



Strategic Outlook



Foreword

Almost 48,000 people who currently or have previously served in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) call South Australia home. Not included in this number, but an equally important part of our veteran community, are spouses, partners, children and families who support our veterans each and every day.

The veteran community is a vital part of the fabric of our state, and the South Australian Government is committed to providing the support required to deliver meaningful outcomes and achieve a strong and empowered community now and into the future.

It is my immense privilege to serve as Minister for Veterans' Affairs. The South Australian veteran and Defence community is diverse, widespread and continually evolving. Together with Veterans SA, the South Australian Government is invested in learning from the veteran community about the issues of most importance to them.

Veterans SA is steadfast in its duty to ensure that South Australian veterans are supported and informed and that they continue to have a voice, both locally and nationally. Importantly, the agency is also dedicated to ensuring that occasions of military and historical significance are commemorated and preserved, fostering a connection between the past, present and future to honour the sacrifice of all who served.

The Veterans SA Strategic Outlook and 2024-25 Action Plan outlines key areas of focus for the agency, underpinned by four strategic pillars:

Connect & Collaborate

Empower & Equip

Educate & Raise Awareness

Honour Service

The initiatives and activities outlined in each pillar aim to collaborate with and empower the veteran community, educate the wider community about the unique nature of military service and honour the sacrifices made by so many South Australian service people and their families.

The 2024-25 Action Plan has been shaped through consultation and collaboration with the community and is representative of the needs of veterans and their families across the state.

We welcome future input from current and former serving members, families and support organisations to ensure that we respond to and action priorities in line with the evolving needs of the community.

Over the coming year, we will work to deliver lasting impacts for the veteran community, and I look forward to connecting with the community to bring this new Action Plan to fruition.

Joe Szakacs MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Veterans SA acknowledges that we work and operate on the traditional Country of the Kaurua people of the Adelaide Plains, and we pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, spiritual beliefs and relationships with the land and waters, and we acknowledge that they are of continuing importance to the Kaurua people living today. We extend this respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We respectfully honour the significant contributions and sacrifices made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through service, recognising their invaluable role in Australia's defence.



About Us

In 2008, the South Australian Government was the first state jurisdiction to recognise the importance of a state-based Veterans' Affairs portfolio and as a result Veterans SA was established.

We envisage a strong, vibrant, well-supported and represented veteran community, inclusive of all generations that is understood and acknowledged by all South Australians.

As the lead advocate across the Government of South Australia on matters relating to veterans and their families, Veterans SA works with ex-service organisations and civic groups that provide support to members of the community when and where it is needed most.

Veterans SA also plays a role in sharing information about services, programs and opportunities across South Australia that are available to families and those who have served in the Australian Defence Force.

Veterans SA works with the veteran community to ensure commemoration activities are supported and that occasions of military and historical significance are remembered and preserved for all South Australians.

Veterans SA supports the Veterans' Advisory Council, which provides independent advice to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, on matters of concern to the veteran community in South Australia.

A veteran is a person who is serving or has served in the Australian Defence Force as a Regular/permanent or Reserve/part-time member.

The **veteran community** is inclusive of veterans and their families with a direct link to a Service or a veteran. This includes spouses, widows, widowers, partners, former partners, carers, children, parents, siblings and relatives of serving or ex-serving members, and should include anyone with an evident link to, or interest in, matters associated with veterans' welfare or wellbeing.



Veterans SA Vision Statement



Connect & Collaborate

We will facilitate connection and collaboration with and among the South Australian veteran and Defence community and the wider South Australian community to build a strong and effective ecosystem.

Empower & Equip

We will empower and build capacity within the South Australian veteran and Defence community through evidence and research-informed education, programs and initiatives.

Educate & Raise Awareness

We will educate the South Australian community about the value and positive impact that veterans and veteran families bring to the South Australian community.

Honour Service

We will honour the service and sacrifice of service people and the experiences of the families that support them.

Giving the community a voice

The Veterans SA annual Action Plan is designed to reflect and respond to the needs of the veteran and Defence community in South Australia.

To ensure that we are seeking and receiving feedback from a cross-section of the community, the agency undertakes comprehensive engagement and consultation. The information collected through these activities is critical to shaping the agency's priorities each year.

The consultation activities that informed the 2024-25 Action Plan were conducted between September 2023 and April 2024 involving participants from both metropolitan and regional areas. This work included round table meetings, polls and surveys.

Our Strategic Enablers

Our People

In order to optimise the achievement of our Strategic Outlook, we will:

Ensure we attract, retain and develop the most capable talent available aligned to our strategy.

Be inclusive of all military and life experiences and seek consultation to ensure comprehensive understanding of experiences.

Seek out diversity in views and opinions to help us better serve our shared community.

Our Systems and Assets

To ensure the best possible outcomes for the veteran community, we will:

Provide advice and feedback to government agencies on matters relating to veterans and their families.

Promote and utilise the collection of data to inform future policy development and initiatives.

Explore how technology can be used to accelerate achieving our goals and our reach.

Our Capabilities

The skills we may need, learn or harness in order to succeed will be bolstered by:

Developing partnerships and collaborating with subject matter experts including those in 'non-traditional' areas across South Australia and nationally.

Committing to an ongoing brand building and effectiveness strategy.

Building a knowledge base within the organisation that can be readily available.

Using a variety of communication channels and mediums to ensure accessibility of information to all.

2024-25 Action Plan

Connect & Collaborate

We will facilitate connection and collaboration with and among the South Australian veteran and Defence community and the wider South Australian community to build a strong and effective ecosystem.

- Facilitate connections between current and former serving ADF members and Defence spouses to employment pathways and opportunities through the SA Veteran Employer Network.
- Facilitate connection and collaboration between ex-service organisations and the wider community through Community Connection events.
- Participate in ADF events (including ADF Transition Seminars and Welcome Days) and provide feedback and state-specific guidance to organisers.
- Deliver activities that educate regional community organisations about military service and empower them to support veterans in their community.
- Promote veteran related support services, programs and events through social media and other channels.
- Participate in the Veterans' Ministerial Council (VMC) and Commonwealth State & Territory Committee (CSTC) and associated working groups.

Empower & Equip

We will empower and build capacity within the South Australian veteran and Defence community through evidence and research-informed education, programs and initiatives.

- Provide consultation opportunities for the veteran community to engage with Veterans SA to ensure activities are focused on issues of relevance.
- Empower veterans and their families by publishing stories and content that highlight veteran success and growth to challenge stereotypes.
- Increase awareness of Home Base SA as a reliable online resource for current and former serving ADF members and Defence spouses.
- Build the capability of members of the veteran community through mentoring and professional development initiatives.
- Facilitate opportunities for the veteran community to seek personal and professional growth through evidence-based programs and initiatives.
- Deliver regional outreach initiatives to educate veterans about the services and support available to them.
- Explore support and engagement opportunities for young people in the Defence and veteran community.
- Investigate initiatives to reduce the unique administrative barriers experienced by the veteran community in relation to employment (licences, registrations), education and training.
- Investigate the feasibility of an Aged Care symposium to educate older veterans about navigating the aged care system.
- Provide funding assistance to organisations that support veterans and their families through the Capacity Building Grant Fund.
- Provide funding assistance to veterans and spouses to undertake higher education and training to improve future career prospects.

Educate & Raise Awareness

We will educate the South Australian public about the value and positive impact that veterans and veteran families bring to the South Australian community.

- Publish stories and content and work with local media to challenge the stereotypes around veterans and highlight the value veterans and their families bring to the community.
- Advocate for the needs of veterans requiring aged care support, including the needs of their support people.
- Advocate for the needs of veterans and their families across state government and to external stakeholders.
- Educate employers on the value of veterans and spouses in the workplace through the SA Veteran Employer Network.
- Engage with peak industry bodies to highlight veterans as a valuable workforce that can help to fill skills shortages.
- Partner with stakeholders looking to build knowledge and understanding around the experiences of veterans and their families to inform future initiatives.
- Educate the veteran and wider community about research undertaken in the veteran space and what services and opportunities are available.
- Collaborate with Suicide Prevention Networks to increase awareness and understanding of military service to support veterans across the state.

Honour Service

We will honour the service and sacrifice of service people and the experiences of the families that support them.

- Provide financial assistance through grant funds to ensure that dates of significance are appropriately recognised.
- Provide financial assistance through grant funds to facilitate projects and initiatives that honour those who have served and South Australia's military history through the Commemorative Services Grant Fund.
- Support veterans and their families to better understand the state-based concessions available to them.

Veterans SA will consider the relevant recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and explore state-based strategies and initiatives in response.

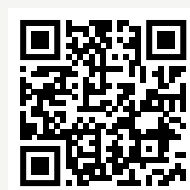


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