

# Veterans Employment Program

## 12 month report

October 2018 – September 2019



# Message from the Acting Minister for Veterans

**The Honourable Geoff Lee MP,  
NSW Acting Minister for  
Veterans**



I am proud of the NSW Government's Veterans Employment Program which assists veterans transitioning out of the Australian Defence Force.

The Program is designed with two key aims – to communicate with veterans about working in the NSW public sector, and to build a network of collaborators who advocate for the transferable skills veterans bring to the workforce.

The Veterans Employment Program was extended in November 2018 for a further four years, with the Premier setting the public sector a target of hiring an additional 1,000 veterans by 2023. I am pleased to say the NSW Government is on track to meet this target, and I look forward to seeing the Program continue to excel in supporting NSW's servicemen and servicewomen. As the Minister for TAFE, I am also pleased that our Veterans Education Program is helping veterans to access further education and training.

# Executive summary

The NSW Government was the first state to commit to a Veterans Employment Program (VEP). Launched on 5 May 2016, VEP's initial aim was to support 200 veterans find employment within the NSW public sector by 2019.

By October 2018, 831 veterans had either found work or been offered a new role. As a result of this success, the Program was extended and a new target set for the public sector to hire an additional 1,000 veterans into roles by 2023.

We are pleased to report the public sector has made excellent progress. **519 veterans accepted roles during this reporting period, exceeding the yearly target of 250.**<sup>1,2,4</sup> The majority of these hires were in the Stronger Communities (57%), Transport (17%) and Planning, Industry and Environment (11%) clusters. In addition to the number of hires, the overall success rate of veterans securing roles improved significantly, from 4.11% at 31 March 2019 to 8.74% by 30 September 2019.<sup>3,4,5</sup>

The Public Service Commission's (PSC) 2019 People Matter Employee Survey results have given us further insight to veterans working in the public sector. Of 2,855 veteran respondents, 26% have worked in the public sector for 10–20 years and 19% have been employed for more than 20 years, higher than the public sector average.

As a communications and education platform, VEP's collaborators across all levels of government and industry are crucial to its ongoing success and impact. In the last year we have strengthened partnerships with agencies including the PSC, TAFE NSW, the Office of Local Government, Local Government NSW and the Australian Defence Force.

The success of the Local Government Rank to Grade Guide and Veterans Education Program has strengthened our commitment to help veterans gain meaningful, ongoing employment.

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  - 2 Includes internal hires (candidates who identified as existing NSW public sector employees) and new hires (candidates who did not identify as existing NSW public sector employees)
  - 3 Excludes data collected by NSW Department of Industry external to Taleo (recruitment management system)
  - 4 No data available for Local Health Districts
  - 5 Success rate includes job postings that were cancelled

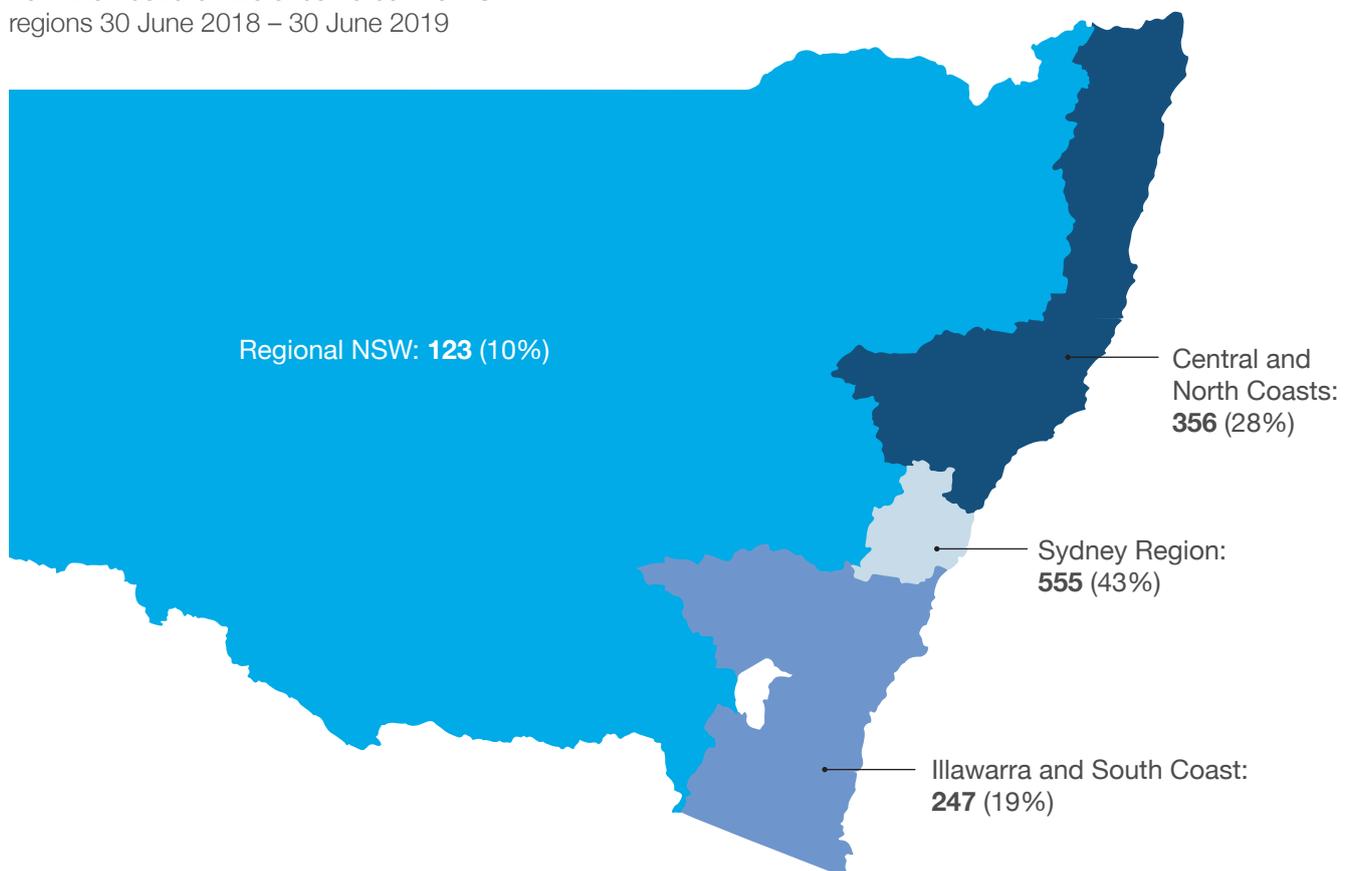
# The veteran landscape

In 2017, a Roundtable of Australian Veterans' Ministers agreed that a veteran would be defined as anyone who has served at least one day in the Australian Defence Force (ADF).<sup>1</sup>

The median length of time spent in the military is seven years for members of the Navy and Army, and 10 years for members of the Air Force.<sup>2</sup>

Between five and six thousand ADF personnel discharge from the military each year. From 30 June 2018 to 30 June 2019 5,617 members separated from the ADF.<sup>3</sup> Approximately 1,200 of those ex-serving ADF members indicated a NSW postcode as their discharge destination.

Approx. number of veterans discharging from the Australian Defence Force into NSW regions 30 June 2018 – 30 June 2019



The Australian Government's Transition Taskforce was established in 2017 to identify barriers to effective transition.

The Taskforce ran an online survey from 26 May to 4 June 2017 and received 447 responses. 400 of the responders were former ADF members, 14 were from veteran support organisations and 33 identified as family or friends of an ADF member.

50% of the responders stated the hardest aspect of transition to civilian life was adjusting to their new circumstances. 35% found finding a job the hardest aspect.<sup>4</sup>

The Transition Taskforce found that some veterans had low confidence in their employability and, in comparison to their military career, experienced limited success securing meaningful post-ADF employment.<sup>5</sup> The Taskforce also outlined the ADF's intention to reinstate post-transition surveys<sup>6</sup> to better understand the time taken to secure civilian roles after discharging.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's report *A profile of Australia's veterans 2018* referred to the ABS 2014–15 National Health Survey's results showing 62% of working age people (aged 18–64) who served in the ADF were employed and working full time, with a further 13% working part time (ABS 2016).<sup>7</sup>

It is clear the way in which personnel transition from the military to civilian employment is an important determinant of long-term wellbeing. The 2019 Productivity Commission Inquiry Report *A Better Way to Support Veterans* stated that there is “sound economic case for good transition support, as smooth transitions contribute to the wellbeing of veterans and their families, potentially increase labour force participation, and reduce reliance on other forms of government support”.<sup>8</sup>

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1 'A Better Way to Support Veterans', *Productivity Commission Inquiry Report Overview & Recommendations*, No. 93, 27 June 2019, Commonwealth of Australia, p. 7

2 'A Better Way to Support Veterans', *Productivity Commission Inquiry Report Overview & Recommendations*, No. 93, 27 June 2019, Commonwealth of Australia, p. 9

3 *Defence Annual Report 2018–19*, Chapter 6, Strategic Workforce Management, p. 93

4 *Transition Taskforce: Improving the transition experience*, Department of Veterans' Affairs, Canberra, 2018, p. 83

5 *Transition Taskforce: Improving the transition experience*, Department of Veterans' Affairs, Canberra, 2018, p. 6

6 *Transition Taskforce: Improving the transition experience*, Department of Veterans' Affairs, Canberra, 2018, p. 92

7 *A profile of Australia's veterans 2018*, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 28 Nov 2018, p.30

8 'A Better Way to Support Veterans', *Productivity Commission Inquiry Report Overview & Recommendations*, No. 93, 27 June 2019, Commonwealth of Australia, p. 31

# What VEP does

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring that our veterans, past and present, are honoured with dignity and respect.

The Veterans Employment Program is administered by the NSW Office for Veterans Affairs (OVA), which is part of the Stronger Communities cluster. OVA manages state programs commemorating and assisting veterans in collaboration with all NSW Government agencies, the Commonwealth and community stakeholders. The Employment Program is one of the key strategies to support veterans in their transition to civilian life.

**VEP supports veterans.** We create tools to assist veterans with their public sector job search. We provide eligible veterans with financial assistance for their vocational study. In the reporting period we spoke to more than 500 veterans at Australian Defence Force Member and Family Transition Seminars. 121 veterans reached out to us via our digital channels. VEP has provided almost \$50,000 to meet the costs of TAFE NSW course fees for 16 veterans.

**VEP supports hiring managers.** In the reporting period we met with 141 hiring managers and human resource specialists to better understand recruitment challenges and career pathways unique to each cluster. We shared 77 job opportunities across our digital channels to help hiring managers attract high-quality veteran candidates.

**VEP supports the NSW Government to meet their veteran employment targets.** Our Champions Network grew from 95 to 189 members during the reporting period. We will continue to build a network of supporters and partners to collaborate with us, promote our initiatives and the skills veterans can bring to the public sector.

The VEP team's focus is on increasing awareness of the Program, strengthening partnerships, and finding more ways to connect with veterans across the state.

# Target tracking



**519 more veterans**  
hired from Oct 2018 to Sept 2019



**831 veterans hired from 2016 to 2018**<sup>1,2,4</sup>

**2023**

**NSW GOVERNMENT TARGET**  
1,000 veterans hired into NSW  
public sector roles by 2023

**2019**

519 veterans have been hired in  
total during the reporting period –  
**more than double the 12 month  
target of 250 hires.**<sup>1,2,4</sup>

**APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2019**  
350 veterans accept roles in the  
NSW public sector.<sup>1,2,4</sup>

**OCTOBER 2018 – MARCH 2019**  
169 veterans accept roles in the  
NSW public sector.<sup>1,2,4</sup>

**2018**

**11 NOVEMBER 2018**  
VEP celebrates the successful  
employment of 831 veterans in  
the NSW public sector 2016–2018.

The Government sets a new target  
for the public sector to hire an  
additional 1,000 veterans by 2023.

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- 2 Includes internal hires (candidates who identified as existing NSW public sector employees) and new hires (candidates who did not identify as existing NSW public sector employees)
- 3 Employment figures for October 2018 – March 2019 include data collected by NSW Department of Industry external to Taleo (recruitment management system)
- 4 No data available for Local Health Districts

# Target tracking at a glance



The veteran application  
**success rate more than doubled**

from 4.11% at 31 March 2019  
to 8.74% by 30 September 2019<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>



**519** veterans  
have been  
successfully hired<sup>1,2,3</sup>

Clusters with the highest  
percentage of veteran hires<sup>1,2,3</sup>



**57%**

by Stronger Communities



**17%** by Transport



**11%** by Planning, Industry & Environment



**10%** by Education<sup>3</sup>

**47%** of total hires

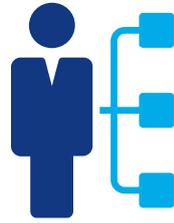


were external  
candidates, an  
increase of 13%  
in the reporting  
period<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>

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- 3 No data available for Local Health Districts
- 4 Excludes data collected by NSW Department of Industry external to Taleo (recruitment management system)
- 5 Success rate includes job postings that were cancelled
- 6 17% of veteran applications had withdrawn or missing responses to the gender question



**63%**  
of veterans  
accepted Entry Level or  
Team Member roles<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>



**12%**  
of veterans  
accepted Team Leader  
or Manager roles<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>

**70%**   
of veterans hired  
identified as male<sup>1,2,3,6</sup>

**13%**   
identified as female<sup>1,2,3,6</sup>

The public sector exceeded the  
Government's yearly veteran  
employment target by

**107%**



**54%**  
of veterans<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>  
accepted roles in  
the Sydney Region<sup>3,4</sup>

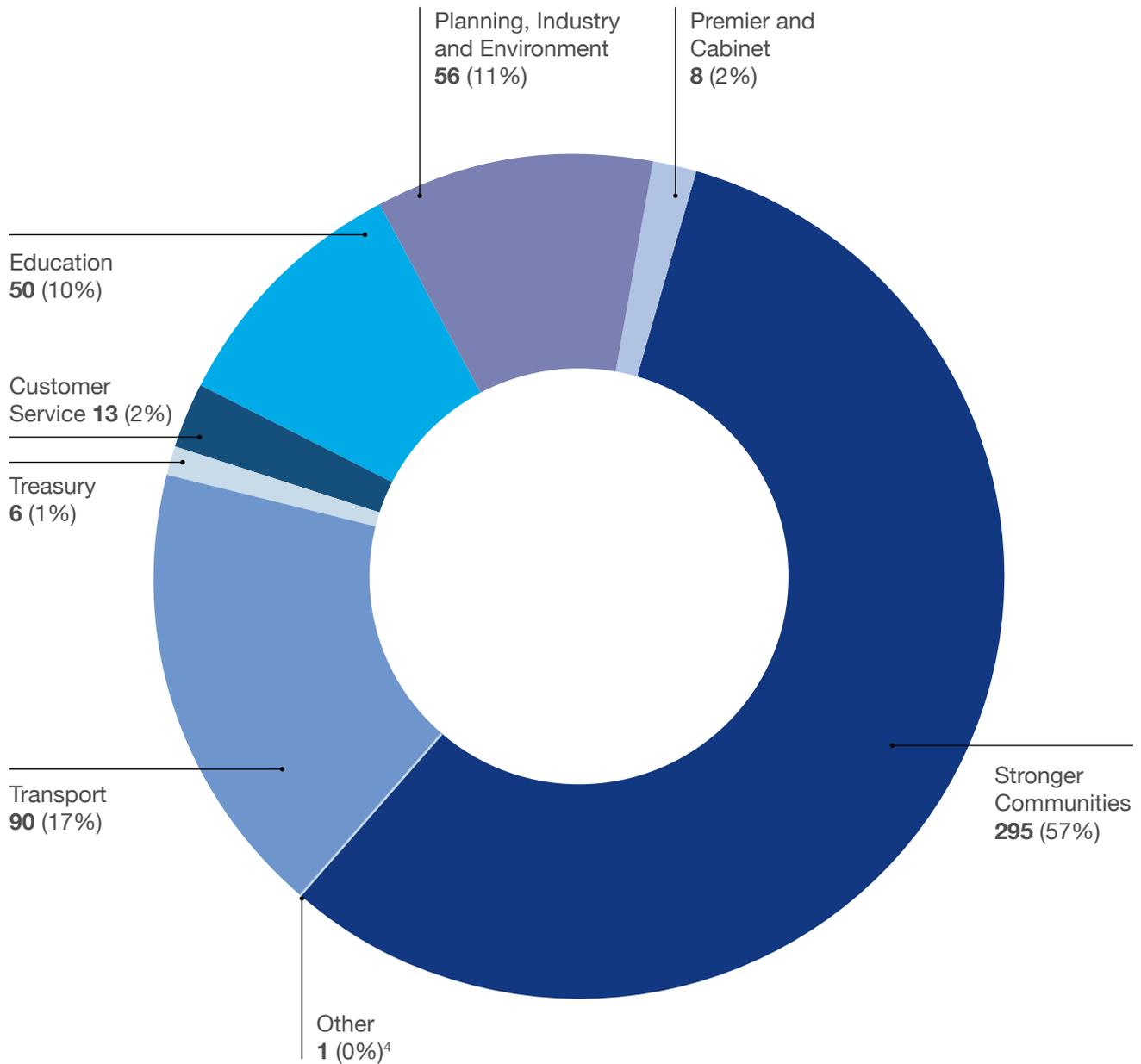


**18%**   
of veterans  
accepted roles in Regional NSW – this  
area also had the highest application  
success rate at 10.9%<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

# Target tracking

## VETERAN HIRES PER CLUSTER

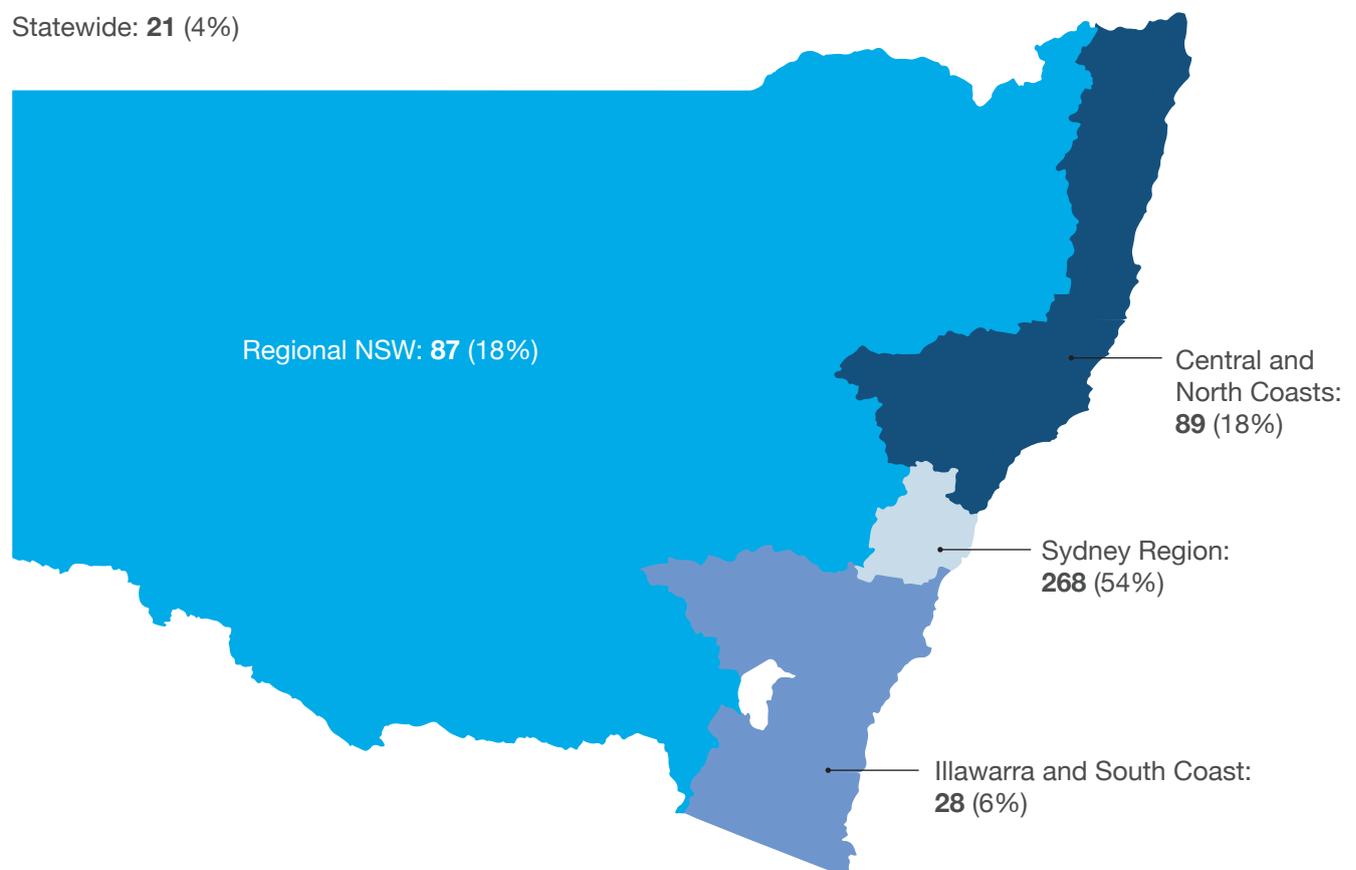
October 2018 – September 2019<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>



## VETERAN HIRES PER REGION

October 2018 – September 2019<sup>1,2,3,4,5,6</sup>

Statewide: **21** (4%)



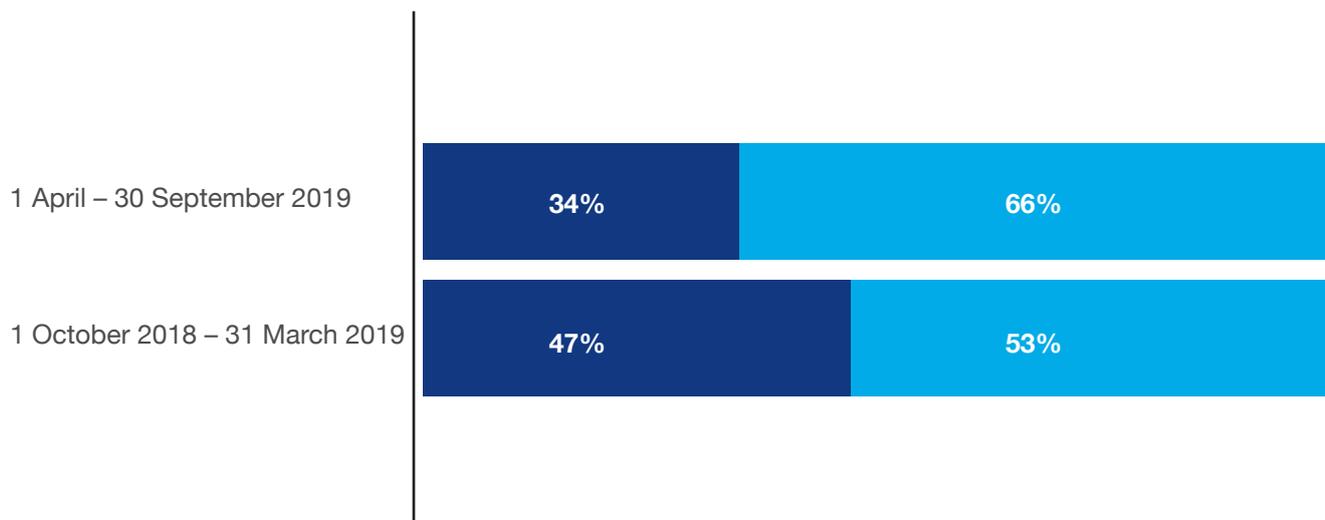
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- 3 No data available for Local Health Districts
- 4 Includes public sector entities that do not align to a cluster
- 5 Excludes data collected by NSW Department of Industry external to Taleo (recruitment management system)
- 6 *Statewide* refers to those roles where job location is advertised as Statewide during recruitment

# Target tracking

## PERCENTAGE OF NEW HIRES VS INTERNAL HIRES

New hires (candidates who did not identify as existing NSW public sector employees) and internal hires (candidates who identify as existing NSW public sector employees) April – September 2019 compared to October 2018 – March 2019<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>

- % of new hires
- % of internal hires

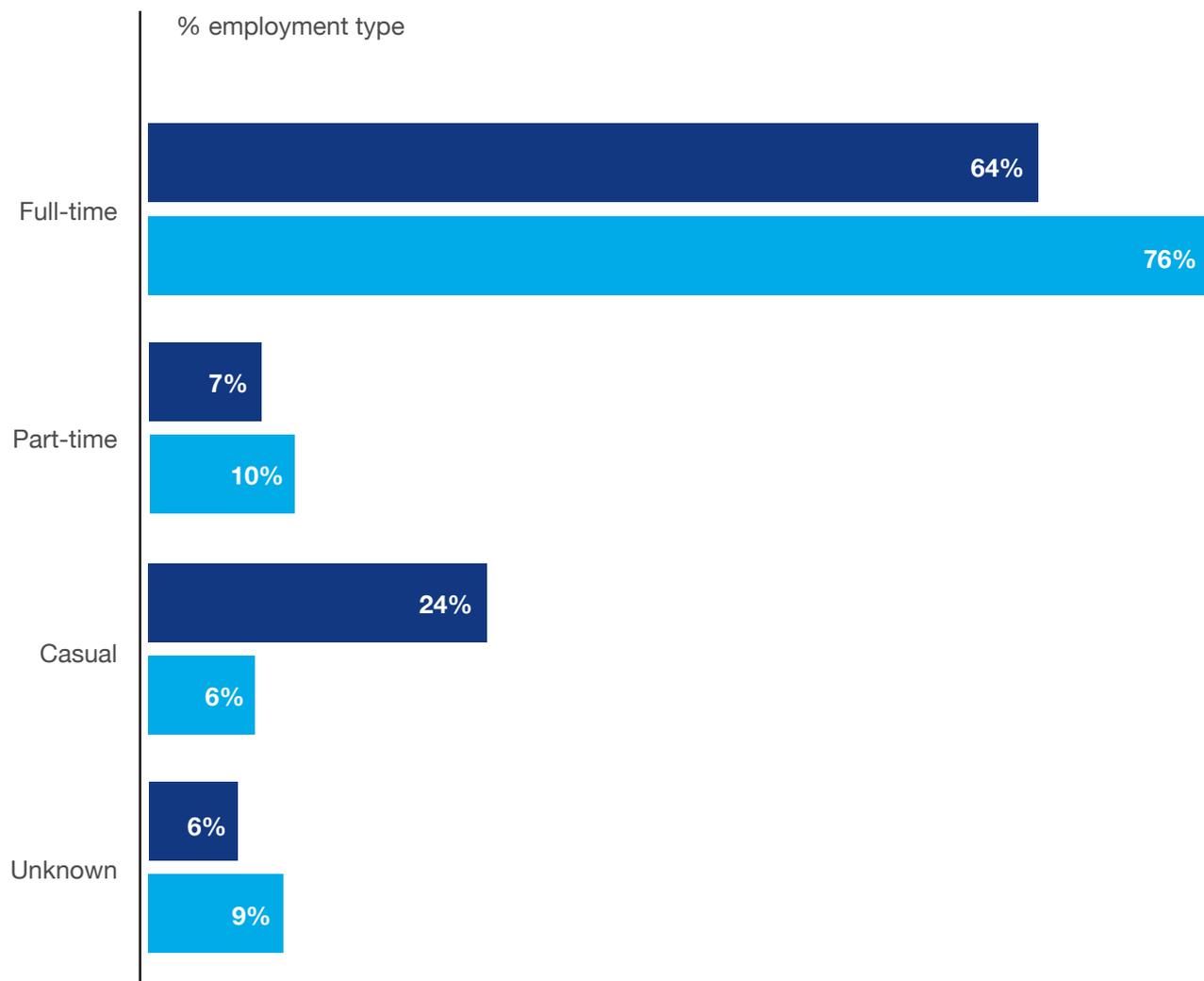


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## VETERAN HIRES BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE

April – September 2019 compared to October 2018 – March 2019<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>

- % employment type 1 April – 30 September 2019
- % employment type 1 October 2018 – 31 March 2019



# 2019 People Matter Employee Survey (PMES)

The online NSW People Matter Employee Survey was open to all employees across the NSW public sector from 30 May to 28 June 2019.

The survey provided an important opportunity for almost 400,000 employees to comment on their workplace and to help make the public sector a better place to work.

The survey was coordinated by the Public Service Commission (PSC) in collaboration with public sector departments and agencies.<sup>1</sup>

## Veterans working in the NSW public sector

In line with VEP's strategic focus to better understand the veteran landscape, the PSC has aggregated 2019 survey responses to gender, age, type of work, salary and tenure to give insight to veterans working in the public sector.

2,855 employees identified as a veteran in the 2019 survey, compared to 2,724 employees in 2018.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2019 PMES; <https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/reports-data/people-matter-employee-survey> PSC, 2019.  
<sup>2</sup> Respondents answered yes to Q15 *Have you ever been a serving full time member of the Australian Defence Force, or a reservist on full time continuous service?*  
<sup>3</sup> *Women in the ADF Report 2017-18*; <https://www.defence.gov.au/annualreports/17-18/Downloads/WomenInTheADFReport2017-18.pdf> Australian Defence Force, 2018, pp. VI

GENDER	% VETERAN RESPONDENTS	% NSW PUBLIC SECTOR
Male	76%	34%
Female	22%	64%
Other	2%	2%

76% of veteran respondents working in the public sector identify as male while 22% identify as female. The PMES results highlight noticeable differences in the gender ratio between veteran respondents and the rest of the public sector. It is important to note these results are consistent with the recent *Women in the ADF Report*, which shows women made up just 17.9% of the ADF workforce in 2017/18. The report also details the ADF's commitment to improving gender diversity, women in leadership and retention amongst servicewomen.<sup>3</sup>

AGE GROUP	% VETERAN RESPONDENTS	% NSW PUBLIC SECTOR
15-34 years	14%	25%
35-54 years	56%	54%
55+ years	30%	21%

The PMES results show only 14% of veterans working in the public sector are 15-34 years old. Interestingly, 30% of veteran respondents are 55+ compared with 21% in the rest of the public sector.

TYPE OF WORK	% VETERAN RESPONDENTS	% NSW PUBLIC SECTOR
Service delivery <sup>1</sup>	50%	50%
Other service delivery work <sup>2</sup>	15%	10%
Administrative support <sup>3</sup>	4%	9%
Corporate services <sup>4</sup>	5%	8%
Policy	1%	2%
Research	1%	1%
Program and project management support	5%	7%
Legal <sup>5</sup>	1%	1%
Other	18%	12%

The PMES results show veterans are engaged in similarly diverse roles when compared to the rest of the public sector. A noticeably higher percentage of veterans (15%) perform “Other service delivery work” which includes (but is not limited to) maintenance, technical support, catering and cleaning.

SALARY	% VETERAN RESPONDENTS	% NSW PUBLIC SECTOR
\$83,402 and below	35%	39%
\$83,403 – \$108,043	30%	27%
\$108,044 – \$144,520	19%	18%
\$144,521 and above	16%	16%

The PMES results show salary ranges of veteran and non-veteran respondents are similar. A higher percentage of veterans (30%) indicated their salary range as \$83,403 – \$108,043. A slightly higher percentage (35%) of veterans earn more than \$108,044, compared to 34% of the public sector.

TENURE IN ORGANISATION	% VETERAN RESPONDENTS	% NSW PUBLIC SECTOR
Less than 1 year	12%	12%
1–2 years	9%	11%
2–5 years	18%	20%
5–10 years	16%	19%
10–20 years	26%	23%
More than 20 years	19%	15%

The PMES results show tenure amongst veterans is higher on average. 45% of veteran respondents indicated they have been working in the public sector for more than 10 years, compared to 38% of non-veteran respondents.

<sup>1</sup> Work that involves direct contact with the general public (e.g. teaching, nursing, policing, shopfront/counter service)

<sup>2</sup> Work that does not involve contact with the public, but is critical to the delivery of a service, e.g. maintenance, technical support, catering, cleaning/laundry

<sup>3</sup> For example, executive/personal assistant, receptionist

<sup>4</sup> For example, HR, finance, IT, ministerial or parliamentary processes

<sup>5</sup> Work that involves developing and/or reviewing legislation

# VEP supporters and collaborators

## The Public Sector Commission (PSC)

The Public Service Commissioner has signed the Veteran Employment Commitment on behalf of the NSW public sector. The PSC collects and analyses data to help VEP gain a clearer overview of the veteran employment landscape. The PSC's data also helps VEP to track the number of veteran hires against the Government's 2023 employment target.



*I am an Army veteran who has only recently accessed Veteran support services after a couple of decades. The Veteran's Employment Program is driven by people highly committed to the cause of veteran and national wellbeing through the placement of dedicated, committed employees into Governance services. A win-win situation for all. Can't recommend the programme often enough to enough people.*

**Mel, Former Captain, Australian Army and VEP Champion**

## The Champions Network

The Champions are a group of mentors and thought-leaders promoting VEP initiatives and supporting the VEP's core values of collaboration and communication.

Champions encourage hiring managers and recruiters to provide veterans with honest, constructive and specific feedback on job applications and interviews. To assist employers in doing this, VEP encourages veteran applicants to request feedback on three areas of their application relating to their cover letter, CV or selection criteria answers.

Champions also share suitable job vacancies for advertisements on VEP's social media channels. Our posts reach, on average, 600–1,200 Facebook and Instagram users.

VEP regularly communicates with the Champions Network and distributes quarterly updates. The team also hosts two networking events per year to bring the Champions together to share information and create new opportunities for veterans transitioning into civilian careers.

At the time of reporting the Champions Network has 189 members. VEP wants this network to grow to 250 members by mid-2020.

## **The Commonwealth**

The NSW State Government collaborates with the Commonwealth Department of Veterans Affairs and the Australian Defence Force to help ensure wellbeing for those personnel separating into NSW. NSW Government representatives attend Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministerial Council and Committee meetings, share program information, learnings and data as well as updates on the progress of various initiatives to support transition. VEP receives Commonwealth data and information that assists NSW initiatives.

VEP attends all NSW and ACT ADF Member and Family Transition seminars. The seminars provide an important opportunity to talk to personnel planning to discharge or discharging from the Defence Force and provide NSW public sector career information as well as other NSW Government education and training supports.

## **Other states and territories**

VEP has played an integral role in sharing information and collaborating with other veteran employment initiatives across industry and state governments, including the research, analysis and mapping tools used to develop the Rank to Grade Guides. Discussions have also been held with private sector stakeholders to support upcoming veteran initiatives to be launched in early 2020.

# Initiatives delivered



## The Veterans Education Program

VEP has partnered with TAFE NSW to support veterans who require further education and training to pursue a civilian career. The Education Program was initially designed to support at-risk veterans identified in the Commonwealth's Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee report *The Constant Battle: Suicide by Veterans*, August 2017.



*The Veterans Education Program has given me the opportunity to study with TAFE NSW for a Certificate IV, Training and Assessment. The Program has assisted me greatly in my transition from full-time employment with the Australian Defence Force into the civilian workforce.*

*The course has complemented my ADF career and made me a competitive candidate in my field. As a qualified Paramedic and Trainer/Assessor I can now deliver accredited training that gives people competencies in my area of expertise.*

*I am grateful for the dedicated staff that work with the Veterans Education Program and all that they do for ex-serving members.*

**Tom, Former Corporal,  
Australian Army**

TAFE offers the Ranks to Recognition program, which gives veterans access to free career counselling and recognition of prior learning. They also offer 1,400 Smart and Skilled courses which range in price from \$500 to \$5,000. The Education Program provides grants of up to \$4,000 to meet eligible veterans' course fees.

Initially the program provided support to veterans who had left the ADF after one day and up to eight years' service. It has since been reviewed to include all veterans who have discharged in the past five years.

The first 2019/20 Financial Year round of funding applications closed on 15 November. \$26,000 was committed to cover the Smart and Skilled course fees for nine (9) veterans. Round two opened on 6 January 2020.



*The Veterans Education Program has allowed me to develop my passion for winemaking. The Diploma of Viticulture will underpin my transition from the ADF and position me perfectly for future employment in the wine industry.*

**James, Former Squadron  
Leader, Royal Australian  
Air Force**



## The Local Government Rank to Grade Guide

Local councils in NSW employ approximately 45,000 employees across a wide range of roles in 128 locations across the state.

The State Government's commitment to support veteran employment was strengthened in 2019 with a new initiative to support the employment of veterans in Local Government.

### Did you know?

*The NSW and Local Government Rank to Grade Guides enable veterans to self-select their ADF rank and search equivalent public sector positions on jobsites. Veterans should consider their additional skills developed outside their ADF career to determine and select their rank.*

VEP partnered with the NSW Office of Local Government to develop a Local Government Rank to Grade Guide (LGR2G). The guide aligns council roles to military ranks and assists veterans explore the range of jobs available in local government. It is a companion to the NSW Government Ranks to Grade Guide available on the VEP website.

A successful communications campaign to launch the LGR2G took place in August 2019 and was met with media support from the Daily Telegraph, Lithgow Mercury, St George and Sutherland Shire Leader and the United Services Union, who also provided expertise in development of the guide.



**Emily, Asset Investigator Water and Wastewater Operator at Ballina Shire Council. Former Corporal, Australian Army.**

A social media campaign reached **31,592 Facebook and Instagram users** and drove **2,835 visits to the VEP website**. In just two weeks **the guide was downloaded 2,636 times**.

The success of the launch was underpinned by the support of its veteran ambassadors, with the campaign highlighting the experiences of five veterans working in local government roles across the state.

# Veteran spotlight

**LGR2G Ambassador  
Phil Miles. Section Manager at  
Port Stephens Council. Former  
Major, Australian Army**



Phil Miles grew up in Mereweather, Newcastle. After high school he went on to study Civil Engineering at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA). He also spent 12 months at the Royal Military College Duntroon and was commissioned as a Lieutenant in 1994.

He was appointed to the Royal Australia Engineers and after completing his Regimental Officers Basic Course in 1996 was posted to the 17th Construction Squadron at Holsworthy Barracks. He spent time in Weipa building RAAF Base Scherger, then commanded the Plant Troop and was involved in the first Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Programme project in 1997.

In 1998 he was promoted to Captain and spent two years at the 12th Chief Engineer Works in Mendi, Papua New Guinea as the Provincial Civil Engineer – a role that introduced him to

public works engineering.

He returned to Australia in 2000 and was appointed as the Plant Roads and Airfields Instructor at the School of Military Engineering at Moorebank. In 2002 he was appointed Corps Adjutant and did a 6-month tour of East Timor as a United Nations Military Observer (UNMO) participating in both UNTAET and UNMISSET missions.

In 2003 he requested a compassionate posting to his home town of Newcastle and enjoyed 12 months as the Operating Officer of the 8th Combat Engineer Regiment. He met Joanne and they moved to the Central Coast. In 2004 on promotion to Major he transferred to the Army Reserve and took up command of the 14th Field Squadron, 8th Combat Engineer Regiment and started working for Gosford City Council.

As a professional engineer in Local Government Phil focussed on planning, providing, maintaining and managing public infrastructure including roads, bridges, airfields, and buildings, as well as a huge variety of recreational and sporting facilities. He was primarily involved in Asset Management (infrastructure planning); starting in an engineering officer role then was quickly promoted to a

management position due to his demonstrated expertise in planning and leadership – skills that came from his time in the Army.

In 2013 Phil and his family made a tree change from the hustle and bustle of the Central Coast and moved to a rural property with ‘views to die for’ near Bulahdelah on the NSW Mid North Coast. Phil accepted a senior role at Greater Taree City Council and became responsible for the Council’s Asset Management and Infrastructure Project Planning.

“The adaptability, resilience and resourcefulness I gained during my military career was of great benefit during a very impactful 3-way Council merger in 2016. Mr Miles said. “I held onto my senior role and brought engineering staff from all three councils together during a time of great uncertainty.”

An opportunity to work closer to his home town of Newcastle presented itself in 2017, so he moved to Port Stephens Council where he is responsible for the delivery of all public infrastructure works.

# VEP Champions spotlight

**Millie Bass, Senior Project Officer. Former Flight Lieutenant, Royal Australian Airforce**



Millie Bass enjoyed her time in the Royal Australian Air Force as a Personnel Capability Officer and acquired a variety of skills and experience over nearly 12 years. She recalls leaving the ADF and establishing a civilian life outside of the military environment as a significant yet seamless experience.

Millie now works for NSW State Government providing business, operations, compliance and project management services across multiple clusters. She describes her role as challenging, dynamic and very rewarding. The organisation actively promotes flexible working arrangements and supports her to learn and grow. Millie was actively involved with the Veterans Employment Program during her transition and she is now a proud VEP Champion.

**Paul Rindermann, Senior Correctional Officer. Former Combat Engineer, Australian Army**



Paul Rindermann joined the Australian Regular Army as a Combat Engineer in 2009. He completed a number of international and domestic postings.

He provided relief after Cyclone Yasi and served in Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan. After discharging from the Army Paul began a career as a Correctional Officer with the NSW Department of Corrective Services. His first role in the public sector was with the Court Escort Security Unit in Silverwater.

His responsibilities included escorting offenders with a range of physical and mental health needs while ensuring the safety and security of the escort vehicle and its occupants.

Paul utilised his Army training and experience to assess situations and mitigate risks.

“The adaptability, resilience and resourcefulness I acquired as a Combat Engineer are invaluable. I honed my skills to a new work environment. I’ve adapted existing abilities and learned new skills to perform my duties to a high standard.”

Paul now works at the Downing Centre Court Complex and then at the Surry Hills Court cells.

# Networking and raising awareness



VEP Manager Craig Delaney presents to the United Services Union, Tweed Heads



VEP Champion Jim Grey speaks to a veteran at the Shoalhaven ADF Transition Seminar.

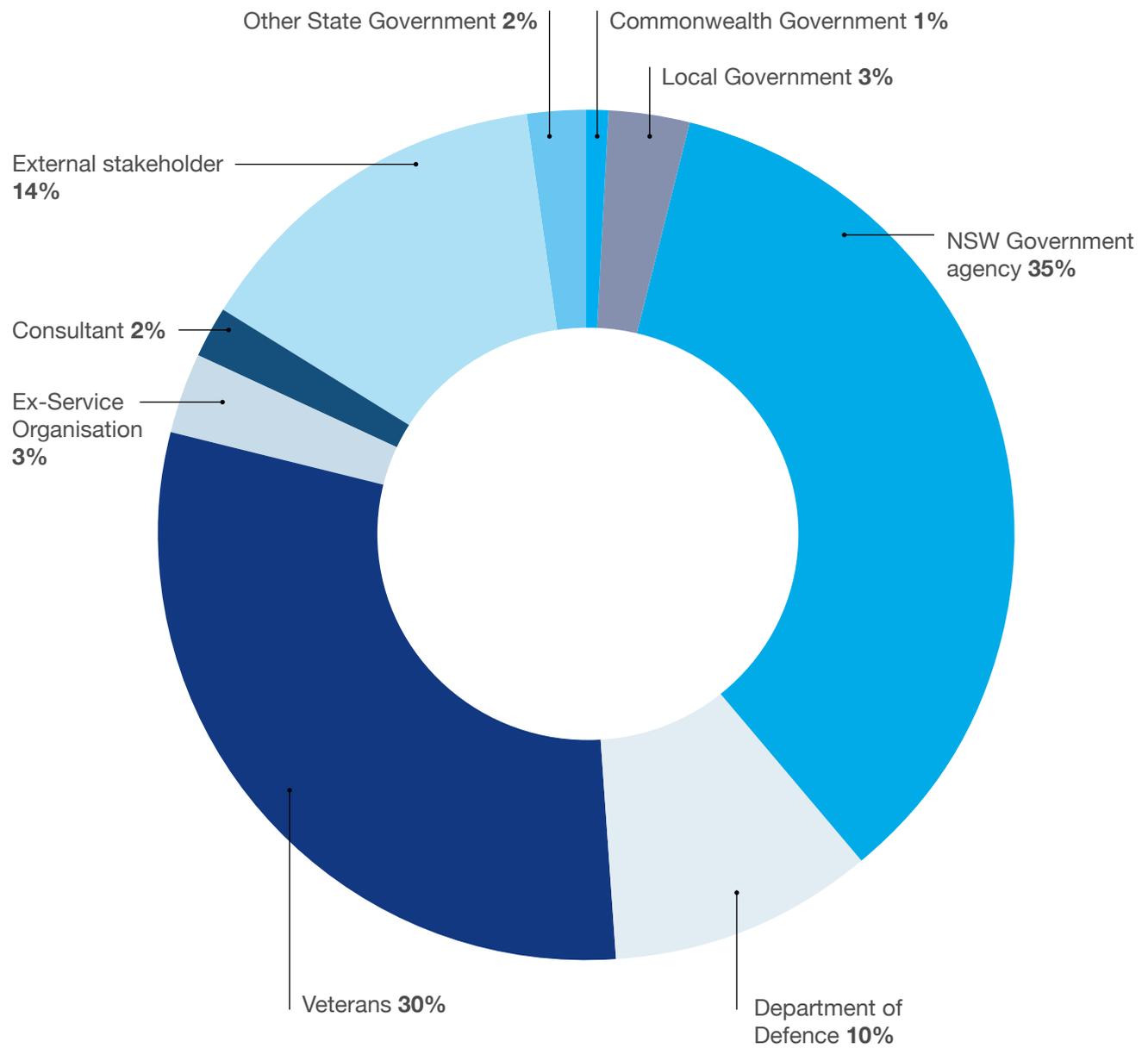
In 2019 the VEP team met with 402 representatives from local, state and Commonwealth governments, ex-service organisations and the veteran community to discuss veteran employment issues, learnings, challenges and breakthroughs. Key discussion topics included the unique skills and attributes acquired by veterans in their military training and the benefits of hiring trained, professional and adaptable individuals who thrive in a variety of working environments.

The VEP presented to approximately 300 NSW Local Government delegates at the **United Services Union biannual conference**; the **NSW Health Workforce Forum 2019** 'Our Future Workforce: Exploring Culture, Talent & Technology' on the topic of *Future Employment for our Talented Veterans*; and delivered a webinar on veterans wellbeing at the **Veteran Wellbeing Summit** online seminar (14 Aug–14 Sep). For the duration of the summit the presentation was viewed 100 times and 96% of participants watched the webinar to completion.

VEP has grown its **online network** to more than 2,500 veterans, their families and supporters. Social media is used to share a variety of public sector roles; highlight initiatives like veteran's sporting events, talent pool recruitment, and introduce public sector career pathways through the "Meet a Veteran" campaign.

In 2019 we spoke to over 500 veterans, growing our database of job seekers and connecting with public and private sector collaborators around the state.

## VEP MEETING TRACKER



# Looking ahead

2020

## Did you know?

*The NSW Capability Definition Tool on the VEP website explains the Framework's Focus Capabilities. The tool provides veterans with clear definitions of each capability level and sample interview questions, helping them to address the selection criteria and assess how their skills and experience align to a role.*

### Launch a Veterans Employment Workshop

VEP will develop and deliver a pilot Veteran Employment Workshop to demystify the public sector application process, focussing on how to address the **NSW Capability Framework** in applications, CV's and targeted questions. The workshop will be held at the Anzac Memorial for both serving and discharged personnel wanting to gain an insight to a career in the NSW public sector.

### Refresh our website content

The **VEP website received 9,245 visitors October 2018 – September 2019**. We've implemented detailed website analytics to better understand the tips and tools veterans find most helpful in their job search. We'll continue to refresh and update our website content to meet the needs of our audience.

### Improve the data we collect

The NSW Office for Veterans Affairs wants to paint a fuller picture of the public sector's efforts and success in building diverse, capable teams.

A key focus of the VEP is to obtain and share useful information across the public sector. We are aware that our challenge is two-fold and involves both encouraging veterans to self-identify when applying for roles, and ensuring each agency is able to collect this information with accuracy.

We will continue to reach out to HR teams across the public sector to develop strategies to accurately capture veteran employment data and identify opportunities to connect veterans in talent pools with hiring managers.



### **Support veteran employment initiatives in local government**

We will build on the success of the Local Government Rank to Grade guide and support Local Government initiatives promoting veterans employability. We will continue to work with the Office of Local Government, Local Government NSW and the United Service Union and facilitate discussions with individual councils.

### **Develop our LinkedIn strategy**

We are continuing to explore new channels to connect with our audience. Our social media network includes more than 2,500 users across Facebook and Instagram. A focus for 2020 is to grow the profile of the Veterans Employment Program LinkedIn page and cross-feed with the IWorkForNSW website to support job-seeking veterans.

VEP will also educate veterans on the value of a strong LinkedIn profile in the search for employment.

# Messages of support

**Lieutenant General Gregory Bilton, AM, CSC, Chief of Joint Operations (former Commander Forces Command)**



I can personally vouch for the skills that Australian Defence Force personnel have acquired during their period of service to our nation. They have much to offer prospective employers, in a range of different fields and in varying roles. The New South Wales Government's Veterans Employment Program continues to function as an important link between our veterans and those employers keen to seize the opportunities that come with having former Australian Defence Force Personnel as part of their team.

I commend the program for the outstanding progress achieved to date and for the ongoing support provided to the New South Wales community. It is fantastic to see this incredibly valuable program extended for another four years, with a new target of linking an additional 1,000 veterans with worthwhile employment opportunities by 2023. I encourage both veterans and employers to make full use of the program website and to take advantage of the range of significant opportunities that are on offer.

**Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead AM, RAN, Commander Australian Fleet**



As Commander Australian Fleet, based in Sydney, I have had the privilege to observe the development of the NSW Government Veterans Employment Program (VEP). I would like to commend them for their outstanding achievement in establishing the program and assisting 831 veterans to find work in the NSW public sector.

Extending the VEP for a further four years, with a new target of helping an additional 1,000 veterans to find work by 2023, is truly commendable. I understand veterans, young and old, sometimes find it challenging to articulate skills and attributes they have obtained throughout their Australian Defence Force (ADF) service. The VEP website, provides assistance for Veterans transitioning from the ADF, can assist them developing applications, and highlights opportunities within the NSW public sector.

**Air Vice-Marshal Steve 'Zed' Roberton, DSC, AM, Former Air Commander Australia**



Air Command has several thousand current veterans with different experiences and backgrounds that create the tremendous diversity underpinning our Air Force. With that diversity comes different needs, as well as the different skills and knowledge of each and every veteran. I therefore applaud the tremendous initiative of the NSW Government Veterans Employment Program (VEP) in assisting our veterans transition to a life outside the military, where they can continue to serve the community with the same dedication and skills that they have developed over their military careers.

I was particularly pleased to learn of the extension to the VEP out to 2023 with an admirable goal of assisting a further 1,000 veterans to find work in the NSW public sector. Not only does this program stand to enrich the lives of our ex-service women and men, but it will benefit the people of NSW by retaining the skills, knowledge and experience of Australian veterans. Thank you on behalf of the women and men of Air Command.

