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# Information Publication Scheme – Agency Plan

## Background

The Defence and Veterans' Service Commission (DVSC) provides independent oversight and evidence-based advice to the Australian Government on reforms to improve suicide prevention and wellbeing outcomes for serving and ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) members.

The DVSC assists the Defence and Veterans' Service Commissioner (the Commissioner) to perform their statutory functions.

The DVSC is an agency subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) and is required to comply with the Information Publication Scheme (IPS) requirements. This Information Publication Plan (the Plan) describes how the DVSC proposes to do this, as required by section 8(1) of the FOI Act.

## Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the IPS is to promote a culture of proactive disclosure and more openness of Government.

This plan will set out the procedures to maintain IPS compliance and manage information holdings.

This Plan describes how the DVSC proposes to implement and administer the IPS in respect of the information held by the commission. The plan outlines:

- the information required to be published;
- other (optional) information to be published; and
- how the DVSC proposes to comply with the IPS.

The purpose of the Plan, in accordance with subsection 8(1) of the FOI Act, is to show the Australian public:

- what information the DVSC proposes to publish under the IPS;
- how, and to whom, the DVSC proposes to publish information under the IPS; and
- how the DVSC otherwise proposes to comply with the IPS.

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# Administering our IPS Agency Plan and compliance review

The Commissioner) is responsible for the administration of this plan.

DVSC will review the operation of the IPS in conjunction with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), with timing of those reviews to be determined in consultation with the OAIC.

The Communications and Engagement team is responsible for the development and management of the DVSC website. IPS publication is maintained through web publication processes and procedures.

Dedicated 'Information Publication Scheme' and 'Freedom of Information', which includes the DVSC FOI Disclosure Log, web pages have been created on the DVSC's website [www.dvsc.gov.au](http://www.dvsc.gov.au).

The DVSC will list on its website any documents that are unable to be published online. The website will state that a person seeking access to any of these documents may contact [FOI@dvsc.gov.au](mailto:FOI@dvsc.gov.au) to arrange access.

## Information architecture and accessibility

The DVSC will publish its IPS information holdings on its website.

To ensure the IPS information holdings and individual IPS documents are easily discoverable, understandable and machine readable, DVSC will:

- publish an 'Access to Information' icon on the homepage of its website, which will link to the IPS section of the website;
- design and publish an IPS entry point on the website;
- where possible, provide online content in a format that can be searched, copied and transformed;
- publish a sitemap for its website;
- provide a search function for the website; and
- respond to community feedback.

There is no charge for accessing or downloading information published on the IPS.

Details on how to request access to a document in another format are contained on the [Freedom of Information page](#).

# Information required to be published under the IPS

Under subsection 8(2) of the FOI Act, the DVSC is required to publish certain information about the agency and how it makes decisions and recommendations that impact on the Australian public. Most of the information required is published on the DVSC website (dvsc.gov.au). Where this is so, a link is included to the relevant page of the DVSC website.

The DVSC is aware of the requirement to ensure the information is accurate, up-to-date and complete and therefore intends to review and add to the information available as detailed in this Plan.

## Structure

The DVSC organisational structure is published online and regularly reviewed for accuracy.

## Functions

The DVSC is established under Schedule 9 of the *Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025 (VETS Act)*. Schedule 9 of the VETS Act inserts Part VIIIE into the *Defence Act 1903*. This part establishes the DVSC and enshrines its functions in legislation.

Key functions performed by the Commissioner include:

- Inquiring into and reporting on:
  - data and trends regarding suicide and suicidality among serving and ex-serving ADF members;
  - systemic factors relating to the Australian Government's administration of policies, programs, systems and practices that contribute to suicide and suicidality among serving and ex-serving ADF members; and
  - the state of the Defence and veteran ecosystem, as it relates to the prevention of suicide and suicidality.
- Conducting inquiries into the Australian Government's implementation of the Government's response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.
- Promoting understanding of suicide risks for Defence members and veterans, and factors that can improve their wellbeing, including through engaging with people with lived experience and promoting that lived experience.

Further information on the DVSC, the Commissioner and enabling legislation is available on the DVSC website.

## Appointments

DVSC publishes details of departmental and agency appointments (other than APS employees under the *Public Service Act 1999*)

## Annual Reports

At the end of each financial year ending 30 June, the DVSC compiles and publishes its Annual Report. The Annual Report details how the DVSC performed during the reporting cycle.

The first DVSC Annual Report will be published online when available.

## Information routinely provided under FOI Requests

DVSC publishes routinely requested information and an FOI Disclosure Log, including documents to which access has been given in response to FOI requests and information published under section 11C of the FOI Act.

## Information routinely provided to the Parliament

In addition to the information provided to the Parliament in the Annual Report, the DVSC also provides information required by external Departments and agencies and other pieces of legislation. Some of the information provided to the Parliament includes:

- **Portfolio Budget Statements:** These Statements inform the Parliament of the proposed allocation of resources to the DVSC's outcomes for the coming financial year. These Statements are combined with all those agencies falling under the Defence portfolio and can be found on the portfolio Department's website ([www.defence.gov.au](http://www.defence.gov.au))
- **DVSC Contracts Listing:** Pursuant to the Senate Order on departmental and agency contracts, the DVSC provides to the Parliament a list of contracts entered into with external parties for amounts exceeding \$100,000. The DVSC publishes bi-annual lists on its website.
- **DVSC File Lists:** Each six months, in accordance with the Senate Continuing Order No. 8 (Harradine Reports), the DVSC provides to the Parliament a list of files created by the DVSC in that six month period.

## Contact details for FOI Officers

For information on this Plan, the IPS or FOI requests please use the following contact details.

Email: [FOI@dvsc.gov.au](mailto:FOI@dvsc.gov.au)

## Operational information

Operational information is information held by the DVSC to assist it to perform or exercise its functions or powers in making decisions or recommendations affecting members of the public, or any particular person or entity, or class of persons or entities.

Copies of DVSC reports, policy statements, handbooks and other documents which are routinely published will be made available on the 'Resource' page of the website.

The DVSC plans to assess its operational information to ensure that all such information that can be published under the IPS is identified and published.

## Optional information to be published

DVSC plans to assess whether it holds other information that, consistent with the purpose of the FOI Act, could be published.

## Accessibility under the IPS

The DVSC is committed to meeting international standards for accessibility, as set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). The Australian Government Digital Service Standard requires online publications to meet WCAG 2.2 to AA level compliance, and where possible, AAA level compliance.

DVSC's current website conforms to AA level compliance, and the content is subject to regular review to ensure it continues to meet Australian Government Digital Service Standards and WCAG guidelines.