



THE BOSUN'S CALL

NEWSLETTER OF THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



NAT EDITION JUN 2026

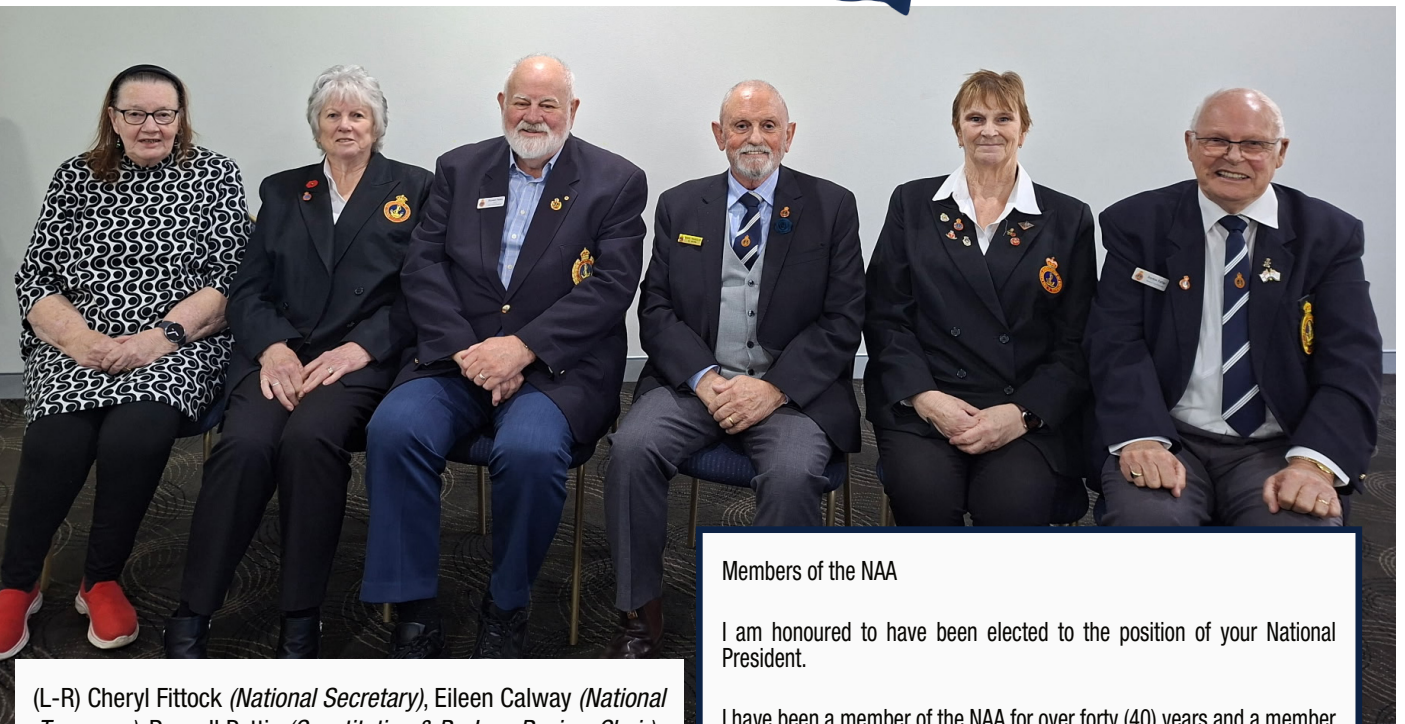
VOL: 6 NO: 05

ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY

2026



NATIONAL EXECUTIVE



(L-R) Cheryl Fittock (*National Secretary*), Eileen Galway (*National Treasurer*), Russell Pettis (*Constitution & By-Law Review Chair*), David Manolas (*National VP Blue*), Lorraine Grey (*National VP White*) & Gordon Fuller (*National President*).

Members of the NAA

I am honoured to have been elected to the position of your National President.

I have been a member of the NAA for over forty (40) years and a member of the National Executive for the last eight (8) years. During that time I have seen a move towards a new era in our community as many of our members are aging. This has also seen a number of Sub-sections fold over the last few years mainly because members are not taking on the Executive positions which are so important. These positions are not that onerous so be prepared to stand up and keep your Subsection going.

Seeking new members has, and will always be, an effort that we must all try and improve on. Many younger ex-naval personnel have young families but we need to be able to work to entice them to join. This includes showing all members the utmost respect because disrespect soon loses members.

We have a sub committee working on bringing our Constitution and By-laws up to date so that we can work towards assisting in reducing veteran suicide.

I wish to thank past President David Manolas for the major efforts he has carried out in making sure that the NAA is front and centre with the RAN and now taking on the role of a Vice President. His service to the NAA has been highly commendable.

Gordon Fuller
NAA National President

In this issue

- Page 2 Hyperion unveils 3D Printed USV
- Page 3 Tamworth Sailor drives innovation at sea
- Page 4 On this day - Beneath the Harbour
- Page 6 DVA - Unsolicited Medical Assessments
- Page 6 Appeal for information
- Page 7 Federal Budget response to Royal Commission
- Page 8 DVA - Contact Information

Re-published from the Australian Defence Magazine with permission

HYPERION UNVEILS 3D PRINTED USV



Hyperion Systems has unveiled the southern hemisphere's first alleged 3D printed Uncrewed Surface Vessel. Credit: Hyperion Systems

Hyperion Systems has unveiled the southern hemisphere's first alleged 3D printed Uncrewed Surface Vessel (USV), marking a milestone for advanced manufacturing and autonomous maritime capability in Western Australia (WA).

Designed by WA marine architect Versatile Marine and powered by Greenroom Robotics' AI and autonomy software, the Astra 460 will be manufactured in Henderson Western Australia by Hyperion Systems.

The project was officially unveiled 26 May at the Indian Ocean Defence and Security conference (IODS) by WA Defence Minister Paul Papalia alongside the first public viewing of Hyperion's deployable "factory in a box" TitanCell.

The 4.6m Astra hulls will be 3D printed using Large Format Additive Manufacturing (LFAM) and recycled polymer waste by a consortium led by Hyperion Systems with integration support from key Australian stakeholders.

The autonomous navigation and control system will be delivered by Greenroom Robotics' GAMA platform.

Hyperion CEO Joshua Wigley said the vessel hull will be manufactured in approximately 40 hours using LFAM 3D printing, compared to at least 4-6 weeks using traditional boat-building methods.

"This dramatic reduction in production time highlights the transformative potential of additive manufacturing for rapid maritime capability and sovereign industrial resilience," Wigley said.

Greenroom Robotics co-founder and COO, Harry Hubbert said that Greenroom's autonomy stack is ideally suited to Hyperion's rapidly reconfigurable 3D printed USV platforms.

"In contested environments, the ability to quickly adapt a vessel to meet evolving mission requirements delivers a significant asymmetric advantage," Hubbert stated. "Hyperion's 3D printed USVs can deliver almost real-time customisation to suit the specific operating context."

"In a matter of days, a vessel can be printed, autonomy enabled and on the water. This opens up endless possibilities for rapid, scalable and distributed maritime defence."

The Astra 460 will be among the world's first LFAM 3D-printed USVs and a larger 8m initial prototype is planned to be supplied to a European navy for use at a major naval exercise later in 2026.

Subject to successfully completing a series of rigorous sea trials which will start later this month, the fully autonomous vessel will, according to Hyperion, feature: top speed approximately 40 knots, cruising speed between 20-30 knots, range of up to 180-200 kilometres, multi-mission capability, including covert movement of small teams; operation across a range of sea states, and modular payload flexibility for surveillance, security and defence roles.

Wigley said combining Hyperion's AI development toolkit with variable scale LFAM printing capacity will mean the Astra will be the first of a series of USVs which will be produced in many sizes and capability configurations that can be printed either in Henderson or deployed and printed using Hyperion's "Titan Cell".

"We are immediately provisioning to build 10 units a month and can scale to over 100 as needed," he said.

Astra Project Manager Jacob Kleinman said recent conflicts have demonstrated the effectiveness of USVs as cost-efficient, low-risk platforms that enhance maritime surveillance, reconnaissance and operational reach while reducing risk to personnel.

"USVs provide strong force-multiplication advantages. They are significantly cheaper to build and operate than traditional crewed vessels, enable persistent maritime presence, and act as force multipliers for manned fleets," he said.

"We see the ASTRA playing a key role supporting missions including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, border protection and security operations. Its modular payload capability also allows rapid reconfiguration for mission-specific roles."

Wigley said the IODS conference also provided a unique opportunity to publicly show for the first time the deployable anywhere TitanCell which can be used to manufacture USVs and a range of other products.

Designed as a deployable "factory-in-a-box", the TitanCell combines advanced robotics, 3D printing and in-house recycled polymer technology to manufacture products such as marine infrastructure, modular housing components, culverts, pontoons and autonomous vessel hulls.

By using difficult-to-recycle plastics, including material recovered from decommissioned resources industry infrastructure, the TitanCell supports sovereign manufacturing capability, reduces waste and carbon emissions and allows advanced manufacturing to be deployed directly to remote, regional or disaster-affected areas where traditional supply chains are limited.

The commercialisation of the TitanCell was accelerated via a \$385,000 matched funding grant provided under the Australian Government's Industry Growth Program.

TAMWORTH SAILOR DRIVES INNOVATION AT SEA

Navy News - 26 May 2026

Author: Lieutenant Marcus Middleton



Electronics Technician Petty Officer Joshua Guy with a 3D printer on HMAS Toowoomba. Photos: Leading Seaman Zac Dingle

'You can't sail with everything. Managing small parts is a more significant problem than you think.'

Thousands of kilometres from home, small issues can become major problems. Petty Officer Guy said a minor plumbing fault almost shut down an entire galley.

Yet, thanks to the skills he developed at Fleet Support Unit, he was able to create a new part from scratch in the middle of the South China Sea, keeping the kitchen open and the crew operational.

"This particular part couldn't have been purchased overseas. If we needed to ship it from Australia, it would have cost upwards of \$10,000. Instead, I was able to spend 30 cents' worth of plastic filament to create something that does the same job."

It is a small start, but shows the unlimited potential of becoming fully self-sufficient at sea.

"The technology a decade ago wouldn't have held up at sea. To see how far it's come in 10 years makes me think [about] what we will be capable of in the future," Petty Officer Guy said.

A multi-generational Tamworth local, Petty Officer Guy's father, sister and uncle have all served, or are still serving, as electronics technicians in Navy. He has another sister who is an electronics warfare sailor.

He has a message for anyone in north-east NSW looking for a challenge with meaning.

"If you love adventure and you have a good work ethic, I would go for it. Every posting brings on a new adventure. Put your hand up for it, see where it takes you," Petty Officer Guy said.

Tamworth isn't just famous for country music. It's also known as the birthplace of highly skilled specialist sailors.

This includes Electronics Technician Petty Officer Joshua Guy, who is at the vanguard of driving innovation and implementing emerging technology at sea.

He's currently serving on board HMAS Toowoomba, which is on a regional presence deployment through East and South-East Asia.

"I didn't think I would be doing this type of work as an electronic technician. Yet when I was given the opportunity at Fleet Support Unit, I really took the bull by the horns," he said.

Petty Officer Guy was previously posted to the 3D printing and graphics department at Fleet Support Unit, developing the knowledge and skills to reduce Australia's reliance on international supply chains and increase the endurance of its ships.

"As we continually improve our skills, we'll be able to build a lot more items for day-to-day use, increasing our manufacturing at sea," Petty Officer Guy said.

Over the past four months, Toowoomba has visited six of Australia's regional partners and engaged in multiple multilateral and bilateral exercises, activities and operations with allied nations.

BENEATH THE HARBOUR:

The Japanese Midget Submarine Attack on Sydney, 31 May 1942

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



On the night of 31 May 1942, Sydney – a city that had long considered itself beyond the reach of the war raging across the Pacific – discovered how wrong that assumption was. Three Japanese midget submarines slipped into Sydney Harbour, bringing the conflict to Australia's most iconic waterway and shattering the sense of distance that geography had seemed to promise.

A War Closing In

By mid-1942, the Pacific War had already torn through Pearl Harbor, Malaya, Singapore, and the Philippines. Darwin had been bombed in February, and Japanese forces were pushing south through New Guinea. Yet for most Sydneysiders, the war remained something heard on the wireless or read in the morning papers – terrible and real, but distant.

That sense of remove ended just after eleven o'clock on a Sunday night.

The Mother Submarines and Their Cargo

The attack was launched from five large Japanese fleet submarines – I-22, I-24, I-27, I-28, and I-29 – which had taken up positions off the New South Wales coast days earlier. Each carried a single Ko-hyoteki class midget submarine, a two-man vessel roughly 24 metres long, powered by electric motors and armed with two torpedoes.

Three midgets were designated for the harbour assault. Their crews – six men in total – knew the odds of returning were slim. They had studied charts and aerial photographs of Sydney Harbour, and their primary target was the USS Chicago, an American heavy cruiser anchored in the harbour as part of Allied naval operations in the region.

Into the Harbour

The anti-torpedo net strung across the harbour entrance was the first line of defence, but it proved inadequate. One midget submarine, commanded by Sub-Lieutenant Kenshi Chuma, became entangled in the net shortly after midnight, triggering an indicator loop that alerted harbour defences. Unable to free the vessel, Chuma and his crewman, Petty Officer Takeshi Omori, scuttled their submarine and died inside it – the first casualties of the night.

The alert had been raised, but confusion and the sheer improbability of the scenario slowed the response. A second midget, commanded by Sub-Lieutenant Kieu Matsuo, managed to penetrate the harbour. He fired two

torpedoes at the Chicago – both missed. One detonated beneath HMAS Kuttabul, a converted ferry being used as a naval depot ship moored at Garden Island. The explosion killed 21 sailors, most of them sleeping below decks. They were the attack's only fatalities.

The third midget submarine, commanded by Sub-Lieutenant Keiu Matsuo – a man trained to expect death – was depth-charged and sunk in shallow water after the attack. Its wreck was later raised from the harbour floor.

The Night Above the Water

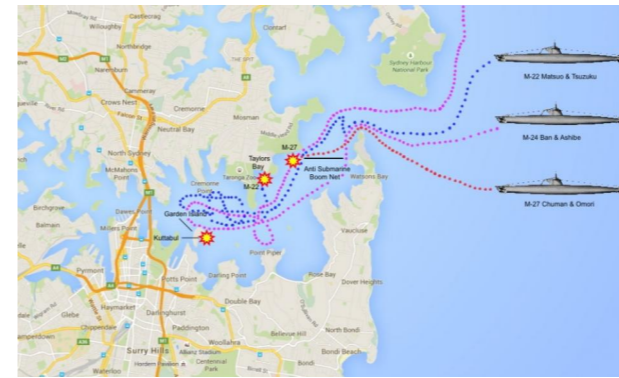
Sydneysiders who lived near the harbour or happened to be awake heard explosions, saw searchlights cutting across the water, and watched naval vessels steam urgently across the harbour. For many, the exact nature of what was happening remained unclear until morning. Anti-submarine patrols swept the harbour, depth charges were dropped, and the waterfront was blacked out.

The city's defenders – harbour patrol boats, shore batteries, and naval vessels – responded with energy if not always effectiveness. The Chicago herself fired into the darkness and contributed to the depth-charge effort, though her big guns were designed for targets considerably less elusive than a midget submarine.

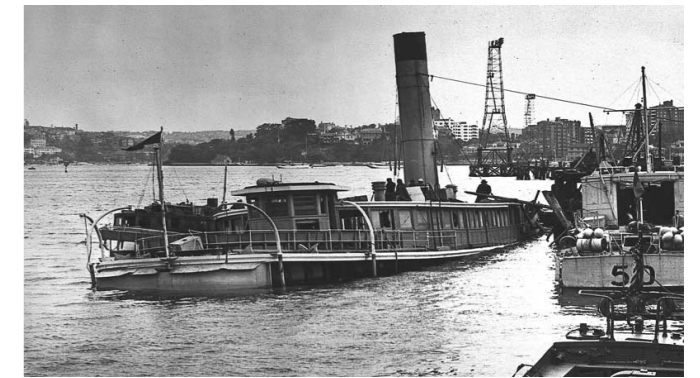
The Dead and the Aftermath

Twenty-one men died aboard Kuttabul: nineteen Australians and two New Zealanders. They were the victims of a weapon aimed at an American warship, killed by a torpedo that ran wide of its mark and found a softer target.

In the days that followed, the bodies of four Japanese submariners were recovered – from the two submarines that had been destroyed. The Australian Navy, in a gesture that drew both admiration and criticism at the time, conducted a funeral with full naval honours for the Japanese dead, cremated them, and – in keeping with the customs of their nation – returned their ashes to Japan after the war. The Australian government was criticised by some for what was seen as excessive courtesy toward enemy combatants; others viewed it as a mark of the respect owed to men who had faced near-certain death. The surviving midget submarine – or rather, the remains of the one caught in the net – was later raised. Two of the three submarines were subsequently salvaged and toured around Australia as part of a war bonds fundraising drive, drawing enormous public interest.



The tracks of the three midget submarines through Sydney Harbour.



HMAS Kuttabul in Sydney Harbour sunk by Japanese Midget Submarines.



USS Chicago (in Sydney Harbour - March 1941) - the intended target of the Japanese Midget Submarines

The Shells That Followed

The attack did not end with the submarines. On the night of 8 June 1942, two Japanese fleet submarines surfaced off Sydney and shelled the eastern suburbs, and a third shelled Newcastle. The bombardments caused minor damage and no deaths, but they confirmed what the harbour attack had already made plain: Australia was within reach.

What the Attack Meant

The strategic significance of the Sydney Harbour raid was limited. No major warship was sunk; the Chicago sailed away intact. But the psychological impact was enormous and lasting. The belief that Australia's geography offered some form of protection – that the war would be fought and won or lost somewhere else – could no longer be seriously maintained.

The attack accelerated civilian defence preparations, deepened the public appetite for American alliance, and concentrated minds in Canberra on the fragility of the home front. It also, unexpectedly, produced one of the war's stranger human stories: six young men dispatched on a mission from which they were not expected to return, met on the other end by a nation that buried them with honours it did not have to extend.

Memory and Memorials

The wreck of one midget submarine – M-24, commanded by Matsuo – was located on the seafloor off Sydney's Northern Beaches in 2006, having apparently made it out of the harbour after the attack and been lost at sea. It is now protected as a war grave.

The twenty-one men killed aboard Kuttabul are commemorated at the Garden Island Naval Chapel and at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. Their names are among the more than 40,000 Australians who died in the Second World War.

Every year on the night of 31 May, the attack is remembered – not as a victory or a defeat, but as the night the war came to Sydney, and the city was never quite the same again.

The Japanese midget submarine attack on Sydney Harbour remains one of the most dramatic episodes of the Pacific War on Australian soil – a reminder that in 1942, no corner of the Allied world was truly beyond the reach of Japanese ambition.



DON'T BE LEFT WITH THE BILL FOR AN UNSOLICITED MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

DVA will only pay for medical assessments when they've been formally requested and approved by DVA. Approval is confirmed through a Transaction Reference Number (TRN), which is issued to an appropriate provider before an appointment can take place.

Medical assessments and subsequent reports arranged without a TRN are not approved by DVA. We refer to these as unsolicited medical assessments and/or reports. Expenses related to these remain the responsibility of the veteran. You can still arrange an assessment without a TRN, however it will not be covered by DVA unless it has been requested and approved.

Medical assessments require a TRN and are not part of the [Medical Expenses Privately Incurred \(MEPI\)](#) arrangement. Under MEPI, medical expenses can only be reimbursed for treatment.

If you are considering lodging a claim, to help your claim progress smoothly, all relevant medical evidence should be submitted when you lodge your claim, or as early as possible during the claim process. This helps DVA understand what information is already available and whether any further assessments are needed. All evidence submitted to support a claim will be considered as part of the claim investigation.

If you are unsure whether your assessment has been approved or whether additional information is required, please contact the Claims Support Officer (CSO) or the Delegate who is managing your claim. This is an essential step before booking an appointment with your GP if you don't want to be left with the bill for an unsolicited medical assessment

DVA sends the medical assessment forms and the TRN, used for invoicing, directly to the veteran's treating medical practitioner. When this happens, notification is provided to the veteran and the nominated representative where required. DVA will only pay invoices for additional assessments that have been requested and approved by DVA before the appointment and where all other requirements have been met.

DVA is aware there is some misinformation circulating about when DVA will cover the cost of medical assessments. Be cautious of advice or offers suggesting your assessment will be paid for without prior approval, as this is not the case.

More information is available on the DVA website, visit [What to expect after you have submitted a compensation claim | Department of Veterans' Affairs](#)

treatment for ill and injured veterans who are awaiting a liability determination on their claim.

Establishing the National Veterans Data Asset (NVDA)

\$29.8 million over 3 years from 2026-27 will establish the National Veterans' Data Asset (NVDA).

Implemented in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988, the NVDA will be a comprehensive data resource, bringing together information from Defence, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), and State and Territory sources to better inform policy, service delivery and program evaluation.

This responds to Recommendation 107 of the Royal Commission and will create the most comprehensive data source available to support improved health and wellbeing outcomes for veterans their families.

These measures respond to Royal Commission recommendations:

- 71 – which called for DVA health fees to be increased,
- 107 – which called for the establishment of the NVDA, and
- 96 – which called for ongoing funding for the PAMT program.

In addition, the establishment of the NVDA will support the implementation of further recommendations, including:

- informing Comcare's regulatory approach to preventing psychosocial harm (Recommendation 58),
- enabling research into the health and wellbeing of Defence families (Recommendation 121), and
- supporting the Veteran and Family Wellbeing Agency (Recommendation 87) in co-designing wellbeing support programs and services.

To find out more about the 2026-27 Budget measures, please visit the [Budget 2026-27 webpage](#).



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE OFFICER IN THIS PHOTO?

I received a phone call this week from a member of the public who had purchased a book from a second hand book store. Inside the book was this photo of a Naval Officer. They have reached out to the Naval Association in the hope that the photo can be reunited with the appropriate family.

If you are able to identify the person in this photo, please send me an email (via wem@navalassoc.org.au) so that we can help get this photo home.

Darren Rush
Bosun's Call Editor



DVA Contact Numbers

Provider invoicing & billing enquiries: 1300 550 017

Provider enquiries: 1800 550 457

Transport bookings: 1800 550 455

Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre (VAPAC): 1800 552 580

Hearing or speech impairment assistance

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the [National Relay Service](#) (NRS):

Talk To You (TTY) users phone 1800 555 677 then ask for 1800 838 372

Speak and Listen users phone 1800 555 727 then ask for 1800 838 372

Internet relay users connect to the NRS then ask for 1800 838 372

Information on health services may be obtained from DVA. The contact numbers for health care pro-viders requiring further information or prior financial authorisation for all States and Territories are listed below:

TELEPHONE: 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)

INTERNATIONAL CALLERS: +61 2 6289 1133

POSTAL ADDRESS FOR ALL STATES AND TERRITORIES:

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Health Approvals & Home Care Section

GPO Box 9998

BRISBANE QLD 4001

DVA WEBSITE: <http://www.dva.gov.au/providers/allied-healthprofessionals>

DVA EMAIL: For prior financial authorisation: health.approval@dva.gov.au

The appropriate prior approval request form can be found at: <https://www.dva.gov.au/providers/servicesrequiring-prior-approval>

CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

For information about claims for payment visit: www.dva.gov.au/providers/how-claim

CLAIM ENQUIRIES: 1300 550 017 (Option 2 Allied Health)

Claims will take a variety of times to complete based on whether or not the claim is prioritised for allocation to a decision maker and the complexity of the claim itself. For example, if the service of the individual crosses two or more Acts or contains a lot of health conditions and injuries or both. This results in some claims being decided faster than the average time, while some claims take longer.

For any condition, to make the claiming process smoother, follow these 3 steps:

- Step 1: Get your medical practitioner to con-firm your diagnosis.
- Step 2: Supply the documents you need to;
- Step 3: Check if you are already eligible for free health care and treatment.

CLAIMS PROGRESS

As at 31 October 2025, DVA had 89,597 claims on hand, comprised of 22,820 unallocated claims and 66,777 claims being processed.

In the financial year to date (FYTD) (1 July 2025 to 31 October 2025):

DVA received 39,032 claims

DVA made 36,099 determinations

For all claims on hand including older claims being processed the average TTTP for MRCA IL was 333 days, up from 304 days in the previous FYTD. The median TTTP was 271 days.

There have already been some significant improvements in processing timeframes for new IL claims received and determined within the last 12 months.

For claims received within the last 12 months, the average TTTP for MRCA IL was 110 days. The median TTTP was 96 days.

OPEN ARMS

Veterans & Families Counselling

Open Arms provides mental health and wellbeing support to anyone who has served at least one day of continuous fulltime service in the ADF and their immediate families.

1800 011 046

SAFE ZONE SUPPORT

Free and anonymous counselling line for all current and ex-serving ADF personnel, veterans and their families. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

1800 142 072

DEFENCE FAMILY HELPLINE

Available 24/7 or online at www.defence.gov.au/members-families/defence-helpline.asp. Staffed by qualified human services professionals including social workers and psychologists.

1800 628 036

DEFENCE ALL HOURS SUPPORT LINE

24/7 confidential telephone service for Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families to facilitate access to ADF or civilian mental health services.

1800 628 036