



**Defence
Families**
of Australia

Advocacy Map

Winter 2023

About us

Defence Families of Australia (DFA) is the official group appointed by the Government to represent the interests of the families of current serving ADF members.

Established in 1986, DFA advocacy has impacted every aspect of Defence life in that time.

As the official advisors to Government and Defence, DFA advocate for ongoing improvement in policy and practical support.

Our aim is to reduce the negative impacts of military service on ADF families, and to support the positive aspects of this unique Defence lifestyle.

DFA is independent of the Department of Defence. Our team is connected to Defence family communities across the country, and are largely veterans or family of ADF members.

In recent years the Australian Defence community has been facing the biggest set of stressors in a generation.

The whole country is carrying more than normal on their shoulders, but many Defence families bear additional weight. So DFA's work is more important than ever.

The advocacy goals in this document reflect actions or changes to the Defence support sector and Defence policy which would benefit families. A listed goal which is not marked 'Complete' is not guaranteed to be delivered.

DFA endorse and/or advocate for these changes, working with service providers and decision makers over time to provide evidence, consult on and refine the best reasonable actions to achieve positive impacts on families.

Some goals would require funding to implement and/or deliver. In these instances, competing demand of public funds must be considered where the services relate to public sector providers.

In publicly listing these goals, DFA aim to raise awareness of the Defence family experience, of the services available for families, and of the recent changes to policy or support.

Importantly, this document also encourages collaboration with other service providers, ex-service organisations or other interest groups to push a goal to fruition.

If you wish to help progress these or additional advocacy goals, please reach out to the DFA team to discuss collaboration opportunities.

dfa.org.au

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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country across Australia on which we live and work, and pay our respect to them, their culture, and Elders past and present.

ABN 27 688 368 241

Advocacy Map Winter 2023

The Advocacy Map is a biannual snapshot of DFA's current advocacy. This dynamic document aims to provide transparency of our work, and to offer the opportunity for Defence families and other stakeholders to support these advocacy efforts. Goals are triaged and addressed over time within DFA resourcing constraints.

This map details work that may take several years to achieve. The outcomes are delivered by a range of service providers, in collaboration with DFA.

Our current key areas of focus are:

Communication: supporting the development, establishment and evaluation frameworks of clear, consistent, easily accessible and timely information for families.

Flexible Housing: supporting greater flexibility, options and availability of suitable housing, including growth to meet current and future needs.

Family Employment: raising awareness of the skills, experience and potential of spouses and partners, working aged children, and other immediate Defence family members, and providing advice to organisations to build their focus and programs in Defence family employment.

Education: working with State and Territory Governments, and education bodies to raise awareness of the needs of Defence children, advising on how to minimise disruption and challenges in streamlined and suitable access to education at any posting location.

Breakdown of Relationships: addressing shortfalls and gaps in current policy related to temporary or ongoing relationship separation, advocating for the Department of Defence to lean in on initiatives to provide support and reduce instances of family and domestic violence.

Map legend

Timeframe of Advocacy Goal:

S – Short term
M – Medium term
L – Long term

Status of Advocacy Goal:

Complete
Underway
Ongoing

[PRIORITY GOAL] – These priority goals have been identified as key areas of focus.

It is important to note that not all advocacy goals are listed in this document. This includes goals which may be triggering to some people, relate to an active investigation, may breach privacy for one or more families that DFA is supporting, or is not yet fully investigated and defined by DFA.



Send your feedback or enquiries to

advocacy@dfa.org.au



Acronyms and abbreviations

ADF	Australian Defence Force
APS	Australian Public Service
CDF	Chief of the Australian Defence Force
Defence	Australian Commonwealth Department of Defence
DFA	Defence Families of Australia
DFTP	Defence Force Transition Program
DHA	Defence Housing Australia
DMFS	Defence Member and Family Support Branch, Department of Defence
DRH	Directorate of Relocations and Housing
DRHM	Defence Relocations and Housing Manager
DSM	Defence School Mentor
DSR	Defence Strategic Review
DVA	Department of Veterans' Affairs
FDV	Family and domestic violence
FLO	Family Liaison Officer
MINDP	Minister for Defence Personnel
MP	Member of Parliament
MWD(U)	Member with Dependents (Unaccompanied)
PACMAN	ADF Pay and Conditions Manual
PEAP	Partner Employment Assistance Program
RA	Rental Allowance
RLLT	Remote Location Leave Travel
SR	Service Residence

Completed Advocacy

Over the past six months, we completed a number of advocacy goals. Many additional advocacy goals were supported but are ongoing, and remain in the broader map below. Advocacy goals relate to changes in policy and practice which DFA have supported to varying degrees. It should be noted that the delivery of these changes is generally made by service providers including Defence, DHA, and other areas of the Australian Government.

General		
Achieved an increase of the ADF Family Health Program benefit from \$400 to \$800 and expansion of eligible services that can be claimed.	M	Complete
Appointed to represent Defence families in advisory roles for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defence People Committee, Department of Defence Operation Navigator Expert Panel (The Oasis, Townsville) Veteran Community Integration Advisory Committee (The Oasis, Townsville) RSL Lifecare Intimate Partner Violence Community of Practice DVA Access to Information consultation DVA Consultative Forum Co-Design Youth Strategy Australian Veterans Employment Coalition (AVEC) Speaker Series Defence and Veteran Families Support Strategy Steering Committee and Working Group A number of corporate organisations and tertiary institutions across Australia. 	S	Complete
Delivered and promoted the #RememBEARance campaign in collaboration with RSL Australia and Legacy Australia to recognise the role of families in supporting current and former serving members, and encourage younger generations to get involved in their local commemorative services on Remembrance Day. This initiative has flowed on organically to Anzac Day and other key dates of remembrance for the Defence and veteran community.	S	Complete
Advocated for and played an advisory role in the establishment of a family-friendly service at the Australian War Memorial the evening before Anzac Day, to recognise and include current and former serving ADF families, particularly those who are unable to attend the Dawn Service.	S	Complete
Provided a submission to the <i>Defence Strategic Review (DSR)</i> , to ensure families are considered. Families have been factored in particularly under the DSR priority addressing recruitment and retention in the ADF.	M	Complete
Provided a submission for the Australian Government's <i>Early Years Strategy</i> to ensure the children of Defence families are considered as a unique cohort.	S	Complete
Obtained an increase in the Remote Leave Locality Travel (RLLT) entitlement of one extra trip per year.	M	Complete
[PRIORITY GOAL – Communication] Supported the <i>Defence Veterans Family Support Strategy</i> through contributing to the development and delivery of the survey, and providing key information to the Steering Committee and Working Group to inform the guiding principles of the strategy.	M	Complete
Engaged regularly with the the <i>Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide</i> Commissioners and their team to make submissions, to identify family engagement opportunities and share information gathered over the years.	M	Complete
Advocated to CDF for the expansion of the current network of Defence Flexible Working Hubs.	S	Complete
Provided feedback to the <i>ADF Employment Offer Modernisation</i> project to inform family-friendly and supportive initiatives.	M	Complete

Advocated to CDF and Chief of Army for the review of Army policy to bring facial hair policy in line with RAN and RAAF, demonstrating Army's evolution as an inclusive workplace, increasing Army morale and time with family (reduced daily shaving time).	S	Complete; not supported by Army
Testified at a Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee hearing for the <i>Inquiry into Adaptive Sport Programs for Australian Defence Force Veterans</i> .	S	Complete
Supporting Defence investigation into appropriate administrative support from Defence to enable DFA's effectiveness.	M	Complete
Provided advice on requests to Members of Parliament to support complex Defence family case in their local community; linking families to relevant support and providing policy improvement advice and positions to MPs.	S	Complete
Provided advice to the Attorney-General's Department on the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and establishing a new federal administrative review body.	S	Completed
Family engagement and communication		
Advocated for greater direct communication with Defence families by adapting Defence communications systems (to an 'opt-out' communication approach).	M	Complete
Supported DMFS research into the implementation of an 'opt-out' communication system to engage directly with families.	M	Complete
Advised on the development of a DMFS Families Guide publication, proposed to be launched in 2023. DFA understands that some of this feedback has been incorporated into the final version.	S	Complete
Secured short term increased resourcing to enhance the DFA communications capability, improving the effectiveness of DFA to meet its Charter obligations of informing families on their rights, responsibilities and support services.	M	Complete
Established improved information input channels with key stakeholders, including DHA, Toll, DMFS and others.	M	Complete
Supported the timely recruitment and onboarding of DMFS Family Liaison Officers where vacancies occurred in South Queensland and Victoria, in particular.	M	Complete
Confirmed the Defence Force Transition Program (DFTP) process to ask all members who they would like to bring to their meeting/s with a transition coach, i.e. spouse, family member or other support person.	M	Complete
Issued a public statement advocating for members of the Defence and veteran community to commemorate and celebrate Anzac Day how they wish, following media criticising some peoples' choices.	S	Complete
Family employment		
Created and delivered the <i>Defence Family Career Comeback Course pilot program</i> in collaboration with the University of New South Wales Australian Graduate School of Management (UNSW AGSM), to support Defence and veteran family members to overcome setbacks or challenges to their preferred career path. The pilot program was delivered in November 2022, and was supported by the Department of Defence and NSW Government.	S	Complete
Provided feedback to the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) (in partnership with the Department of Education) survey regarding family employment and its link to Defence capability.	S	Complete

Housing		
Supported the review and improvements to the DHA rental reference letter, enabling families to be better positioned to secure rental properties (e.g. when a relationship ends). This template includes: payment history, statement of regularity of inspections, and details of the conditions of premises.	S	Complete
Obtained the national expansion of the DHA Flexible Housing Trial.	M	Complete
Relationships		
Provided advice and information to Veterans SA to produce the <i>Family Domestic and Sexual Violence Fact Sheets for the Military Community</i> for the South Australian Office for Women.	S	Complete
Produced and submitted the <i>DFA Issues Paper: Defence Family and Domestic Violence</i> to Chief of Defence Force and the Minister for Defence Personnel.	S	Complete
Consulted with a range of family and domestic violence experts and advocates across Australia to consolidate feedback on the development of the <i>Defence Family and Domestic Violence Strategy</i> .	S	Complete
Consulted with the Defence Family and Domestic Violence Steering Committee on the development of the <i>Defence Family and Domestic Violence Strategy</i> (Strategy is proposed to be released 2023).	M	Complete
Provided advice and participated in the Australian Institute of Family Studies' <i>Strengthening and Protecting Veteran Family Relationships Study</i> .	S	Complete
Improved DFA's website and statements to ensure clear inclusion and respect of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans/transgender, Intersex, Queer/questioning, and Asexual (LGBTIQA+) members of the Defence community.	S	Complete
Education		
Shared learnings from Defence School Mentor program with Veteran Family Advocate to develop veteran child services where required.	S	Complete
[PRIORITY GOAL – Education] Collaborated with the Veterans SA brief to State Ministers to advocate for the establishment of an enrolment identifier for South Australian Defence school children.	M	Complete



Housing

1. Housing		
1.1 Flexible housing options		
Ensure senior decision makers understand the need for Defence families to have greater housing choice and flexibility.	S	Ongoing
[PRIORITY GOAL – Flexible Housing] Seek greater transparency of Defence's long term housing policy and strategy among key stakeholders for improved decision making.	S	Ongoing
[PRIORITY GOAL – Flexible Housing] Obtain commitment for greater stability in SR availability and a simplified, more flexible RA process.	M	Underway
Progress the expansion of housing band categories e.g. Rent Band Choice.	L	Underway
Advise DHA on and confirm appropriate processes for families in a SR to be given reasonable notice and clarity on the sale or re-banding of properties they currently reside in.	S	Underway
[PRIORITY GOAL – Flexible Housing] Consult with DHA to enable families to make informed housing choices, with the following updates to the Homefind website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of lease date and terms; • If the SR permits or prohibits a home-based business; • Identification of SR owned by Defence or DHA, which impact families operating businesses from home. 	S	Underway
[PRIORITY GOAL – Flexible Housing] Obtain commitment for the following housing policy amendments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable families to reject a SR and/or obtain RA due to proximity to family employment, schooling and required medical services. • Remove an offer of employment (partner) as a prerequisite to obtain housing in the Flexible Housing Trial and RA applications. • Enable families to reject an SR when less than 12 months remain on the lease. • Subsidised RA is provided in the event that a DHA lease is ending within 12 months. 	M	Underway
1.2 Rental reference process		
Advocate for DHA and DRH to establish a process to provide phone references when requested by real estate agents for private rental accommodation.	S	Underway
Secure acknowledgement or addition of recognised partner dependent on SR tenancy agreements.	S	Underway
1.3 Signatories for removals in a breakdown of relationship		
[PRIORITY GOAL – Breakdown of Relationships] Obtain commitment for policy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allow either the ADF member or the partner to authorise a removal; • prevent a member from stopping a removal following a breakdown of relationship. 	S	Underway
[PRIORITY GOAL – Breakdown of Relationships] Raise awareness of the risk of housing policy being misused in instances of family and domestic violence.	S	Ongoing
1.4 Accommodation allowance between uplift and downlift on a breakdown of relationship		
[PRIORITY GOAL – Breakdown of Relationships] Obtain commitment for an accommodation allowance to cover accommodation for member and partner between an uplift and downlift if required in a breakdown of relationship removal, to address a current gap in policy. Where this pertains to dual serving members, both members should be entitled to this provision.	S	Underway

1.5 Review of Defence-owned properties and allowances for families in remote regions		
Support the review of SR standards in remote locations such as Thursday Island, Tully and Weipa.	S	Underway
Raise awareness of the impacts of living in remote locations on families.	S	Ongoing
1.6 Rent Allowance (RA)		
Confirm commitment for regular RA and rental ceiling reviews to be aligned with current market conditions.	M	Underway
Secure commitment from Defence to communicate a clear course of action, contingencies and appropriate support for families when they are unable to secure housing due to the current housing supply issues.	M	Ongoing
1.7 Home-based business needs		
Support and progress DMFS and DHA review of home-based business needs, prevalence and application processes.	M	Underway
1.8 Review owner rights and responsibilities		
Obtain commitment from Defence and DHA to review and update policy regarding ownership rights and their maintenance responsibilities, and ensure inconsistencies are addressed.	M	Underway
1.9 Expansion of removal deadline for relationship breakdowns		
[PRIORITY GOAL – Breakdown of Relationships] Secure Defence and DHA commitment to extend the 28-day removal deadline to 90 days.	M	Underway
1.10 Service Residence (SR) capital inclusions		
Collaborate with DHA to advance the installation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate heating and cooling in all SRs as standard capital inclusions; • Sustainable energy options, such as solar panels, in SRs; • Electric car charging stations in all SRs by 2035. 	L	Underway
1.11 Improve bereavement policy		
[PRIORITY GOAL – Breakdown of Relationships] Secure commitment for the following policy amendments for bereavement (death of a Defence member): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the option for grieving families to remain in a SR or other Defence funded rental property for up to 18 months following the death of a member; • Bereavement support process to be aligned to entitlement periods. 	L	Underway
1.12 Enabling trial separation periods		
[PRIORITY GOAL – Breakdown of Relationships] Obtain commitment from Defence to examine the implementation of a trial separation period for couples considering ending their relationship.	L	Underway
1.13 Enhance flexible use of temporary accommodation allowances		
Obtain commitment for policy to be updated to enable families to use temporary accommodation allowances at either the losing or gaining location.	S	Underway
1.14 Improve support for families arriving in a new location		
Collaborate with DMFS and Defence Command to improve family readiness through the provision of useful and relevant information to families including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the member's base and unit contact information; • emergency support services; • local organisations and support services. 	M	Underway

1.15 Additional entitlements for Rent Allowance (RA) recipients		
Obtain commitment for policy to be amended to include a bond cleaning allowance for families in RA properties.	L	Underway
Obtain commitment for policy to be updated to include an additional night of temporary accommodation to cover self-cleaning following uplift, in lieu of the above.	L	Underway
1.16 Relocations Briefings		
Advocate for Relocations Briefings to be reinstated at bases where this has not yet occurred.	S	Underway
1.17 Housing capacity and services in Northern Australia		
Support planning for family related considerations (e.g. housing, medical, education) for the DSR-endorsed increase of ADF presence in Northern Australia.	L	Underway
2. Overseas postings		
2.1 Supporting co-location with pets		
Engage Defence and Qantas (national provider) to further subsidise pet transport expenses for families undertaking overseas military postings.	M	Underway
2.2 Increased awareness of requirements of families in overseas postings		
Collaborate with Defence on the development of overseas posting information sessions and information for families considering overseas postings.	M	Underway
Support the review of overseas posting information and communications campaigns to ensure it is relevant, timely and useful.	M	Underway
Engage Toll to improve communications to families regarding international delivery of belongings.	M	Underway
Advocate for a review of the following overseas posting entitlements in consideration with current costs of living including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • storage of car/s; • removal of loss on sale of a motor vehicle; • entitlement for car hire due to sale of car; • costs of pet transport to/from Australia. 	M	Underway



Family Stability

3. Family engagement and communication		
3.1 Increased communication with ADF families		
<p>[PRIORITY GOAL - Communication] Seek Defence commitment to establish a Defence Families Working Group or Committee to support effective communication strategies and resources for Defence families. This includes creating and consulting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction sessions for families of newly-enlisted members; • Family engagement content and initiatives for Defence Command e.g. family readiness plans, family information sessions. 	S	Underway
Seek Defence commitment to develop a family section on the Defence website that includes all Defence community information, posting and relocation guidance, etc.	M	Underway
Advance initiatives for greater awareness and uptake of Defence support services, e.g. the development of a communications campaign to promote the Defence Family Emergency Assistance Scheme.	M	Ongoing
Drive clear, consistent processes of data collection of family contact details in Defence.	M	Underway
Advise the ForceNet Working Group on community feedback about the platform for ongoing improvement and uptake.	S	Ongoing
Support Defence to develop a ForceNet guide for stakeholder engagement with Defence families.	M	Underway
Advocate for an official, step-by-step procedure for relationship breakdowns (including when FDV is a factor) for families to be developed and included in the DMFS ADF Member and Family Guide and website. This procedure should include the key external support services for former partners to use when they are no longer supported as a dependent by the ADF.	M	Underway
Advocate for the establishment of a role that acts as a point of contact or case manager to assist families through the relationship breakdown process.	L	Underway
3.2 Communications support for regional DMFS teams		
Assist DMFS to improve the quality and consistency of communications to Defence families.	M	Ongoing
4. Family and domestic violence		
4.1 FDV Strategy		
Obtain commitment from Defence that the FDV review and FDV Strategy committee will draw on expert advice from FDV experts, such as Phoenix Australia.	M	Underway
Obtain commitment from Defence to implement reporting on FDV, with units and DMFS to consolidate data on the prevalence and nature of cases reported.	M	Underway
<p>Advocate for the Defence FDV review to explore::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended access to DMFS social workers for (partner) victim-survivors following a relationship breakdown where FDV was a factor; • Extended or unlimited Open Arms access where FDV was a factor in a relationship breakdown. • Options for DHA to provide appropriate, fast phone and email responses to rental reference requests for members and ex-partners rental applications. 	M	Underway

5. Childcare		
5.1 Child care accessibility		
Advocate for increased promotion and availability of before- and after-school care, outside of school hours care, and home-based care.	M	Underway
Raise awareness and uptake of current support options for emergency or ad hoc childcare for parents in the case of member absence.	M	Underway
Review and consult on the Defence Family Emergency Assistance Scheme to ensure it is more accessible and relevant including child care support during member absences.	M	Underway
Advocate for a childcare subsidy to support the partner's employment during deployments or domestic operations.	M	Underway
6. Education		
6.1 State/Territory support of Defence students		
<p>[PRIORITY GOAL - Education] Engage State and Territory Education and Veterans' Affairs Departments to recognise Defence children as a priority cohort with exceptional circumstances, and to secure their participation in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a system of identifying Defence school children to facilitate appropriate funding allocation; Championing the uptake of ADF Aware training by school staff; Permit schools to accept a Defence Posting Order as proof of address for zoning and enrolment purposes, prior to a family securing housing. 	L	Underway
Support CDF's initiative to request State and Territory education departments recognise Defence children as a priority cohort, and participation in implementing supports for families.	M	Underway
6.2 Boarding subsidy		
Raise awareness of the Defence boarding subsidy available for Defence children.	L	Ongoing
Advocate for schools to review boarding fees to align with the Defence boarding subsidy for Defence children.	L	Underway
6.3 DMFS Moving Schools Checklist		
Request DMFS increase communication about the Moving Schools Checklist as a resource for families, e.g. prior to peak posting cycles.	S	Ongoing
6.4 Upfront tutor payments		
Obtain commitment by DMFS to review the tutoring reimbursement scheme to explore options to reduce or remove upfront payment of tutoring costs to reduce financial burdens on Defence families.	S	Underway

6.5 Supporting the Defence School Mentor Program		
Advocate for greater awareness and uptake of the Defence School Mentor program.	L	Ongoing
Support greater stability in Defence School Mentor numbers and reduce gaps in service where vacancies occur by progressing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions to increase advertisement of vacancies; • DMFS to communicate recruitment delays to families, and confirm alternative services; • Improvements to enable consistent application of the program in all States and Territories, including recruitment, selection and training processes. 	M	Underway
[PRIORITY GOAL – Education] Enhance the Defence School Mentor program through advocating for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and selection criteria to include lived Defence experience or the ability to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the Defence family experience; • Increased funding to accommodate higher demand related to the expansion of the program to include children of ex-serving veterans. 	M	Underway
7. Family engagement		
7.1 Family Liaison Officers (DMFS)		
Collaborate with DMFS to ensure Family Liaison Officer recruitment delays are communicated to families, and contingencies are established to continue their support functions.	S	Ongoing
7.2 ADF Family Health Program		
Drive the expansion of the eligibility criteria to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mirror two years post-transition date for SERCAT 6/7; • Include the families of Reservists on continuous full-time service. 	M	Underway
Support the review of the ADF Family Health Program and provide recommendations to improve the program.	M	Underway
8. Family employment		
8.1 Defence family employment support		
[PRIORITY GOAL – Family Employment] Highlight the business case for partner employment by raising awareness of the transferable talent, skills and career experience of Defence families.	S	Ongoing
[PRIORITY GOAL – Family Employment] Support private and public sector organisations (including Defence service providers) to develop and promote Defence family employment programs and/or advise them on how to engage Defence families in meaningful employment opportunities.	S	Ongoing
[PRIORITY GOAL – Family Employment] Collaborate with DMFS to raise awareness and uptake of the Defence Partner Employment Assistance Program (PEAP).	S	Ongoing
[PRIORITY GOAL – Family Employment] Secure expansion of PEAP to enable partner access following a member's transition from full time service.	M	Underway
Pursue the expansion of the Queensland Government's Connecting the Sector Veterans' Mentoring Program eligibility for families to access this program, including veterans and families in other States and Territories.	L	Underway
Collaborate with Veterans SA and other state and territory governments to research the impact of posting relocations on family employment through changes to certifications, qualifications and licenses.	M	Underway
8.2 Reducing professional registration barriers		
[PRIORITY GOAL – Family Employment] Advocate for national recognition of professional registrations, licenses and certifications of Defence families.	M	Underway

9. Financial security		
9.1 Delivery of free financial literacy programs specific to Defence families		
Consult with the ADF Financial Services and Consumer Centre to continually improve program delivery.	M	Ongoing
10. Overseas postings		
10.1 Streamline processes to access education tuition and employment support		
Advocate for Defence to expand eligibility and reduce bureaucracy around processes to access these services on return to Australia.	M	Ongoing
Advise Defence on communication campaigns to increase family awareness of available education and employment support for overseas postings.	M	Ongoing
11. Transition		
11.1 Relevant and timely information for families		
Advocate for Defence Transitions meetings with a transitioning member to factor in the whole family's transition.	M	Underway
12. Capability and stability		
12.1 Increased location stability by reducing posting relocations		
[PRIORITY GOAL – Family Employment] Obtain commitment from Defence to review posting practices and increase awareness and training in Career Management Agency staff to facilitate longer posting term career planning.	M	Underway
13. Parental leave		
13.1 Government Paid Parental Leave		
Advocate for expanded eligibility to enable non-serving partners to receive government funded parental leave during a relocation when employment in the new location has not been secured.	L	Underway
14. Flexible work options for Defence members		
14.1 Expansion of flexible work options		
Support Defence review and planning to increase flexible and remote work options.	S	Ongoing
Consult with Defence stakeholders to understand demand and prime locations for Flexible Working Hubs.	M	Underway
15. Live-in Carers		
15.1 Review and update of Live-in Carer provisions		
Progress the expansion of the Live-in Carer entitlement to include all recognised dependents with special needs, the removal of the requirement for a carer to be a relative, and inclusion of a bedroom entitlement to accommodate a Live-in Carer.	M	Underway



General Advocacy

16. Medical		
16.1 Improved access and quality of on-base medical services		
Obtain commitment from Defence to review on-base medical services to ensure high quality, timely health services are available for Defence members.	M	Underway
17. Diversity		
17.1 Stronger inclusion of diverse Defence families and their needs in policy making		
Engage with the below groups to ensure inclusion in DFA advocacy, and support their connection to timely information on relevant services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Defence families Defence Indigenous Affairs, Regional Indigenous Liaison Officers, Indigenous Liaison Officers Religious Advisory Committee for the Services Defence LGBTI Information Service (DEFGLIS) New Defence families (recruits) Regional Defence families, e.g. Thursday Island, Norfolk Island, remote bases in NT/WA Overseas posted families ADF Defence Attaches in overseas posting locations Defence families with special needs Defence Special Needs Support Group. 	S	Ongoing
18. Family support		
18.1 Individual advocacy for families with complex issues or requiring advice on their rights and relevant support services for their needs		
DFA National Delegates to support individual families where they encounter issues or failures in the support system. (This accounts for approximately 450 families per year with highly complex issues, and thousands with minor issues or questions)	S	Ongoing
Defence Family Advocate to complete private session hearing with the <i>Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide</i> .	M	Underway
19. Research		
19.1 Maximise value of research undertaken on Defence families, and the impact of that research on meaningful change		
Inform the review of the Defence Family Survey.	M	Ongoing
Inform the Defence Census questions relating to families.	M	Ongoing
Contribute to research advisory boards to shape research related to Defence families including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Institute of Family Studies Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Military and Emergency Services Health Australia (MESHA) Phoenix Australia at University of Melbourne Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation Open Door Australian Catholic University Other universities include UNSW, the Australian National University, UniSA, Flinders University, Central Queensland University and the University of New England. 	M	Ongoing

Connect stakeholders with research opportunities i.e. research institutions and experts to investigate under-researched areas, families to participate, and stakeholders to implement the findings for meaningful change.	M	Ongoing
20. Remote Location Leave Travel (RLLT)		
20.1 Greater clarity around Remote Location Leave Travel (RLLT) in remote locations		
Obtain parking allowance to cover airport parking fees where there is no other option than to drive to the airport for RLLT.	M	Underway
21. Pets and deployment		
21.1 Review of allowances for the boarding and care of pets for members who are deployed		
Raise awareness of the impacts (stress, financial and capability) on single members and Member with Dependents (Unaccompanied) (MWDU) families when no family remains in location during a deployment to care for pets.	M	Underway
Obtain a policy amendment to include international and domestic deployments, and short (minimum four weeks) and long-term absences, e.g. courses, conferences or domestic operations.	M	Underway
22. Community Centres		
22.1 Dedicated Defence Community Centre for Ipswich/Amberley (South QLD)		
Engage stakeholders to support increased services for this region.	L	Underway
22.2 Veteran Wellbeing Centres designed to support Defence families as well as veterans		
Advise on the establishment, development and operation of centres to ensure Defence families' needs are considered.	L	Ongoing
23. Engagement with support		
23.1 Empower ADF member to seek support for them and their families		
Advocate for messaging which reduces hesitancy to seek help.	L	Ongoing
Advocate for review and update of processes, policy and culture that suggest negative career impacts for speaking up.	L	Ongoing
Advocate for and deliver communications tailored to families to highlight the scope of support, and encourage asking for help.	L	Ongoing
24. Licence and registration		
24.1 National recognised process to transfer licence and vehicle registration for Defence members and families		
Liaise with civilian advocacy bodies, State and Territory Governments and stakeholders to support submissions.	L	Ongoing

25. Community connection		
25.1 Support grassroots initiatives to connect the Defence community		
Maintain a mentoring, advisory and supporting role to the community to establish engagement options for the community.	S	Ongoing
26. Parliamentary Triangle parking		
26.1 Allowance for parking at Russell Offices, Canberra		
Obtain commitment for a parking allowance for members who are posted to Russell Offices (ACT Parliamentary Triangle).	M	Underway
27. Recruitment and retention		
27.1 Retention bonuses		
Advocate for equitable distribution of retention bonuses, measured and achieved based on balanced work (e.g. low leave balance) and performance. Request this be backdated to the end of the former retention bonus program to re-attract transitioned veterans.	L	Underway
28. Facility Access		
28.1 Pool and Gym Facility Access – Thursday Island		
Advocate to have lapsed pool and gym facility access reinstated for members and families posted to Thursday Island (Weiben).	S	Underway



Acknowledgements



The DFA team wish to acknowledge and thank the thousands of Defence families who contribute and provide feedback on this resource, and to our advocacy work. This is truly families supporting families.

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There are a range of stakeholders who collaborate with DFA and draw on our insights and advice to shape their services and programs.

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This is the fourth iteration of the DFA Advocacy Map. This dynamic tool is currently published biannually in a summer and winter edition. The document seeks to summarise the key work occurring in policy advocacy relating to Defence families. It starts conversations and drives transparency, progress, and accountability.

Supporting a thriving Defence and veteran community is an ongoing task that cannot be done by any single entity. DFA engage many thousands of stakeholders annually and appreciate all input.

Together, we are making a difference.



For any questions or to provide feedback on any information in this document, please contact [**advocacy@dfa.org.au**](mailto:advocacy@dfa.org.au)

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