



Our Shared Responsibility:

Legacy WA's Response to the
Royal Commission into
Defence and Veteran Suicide

DECEMBER 2024



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Background

The findings mark a critical moment for systemic reform.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide was established on 8 July 2021 by the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) to investigate the underlying systemic factors contributing to high rates of suicide among current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel. Over three years, the Commission engaged deeply with a broad range of stakeholders, including Legacy, the only national organisation dedicated solely to supporting the families of veterans. Legacy WA's involvement offered critical insights drawn from its extensive history of service, providing a unique perspective on the needs and challenges faced by the families of veterans.

The Royal Commission's Final Report was released on Monday 9 September 2024 and has shone a stark light on the systemic failings that have impacted the lives of Australian Defence Force members, veterans, and their families. As a leading advocate for the families of veterans, Legacy WA is steadfast in our commitment to transforming these findings into action.

The findings mark a critical moment for systemic reform. Legacy WA acknowledges the courage of veterans, families, and others who contributed their lived experiences to the inquiry. We stand ready to honour their sacrifices by operationalising the recommendations to create meaningful, long-lasting change.

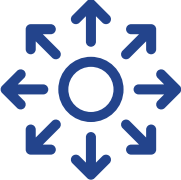
On Monday 2 December 2024, the Federal Government released their positive response. Legacy WA are currently reviewing the 160 pages to fully understand the implications for veteran families.


Legacy WA is the only charity in Western Australia exclusively supporting families of veterans. Our CEO, Board, and Operational Team have developed this response noting that significantly more work is required over the coming weeks and months to achieve our vision on creating change. This response outlines that vision for addressing the Royal Commission's recommendations, operationalising reforms, and ensuring that the voices of veterans' families are central to the conversation.


Legacy WA's Mission in Supporting Families of Veterans

We care for veterans' families affected by their Defence service and facilitate connections that foster a strong and connected veteran community.

Our response to the Royal Commission is grounded in Legacy WA's Strategic Plan 2024-2027, which focuses on:

- 

1 Expanding our scope and collaboration to deliver better outcomes.
- 

2 Engaging deeply with the WA community to enhance veteran family well-being.
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3 Securing the financial and operational sustainability of Legacy WA.

Legacy WA's Role in Implementation

Legacy WA requires dedicated full-time equivalent (FTE) staff across a range of specialities to effectively implement and manage the initiatives outlined in this response. This includes staffing for program speciality, coordination, advocacy, research, data analysis, and direct family support services. Adequate FTE resourcing is critical to ensure sustained engagement with stakeholders, efficient execution of programs, and continuous improvement of services for veteran families. Legacy WA is committed to working with The Commonwealth and Western Australia Governments to deliver on implementing the Royal Commission's recommendations by:

Designing and delivering new innovative services and programs that address key recommendations related to veteran families.

Leveraging our extensive network to engage families in co-designing solutions.

Providing peer support and case management services to complement government initiatives.

Advocating for family-centred, trauma-informed practices across all levels of service delivery.

Contributing data, insights, and expertise to inform policy and program development.

Legacy WA's Current Service Delivery Model

Legacy's service delivery model delivers measurable transformative outcomes for families of veterans, ensuring improved mental health, financial stability, and community connections. By maintaining a focus on practical person-centred support, these programs reduce reliance on welfare systems while fostering resilience and independence.



Intake, Assessment, and Case Management Program:

Our case managers conduct comprehensive intake and assessment processes to tailor support to each family's unique circumstances. This holistic approach identifies individual needs and appropriate referral pathways to specialised providers. We have forged strong partnerships and collaborative networks, ensuring that all veteran families have safe, timely access to the essential services they require.



Financial Support and Wellbeing:

Legacy WA offers a suite of services to promote financial wellness. Our qualified pension and wellness advocates assist families in navigating pensions, payments, and entitlements. Our community services team provide navigation and referrals to financial counselling, emergency relief, homelessness solutions, and education support grants. By strengthening financial stability, we empower families to achieve long-term independence.



Respite and Camp Programs:

Since 1957, Legacy WA has operated a campsite in Busselton, offering respite and camp experiences to veterans' families. Recognising the detrimental effects of social isolation, we organise tailored camps for women, youth, families, and individuals living with disabilities. These no-cost programs, supported by our volunteers, encourage independence, resilience, and the formation of meaningful peer connections.

Legacy WA's Current Service Delivery Model

Through these integrated services, Legacy WA ensures that veterans' families overcome immediate obstacles, and gain long-term stability and wellbeing. Continued investment in these programs aligns with government priorities for resilient, empowered communities and represents a cost-effective, sustainable approach to supporting those who have served our nation.



Community Engagement and Social Connections

For nearly 100 years, Legacy WA has provided tangible and practical support to thousands of veteran families at all stages of the family life cycle. We facilitate emotional and social wellbeing through friendships, informative workshops, and group activities. Regular programming to enable younger families to connect with peers helps to build social support networks and resilience so that they can thrive in their community. Our Laurel Program supports over 2700 war widows and partners of veterans across the State. Many of these groups, active for over 40 years, meet monthly for workshops, social outings, and mutual support. As veterans and their families age, these activities help mitigate social isolation and maintain community engagement and independent living.



Legatee Peer Support and Referral Program:

Legacy WA currently have over 140 volunteers who provide peer support and referral pathways to our families. Participants experience enhanced emotional resilience through full engagement in community activities. Feedback from our families highlights the vital support provided during challenging times. By delivering these important services, Legacy WA ensures that veterans' families not only overcome immediate challenges but also build lasting stability. Investment in these programs aligns with government priorities for stronger, more resilient communities while delivering cost-effective, sustainable outcomes.

*Legacy WA's service
delivery model
delivers measurable,
transformative outcomes
for families of veterans*

Legacy WA - Enhancement and New Service Creation

The following pages provide a high-level overview of new service projects and programs that Legacy WA will advocate for funding to implement. These initiatives aim to strengthen and tailor our support in direct response to the Royal Commission's findings. Legacy WA is preparing fully costed operational briefs for government, philanthropic organisations, donors, and other key stakeholders, inviting them to partner with us and ensure that no veteran family is left behind.

*Legacy WA is preparing fully costed operational briefs for government, philanthropic organisations, donors, and other key stakeholders, inviting them to partner with us and ensure that **no veteran family is left behind.***



Royal Commission Recommendations 69 & 81

69

81

Recommendation

Improve Suicide-Prevention Training (Recommendation 69)

and

The Department of Veterans' Affairs to fund a program to support members' wellbeing during transition to civilian life. (Recommendation 81)

Description

Support the enhancement of Legacy WA to deliver suicide prevention and intervention training across WA, tailored to the needs of veteran families.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Existing best-practice models for suicide prevention, education, and intervention are available through National and International Organisations. Legacy WA is collaborating with these leading organisations to empower veteran families with lived experience to access and become qualified to deliver these programs. Leveraging the unique insights of lived veteran experience will enhance the delivery and impact of these training programs, ensuring they are tailored to the needs of veteran communities and their families.

Legacy House, our Busselton Camp and our ESO partner sites would support a Legacy WA led delivery of a program to support members' wellbeing during their transition to civilian life. By partnering with other ex-service organisations and experts in cultural adjustment and trauma-informed care, Legacy WA can host dedicated transition programs designed to support veterans and their families through this critical phase.

Legacy WA led transition programs for families can offer practical support, such as career guidance, skills training, mental wellness guidance and encourage social connections. Connection to community and having a sense of purpose has been proven to make a positive difference during the transition.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has extensively documented the importance of family. Family is critical in supporting serving and ex-serving members to be mentally healthy and resilient. Defence accepts that military capability is derived from the member and the family unit that supports that member and enables their service.

Upgrading the Busselton Camp and expanding services for the families of veterans and serving members align with the Government's commitment to supporting these families. Legacy WA Camps, previously held for both children and adults, have demonstrated their effectiveness in connecting individuals, providing support and fostering a strong sense of community.

Continued next page...

Royal Commission Recommendations 69 & 81

69

81

Recommendation

Improve Suicide-Prevention Training (Recommendation 69)

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Description

Support the enhancement of Legacy WA to deliver suicide prevention and intervention training across WA, tailored to the needs of veteran families.

Outcome

- › Increased capacity for Legacy WA to deliver safe, evidence-based suicide intervention training. More trained veteran and ex-service trainers across WA, strengthening community-based support. Improved help-offering and help-seeking behaviours among veteran families, reducing stigma and increasing early intervention opportunities.
- › Delivery of veteran focused suicide prevention training sessions such as Safe Talk, ASIST and Mental Health First aid across Australia with newly trained veterans and their families connected to Legacy WA.
- › Increased access and collaboration of high quality facilities and industry partners to deliver training, wellness and recreational activities for veteran families.



Operational Funding Required

Yes – Develop Capacity Building Project to develop 'Train the Trainer' sessions for Mental Health First Aid Australia and Livingworks Australia and further costs for materials and ongoing professional skill development. Funding required for Busselton Camp Revitalisation.

Royal Commission Recommendations 69 & 81

69

81

Recommendation

Improve Suicide-Prevention
Training
(Recommendation 69)

and

The Department of Veterans'
Affairs to fund a program to
support members' wellbeing
during transition to civilian life.
(Recommendation 81)

Description

*Increasing suicide prevention,
awareness, community connection,
and intervention skills training through
a dedicated peer support program
specifically tailored to veteran families.*

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Building on existing family and peer support models, Legacy WA will pilot and evaluate a Legacy WA Family Peer Navigation Support Program that adapts proven best-practice frameworks to the unique cultural, social, and emotional contexts of veteran communities. This approach involves developing early intervention strategies, enhancing mental health literacy, and equipping program participants with practical suicide intervention skills. The pilot will be rigorously assessed to ensure its effectiveness, scalability, and ongoing improvement, thereby fostering a resilient and supportive environment for veteran families.

Outcome

- › Strengthened help-offering and help-seeking behaviours within veteran families, leading to earlier identification of mental health challenges, reduced stigma, and improved overall community wellbeing. Ongoing evaluation will inform continuous refinement and best-practice integration.



Operational Funding Required

Yes the program would require FTE staffing across a range of expertise.



Veteran Family Peer Navigation Program

Best practice suicide prevention, intervention and skills and social connectivity for veteran families.

The Veteran Family Peer Navigation Program is a pioneering initiative designed to adapt best-practice suicide prevention, intervention, and social connectivity frameworks specifically for veteran families. It builds on existing family and peer support models to develop early intervention strategies, enhance mental health literacy, and facilitate social engagement activities. Central to the program's success is the involvement of trained family peers and community leaders who act as navigators, guiding participants through resources, support networks, and mentorship opportunities. By creating culturally informed and welcoming environments—this program reduces

isolation, encourages help-seeking behaviours, and fosters a sense of belonging. The pilot will be rigorously evaluated for effectiveness, scalability, and ongoing refinement, ultimately aiming to produce a proven, replicable model that can be implemented nationally. With a funding requirement of \$1.8 million over four years, the initiative covers the costs of recruiting and training peer navigators, developing educational materials and toolkits, hosting social connectivity events, enhancing IT platforms, and conducting thorough monitoring and evaluation. The expected outcomes include improved mental health literacy, stronger social cohesion, increased

early intervention capacity, and lasting improvements in wellbeing and resilience among veteran families.

Funding Required:

\$1.8M

(over 4 years)



Royal Commission Recommendation 70

70

Recommendation

Revise Protocols for Responding to Suicidal Crisis (Recommendation 70)

Description

Advocate for updated protocols ensuring consistent, trauma-informed responses to suicidal crises for veteran families.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Deliver training in Mental Health First Aid, Youth MHFA, ASIST, and SafeTALK to Legacy WA staff, volunteers, and family representatives. Collaborate with mental health professionals to integrate trauma-informed principles into crisis response protocols. Legacy WA will embed this program across all activities at our Busselton Camp and other locations.

Outcome

- › Enhanced crisis response capability within Legacy WA and its partner networks. More timely and effective intervention for individuals in suicidal crises, improving safety and post-crisis outcomes for veterans and families.



Operational Funding Required

Yes - Training costs, collaboration with professionals, ongoing upskilling – this is costed in our train the trainer project.



Suicide Prevention Capacity Building Project

Train the Trainer Project for existing evidence-based trauma informed suicide prevention, intervention and mental health literacy training and delivery of training for veteran families and community.

Existing best-practice models for suicide prevention, education, and intervention are available through National and International Organisations. Legacy WA seeks to collaborate with these leading organisations to empower veteran families with lived experience to access and become qualified to deliver these programs. Leveraging the unique insights of lived veteran experience will enhance the delivery and impact of these training programs, ensuring they are tailored to the needs of veteran communities and their families.

Funding Required:

\$1.2M
(over 4 years)



72

88

Royal Commission Recommendation 72 & 88

Recommendation

Expand and strengthen healthcare services for veterans (Recommendation 72)

and

Develop a national funding agreement on veterans' wellbeing (Recommendation 88)

Description

Improve the coverage of specialised veterans care and support the integration of veterans' health services at a local and national level and supporting veterans who are incarcerated, both during and after their incarceration.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

A revitalised Busselton Camp inclusive of a new Wellness Studio could facilitate allied health professionals to conduct workshops and education sessions for veterans and their families. Allied health professionals such as art therapists, chiropractors, dietitians, exercise physiologists, music therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, psychologists, social workers, speech pathologists, osteopaths and rehabilitation counsellors would be invited to connect with veterans and provide support tailored to their needs. This also provides an opportunity to inform veterans about services available, as recommended. In conjunction with the WA Department of Justice and other ESO partners, Legacy WA are developing a program which will work directly with the families of incarcerated veterans. These families are often disadvantaged and require tailored case management and support. Legacy WA will offer services that span mental health, education, and housing referrals across nine prisons in Western Australia.

Outcome

- › Expanded and strengthened healthcare services for veterans and enable families of incarcerated veterans to build resilience and overcome adversity.



Operational Funding Required

Yes – funding noted in revitalisation project and a range of other specialised support programs.



Incarcerated Veteran Family Program

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide highlights the critical need for holistic, family-centred support. While families are central to veteran wellbeing, families with incarcerated veterans are often overlooked—facing isolation, financial hardship, and social stigma. The Department of Justice in Western Australia have developed a program working with incarcerated veterans. The program has identified the service gaps in working with impacted families. By extending our established service model to include these families, Legacy WA responds directly to the Commission's recommendations. With a century of experience and robust Ill-Health Veteran programs already in place, we

can readily adapt our frameworks to this new cohort. Over time, we will pilot and refine tailored supports, providing case management and offering services that span mental health, education, and housing referrals across nine prisons in Western Australia. By combining professional social work expertise with trauma-informed, culturally sensitive peer support models, we aim to build resilience, reduce stigma, and encourage help-seeking behaviours. Using data-driven insights, we will continuously evaluate our outcomes, share findings with stakeholders, and refine our approach for potential national replication.

Funding Required:

\$1.4M-2.4M*

(over 4 years)

**Approximate figures - dependent upon families and caseload identified via Department of Justice*



Royal Commission Recommendation 76

76

Recommendation

Develop a Postvention Framework (Recommendation 76)

Description

In collaboration with WA ESO's and DVA, establish a structured, trauma-informed postvention framework to support families and communities after a suicide.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Collaborate with lived experience groups, WA specific postvention organisations, and mental health experts to create standardised local postvention protocols for veterans and their families. Integrate cultural and situational considerations for veteran families ensuring sensitive and targeted support services. The Western Australian community sector, supported by State and Federal Governments, has funded and developed postvention protocols that effectively reach at-risk groups in both regional and metropolitan areas of Western Australia. These programs are renowned nationally and internationally as best practice in postvention service delivery. Established frameworks in WA enable Ex-Service Organisations to collaborate, pilot, and evaluate a veteran postvention program that could be scaled and replicated on a national level.

Outcome

- › Improved support for bereaved families, reducing isolation and fostering healing. Increased interagency referrals from ESO's and existing WA postvention services enabling more consistent, evidence-based postvention practices across Legacy WA's network, enhancing community resilience and understanding.



Operational Funding Required

Yes - Development of resources, staff training, and ongoing liaison across ESO sector and existing WA Postvention Responses through employed consultant experts to deliver this project.

Royal Commission Recommendation 77

77

Recommendation

Develop a Suite of Postvention Resources in Collaboration with Stakeholders (Recommendation 77)

Description

Work with stakeholders to create resources for suicide-bereaved families and communities, ensuring accessibility and relevance.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Partner with WA specific and national postvention bodies, ESOs, and lived experience individuals to co-design resource toolkits, guides, and referral pathways. Provide training modules for staff and volunteers focused on supporting bereaved families.

Outcome

- › Increased availability of culturally and contextually appropriate resources. Better-informed families, reduced stigma, and enhanced community capacity to navigate grief and trauma following suicide.



Operational Funding Required

Yes - Development of resources, staff training, and ongoing liaison across ESO sector and existing WA Postvention Responses through employed consultant experts to deliver.



Postvention Framework Development Project

Legacy WA will collaborate with lived experience groups, WA specific postvention organisations, and mental health experts to create standardised local postvention protocols for veterans and their families across Western Australia. Integrate cultural and situational considerations for veteran families ensuring sensitive and targeted support services. The Western Australian community sector, supported by State and Federal Governments, has funded and developed postvention protocols that effectively reach at-risk groups in both

regional and metropolitan areas of Western Australia. These programs are renowned Nationally and Internationally as best practice in postvention service delivery. Established frameworks in WA enable Ex-Service Organisations (ESOs) to collaborate, pilot, and evaluate a veteran postvention framework that could be scaled and replicated on a national level. Legacy WA will partner with WA specific and national postvention bodies, ESOs, and lived experience individuals to co-design resource toolkits, guides, and referral pathways.

Funding Required:

\$760K
(over 4 years)



Royal Commission Recommendation 78

78

Recommendation

Prevent, minimise and treat moral injury
(Recommendation 78)

Description

Collaborate with defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to develop an agreed approach to minimising the negative impacts of moral injury, including the risk of suicide and suicidality for serving and ex-serving members. The approach should evolve in line with emerging research and best practice, and at a minimum include:

- (a) implementing education, training and support programs with the explicit objectives of preventing, minimising and treating moral injury*
- (b) considering using the Moral Injury Outcome Scale or other tools, as the evidence base evolves, to support the early identification and treatment of moral injury*
- (c) conducting or commissioning further research to better understand moral injury in the Australian military population.*

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Building on our existing family and peer support models, Legacy WA will pilot and evaluate a program that adapts proven best-practice frameworks to the unique cultural, social, and emotional contexts of veteran communities. This approach involves developing early intervention strategies, enhancing mental health literacy, and equipping program participants with practical suicide intervention skills. This will be delivered across the South West Region and Perth Metropolitan areas.

Outcome

- › The pilot will be rigorously assessed to ensure its effectiveness, scalability, and ongoing improvement, thereby fostering a resilient and supportive environment for veteran families.



Operational Funding Required

Yes - The program would require FTE staffing across a range of expertise.

Royal Commission Recommendation 86

86

Recommendation

Ensure Ongoing Funding for Veterans' and Families' Hubs (Recommendation 86)

Description

Advocate for stable, recurrent funding models that guarantee the financial sustainability of Veterans' and Families' Hubs.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Collaborate with government agencies and hub lead organisations to develop bespoke funding arrangements. Advocate for integrated service delivery models and standardised data collection to identify service gaps and improve outcomes across Veterans' and Families' Hub consortium partners.

Outcome

- › Secure long-term operational stability of hubs, ensuring consistent access to support services for veteran families. Data-driven improvements in service delivery, meeting evolving community needs.



Operational Funding Required

No - The provision of dedicated FTE across projects and programs will allow Legacy WA to build capacity of the ESO sector by participating in joint consortium

Royal Commission Recommendation 87

87

Recommendation

Establish a new agency to focus on veteran wellbeing
(Recommendation: 87)

Description

Legacy WA will support and work with the new agency focused on veteran wellbeing to ensure seamless information sharing and referrals.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Legacy WA will be a key partner in advancing this initiative, bringing its proven expertise in supporting veterans and their families. Legacy WA will deliver targeted programs designed to enhance wellbeing, foster resilience, and strengthen community connections. Building on its successful legacy of hosting camps and providing tailored support, Legacy WA will offer practical assistance such as career guidance, skills development, and emotional support. By collaborating with the new agency, Legacy WA will ensure veterans and their families have the resources and networks needed to navigate the transition to civilian life, contributing to a holistic and sustainable approach to veteran wellbeing.

Outcome

- › Increased collaboration and service delivery referral pathways across ESOs and service providers.



Operational Funding Required

No

Royal Commission Recommendation 103

103

Recommendation

Improve the Support, Communication, and Services Provided to Defence Families (Recommendation 103)

Description

Strengthen family support programs and communication, removing barriers to accessing services, improve transition supports, provision of respite opportunities.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Legacy WA are advocating with Government and Philanthropic entities to ensure funding for a range of innovative services and programs.

To better support Defence families and enhance their wellbeing, we need to improve access to services, provide evidence-based resources during times of stress, offer family therapy and enhance communications. This can be centred at the proposed new Wellness Studio at the Legacy Busselton Camp. Families are integral to the health and wellbeing of serving and ex-serving ADF members. By providing a modern contemporary and safe place for families to rest, relax, and recuperate, can play an important part in this recommendation. This includes the revitalisation of the Legacy Busselton Camp that will provide respite, wellness activities and peer programs for veteran families and families transition to civilian life.

The Veteran Family Peer Navigation Support Program Pilot will provide peer outreach across veteran communities. The staff and volunteers will deliver best practice suicide prevention, intervention and mental health literacy training and social connectivity activities.

Develop Train the Trainer Project for existing evidence-based trauma informed suicide prevention, intervention and mental health literacy training to support opportunities for veteran families transiting to civilian life.

Outcome

- › More responsive, accessible, and family-centred services. Better-informed families and increased employment opportunities. Transparent performance reporting leading to refined and impactful programs for veteran families.



Operational Funding Required

Yes - Legacy WA are actively seeking Government and philanthropic support to further implement a range of existing services and to develop innovative new evidence-based programs.



Revitalisation of the Busselton Camp Site

Legacy WA intends to upgrade and modernise the Busselton Camp to better serve veteran families, provide meaningful respite, support smooth transitions into civilian life, and align with Royal Commission recommendations. Currently offering dormitory-style accommodation for up to 55 guests, the facility faces challenges including outdated infrastructure, limited accessibility, asbestos in older structures, utilities constraints, and restrictive covenants—resulting in low utilisation and financial losses. By undertaking a \$15M, three-year capital investment plan Legacy WA aims to introduce eco-cabin style accommodations, improve accessibility,

update amenities, and reform lease and covenant conditions. These changes could boost usage from around 3% to over 80%, welcome broader user groups, and align with AUKUS-related opportunities due to the Camp's proximity to HMAS Stirling. Enhanced facilities and an expanded funding base will ensure greater financial viability, improved accessibility and comfort, and reinforce the Camp's role as a cornerstone of veteran family support, community connection, and international defence engagement.

Funding Required:

\$15M
(over 3 years)



Royal Commission Recommendation 104

104

Recommendation

Improve the Profile, Resourcing, and Impact of the Defence Family Advocate (Recommendation 104)

Description

Enhance the role, visibility, and influence of the Defence Family Advocate to ensure comprehensive representation of serving and ex-serving members and their families. Advocate for appropriate resourcing and staffing of the Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner's office to ensure veteran families are prominently represented in policy design, decision-making, and advocacy.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Legacy WA will seek funding to embed dedicated navigation and program advocates within our advocacy team who will serve as a direct link to the Veteran Family Advocate. This will facilitate timely communication, stronger advocacy, and coordinated service delivery, ensuring that the voices and needs of veteran families guide strategy, policy, and program development.

Outcome

- › A more visible, well-resourced, and impactful Defence Family Advocate function that effectively amplifies family voices, drives policy enhancements, and strengthens collaboration between Legacy WA, veteran families, and advocacy entities.



Operational Funding Required

Yes – funding required for dedicated FTE to provide linkage to the Veteran Family Advocate and the Commissioner .



The Defence Family Advocate and Veteran Family Commissioner

Legacy WA will seek funding to embed a dedicated navigation and program advocate within our advocacy team. The advocate will serve as a direct link to the Veteran Family Advocate. This will facilitate timely communication,

stronger advocacy, and coordinated service delivery, ensuring that the voices and needs of veteran families guide strategy, policy, and program development.

Funding Required:

\$600K

(over 4 years)



Royal Commission Recommendation 121

121

Recommendation

Enable Research into the Health and Wellbeing of Defence Families (Recommendation 121)

Description

Legacy WA recognises the need for expanded research to better understand the health and wellbeing of Defence families represented in policy design, decision-making, and advocacy.

Legacy WA Operational Service Development

Advocate for increased funding through the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) for studies on family mental health, resilience, and risk factors.

Collaborate with the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and lived experience individuals to design relevant research initiatives that address gaps in evidence and reflect diverse family experiences.

Explore opportunities for veteran families to be included in key datasets and longitudinal studies, ensuring robust, data-driven insights that guide policy and program development.

Outcome

- › A richer, evidence-based understanding of Defence and Veteran family health and wellbeing. This leads to targeted, effective interventions, informed policy-making, and improved outcomes for defence and veteran families over the long term.



Operational Funding Required

No – ensure that all program funding has budget lines to include robust research, evaluation and impact reporting

Conclusion

In unity, we will build a resilient and compassionate network of care—one that truly recognises, values, and supports veteran families

The findings of the Royal Commission have illuminated many of the systemic issues Legacy WA has long identified—the urgent need for sustainable mental health support, better transition services, and comprehensive, family-centred and trauma informed care. Yet, recognition alone is not enough. We must seize this pivotal moment to move beyond acknowledgment and into decisive action.

We call on the Australian Governments to recognise Legacy WA as the representative voice of veterans' families across Western Australia and to integrate our insights into implementing the Royal Commission's recommendations. Backed by decades of direct experience, extensive data, and the lived wisdom of over a century, Legacy WA offers informed, grounded solutions that the Government cannot afford to overlook.

Our approach is collaborative, focused on workable strategies to work alongside Government Departments

and Agencies. We bring forward the collective voice, knowledge, and the lived experience of thousands of Western Australian veteran family members whose insights illustrate what effective support should look like and how best to deliver it.

Families are primary contributors to the wellbeing of veteran communities and must be central to decision-making processes. From the delivery of suicide prevention training, the development of peer support programs and postvention resources, to the creation of new wellbeing agencies, these families must be embedded at every level. Legacy WA is prepared to contribute its expertise to ensure these efforts are truly fit-for-purpose and family-focused.

By placing families at the heart of veteran wellbeing initiatives, we can transform the support landscape for veterans and their loved ones. We urge the Government to act now—to move quickly, decisively, and sustainably. Together, we can create a future where

the sacrifices of veteran families are honoured with the comprehensive care, respect, and support they deserve.

The findings of the Royal Commission mark a pivotal moment for systemic reform. Legacy WA stands ready to lead and collaborate in transforming these recommendations into actionable solutions. By prioritising the health and wellbeing of veteran families, we can honour their sacrifices and ensure they receive the care and support they deserve. Legacy WA calls on the Commonwealth Government, the Western Australian Government, and all key stakeholders to act swiftly and decisively, ensuring these recommendations deliver meaningful change for veteran families.

In unity, we will build a resilient and compassionate network of care—one that truly recognises, values, and supports veteran families.



“By placing families at the heart of veteran wellbeing initiatives, we can transform the support landscape for veterans and their loved ones. We urge the Government to act now—to move quickly, decisively, and sustainably. Together, we can create a future where the sacrifices of veteran families are honoured with the comprehensive care, respect, and support they deserve.”

Allison Stephens

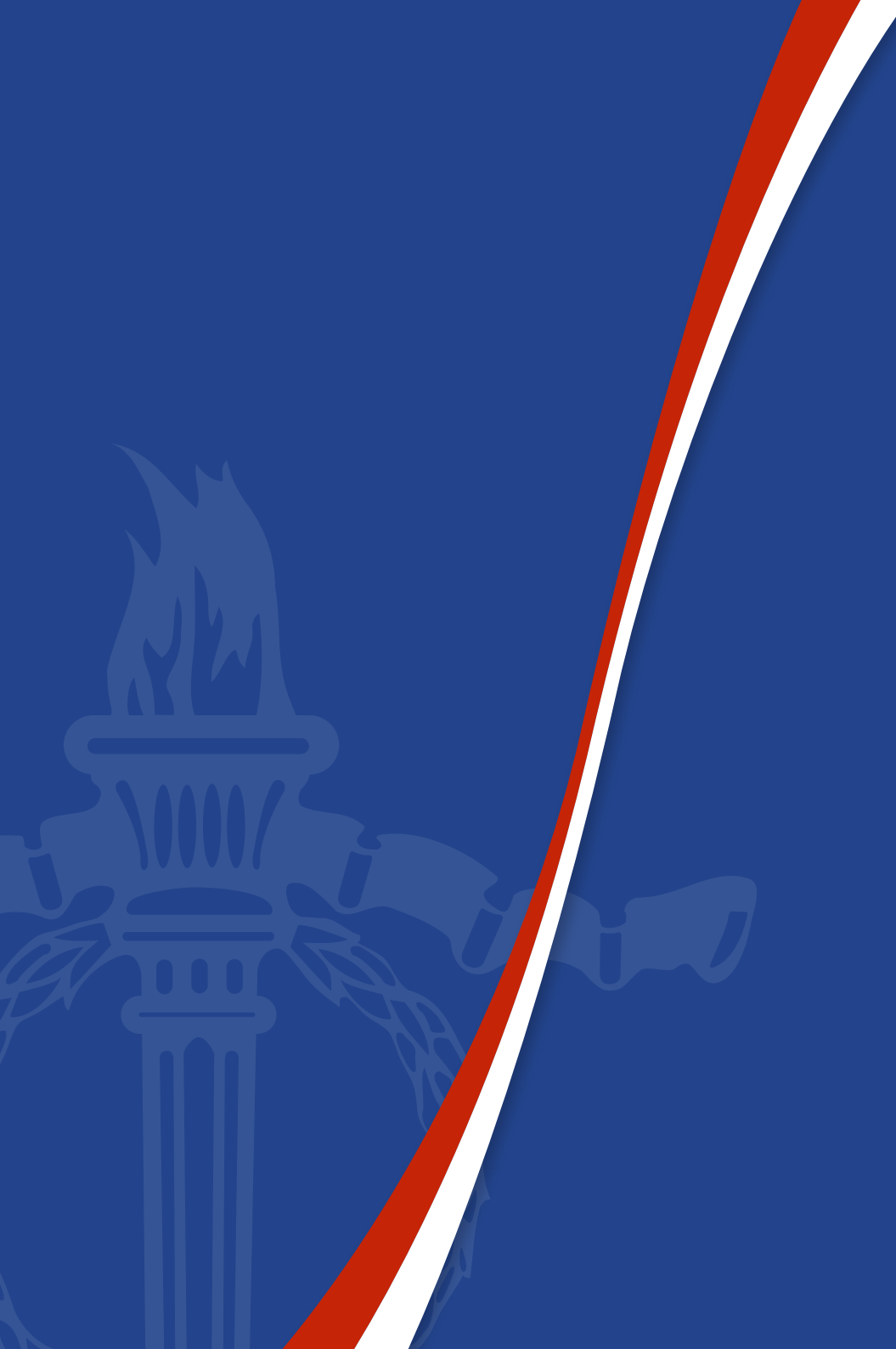
CEO, LEGACY WA

“Legacy WA acknowledges the findings of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide with profound respect and a resolute commitment to meaningful action. Our unwavering mission is to support the families of veterans, whose vital role in the well-being of those who have served cannot be overstated. Collaborating with our partners and the broader community, we are dedicated to confronting these critical challenges and shaping a future where every veteran and their family are empowered to thrive with dignity, care, and steadfast support.”

Steve Stoll

PRESIDENT, LEGACY WA





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DECEMBER 2024