RSL
NSW

Royal Commission Adelaide Hearing Block – Day 6
RSL References

Positive:
No references made.

Negative:
No references made.

Timeline:
10:05am –   In session.
10:07am – Witness affirmed.
11:45am –   Short adjournment
12:07pm – In session.
12:08pm – Questioning continued.
1:19pm – Lunch adjournment.
2:20pm –   In session.
2:21pm – Questioning continued.
4:17pm –   Adjourned.

General summary:

- Many questions requiring Notice.
- Admission for Committees being too broad – attempts to streamline processes;
- Attempts to ensure transitions are smoothly integrated into existing frameworks;
- "We got it as right as we could at the time with the resources and information we had";
- Should have enacted safeguards from the get-go to prevent or minimise the risk of abuse within ADF;
- We are too complex, we need to streamline a lot to ensure there is coherence and stability provided;
- Names, Firms, Individuals and Papers redacted: *full publication not authorised by the Commonwealth or Defence;*
- No accountability mechanisms for any members; nor disciplinary procedures where outcomes are not met;
- ADF Leaders need to be able to foster an environment and act accordingly to develop a safe culture for members;
- Survey rates not mandatory; no participation rate set by DepSec, Sec, CDF or ADF;
- Individual survey responses can be categorised into ADF Branches (RAN, RAAF, Army) or to individual posts;
- Kinds of unacceptable behaviour are monitored: broad definitions encapsulate many different forms of abuse;
- Uptrend of unacceptable behaviour identified in RAAF;
- Questionability about the reliability of data sets collected;

Counsel Assisting Opening Address –Peter Singleton:
- Justine Grieg, Witness – Deputy Secretary for Defence People Group
- Significant role – expected to give evidence again, slowly producing documents: wishes to expedite process
- Not going to continue with lengthy introductions – previous introductions suffice.

Witness List:

Time	Witness	Description
10:00am-12:00pm	**Deputy Secretary, Justine Grieg** Deputy Secretary, Defence People Group	Commonwealth Witness
12:00pm-12:15pm	Short Adjournment	
12:15-1:15pm	**Deputy Secretary, Justine Grieg** Deputy Secretary, Defence People Group	Commonwealth Witness
1:15pm-2:15pm	Lunch Adjournment	
2:15pm-4:15pm	**Deputy Secretary, Justine Grieg** Deputy Secretary, Defence People Group	

Witness: Justine Grieg

Type	Body/Comments
Verbal Evidence	There are many committees – some Committees are integrated. DVA has very important committees which are focused on veteran-centric reforms. Some Committees are point-in-time.
	We are reevaluating the number of Committees and aiming to merge a few together to minimise the burden and workload across some of our staff.
	The issue of suicide and suicidality is an issue that is governed by the People Committee.
	The Policy Practice Programmes should focus on the Health Select Committee – where there is a decision to be made.
	There's a parallel with the Work Health and Safety Board – established a few years ago due to understanding that there wasn't enough time to address it at Innovation Committee. Individual committee established for dedicated focus to suicidality, suicide, and suicide behaviours.
	DPC meeting could go between 2.5-5.0 hours.
	We struggle to fuse the information. Suicidal tendencies, risks and behaviours need to be fused and identified. I am establishing a division to identify, collate and monitor that data to adequately address concerns that have been previously raised.
	Previous systems have been difficult to navigate – we are aiming to improve cohesion amongst all existing systems by introducing new ones and retiring old ones; we need to ensure there is a coherent strategy to improve outcomes across the Department.
	If I have signed those minutes without the acknowledgment to the Royal Commission – I am disappointed. Those documents have my name, but not my signature. Can we determine whether the documents have been sighted by me and whether a signed copy exists?
	Wellbeing and Suicide are being treated as issues in WHS and through the Mental Health taskforce. They are good programmes but to leverage and analyse the protective and risk factors with prevention, we need to look at other aspects of organisation.
	Defence Behaviour Safety Review: Defence People Group produced by two independent consultants (REDACTED: Firms) and people associated with Justine Grieg – this was approved on behalf of the Group. It is a People Group Product.
	Proposed strategy to find funding outside the group; was denied – attempting to find funding within the group.
	There were no recommendations that faced a series of rejections – but the recommendations were put into the Implementation Plan. We need a stronger psycho-social response and understanding of the staged work that the Implementation is going to do.
	The Implementation Plan was written by DepSec WHS and their Working Group.
	The Cultural BluePrint is look at what is currently undertaken and what needs to be done; it recognises that there is much more to be done.
	Communication and consultation that comes from the Work Force: communication needs significant improvement; we have various methods, but they need to be layered to understand the contexts of Defence. We need to improve on the way we listen to people which hasn't been done as well as it could've been done. Transparency is highly related to communication and decision-making.

	We are aiming to improve the participation rate of the surveys – without participation rates, then we are unable to enact or develop new policies which aim to change the culture of the ADF.
	Culture survey aimed to capture the whole ADF cultures – no target participation rate. ADF Branches get individual survey outcomes and highlight statistics and have opportunity to seek more details. Selected data, however, can also be sought for individual units and barracks such as RAAF Wagga, Robertson, RAAF Richmond etc.
	I have work that is reviewed and analysed by my One-Up and Two-Up Supervisors. My performance agreement holds me to account. These performance criteria measure my contributions and areas of weakness and strengths.
	There's continuance training, development and educational programmes with metrics that should be embedded. The metrics we have reported on includes the retention rate; recruitment rates;

Evidence Tendered:

Document	Paragraph	Body
Statement of Deputy Secretary Grieg in response to NTG-JGR-001	DEF-9999.0105.0001	Main Statement – Page 05 - [Table]: twenty-four committees; meeting from weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, or trimonthly. 0073: biannual - [paragraph 194(f)] - two sub-paragraphs: People's Risk is provided for Review to DPC.
Supplementary Statement of Deputy Secretary Grieg in response to NYG-JGR-002	DEF.9999.0108.0001	
Defence's response to NTG-DEF-151	DEF.9999.0095.0024	
Defence's response to NGTG-DEF-121	DEF.9999.0070.0001	
Defence's response to NTG-DE7-0978	DEF.9999.077.0001	
Notice to Give Information NTG-DEF-077	DEF.1151.0005.0031	
ETG – Defence Accountability Framework Visual	DEF.1181.0005.0031	
Strategic Accountability Table – Group Heads and Service Chiefs	DEF.1151.0005.0637	

Defence People Committee Charter	DEF.1151.0005.0011	
Defence People's Committee Charter	DEF.1230.0002.0001	
PWC Discussion Paper titled: *A Better Way to Support Veterans: Response to Productivity Commission Recommendations [11.7.]*	DEF.1233.0002.0201	
Extract from Enterprise Business Committee Minutes, Defence Accountability Framework	DEF.1161.0001.0116	
Extract from Enterprise Business Committee Minutes, Other Business, 2021/2583	DEF.1161.0001.0115	
Enterprise Business Committee, Defence Work Health and Safety Culture and Reporting 2022/2835	DEF.1167.0009.0091	
[REDACTED: The Commonwealth has not authorised the publication or distribution of this material.]	Reviews and Approvals	[Redacted] Paragraph 3: The alignment of APS and ADF Staff under a One Defence Banner, relating to *Monitoring Pathway to Change and One Defence initiatives and Defence-wide workforce disposition.*
[REDACTED]	Committee Direction and Powers	[Para 20]: *The decisions of the Committee are binding across the Defence organisation.*
[REDACTED]	Defence Safety Behaviour Review: Final Report March 2022	[REDACTED: The Commonwealth has not authorised the full publication or distribution of this material.]
[REDACTED}	Quote, Gen. Angus Campbell, CDF	In no circumstance is death or injury a necessary, required, or appropriate outcome of training. In no circumstance is that the case. And whilst I accept, in our profession, there will never be a circumstance on operations where risk is wholly mitigated, we train to build and develop our people and our capability to then employ it in circumstances of risk where we can only mitigate so much, and our enemy also has a vote in operational conduct.'
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	*The review found that this message and intent is undermined by the assumptions, traditions, and norms...*
[REDACTED]	DEF.1167.0009.0001	*Enterprise Business Committee, February 2023.* It is recommended that the Enterprise Business Committee.

		a. **Endorse** the proposed Safety Behaviour Review Implementation Plan at Attachment C b. **Endorse** a change to WHS Enterprise reporting to establish bi-annual updates to the Enterprise Business Committee and more focussed due diligence reporting to the Defence Committee (Attachment E)
[REDACTED: The Commonwealth has not authorised the full or partial publication of this material].	Safety Behaviour Review	[17] This review attracted extensive feedback on several of the recommendations. Whilst the WHS Board agreed on the importance of understanding Defence's safety culture, there was some concern that the recommendations of the Review did not address the complexity of the Defence context. To mitigate these concerns, an implementation plan was developed giving Defence the flexibility to address the intent of the Safety Behaviour Review, whilst also working with Groups and Services to tailor to the Defence context.
Defence Safety Implementation Plan	WHS Strategy: *DEF 1167.0009.0037*	WHS Strategy: Launch the WHS Strategy 2023-2028 – On Track.
Defence SLG 360-Degree Assessment: Headline Observations on Group Trends and Themes	--	--
Defence Culture Strategic Plan	Design and Activate the Integrated Culture Network System – DEF.1233.0002.1913	Senior Executives to understand the role of the Network and how to access, leverage and enable the horizontal channels of collaboration.

Witness: Deputy Secretary Justine Grieg		
Parties	**Question**	**Comments**
Peter Singleton	Would you assert that your most important role, as Deputy Secretary for Defence People Group, is to prevent harm or suicide to ADF personnel, during or after service?	Yes
	Why hasn't it [suicide] been addressed expressly?	It has been addressed in the People and Defence Strategy 2021-2027.
	Are those strategies operative now?	No.
	Do you recognise this chart to summarise the organisational structure of Defence?	Yes,
	Where does suicide prevention, suicidality, and addressing suicidal behaviour lie?	In the documents provided, it includes, the CDF Secretary-Directive, the New Peoples System, now-until 1 November, there is a transition-period. This chart may change, and currently, in terms of responsibilities for suicide management and Joint Health Command, and prevention, these responsibilities have been moved to myself and Brigadier Kait Langford, in the Mental Health Branch.
		Significant change and establishment New Peoples Systems, and of appointment of General Fox.
	Are you and General Fox the only diarchy and cooperation different from other portfolios?	Yes. Together, we will deliver what is required for the entire Peoples System and improve capabilities for ADF and Defence.
	With this transition, what effects will it have?	Employment lifecycle of ADF Members, bringing recruiting, employment, and transition life cycle. It is intentional. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Branch will work with WHS and Brigadier Langford's branch to highlight pyscho-social risks.
		It is possible there will be further changes to these organisational constructs – at the time – this was deemed the best approach. These changes were to improve coherence, and to plan. One-line, clear responsibility rather than having responsibilities dispersed.
	To whom does General Fox report?	The Chief of Defence – direct line.

	With all these Committees, how do you know how conflicting or contradictory decisions are made?	A Secretariat does some of that work.
	How much time in a week, or a month, does it take, for you to attend all these Committees?	Attending committees per month: three days Briefing or reading per month: three days
	Is it necessary or desirable to be on so many Committees?	There needs to be a balance – at times – different representatives could be used.
	Is the term 'suicide' within People Management Services?	It should encapsulate that – yes.
	Does the DPC monitor whether its decisions are ever implemented?	Programmatically, yes. Trying to modernise our policies to ensure they are contemporary. We aim to categorise changes that have been ongoing – there is a feedback loop there, from policy teams to myself. Does this happen in all cases? No.
	For receiving feedback on the systems and policies, do you need to do it yourself, or do you hear it anecdotally or hear it ad hoc, or received through your 'Town Hall' meetings?	Strategy Performance Risk Committee will look at monthly workforce reports; the granular level is based on the project level – but in some cases, there are superior reviews.
	Have you had feedback on whether the 2018-2023 strategy was successful?	We had two meetings – feedback was largely in terms of actions and programmes delivered through the strategy, rather than specific metrics. We received a description of what had been done, rather than an evaluation that outlined the outcomes.
	Why did you receive two bi-annual reports in four years, instead of eight?	Those reports outlined the evaluation and implementation of those programmes – we will leverage what comes from those reports, in terms of the new strategy. Biannual reporting should have been undertaken.
Peter Singleton	Is there a reason that so many reports have been delayed? Were there mechanisms in place to ensure they were being followed up?	Covid, but there shouldn't be an excuse.
	Who has authority to amend Frameworks?	The Enterprise Committee can consider and approve amendments. The Committee can identify trends and attempt to mitigate those risks such as unacceptable behaviour and worrying behaviours that are flagged across the ADF.

	We have identified that suicide behaviours and attempts have been alarmingly high at Robertson Barracks – has this come to the attention – or any other Barracks – been identified as a place of concern?	No, but the surveillance work that we know needs to be done, has an approved analysis through data retention and collection. We have put in place. We are aiming to identify those hotspots and DPC has not yet identified Robertson Barracks.
	Does DPC monitor separation from ADF?	The Workplace Report discusses figures, but it is not always discussed – nor, separation rates.
	Will metrics or KPIs be introduced to improve outcomes?	Yes – they are called Key Identifying Outcomes, from memory.
Commissioner Brown	Does Defence always decide and then figure out what it wants to achieve from that decision?	We are trying to move faster and are mindful that there have been things that have taken too long. Using strategic guidance, intent, and guiding authorities, we are to invoke those. We aim to have an understanding of outcomes when decisions are made.
	Can you please determine what 'unacceptable behaviours' are and how they are flagged?	We were flagging unacceptable behaviours and some increases, for the last quarters' report. The nature of those trends was a high number of incidents in Navy. These reports were always available with WHS data however, we have only recently included 'unacceptable behaviour' reporting but have implemented ways to highlight group and service reports; categories of behaviour; number of incidents.
	Where does the feedback go?	Not to me – I do not get that loop.
	Is there any data around Defence APS staff – we understand that you have data on ADF personnel, but is there any oversighting, and how, suicides of Defence APS members?	WHS and Peoples Group audits APS mental health and wellbeing function – which we learnt a lot from. The APS branch monitors the APS service psycho-social risks and trends, and they report to Peoples Services Division, and to myself – they are in the same Division as the Mental Health Branch. There are dependencies to benefit outcomes, monitoring and reporting.
Commissioner Kaldas	In relation to promotions and suitability – one of the issues is where people are accused of unacceptable behaviour – where they are still able to progress?	It took many years to address complaints, and systemic problems, because systemic reform were seen to be adequate. The Fit and Proper Person Test sees another step – another important step – because of the failure, or inadequacies of the issues that DART Policies and Directives were aimed at.
	Fit and Proper Person Test introduced in September 2022, which aimed to ensure that there weren't opportunities for people who abused.	It is additional too, and we should have done it earlier. It should have always been enacted.
	Is there a reason it took so long to introduce these protections?	
Commissioner Brown	Is it standard practice within Defence to write Implementation Plans where there are many recommendations?	Unusual if it was a Review (external) - depending on the nature of the Review - this was self-generated. The Implementation Plan had focus areas which intended to identify areas and series of concerns.
	Was the intent of pursuing and rectifying these issues actioned and achieved?	That was about having recommendations and then moving forward to an Implementation Plan, or similar, without revisiting each recommendation. The intent of recommendations is not always followed through with or rejected by the Department or the Government.
	What is stopping communication from being achieved, or improved upon, what is now required? When was it identified?	The data that we have has been communicated. The Senior Leadership Day saw me speak to this data, we are enacting a Culture Hub with additional twelve staff which will receive the focus and attention it requires.

	Would you agree that there are multiple cultures within the ADF and its branches?	Yes.
Peter Singleton	Do ADF leaders have a role – a significant role – in achieving or impacting the culture of the ADF?	Yes.
	Are you aware of the propensity of Commanders to attribute an upward line to good reporting culture rather than a culture that propels bullying?	The data is more likely willing to report and identify good reporting lines – however, they are complex to interpret fully and properly.
Commissioner Kaldas	Please give us a rundown on how accountability is going to be introduced?	The data provided will allow us to improve accountability and improve areas of high-risk which we can prevent, rather than intervene.
Commissioner Brown:	Organisational stressors are likely to cause distress. The operational business being separated from Mental Health and Wellbeing, how can reassurance be provided that these structures are going to come together to achieve change in a timely way?	The structure with Joint Health Command will come together under the Chief Health Officer – under Deputy Secretary Defence People Group – the Branch will focus its number one priority on ADF and APS suicidality, and closely work with WHS, DVA, and Mental Health and Wellbeing. Looking at suicide and mental health is multifactorial, and these complex stand-alone units are being brought together for cohesiveness and with an aim for better outcomes.
	Should people who cannot deliver in three years be out of their position?	Being accountable is important however these changes will exceed three years. Any changes may cause further disruptions.
	Have you identified areas of skill shortages?	Yes, mostly typical there are shortage with highly technical positions.
	Have you been held accountable for the failure to reach targets?	I have been held to account for elements of failures – I am held to account and performance statements which have been independently contributed to. Feedback, reports, actions that must need to be taken, suggested improvement. It's an element of an accountability system.