

Minister for Primary Industries and Water
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Level 5, 4 Salamanca Place HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Phone: +61 3 6165 7670
Email: minister.pearce@dpac.tas.gov.au



Mr Rob Fairs MP
Member for Bass

17 APR 2026

C/- Laura.Ross@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr Fairs

In Parliament on 19 March 2026, you asked the following question on behalf of your constituents:

I had the pleasure of meeting a lovely couple recently at the Exeter Show. He was a veteran and he asked me about improving access to wellbeing and support services for veterans and their families and friends. What is the government currently working on for them?

Thank you for raising this on behalf of your constituents. While the Australian Government, through the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), has the lead role in veterans' policy and services, both levels of government contribute to supporting veterans and their families.

The Tasmanian Government is strongly focused on improving the mental and physical wellbeing of Tasmania's 17,500 veterans and their families. We continue to work closely with RSL Tasmania, ex-service organisations, the Commonwealth and the broader veteran community to deliver practical and targeted initiatives that strengthen access to wellbeing and support services.

A key initiative is the Veteran Wellbeing Voucher Program. In 2021, the Government committed \$200,000 over four years to establish the program, and due to its success, it has been extended through to 2026. The program provides vouchers for veterans, partners and widows to access gyms, community recreation and sporting club memberships, supporting both physical activity and social connection.

In July 2024, the program was expanded to allow eligible participants to access two \$100 vouchers per year. From July 2025, widows and partners holding eligible Defence-issued cards also became eligible to apply. There are now more than 168 registered activity providers across Tasmania, including over 50 new providers added in the past year.

To make the program easier to access, veterans can apply online or in person at any Service Tasmania centre. This reduces digital barriers and allows eligible applicants to present their Defence-issued card and receive vouchers directly. Since expanding eligibility and transitioning processing to Service Tasmania, participation has increased significantly. The program is also promoted through the Tasmanian Government Concessions and Discounts Guide, with 35,000 copies distributed statewide.

In addition to physical wellbeing initiatives, the Tasmanian Government, through the Department of Health, is working with the Australian Government's Open Arms program to deliver dedicated veteran mental health services within Tasmania. Programs such as the *Stress Resilience and*

Functioning Program support veterans experiencing chronic stress and trauma, including symptoms consistent with PTSD. Services are available in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie, reducing the need for veterans to travel interstate for treatment.

The *Enhancing Mental Health Service Access for Veterans* initiative also enables veterans to be identified through the state intake service and referred directly to Open Arms. The positive experiences and insights gained in Tasmania are contributing to the national rollout of these programs.

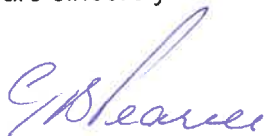
As one of Tasmania's largest employers, the Tasmanian Government is committed to recognising veterans' skills and creating clear pathways into the State Service. The *Tasmanian Veterans' Employment Strategy 2023–2027* focuses on removing barriers, valuing Defence-acquired capability and supporting meaningful employment.

A key initiative is the Veterans' Employment Portal on jobs.tas.gov.au, which provides a single-entry point to vacancies, transition guidance and practical support. It also helps veterans translate their Defence experience into civilian language, and a Veterans Mentor Network is being established to connect veterans with peers who can support their employment journey.

These initiatives reflect the Government's ongoing commitment to ensuring veterans, their families and their support networks can access the services they need, close to home, and in ways that recognise their service and contribution.

Thank you again for raising this matter on behalf of your constituents.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Pearce'.

Hon Gavin Pearce MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs