Your Address

The Date

Committee Secretary  
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee  
Department of Senate  
Po Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Email: fadt.sen@aph.gov.au

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

Dear Committee,

Schedule 9 of the Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025 must be completely rescinded from current legislation. This is not a matter of making amendments or improvements - the entire framework is so fundamentally compromised that it cannot be salvaged.

**THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF FIXING SCHEDULE 9**

Many will suggest that Schedule 9 can be "fixed" through amendments. This approach is doomed to fail for two critical reasons:

* the same people who created this compromised legislation would be responsible for writing any "fixes."
* Most importantly, schedule 9 suffers from a complete absence of deliberate, transparent design. This legislation was not drafted transparently, nor was it properly considered by all stakeholders.

The government:

* Avoided consultation with veteran organisations on oversight design
* Ignored input from families affected by veteran suicide
* Attempted to excluded parliamentary scrutiny through embedding it in healthcare legislation at the 11th hour

The legislation was developed behind closed doors by the very entities it purports to regulate, the Minister and DVA. No transparent design process occurred. No deliberate consideration of stakeholder needs took place. No genuine consultation with those most affected by veteran suicide was undertaken.

This fundamental failure in process means that Schedule 9 is not merely poorly written - it is illegitimate in its very conception. Legislation affecting veteran lives and deaths cannot be developed without veteran input. Oversight mechanisms cannot be designed by those they are meant to oversee.

**THE PRECEDENT OF ACCEPTING COMPROMISE**

If the veteran community accepts Schedule 9 with minor amendments, we establish a dangerous precedent: the government can ignore Royal Commission recommendations as long as they provide the appearance of compliance.

This sends a clear message that veteran lives are negotiable, that independence is optional, and that the government can deceive the veteran, and any subsequent, community without consequences. Future governments may point to veteran acceptance of Schedule 9 as justification for further compromises.

The Royal Commission cost $200 million and took three years to complete. If we accept this betrayal of its most important recommendation, we signal that Royal Commissions are meaningless exercises that can be ignored with impunity.

**THE IMPACT ON FUTURE VETERANS**

Everyday Schedule 9 remains in force, it legitimizes fake independence and compromised oversight. Future veterans will inherit a system designed to protect government interests rather than veteran lives.

The systemic failures identified by the Royal Commission will continue because genuine oversight is impossible under Schedule 9. Veterans will continue to face:

* Inadequate support systems
* Bureaucratic delays and denials
* Lack of accountability for government failures
* Continued high suicide rates

By accepting Schedule 9, we condemn future generations of veterans to the same failures that have cost so many lives.

**THE GOVERNMENT'S CALCULATION**

The government embedded Schedule 9 in healthcare legislation because they calculated that veterans would:

* Not notice the betrayal among other legislative changes
* Accept compromise rather than fight for genuine independence
* Lack the energy to demand complete rescission
* Eventually legitimize the compromised Commissioner

They are betting on veteran apathy and resignation. They expect us to accept fake independence because fighting for real independence requires sustained effort.

I ask that you rescind the legislation and not amend it. It needs to be designed through transparent consultation.

Regards,

Signature

Your name