeting on 10 May 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D12	Members ENDORSED the minutes from the meeting on 10 May 2021.

Members **AGREED** to close action items; 2021/A07, 2021/A08, 2021/A09, 2021/A11, 2021/A12, 2021/A13, 2021/A14, 2120/A15 and 2021/A16.

Action items 2021/A02, 2021/A06 and 2021/A10 will remain in progress.

Members **AGREED** to add an Open Arms / BUPA Update to the Forward Work Plan for the July meeting. Leanne Cameron will take carriage of this item.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A17	Secretariat to add BUPA / Open Arms Update to the Forward Work Plan for the July meeting.	Secretariat Leanne Cameron

Agenda Item 3.1 Financial Snapshot

Members **NOTED** the verbal update regarding the Department's financial position to the end of May 2021.

Members **NOTED** that the monthly finance report will be provided to a Special Executive Management Board meeting after 12 June 2021.

Members **NOTED** that the Chief Financial Officer and/or the Chief Accountant will meet with each Divisional First Assistant Secretary to discuss their Year to Date results and forecasts.



Agenda Item 3.2 Budget Comebacks

Members **NOTED** the Veterans' Affairs comeback items for future budget rounds, and **DISCUSSED** the strategy and packaging for these comebacks, such as possible submissions required.

Members **AGREED** the lead for each item.

No.	Decision
2021/D13	Members AGREED the lead for each item of the budget comebacks.

Agenda Item 4.1 Workforce Information

Members received an update and **NOTED** the Workforce dashboard as at 31 April 2021, and discussed the completion rates of DVA staff of the Mid Cycle Performance Agreements for each division. Members requested a list on outstanding Mid Cycle Performance Agreements for their divisions.

Members **NOTED** the project status of the conversion of approximately 270 labour hire staff to non-ongoing employees within Clients' Benefits and Client Engagement and Support Services divisions. A phased approach is being taken, with the first tranche of approximately 40 labour hire staff being placed in non-ongoing positions by 1 June 2021. A second, larger tranche of approximately 230 staff will be recruited into non-ongoing positions by 1 July 2021.

Members **NOTED** the details on the proposed Pilot Empowering Excellence program. 'Empowering Excellence' is a high performance program which focusses on improving team performance through developing two capabilities (empathy and accountability) and four habits (1 – Daily team stand-up meetings, 2 – visual performance boards, 3 – connector coaching and 4 – team based problem solving). Services Australia have used this program with great success in their service delivery teams. The department is reaching out to Services Australia to obtain dates and options for the pilot and then a plan and evaluation strategy will be developed. The results of the pilot will be assessed alongside the results of the Learning & Development Training Needs Analysis in the design of a DVA Management Development Program.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A18	List of outstanding Mid Cycle Performance Agreements to be sent to each Division.	Mark Harrigan

Agenda Item 4.2 Veteran Pathway

Member received an update on the Veteran Employment Pathway. The Veteran Employment Program pilot will see those with relevant qualifications and military experience engaged at the APS4-6 level into relevant positions across the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Department of Defence (Defence).

Members **NOTED** that this is the first time the Veteran Employment Pathway will be able to offer ongoing roles to an exclusively Veteran cohort. People Services Branch (PSB) confirmed that the initial number of eleven roles to quarantine for this program and **AGREED** that PSB will confirm with the First Assistant Secretaries which positions will be advertised and potentially filled via the Veteran Employment Pathway program in their respective Divisions.



Members **ENDORSED** the implementation of the Veteran Pathway Program and associated budget of \$1.3M and associated average staffing level of 11 for 2021/22. Members **NOTED** that the PSB seek confirmation that the induction, Learning & Development offering and supports provide a platform for success for the transitioning service men and women. Members **AGREED** to endorse the allocation of one average staffing level to coordinate the program.

Members **ENDORSED** the Veteran Employment Pathway pilot attraction and selection, learning and development, additional supports and evaluation components.

Members also **NOTED** targets for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. PSB have established an Indigenous Temporary Employment Register, with 28 Indigenous Australians registered. A paper will be provided to the Special Executive Board meeting on 15 July 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D14	Members ENDORSED the implementation of the Veteran Pathway Program and associated budget of \$1.3M and associated average staffing level of 11 for 2021/22.

No.	Decision
2021/D15	Members ENDORSED the Veteran Employment Pathway pilot attraction and selection, learning and development, additional supports and evaluation components.

No.	Decision
2021/D16	Members AGREED People Services Branch confirm with First Assistant Secretary's which positions will be advertised and potentially filled via the Veteran Employment Pathway program in their respective Divisions.

Agenda Item 5 OAIC Privacy Audit Update

Members **NOTED** the Draft Assessment Report from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) was received in March and contained questions for the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). DVA was requested to review the draft report for factual accuracy (making necessary changes in mark-up mode) and propose redactions to any sensitive content; clarify and respond to additional follow-up questions from the OAIC and provide responses to the recommendations at Part 4 of the report. The OAIC listed eight findings, with one being high risk, four medium risk and three low risk and made nine recommendations.

Members **NOTED** that the Report has been circulated to relevant business areas, seeking input and answers in response to the OAIC questions. Members also **NOTED** Information Law is collating the comments received and preparing a final response. Business Areas will be approached by the Information Law team for further clarification as needed.

Members **NOTED** the Department's response was provided to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner on Thursday 27 May 2021.



Agenda Item 6 Strategic ICT – Consolidation of DVA Websites Taskforce

Members were advised that Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) websites are disparate in their hosting, support and management, and that a consistent and clear approach to website management, hosting and support is required, including consolidation of some websites.

A number of issues have been identified requiring attention. Members were advised that these include security and technology currency issues needing to be urgently addressed, and that Shared Services & Technology Branch has initiated a Website Taskforce to commence addressing the issues outlined with DVA's websites. This will be assisted by the Communications Branch and the Integrity Assurance Branch.

Members were advised that some websites are moving to GovCMS (sponsored by Department of Finance) in line with the same direction other Departments are taking. This will result in them remaining standalone DVA websites on a more stable platform and meeting the whole of government standards. Other websites require further investigation to determine whether they should remain as stand-alone websites, whether they should move to GovCMS or whether they should be consolidated.

Members were advised that once the Website Taskforce has undertaken further analysis including scoping the security requirements, platform upgrades, potential moves to GovCMS, as well as any other work that may be required, a further paper will come to EMB for discussion/endorsement, noting also that funding is likely to be sought to support the work. In the interim, a charge of \$14, 000 will be incurred for Services Australia to enable transition of the relevant websites to GovCMS by end of this financial year.

Members **NOTED** that DVA has some 35 active websites and a number of partially decommissioned websites.

Members **AGREED IN PRINCIPLE** to the consolidation of websites where it made sense to do so; however, members requested further work to be undertaken to inform any decision to decommission or consolidate websites, prior to any further changes being made. This should include an impact analysis (including on external stakeholders) of any changes.

No.	Decision
2021/D17	Members AGREED IN PRINCIPLE to explore the feasibility of website consolidation where it made sense to do so, and come back to EMB with recommendations, noting the paper should also provide an analysis of the benefits and risks as well as an impact analysis of making any changes.

S 47G



S 47G

Agenda Item 8 Portfolio Investment & Implementation Committee Schedule

Members **NOTED** the Portfolio Investment & Implementation Committee (PIIC) forward schedule of dates. PIIC was established to be an advisory group to the Executive Management Board to facilitate open discussions for new/changing projects and significant investment matters.

Members **DISCUSSED** the Enterprise Program Office's (EPO) governance review that involves the Portfolio Investment & Implementation Committee and **NOTED** the PIIC has fulfilled its objectives by prioritising initiatives, supporting seed funding for projects to return with fully costed business cases, and reporting on the intended outcomes of projects to appropriate boards and committees.

Members **NOTED** that the EPO is working with the Chief Financial Officer Division to conduct a review of the Department of Veterans' Affairs project governance arrangements.

Members **NOTED** that the next PIIC meeting (11 June 2021) is a combined PIIC/Transformation Program Board meeting focused on the 2021-22 Budget. These meetings have been combined to ensure a fruitful discussion with key stakeholders, many of whom attend both boards. It is this duplication the governance review seeks to remove.

Agenda Item 9 Royal Commission Update

Members **NOTED** the status and next steps for the establishment of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A19	Mark Harrigan to consult with Services Australia to resolve the delays of on-boarding staff.	Mark Harrigan



No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A20	Leanne Cameron, Natasha Cole, Traci-Ann Byrnes and Mark Garrity to commence the initial investigations to address staff resourcing and accommodation matters to determine solutions to the current process.	Leanne Cameron, Natasha Cole, Traci-Ann Byrnes and Mark Garrity

Agenda Item 10 National Commissioner Update

Members **NOTED** the current Requests for Information from the interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention.

Agenda Item 11 Commissions Considerations & Decisions

Members **NOTED** the information provided on Commissions Consideration and Decisions from the meeting held 14 May 2021 of the Repatriation Commission (RC) and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) (Commissions').

Members **NOTED** that at the RC/MRCC meeting held 14 May 2021, there were six matters for consideration and nine submissions for decision by members. The RC/MRCC 28 May 2021 Subcommittee meeting was cancelled.

Agenda Item 12 Departmental Priorities and Government Commitment Update

Members **NOTED** the current update on action taken on all Government commitments.

Agenda Item 13 Other Business

There was no other business raised by members.

The following items were below the line, information updates.

Agenda Item 14 Compensation Claims Update Dashboard

Members **NOTED** the progress on the Compensation Claims for various programs.

Members **NOTED** the progress in implementing various activities outlined in the *Client Benefits Division Implementation Plan to Improve Claims Processing and Reduce Backlog*.

Agenda Item 15 Client Interactions Dashboard

Members **NOTED** the productivity across the Client Engagement & Support Services Division for the month of April 2021.

Agenda Item 16 Client Feedback Update (SI)

Members **NOTED** the Feedback data for April 2021.

Agenda Item 17 Governance Committee Reports (SI)

Members **NOTED** the topics discussed at the April and May committee meetings.

Agenda Item 18 EMB Forward Work Plan (SI)



Members **NOTED** the update provided on the EMB Forward Work Plan for 2021 and several additional items to be added for future meetings.

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm. The next EMB meeting is scheduled for Monday, 5 July 2021.

Special EMB – Decision Summary

Monday 22 February 2021

Decision One – Enterprise Risk 1 – Wellbeing – Mark Garrity

The Special EMB was asked to:

1. **ENDORSE** the Risk Assurer Report for Enterprise Risk 1 - Wellbeing.

OUTCOME:

1. Special EMB **ENDORSED** the Risk Assurer Report for Enterprise Risk 1 – Wellbeing.

Notes:

- The risk is being effectively managed and the controls are effective.
- The Assurer Report notes close attention is required for program funding, governance, IT systems, and use of data.
- Ongoing development of data and analytics is critical to assure and deliver programs.
- In the last six months there has been a transition to single sign off for program funding, noting this is a point in time control. With demand driven programs this model has its limits.
- The implementation of the Procurement and Program Management frameworks have improved a number of key controls.
- The impact of COVID will continue to be consideration in terms of program delivery and risk.
- The Wellbeing Framework for early intervention will enable us to improve, with more investment in these areas.
- While the risk wasn't realised there is an ongoing need for an evidence and outcome based approach to make sure programs being made available are targeted at improving health and wellbeing.

Decision Two – Enterprise Risk 5 – Commemorate – Veronica Hancock

The Special EMB was asked to:

1. **ENDORSE** the Risk Assurer Report for Enterprise Risk 5 – Commemorate.

OUTCOME:

1. Special EMB **ENDORSED** the Risk Assurer Report for Enterprise Risk 5 – Commemorate; and
2. **NOTED** that the risk will need to be re-visited post budget.

Notes:

- The Assurer Report notes that adequate controls are in place to deliver solemn and dignified commemorations, but there are quite a few live risks which the team is actively working to control.
- We need to get funding through the budget for the three year strategy for ongoing commemorations.
- Overseas challenges - overseas commemorations due to the pandemic, security levels in other countries change risk.
- Overall assessment is that it is a very mature program and we have been doing a good job for a long time to manage risks.
- Mark Harrigan noted we might need to revisit the risk post budget due to significant budget impact.



Minutes

Members	
Liz Cosson	Chair, Secretary
Vicki Rundle	Deputy Secretary, Veterans' and Families' Services
Kate Pope	Deputy President, Strategic Policy and Planning
Don Spinks	Veteran Engagement Commissioner
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Stuart Smith	Defence Engagement Commissioner
Professor Jenny Firman	Chief Health Officer
Roger Winzenberg	A/g Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operation Officer Division
Leanne Cameron	First Assistant Secretary, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services Review
Maira Campbell	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement and Support Services Division
Natasha Cole	First Assistant Secretary, Clients' Benefits Division
Rachel Goddard	First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations Transformation Division
Ken Corke	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations Transformation Division
Veronica Hancock	First Assistant Secretary, Veterans' & Families' Policy Division
Glen Casson	Chief Finance Officer Division
Traci-Ann Byrnes	First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce Division
Presenters	
Roger Winzenberg	Assistant Secretary, People Services Branch – <i>Items 4.1, 4.2 and 8</i>
Fiona McCurdy-Cash	A/g Assistant Secretary, Client Access and Rehabilitation – <i>Items 9, 17 and 18</i>
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff and Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance Branch <i>Item 14</i>
Observers	
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff and Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary and Governance
Nicole Ingram	General Counsel, Legal Services and Audit
Janice Silby	Assistant Secretary, Income Support – <i>Item 10</i>
Secretariat	
Belinda s 47F	A/g Director, Governance and Ministerial Events Section
Peggy s 47F	Assistant Director, Governance and Ministerial Events Section
Faith s 47F	A/g Senior Secretariat Officer
Apologies	
Mark Harrigan	Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operation Officer Division
Mark Garrity	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement and Support Services Division
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Mark Fraser	First Assistant Secretary



Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

The Deputy Chair, Vicki Rundle welcomed everyone to the meeting and members declared no conflicts of interest. Apologies were noted from Mark Harrigan, Chief Operating Officer; Mark Garrity, A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement and Support Services; and Gwen Cherne, Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner.

Secretary Update:

The Secretary updated members on the new Minister. The Secretary outlined the expectations and business requirements the Minister's office have requested, and members discussed ways in which to accommodate this work.

Agenda Item 2 Minutes & actions of previous meeting

Members **ENDORSED** the minutes from the meeting on 7 June 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D18	Members ENDORSED the minutes from the meeting on 7 June 2021.

Members **AGREED** to close action items; 2021/A06, 2021/A10, 2021/A17, 2021/A18, 2021/A19 and 2021/A20.

Action item 2021/A02 will remain in progress.

Agenda Item 3.1 Financial Snapshot

Members **NOTED** the verbal update regarding the Department's financial position to the end of May 2021.

Members **NOTED** that the monthly finance report will be provided to a Special Executive Management Board meeting after 12 July 2021.

Agenda Item 4.1 Workforce Information

Members received an update and **NOTED** the Workforce dashboard as at 31 May 2021. Members also **NOTED** the updated reporting terms for the Non-Australian Public Service (APS) workforce.

Members **NOTED** the People Services Branch provided an action brief to the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Secretary on Non-APS workforce reporting, and that the use of the term Non-APS has evolved over time to include all staff who access DVA's SAP system. This includes: Labour Hire, Consultants, Contractors, Non-APS Secondees and Student Placements.

Members were advised that the Mid-Cycle Performance reviews are currently sitting at 76 per cent. The Indigenous Skills Talent Acquisition Register has 36 candidates registered, with 12 candidates being matched with recruitment vacancies within the department. There has been an increase in Paid Full Time Equivalent (+17.2), but it is too late in the financial year for this to have an effect on the average staffing level (ASL) which will end up around 1612. With the increase of the ASL cap and budget, there has been a large increase in the hiring of APS (both Ongoing and Non-Ongoing) and Labour Hire staff over the past month.



Agenda Item 4.2 Strategic Workforce Plan

Members **NOTED** that in 2018-19, DVA created an Enterprise Strategic Workforce Plan (ESWFP) 2019–2023 to enable effective workforce planning throughout Transformation. The ESWFP provided a workforce capacity and capability assessment of transformation's impact on DVA, considering how to maintain business-as-usual outcomes while transforming for the future.

Members **NOTED** that reprioritisation due to COVID has meant the ESWFP has been in a maintenance only phase, with no dedicated workforce planning staffing resource allocated. The ESWFP was always intended to be a live document, with updates made after each Budget cycle and after any major changes to strategic context. Members **NOTED** that the update of the ESWFP will need to take into account the following significant drivers, which are new to DVA's operating context since the most recent ESWFP was produced.

- Royal Commission environment
- Australian Public Service (APS)/Contingent worker conversions and strategy
- Future, ongoing impact of COVID and APS disaster response on workforce
- Alignment to recently released APS Workforce Strategy

Members **AGREED** to the proposed approach to refreshing the DVA Workforce Plan, including analysis of contingent workforce, to commence following endorsement of the DVA Strategic Plan.

The refresh of the ESWFP will commence once DVA's Strategic Plan is finalised and endorsed.

No.	Decision
2021/D19	Members AGREED to the proposed approach to refreshing the Department of Veteran's Affairs Workforce Plan, including analysis of contingent workforce, to commence following endorsement of the Department of Veteran's Affairs Strategic Plan.

Agenda Item 5 Draft Corporate Plan 2021 - 22

Members **NOTED** that Under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) the department is required to prepare a corporate plan annually. Under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*, the corporate plan is required to be published on DVA's website by 31 August each year.

In April, Divisions provided input and updated content (exclusive of the performance measures) for the corporate plan. This content was then subsequently reviewed by the Deputy Secretary, Deputy President and more recently, the Secretary.

In May, the Australian National Audit Office performance auditors commenced their work reviewing DVA's 2020-21 Corporate Plan and provided some preliminary informal advice to help inform the development of the 2021-22 Corporate Plan, specifically in relation to the Performance section. Subsequently, changes to the performance measures were endorsed by the Special Executive Management Board on 21 June 2021 and have since been incorporated.

Members **NOTED** that a graphic design treatment of the corporate plan is scheduled to occur following Executive Management Board endorsement. The Executive and Secretary will then be asked to formally



approve the designed corporate plan. As required under the PGPA Act, a brief inclusive of the approved corporate plan will be provided to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Minister for Finance before being published on the DVA website.

Members **ENDORSED** the draft Department of Veterans' Affairs 2021-22 Corporate Plan.

No.	Decision
2021/D20	Members ENDORSED the draft Department of Veterans' Affairs 2021-22 Corporate Plan.

Agenda Item 6 BUPA Update – Open Arms

Members **NOTED** the information on Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling (Open Arms) contract with Bupa to provide mental health services.

Members were advised that Open Arms has contracted Bupa to provide clinical mental health services in two ways:

- a Contracted Health Professional Workforce (CHPW) based in Open Arms centres, and
- Community Based Mental Health Services (CBMHS), as an overflow solution which enables clients to be referred to community-based Bupa providers.

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Members **NOTED** that between 1 April and 15 June 2021, Open Arms has referred 177 clients to Bupa under the CBMHS. Of these 177 clients, 112 clients have attended appointments or have an appointment booked with providers, and 14 clients have withdrawn their requests.

Members were advised that Open Arms are now working with Bupa to develop a rostered arrangement for locum-type clinicians to provide surge capacity to the Client Assist Contact Centre. This will be enacted under the CHPW provision in the contract, and will take effect in the next four to six weeks.

Agenda Item 7 Commissioning of Research – Strategic Research Framework

Members **NOTED** the update provided on the new research proposals and the current funded research activity approved by the Research Board at its meetings 23 February and 18 May 2021.

Members **NOTED** that six new research projects were approved by the Board at meetings held in February and May 2021, and that there are currently 13 active Applied Research Program funded projects, five recently completed and seven undergoing procurement.



Members **NOTED** that Research proposals currently presented to the Board for consideration and funding requests are Department driven proposals, and that the Research Board proposes to invite the research community to offer proposals on the topic of veteran mental health, suicide prevention and emerging therapies. Proposals would need to align with DVA's research priorities and address DVA areas of need. Members discussed the Commonwealths approach to Intellectual Property (IP) and noted that advice would be sort on IP contract clauses to enable flexibility for researches when publishing research.

Members discussed the benefits of joint funding proposals, and the currently funded research against the new priorities. Members requested a comparison on current funded research against the new priorities.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A21	Document outlining DVA's current funded research against the new priorities to be provided to members.	Veronica Hancock

Members **AGREED** to the revised research priorities and definitions for 2021-22, endorsed by the Research Board on 18 May 2021.

Members **AGREED** to the Research Board inviting proposals from researchers in the areas of mental health, suicide prevention and emerging therapies.

No.	Decision
2021/D21	Members AGREED to the revised research priorities and definitions for 2021-22, endorsed by the Research Board on 18 May 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D22	Members AGREED to the Research Board inviting proposals from researchers in the areas of mental health, suicide prevention and emerging therapies.

Agenda Item 8 DVA Reconciliation Action Plan – *STRETCH* 2021 - 23

Members **NOTED** the Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a continuation and extension of the department's previous Innovate RAP and will focus on actions and activities that connect staff with each other and how we connect and engage with the First Nations veteran's community, First Nations staff and the broader First Nations communities.

Members **NOTED** that the DVA Stretch RAP actions will be aligned with actions outlined by Reconciliation Australia. Some of the DVA strategies and programs that the Stretch RAP supports includes, but is not limited to, are:

- Indigenous Veterans Strategy 2020-25
- Gurru Ngali: We Together - DVA Indigenous Employment Strategy 2020-24
- Cultural Capability Framework
- Indigenous Staff Network – Nganana
- DVA Diversity Strategy
- Diversity and Inclusion Staff Network



Members discussed the RAP, and wording of 26 January – Survival Day. Members were advised that this wording was provided by the DVA's Nganana Indigenous Staff Network. Members **AGREED** that advice be sought from Reconciliation Australia on this matter.

Members **NOTED** that low rates of cultural awareness across the department due to the length of the online training and were advised that enquiries are being made to purchase a shorter learning tool, and the Services Australia have offered to provide the DVA with a product in the interim.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A22	Advice to be sought from Reconciliation Australia on the wording of <i>26 January – Survival Day</i> in the DVA Reconciliation Action Plan – <i>STRETCH</i> 2021 – 23 report.	Roger Winzenberg

Members **AGREED** to Support the implementation of Galumbany 2021-2023 across the department and People Services Branch is to develop a final product for launch and distribution.

Members **AGREED** to Support actions outlined in Galumbany.

No.	Decision
2021/D23	Members AGREED to Support the implementation of Galumbany 2021-2023 across the department and People Services Branch is to develop a final product for launch and distribution across the department.

No.	Decision
2021/D24	Members AGREED to Support actions outlined in Galumbany.

Agenda Item 9 Standardised Service Offer

Members **NOTED** the commencement of the Standardised Service Offer on 1 July 2021. From 1 July 2021, DVA is expanding its services into 318 Services Australia centres around Australia to provide more equitable and connected face-to-face services for veterans and their families. The centres will provide the same services and supports, regardless of location and that the participating centres will provide onsite wireless internet for public use, as well as access to self-service facilities including computers, printers and phones.

Members **NOTED** that where complex matters cannot be adequately supported and actioned by the service centre, the veteran will be referred to DVA using MyService to request a call back. The veteran or family member will then be contacted by DVA.

Members **NOTED** that existing locations where Services Australia offers DVA services and support will align with the new standardised service offer. Veterans and their families impacted by these changes are being supported through ongoing communication from both DVA and Services Australia, and that this expanded service offer will not impact the services and support currently received through DVA's Veterans Access Network.



Agenda Item 10 Income Support Restructure

Members **NOTED** the update on the Income Support Restructure.

Agenda Item 11 National Commissioner Update

Members **NOTED** the information provided.

Agenda Item 12 Transformation Update

Members **NOTED** the update provided on the Veteran Centric Reform – Putting Veterans' and their Families First Transformation Program (VCR PVFF).

Members **NOTED** that the Year 4 VCR-PVFF Closure process has commenced with project managers and stream leads asked to complete relevant documents no later than 9 July 2021.

Members **NOTED** that the Enterprise Program Office (EPO) has worked with the divisions to conduct a review of the department's project governance arrangements. Members were advised that the draft project governance structure was presented at the 11 June 2021 Portfolio Investment and Implementation Committee meeting, with members noting the need for further consultation.

Members **NOTED** that all First Assistant Secretaries have been approached to comment on the draft project governance structure, including confirming ownership for all projects resulting from budget measures, and that the EPO has worked with the divisions to conduct a review of DVA's project governance arrangements. The draft project governance structure was the subject of a deep dive with the Secretary on Tuesday 22 June 2021. An interim project governance structure was agreed at Special Executive Management Board on Monday 28 June 2021, noting the wider review of departmental governance may result in changes to the final project governance model.

Agenda Item 13 Commissions Considerations & Decisions

Members **NOTED** the information provided on Commissions Considerations and Decisions from the meeting held 8 June 2021 of the Repatriation Commission (RC) and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC).

Members **NOTED** that at the RC/MRCC meeting held 8 June 2021, there were six matters for consideration and nine submissions for decision by members, and that the RC/MRCC 25 June 2021 Subcommittee meeting was cancelled.

Members **NOTED** the next meeting dates are 8 July for a full commission meeting, and 20 July is the next subcommittee meeting.

Members discussed and **NOTED** the sequencing of papers, and noted that papers going to RC and the MRCC should be first brought to EMB. This is to be implemented immediately.



Agenda Item 14 Departmental Priorities & Government Commitment Update

Members **NOTED** that the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet will shortly be updating the template, which will include the 2021-22 Budget measures. This will come into effect for the August Executive Management Board meeting.

Members **NOTED** that the newly formatted document will be provided to the Minister with explanatory information, and that the report will be more detailed.

Agenda Item 15 Other Business

There was no other business raised by members.

Agenda Item 16 Compensation Claims Update Dashboard

Members **NOTED** the progress on the Compensation Claims for various programs and the progress in implementing various activities outlined in the *Client Benefits Division Implementation Plan to Improve Claims Processing and Reduce Backlog April 2021- June 2022*.

Members were provided with an overview of the *Implementation Plan Progress Report – 30 June 2021* and **NOTED** that this report will be provided to the Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission meetings for the future.

Members had a detailed discussion on the Implementation Plan Progress Report. The Chair requested a detailed update be provided to her office on the long standing cases referred to on page 5 - (*Approximately fifteen cases have been or are currently being considered by Veteran and Families Policy Division and Legal Branch currently*).

Members **NOTED** the revised Communication Plan.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A23	Detailed update be provided to Chair's office on the long standing cases referred to on page 5 of the Implementation Plan Progress Report.	Natasha Cole

Agenda Item 17 Client Interactions Dashboard

Members **NOTED** the productivity across the Client Engagement & Support Services Division for the month of May 2021.

Members **NOTED** that the Veterans' Access Network continues to not achieve performance targets of 70 per cent of calls answered in 60 seconds and an abandoned call rate of less than 5 per cent. Service levels decreased to 18 per cent in May compared to 20 per cent in April, with a corresponding increase in abandoned calls from 13 per cent in April to 15 per cent in May. Members were advised that recruitment to the VAN was currently occurring.

Members **NOTED** that Feedback results continue to be impacted by MyService changes but at a declining rate, especially suggestions which decreased by 44 per cent in May compared to April.



Members **NOTED** that Veteran Support Officers stakeholder engagement financial year to date comparisons have more than doubled (an increase of 117 per cent) in 2020-21 from 2019-20, while helping clients go online increased 66 per cent. Health prior approval processing continued to improve in May achieving performance targets in medical allied health and dental implants. The Chair requested a breakdown on the completed dental approvals rates.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A24	Provide the Chair with completed dental approval rates and breakdown of this data.	Moira Campbell

Agenda Item 18 Client Feedback Update (SI)

Members **NOTED** the Feedback data for May 2021.

Members **NOTED** that in May 2021, DVA received a total of 251 complaints, 52 compliments and 25 suggestions. In April 2021, DVA received 220 complaints, 46 compliments and 45 suggestions. Comparative analysis of the two months shows that in May 2021, including an emerging trend regarding MyService:

- Complaints increased by 11 per cent
(45 out of 251 complaints related to MyService)
- Compliments increased by 13 per cent
- Suggestions decreased by 42 per cent
(11 out of 25 suggestions related to improving MyService)

The members were advised that the complaints mostly referred to the car booking system which has been resolved.

Members discussed methods to capture comments, feedback and complaints that are received via other sources, such as emails. The members were advised to use the Client Feedback Management System to record this information including complaints that come in through the Secretary's office and the Ministerial process. The Chair advised members that the Ombudsman's Office have complimented the Department of Veterans' Affairs on the mature way in which we manage our complaints.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A25	Deputy Chair to provide recent copy of the Department's Response to the Ombudsman Report to the Chair.	Vicki Rundle

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A26	Secretary DVA and Parliamentary Section advised to use the Client Feedback Management System to record this information, including complaints that come in through the Secretary's office and the Ministerial process.	Members



Agenda Item 19 Governance Committee Reports (SI)

Members **NOTED** the topics discussed at the May and June committee meetings and received an update on the Streamlining of the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) governance processes.

Members **NOTED** that consultation has been conducted with the First Assistants Secretaries, seeking suggestions, comments and input into a refined governance process for the Department. Members were advised that the discussions were productive and most members felt that a benefit from these committees are the discussions that often unpack issues not discussed in any other forum. Members also noted that duplication does occur across some sub committees.

Members **NOTED** that the Streamlining of DVA Governance Processes is still in consultation phase. The outcomes from the Departmental Governance Review is scheduled for the 2 August 2021 Executive Management Board meeting.

Members **NOTED** the topics discussed at the May and June committee meetings.

Agenda Item 20 EMB Forward Work Plan (SI)

Members **NOTED** the update provided on the EMB Forward Work Plan for 2021. The Chair advised that amendments will be made to reflect emerging issues for DVA.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A27	Chair to meet with Rachel Goddard to review/amend the EMB Forward Work Plan to ensure that emerging issues for DVA are discussed at upcoming meetings.	Chair Rachel Goddard

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm. The next EMB meeting is scheduled for Monday, 2 August 2021.

Special EMB – Pandemic Decision Summary

Tuesday 9 March 2021

Productivity Placemats – Jason Howden

The Special EMB was asked to:

1. **NOTE** the Productivity Placemats; Client Health & Wellbeing, Staff Health & Wellbeing, and Productivity with data updates from November, December, and January.
2. **AGREE** to the Productivity Placemats being presented every two months rather than monthly.

OUTCOME: Special EMB

1. **NOTED** the Productivity Placemats; and
2. **AGREED** to the presentation of the Productivity Placemats every two months.

NOTES:

- Open Arms volumes still remain high.
- We are moving closer to a fifty/fifty mix of staff working remotely and working in the office.
- Mark Harrigan noted that the APS more broadly are looking at APS wide productivity therefore producing these placemats is important however, moving to every second month is appropriate.
- Luke Brown suggested adding data on Pensioner Initiated Reviews (PIRs) which could be a relevant indicator for financial difficulties.
- Veronica Hancock noted that it would be helpful to be able to compare the current year to previous years back to 2019 for unscheduled absences.



Minutes

Members	
Liz Cosson	Chair, Secretary
Vicki Rundle	Deputy Secretary, Veterans & Family Services Group
Kate Pope	Deputy President, Veteran & Family Policy Group
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Stuart Smith	Defence Engagement Commissioner
Professor Jenny Firman	Chief Health Officer
Don Spinks	Repatriation Commissioner
Leanne Cameron	First Assistant Secretary, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services
Mark Harrigan	Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operation Officer Division
Mark Garrity	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement & Support Services Division
Natasha Cole	First Assistant Secretary, Client Benefits Division
Rachel Goddard	First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations & Transformation Division
Veronica Hancock	First Assistant Secretary, Veteran & Family Policy Division
Glen Casson	Chief Finance Officer, Chief Finance Officer Division
Traci-Ann Byrnes	First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce Division
Presenters	
Ken Corke	Assistant Secretary, Enterprise Program Office – VCR - <i>Items 5 & 9</i>
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff & Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance Branch- <i>Item 17</i>
Observers	
Nicole Ingram	General Counsel, Legal Services and Audit
Gwen Collins	A/g Assistant Secretary Channel Strategy & Digital Delivery – <i>Item 5</i>
Maxine s 47F	A/g Director, Channel Transformation & Client Strategy – <i>Item 5</i>
Nathan s 47F	Director, Content Hub – <i>Item 5</i>
Secretariat	
Belinda s 47F	A/g Director, Governance & Ministerial Events Section
Kylie s 47F	Assistant Director, Governance & Ministerial Events Section
Faith s 47F	A/g Senior Secretariat Officer
Karen s 47F	A/g Secretariat Support Officer
Apologies	
Don Spinks	Repatriation Commissioner

Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. No conflicts of interest were declared. Apologies were noted from Don Spinks, Repatriation Commissioner.

Item 2 Minutes & actions of previous meeting



Members **ENDORSED** the minutes from the meeting on 5 July 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D25	Members ENDORSED the minutes from the meeting on 5 July 2021.

Members **AGREED** to close action items; 2021/A21, 22,25,26 and 27.

Members **NOTED** action items 2021/A02, 2021/ A23 & 2021/ A24 remain in progress.

Agenda Item 3 Financial Information Dashboard

Members **NOTED** the verbal status update of the Department's financial position to the end of July 2021.

Members **AGREED** in principle with the Billing and Coding Project and procurement outline and **NOTED** the Intergrity Framework will be presented to Special Executive Management Board (SEMB) later in the month.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A28	Present the Billing and Coding Integrity Framework to Special Executive Management Board before the end of August 2021.	Mark Garrity

Agenda Item 4.1 Workforce Information

Members **NOTED** the progress report provided on people initiatives and **NOTED** the Workforce Dashboard as at 30 June 2021 and final ASL figures for the 2020-21 Financial Year.

Members were advised that the Veteran Employment Pathway (VEP) was advertised on 8 July 2021 through the APS gazette, LinkedIn, and direct marketing, with expected participant start date being 25 October 2021. A virtual information night was held on Thursday, 15 July 2021 which was opened by Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services, Vicki Rundle. 15 positions in total are to be filled by the pilot VEP recruitment process, with 14 of these being within DVA and one at the Department of Defence. 124 applications were received. A merit pool may be established.

Members **NOTED** the recruitment of 196 labour hire staff to non-ongoing APS positions in Client Engagement & Support Services (CESS) and Client Benefits divisions was successfully completed by 30 June 2021. A further 60 candidates that are currently labour hire staff for APS non-ongoing positions will be on-boarded by mid-August. Mental Health & Wellbeing Services have advised labour hire staff that a recruitment process for approximately 60 non-ongoing positions will start in August.

Members **NOTED** that the Chair received, and has accepted, an interview request from the Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Kate Jenkins.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A29	Correspondence between the Secretary and Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Kate Jenkins, to be circulated to members.	Roger Winzenberg

Agenda Item 4.2 Employee Census 2021



Members **NOTED** the update provided on the results of the Australian Public Service (APS) Employee Census 2021, and the DVA highlights.

Members **NOTED** four areas that require attention within DVA: Communications; Workplace Conditions; Enabling Innovation; and Staff Wellbeing.

Members discussed options on addressing the results and agreed that a snapshot of previous DVA census results and trends would be beneficial. Further analysis around the outcomes and trends is to occur once the data is available and will be considered further at EMB.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A30	Further analysis of DVA's Employee Census results to be undertaken and communications developed for staff circulation. To be submitted to September Executive Management Board (EMB). Provide each Division with its results.	Mark Harrigan

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A31	Analyse DVA's Employee Census results from 2018-2021 to identify any trends and provide to September Executive Management Board (EMB).	Mark Harrigan

Agenda Item 5 Transformation Ongoing Funding – Telephony Operations and Content Hub

Members **DISCUSSED** the ongoing funding requirement for the costs of the telephony Managed Contact Centre Service (MCCS) offer and the Content Hub capability, noting the current shortfall in funding.

Members **NOTED** that DVA has undergone a significant transformation of its telephony channel, investing in modern tools and technology through the Veteran Centric Reform (VCR) program. To fully realise the benefits of this investment and support the channel into the future, a robust Operations Support Model (OSM) was developed through the 1800 VETERAN Project and embedded in part within the Client Access & Rehabilitation Branch.

Under the telephony Operations Support Model (OSM), which comprises a Managed Contact Centre Services (MCCS) offer with Services Australia, and an internal telephony Operations Support team: Services Australia MCCS provides technical support for the tools, systems and communications capabilities to effectively support the operation of the telephony platform; and the Operations Support team provides business facing support for workforce management, business support & engagement, and quality management.

Members **NOTED** that the MCCS is currently only funded for 18 months. Beyond that time there is a risk that the MCCS will cease which will have flow on implications for the telephony channel and technologies. The Content Hub is another initiative that is improving client interactions and experiences. Currently there is a shortfall of \$1million and 5 ASL in FY2021-22 (and beyond) to enable the Content Hub to continue delivering a centralised content capability.



The Chair **NOTED** the advice from DVA's Chief Finance Officer and will not enter into any commitment beyond the current funding provided through the Budget.

Members agreed that further discussion is required on the prioritisation of Ongoing Funding for Telephony Operations and the Content Hub. Further discussion will be undertaken at SEMB on 9 August 2021.

Members **AGREED** that Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services, Vicki Rundle, will discuss with the Deputy CEO, Transformation Projects Group, Services Australia and report on outcomes to SEMB.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A32	Transformation Ongoing Funding – Telephony Operations and Content Hub and all emerging budget pressures to be included on SEMB agenda for 9 August 2021.	SecretariatMark Harrigan

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A33	Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services will discuss Transformation Ongoing Funding – Telephony Operations and Content Hub issues raised, with the Deputy CEO, Transformation Projects Group, Services Australia and report on outcomes to SEMB on 9 August 2021.	Vicki Rundle Ken Corke Mark Harrigan

Agenda Item 6 Managing Claims from Veterans not engaging with DVA

Members **NOTED** the proof of concept for the management of claims from veterans where they have disengaged, or are not responding to Delegate requests for additional information; and the use of Case Conferencing to guide decisions on determining or closing claims where requested information is not provided.

Members **NOTED** that in a number of cases, claims Delegates have difficulty engaging with veterans and obtaining the required information in order to process a claim and make a decision. Triage & Connect and the Client Benefits Division have been developing protocols to refer clients who have not responded for more than 365 days to Triage & Connect for case conferencing and engagement with the client.

Members **AGREED** the proposed protocols will be tested with the sample cases from MRCA Liability and adjusted as required. The protocols will be provided to the Repatriation Commission & Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (RC/MRCC) for consideration at the 6 August 2021 meeting.

No.	Decision
2021/D26	Members AGREED for the proposed protocols for Managing Claims from Veterans not engaging with DVA, to be referred to the RC/MRCC for consideration on 6 August 2021.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A34	Investigate the revision of the naming convention 'Refuse to Deal' under section 330(3) of the MRCA.	General Counsel, Nicole Ingram



Agenda Item 7 **DRCA Proposed Pilot – Standardised Impairment Points for Two Common Conditions**

Members **NOTED** the update provided on the implementation of Recommendation 6 of the *Review of Compensation Claims Processes and Procedures*, which included the proposed pilot to standardise impairment points for two common *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-Related Claims) Act 1988* (DRCA) conditions.

Members **NOTED** that in late 2021, an internal report was provided to EMB and subsequently to the Commissions in March 2021, making a number of recommendations, including Recommendation 6 which proposed that data analysis be undertaken with a view to developing a streamlined approach to the assessment of impairment points for certain DRCA conditions. Analysis of available data has presented two possible options for consideration which, following further examination of the risks associated, it is not recommended that a streamlined process for determination permanent impairment claims under the DRCA for osteoarthritis be implemented at this stage.

Members **AGREED** a recommendation be made to the RC/MRCC that a streamlined approach not be implemented in respect of permanent impairment compensation claims for osteoarthritis under the DRCA, at this point in time.

Members **AGREED** a recommendation be made to the RC/MRCC to include a new standard paragraph in liability determination letters accepting tinnitus, pleural plaques and obesity under the DRCA, indicating that no permanent compensation payments can be made for these conditions.

Members **AGREED** that, subject to agreement from the RC/MRCC, while work will be ongoing to identify opportunities to streamline compensation claims processes based on data-driven, risk-based approaches, implementation of Recommendation 6 of the *Review of Compensation Claims Processes and Procedures* can be closed.

No.	Decision
2021/D28	Members AGREED a recommendation be made to the Repatriation Commission & Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (RC/MRCC) that a streamlined approach <u>not</u> be implemented, at this point in time, in respect of permanent impairment compensation claims for osteoarthritis under the DRCA.

No.	Decision
2021/D29	Members AGREED a recommendation be made to the RC/ MRCC to include a new standard paragraph in liability determination letters accepting tinnitus, pleural plaques and obesity under the DRCA, indicating that no permanent compensation payments can be made for these conditions.

No.	Decision
2021/D30	Members AGREED that, subject to agreement from the RC/MRCC, while work will be ongoing to identify opportunities to streamline compensation claims processes based on data-driven, risk-based approaches, implementation of Recommendation 6 of the <i>Review of Compensation Claims Processes and Procedures</i> can be closed.



Agenda Item 8 Progress Report on VEA AFI Change

Members **NOTED** the current status of the streamlined process implementation of VEA Applications For Increase (AFI).

Members **NOTED** that on 14 May 2021, the RC/MRCC agreed to a procedural change under the VEA, to improve veteran satisfaction and claims processing efficiency for the re-assessment of disability pensions, by providing claimants with a greater level of input into the assessment process. To enact the change, a Businessline was published on 18 June 2021, procedural documentation updated and delegates trained.

Members **NOTED** the new arrangements commenced on 31 May 2021 and are being applied to all claims received for re-assessment. Members **NOTED** that under the simplified arrangements, claimants are able to nominate which of their accepted conditions require re-assessment. This will provide claimants with input into the management of their own claim.

Agenda Item 9 Transformation update – Year 4 Wrap up

Members **NOTED** the update on Year 4 of the Veteran Centric Reform Putting Veterans and their Families First (VCR PVFF) Program and that the Year 4 VCR PVFF Program Closure process has commenced, with the majority of project managers and stream leads having completed a project level closure report.

Members **NOTED** that information obtained as part of the closure process will allow the Enterprise Program Office (EPO) to develop a comprehensive program level summary report that will be provided to the Transformation Program Board (TPB) for endorsement at its 5 August 2021 meeting.

As part of the closure process, the EPO has captured key lessons learned. To better inform the proposed response to the lesson learned, all lessons learnt were categorised and then mapped against the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)/Gateway recommendations.

Members **NOTED** that while the VCR-PVFF program has been successful, the EPO acknowledges that some deliverables within the 2020-21 financial year scope were not implemented under Year 4. These deliverables will be raised at the next DVA/Services Australia Partnership Forum (DSPF) and the TPB, with negotiations around how these deliverables will be progressed and funded to occur.

An outcome and update of the Transformation update – Year 4 Wrap up is to be included on the 6 September 2021 EMB meeting agenda.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A35	An outcome and update of the Transformation update – Year 4 Wrap up to be provided to EMB on 6 September 2021.	Ken Corke Secretariat

Agenda Item 10 Departmental Governance Review - Outcomes

Members **NOTED** the Departmental Governance Review document provided and discussed the proposed new governance framework and meeting methodology.

Members **NOTED** that the forums are structured in the following tiers:

- Tier One – Portfolio Level Governance forums



- Tier Two – Information Sharing; Cross Program Management, Engagement and Collaboration; and P3O Program forums
- Tier Three – Operations Management, Business Specific Engagement and Collaboration, P3O Project forums

Members **NOTED** that there will be a period of adjustment required to embed the new methodology and model. The Secretariat team will implement the changes to the meeting cadence and templates, and FAS's were asked to review the meeting tracker template and undertake a stocktake of all attendees at each meeting.

Members **NOTED** that the FAS's are to work with their Assistant Secretary's (AS's) to share and review the stocktake of meetings, update terms of reference and membership, and reduce forums and membership numbers where possible.

Members **AGREED** to next steps including the internal review of Tier Two and Tier Three forums to ensure membership is at the appropriate level and the forum is still required.

Members **ENDORSED** the proposed governance model and meeting changes at the Tier One and Tier Two levels.

No.	Decision
2021/D	Members AGREED membership on the current Disaster Management Response Team (DMRT) management meeting will remain unchanged and AGREED attendance is open to all staff who wish to attend.

No.	Decision
2021/D31	Members ENDORSED the proposed departmental governance framework and meeting changes at the Tier One and Tier Two levels; and AGREED to next steps including the internal review of Tier Two and Tier Three forums to ensure membership is at the appropriate level and the forum is still required.

Agenda Item 11 DVA Service Charter

Members were advised that DVA has been without a published Service Charter since April 2021.

Members **NOTED** that the DVA Service Charter has been reviewed and updated to reflect DVA's commitment to our clients, our focus on our clients' whole of life wellbeing, the supports DVA provides to them and how clients can help us to improve our services through review and feedback.

Members **NOTED** that the updated Service Charter makes no commitments about claim processing times. This is consistent with the service charters published by Services Australia and the Department of Home Affairs and the Ombudsman has asked about DVA's service charter as part of its Own Motion Investigation.

Members **ENDORSED** the updated DVA Service Charter 2021, in principle.

No.	Decision
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2021/D32	Members ENDORSED the updated DVA Service Charter 2021, in principle.
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Agenda Item 12 Internal Audits

Members **DISCUSSED** the current Internal Audit status and the current Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) Audit status.

Members **NOTED** that with regard to the Internal Audit, Ernst & Young (EY) are focussed upon the analysis of the 52 outstanding recommendations that relate to Veterans Family Services (VFS), and 28 outstanding recommendations that relate to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) divisions. A number of the outstanding recommendations are greater than 12 months overdue and are likely to be superseded.

Members **NOTED** that EY is working directly with DVA business areas on progressing development of Closure Packs.

Members **NOTED** that with regard to the ANAO's 2020-21 Financial Statement Audit, DVA is pushing to provide the ANAO with all assurances possible around the IT General controls for 2020-21, to enable the ANAO and DVA to meet the September signing deadline. Members **NOTED** that as a result of the issues uncovered in the current Financial Statements audit, the Audit team is working on a plan of key changes that need to take place to reduce DVA's risk, as well as meet audit expectations. This work will involve input and assistance from multiple business areas.

A copy of the recent DVA internal Audit Plan is to be provided to the Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services, Vicki Rundle for her visibility.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A36	A copy of the recent DVA internal Audit Plan is to be provided to the Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services, Vicki Rundle for her visibility.	Nicole Ingram

Agenda Item 13 Compensation Claims Dashboard Update

Members **NOTED** the progress on the compensation claims for various programs and the progress in implementing activities outlined in the *Client Benefits Division (CBD) Implementation Plan to Improve Claims Processing and Reduce Backlog April 2021- June 2022*.

Members **NOTED** the capacity of medical advisers continues to impact determinations, with the number of outstanding requests growing. Mitigating actions have been implemented, including recruitment of clinical advisers and a diversion of resources to completing impairment assessments.

Members **NOTED** that the Claims Support team has completed the task of contacting clients with unallocated claims over 365 days old and completed the preparation work on claims to assist delegates to process those claims.

Agenda Item 14 Client Interactions Dashboard

Members **NOTED** the productivity of the Client Engagement & Support Services (CESS) Division for the month of June 2021.

Members **NOTED** the following June highlights and financial year comparisons included in the report:



- VAN performance improved in June, but is still not meeting performance targets for calls answered or abandoned call rates.
- Feedback compliments declined by 30 percent in the 2020-21 financial year.
- All Veteran Support Office (VSO) performance indicators improved in the 2020-21 financial year, especially stakeholder engagement and helping clients go online.
- Medical and allied health approvals increased by 20 percent in the 2020-21 financial year, compared to the previous financial year.
- Household services and attendant care new claims and renewals more than doubled in the 2020-21 financial year.
- RAP, transport and ambulance payment processing consistently met performance targets throughout the 2020-21 financial year, as did transport reimbursement processing.
- Health reimbursements continue to not meet performance targets.

Agenda Item 15 Client Feedback Update

Members **NOTED** the feedback data for June 2021 and that it was completed using data current as at 12 July 2021.

Members **NOTED** that in June 2021, DVA received 251 complaints, 68 compliments and 28 suggestions.

Agenda Item 16 Commissions Considerations and Decisions

Members **NOTED** the information provided on Commissions Considerations and Decisions from the meetings held on 8 and 20 July 2021 of the Repatriation Commission (RC) and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) and the MRCC Subcommittee, respectively.

Agenda Item 17 Departmental Priorities and Government Commitment Update

Members **NOTED** the new format of the reporting templates from the Office of the Prime Minister. DVA is now required to report on an additional 17 measures.

Members were advised that this report, which aligns with the quarterly reporting from DVA, will be sent to the DVA Minister and the Prime Minister.

Agenda Item 18 Culture Update

Members **NOTED** the update provided in regard to DVA's culture.

Members **NOTED** that the Transform Engage Design (TED) team have been actively engaging with DVA staff through a number of different forums and mediums, including the Staff Reference Group and the Leadership Masterclass sessions, and intend to continue this engagement, whilst taking on board feedback from staff in regards new ways of promoting a positive culture within DVA.

Members **NOTED** that the TED team will provide general support to the Royal Commission Taskforce, if required and will target specific elements of the DVA Cultural Vision to address impacts that the Royal Commission may have on staff.



Members **NOTED** that with the re-emergence of COVID cases, and extension of restrictions in some jurisdictions, the team will work with the Department Response Management Operations team (DRMT) to ensure staff are informed and engaged appropriately.

Members **NOTED** that the TED team is investigating the current appetite for re-introducing an on-going series of All Staff surveys, similar to what was conducted in 2020, which would be beneficial with tracking staff wellbeing indicators against the 2020 benchmarks, and as an established mechanism to 'take the pulse' on emerging issues and topics. This would also be useful in conjunction with the recent APS Census results.

Agenda Item 19 Privacy Update

Members **NOTED** the contents of the Privacy Report for 1 October 2020 to 30 June 2021 and **DISCUSSED** and noted the contents of the OAIC's audit report.

Members **NOTED** that there was an increase in reported privacy incidents in the three reported Quarters. As with the July – September 2020 Quarter, the majority of incidents arose in the Client Benefits Division (37.4per cent) and most incidents were a result of staff sending written correspondence to the wrong client or a third party, by email.

Members **NOTED** that the development of a compulsory e-learning module for all staff on their privacy obligations is a need that has been identified previously and is a priority for the Information Law section, as is the development of the team's intranet page, which will include privacy factsheets for staff.

Members **NOTED** that in October 2019, DVA participated in an audit conducted by the OAIC regarding data matching activities and management of personal information. EMB have previously been briefed on the OAIC's audit. DVA has now received the OAIC's final report, with the OAIC making nine recommendations for DVA to elevate its privacy compliance.

Members **NOTED** that one of the findings is rated as high risk and requires DVA to develop a personal information holdings register, as required by the Privacy Code.

Members **NOTED** that the Information Law section has recently drafted DVA's 2021-2022 Privacy Management Plan (PMP) and circulated the plan to each division for input, along with a copy of DVA's Privacy Policy. Implementation activities resulting from the OAIC's audit have been incorporated into the PMP. An update will be provided to EMB once the PMP has been finalised.

Members **NOTED** that the Information Law section continues to work on a backlog of privacy investigations and assessments and is making steady progress.

Agenda Item 20 Other Business

Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services, Vicki Rundle, requested that the recent Client Satisfaction Survey results be circulated to members.

No.	Action	Assigned to
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2021/A37	Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services, Vicki Rundle, requested that the recent Client Satisfaction Survey results be circulated to members.	Kate Pope
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Agenda Item 21 Governance Committee Reports

Members **NOTED** the Governance Committee Reports provided.

- The Client Services Committee meeting was held Thursday 15 July 2021.
- The Policy Committee meeting was held Tuesday, 18 May 2021.
- The People & Culture Committee meeting was held Wednesday, 19 May 2021.
- The Portfolio Investment and Implementation Committee was held Thursday, 22 July 2021.

Agenda Item 22 EMB Forward Work Plan

Members **NOTED** the EMB Forward Work plan.

Meeting closed: 3:50pm

Next EMB scheduled for 6 September 2021.



Minutes

Agenda Item 1 Intelligent Reporting Booking System (IRBS) – Prof Jenny Firman

- iRBS Presentation

Members **NOTED** the presentation is deferred to a future special EMB and has been included on the Forward Work Plan.

Agenda Item 2 Corporate Plan and Timeline

1. Members **AGREED** to the tasking out approach for DVA's Corporate Plan 2021-22 with the timeline revised to give DVA Business areas maximum amount of time to provide input.

No. 2	Action	Assigned to
2021/A1	Develop a presentation outlining reporting requirements for input into the Corporate Plan at the next DRMT.	Liane Pettitt/ Graeme Rochow

No. 2	Decision	Assigned to
2021/D1	Corporate Plan to be tasked out once timeline is revised.	Liane Pettitt

The next SEMB meeting will be held on Monday, 6 April 2021.



Minutes

Members	
Liz Cosson	Chair, Secretary
Vicki Rundle	Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services Group
Kate Pope	Deputy President, Veteran & Family Policy Group
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Stuart Smith	Defence Engagement Commissioner
Professor Jenny Firman	Chief Health Officer
Don Spinks	Repatriation Commissioner
Leanne Cameron	First Assistant Secretary, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services Division
Mark Harrigan	Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operating Officer Division
Mark Garrity	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement & Support Services Division
Natasha Cole	First Assistant Secretary, Client Benefits Division
Rachel Goddard	First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations & Transformation Division
Veronica Hancock	First Assistant Secretary, Veteran & Family Policy Division
Glen Casson	Chief Finance Officer, Chief Finance Officer Division
Traci-Ann Byrnes	First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce Division
Presenters	
Joumana El Hassan	Assistant Secretary, Shared Services & Technology - <i>Item 4</i>
Tony ^{s 47F}	Managing Director, KPMG - <i>Item 5</i>
Emma Ockwell Hawkins	A/g Assistant Secretary, People Services Branch - <i>Items 14 & 15</i>
Liane Pettitt	Chief of Staff & Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance - <i>Item 16</i>
Observers	
Rodger McNally	Assistant Secretary, Integrity, Information & Security – <i>Item 4</i>
Sharon ^{s 47F}	Director, People Strategy, People Services Branch – <i>Item 15</i>
Nicole Ingram	General Counsel and Assistant Secretary, Legal Services & Audit Branch
Secretariat	
Belinda ^{s 47F}	A/g Director, Governance & Ministerial Events Section
Melinda ^{s 47F}	Assistant Director, Governance & Ministerial Events Section
Faith ^{s 47F}	A/g Senior Secretariat Officer, Governance & Ministerial Events Section
Apologies	
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Don Spinks	Repatriation Commissioner

Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest



The Chair welcomed members to the Executive Management Board (EMB) meeting. Apologies were noted from Gwen Cherne, Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner and Don Spinks, Repatriation Commissioner. No conflicts of interest were declared.

Secretary Update:

The Chair discussed the reporting and processing requirements for dealings with the Minister's Office and noted the new Departmental Liaison Officer staffing arrangements.

The Chair advised that the final report prepared by the Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention is scheduled for release on 15 September 2021. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Suicide and Self-Harm Monitoring report is also due for release in late September. Both reports are expected to have a direct impact on the work of the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), and will likely result in Requests for Information being made to the department. In anticipation, the Chair is conducting an issues-identification session with the Communications Branch to prepare for any likely media enquiries.

The Chair advised that the Department will begin planning for the next generation of veterans.

A deep-dive analysis of DVA processes for reviewing and handling enquiries will be held this week with the Royal Commission (RC) Taskforce. The Chair plans to discuss media engagement methods, narratives of previous DVA reports, and map lessons learned from previous investigations. The discussion will be framed by four key themes: Families Support, DVA Client Experiences, Transition from Defence Service and Suicide Prevention Initiatives and will support the budget overlay for decision-making.

The Chair has reviewed the draft DVA Annual Report, and noted her preference for it be more concise.

Item 2 Minutes & actions of previous meeting

Members **ENDORSED** the minutes from the meeting of 2 August 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D33	Members ENDORSED the minutes from the meeting of 2 August 2021.

Members **AGREED** to close action items: 2021/A23, 2021/A24, 2021/A28, 2021/A29, 2021/A30, 2021/A31, 2021/A32, 2021/A33 and 2021/A34.

Members **NOTED** action items 2021/A02 and 2021/A35 remain open.

Agenda Item 3 Commissions Considerations & Decisions

Members **NOTED** the information provided on Commissions Considerations & Decisions from the meetings of the Repatriation Commission (RC) and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) and the MRCC Subcommittee (Commissions') held on 6 August 2021, 12 August 2021 and 19 August 2021.

Members **NOTED** that at the RC/MRCC meeting held on 6 August 2021, addressed six matters for consideration and 10 submissions for decision by members. At the RC/MRCC Extraordinary meeting on 12 August 2021, no matters were submitted for consideration; two submissions were provided for decision by



members. At the RC/MRCC Subcommittee meeting on 19 August 2021, three matters were submitted for consideration and two submissions were provided for decision by members.

Agenda Item 4 ICT Strategic Discussion – Secure Email Replacement

Members **NOTED** that DVA has been working on a project with Services Australia to replace *ProofPoint*.

ProofPoint currently provides DVA the following two functions:

- To manage its **Secure Email** – 'Sensitive' marked emails; and
- For **Malware, SPAM and Virus filtering**.

Members **NOTED** that the Malware, SPAM and Virus filtering functionality has been migrated to Services Australia since 24 August 2021. However, Services Australia's proposed solution (Symantec PGP) for Secure Email was found to be lacking the key functionality needed to meet DVA's requirements and presented a potential security risk.

Members **AGREED** to retain *ProofPoint* as DVA's secure email solution following the implementation of a workaround to rectify the support functionality to enable clients to access information through their preferred channels. These include accessing DVA Sensitive emails via iPhones and iPads.

No.	Decision
2021/D34	Members AGREED to retain <i>ProofPoint</i> as DVA's secure email solution following the implementation of a workaround to rectify the support functionality and to enable clients to access information through their preferred channels. These include accessing DVA Sensitive emails via iPhones and iPads.

Agenda Item 5 Enterprise Risk Review Update

Members **NOTED** that KPMG were engaged in June 2021 to assist with a review of DVA's existing strategic risks and the processes by which these are documented, reviewed and monitored. Following interim advice, it was agreed to re-develop the Enterprise Risk (ER) statements. This was completed on 20 August 2021 and Senior Executives subsequently agreed that the ER statements be expressed through an enterprise risk/environmental scan (the Scan) rather than as a risk.

This supports a deliberate approach to focus on performance and outcomes, reframing it using 'positive' terminology to highlight key areas of strategic focus, rather than negative 'risk language'. It was further noted that the Scan is designed to provide visibility of the threats so that a temporal assessment can be undertaken to ensure that 'here/now' concerns can be treated to push them out to be more of a future action requirement. It is expected to relieve immediate associated pressures on members.

Members were advised that the proposed Scan will be a dynamic document that will be updated by EMB to align with the changing ER environment. Ownership of any amended focus areas will be determined at the time of identification, and will be shared with Executive Leadership Group (ELG) members.

Members **NOTED** that the proposed documentation associated with the management of the risk focus areas is noticeably different to the current risk registers, with a focus on significantly reducing unnecessary process and rationalising the documentation presented at future EMB meetings.



Members discussed the Scan and the new format, and **AGREED** that it would be beneficial to seek input to the new categories from the ELG and Band 1 staff. Progress will be made to produce a survey which will include strategic questions seeking feedback/input from these staff. KPMG will work to develop this.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A38	Members agreed to ENGAGE and seek input to the Enterprise Risk Scan from DVA's SES Band 1 staff and the ELG. Progress will be made to produce a survey/strategic questions when seeking feedback/input from these staff members. KPMG will work to develop this.	KPMG & Mark Harrigan

Members **NOTED** that separate meetings will be scheduled with risk owners to understand what information already exists to manage relevant risks and to gauge DVA's level of risk exposure.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A39	Enterprise Risk Scan and determinations of risk owners to be added to EMB FWP for the October meeting, or discussed out of session.	Chair & Secretariat

Agenda Item 6 Monthly Financial report

Members **NOTED** the DVA July Financial Report, and that year to date expenditure is \$34.5m. This is slightly higher than the pro-rata departmental revenue (\$34.2m), but is in line with expectations in comparison to July of the previous financial year.

Members **NOTED** that Finance and Account Managers in the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Division will meet with each First Assistant Secretary (FAS) or their finance officer to discuss year to date results, and that forecasting will commence from the end of August 2021.

Agenda Item 7 2021-22 Internal Budget Allocations

Members discussed the Internal Budget Allocations and **NOTED** the approach used to set and manage the internal budgets for 2021-22, as previously outlined at the Departmental Response Management Team (DRMT) meeting.

Members **NOTED** that initial budgets have been allocated at the divisional level where accountability to EMB will rest. The budget will be devolved further to the branch and directorate level in September to provide greater visibility and control for divisions, and also allow Assistant Secretaries and Directors to have greater financial span of control of their respective business areas. Divisions have been advised of their initial allocations and have built their bottom-up budgets at the account category level in the budget management system.

Members **NOTED** that owners are proposed for each of these centrally managed items to enable better planning and co-ordination of purchasing, leveraging off the department's purchasing power. This will concurrently enable divisions to focus on matters within their control. The process for divisions to access the centrally held budgets is intended to balance transparency, accountability and administrative overheads.



Members **NOTED** that the internal budget will be reviewed throughout the year to address any external budget adjustments, internal pressures and to realign priorities. Divisions will be required to review internal budget allocations and priorities prior to seeking additional funding through the review processes.

Members **NOTED** the two review points for the internal budget allocations. These are known pressures which are being discussed with divisions and are to be refined. The first is the Mid-year review to be undertaken in November, based on the end of October year-to-date actual expenditure. The second being the Final budget review, to be undertaken in March, based on the end of February year-to-date actual expenditure.

Members **AGREED** to the initial internal departmental budget allocations for 2021-2022. Members **AGREED** to the broad allocations of the capital budget and to the owners and process to release funding held in the central provisions.

Members **NOTED** that the Secretary will engage with all FAS out-of-session in relation to divisional budgets.

Agenda Item 8 Draft 2020 – 2021 Annual Performance Statements

Members **NOTED** the draft 2020-21 Annual Performance Statements (APS) and associated supporting documentation, and that during 2020-21 DVA undertook a review of its 2020-2024 Corporate Plan and performance measures. As a result, DVA re-issued its Corporate Plan in June 2021, which included minor changes to the measures and an additional explanatory table to clarify the relationship between DVA's purpose and the stated performance measures.

Members **NOTED** that as with the 2019-20 program years, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) is undertaking an audit of the department's 2020-21 APS. The draft 2020-21 APS incorporates feedback already received from the ANAO. In particular, the APS seeks to provide further clarity on the linkages between DVA's purpose, key activities and performance measures.

Members **NOTED** that DVA has achieved 29 (or 57 per cent) of the performance measures reported in the 2020-21 APS. A further 20 measures (or 39 per cent) were not achieved, and two measures (4 per cent) are pending final results. This represents an improvement of four percentage points compared to 2019-20, with timeliness measures improving the most.

Members **NOTED** that the draft APS were presented to the joint Financial and Performance Statements Sub Committee (FPSSC) and the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) for endorsement on 1 September 2021. Following endorsement by the FPSSC, ARC and the EMB, the Secretary will sign off on the APS as the Accountable Authority in September 2021. The APS will then be provided to the Annual Report editors for final review and design work.

Members **NOTED** that new reporting measures for the Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG) have been implemented for 2020-21. Through the reporting process, limitations have been identified with the War Graves Asset Management System. The Data & Insights team have been engaged to extract data from the system to report against these two measures for the APS. The results will be provided to Special EMB as soon as they are available. The OAWG is exploring options to improve longer-term reporting.



Members **ENDORSED** DVA's draft Annual Performance Statements for 2020-21 pending revisions from the Secretary and ARC, and publication in the 2020-21 Annual Report in October 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D35	Members ENDORSED DVA's Draft Annual Performance Statements for 2020-21.

Agenda Item 9 Transition Medical Assessment Project

Members were provided with an overview of the Transition Medical Assessment (TMA) Project expected to be piloted at the Duntroon Garrison Health Centre in 2022.

Members **NOTED** that the aim of the TMA pilot is to expedite claims determination for transitioning Australian Defence Force (ADF) members by utilising Occupational Physicians to provide prima facie expert medical evidence to DVA delegates. This will ensure that, where possible, claims are determined prior to separation.

Members **NOTED** that the pilot aims to minimise the potential negative mental health impacts of delayed claims processing, highlighted by the Productivity Commission in its Inquiry Report. The pilot program is expected to support and facilitate veterans to enter into a treatment/rehabilitation-focussed relationship with DVA, rather than an adversarial claims-based relationship. Client Benefits Division (CBD) has provided in-principle support for the pilot and has agreed to provide resourcing to prioritise claims for evaluation that are submitted by medically and administratively separating members.

Members discussed the TMA pilot, with recommendations made to narrow its scope and to ensure that consideration is given to the multiple stakeholders involved. Members **AGREED** that Veterans' Support Officers (VSOs) have key roles in the process and would benefit from the knowledge transfer available should this pilot proceed.

Members discussed the options of the TMA pilot being funded as a New Policy Proposal (NPP). Members considered the project's link to administered funding arrangements, but acknowledged that further exploratory work is required and that the details of the evaluation plan will be critical to any future NPP.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A40	Explore options around the Transition Medical Assessment (TMA) pilot being funded as a New Policy Proposal (NPP).	Veronica Hancock & Jenny Firman

No.	Decision
2021/D36	Members ENDORSED , in-principle, the Transition Medical Assessment concept to be piloted at the Duntroon Garrison Health Centre, commencing in 2022.

Members **NOTED** that the TMA pilot concept is to be presented at the Defence Links Steering Committee on 28 September 2021 and that endorsement by the ADF Joint Health Command is planned for 30 September 2021.



Members **did not AGREE** that the initial pilot funding be provided under the administered (V2) budget, due to a requirement for further associated work to be undertaken in relation to the recommended pilot options provided.

Agenda Item 10 Expansion of Computer-Based Decision Conditions

Members **NOTED** that on 13 November 2020, the Secretary tasked Luke Brown, Deputy Commissioner Tasmania to undertake a Review of Compensation Processes and Procedures. The review detailed seven recommendations to assist with managing the growing number of claims in the compensation claims area.

Members **NOTED** the update provided and on the implementation of Recommendation 5 - *It is recommended that the current list of computer-based decisions be expanded, but application be limited to claims where the claimant enlisted after 1 July 2004.*

Members **ENDORSED** the expansion of computer-based decision making for initial liability claims under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) to include claims for Rotator Cuff Syndrome and Lumbar Spondylosis.

No.	Decision
2021/D37	Members ENDORSED the expansion of computer-based decision making for initial liability claims under the <i>Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004</i> (MRCA) to include claims for rotator cuff syndrome and lumbar spondylosis.

Members **NOTED** that a MRCC submission will be prepared for consideration of this matter at the MRCC September 2021 meeting.

Members **NOTED** that the availability of IT funding will be explored and external consultation undertaken through the Ex-Service Organisation Round Table (via the Multi-Act Working Group) and the Operational Working Party. Changes to computer-based decision arrangements will be finalised via a brief to the Secretary who has delegation to approve this under the *Digital Readiness Act* amendments.

Members **ENDORSED** the changes restricting the current computer-based decision making in respect of MRCA initial liability claims, to limit its application to claimants who enlisted on or after 1 July 2004.

No.	Decision
2021/D38	Members ENDORSED a change to current computer-based decision making in respect of MRCA initial liability claims to limit its application to claimants who enlisted on or after 1 July 2004.

Agenda Item 11 Compensation Claims Dashboard Update including Post Allocation Emails

Members **NOTED** the progress of compensation claims of various programs and the progress in implementing various activities outlined in the *CBD Implementation Plan to Improve Claims Processing and Reduce Backlog April 2021- June 2022*.



Members **NOTED** that the prolonged COVID-19 lockdown and home schooling arrangements in a number of eastern states has impacted staff productivity and the capability and capacity of new Claims Medical Advisers is having an impact on productivity and timeliness with the number of outstanding requests growing.

Members **NOTED** the update on the introduction of a new process 'ladder' involving multiple communication channels for contact with veterans at processing milestones, including an email to the veteran upon allocation to a claims delegate. The sending of emails will be undertaken by those currently involved in allocating claims to delegates and will be absorbed into existing staffing levels.

Agenda Item 12 Client Management Feedback Update

Members **NOTED** that a 'refresher' and Client Feedback Management System (CFMS) training has been provided to various business groups to ensure staff record all feedback provided through correspondence logged in the Parliamentary Document Management System (PDMS).

Members **NOTED** that PDMS correspondence which includes feedback should also be recorded in CFMS as 'shell records' as the final step in closing the PDMS record, to enable staff to access a basic summary of the feedback provided.

Members **NOTED** that in July 2021, DVA received a total of 223 complaints, 58 compliments and 39 suggestions. In June 2021, DVA received 265 complaints, 68 compliments and 28 suggestions, with the top three categories for complaints in July being client service, timeliness and contractor/provider issues.

Members **NOTED** that as at 20 August 2021, there are currently 265 open cases in CFMS. Of these, 180 are complaints, 16 are compliments, 23 are suggestions and 45 are recorded as 'other' and the average time taken to process complaints in July was 18 days. There are 130 overdue feedback items which will not meet the 28 day timeliness standard.

Agenda Item 13 Client Interactions Dashboard

Members **NOTED** the update provided on productivity across the Client Engagement & Support Services (CESS) Division for the month of July 2021.

Members **NOTED** that Veteran Access Network performance declined in July and continues to not achieve performance targets of 70 per cent of calls answered in 60 seconds and an abandoned call rate of less than 5 per cent.

Members **NOTED** that in comparison to June, Feedback complaints decreased in July, from 265 to 223 and that VSOs assisted 882 clients to go online in July.

Members **NOTED** that there continues to be an anomaly with MyService reporting which makes new claims data unavailable and this remains under investigation. DVA website data also continues to be unavailable for July due to Google analytics system issues.

Members **NOTED** that dental implant approval average processing time continues to meet the 60 day performance target, averaging 36 days in July. Dental approval completion rates declined in July compared



to June and did not meet the average time taken to process standard of 21 days, increasing from 16 to 35 days.

Agenda Item 14 2021 APS Employee Census – DVA Results

Members **NOTED** the DVA 2021 Australian Public Service (APS) Employees Census results and that 76 per cent of DVA's workforce completed the Census. This included 1317 (62 per cent) APS staff and 789 (38 per cent) Labour Hire staff.

Members **NOTED** that comparatively, this year's results against Employee Engagement, Innovation and Wellbeing indexes show very little change from 2020 and remain close to par with the APS average. This accounts for a period of only six months between Census' being conducted, compared to the usual 12 months. In this time, a number of external factors are likely to have influenced staff responses. These include: the announcement of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide; delays to salary increases and the capping of future pay rises in accordance with the Wage Price Index (WPI); and that at the time of the survey DVA's Budget initiatives had not been announced. In addition, pandemic-related lockdowns occurred across multiple jurisdictions and where possible, staff were being asked to return to the office for a minimum of two days per week.

Members **NOTED** that a suite of training and wellbeing supports will be accessible to all DVA staff (APS and contingent workers) on DVATrain, including a course in Mental Health First Aid, a building resilience eLearning and workshop and Accidental Counsellor training, amongst others.

Members **AGREED** that in response to a decrease in awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture, People Services Branch (PSB) will continue to investigate cultural awareness training that is fit for purpose in the DVA environment. Once available, PSB will provide information to Divisions.

Members **AGREED** that in response to a decrease in support of innovation, the creation of a DVA Innovation Champion will be considered, utilising the Staff Reference Group (SRG) to support the formalisation of structured innovation programs and encourage new ways of working within DVA. Members agreed to discuss and consider this proposal off-line.

Members **AGREED** to the proposed work to be led by the Chief Operating Officer Division to address some of the common areas for improvement across the department. Members also **AGREED** to business areas analysing their branch and divisional results in consultation with staff, to plan and work on key focus areas.

Agenda Item 15 Work Force Information

Members **NOTED** the staff consultation undertaken prior to the ballot for the DVA Enterprise Agreement remuneration determination.

Members **NOTED** that while the attrition rate has fallen, there has been a commensurate decrease in the median tenure, indicating that highly experienced/high tenure employees have separated from the department in the last 12 months. A deep dive will be conducted to detail the role specifications and expectations for staff levels and obtain insights regarding this matter.

Members discussed providing opportunities for staff to provide feedback/insights as to why they leave DVA. The option of conducting compulsory exit interviews was discussed, but members were advised that



the *doc-u-sign* process that staff complete on exiting the department already provides an option to request an interview.

Agenda Item 16 Departmental Priorities and Government Commitment Update

Members **NOTED** the Departmental Priorities and Government Commitment Update provided. Members were thanked for the detailed input now required for these reports, which are provided to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Prime Minister's office, respectively.

Agenda Item 17 Other Business

Members were advised that a new Branch, initially titled *Mental & Social Health Programs Branch*, will be established within the Mental Health & Wellbeing Services Division. This Branch will consolidate all of the Division's mental and social health programs.

Agenda Item 18 Forward Work Plan

Members **NOTED** the Forward Work Plan.

Meeting closed: 4:20pm. The Next EMB meeting is scheduled for 5 October 2021.



Minutes

Agenda Item 1	Enterprise Risk 2 - Policy
Agenda Item 2	Enterprise Risk 3 – Finance
Agenda Item 3	Enterprise Risk 6 - Workforce
Agenda Item 4	Enterprise Risk 7- Claims

Special EMB NOTED the enterprise risks and AGREED the following further work is to be undertaken:

6 April 2021	Decision
2021/D07	To ensure appropriate independence and oversight, assurers are to be separate to the relevant business area. Accordingly, Dep Sec Vicki Rundle is to be assigned assurer for the Policy ER and Financial ER and Deputy President, Kate Pope is to be assigned assurer for Claims and Workforce. Each assurer will be supported by a FAS that is also separate to the business.

6 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A2	Enterprise Risk Workshops – Assurers and relevant FAS listed below to coordinate workshops per individual Enterprise Risk inviting all relevant parties to examine new ideas, naming conventions and areas for integration.	Kate Pope/Vicki Rundle
Risk Priority	Risk Assurer	Responsible FAS
Enterprise Risk 7- Claims	Kate Pope	Traci-Ann Byrne
Enterprise Risk 3 – Finance	Vicki Rundle	Veronica Hancock
Enterprise Risk 6 - Workforce	Kate Pope	Natasha Cole
Enterprise Risk 2 - Policy	Kate Pope	Leanne Cameron

6 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A7	Chief Risk Officer (CRO) to provide the remaining Enterprise Risks to SEMB 12 April 2021.	CRO

6 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A8	A contracted organisation will be engaged to facilitate the refreshment of the risks and reporting framework Through a series of short workshops with each risk assurer, owner and relevant business area.	CRO

The Forward Work Plan was DISCUSSED and all other Enterprise Risks are to be presented at the next SEMB for discussion.

The next Special Executive Management Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, 12 April 2021.



Minutes

Members	
Liz Cosson	Chair, Secretary
Vicki Rundle	Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services Group
Kate Pope	Deputy President, Veteran & Family Policy Group
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner
Stuart Smith	Defence Engagement Commissioner
Prof Jenny Firman	Chief Health Officer
Don Spinks	Repatriation Commissioner
Leanne Cameron	First Assistant Secretary, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services Division
Mark Harrigan	Chief Operating Officer, Chief Operating Officer Division
Mark Garrity	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement & Support Services Division
Natasha Cole	First Assistant Secretary, Client Benefits Division
Rachel Goddard	First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations & Transformation Division
Veronica Hancock	First Assistant Secretary, Veteran & Family Policy Division
Glen Casson	Chief Finance Officer, Chief Finance Officer Division
Traci-Ann Byrnes	First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce Division
Presenters	
Tony ^{s 47F}	Managing Director KPMG – (Item 5)
Wayne Perry	Assistant Secretary, Provider Engagement and Management Branch (Item 10)
Nic ^{s 47F}	Assistant Director, Transformation, Engagement and Design - (Item 11)
Nicole Ingram	Assistant Secretary, Legal Services and Audit General Counsel (Item 13)
Roger Winzenberg	Assistant Secretary, People Services - (Item 14)
Liane Pettitt	Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary and Governance - (Item 19)
Observers	
Maria ^{s 47F}	Director, Statutory Interpretation, Legal Services Branch (Item 4)
Simon Hill	Assistant Secretary, Policy Development Branch - (Items 6, 7 & 8)
Adrienne ^{s 47F}	Director, Policy Implementation, Evaluation and Families (Item 8)
Sharon ^{s 47F}	Director, People Strategy Section (Item 14)
Jodi ^{s 47F}	Office Manager for the Secretary
Secretariat	
Belinda ^{s 47F}	A/g Director, Governance & Ministerial Events Section
Kylie ^{s 47F}	Assistant Director, Governance & Ministerial Events Section
Faith ^{s 47F}	A/g Senior Secretariat Officer, Governance & Ministerial Events Section
Apologies	
Traci-Ann Byrnes	First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce Division



Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, noting apologies from Traci-Ann Byrnes, First Assistant Secretary (FAS), Royal Commission Taskforce Division. No conflicts of interest were declared.

Secretary Update:

The Chair attended the Senate Committee inquiry into Australia's engagement in Afghanistan. Senator Lambie made special mention of the recent communications by the Department, and recommended DVA continue with this process to advise veterans and their family members about the Senate inquiry and that submissions are being sought by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide.

The DVA All Staff Live Event held on 30 September 2021 proved successful. A high percentage of staff attended, many questions were asked and responses will be provided in due course.

Item 2 Minutes & actions of previous meeting

Members **ENDORSED** the minutes from the meeting of 6 September 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D39	Members ENDORSED the minutes from the meeting of 6 September 2021.

Members **AGREED** to close action items 2021/A34, 2021/A35, 2021/A38, and 2021/A39.

Members **NOTED** that the action items 2021/A02 & 2021/A40 will remain open.

Item 2.1 Action Item 2021/A34 MRCA s330 (3) Legislation Wording Amendment

Members **AGREED** for the business area to select the preferred phrasing for s330(3) of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) to replace the wording 'refusal to deal' and agreed for Client Benefits Division (CBD) to submit this proposed change to the next Repatriation Commission (RC) and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) (the Commissions) meeting.

No.	Decision
2021/D40	Members AGREED for the business area to select the preferred phrasing to replace the current wording 'refusal to deal' for MRCA s330(3) and for CBD to submit the proposed change to the Commissions at the next meeting for final approval.

Agenda Item 3 Commissions Considerations & Decisions

Members **NOTED** the overview of the Repatriation Commission (RC) and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) (the Commissions) meeting held on 9 September 2021.

Members **NOTED** there were 10 matters for consideration and 12 submissions for decision and the next cycle of Commissions meetings are scheduled for; RC/MRCC Subcommittee on Thursday, 7 October 2021; and the RC/MRCC will be held on Friday, 22 October 2021.

The Chair requested the Tracker for Commissioners Post Activity Reports be provided to EMB for visibility.



No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A41	A copy of the Tracker for Commissioners Post Activity Reports be included as a standing agenda items for future EMB meetings.	Don Spinks

Agenda Item 4 Draft Integrity Framework

Members **DISCUSSED** the draft DVA Integrity Framework, acknowledging that the document outlines DVA's commitment to integrity and the necessary support and guidance to assist DVA's personnel in maintaining the highest levels of accountability, including decision making. The Framework supports a strong, pro-integrity culture within DVA.

Members **NOTED** that the Australia New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) was tasked by the Secretariat of the Independent Review of the Australian Public Service (APS) to develop a report on the APS Integrity Framework. The report was published in March 2019. Consistent with the ANZSOG report, the basis for the Integrity Framework comprises a number of legislative sources, including the *Australian Public Service Act 1999* and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act)*.

Members recommended the Framework be provided to the Staff Reference Group for feedback and then return to EMB requesting endorsement.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A02	Provide the draft Integrity Framework to the DVA Staff Reference Group (SRG) requesting feedback.	Mark Harrigan
2021/A42 Linked to 2021/A02	Following consultation with the SRG, the draft Integrity Framework will return to the Executive Management Board for endorsement.	Mark Harrigan

Agenda Item 5 Enterprise Risk Scan – Facilitator Determinations

Members **DISCUSSED** the status update of the Enterprise Risk Review and the proposed facilitator role, recommending allocation of this role to each of the areas of focus within DVA, outlined in the Risk Scan.

Two questions were posed to the Executive Leadership Group and responses were discussed on 24 September 2021 at the Department Response Management Team meeting. The two biggest risks identified were:

1. The inability to provide strategic and evidenced based policy advice to Government; and
2. Pandemic – transition and planning.

Members **AGREED** to include the above risks into the current review with 1. included in *Achieving Legislative Reform* and 2. included as business as usual in *Managing Our Workforce*.

The Risk Scan will continue to be a dynamic document updated to align with the changing risk environment, noting concerns around competing with the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Aged Care sector to provide services to our clients.



Members **AGREED** with the Chair's amendments and assignment of facilitators that will be updated in the Risk Scan. The risk regarding Effective Stakeholder Engagement sits across all business areas and the FAS, Commemorations & Transformation agreed to facilitate this risk. It was suggested a stocktake of all current DVA stakeholders be undertaken as part of this facilitation.

The Legal Services & Audit (LS&A) team has completed mapping of existing mitigation strategies that align with each of DVA's key risk areas. Facilitators will schedule meetings with LS&A to assess how their key focus area is currently being managed. The refreshed process provides an opportunity for strategic management within DVA, as well as encouraging deeper, action-oriented and dynamic discussions on risk.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A43	Facilitator determinations for the Enterprise Risk Scan to be finalised and distributed to EMB members, noting the facilitation of the Effective Stakeholder Engagement risk would include a stocktake of current DVA stakeholders.	Mark Harrigan

No.	Decision
2021/D41	Members ENDORSED the proposed facilitator roles for the key focus areas identified in the Enterprise Risk Scan.

Agenda Item 6 Building Family Resilience – Strategy Update on Family Policy

Members **NOTED** the key policy activities underway to support veteran families and that the Veteran Family Strategy and Action Plan will be provided to the Commissions for agreement and will progress to the Minister for consideration and comment.

Members **NOTED** the research collaboration between DVA and Defence to better understand what support families need during transition, particularly families with children. Recruitment for the research is subject to ethics approval and the Veteran Family Policy (VFP) Division will work with the Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner to promote the study.

Members **NOTED** the Family Support Package Budget Measure to extend current services to more veteran families will be implemented from 1 July 2022, and improvements to assist widows to have more flexible childcare arrangements is currently being sought.

In June 2021, the yearly DVA Education Schemes Satisfaction Survey was conducted, which is a short anonymous survey used to report against Outcome 1.5.3 in the Annual Report. 83.22 per cent of responses indicated that the Scheme is effective or very effective in helping veteran families through supporting children or dependants of current and former Australian Defence Force members who have died or been severely injured as a result of their service, reach their individual academic potential.

Agenda Item 7 Strategy for Legislative Reform – Harmonisation of Veterans Acts – Alignment

Members **NOTED** the verbal update provided by FAS VFP outlining the request from Government to investigate simplifying the current suite of legislation that DVA is governed by into one "single Act". VFP is seeking to contract an expert panel to provide advice and develop a roadmap that can be presented to



Government in 2022/23. Extensive consultation will be undertaken with ex-service organisations, other departments and internally.

Agenda Item 8 Evaluation of Incapacity Payment Step up for Veterans Studying as Part of Rehabilitation

Members **DISCUSSED** the policy and service evaluation outcomes of the 2021 review of the incapacity payments step-up for veterans studying. The step-up measure was initially introduced on 1 November 2018 as part of a Budget measure which increased incapacity payments back to 100 per cent of normal earnings, for those that were undertaking study as part of their rehabilitation plan. The evaluation recommended some low or no cost improvements, and some larger strategic options that need to be considered in the broader budget and transformation context. The current measure is due to cease on 30 June 2022 and consideration is required to seek ongoing funding to support the measure into the future, or shift funding to an alternative support.

Members **AGREED** that study is beneficial to an individual's wellbeing and should be part of their rehabilitation plan and **ENDORSED** the development of an implementation plan for submission to the Commissions.

No.	Decision
2021/D42	Members ENDORSED the findings of the evaluation report of the incapacity payments step-up for veterans studying and an implementation plan is to be progressed to the Commissions.

Agenda Item 9 Outcome and Update of Transformation – Year Four

Members **NOTED** the update on the Veteran Centric Reform – Putting Veterans and their Families First Program and **DISCUSSED**:

- **Year 4 Closure Process** - The Transformation Program Board (TPB) considered a summarised version of the Year 4 Closure report in August 2021 and requested further work be undertaken to analyse financial saves. The Enterprise Program Office is working with the Chief Financial Officer Group to progress this work to then submit the full report to EMB.
- **External Assurance**
 - The fifth Mid Stage program (Gateway) review is scheduled for November 2021, however DVA has submitted a request to defer until early 2022, given revised governance processes are being established, competing priorities, current staffing levels and the need to implement outcomes of the previous reviews.
 - It is expected that recommendations made as part of the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) Report into the Effectiveness of the Planning and Management of Veteran Centric Reforms will be actioned by the end of November 2021.
 - The recent Governance Review proposed a new structure that is currently being implemented. The Implementation Assurance Board (IAB) has replaced the TPB, with a revised membership. The inaugural IAB meeting is scheduled for late October to consider the Terms of Reference, Operating Principles and other program level artefacts.



Agenda Item 10 Performance Dashboard – Quarter 4 Results (2020 – 21)

Members **NOTED** the Quarter 4 2020-21 Performance Dashboard update and the key contracts which are managed by the Provider Engagement and Management Branch and also noted that DVA exceeded its target of procuring services from Indigenous suppliers.

Agenda Item 11 Internal Survey Protocol

Members **NOTED** that the Internal Survey Protocol has been developed to support the Senior Executive to engage with their staff and gather attitudinal and preference data as effectively as possible.

Members **ENDORSED** to the proposal developed by the by the Transform, Engage, and Design Team.

No.	Decision
2021/D43	Members ENDORSED the implementation of the Internal Survey Protocol developed and operated by the Transform, Engage, and Design Team.

Agenda Item 12 Repatriation Transport Scheme: Building an Equitable and Contemporary service offering

Members **NOTED** that the Repatriation Transport Scheme (RTS) provides travel assistance for eligible clients who need to travel to obtain treatment. The Department undertook a review of the RTS to achieve a more equitable and accessible service.

In February 2021, the Commissions endorsed program reform work resulting from the Aligned Transport Services review, for the following four service offerings:

1. New South Wales Country Taxi Voucher Scheme;
2. New South Wales Community Transport Provider Payment Arrangements;
3. Simplification of contractual arrangements between DVA and emergency ambulance providers; and
4. Transport from treatment facilities to other care facilities (such as residential aged care).

Recommendations 3 and 4 are tracking well however 1 and 2 are being impacted by the pandemic. Members **AGREED** with the proposed approach to pause work on recommendations 1 and 2 for a 12 month period.

No.	Decision
2021/D44	Members AGREED to approach the Commissions and request approval to pause work on Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Aligned Transport Services (ATS) review, for a 12 month period.

Agenda Item 13 Internal Audits

Members **NOTED** the current status of DVA's internal audit and ANAO work in progress.

The Department continues to work with the ANAO noting it is in the final stages of testing and completing the audit, with a small number of queries being worked through. The issues highlighted in the interim management letter have been addressed in the 2020-21 Annual Performance Statement, where relevant. At the conclusion of the audit, a draft Final Audit report will be provided allowing DVA to consider the outcomes and seek to improve our performance measures further.



Members **NOTED** that the Chair has discussed reporting practices with the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Chair, Ms Elizabeth Montano. A workshop will be held by the ARC Chair to provide guidance and assistance with aligning reporting requirements, and practises across the department.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A44	The Audit and Risk Chair, Elizabeth Montano, to attend EMB to provide an overview of the past Financial Year's audit process and any key lessons for the Department.	General Counsel

No.	Decision
2021/D45	The Chair requested the Annual Report be progressed to the Minister, requesting sign off to ensure the Department meets its obligations under the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act)</i> .

Agenda Item 14 Workforce Information

Members **DISCUSSED** ways to address the poor completion rate of annual performance reviews, noting the effect of COVID-19 on the performance review cycle, with lockdowns in many states and territories.

Members **NOTED** the challenges presented in reaching the ASL cap and **AGREED** with the proposal to engage an external recruitment agency to conduct a department-wide recruitment process. FAS' are review the report highlighting long-term acting and contracting arrangements, and consider and advise on positions for the recruitment processes. This will assist to address staff questions during the All Staff Live Event, as well as achieving the ASL cap.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A45	People Services Branch (PSB) to engage a recruitment agency to conduct a DVA bulk recruitment process.	Roger Winzenberg
2021/A46	First Assistant Secretaries to examine the positions within their respective divisions and provide options to PSB for further recruitment action.	All FAS

Agenda Item 15 Monthly Finance Report – August 2021

Members **NOTED** the departmental, financial and expenditure results provided as at 31 August 2021 and that a detailed capital budget will be provided to a future EMB for endorsement.

Agenda Item 16 Compensation Claims Dashboard Update

Members **NOTED** the progress on compensation claims as outlined in the August 2021 Monthly Progress Report, as well as the progress with implementing activities in the Client Benefits Division Implementation Plan to improve Claims Processing and Reduce Backlog April 2021 – June 2022.

Members **NOTED** that the number of *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA)* Initial Liability (IL) claims received continues to increase (with processing being addressed through recruitment), however; the MRCA IL correctness rate has improved to 90.7 per cent.



Members **NOTED** that the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988* (DRCA), and the DRCA Personal Injury (PI) claims are tracking well, which has enabled resources to be reallocated to assist with the processing of DRCA IL claims and that the processing of direct limitations continues to impact income support processing and the Single Access Mechanism.

The consulting company McKinsey & Co has commenced work examining the complexities of the DVA claims system.

Agenda Item 17 Client Management Feedback Update

Members **NOTED** the Client Management Feedback data for August 2021 provided an overview of complaints, compliments and suggestions across divisions, feedback categories, performance standards, as well as trends over time.

In 2020, DVA received 2,437 complaints, 1,105 compliments and 233 suggestions. This compares to 3082 complaints, 1228 compliments and 517 suggestions in 2019. Since COVID-19 started in 2020, there has been a 21 per cent decrease in complaints, a 10 per cent decrease in compliments and a 55 per cent decrease in suggestions compared to 2019.

Agenda Item 18 Client Interactions Dashboard

Members **NOTED** the productivity across the Client Engagement & Support Services Division for August 2021 - Veteran Access Network performance has improved and Open Arms feedback has been consolidated into outputs from the Mental Health & Wellbeing Services Division.

Members **NOTED** that only IL claims data can be extracted from MyService. Dental approvals average time taken to process has improved, but still does not meet the average time taken to process target of 21 days. Rehabilitation new cases are 41 per cent higher this financial year and health reimbursements continue to not meet performance targets.

Agenda Item 19 Departmental Priorities and Government Commitments Update

Members **NOTED** the Departmental Priorities and Government Commitments Update provided. Members were thanked for the detailed input now required for these reports, and that this current report is the quarterly report that is provided to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Prime Minister's offices, respectively.

Agenda Item 20 Other Business

No other business was raised.

The following items were below the line, were provided for information purposes and not discussed.

Agenda Item 21 Governance Committees

Members **NOTED** the updates to internal governance committees and the implementation of the internal governance review.

Agenda Item 22 Diversity Update

Members **NOTED** the primary focus for DVA has been Gurru Ngali, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy. Ensuring DVA increases representation and provides a variety of supports to achieve targets has been an early focus of the strategy and diversity within teams.



Members **NOTED** that the Disability Strategy was launched last month and planning is underway to begin work outlined within the Strategy.

Agenda Item 23 EMB Forward Work Plan

Members **NOTED** the Forward Work Plan.

Meeting closed: 3.30pm.

The Next EMB meeting is scheduled for 1 November 2021.



Minutes

ITEM	SUBJECT	PAPER	ACTION	LED BY
1	Bupa's Intelligent Referral Booking System (iRBS)	Y	I	Professor Jenny Firman
2	Risk Owners and Assurers of remaining Enterprise Risks	Y	E	Mark Harrigan (CRO)
3	Forward Work Plan	Y	D	Chair

1. Members **NOTED** the progress of the Intelligent Referral Booking System (iRBS); and

- Process:
- This system is being adapted from the clinical referral system used by Defence to manage workflows to clinical advisers in DVA. At this stage this will be implemented across CESS.
- Business area raises a template to request clinical advice and this is then uploaded to iRBS. The Clinical Adviser then actions the request, completes the template and returns the completed advice to iRBS where the delegate can access that advice and determine the outcome of the request. The outcome can be recorded in iRBS. The fields collected allow real time tracking of numbers of requests, where they are in the process and then this data can also be reported in user friendly reports through PowerBI (like Tableaux) business analytics. Completed templates are saved by the business area in the relevant file system (ie TRIM)
- IP belongs to DVA. This system will not be used for Compensation at the current time. R&C ISH collects information and workflows in a similar way but does not have a easy to use business analytics reporting mechanism.
- Security is in the process of assessing the system for use with DVA data but noting that the system has already undergone this process with Defence it is anticipated this will be accepted.
- A costing from Services Australia is required to assess whether an in house system can be built. SA investigates requirements thoroughly due to the nature of the data being captured and stored and are aware of the challenges that cloud based solutions entail.
- Should SA not be able to build the requirements, investigations will need to be conducted to purchase from another supplier.
- Discussions with VCR to be coordinated to ensure work is captured for years 5 and 6.
- Integration of systems is a high priority for Clients Benefits Division.

12 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A9	Return to the 7 June 2021 EMB and provide an update on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussions with Services Australia (SA) with regards to the implementation of iRBS• Note the outstanding security assessment completion	Professor Jenny Firman / Mark Harrigan/ Ken Corke/ Vicki Rundle



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussions with Veteran Centric Reform (VCR) ensure work is captured for years 5 and 6.• Discussions with SA with regards to integration of systems.	
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2. Members **NOTED** the Risk Owners and Assurers of remaining Enterprise Risks and **AGREED** amendments are required.

12 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A10	Secretariat to amend the previous minutes and the table provided in the paper - Risk Owners and Assurers of remaining Enterprise Risks and present at SEMB 19 April requesting endorsement.	Kate Pope/ Secretariat

3. The Forward Work Plan was not discussed.



Minutes

Members	
Vicki Rundle PSM	A/g Chair, Deputy Secretary, Veteran & Family Services
Veronica Hancock	A/g Deputy President, Veteran & Family Policy Group
Don Spinks AM	Repatriation Commissioner
Prof Jenny Firman AM	Chief Health Officer
Mark Harrigan	Chief Operating Officer
Leanne Cameron	First Assistant Secretary, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services
Mark Garrity	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Client Engagement & Support Services
Natasha Cole	First Assistant Secretary, Client Benefits
Rachel Goddard	First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations & Transformation
Glen Casson	Chief Financial Officer
Traci-Ann Byrnes	First Assistant Secretary, Claims Processing Diagnostic Project
Nicole Ingram	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce, Legal Services & Audit and General Counsel
Alison Hale	A/g First Assistant Secretary, Veteran & Family Policy
Presenters	
Liane Pettitt	Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance – <i>Item 4</i>
Michael Harper	Assistant Secretary, VEA Compensation & Support – <i>Item 5</i>
Vinay s 47F	Director, ICT Strategy & Design – <i>Item 7</i>
Leonie Nowland	Assistant Secretary, Client Coordination & Support - <i>Item 9</i>
Tara Hatzismalis	Assistant Secretary, Processing & DHOAS – <i>Item 14</i>
Roger Winzenberg	Assistant Secretary, People Services – <i>Item 17</i>
Elizabeth Montano	Chair, Audit & Risk Committee – <i>Item 18</i>
Observers	
Jodi s 47F	Office Manager for the Secretary
Meaghan s 47F	Director, VEA Compensation & Support – <i>Item 5</i>
Rachael Farrell	A/g Assistant Secretary, Mental & Social Health Programs – <i>Item 8</i>
Kristi s 47F	Assistant Director, Disability Support Pathway – <i>Item 9</i>
Peta s 47F	Director, Processing & DHOAS – <i>Item 14</i>
Sharon s 47F	Director, People Strategy – <i>Item 17</i>
Secretariat	
Belinda s 47F	A/g Director, Governance & Ministerial Events
Kylie s 47F	Assistant Director, Governance & Ministerial Events
Faith s 47F	A/g Senior Secretariat Officer, Governance & Ministerial Events
Apologies	
Liz Cosson AM CSC	Chair, Secretary



Stuart Smith AO DSC	Defence Engagement Commissioner
Kate Pope PSM	Deputy President, Veteran & Family Policy Group
Gwen Cherne	Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner

Agenda Item 1 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

The Deputy Chair opened the meeting and welcomed members. Apologies were **NOTED** from Liz Cosson, Kate Pope, Stuart Smith and Gwen Cherne. No conflicts of interest were declared.

The A/g Chair advised members Item 19 Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner Event Report – National Summit on Women's Safety could be addressed at a future EMB or Special Executive Management Board (SEMB) meeting.

Agenda Item 2 Minutes & actions of previous meeting

Members **ENDORSED** the minutes from the meeting of 5 October 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D46	Members ENDORSED the minutes from the meeting of 5 October 2021.

Members **AGREED** to close action items 2021/A02, 2021/A40, 2021/41, 2021/A43, 2021/A44 and 2021/A45.

Members **AGREED** for action items 2021/A42 and 2021/A46 to remain open.

The Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance (P&G) sought inclusion of P&G Branch in requests to First Assistant Secretaries when collating departmental information.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A47	Assistant Secretary P&G to discuss P&G Branch recruitment requirements with First Assistant Secretary, Commemorations & Transformation (CAT) for possible inclusion in the CAT recruitment round.	Liane Pettitt/ Rachel Goddard

Agenda Item 3

3.1 Commissions Considerations & Decisions

Members **NOTED** the overview of six matters considered and eight decisions made by the Repatriation Commission (RC) and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) [the Commissions] at the meeting held on 22 October 2021.

The MRCC Subcommittee meeting scheduled for 7 October 2021 was cancelled and the next cycle of the Commissions meetings are scheduled for:

- RC/MRCC Subcommittee – 18 November 2021; and
- RC/MRCC – 16 December 2021.

Members **NOTED** that Jodi **s 47F** Office Manager for the Secretary, is the contact for business areas regarding Commissions enquiries and the forward work plan.



3.2 Commissioners Post Activity Reports Update

Members **NOTED** the update provided on the Commissioners Post Visit Reports and the open action items for business areas. The reports were tabled at the Commissions meeting held on 22 October 2021.

Members **NOTED** the reports provided below were current as of 11 October:

- Commissioners Post Visit Reports – Update (Open/Closed Action Lists)
- Visit Report – Engagement with Australian Defence Force Personnel stationed at Royal Malaysian Air Force Base, Butterworth (Malaysia)
- Visit Report – National Summit on Women's Safety.

The reports are proving to be a valuable tool to capture feedback from external stakeholders and provide to First Assistant Secretaries, who have been extremely responsive.

Agenda Item 4 Departmental Priorities and Government Commitments Update

Members **NOTED** the Departmental Priorities and Government Commitments Update provided. Members were thanked for the detailed input now required for these reports. This current quarterly report is provided to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Prime Minister's offices.

Agenda Item 5 New Screening Process

Members **NOTED** that Initial Liability claims under all three Acts have been screened and prioritised where appropriate, since 2019. A range of risk factors currently used by the DVA screening teams were previously approved by the Commissions.

As a result of increased claims, intake and delays in claims processing, there has been an increase in requests for claims prioritisation. To improve the clarity of the current process for screening new and existing claims, and to improve the documentation of reasons for approving or rejecting a claim for prioritisation, a new claim prioritisation tool (or guidance) has been developed.

Members noted the need for further clarity in relation to serving members. Also noted was the importance of communication to DVA clients and ESOs in the implementation phase following consideration by Commissions.

Members **AGREED** to the submission moving through to the next Commissions meeting scheduled for 16 December 2021.

No.	Decision
2021/D47	Members AGREED for the New Screening Process submission outlining the new tool for claim prioritisation designed for use by Screening Officers within the Client Benefits Division, move forward for presentation to Commissions.

Agenda Item 6 Comcare – National Certificate of Capacity Proof of Concept

Members **NOTED** the progress of the Proof of Concept (POC) pilot - National Certificate of Capacity, which Commissions had previously agreed DVA would participate in, alongside Comcare.



Comcare is funding the initial costs for the POC pilot and members **NOTED** there may be costs associated with ICT provisions for DVA to receive data, with discussions to commence soon between Services Australia (SA) and Telstra to determine needs and timeframes (for the pilot and/or for post-pilot implementation).

Extensive consultation has been undertaken between DVA and all parties involved. A Memorandum of Understanding has been discussed with Comcare and a work order has been signed between Comcare and Telstra with work to begin from 4 November 2021.

Agenda Item 7 Strategic ICT Discussions – ObjectStar Risks and Mitigation

Members **NOTED** ObjectStar is a legacy ICT integration platform, underpinning various essential DVA business functions, including recording client information, case and payment processing, entitlement calculations, debt management and card processing. The vendor for ObjectStar has advised that support will conclude from December 2022. SA has given in-principle agreement to providing a small team of staff familiar with Objectstar to support DVA. SA has recommended undertaking a discovery phase, to analyse all ObjectStar functions and determine end-state ICT platforms. The findings will inform a future business case that supports ObjectStar re-platforming, as a risk mitigation to ensure business continuity.

Members **DISCUSSED** funding and **NOTED** the proposal is for an interim solution.

Members **AGREED** in principle to working with SA on a discovery phase of ObjectStar functions, subject to a plan being developed and funding identified.

No.	Decision
2021/D48	Members AGREED in principle to enter into a discovery phase of ObjectStar functions, with Services Australia, subject to funding being identified.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A48	Provide the current Objectstar discovery phase project plan to First Assistant Secretaries of CBD and CAT, and the CFO, for their consideration and feedback.	Mark Harrigan /Vinay s 47F

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A49	Articulate the capability, capacity and timeframes across the Department in a financial estimate and provide through the Service Performance Committee to EMB.	Mark Harrigan/Vinay s 47F

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A50	First Assistant Secretary, CAT to consider the ObjectStar discovery phase project plan and identify a possible alliance with the Veteran Centric Reform.	Rachel Goddard



Agenda Item 8 Proposed Community Based Innovative Mental Health Program Trials - Update

Members **NOTED** the update provided for the proposed Community Based Innovative Mental Health Program (IMHP) Trials and **ENDORSED** the proposal to go through to Commissions for consideration.

A trial methodology has been designed which includes outcome measurements applied by providers to gauge the effectiveness of the programs for participants and any flow-on benefits for families. Part of the trial design includes a streamlined DVA prior approval process, reducing red tape and increased expediency for providers and participants. Initially, providers will be invited to submit IMHP proposals, if they have previously received approval for their community-based mental health programs. An assessment by DVA's Mental Health and Psychology Advisers, against DVA's clinical and quality standards, will occur before a provider is included on the IMHP trial panel. Once on the panel, a provider can be selected by any eligible veteran seeking community-based mental health treatment.

No.	Decision
2021/D49	Members ENDORSED the proposed design for the Community Based Innovative Mental Health Program trial to go through to Commissions for consideration.

Agenda Item 9 Escalation Pathway for Clients with Complex Support Needs

Members **NOTED** DVA does not currently have a coordinated, integrated and sustainable process for managing veterans with complex support needs. The Disability Support Pathway would coordinate all departmental processes for veterans with complex needs, as well as facilitate access for eligible veterans and their families to resources and supports available through other government schemes, thereby promoting a holistic approach to support needs. The Pathway will be delivered through a change to the role and focus of the Planned Support Unit under the Wellbeing and Support Program. It was noted that this paper is focused on how DVA organises supports for veterans; and not about increasing entitlements and cost.

Members **ENDORSED** the Disability Support Pathway and for the proposal to go through to Commissions.

No.	Decision
2021/D50	Member ENDORSED the Disability Support Pathway proposal for veterans with complex support needs to go through to Commissions for consideration.

Agenda Item 10 Actuary Analytics Work Program 2021-22

Members **DISCUSSED** the 2021-22 Actuarial Analytics work plan, which sits within the Data & Insights Branch and **NOTED** further discussion in greater detail is required. Members **AGREED** in principle to allow scheduling of projects within the available resourcing and **NOTED** the mix of funding to deliver the plan, with the following comments:

- some work is non-discretionary;
- other priorities will emerge at short notice as a result of a Government policy and commitments;
- flexibility will always need to be a feature of this program;
- there was insufficient detail in the paper for members to prioritise at that time; and
- the program would benefit from additional funding overall.



Members also noted the significant value of the Data and Insights Program and the valuable support they each received from it, and thanked Mr Howden and the team.

No.	Decision
2021/D51	Members AGREED in principle to the priorities for the Actuarial Analytics section within the Data & Insights Branch; however, more detail is required to enable prioritisation.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A51	First Assistant Secretaries to provide a prioritised list of work within their Division to the Data & Insights Branch.	All FAS' and AS P&G

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A52	Include the Actuary Analytics Work Program 2021-22 and the FAS priority list on the Service Performance Committee Agenda for 6 December, allowing enough time for a detailed discussion.	Glen Casson/ Jason Howden/SPC Secretariat

Agenda Item 11 2021-22 DVA Performance Reporting Plan

Members **NOTED** the draft DVA Performance Reporting Plan for 2021-22 which sets out the department's key planning and reporting activities required under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (*PGPA Act, 2013*). Members **ENDORSED** the DVA Performance Reporting Plan 2021-22.

No.	Decision
2021/D52	Members ENDORSED the DVA Performance Reporting Plan 2021-22.

Agenda Item 12 Financial Monthly Report

Members **NOTED** the department's financial results as at 30 September 2021 and **DISCUSSED** the summary provided which included: results by division and category; administered financial results; and capital expenditure financial results.

Members **NOTED** that the Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance was not offered the opportunity to provide input into the budget forecasts. A separate discussion will be held to address the budget requirements for P&G Branch. Members **AGREED** to revisit their previous budget forecasts that were provided to the CFO.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A53	Members are to review and consider their Branch budget forecasts and provide feedback to the Chief Financial Officer.	All members Glen Casson

No.	Action	Assigned to
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2021/A54	CFO and Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary & Governance to discuss a budget for P&G Branch.	Glen Casson / Liane Pettitt
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Agenda Item 13 Compensation Claims Dashboard Update

Members **NOTED** the Implementation Plan Progress Report as at 28 October 2021 and the September 2021 Forecast Plan. The reports continue to show that claims finalised exceed claims received in all major categories, excluding MRCA Initial Liability. Members **NOTED** that weekly figures are not available for VEA disability claims at this time. Members **NOTED** that regular claims processing updates will continue to be provided to Commissions.

Agenda Item 14 Incapacity Pilot Update

Due to time constraints, the A/g Chair recommended members address this submission out of session noting **ENDORSEMENT** is required to move through to Commissions.

No.	Action	Assigned to
2021/A55	Members are to approach the business area directly with any questions relating to the Incapacity Pilot Update and provide a response to Secretariat before the submission can move through to Commissions.	All members / Secretariat

Agenda Item 15 Client Interactions Dashboard

Due to time constraints, the A/g Chair recommended members contact the business area directly if there are any questions and members **NOTE** the paper as read.

Agenda Item 16 Client Management Feedback Update

Due to time constraints, the A/g Chair recommended members contact the business area directly if there are any questions and members **NOTE** the paper as read.

Agenda Item 17 Workforce Information

Due to time constraints, the A/g Chair recommended members contact the business area directly if there are any questions and members **NOTE** the paper as read.

Agenda Item 18 2020/2021 Financial Year Audit Process

The external Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, Ms Elizabeth Montano provided an overview of the Financial Year Audit Process. Members **NOTED** the Australian National Audit Office develop the methodologies of the audit process and were advised where improvements can be made for the next financial year's process.

Agenda Item 19 Other Business

Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner Event Report – National Summit on Women's Safety may be discussed at a future EMB or Special Executive Board (SEMB) meeting.

The following items were below the line, were provided for information purposes and not discussed.

Agenda Item 20 Privacy Update



Members **NOTED** the Privacy Update report

Agenda Item 21 Culture Update

Members **NOTED** the Culture Update report.

Agenda Item 22 EMB Forward Work Plan

Members **NOTED** the Forward Work Plan.

Agenda Item 23 Diversity and Indigenous Final Report

Members **NOTED** the Diversity and Indigenous Staff Engagement Final Report.

Meeting closed: 4:05pm

The next EMB meeting is scheduled for 6 December 2021.



Minutes

ITEM	SUBJECT	PAPER	ACTION	LED BY
1	Program Performance Indicators (PPI) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Attachment A – PPI Report 1Attachment B – PPI Report 2	Y	D	Glen Casson
2	myGov Inbox – Preference Solution	Y	E	Ken Corke
3	Forward Work Plan	Y		Chair

1. Members:

- NOTED** the outcomes of the ANAO Annual Performance Statements pilot audit.
- AGREED** that a review process be conducted across all performance measures starting in May 2021. Critical changes will be incorporated into the 2021-22 Corporate Plan and the full review into the 2022-23 Portfolio Budget Statements and Corporate Plan.
- NOTED** the results of the Performance Report 2 for the period Nov 2020 – Feb 2021.

Next Steps

The CFO will engage external consultants to work with business areas to conduct a thorough review of all performance measures in readiness for next year's reporting cycle. These changes will be incorporated for the 2022-23 PBS and Corporate Plan.

2. Members:

- ENDORSED in PRINCIPLE** Option 1 - the digital by default approach (opt-out) and **NOTED** the need for future digitisation; and
- AGREED** that any final decision is subject to the Secretary's consideration and endorsement given that she was not present for this discussion and it will be a sensitive issue for some of DVA's clients.

Next Steps

Further investigation is required into the myGov costings – digital versus hard copy mail, and the development of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.

Members noted that a new version of myGov will be released within the next few years.

19 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A11	Meet and discuss the additional service offering costing from myGov and report back to SEMB next Tuesday 27 April 2021.	Ken Corke/ Glenn Casson

19 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A12	Draft a Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy identifying key stakeholders and a risk management plan. Provide to SEMB for consideration.	Ken Corke

- The Forward Work Plan will be circulated out of session.



Minutes

ITEM	SUBJECT	PAPER	ACTION	LED BY
1	Responses to Action Items	Y	D	Chair
2	Managing External Data Requests	Y	E	Glen Casson
3	Forward Work Plan	Y	D	Chair

1. Members:

- **NOTED** updates to open action items 2021/A08, 2021/A11 and 2021/A12.
- **AGREED** to the closure of action item 2021/A10.

2. Members:

- **AGREED** that all requests for data from external organisations be approved by the relevant policy and/or program area(s) and data steward(s) prior to the release of information;
- **AGREED** that Data and Insights Branch work with Data Stewards to develop and communicate a process for the approach; and
- **NOTED** that where it is not clear which data steward(s) have ownership of specific data requested for release, the question will be escalated to Special EMB to resolve.

Next Steps

Complete a data stocktake and identify Data Stewards and owners for all data holdings.

Consult with Data Stewards around responsibilities and process for clearing external data requests.

Publish information on the DVA website about the processes in place for data requests and how to make a request, and the need for Ethics Committee approval for certain requests.

27 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A13	Complete a data stocktake and identify Data Stewards and owners for all data holdings.	Jason Howden

27 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A14	Consult with Data Stewards around responsibilities and process for clearing external data requests.	Jason Howden

27 April 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A15	Publish information on the DVA website about the processes in place for data requests and how to make a request, and the need for Ethics Committee approval for certain requests.	Jason Howden

3. The Forward Work Plan will be circulated out of session.



ITEM	SUBJECT	PAPER	ACTION	LED BY
1	Responses to Action Items 1.a Action Item 2021/11 and 12 1.b Draft Strategy	Y	E	Chair
2	Check-in app use at VAN offices	Y	E	Kent s 47F
3	Forward Work Plan	Y	D	Chair

Minutes

1. Members:

- **NOTED** the response provided by the Commemorations and Transformation Division; and
- **ENDORSED** the decommissioning of the MyAccount inbox ensuring a Transition and Communications Strategy is developed to support this decision.

3 May 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A12	Meet and discuss the current Stakeholder Engagement Strategy with Assistant Secretary, Communications Branch to assist with the development of a Transition and Communications Strategy for the decommissioning of the MyAccount inbox. Include a clear timeline ensuring all current change management practices have been taken into consideration.	Rachel Goddard/Ken Corke /Catherine McDonald

Members **NOTED** the update provided by the Chief Risk Officer for Action Item **2021/A08**.

2. Members:

- **AGREED** to the introduction of the relevant state/territory based check-in app in all DVA sites; and
- **NOTED** that DVA has the ACT check-in app operational.

Members **NOTED** updates provided by the Chair on the:

- Royal Commission;
- Lessons learned with regards to the Royal Commission into Aged Care;
- Management of negative feedback from the media;
- Resourcing; and
- OODA Loop – Observe, Orient, Design and Action

3. The Forward Work Plan will be circulated out of session.



ITEM	SUBJECT	PAPER	ACTION	LED BY
1	Responses to Action Items	Y	D	Chair
	MyAccount Decommissioning 2021/A12	N	D	Ken Corke
2	Data & Insights Branch Placemat	Y	I	Jason Howden
3	Forward Work Plan	Y	D	Chair
4	Other Business	N	D	Chair

Minutes

1. Members:

- **NOTED** the closure of action item 2021/08;
- **NOTED** action items 2021/09, 2021/A13, 2021/A14 and 2021/A15 would remain open; and
- **DISCUSSED** progress on 2021/A12. A number of services provided on MyAccount have been identified as needing to be either decommissioned or transferred to MyService. The Chair requested a placemat be provided to the 24 May 2021 SEMB with proposals for decisions on the services identified.

2. Members:

- **NOTED** the placemat and discussed dashboard reporting more broadly, including dashboards provided to the Secretary and to the Prime Minister.
- **NOTED** that all dashboards need to be consistent, and that the current reporting to SEMB should be based on a version of the information provided to the Secretary and Prime Minister's Office.

3 May 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A16	Prepare a deep dive with interested Executive members on what elements should be measured for dashboard reporting, and for what purpose e.g. PM dashboard, Secretary dashboard etc.	Jason Howden

3. The Forward Work Plan will be circulated out of session.

4. The Chair advised Members that deliberations are continuing regarding topics for internal audit. The Chair has taken deliberation offline and will discuss further with the Deputy Secretary.

The Chair flagged with Members that a protocol will need to be developed for complex correspondence matters that the Chair must consider and respond to.



ITEM	SUBJECT	PAPER	ACTION	LED BY
1	Updates on Open Action Items – discuss due dates MyAccount Decommissioning	Y	D	Chair Janice Silby/ Ken Corke
2	Forward Work Plan	Y	D	Chair

Minutes

- Members AGREED that the legacy platforms will need to be decommissioned at some stage to comply with VCR requirements however they would like to better understand the impact this will have on the current users.
- Members requested further information be provided:
 - Investigate and advise how many users there are of the four functions of MyAccount to date?;
 - When was MyAccount last accessed for each of the four functions that require decommissioning?;
 - Is it possible to extract and identify which Advocates are using MyAccount? They could be contacted directly to advise of decommissioning?;
 - Why was the Honours and Awards functionality provided in the first place?;
 - What would be the financial impact of not decommissioning by 30 June 2021? This may not have been part of the financial projections for the next financial year.
 - Is it possible to slowly decommission individually? Yes this can be arranged and there will be a cost attached to this from Services Australia that may not have been included in the forward financial estimates.

Advocates have provided feedback that the Ex Service Organisations Portal is causing concern.

- Can the Awards and Honours function be included for use in the portal?

24 May 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A12	Include a timeline in the Communications Strategy outlining financial impact of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Decommission all at once and how many users would this affect?- Decommission over a period of time and how many users would this affect?	Janice Silby / Rachael Goddard
2021/A12	The Secretary will socialise the possibility of decommissioning the four functions with ESORT on Tuesday 25 May 2021	Chair
2021/A12	The Deputy Secretary will socialise the possibility of decommissioning the four functions with the Operational Working Party out of session.	Vicki Rundle



2021/A12	The Commissioner Veteran Engagement recommended socialising the possibility of decommissioning the four functions through the Deputy Commissioners.	Janice Silby / Rachael Goddard
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2. Mr Jason Howden provided an update on the request received from Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C) last Friday 17 May 2021, to develop a placemat providing the Prime Minister with an overview of DVA services over the last three years. Members provided recommendations for inclusions/exclusions and the Chair **AGREED** to submit as a draft to PM&C requesting feedback, to ensure the Department has captured the information the Prime Minister wishes to see in the placemat.
3. Members agreed with items as listed on the Forward Work Plan

SEMB Forward Work Plan			
21	2 June	Mark Harrigan	Stand alone iPads for SES (Dependant on outcomes of discussions with Services Australia)
		Glen Casson	Financial Dashboard



ITEM	SUBJECT	PAPER	ACTI ON	LED BY
Standing Agenda Items				
1	Updates on Open Action Items	Y	D	Chair Action Item Owners
2	Royal Commission Update	N	D	Traci-Ann Byrnes
For Endorsement/Discussion				
3	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Attraction and Recruitment	Y	D	Mark Harrigan
4	Financial Snapshot	Y	D	Glen Casson
5	Forward Work Plan	y	D	Chair

Minutes

1. Action Item Updates

2021/A12 – Presentation of the Draft Communications Strategy to SEMB once completed.

2021/A13 – A16 – Consultations with business areas have been undertaken. Work continues.

2. Royal Commission Update

Alison Hale will act First Assistant Secretary for Traci-Ann Byrnes for two weeks. Workshop will be scheduled with all FAS to discuss the preparations for when the RC is established. Members agreed digitisation of hard copy files is to be a priority.

3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Attraction and Recruitment

Members:

- **DISCUSSED** the various strategies that may be undertaken to improve employment rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples within DVA; and
- **AGREED** to set goals for Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander employment by level by Division and to reserving positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples within each Division.
- **NOTED** further discussions between FAS to be undertaken with regards to target percentages.
 - Approach the Indigenous Recruitment Panel;
 - Advertising a Recruitment Indigenous only round;
 - Investment of Indigenous apprenticeships; and
 - Investment in engaging Indigenous veterans.

4. Financial Snapshot

Members **NOTED**:

- the departmental financial position as at 17 May 2021;
- the administered financial position as at 30 April 2021; and
- the capital expenditure financial position as at 30 April 2021.



5. Forward Work Plan

SEMB Forward Work Plan			
24	21 June	Glenn Casson	Performance Measures for the 2021-25 Corporate Plan.
		Rachel Goddard	DVA Project Governance 2021-22

15 June 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A17	Discipline and Protocols are required for the preparation and submission of papers to Commissions. Possible solution to be included in the DVA Project Governance 2021-22 listed in the FWP for 21 June 2021.	Rachel Goddard/ Natasha Cole/ Vicki Rundle



ITEM	SUBJECT	PAPER	ACTION	LED BY
For Endorsement/Discussion				
1	Performance Measures for the 2021-25 Corporate Plan.	Y	E	Glenn Casson
Standing Agenda Items				
2	Updates on Open Action Items	Y	D	Chair Action Item Owners
3	Royal Commission Update	N	D	Traci-Ann Byrnes
4	Forward Work Plan	Y	D	Chair

Minutes

1. Performance Measures for the 2021-25 Corporate Plan

Members:

- **Noted** the actions taken to improve the Corporate Plan, in response to internal audits and feedback from ANAO.
- **Noted** that a review process will be conducted across all performance measures starting in July 2021. Critical changes will be incorporated into the 2021-22 Corporate Plan and the full review into the 2022-23 Portfolio Budget Statements and Corporate Plan.
- **Endorsed** the change of wording for performance measure 2.5.4 in the 2020-21 and draft 2021-22 Corporate Plans.
- **Endorsed** including a clear reference to proxy efficiency measures in the 2020-21 and draft 2021-22 Corporate Plans.
- **Endorsed** the proposed performance measures for the 2021-22 Corporate Plan at **Attachment B**.
- **Endorsed** including the table at **Attachment C** in the 2020-21 and draft 2021-22 Corporate Plans.

2. Updates on Action Items

2021/A09 Members **AGREED** to close.

2021/A12 – Secretary asked Leonie Nowland to follow up with Communications to see when this item will be presented to EMB.

2021/A13, 14 & 15 – Work continuing with the Royal Commission taskforce and Services Australia. The Secretary recommended Glen Cosson speak with Alison Hale with regards to the inclusion of data in the RC protocols currently being drafted.

2021/A16 – The draft Dashboard was presented to the Minister. Data & Insights continue to progress.

3. Royal Commission Update

Members were advised nil to report – waiting for the RC to be announced.

4. Forward Work Plan

28 June	Rachel Goddard	DVA Project Governance 2021-22
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Minutes

1. DVA Project Governance 2021-22

The Chair requested further investigations be undertaken and members **AGREED** to the draft provided **In Principle** to allow work to continue:

28 June 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A18	Capture Key Principles that will underpin the future governance of DVA.	Rachel Goddard
2021/A19	Provide a stocktake of all the meetings that the Deputy Secretaries currently attend and identify where FAS representation may be warranted.	Rachel Goddard
2021/A20	Identify and present where Audit fits in the governance picture.	Rachel Goddard
2021/A21	Provide a visual of the current workload distribution for all projects, boards, committees, councils etc.	Rachel Goddard

2. Action Item Update

Members noted **2021/A12** the Communications team provided guidance and feedback on the Draft Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for the decommissioning of the MyAccount inbox. The business area, Commemorations and Transformation Division, are to provide SEMB with the finalised plan.

Members noted **2021/A13, 14, 15** as continuing to progress with 2021/A16 to return to Special EMB on 12 July 2021.

Members noted further work is required for **2021/A17** and will remain **IN PROGRESS**.

3. Royal Commission Taskforce Update

NIL

4. Forward Work Plan

SEMB Forward Work Plan			
24	12 July	2021/A12 Leanne Cameron <u>Ken Corke</u>	Draft Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for the decommissioning of the MyAccount inbox.
		2021/A16 Jason Howden	Prime Minister Dashboard that was presented to the previous Minister.
		<u>2021/A18-21</u>	<u>Further iteration of governance review work to be provided.</u>



		Rachel Goddard	
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Draft



Minutes

1. Financial Snapshot

Members **NOTED** the update provided by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

2. Updates on Open Action Items

Members:

- **AGREED** to close Action Items 2021/A12 and 2021/A16; and
- **NOTED** 2021/A13, 14 and 15 are progressing as a priority for the Royal Commission Taskforce this week.

3. Royal Commission Update

Members **NOTED** the update from First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce.

4. Forward Work Plan

Members **NOTED** action items 2021/ A17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 due for 26 July 2021.

Week	Date	Lead	Agenda
28	26 July	Rachel Goddard	Action Items 2021/ A17,18, 19, 20 and 21



Minutes

1. APS Remuneration & DVA Remuneration

Members **NOTED** the update provided by the Chief Operations Officer (COO).

2. Updates on Open Action Items

Members:

- **NOTED** Action Items 2021/A13, 14, and 15 continue to progress and 2021/A17 – 21 will be presented to the Executive Management Board (EMB) on 2 August 2021.

3. Royal Commission Update

FAS RC Taskforce advised the Interdepartmental Committee (IDC) will meet on 6 August 2021 and all interested Executive are invited to attend.

Members **NOTED** the update from First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce.

26 July 2021	Action	Assigned to
	Chief Operations Officer (COO) to invite Assistant Secretary, People Service Group to advise SEMB members of provisions for staff working on the Royal Commission Taskforce; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working late at night;• Working on the weekends; and• Access to parking outside of the 7.00am – 7.00pm public service hours of operation. and update the RC Workforce Plan if required.	COO

4. Forward Work Plan

Week	Date	Lead	Agenda
30	2 August	CANCELLED due to EMB	
31	9 August	Glen Casson	PPI Dashboard
			Compliance Report 4 th Quarter Results



Minutes

1. 2020-21 Compliance Reporting Results

Members **DISCUSSED** the results of the DVA 2020-21 PGPA Compliance Reporting.

Members **AGREED** that the report captures known instances of non-compliance and that none of those instances constitute significant non-compliance with the finance law in 2020-21, however members did recommend investing in training for SES to assist in their understanding of compliance requirements. It was recommended feedback of non-compliance activities be provided to business areas to assist with compliance education.

9 August 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A23	Take action to address training for Senior Executive Officers (SES) and the provision of feedback to business areas that are non-compliant with PGPA compliance reporting.	Glen Casson

2. Hospital Billing and Coding Audit Project & Procurement.

Members **AGREED** to the proposed procurement of PriceWaterhouseCoopers for a five month engagement to support the HCCBA project activities (August to December 2021) to the value of \$740,000 including GST); **NOTED** that funds for the consultancy are available within the 2021-22 Departmental appropriation for this project of **s 47D**; and **NOTED** that the project will propose further consultancy support for EMB consideration at a later date, in line with the appropriated budget, to build an audit and assurance capability.

3. **Action Item 2021/A33 EMB 2 August 2021** - Deputy Secretary, Veterans' and Families' Services will discuss Transformation Ongoing Funding – Telephony Operations and Content Hub issues raised with Deputy CEO, Transformation Projects Group, Services Australia and report outcomes to SEMB.

Action Item 2021/A33 EMB 2 August 2021

Deputy Secretary, Veterans' and Families' Services will discuss Transformation Ongoing Funding – Telephony Operations and Content Hub issues raised with Deputy CEO, Transformation Projects Group, Services Australia and report outcomes to SEMB.

Members discussed the action items resulting from EMB 2 August 2021 and **AGREED** that it was too soon to provide an update and will return to SEMB when work has been completed.

4. Updates on Open Action Items

Members **NOTED** action items progressing and **AGREED** to close 2021/A13, A15, A17, A18, A19, A20 and A21.



5. Royal Commission Update

Members **NOTED** the update from First Assistant Secretary, Royal Commission Taskforce. Taskforce Communications team are to meet with the Secretary.

6. Forward Work Plan

Week	Date	Lead	Agenda
31	16 August	Glen Casson	PPI Dashboard



Minutes

1. DVA Performance and Management Assurance Framework

Members:

- **ENDORSED** minor changes to the DVA Performance and Management Assurance Framework; and
- **ENDORSED** the new guidance document for amending the corporate plan and record keeping requirements.

2. Internal Survey Protocol

Members **DISCUSSED** the purpose of the submission:

To seek agreement to implement the *Internal Survey Protocol* (Attachment A), including the authority for the TED Team, as DVA's experts in client and staff engagement, to register, review, advise, approve or reject a DVA business area's request to survey DVA staff. This approach is already utilised by TED in the *Client and User Engagement Protocol*.

16 August 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A24	Members requested further consultation be undertaken on the proposed Internal Survey Protocol with business areas before returning to EMB or SEMB.	Mark Harrigan

3. PM's Dashboard

Members **NOTED** the update provided on Prime Ministers and Cabinet's (PM&C's) recommended amendments/inclusions for the PM's Dashboard. PM&C have provided until Friday 20 August 2021 to incorporate the changes. The Chair would like to discuss further.

16 August 2021	Action	Assigned to
2021/A25	The Chair to discuss PM&C's recommendations with the Deputy Secretary, Veterans and Family Services Group and the Deputy President Veterans and Family Policy Group and will provide an outcome to the Chief Finance Officer before Friday 20 August 2021.	Liz Cosson

4. DHOAS Budget

Members **ENDORSED** the Ongoing budget allocation for mandatory DHOAS audits and the Chief Finance Officer reminded members to mindful of language used as DVA can't retain Section 74 receipts if over our costs have been incurred.



5. Royal Commission Update

Nil to report.

6. Action Item Register

Members **AGREED** to close 2021/A22 and **NOTED** 2021/A12 and A23 remain open and in progress.

Week	Date	Lead	Agenda
31	23 August	Glen Casson	PPI Dashboard



Minutes

The Chair acknowledge the assistance provided by Ramsey Health and The Royal North Shore Hospital in transporting a war widow for treatment over the weekend.

1. Monthly Financial Report – June 2021

Members:

NOTED the departmental financial results and cash position as at 30 June 2021;

NOTED the administered financial results as at 30 June 2021; and

NOTED the capital expenditure financial results as at 30 June 2021.

2. Action Item Register

Members **ACKNOWLEDGED** open and in progress action items.

3. Royal Commission Update

Members **DISCUSSED** the most recent notice received from the Royal Commission and advice provided from the Attorney Generals Department with regards to Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

4. Forward Work Plan

Nil provided.

Week	Date	Lead	Agenda
34	30 August	Roger McNally	Fraud Control Plan (tentative)
		Roger Winzenberg/ Mark Harrigan	Update on CPSU – DVA Workload Report – Verbal Update



Minutes

1. Annual Performance Statements

Members **NOTED** the paper provided and that it will be considered by the Audit and Risk Committee on Wednesday 1 September.

Members **NOTED** that the opportunity to discuss the paper further will occur at the full EMB meeting scheduled for Monday 6 September 2021.

2. CPSU Update – DVA Workload Report

Members **NOTED** the verbal update provided by Natasha Cole.

Chair advised that a copy of the report will be circulated to members for reference.

3. Royal Commission Update

Members **NOTED**:

- The update provided by Traci-Ann Byrnes, including the receipt by the Department of the first Notices for action from the Royal Commission.
- The update provided by Nicole Ingram, including timeframes for provision of requested material, or negotiation regarding scope of the request.
- A FAS Group will be convened in order to provide advice regarding scope or clarification, as required.

4. Forward Work Plan

Nil provided.

5. Action Items

No new actions were recorded.



Minutes

1. Monthly Financial Update

Members **NOTED** the verbal update provided in relation to the department's August financial position. Members **NOTED** that the opportunity to discuss the paper further will be provided at the full EMB meeting scheduled for Monday 5 October 2021.

2. Forward Work Plan

Internal Survey Protocol – Mark Harrigan.

3. Action Items

No new actions were recorded.

Item 2021/A14 will be closed following the presentation of papers to EMB at the meeting scheduled for 1 November 2021.

Item 2021/023 will be closed following the presentation of papers to EMB at the meeting scheduled for 1 November 2021.

Item 2021/024 will be closed following an update to SEMB on 27 September, and the presentation of papers to EMB at the meeting scheduled for 5 October 2021.



MINUTES

To:	Special Executive Management Board	Date: 22 November 2021
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AGENDA

- | | | |
|----|---|-------------------------|
| 1. | ELG Agenda | Chair/Heather MacDonald |
| 2. | Veteran Family Advocate (VFA) Commissioner Update – National Summit on Women’s Safety | VFA Commissioner |

Decisions

1. Members discussed the Agenda and the Chair agreed to review a move of the Claims Diagnostic Project to EMB on 6 December 2021 depending on the availability of McKinsey & Co. ELG will focus on the Department’s achievements and supporting all SES members.
2. Veteran Family Advocate (VFA) Commissioner Update – National Summit on Women’s Safety was not discussed and will be included on the Forward Work Plan for EMB in February.
3. Members discussed the Audit scheduled to begin shortly on DVA’s Workforce Planning. It was recommended members consult a similar review undertaken in 2019 of the NSW Government and recommendations resulting from that review.
4. Ms Vicki Rundle and Ms Leanne Cameron to discuss a client matter and provide advice to the Secretary in preparation for her meeting with the Prime Minister of Australia.
5. Members discussed a memo received from the Minister for Veteran’s Affairs with Ms Veronica Hancock to provide previous work product to the Secretary addressing the matters raised in the memo, for her consideration.