



# DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

## NATIONAL OFFICE

Patron-in-Chief: His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)

A member of the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations

18 January 2019

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION'S DRAFT REPORT – THE GOOD AND THE BAD**

The Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA), together with its partners in the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO), have now had the opportunity to more closely examine the Productivity Commission's draft report into compensation and rehabilitation for veterans. In commenting on the draft report, the National President of DFWA, Kel Ryan, firmly stated that, while there are many aspects to it that can be supported, the recommendation to eliminate the Department of Veterans Affairs and transferring veterans' support functions to the Department of Defence must be rejected outright.

Veterans also reject implied notions within the draft that veterans' entitlements are 'overly generous'. There is no basis for them to be means-tested and/or needs-based. Entitlements cannot be compared to commercial workers compensation schemes. Rather, in large part they rightfully recognise, as pleasingly does the Productivity Commission within its report, the unique nature of military service.

Kel Ryan proffered that the veterans' community as a whole is arguably unanimous in its support for a specific Veterans' Department to provide effective and efficient legislated veterans support programs. Equally, it supports DVA's ongoing Veterans' Centric Transformation and transition initiatives that were being currently implemented to address the recognised major deficiencies in past services delivery.

DFWA welcomes the chance to join with its ADSO partners in this once in a life time opportunity to set the agenda for the care and support of the veteran community into the future.

DFWA, along with its ADSO partners is working closely with DVA to identify needs and problems, and to find solutions for them. They look forward to making written submissions on the Productivity Commission's draft report and participating in planned public hearings to discuss the issues at hand with the Commissioners.

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