



THE SENATE

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

As of 9.00 am on 29 August 2025, the Committee received 1337 letters regarding its *Review of Schedule 9 of the Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025*.

It was agreed by the Committee that an example of the letter, available below, would be published as a sample of those received by the Committee.

The Committee thanks participants for their contribution to the inquiry.

Senator Raff Ciccone  
Senator the Hon Sarah Henderson  
Senator Andrew McLachlan CSC  
Senator David Shoebridge  
Senator Jacqui Lambie

CC:

The Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade

**Review of Schedule 9 of the Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025**

Dear Senators,

I am writing regarding the Review of Schedule 9 of the Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide documented over 750 previous recommendations on veteran issues, noting governments' limited response to these inquiries. The Commission's most critical recommendation in its Final Report was Recommendation 122. This called for establishing a statutory organisation providing independent oversight to improve suicide prevention and wellbeing outcomes for serving and ex-serving ADF members.

This organisation must be genuinely independent—not only in function but in perception—to maintain community confidence and effectively carry out its mandate.

Schedule 9 fails to deliver true independence. Drafted behind closed doors without stakeholder consultation, it represents the 751st poorly handled recommendation by government and does not meet veteran community needs.

The Veteran and Veteran Family Community needs an independent organisation designed through proper governance and using world's best practice project management methodology that includes stakeholder representation. What we do not need is an organisation defined by a well-intentioned few that serves their perceived needs rather than our community's actual requirements.

I urge the Committee to rescind Schedule 9 and restart using best practice project management methodology that includes veteran, veteran family, and stakeholder representatives in designing the new organisation, which I understand will be called the Defence and Veterans' Service Commission. I ask that my thoughts be recorded in your Report due on 29 August 2025.

The 29 August 2025 Report must not be the final report. You should then report again after new stand-alone legislation has been enacted, the project of designing and establishing the Defence and Veterans' Service Commission has been achieved, and its performance measured. This Committee should then close—not as a result of your report due on 29 August 2025, but only after these substantive reforms are completed.

Yours sincerely,