

THE BOSUN'S CALL

NEWSLETTER OF THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



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ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY



The Mid Year Lunch was held on July 2. Normally held as "Xmas in July" it was felt on the day that we could dispense with the Christmas theme and just enjoy the fellowship.

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The HMAS Canberra
Memorial Service
was held on Friday
August 7 at 11am

Photos on
page 7





Naval Association of Australia (ACT Section)

Founded 1 July 1944
Patron The Hon Sir William Deane AC KBE

Office Bearers 2026 - 2027

Executive Committee Members

President David Manolas
0427 504 564
stbdstayportgiveness@gmail.com

Vice President Alex McGown
02 6258 6167

Secretary Darren Rush
0435 911 607
darren.rush@navalassoc.org.au

Treasurer Alaric O'Neill

Committee Members

Tiger Lyons
Pauline Gribble
Heather Milward
Sue Wheeler

Welfare Alex McGown
02 6258 6167

Membership Darren Rush
0435 911 607
darren.rush@navalassoc.org.au

Social Sec Bev Joce

Bosun's Call Darren Rush
wem@navalassoc.org.au

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

September Birthday List

Harry Beardsell
John Coombe
Ian Holmes
Robert Kendall
Michael Taylor
Stephen Youll

Upcoming Events

- 2 Jul Christmas in July – Gungahlin Eastlakes Football Club 1200
- 29 Jul Last Post Ceremony - Stoker 2nd Class James Edward Sandry WWII
- 14 Aug Last Post Ceremony - Able Seaman Victor Athol Evers WWII
- 19 Aug Last Post Ceremony - Able Seaman David Alexander Gaff WWI
- 28 Aug Last Post Ceremony - Cooks Mate William Hare WWI
- 12 Sep Anniversary of the sinking of the Rakuyo Maru & Kachidoki Maru
- 12 Sep Last Post Ceremony - Able Seaman William Thomas Pilditch McCall

Meeting Dates & Locations

Tables are normally booked for drinks and lunch in the host club from 1200 prior to the meeting.

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 3 Sep | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | <i>Committee Meeting</i> | <i>1100</i> |
| | <i>General Meeting</i> | <i>1330</i> |
| 1 Oct | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | <i>Committee Meeting</i> | <i>1100</i> |
| | <i>General Meeting</i> | <i>1330</i> |
| 5 Nov | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | <i>Committee Meeting</i> | <i>1100</i> |
| | <i>General Meeting</i> | <i>1330</i> |
| 3 Dec | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | <i>Committee Meeting</i> | <i>1100</i> |
| | <i>General Meeting</i> | <i>1330</i> |
| 4 Feb | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | <i>Committee Meeting</i> | <i>1100</i> |
| | <i>General Meeting</i> | <i>1330</i> |
| 4 Mar | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | <i>Committee Meeting</i> | <i>1100</i> |
| | <i>General Meeting</i> | <i>1330</i> |

Social Program

*Fish & Chips - held at Snapper & Co.
(Canberra Yacht Club)
Mariner Pl, Yarralumla ACT 2600*



- | | | |
|---------------|---|-------------|
| 17 Sep | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | <i>Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co)</i> | |
| 15 Oct | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | <i>Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co)</i> | |
| 19 Nov | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | <i>Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co)</i> | |
| 17 Dec | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | <i>Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co)</i> | |
| 18 Feb | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | <i>Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co)</i> | |

Bev Joce
Social Secretary

Diverse careers on show ADFA Open Day 2026

25 August 2026

The Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) open day brought prospective trainee officers, families, friends and the public together to learn about the academy and career opportunities in the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

Locals enjoyed more than 70 stands and interactive displays highlighting the breadth of capabilities and careers across the ADF's sea, land, air, space and cyber domains.

Highlights included flypasts from Royal Australian Air Force C-130J Hercules and F-35A Lightning II aircraft, an Army land combat demonstration and a Navy MH-60R-Seahawk helicopter display.

Visitors also had the opportunity to speak with ADFA trainee officers about their experiences, learn about the different voluntary extracurricular clubs and tour the live-in accommodation.

Commandant ADFA Brigadier Troy Francis said the event was an important opportunity to showcase life at ADFA, available career opportunities and a wide variety of Defence capabilities and equipment.

"ADFA is committed to developing the character, leadership and professionalism of the future leaders of our Navy, Army and Air Force," Brigadier Francis said.

"The 2026 open day was a terrific demonstration of the opportunities and pathways available to those who are selected to start their leadership journey here at ADFA.

"This year's event was extra special as it coincided with our 40th year of offering a unique combination of world-class education, plus cutting-edge military and leadership training as a first step for trainee officers towards their career in the ADF.

"Thank you to everybody who travelled far and wide to attend and to those involved in delivering another successful ADFA open day."



A child tries on a helmet with the help of an Army soldier at the 2026 ADFA open day. Photos: Rodney Braithwaite



Members of the public get a close look at military helicopters and vehicles during the ADFA open day.



Attendees: David Manolas, Alex McGown, Darren Rush, Alaric O'Neill, Heather Milward & Dennis Lyons.

Meeting opened at 11:24

1. Passing of Peter Cullinan

David announced the death of member Peter Cullinan, who died from infection before surgery in Melbourne. His wife Lynne wants a commemorative service (possibly at ADFA/Duntroon) rather than a funeral. David has 50 bereavement pins from Commander Blazey to distribute.

2. National elections – ACT vote

Eileen Callaway is stepping down as Treasurer (her partner is now National President) and moving to Assistant Secretary, unopposed. David is standing for National Public Officer against Mr Jacobi (E-Fleet group); David will recuse himself from the section's vote and have Darren email the result to the Returning Officer (Russell Pettis).

3. HMAS Canberra memorial service (next day)

Logistics mostly finalized despite NCA access issues and an unresolved ~\$600 traffic control cost (DVA declined to help; Repatriation Commissioner Fagan is looking into it). A Commodore and Air Commodore will attend instead of the CN; only one politician (Opposition Leader's rep) expected. British, American, Kiwi and Canadian wreaths confirmed among ~13 total. Muster 9:30am for an 11am start. Harman will provide the catafalque party; David will deliver two odes.

4. Funding for 85th anniversary (next year)

Sue noted next year's service may qualify for a DVA commemorative grant as a major anniversary; this year's costs will be covered out of pocket.

5. Parking/access confusion

Alex questioned parking directions; David explained it's driven by NCA requirements.

6. Last Post ceremonies

Roster covered through November. Tiger is struggling since Microsoft Publisher has been discontinued; Darren offered to teach him Affinity for card design.

7. Welfare

No other illness reported. Pauline has medical appointments. Bev's absence meant no raffle.

8. Badges

Darren has received a stock of NAA pocket slide badges (\$35 each if anyone would like one - money to be given/sent to Alaric who can forward to National) and standard Full Member badges (at a cost of \$5 each - funds payable to National) to keep on hand for New Members. David approved paying the invoice.

9. Website redesign

Darren (National Webmaster) is building a new non-Drupal site and wants ACT section feedback/vote comparing it to the current Drupal-based site; other sections have largely favored the redesign.

10. Bereavement pin stock

Section stock rising to ~150 once national supply is factored in.

11. Fishwick shop closure

The local Military Shop has closed their physical store suddenly, moving to Queanbeyan as online-only – David and Alex lamented the loss of in-person retail.

12. War Memorial advisory group

David will continue on the AWM Veterans Advisory Group; raised possibility of a group tour with guide Glenn McNamara, possibly including the Mitchell Annex.

13. War Widows Association

The national body is closing; NSW will absorb much of its work. David will ask Robin Mitchell (possibly local) about addressing the section.

14. USS Canberra trivia

Alex shared background on USS Canberra-class ships being beached due to parts issues; Darren will feature it in the Bosun's Call.

Meeting closed at 12:05

Attendees: Committee, Heather Milward, Sue Wheeler, Glen McNamara, Alan Masters, Joe Slaats, Veronica Heard, John Small, Bev Joce, Stewart Gordon & Tony Vickers.

Apologies: Pauline Gribble, Mike Hardwick, Ray Horne, Graeme Quinn.

Visitors: Mary Slaats, Sue Lyons, Debra McGown & Stephen Rowley.

Meeting opened at 13:32

1. Welcome

David Manolis opened the meeting, welcoming back John and new member Stephen Rowley. Sue Wheeler received her membership badge and joined the committee.

2. Bereavements

Peter Cullinan's death was announced (details pending on a commemorative service in Canberra, possibly Duntroon Chapel); his wife Lynn is also unwell. Rick Hannan (Crossed the Bar age 90) was also remembered for his Navy, dockyard, and policing career.

3. Recital of the Odes

Naval Ode, Ode to the Naval Veteran and the Ode of Remembrance.

4. Apologies & Birthdays

Apologies: Pauline Gribble, Mike Hardwick, Ray Horne, Graeme Quinn. August birthdays acknowledged for five members.

5. Minutes

Minutes from August Meeting. No corrections or business arising. Minutes accepted unanimously
Mover: Alan.
Seconded: Joe.

6. Committee Reports

A. President's Report

David updated members on national association matters, including vacant roles and the need to vote on the position of public officer for ACT incorporation requirements. He explained the public officer role as the link between the association and the ACT Government.
Two candidates were discussed:
David Manolas
John Jacobi
David explained that Alex had seconded his nomination. Members discussed the suitability of each candidate, focusing on:
David's long service and familiarity with the association
Jacobi's qualifications and lack of demonstrated association involvement
Concerns that Jacobi was from the E-Fleet and had little direct connection to the section
Alex, as Vice President, was asked to adjudicate the vote.
The section voted unanimously in favour of David Manolas.

B. Vice President's Report

DVA and KAC Update on Allied Health Caps and Public Hospital Limits
Alex reported from a KAC meeting that discussion was underway with ministers regarding a proposed \$5,000 annual cap on allied health services from 1 July next year.

Tiger explained that this cap would apply to allied health or ancillary services such as:

Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Exercise physio / gym-related programs
He noted that claims would be visible via MyGov.
The group also discussed a 35-day public hospital limit, after which patients would have to pay unless they had an acute care certificate.
Alex said Pat McCabe and KAC were pushing to get the rule scrapped.
Petitions were circulating for members who wanted to support the effort..

C. Last Post Ceremonies

Alex said the ceremony is running from the end of the year into early January, and interested members should see him to have their names added.

D. Correspondence (Secretary Report)

Darren reported incoming correspondence and updates: Acceptance from the British Defence Attaché of Honorary Membership
No reply yet from the New Zealand High Commission
An email from Julie Higgins, who has naval memorabilia from her late husband and wants it to go to a good home
Darren also reported the arrival of additional membership-related materials from National.

E. Treasury

Alaric reported that the section had enough cash in bank to cover current bills.
Outstanding costs included:
The National Capital Authority traffic control invoice for the next day's event, expected to be around \$600
Capitation payments to National, overdue since Peter's death, amounting to about six months and roughly \$1,000 total for around seven people
Alaric said the association was still financially able to cover the expected obligations.

5. General Business

Website and Digital Security Work

David reported that preliminary work had been done to improve the Naval Association website, making it more modern, intuitive, and welcoming.
He stressed that the association still did not have full control or understanding of what had previously been done to the site by the former webmaster.
Members were asked whether they were happy for Darren's redesign work to proceed.
The section agreed to proceed.
Darren then gave a detailed explanation of why the website had been separated from the membership database:
To reduce cyber risk
To protect private member information
To meet insurance requirements
To simplify access and limit who could reach the database
He explained that the database and website are now separate, reducing potential security breaches significantly.
The discussion emphasized the risks of ransomware, hacking, and data exposure.
Alan asked whether the association had a policy for ransomware and disaster recovery; Darren said he would check.
David said he would also endeavour to find out more.

Managed Service Provider and Cyber Insurance

Darren explained that the association needs a managed service provider (MSP) to handle IT maintenance, administration, updates, repairs, email systems, and cybersecurity.

He said National had approved a quote from Glenfield Group in WA, run by a gentleman already doing much of the association's IT work pro bono.

The reason for formalising the arrangement is to satisfy insurance requirements and reduce liability exposure.

Members discussed the cost and implications of cyber insurance and whether the association should be concerned about public-facing data.

Tiger compared it to personal cybersecurity tools and described how professional attackers operate.

Stephen noted that Defence receives large numbers of attacks daily, reinforcing the need to use professionals.

David said he had long believed the ACT section website should only carry basic public information: who they are, where they meet, and when meetings occur.

Bereavement Pins, Merchandise, and Naval Association Stock

David said he had met with Commander Blasey regarding bereavement pins and that the ACT section now has a stock of 50.

He said the supply would be divided among committee members so they could be distributed if he were absent.

The section discussed merchandise including:

Lapel pins

Jacket slides

Darren said the section had received new jacket slides from National, priced at \$35 each, with payment to be forwarded to National through Alaric.

New membership badges were also received for new members.

War Widows / Families of Veterans Update

David said the Australian War Widows Association national body seemed to have ceased operating.

He suggested the NSW office may now be overseeing national issues, but he was seeking confirmation.

Alan clarified the name had changed to Families of Veterans Guild and explained that the shift was intended to be less widow-centric and more inclusive of widowers and families.

David planned to speak further with people attending the HMAS Canberra memorial service to understand the new arrangement.

War Memorial Advisory Role and Potential Section Visit

David reported that his advisory role with the Australian War Memorial Veterans Advisory Council would continue.

The council would now review older displays, including potentially the colonial wars galleries.

David had been asked by Mary Anderson to continue, and he was happy to do so.

He also described a recent tour of the War Memorial led by a guide named Glenn.

He praised the guide's presentation and the way the tour connected people and artifacts.

David suggested that the section might one day arrange a group visit to the Memorial.

Joe Berta explained that tours can be tailored and limited to about 15 people per guide, with the option to split into groups.

He noted the tour could include lunch in the atrium café and does not need to take the whole day, though members should allow more time than they might expect.

HMAS Canberra Memorial Service Planning

David said he would be attending the HMAS Canberra memorial service the following day and expected some members to help.

He said the service would begin at 11:00 and run for about an hour.

Attendees and ceremonial details included:

Navy Band Sydney sending a quartet

A catafalque party provided by Harmon, not the Federal Guard

A rehearsal held the previous day, which went very well

A Commodore from the Navy and an Air Commodore from the Air Force attending

American, New Zealand, and Canadian guests expected

The National Capital Authority had again required a paid traffic controller.

David asked members coming to the memorial to mention they were with the Naval Association if they needed assistance parking.

Challenge Coins and Section Branding

David introduced the idea of challenge coins as commemorative items.

Two design concepts were to be considered:

NAA badge on one side with the Ode to the Naval Veteran on the other.

NAA badge on one side with a Canberra Memorial design, including the black and white swans, on the other

He explained they would be optional and could be used as mementos, especially at ceremonial events.

Australian White Ensign and Branding Rules

David explained that, after clarification with Navy branding staff, the association is eligible to purchase an Australian White Ensign (AWE) for ceremonial use under certain rules.

Approved uses include ceremonial locations such as Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, and funerals.

He stressed that many items once assumed to be freely usable are now subject to Navy rules, including:

Ship images

Rate badges

Ships' badges

The association can use silhouettes of ships in some cases, but not actual photographs without permission.

Tiger raised the issue of an AWE already held from a closed Sub-section.

David advised that if such items are not needed, the association should contact Navy through him and arrange to return them.

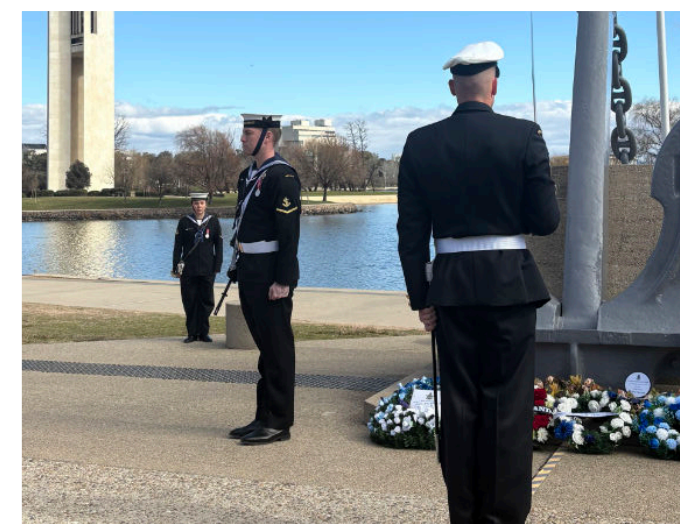
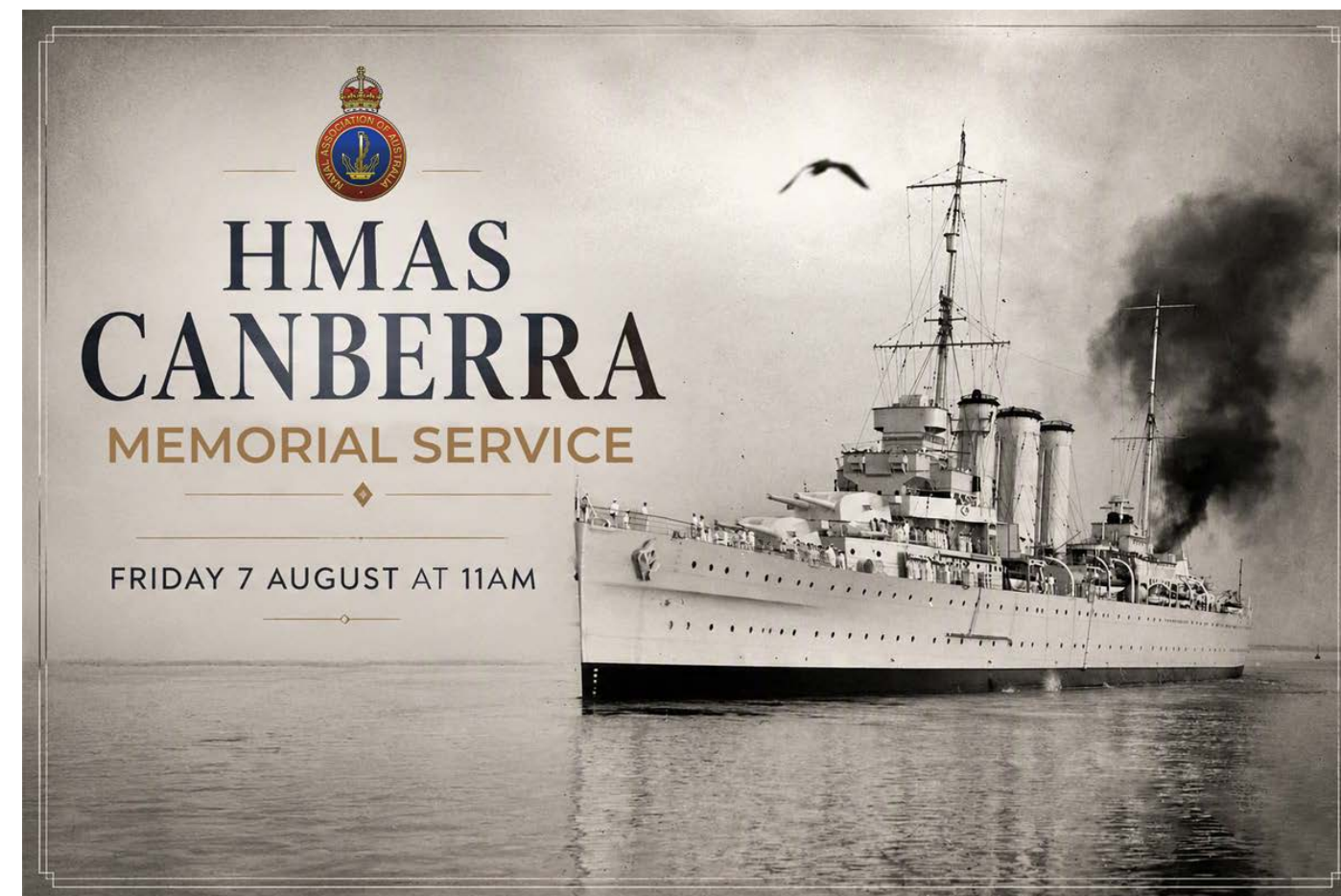
It was confirmed that the existing AWE should be retained.

Reports accepted unanimously

Mover: Joe.

Seconded: Stewart.

Meeting closed at 14:35



Photos courtesy Veronica Heard



Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs

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

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) continues to process outstanding claims as quickly as possible, to deliver much needed help to veterans and families sooner.

As part of our commitment to routinely, publicly, and meaningfully reporting on claims processing progress, each month DVA releases updated data via the claims processing page.

A snapshot of May 2026:

DVA received 8,979 claims in May bringing the total for the financial year to date (FYTD) to 98,799 claims – 7.3 per cent higher than the same period last year.

DVA made 7,042 determinations and has finalised 85,573 claims in the FYTD, 8.6% per cent less than the equivalent period last year. 70,344 claims were with an officer for processing, and 31,316 claims were yet to be allocated for processing.

The average time taken to process a MRCA IL claim was 361 days in the 2025-26 FYTD (1 July 2025 to 31 May 2026), compared to 311 days in the corresponding 2024-25 FYTD.

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