

David Harris

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty
Minister for Gaming and Racing
Minister for Veterans
Minister for Medical Research
Minister for the Central Coast

**Jodie Harrison**

Minister for Women
Minister for Seniors
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Media Release

Australian-first women veterans research project to help address support needs

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The Minns Labor Government is conducting an Australian-first research project to improve wellbeing support services for women veterans in the State, in partnership with RSL NSW and Monash University.

An action of the recently-launched NSW Veterans Strategy 2025-2030, the *Shaping Support Services for Women Veterans* project will explore how veteran wellbeing services may be tailored to the needs of former servicewomen in NSW.

With a growing number of women veterans it is important to understand the challenges they face when using these services.

The research will include a survey and interviews with women veterans to learn about their experiences, challenges, and further support needs.

The survey will ask women veterans about what's important to them and what areas need to be improved, including balancing caregiving responsibilities, dealing with women's specific health needs, and managing service-related physical and mental health issues.

According to the 2021 ABS Census data, NSW is home to 127,600 ADF veterans, 11.7% of who are women (14,923). At the time of the census, 3,876 women were serving full-time in the ADF, with an additional 1,183 in the Reserves. Together, they accounted for 20% of the total currently serving ADF personnel.

Participation in the research is voluntary and includes an online anonymous survey to capture data on the experiences of women veterans accessing veteran-specific services, and an optional follow up interview that allows participants to expand on their responses and experiences.

For more information and to participate in the survey visit: www.monash.edu/medicine/women-veterans-support/research

To read the NSW Veterans Strategy 2025-2030 visit: <https://www.veterans.nsw.gov.au/about-us/nsw-veterans-strategy/>

Minister for Veterans David Harris said:

"The NSW Government is partnering with RSL NSW and Monash University to conduct an Australian-first project that gives a voice to women veterans while shaping plans for veteran-specific wellbeing support options in NSW.

"As the number of women in the veteran community continues to grow, it is essential that veteran wellbeing services which were historically designed with men in mind, evolve to address the unique needs of all genders.

"This new program is an action of our new 5-year NSW Veterans Strategy to support the wellbeing of veterans and their families and acknowledge their vital contribution to NSW."

Minister for Women Jodie Harrison said:

"NSW is home to almost 15,000 female veterans and this research project is all about ensuring their voices are heard.

"We know women are making a significant contribution in roles traditionally occupied by men whether it be in the Air Force, Army or Navy.

"Veterans have made significant sacrifices to uphold the defence of our nation and deserve to know that all levels of government value them."

RSL NSW CEO Giles Hurst said:

"RSL NSW is proud to be working with the NSW Government to progress this innovative research project to ensure women veterans have access to the tailored support services that they need.

"Importantly, this work will be informed by the experiences of women who have served in the Australian Defence Force, including the challenges they have encountered when accessing support services. This is critical to ensuring some 20,000 current and former servicewomen who reside in NSW have timely access to high-quality services into the future."

RAAF veteran and President of the Defence Force Welfare Association, Del Gaudry CSC said:

"Women veterans represent a growing segment of the veteran population, yet our experiences and needs have historically been underrepresented in veteran support services. Women veterans are more likely to have faced issues around sexual trauma, reproductive health issues and mental health conditions.

"To provide more tailored services to women veterans, relevant data is needed to support and shape services specifically for women. I believe this survey will underscore the commitment to addressing the unique needs and challenges which can differ significantly from those of our male counterparts."

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