



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Patron-in-Chief: His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)

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Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Government Response to the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART)

The Defence Force Welfare Association welcomes this inquiry into the Government's response to the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce. Whilst we are firmly of the opinion that there isn't a "culture of abuse" within the ADF, the work of this committee has highlighted a worrying number of incidents of abuse that indicate the need for a firm and transparent response by both the Government and the Defence Organisation.

Generally, we are of the opinion that the Taskforce has been very effective in investigating the cases reported to it, and have been very sensitive in its dealings with the individuals who have been subject to abuse. However the seriousness of this issue has the potential to damage discipline within the ADF, harm individual members and to cause the general public to lose confidence in those who occupy positions of command.

We are of the opinion that unless there is the fullest possible disclosure of all volumes of the report and findings compiled by DLA-Piper that lead to this Taskforce being created, then there will inevitably be questions left in the eyes of the general public concerning the veracity of both the inquiry and the response by the ADF.

We therefore believe that the second volume of the DLA-Piper Report should be released so that the response by both the Government and the Defence Organisation can be made as transparent as possible. Those subject to abuse can thus also get the assurance they need that appropriate action is in train or has been taken.

Yours Sincerely

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