

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS– FEBRUARY 2017

Finance and Public Administration Portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Outcome/Program:

Outcome 1. Fair and accountable administrative action by Australian Government entities and prescribed private sector organisations, by investigating complaints, reviewing administrative action and statutory compliance inspections and reporting.

Topic: Defence Force Ombudsman

Senator: Senator Skye Kakoschke-Moore

Question reference number: 124

Type of question: Written

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator SKYE KAKOSCHKE-MOORE:

Recent FADT Committee Inquiries

The Suicide by Veterans' inquiry is currently ongoing with a reporting date of 30 March 2017. Have people contacted the office regarding the inquiry specifically?

Answer:

No.

Question:

If people do contact the office, who would they be referred to?

Answer:

The Defence Force Ombudsman has a dedicated team of liaison officers who are experienced in providing support and assistance for distressed callers. We always undertake a risk assessment if a person expresses any suicidal ideation or intent to harm themselves or others. We ensure that appropriate intervention is undertaken to address any immediate threat and that the individual has access to appropriate ongoing support mechanisms, including referral to the Veterans and Veterans' Families Counselling Service for urgent counselling, where eligible and appropriate. Information is also routinely provided about assistance that is

available in the community, including contact details for support organisation such as Beyond Blue, Lifeline and Australian Defence Force wellbeing services.

We can also urgently transfer a matter to the Department of Veterans' Affairs to expedite any claims relating to health care, particularly access to non-liability mental health support.