

# About Us

## History of Achievements of the P.V.A. Australia Inc.

Since our formation in 1999 the National Association and our state branches in NSW/ACT/NT, QLD, WA, SA, VIC. and TAS. have lobbied the Federal and State Governments of the day to increase the welfare and support of partners and families of both current and former Veterans and Australian Defence Force members.

Over many years representatives of our association both at the state and national level have represented partners, widows/widowers, War Widows/Widowers and families at forums and meetings and continue to do so today. Currently all have a representative on Deputy Commission DVA state forums as well as national representation on the Ex-Service Organisations Round Table (ESORT) the National Aged and Community Care Forum (NACCF) the Female Veterans and Family Forum (FVFF) and the Operational Working Party (OWP).

There is also partner representation on the National Advisory Council (NAC) to VVCS and the Prime Ministers Advisory Council (PMAC) on Veterans Mental Health

During that time P.V.A. Australia Inc. has improved benefits for those we represent and their families in the following areas:

### Widows and Widowers

Our Association alone advocated for the Bereavement Payment paid to the surviving widow/widower to be calculated at the rate the veteran was in receipt of at the time of his/her death;

Supported the Indexation of the Income Support Supplement (ISS) paid to eligible War Widows/Widowers.

Had the age limit removed for War Widows/Widowers to apply for the Income Support Supplement (ISS)

### Dependants/Families

We succeeded in having the age limit removed on children of Vietnam Veterans to receive counselling from the Veterans and Veterans Family Counselling Service (VVCS).

Our Association supported the provision of child care for participants at VVCS Residential Lifestyle Courses.

Succeeded in our representations that the age limit be removed for all eligible children of past and present veterans to be able to receive counselling through VVCS;

Our Association compiled and distributed a Children's health questionnaire which assisted the call for a full study on the health of the children of Vietnam Veterans.

### Partners/Ex Partners

Secured the additional Carer Bonus for carers of Veterans in receipt of Partners Service Pension, a payment that has now been legislated and is paid yearly;

Advocated with Family and Community Services to clarify problems partners were encountering when applying for the Carers Allowance;

Supported the investigation of the deteriorating health of partners and/or carers of veterans via our national health committee;

We had a member representative on the Vietnam Veterans Family Study (VVFS) Consultative Forum;

Succeeded in our efforts for increased counselling for former partners of ADF personnel to access VVCS up to 5 years after a couple separates or while co-parenting a child under the age of 18.

## **Veterans**

Supported other Ex-Service Organisations (ESOs) for the government to recognise the health issues of Aircraft Personnel in relation to the Re-seal, De-seal of the F1-11s;

Our Association was the catalyst for the production and distribution of a brochure highlighting awareness of the Strongyloides parasite.

### **We're working on:-**

Advocating for an increase in the amount of Funeral Benefit paid to eligible recipients under the Veterans Entitlement Act (VEA).

Negotiating with WVCS to hold more courses for those Carers and Family Members caring for a veteran with PTSD;

Representing to government the need to negotiate with all states in offering subsidised accommodation to partners/carers when a veteran living in regional Australia is hospitalised far from home;

Asking that a little used WVCS program available for Vietnam Veterans needing "time out" in accommodation be widened to include not only younger veterans, but also partners and children as well.

These are but a few of the issues that our Association feels need great improvement; there are many more that need to be addressed and by our vigilance and speaking to partners who bring problems to us, we will endeavour to keep a close watch on any issues that may arise.