



Robyn Collins
General Manager



I am writing this in the lead-up to Christmas – a time that can be especially difficult for many of our veterans and their families.

Earlier this year, DefenceCare’s counsellor, Peter Pocock, started working with a veteran with significant mental illness and his family. Because of the veteran’s location, Peter asked a pensions officer from a local sub-Branch to assist with the veteran’s DVA claim. They worked together, making slow but vital progress in difficult circumstances.

I received a call from Sydney Legacy earlier this week about a Legatee who heard about a veteran in danger. That phone call, and the information provided, allowed us to identify the veteran as the one we had been helping. We then began supporting his family during this sudden crisis. There is still a long road to travel, but the path towards recovery is worth every step.

As the relief settled in, I reflected on the importance of everyone in the veteran community working together to help veterans and their families in need to achieve the best possible outcomes.

DefenceCare works closely with many RSL NSW sub-Branch pension officers. Glenn Mount, one of many extraordinary volunteers throughout RSL NSW, has been helping veterans with DVA claims for many years. Like many others I have met as I visit sub-Branches, Glenn has changed many lives for the better. So too have the generous volunteers who support the Defence community at the Train at St Mary’s in Sydney’s west, an amazing hub of volunteers from ex-service organisations making a real difference to veterans in need. Our thanks to all welfare and pension officers for the work you do.

WOMEN’S AUXILIARIES’ QUILT TO HELP VETERANS IN CRISIS

Our thanks to the wonderful women of the Women’s Auxiliaries, who are working tirelessly to make a quilt that will be raffled in 2014 to support DefenceCare.

Tickets will be available from February next year and the winner will be drawn in November. At \$2 a ticket and \$20 for a book of 10, it is a great way to support veterans in crisis. Please call Pauline James on 0416 247 635 to order tickets.

QUICK FACTS ABOUT DEFENCECARE

There is still some confusion about DefenceCare, so hopefully these points will help.

- DefenceCare is the new name for the Defence Service Assistance Centre and is part of RSL Welfare and Benevolent Institution (RSL WBI).
- DefenceCare is part of the RSL NSW family and is a Tier 1 organisation for donations.
- As part of RSL WBI, DefenceCare is a charity and public benevolent institution. It raises money to help current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force members and their families in times of injury, illness and crisis.
- DefenceCare has recently undergone significant change to better cater for the needs of the Defence community.
- In recent years, 70% of all donations to RSL WBI received has gone towards the cost of services, while 30% has covered administration costs such as audit, rent, computers, telephones, postage and utilities. It is our goal to reduce the percentage spent on administration to 20% in coming years.
- In recent years, DefenceCare has had to rely on its reserves to meet the demand for its services. While this can’t continue for too long, we are trying to raise more money rather than turn veterans and their families away.

Donations are rising as a result of this strategy and we continue to monitor the situation carefully.

HOW MANY PEOPLE DOES DEFENCECARE HELP?

From February to October 2013, DefenceCare received 709 requests for crisis support, leading to 1244 services, including payment of urgent bills, counselling and referrals to sub-Branches and other organisations.

In the same period, DefenceCare helped 566 clients with DVA Entitlements, submitting 248 claims and helping with post liability and other assistance. We also received over 350 enquiries for appeals to the VRB, completing 141 case appraisals and lodging over 120 appeals.

DONATIONS TO DEFENCECARE ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Sometimes the most meaningful and memorable gift on a special occasion is one that helps alleviate the suffering of others.

On occasions such as birthdays, weddings or funerals, you can ask your guests to give a donation to DefenceCare in lieu of gifts. Their donations will help current and ex-serving members of the Australian Defence Force and their families in times of injury, illness or crisis.

DefenceCare can provide you with brochures, donation envelopes for funerals (pictured) and other printed material for you to pass on to your guests if this is what you would like to do. Please call DefenceCare’s Marketing and Sponsorship Manager, Xiong Luong, on 9264 8188 ext 502.



PEOPLE WE HAVE HELPED

DefenceCare was there for a client in serious financial hardship and living in a caravan park with her young family. The client, who served in the Solomon Islands, was in a situation where luxuries like a haircut were not possible. DefenceCare helped out with food and grocery payments, rental bond for new accommodation and two weeks’ rent. We also put the veteran in touch with a financial counsellor.

A serving army member also approached DefenceCare when he had nowhere else to turn. Suffering from depression and bipolar, the client discovered his partner was diagnosed with postnatal depression. The couple were also struggling financially. DefenceCare paid for housecleaning and gardening services so the couple could focus on managing their mental health and is helping the client obtain a service dog to help him during a crisis.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I DONATE TO DEFENCECARE?

When we hear about the issues faced by current and ex-serving members of the

MINUTE TO REMEMBER 2013

The Minute to Remember campaign asked Australians to sign up at DefenceCare’s Facebook page for a free SMS reminder to turn their smartphones off at 11 am on November 11 to honour the fallen on Remembrance Day. They also got the chance to purchase a virtual poppy to help current and ex-serving members of the Australian Defence Force and their families in times of injury, illness or crisis.

War hero and aspiring Paralympian Damien Thomlinson (pictured) and Australian journalist and author Peter FitzSimons got behind the campaign online and on television.



Oh! Media’s digital network of 1300 digital advertising panels in airports, shopping centres, pubs and on roadsides around the country turned black and displayed the symbol for Remembrance Day – a red poppy - for one minute on 11am November 11.

This is the second year running for the Minute to Remember campaign. Please visit www.defencecare.org.au/announcements/M2R to read or watch other publicity surrounding the campaign.

Australian Defence Force and their families in times of injury, illness or crisis we can become overwhelmed.

Many of us believe that these brave men and women deserve our help but we can sometimes think, the problem is so widespread, how can my donation make an impact? Please be assured that your donation does make an impact. If you are

wondering how much you could donate to DefenceCare, you can use the below as a guide.

RSL NSW SUB-BRANCH WELFARE AND PENSION OFFICER SURVEY

Thank you to the RSL NSW sub-Branch welfare and pension officers who completed the survey we sent out in October. Welfare and pension officers who have not completed the survey can send it to DefenceCare at any time as the information is valuable regardless of the date it is received. An overview of the results received before 30 November 2013 was sent out recently in the RSL NSW bulk mail. If you would like a copy, please contact DefenceCare’s Client Services Manager, Wayne Watson, on 8088 0388.

WELCOME HOME HMAS NEWCASTLE

DefenceCare and RSL NSW were part of an emotional homecoming for HMAS *Newcastle* as she and her crew were welcomed home on October 13 by excited and very happy family members and friends.

RSL NSW and DefenceCare were

DONATIONS TO HELP VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES: HOW MUCH SHOULD I DONATE?		
\$50 will provide Travel assistance for a veteran going to and from medical appointments.	\$150 will provide One employment counselling session for a young veteran transitioning out of Defence.	\$290 will provide A resumé preparation service for young veterans transitioning out of Defence.
\$70 will provide One lawn mowing or cleaning service when a veteran is recovering from surgery or hospitalisation.	\$150 will provide Counselling for a veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress (PTS).	\$1,500 will provide A companion dog to aid veterans suffering extreme PTS.
\$100 will provide Groceries to Defence families struggling to make ends meet.	\$175 will provide Assistance with a veteran’s compensation claim for injury or illness.	\$1,700 will provide A mobility scooter for a veteran or a member of their family.
\$180 will provide A special phone for hearing and sight impaired veterans.	\$2,000 will provide Emergency accommodation for veterans and their families who find themselves homeless.	

DefenceCare Always there www.defencecare.org.au f t p

A photograph of an older couple sitting outdoors, smiling and holding wine glasses. In the foreground, a wicker picnic basket is open, showing a white cloth with silverware and a loaf of bread. The background features a vineyard and mountains under a clear sky. The text 'Introducing the new ADCU Deeming Access Account.' is overlaid in green script on the left side.

A great way to earn interest without affecting your retirement.



The Schedule of Fees and Charges and Terms and Conditions should be considered in deciding whether to acquire the products and are available at www.adcu.com.au. Australian Defence Credit Union Limited ABN 48 087 649 741 AFSL No. 237 988. Australian credit licence number 237 988.



With your support we can help even more older Australians who are unable to care for themselves.

I would like to help RSL LifeCare continue to care for older people in need who are unable to care for themselves.

Expiry date:

- Donations over \$2 are tax deductible

Twitter: DefenceCare

8005 5730 local
1800 243 387 national

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