

For those who stand beside them

Heather Evans, National President, Partners of Veterans Association of Australia Inc (PVA)

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The PVA was established in 1999 in NSW and is unique among ex-service organisations (ESOs). Our primary function is to support partners, dependants, ex-partners, family members and war widows/ers who live with and care for or have cared for a current or ex-serving member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

The Association has grown since its early formative years to include state branches in NSW, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania, with the NSW State Branch responsible for the ACT and Northern Territory. There are now numerous sub-branches and groups throughout Australia where members meet for the support and understanding of those in similar situations. You can find these groups by visiting our [Partners of Veterans Association website](#).

The Association has worked with all of the major ESOs. We have a seat at the Ex-Service Organisation Round Table (ESORT), the Australian Defence Services Organisation (ADSO), and members attend many forums and committees at all levels of government.

Our aim is not only to support the partners and families of our generation, but also the needs of future generations and to have in place a support network that was not available when many of our veterans returned from their service.

We are your voice and over the past 20 years have contributed enormously to the recognition of partners and families, gaining many of the benefits that we receive today. Over these 20 years we have also been involved in assistance for our children.

PVA and Defence Families of Australia (DFA) took the lead in lobbying the Minister for Veterans and Defence Personnel and the Defence Department for Kookaburra Kids to be granted funding for children living in a family affected by mental illness to attend camps and outings.

The list of people who could benefit from getting involved with PVA is extensive. They include: carers of veterans; mothers, fathers and siblings caring for single ADF members; and grandparents who have custody or temporary care of the children of ADF or former ADF members. The latter group often need the understanding of people who have raised their children in the shadow of ADF service. We also identify schoolchildren in need of support whose parent or parents have served our country.

For further information about eligibility for membership, location of groups, or to find out more about the work we do, please visit our [Partners of Veterans Association website](#) or call our national Support Line [1300 553 835](tel:1300553835) for assistance. Join PVA between April and June 2020 and receive these months membership free of charge.

If you are a veteran, please pass this article on to your partner.