



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Veterans' Affairs**  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Mr David Sullivan  
Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on  
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Sullivan

I seek to correct evidence given by myself to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing on Wednesday 1 March 2017.

On page 114 of the proof Committee Hansard in relation to a question by Senator Roberts about immediate access to support for mental health conditions I stated: *"It was about mental health conditions et cetera. I want to make it clear that we are talking about the liability path or the claims-processing path now. It is important to recognise that the government decided in the last budget to provide non-liability health care. Provided you have served at least one day in the ADF – it does not matter when - you now have access immediately to support for mental health conditions, including PTSD, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and alcohol abuse without the need to establish a claim. In terms of the healthcare treatment path, people can get support straightaway. We are trying to use every avenue we can identify to get that message out, because there are a lot of people out there right now who are pursuing just the liability path, but they also have immediate access to health care through the non-liability path."*

I seek to clarify my statement about who is eligible to receive immediate support for mental health conditions to make it clear that it includes anyone who has had one day of full-time service (rather than just one day of service). The corrected wording is provided below:

*"It was about mental health conditions et cetera. I want to make it clear that we are talking about the liability path or the claims-processing path now. It is important to recognise that the government decided in the last budget to provide non-liability health care. Provided you have at least one day of full-time service in the ADF – it does not matter when - you now have access immediately to support for mental health conditions, including PTSD, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and alcohol abuse without the need to establish a claim. In terms of the healthcare treatment path, people can get support straightaway. We are trying to use every avenue we can identify to get that message out, because there are a lot of people out there right now who are pursuing just the liability path, but they also have immediate access to health care through the non-liability path."*

I would be grateful if you could provide this correction to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

**S. Lewis PSM**  
Secretary

28 March 2017

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