



Out in the shed with Ted.

Ted McEvoy

Hey mum – I'm home.

The last leg of my epic "Lap of Oz" was Exmouth to Coral Bay, Carnarvon, Denham, Geraldton then down to Perth. 8 months on the road, 27,718 Km, 3,990 litres of diesel, (an average of 14.4 litres/100Km – 19.6mpg) fuel cost \$5,317 (average fuel cost \$1.33 c/l) and not one haircut or shave.



If you get the chance – do it!!!

DVA set to improve.

Liz Cosson AM CSC
Deputy Secretary
Chief Operating Officer
DVA



For nearly a century, DVA's fundamental mission has been to support those who serve, or have served in defence of our nation and to commemorate their service and sacrifice. The veterans who come to us looking for support need our help. They often need this assistance immediately. To date, we have not always been able to offer that immediate help, though that is our goal for the future. We know we can do better, which is why we are now focused on a comprehensive upgrade to our systems, processes and technology that will improve the way we do business, address delays and streamline the services we offer.

These improvements are necessary to transform us into the Department that veterans need us to be. We believe that simplifying our systems will make it easier for our clients to communicate with us. This will allow us to build relationships with a larger number of veterans, providing assistance to those who may previously have seen connection with the Department as too complex or burdensome. We know, for example, that there are often significant wait times associated with our services and that our phone systems need streamlining. Our ICT systems are outdated, we're governed by complex legislation and our largely paper-based business processes need a complete overhaul.



The transformation program that is currently underway will allow us to make significant improvements to the system. It will allow us to set in motion plans to consolidate the number of external DVA phone numbers to reduce phone transfers and, in time, move towards a system where clients will access help by ringing a single 1800 VETERAN number. The reform process will allow us to work towards dramatically reducing approval times for urgent medical health treatment. It will allow us to decommission legacy ICT systems and ensure documentation for every new client we serve is set up and maintained digitally rather than in paper form, as we simultaneously digitise 300,000 pages per week from existing client files.

We are working in partnership with other agencies across government, including the Department of Defence, the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, and others, to leverage their skills, experience, systems and business processes as we embrace change. Through these relationships, DVA is learning what works well for similar clients and how it can change to provide better, more modern services to veterans and their families.

Changes like this will see DVA evolve from an organisation that focuses on claims to one that places veterans and their families at the centre of everything it does. Transforming DVA won't happen overnight, but with our sights clearly set on improved outcomes for veterans, we're well on our way.

Gold Card entitlement.

From 1st July this year, Australian participants in the British Nuclear Tests (BNT) in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s and Australian members of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) have been entitled to a Gold Card.

BNT participants include former ADF personnel, Commonwealth employees and contractors who provided services and support to the nuclear test program and civilian personnel who many not have been involved in the nuclear tests but who entered a nuclear test area.



BCOF members include ADF members who served with the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan between the end of the Second World War and the disbandment of the BCOF on the 28th April, 1952.

Anyone who believes they may be eligible for the Gold Card is encouraged to contact DVA. There is more information on the DVA website [HERE](#)

Eligibility for Health/Medical assistance from DVA

Depending on their individual situation, Veterans who have served in Australia's defence force may be eligible for pensions or benefits from DVA. Some British, Commonwealth and Allied Veterans who served in conflicts in which Australia was involved may also be eligible for pensions/or benefits from DVA.

Qualifying service is one of the criteria used to determine if you are eligible for a service pension. Qualifying service for a service pension is different from operational service for a disability pension. You may be eligible for a disability pension, but not be eligible for a service pension.

Click [HERE](#) for further information.

Engage!



Australian Government
Department of Defence

Engage

SUPPORTING
THOSE WHO
SERVE

The Department of Defence has launched a new website for current and former ADF members called **Engage 'Supporting those who serve'**. The Minister for Defence Personnel and Minister for Veterans' Affairs the Hon Dan Tehan MP launched the site on 11 August 2017.

Previously, members and former members, their families and those involved in their support had to navigate a broad range of websites in search of information, support and services provided by Government agencies, not-for-profit service providers and charities. The website aims to simplify the process of finding information and accessing free support and services for current and former ADF members, their families and those involved in their support.

Engage is funded under the 2016 Defence White Paper as part of Phase Three of the Support for Wounded, Injured and Ill Program. The website is hosted by Defence with the data maintained by participating service providers who are registered on the site.

Find it at <https://engage.forcenet.gov.au>

You're invited to celebrate Christmas Day at the Club with a delicious seafood buffet, sparkling wine on arrival, soft drinks, live entertainment & a special appearance by Santa Claus!

11am, Monday 25th December 2017
Blue Pacific Ballroom, Level 1
Book now at Kedron-Wavell Services Club
kedron-wavell.com.au

Pauly and Maury are having a drink at the bar and chatting. Pauly looks forlorn and Maury asks him what if there are any problems. Pauly: "I got fired from my construction job." Maury: "What happened?" "You know what a foreman is?" asked Pauly. "The one who stands around and watches the other men work?" "What's that got to do with it?" asked Maury "Well, he just got jealous of me," Pauly explained. "Everyone thought I was the foreman."

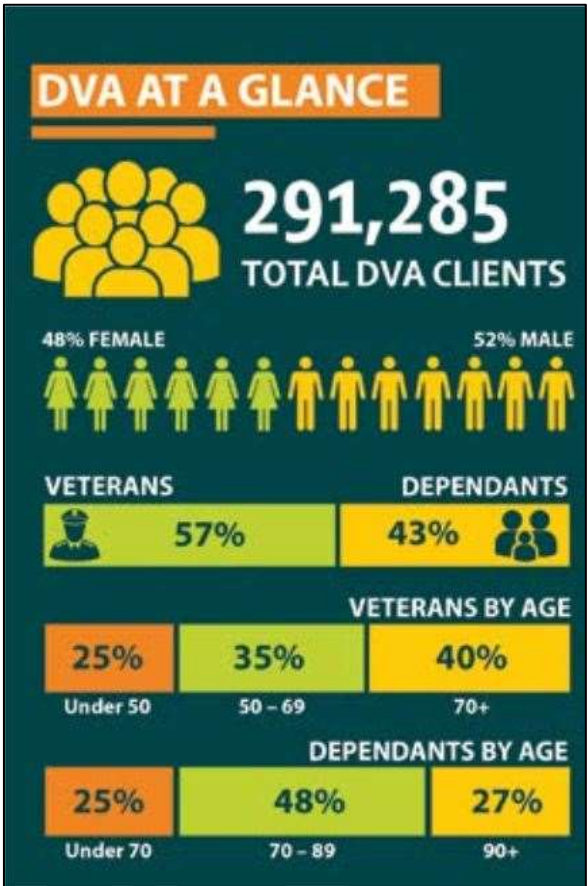
Who are Australia’s Veterans?

What does the average DVA client look like? Or the typical veteran, for that matter? If you’re thinking of a former serviceman aged in his 60s, 70s or older, you’re only seeing part of the picture. As it turns out, one quarter of DVA’s veteran clients are aged under 50, with a further 35% aged between 50 and 69.

Some 23,000 of the Department’s clients are under the age of 40. Sure, more than 201,000 are 65 or older and one in seven Australians over the age of 85 have a DVA Health Card, but almost half of DVA’s clients (48%) are women and 2500 of them are dependent children.

Speaking of dependants, 25% of DVA clients who are dependants are under 70, 48% are aged 70–89 and 27% are aged 90+. Another factor to consider is that the Department is undergoing a significant period of change. DVA’s overall client numbers are falling. Today, DVA has contact with one in three veterans who have served since Vietnam and one in five veterans who have served since 1999. This change gives DVA the opportunity to put veterans at the centre of everything it does.

Departmental transformation will empower veterans and their families by making it simpler to access the services they require. Veterans will enjoy improved health and wellbeing outcomes under a system that focuses on veteran wellbeing – moving away from a claims-based rehabilitation and healthcare system



Scanning docs.

A large program of document scanning within DVA is helping to speed up the claims process and make client records more accessible to the DVA staff who need to use them.



Since its inception, the Department has stored clients' information primarily on paper files. Until 2015, some **25 tonnes of paper** were being moved around the country each month, as part of usual DVA operations, with more than a million files taking up space in three warehouses and other storage facilities. In these modern times, this is no longer acceptable.



In November last year, the Department ceased creating a paper file for each new client that lodged a claim, and now creates a digital file only. This brought to an end a practice that began almost a century ago and ushers in the beginning of a new digital era for DVA. Following an initial trial, the conversion of client paper files into digital, known as digitisation, is well underway. This program has so far digitised more than 20,000 client records (more than 5 million pieces of paper).

On any given day, DVA receives around 2,500 pieces of mail from clients, providers and other parties. These are all now routinely digitised and delivered electronically to the Department each day. In the months to come, DVA will significantly boost the amount of digitisation that it undertakes with a recent injection of funds received under the Veteran Centric Reform program. The Department expects to be digitising well over 300,000 pages per week, with one of its goals being to digitise DVA's most used and most recent client files within the next six years.

**NEW YEAR'S EVE
ROCK 'N ROLL PARTY**

**ROCK THE NIGHT AWAY
+ COUNTDOWN TO 2018!**
SUNDAY 31ST DECEMBER 2017

9.00PM – 12.30AM
(DOORS OPEN 8.30PM)

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT BY THE FUN
AND FABULOUS CHI CHI
TICKETS ONLY \$10PP

**PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS AT
TICKETMASTER.COM.AU**

18+ EVENT

A touching story.....

As she sat by him at his sick bed, he whispered, eyes full of tears, "You know what? You have been with me all through the bad times. When I got fired, you were there to support me. When my business failed, you were there. When I got shot, you were by my side. When we lost the house, you stayed right here. When my health started failing, you were still by my side...

You know what Martha?" "What dear?" she gently asked, smiling as her heart began to fill with warmth. "I'm beginning to think you're bad luck."

Older Persons Advocacy Network.

Click [HERE](#) to obtain a Power Point presentation that was given at the recent National Aged Care Consultative Forum. As many ESOs, including Welfare Officers, are having difficulty with navigating the [MyAgedCare](#) system and find it hard to assist their members it may help to consult the OPAN Advocacy Service. ESOs, and in particular Welfare Officers, can advocate on behalf of Members directly with OPAN.

In addition to this resource, DVA has now established an Aged Care information page for Veterans and War Widows on their website. It can be found [HERE](#). The benefits and entitlements that differ from the general public include use of :

1. **The Gold Card** – many Veterans are being told they will never be able to use their gold card while in Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF). This is totally incorrect.
2. **Their own GP, Specialists and/or Pharmacy** – again, many are being told they must use the RACF's GPs and Specialists and Pharmacies. Again, this is totally incorrect.
3. **All items listed on the Rehabilitation Appliance Program (RAP)** – again, many are being told they cannot use the DVA Lift chairs, wheelie walkers, motorised scooter etc. They also have a higher allocation for incontinence products. The RACF usually have a limited supply per day but the Veteran has an unlimited supply from RAP.

Secret Japanese Aircraft of WW2 Hangar 7, Brisbane.

Hangar No.7 was constructed in 1942 at 116 Lamington Avenue, Eagle Farm (Brisbane) to house the work of the Allied Technical Air Intelligence Unit which involved the technical examination, reconstruction and simulated combat trials of captured Japanese aircraft. The

ATAIU was formed to collect technical information on aircraft with which to develop combat techniques to counter the Japanese, and their work was integral to the Allied victory in the South West Pacific Area.

The development of hangar 7 for the ATAIU, and of Eagle Farm as an aircraft assembly depot and aerodrome, is a result of a shift in Australian foreign policy in December 1941, when Prime Minister Curtin announced that Australia now looked to America free of the United Kingdom to shape a plan with the United States as its cornerstone. As a result, the RAAF was placed under the control of General Douglas MacArthur in April 1942. This contrasts with the previous role of Eagle Farm as part of an RAAF Elementary Flying Training School from 1940 which serviced the Empire Air Training Scheme to provide airmen for the defence of Britain.

The hangar is representative of the massive wartime infrastructure constructed at and around Eagle Farm, the existence of which resulted in the Eagle Farm aircraft assembly depot and aerodrome becoming the Brisbane Airport after the Second World War.

Video <https://youtu.be/5sYombW6Uh0>

An older couple were at home watching TV. Phil had the remote and was switching back and forth between a golf channel and a porn channel. Becoming more and more annoyed Sally finally said, For goodness sake, Phil...leave it on the porn channel... you know how to play golf.

Pensions.

There are different eligibility rules for APS members who are ex-defence force and who have done what is considered to be eligible "Active Service". Under the Centrelink rules the current "Age Pension" entitlement is from age 65 to 67 depending on what year you were born. If you're ex-military with an eligible period of active service in a war zone or eligible conflict or peace keeping force that was declared Warlike (such as Rwanda in 1995) then there may be a bit of a surprise for you! If you fit the category above (and provided you have retired from work) you may be entitled to the DVA "Service Pension" at age 60 which is almost identical in value to the Centrelink aged pension.



In contrast to the Centrelink Age Pension, the Service Age pension is payable from 60 years of age. This is in recognition of the intangible effects of war that may result in premature ageing of

the veteran and/or loss of earning power. Invalidation service pension may be granted at any age up to age pension age. See [HERE](#).

What is a service pension?

A Service Pension is an income support payment that provides a regular income for people with limited means. A Service Pension can be paid to eligible veterans on the grounds of age or invalidity and to eligible partners, former partners, widows and widowers. It is subject to income and assets tests.

The service pension is paid fortnightly. The rate of service pension is adjusted twice-yearly, in March and September, in line with movements in the cost of living and/or average wages. The Commonwealth Seniors Health Card is issued by either DVA or Centrelink, to eligible veterans, partners, war widows and widowers who do not receive an income support pension from DVA or a pension or benefit from Centrelink because their income and/or asset levels exceed the amount allowing payment. This card entitles the holder to:

- pharmaceuticals at the same cost as people receiving an income support pension,
- access to the Medicare Safety net threshold.

Additional concessions from state and local government authorities may be available. You may also be entitled to a quarterly payment of the Energy Supplement. You can see further information [HERE](#).

If you meet the war service eligibility as outlined above then as an added bonus you (only you as the member, not your partner) automatically qualify for the DVA "Gold Card" at age 70 (regardless of any health conditions). Also, DVA will cover you automatically as an ex defence member for any Cancer related treatments regardless of whether it was caused by your service or not.



The full DVA Service pension rates are as follows:

(These figures include pension supplements and also the energy supplement and are identical to the Centrelink aged pension figures):

- Single - \$888 per fortnight
- Couple (Combined) - \$1,339 per fortnight

The service pension is also asset and income tested in much the same way as the age pension so your PSSap, PSSdb or MSBS pensions are assessable against it in the same way.

How to work it out what you "might" get for the service pension as a single or as a couple:

Single: See [HERE](#).
Couple (combined): See [HERE](#).

You can see additional Centrelink "Aged pension" Calculators (but not related to the service pension) [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).



I hate all this terrorist business.
I used to love the days, when you could look at an unattended bag on a train or a bus,
and think to yourself, "I'm gonna have that!"

Fred Smith.

I was listening to the ABC's Christine Anu's program on Remembrance Day night and she included a session which featured various songs of a military flavour in keeping with the day. One of which was a song by Fred Smith.

I'm sure all of us Vietnam Vets (and most of the general population) would know of John Schumann's iconic "[I was Only Nineteen](#)".



I, for one, had never heard of Fred Smith and his music even though he has written, recorded and performed his songs in regards the recent conflicts in the overseas “sandpits”.

The ABC program played one of Fred’s composition entitled “Sappers Lullaby” – you can hear it [HERE](#).

You can read more about Fred [HERE](#).

Sin! Because if you don't, Jesus died for nothing!



Another great actor who probably wasted his life on drugs and alcohol

DVA provided transport for medical/dental appointments.

If you're eligible for DVA transport to/from a medical/dental appointment, you will know sometimes there can be a wait while you or the medical/dental provider rings DVA to arrange the transport. There is a better way.

You can get around the waiting for someone at DVA to answer the phone (Monday's are the worst), all you need to do is obtain a card from the taxi driver who takes you to the appointment, then when you're ready to go home, call the Taxi company's number on that card and book the trip. DVA has already approved for the return trip so the taxi company already has

your details. This will save you or your medical/dental provider having to call the DVA booked car operator and cut down on waiting times.

Queenstown NZ.

Anyone who has flown into Queenstown in NZ and was lucky enough to have a window seat, would still be raving about the wonderful scenery you experience from about 15 mins out until you land. Especially in the colder months. If you're coming from Oz, you commence your descent over the snow covered mountains of the Fiordland National Park, followed by a left turn that puts you over Lake Wakatipu. Sometimes it's socked in and it's an ILS approach, this is when you hope the Radtech G's have done their job correctly and the system has been configured correctly. When you break out of the cloud, you can see the Lake and the town itself on the left hand side, then it's touch-down and you're there.

What a wonderful experience.

But the pilots have a much better view, see [HERE](#).

Only in America.

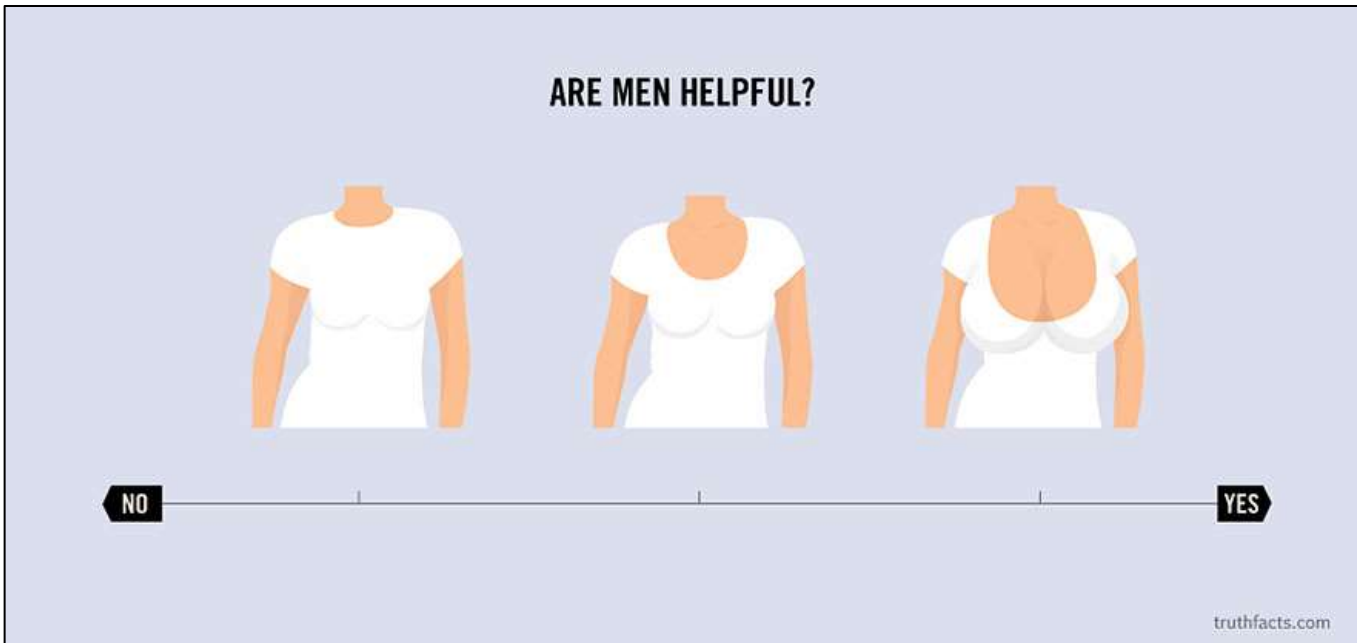
Kinder Surprise chocolate eggs are banned in the US of A because they are a "health hazard!". Semi-automatic rifles aren't – make sense???



Vietnam

Over the years there has been a lot written and a lot of video produced on Australia's commitment to the war in Vietnam, some of which are mediocre, some are good.

[THIS](#) is one of the good ones.



Ask Ted!

For many years now lonely ladies have been coming to yours truly for expert advise on how to attract and keep a handsome specimen of the opposite sex and being a true specialist in this complicated field, I have been able to put together many lovely and lonely ladies with handsome beaus. I do this free of charge of course, that's just the sort of bloke I am, but unfortunately, the word of my success in this field has spread far and wide and I find I am not able to devote as much time as I ought to these lovely ladies – after all, 5 or 6 hundred calls a day is a bit more than even I can handle, so, I have decided to put together a wonderful little video which the ladies can watch and which will give them the tools and expertise necessary to snatch an unsuspecting male.

Girls – you can watch the video [HERE](#) – no charge!!

Political Correctness.

I don't know about you, but I think these days political correctness has gone way over the top, today it controls every aspect of our lives. Where once we could have a bit of harmless fun at

someone's or something's expense, try it today and the blue rinse set will tutt tutt you and you'll be ostracised, Facebook, Twitter and the ABC will brand you as the worst of the worst, even though secretly they themselves also found what you said or did was a bit funny. You can't laugh out loud at anything anymore, you can't flirt anymore, these days it's called sexual harassment. It's called keep up appearances and it's all crap!!

Well, we don't care, I saw [THIS](#) on the net recently and I think it's funny, if you don't, then God help you.



Protecting your wealth from scams.



In 2016, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) Scamwatch website experienced a 47 per cent increase in reports of scams over the previous year, according to the [ACCC Targeting Scams Report](#). This alarming increase should prompt all of us to be well informed about how scams work, and to take steps to protect our savings and investments. These tips will help you do just that.

Beware of banking scams.

Bank and credit card scams are all too common, and many are caught out by the deceptive ways that criminals can obtain your account details. One of their most common methods is known as phishing and involves the scammer duping the unsuspecting victim into handing over personal account information. A typical example is receiving an email, text message, or phone call from someone claiming to be from your bank. They seek to lower your defences by saying there is a problem with your account and ask you to give them your account details or click on a link to remedy the situation. This information is then used to steal money from your account.

Computer hacking is another common method. The scammer gains access to your computer by exploiting security weaknesses. Malware or ransomware can then be installed on your machine, giving them access to your files or allowing them to spy on your computer activity.



Staying on guard.

To protect yourself against such attacks, always be wary of any direct phone call or email from someone claiming to be from your financial institution, or a government agency such as the tax office. You should make your own call to the institution to check on the bona fides of the contact. In relation to electronic security, ensure your privacy settings are up-to-date on your social media accounts, keep your computer security system up-to-date, choose passwords that are hard to work out, and avoid using the same password for multiple logins. It is also wise never to accept a message or friend request on social media from someone you do not know.

Credit card skimming.

This involves your credit card being read by an electronic device, which can be handheld or covertly installed on an ATM. The skimmer reads the magnetic strip on your card and electronically captures information, which can then be used to access your account. To avoid being skimmed, always keep your card in sight when paying at a shop or restaurant, never share your PIN, and be watchful for signs of tampering at an ATM. It's also wise to check your credit card statements regularly to identify any unauthorised transactions.

Investment scams.

Investment scams often come in the form of a phone call, an email, or through social media. While they can be very slick, seeming legitimate and substantial in their promotional material, the "investment" they are offering is either totally fictitious, or if it does exist, your money is not going towards that investment. Those who are drawn into these investment schemes end up having their money going straight into the scammer's bank account.

Know the warning signs.

Telltale signs include the lure of high, quick returns, or tax-free benefits. They may also claim to have no risk with the option to sell at any time, get a refund, or swap one investment for another. There may be promises of "inside information" or an early bird offer before the investment goes public, designed to grab your attention and add a sense of urgency. The scammer will often call you persistently, and can be highly persuasive.

If it sounds too good to be true.

It probably is, so do your research and ask questions to gain some verifiable information. Find out the name of the company, the address, who owns it, and what their Australian Financial Services Licence (AFSL) number is. If they try to avoid answering these questions, it is probably a scam.

If you have any inkling of suspicion, do not engage with the person any further. Hang up the phone, ignore emails, and block them on social media. You can also report any suspicious activity on the [ACCC Scamwatch website](#).

Take the trustworthy route.

It is always wise to obtain independent financial advice before investing in anything. This is one of the advantages of using a licensed financial adviser, who is subject to stringent regulations on how their professional standards are maintained, how they assess your needs, and how they present their research and recommendations on financial solutions to fit your goals and circumstances.

Blessed are those who are cracked, for they are the ones who let in the light!



Ok, Ok!! – I'm going back to my room!!