



7 February 2020

Guy Barnett, Minister for Veterans' Affairs

## Honouring and supporting our veterans

The Tasmanian majority Liberal Government is committed to supporting Tasmania's veterans and ex-serving personnel and honouring the sacrifice of our servicemen and women.

We welcome the Federal Government's announcement yesterday that a permanent National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention will be established.

Veterans and current serving men and women protect our community and nation in often difficult or dangerous situations. Their mental health and wellbeing is an issue of national importance.

The establishment of an immediate, independent review of historical veteran suicide cases by the Commissioner and delivery of an annual Veteran and Defence Suicide Death Report to the Federal Parliament are also welcomed. The Tasmanian Government will work with the Commissioner to ensure that the wellbeing of our veterans and ex-serving personnel is prioritised.

The Commissioner's work sits alongside our commitments to help support the wellbeing of our veterans and ex-serving personnel through our \$225,000 Active Recreation Program and \$100,000 Dago Point Retreat.

The Active Recreation Program provides an outdoor recreation experience for returned service personnel in a National Park environment with a focus on mental health and wellbeing, and links to training pathways and employment in outdoor education or eco-tourism. The Program will be conducted by Point Assist, a veteran run training organisation, with expressions of interest for the first course currently sought. More information is available at [www.pointassist.com.au/varp](http://www.pointassist.com.au/varp)

The Dago Point project aims to provide veterans and their families with a retreat at Lake Sorell, in Tasmania's highlands which supports positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

Expressions of interest from not-for-profit organisations to develop the retreat, by renovating a former Parks and Wildlife Service shack, are currently sought.

The successful applicant will receive \$100,000 to support the renovations needed to make the retreat a reality. Guidelines and application forms are available from Communities Tasmania website [www.communities.tas.gov.au/csr](http://www.communities.tas.gov.au/csr)

The Tasmanian Government will continue to work with the Federal Government to support our veterans and ex-serving personnel and honour their service.