

**OFFICIAL**



**Government  
of South Australia**

# **Veterans' Health Advisory Council**

## **2021-22 Annual Report**

VETERANS' HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

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To:

Hon Chris Picton MP

Minister for Health and Wellbeing

This annual report will be presented to Parliament to meet the statutory reporting requirements of (the *Public Sector Act 2009*, the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987* and the *Health Care Act 2008* ) and the requirements of Premier and Cabinet Circular *PC013 Annual Reporting*.

This report is verified to be accurate for the purposes of annual reporting to the Parliament of South Australia.

Submitted on behalf of the Veterans Health Advisory Council by:

**Christopher Lemmer**  
**Executive Officer**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Lemmer', with a stylized circular flourish at the beginning.

Date: 23rd September 2022



## From the Presiding Member

The 2021-22 year has been my first full year as Presiding Member of the Veterans' Health Advisory Council (VHAC). I was first appointed to the Council in 2014 when I was serving Full-Time in the Australian Army. I am now an Active Army Reservist and the Commanding Officer of Adelaide Universities Regiment.

VHAC's role is to advise the Minister for Health and Wellbeing on the health service needs, priorities and issues for veterans and for the spouse, widow or widower of veterans and to advocate on their behalf with the Minister. The VHAC consults with ex-service and related organisations to obtain their views when preparing such advice.

### VHAC Membership

VHAC's membership is comprised entirely of volunteers the following of whom were members during the 2021-22 year.

<b>VHAC Nominations</b>
Ms Ilona Horan (Presiding Member)
Dr Chris Butcher
Dr Paula Dabovich
Mr Bill Denny
Dr Adrian De Savi
Mr Brett Grosser
Mr Nathan Klinge
Professor Alexander McFarlane
<b>RSL Nomination</b>
Mr Wayne Langford
<b>Ministerial Nominations</b>
Mr Tim Adey-Wakeling - Resigned April 2022
Dr Robert Black - Retired 27 May 2022
Mr Justin Brown
Mr David West

The membership includes Reservists from Navy, Army and Air Force as well as ex-serving veterans and medical specialists who deal with veterans.

I take this opportunity to thank members sincerely for giving of their time so freely and for the contribution they make both individually and collectively to help improve the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families.

I am concerned that VHAC has been unable to achieve gender equity or first nation representation in its membership and will work to address this matter throughout the coming year.

A priority for VHAC throughout 2021-22 has been our collaboration with SA Health in developing a 2022-25 Veteran Wellbeing Action Plan. This plan, when complete, will build on the work contained in the earlier Frameworks for Veterans' Health Care. A key objective identified within these plans, which has yet to be achieved, is the ability to identify and record a veteran's status at point of entry to the State's public health system. VHAC will continue to advocate for this to be achieved.

VHAC is maintaining a watching brief on the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and will provide advice to our Minister as appropriate.

Members of VHAC were involved with the steering group to establish the Veterans' Wellbeing Centre at the Repat in Daw Park. VHAC remains committed to the successful development of the initial vision for the facility.



**Presiding Member**

**Veterans' Health Advisory Council**

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## Overview: about the agency

### Our strategic focus

<b>Our Purpose</b>	<p>The Advisory Council is established in relation to Veterans and the spouse, widow or widower of Veterans to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advise on their health service needs, priorities and issues;</li> <li>2. Advise on the delivery of health services;</li> <li>3. Advocate on their behalf with the Minister.</li> </ol>
<b>Our Vision</b>	Not applicable
<b>Our Values</b>	Not applicable
<b>Our functions, objectives and deliverables</b>	<p>The functions of the Advisory Council in regard to Veterans and the spouse, widow or widower of Veterans are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Act as an advocate to promote their health interests;</li> <li>2. Provide advice to the Minister about any aspect of the provision of health services;</li> <li>3. Provide advice or assistance to the Minister in relation to the development or implementation of systems or mechanisms designed to support the delivery of health services or programs;</li> <li>4. Assist the Minister and the Department in the provision of information to, and to consult broadly with Veterans in relation to health services provided by incorporated health services in the State;</li> <li>5. Consult with other bodies that are interested in the provision of health services to veterans;</li> <li>6. Provide advice to the Minister about any matter referred to it by the Minister or the Chief Executive;</li> <li>7. Provide advice to the Minister on the development and management of health services and on the resources made available for these services and in so doing, reflect the views of Veterans;</li> <li>8. Provide advice to the Minister when the agreement between the Department and the Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs is renegotiated;</li> <li>9. Provide advice to the Minister on the non-clinical commitments to veterans and war widows, as recorded in the 1995 'Record of Ongoing Commitments' between the</li> </ol>

	<p>Commonwealth of Australia and the State. These non-clinical commitments are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. the continuing work of voluntary bodies, including Ex-Service Organisations, is encouraged;</li><li>b. Ex-Service Organisations and communities are welcome to visit the former Repatriation General Hospital, Daw Park and areas of significance; and</li></ul> <p>The Chapel and Peace Garden are maintained at the former Repatriation General Hospital, Daw Park.</p>
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**Our organisational structure**

In accordance with the Rules as amended in July 2019, the Advisory Council comprises of no more than 15 Members who are appointed by the Minister. Of these, 10 may be nominated by the Advisory Council, one by the RSL, and four by the Minister.

A list of current members is included in the Presiding Members Report

**Changes to the agency**

During 2021-22 there were no changes to the agency’s structure and objectives as a result of internal reviews or machinery of government changes.

**Our Minister**



Hon Chris Picton MP is the Minister for Health and Wellbeing in South Australia.

The Minister oversees health, wellbeing, mental health, ageing well, substance abuse and suicide prevention.

**Our Executive team**

VHAC is supported by an Executive Officer, Chris Lemmer, who is employed by RSL Care SA. The position is funded by SA Health through a service agreement with RSL Care SA.

**Legislation administered by the agency**

Not applicable

**Other related agencies (within the Minister’s area/s of responsibility)**

Not Applicable

## The agency’s performance

### Performance at a glance

The Health Advisory Council undertakes an advocacy role on behalf of the veteran community.

### Agency contribution to whole of Government objectives

Key objective	Agency’s contribution
More jobs	Not applicable
Lower costs	Not applicable.
Better Services	Not applicable.

### Agency specific objectives and performance

The Health Advisory Council undertakes an advocacy role on behalf of the veteran community. Refer to the Presiding Member’s report for specific details

Agency objectives	Indicators	Performance
Not applicable		

### Corporate performance summary

Not applicable

### Employment opportunity programs

Program name	Performance
Not applicable	

### Agency performance management and development systems

Performance management and development system	Performance
Not applicable	



## **Financial performance**

### **Financial performance at a glance**

The Veterans' Advisory Council is a non-incorporated Health Advisory Council. It does not control assets, incur expenditure or receive revenue.

### **Consultants disclosure**

Not Applicable

### **Contractors disclosure**

Not Applicable

### **Other financial information**

Not Applicable

### **Other information**

Not Applicable

## **Risk management**

### **Risk and audit at a glance**

Not Applicable

### **Fraud detected in the agency**

Nil

### **Public interest disclosure**

Nil

## **Reporting required under any other act or regulation**

Not Applicable

### **Reporting required under the *Carers' Recognition Act 2005***

Not Applicable

## **Public complaints**

### **Number of public complaints reported**

Nil

## **Compliance Statement**

The Veterans' Health Advisory Council is compliant with Premier and Cabinet Circular 039 – complaint management in the South Australian public sector	Y
The Veterans' Health Advisory Council has communicated the content of PC 039 and the agency's related complaints policies and procedures to employees.	N/A

### **Public Complaints**

Nil to report

### **Service Improvements**

Not Applicable