



Mr Les Dwyer  
National President  
Naval Association of Australia  
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Dear Mr Dwyer

### **Ambulance and Hospital Arrangements for the Veteran Community**

I am writing to inform you of proposed changes to the arrangements which the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) has in place for the delivery of ambulance services, and for the proposed extension of Hospital Services Arrangements with State and Territory governments until June 2012.

#### **Ambulance Services**

Currently DVA contracts with individual States and Territories and a small number of private providers for ambulance services for eligible Gold and White Card holders. The new arrangements will put in place a single new agreement with each State and Territory for a simplified and uniform approach to subsidising the costs of these services.

It is proposed that the changes will commence on 1 July 2010. From that date, each State and Territory will be paid the same amount per eligible card holder in their jurisdiction.

The new arrangements will apply to all emergency and non-emergency services. An exception is the Royal Flying Doctor Service which is separately funded by the Australian Government.

The Australian Government remains committed to subsidising the costs of ambulance services for eligible veterans. These changes will not impact on veterans' access to ambulance services - they will continue to access services in line with the service arrangements operating within individual jurisdictions. It is expected that veterans will notice no change in services.

The current ambulance arrangements with DVA are complex and cumbersome to administer. With every jurisdiction, DVA deals with different fees, different formulas for calculating payments and varying levels of subsidy. Data collection and administration is costly both for DVA and service providers. These changes will ensure national consistency and a more streamlined approach between DVA and individual States and Territories.

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In Western Australia and Tasmania, DVA contracts with some private ambulance providers in addition to the main ambulance provider who services the general community. DVA will be negotiating with those governments to confirm that there is no diminution in services to eligible veterans.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Alan Griffin MP, has written to States and Territories outlining the new arrangements. The arrangements which currently operate will remain in place until July 2010.

### **Hospital Services Arrangements**

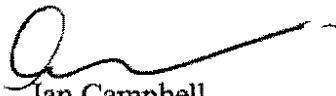
Minister Griffin has also written to States and Territories about the current Hospital Services Arrangements.

Given the context of health reform now underway, the Australian Government intends to extend the existing Hospital Services Arrangements for an interim period until 30 June 2012.

It is proposed that this extension could operate through a deed of variation, extending the Arrangement's duration, and setting payment arrangements for the period.

Should you have any queries about this announcement, the contact in DVA is Ms Judy Daniel, National Manager Primary Care Policy Group on (02) 6289 6418 or by email [judy.daniel@dva.gov.au](mailto:judy.daniel@dva.gov.au) .

Yours sincerely



Ian Campbell

Secretary

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