

# **Veterans Employment Program**

**October 2018 - September 2022  
48 Month Report**



# Message from the NSW Minister for Veterans

The Hon. David Elliott MP



As a Member of Parliament and veteran, I am extremely proud of the achievements of the NSW Office for Veterans Affairs and especially the NSW Veterans Employment Program (VEP). Veteran employment is a key pillar of the NSW Government Veterans Strategy. VEP not only leads the field in veteran employment within the Public Sector (winning three Prime Minister's Veteran Employment Awards between 2018-2022), but also helps the Private Sector promote veteran employment.

The NSW Government has employed close to 2,500 veterans since the program started in 2016. In 2018, the program was extended with a target of 1,000 veterans to be employed by 2023. Having employed 1,626 veterans into new roles during that period, VEP has been extended for a further four years with a new target to employ 2,000 veterans by December 2026.

The program continues to achieve two key aims – communicating with veterans about Public Sector roles and building a network of collaborators who advocate for the transferable skills of veterans.

VEP has also developed many useful tools and learning opportunities, including a workshop and video, 'How to apply for roles against NSW Public Sector Capability Framework'. The video was so well regarded by the NSW Public Service Commission, they adapted the VEP video to assist the broader NSW public to apply for roles.

This program continues to be instrumental in helping veterans enjoy a smoother transition from military service to civilian life. This means the NSW Government obtains the exceptional skills, knowledge and experience of our former Defence personnel. I wish VEP, and all our veterans employed in the NSW Public Sector, every success in the future to continue their support for veterans in NSW.



# 1,626 veterans

accepted roles in the NSW Public Sector  
between October 2018 and September 2022

**Target 1,000** veterans employed by  
November 2022

## 62% AHEAD

## Program overview

The NSW Government was the first state to commit to supporting veterans through an employment program. The NSW Veterans Employment Program (VEP) was launched in May 2016 with a key objective of creating an awareness of veteran employability.

VEP sits within the NSW Office for Veterans Affairs (OVA) in the Department of Communities and Justice.

An initial figure of 200 veterans was chosen as a target number of veterans to hire during the Centenary of Anzac, which was surpassed with 831 veterans employed in new roles to September 2018. In the four-year period (October 2018 to September 2022), the program saw 1,626 veterans hired in new roles, significantly exceeding the period target of 1,000. In November 2022, the Premier committed to a four-year extension of the Program with a new target of 2,000 veterans employed in new roles within the NSW Public Sector by December 2026.

The VEP team set an incremental target of 125 veterans employed every six months over the past four years and they aim to double that figure to 250 for the next four years. VEP achieved 226 veterans hired in new roles in the last reporting period from 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022. The target of 250 veterans employed in new roles biannually should be achievable. VEP's confidence in achieving the new target of 2,000 veterans employed in new roles has been boosted with the inclusion of data from the Health cluster for all future reporting.

# Target tracking

October 2021 - September 2022

During the six-month reporting period (1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022), 3,699 job applications were submitted by veterans, with a success rate of 6.1 per cent. This success rate was up by 0.2 per cent in the past six months. It remains higher than the NSW general population application success rate of 5.0 per cent (2019, PSC data). Job levels won have remained consistent during the period with most veterans joining the Public Sector at entry-level, as individual contributors and team leaders. Entry-level positions have an 8.0 per cent success rate, individual contributors 6.5 per cent, while team leader levels have a 7.6 per cent success rate.

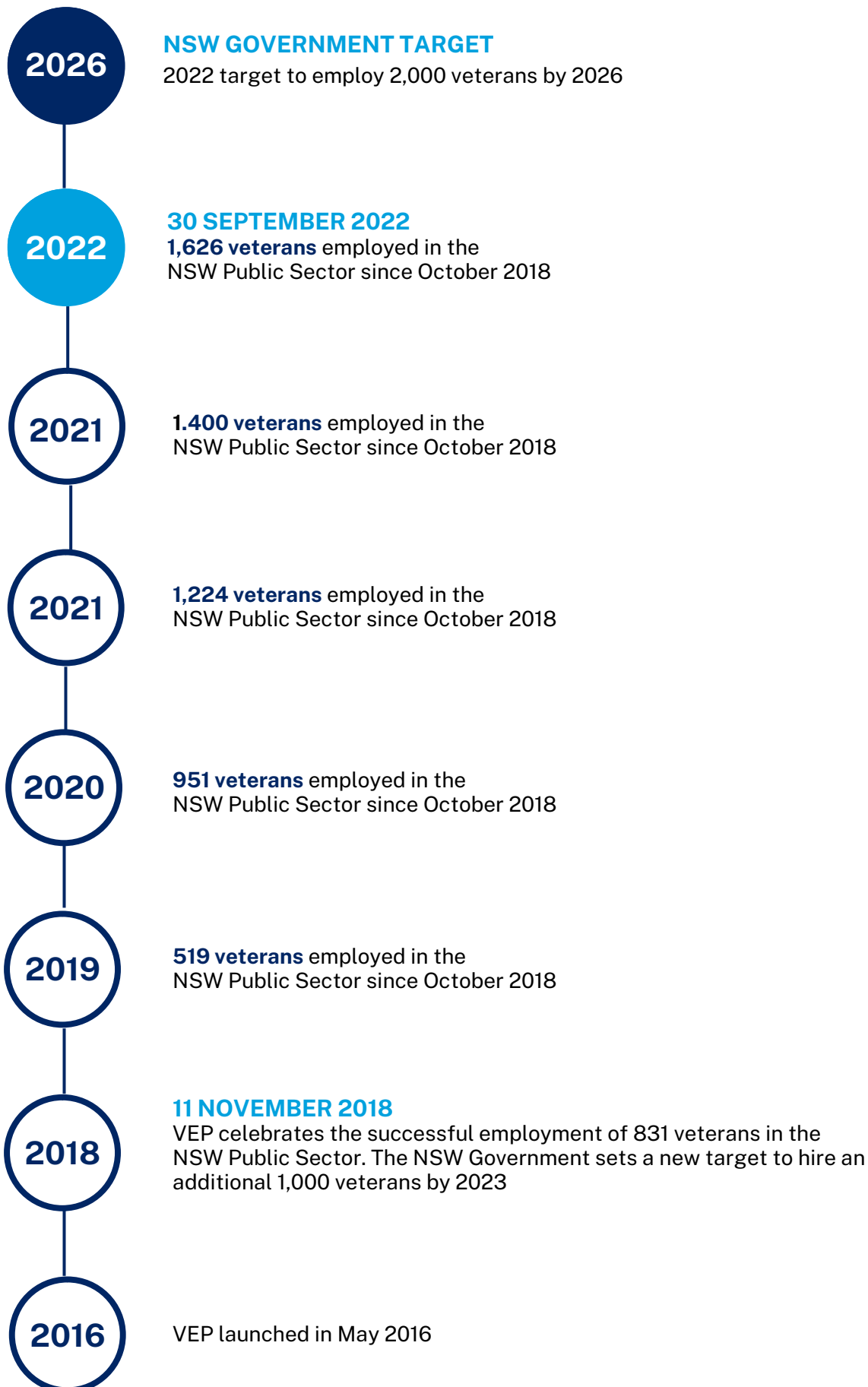
Veterans have also won Senior Executive and Director roles, however the success rate is much lower at 0.8 per cent for both levels. VEP continues to investigate the reason the success rates at these levels are low. Discussions to date have identified the main barrier to higher ranks filling senior executive roles is generally based around specific levels of experience required for more senior roles in the public service. For example, specific experience dealing with commercial contractors, procuring large infrastructure projects, or specific knowledge of cluster-related issues. Further information is being pursued to assist future applicants.

The gender breakdown for the hiring period saw 23 per cent female veterans and 77 per cent male veterans win roles. It was interesting to note women had 6.4 per cent application success while men only had 5.5 per cent. Of positions won, 64 per cent were full-time, 8 per cent part-time, 16 per cent casual (12 per cent could not be identified due to incomplete data). There was also one position labelled job share. Stronger Communities (47 per cent) remains the lead veteran employment cluster, with Transport (18 per cent) in second place and Education (16 per cent) in third place. These clusters have consistently remained within the top three since veteran employment reporting began in 2016. It should be noted this may change with the Health cluster now capturing veteran hiring data.

The Public Service Commission's (PSC) 2022 People Matter Employee Survey (PMES) results have given us further insight to veterans working in the Public Sector. Of 3,119 veteran respondents, 18 per cent have worked in the Public Sector for 10-20 years and 12 per cent have been employed for more than 20 years, higher than the Public Sector average. 20 per cent of veteran respondents had been employed in the NSW Public Sector for less than 12 months while 13 per cent had been employed for 1-2 years. Stronger Communities employs just over a third of veterans, which includes all the NSW uniformed emergency management organisations, Corrective Services NSW and the Office of the Sheriff. The Health cluster will also be tracking veterans entering the Public Sector to include in future reporting. Notably, 27 per cent of veteran respondents to the PMES survey work in the Health cluster, a figure which has not been included in previous reporting.

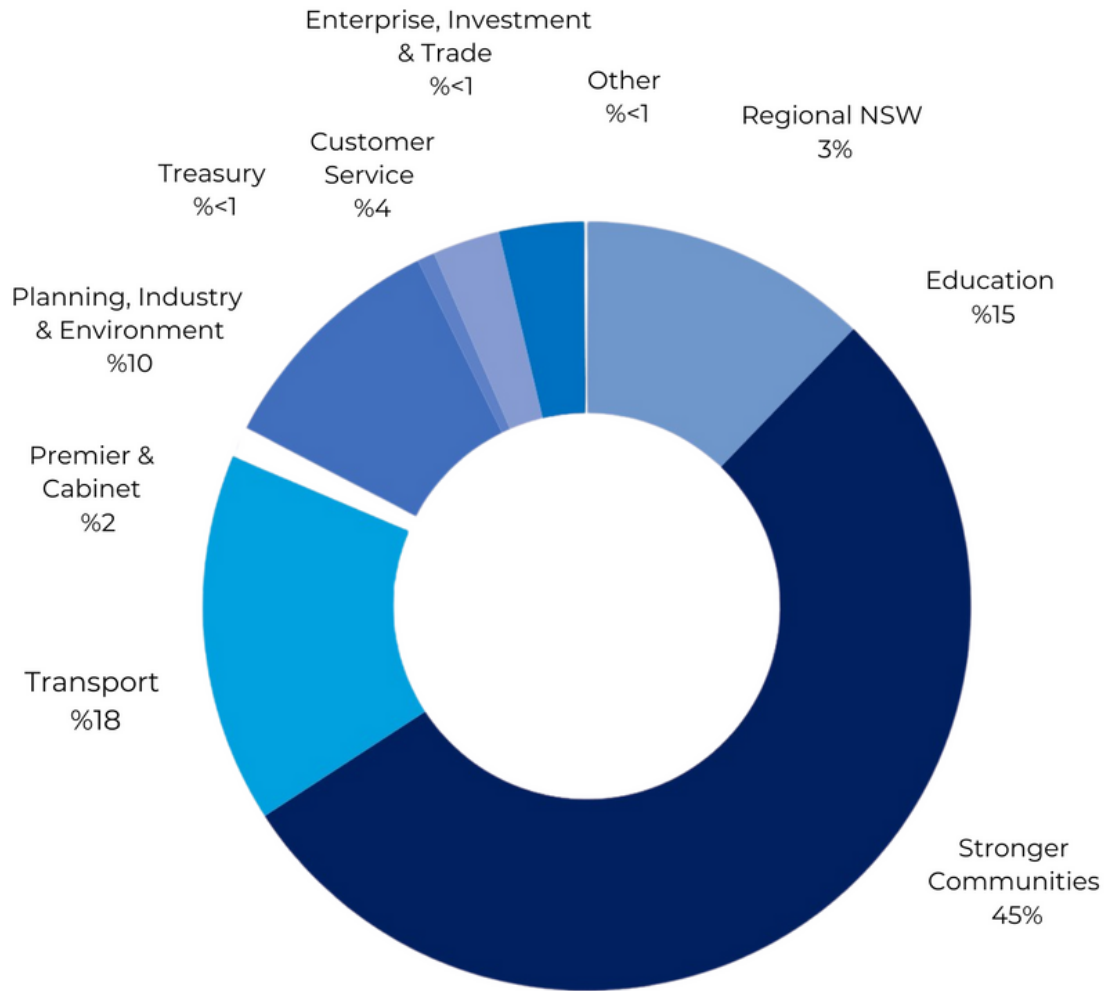
# Target tracking

May 2016 - October 2023



# Veteran hires per cluster

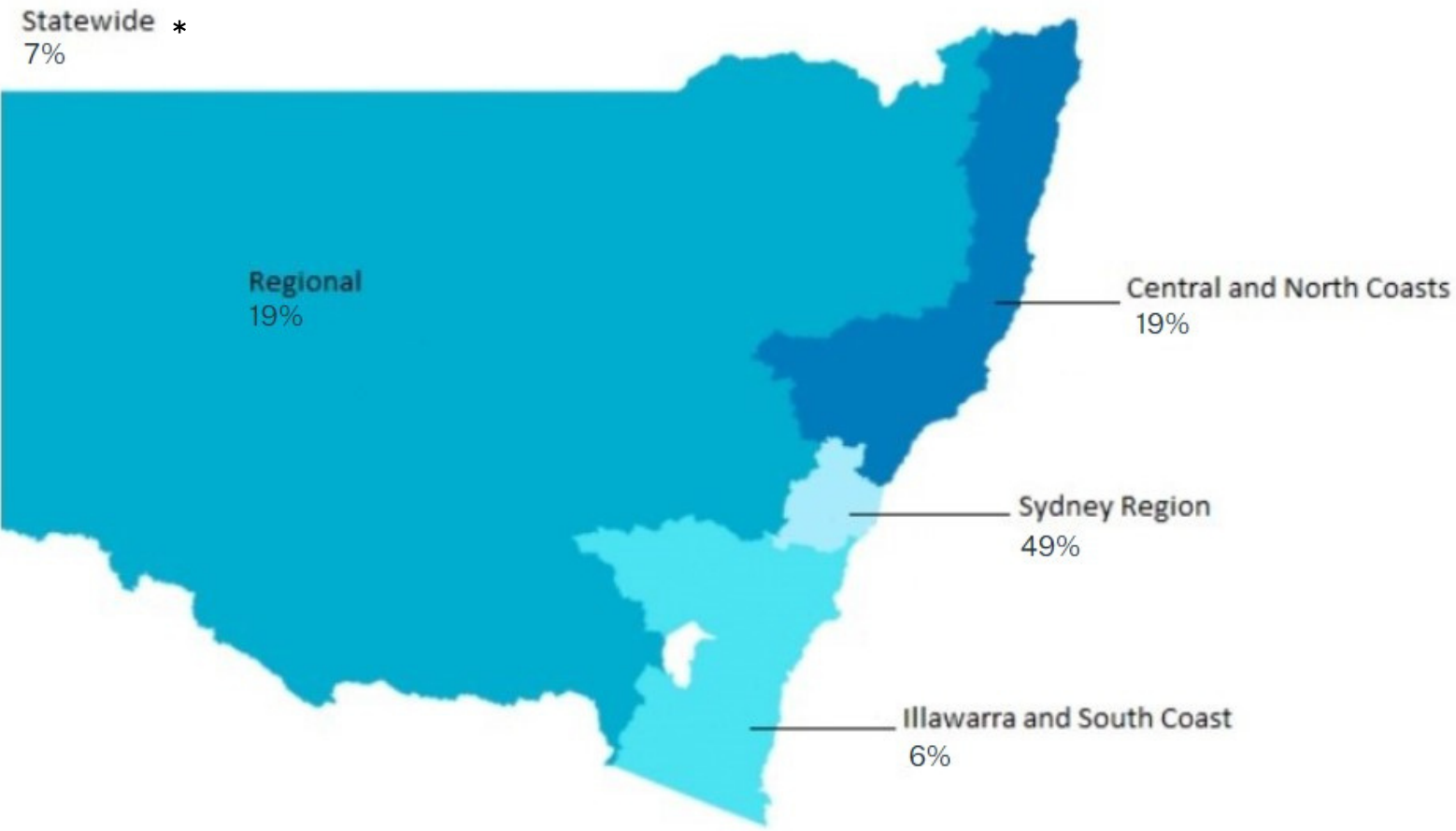
October 2018 - September 2022



*\*NSW Health figure not included. VEP is working with Health to establish a veteran identifier in their employment system to track veteran employment.*

# Veteran hires per region

October 2018 - September 2022



*\*Statewide refers to veteran hires not aligned to a specific region.*

# TAFE NSW

Our partnership with TAFE NSW continues to grow and has been extended for a further four years. TAFE NSW collects important data to track how their Ranks to Recognition Program (R2R) is progressing. R2R assists veterans to transition into the civilian workforce. This program includes customised career advice, career counselling, skills assessment, recognition of prior learning, and training gap analysis. The program has extended and is now also offering these services to veterans' spouses and recognised partners.

476 veterans were supported in the past twelve months. Of those veterans, 209 are enrolled in Certificate IV level courses, followed by 115 in Diploma level. The high demand courses in 2022 among veterans were Diploma of Project Management and Certificate IV in Community Services. It was identified 59 per cent of veterans prefer to study online, which we assume is to assist their transition from ADF.

TAFE NSW also launched its 'Teach at TAFE' campaign, which gives veterans the opportunity to become a teacher at TAFE campuses around NSW. An update will be provided in the next report.

The Veteran Skills program was launched on 31 May 2021 to provide veterans and their recognised spouse/partner access to fee-free or heavily subsidised training under the NSW Job Trainer program.

Courses are offered at approximately 360 Registered Training Organisations throughout NSW. If applicants only require a part qualification to be 'job ready' to pursue a civilian career path, that will also be supported.

To date, 703 veterans and 264 spouses/partners have enrolled in full qualifications with the most popular courses being Project Management, Leadership, Training and Assessment. 420 veterans and 42 spouses/partners have enrolled in part qualifications, most opting for the Civil Construction, Machinery Operation, Agriculture and Horticulture, Equipment Safe Operations courses.

To date, just over \$1.2 million has been committed.



VEP team and Sree Duntoor from TAFE NSW



# Stakeholder Engagement

In April 2022, Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) launched its **Mentoring/Buddy** Support System for veterans transitioning to a role with CSNSW. The system is slowly developing to support veteran Corrections Officers, through transition, training and in their new career. Since establishment, uniformed and non-uniformed staff from across the state have represented Corrections at six ADF Transitional Seminars. A number of veterans have graduated as prison officers as part of a recent CSNSW recruiting drive. As the new members settle into their Correctional Centres, they will be offered additional support in the form of buddies or mentors from a group of 50 former Defence personnel who are happy to support them in their transition.

The NSW Sheriff has committed to implementing the system for veterans into the Office of the NSW Sheriff in 2023.

The VEP team remains focused on building the **Champions Network** throughout the NSW Public Sector. As there are only two members running VEP, the Champions Network was developed to act as a force multiplier throughout government. The Network consists of Hiring Managers, Human Resource personnel, veterans and anyone who has a genuine interest in supporting veterans. They are a group of mentors and leaders promoting VEP initiatives and the skills that veterans can bring to the Public Sector. The Champions Network is currently about 400 strong, committed to helping NSW Government reach its veterans employment target. VEP's success is a direct result of the support of the champions.

**Seasonal updates** continue to be published on the VEP website and sent to VEP champions, veteran contacts and ex-service organisations to maintain active awareness of the program. VEP adjusted operations during the COVID-19 pandemic to include more video/telephone meetings and use of social networks. VEP managed to meet face-to-face and virtually with 934 stakeholders in 2022. There were 371 veteran engagements and 248 with NSW Government representatives. This is in line with VEP's aim to assist veterans to apply for NSW Government roles and to educate NSW Government members of the benefits of hiring veterans.

VEP has continued to expand its use of **social media** channels to connect with veterans and the veteran community. With over 3,000 followers on Facebook and 830 on Instagram, engagement on these channels is increasing. VEP's LinkedIn following has increased as the channel use has evolved, and now has almost 1,000 followers. VEP understands the importance of using different channels to communicate with different veterans. While LinkedIn continues to grow, Facebook still appears to be preferred by younger veterans.

Over the past six months, the VEP team have been able to attend seven face-to-face **ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars** where we have spoken to hundreds of veterans about working in the Public Sector and what VEP can do to assist them. We have logged on for 12 virtual seminars and following the success of the design and build of the VEP virtual booth, there are now ten NSW Government booths at the virtual transition seminars with more to follow in the future.

VEP continues to support **Service NSW** with updates to the veteran-specific online directory. The directory outlines NSW-based programs, services and concessions available to veterans and their families to aid their transition from military to civilian life and to assist with the cost of living.

VEP continues to deliver the **Veterans Employment Workshop**. Data has shown once a veteran completes the workshop, they have a 75 per cent chance of securing a role within 6 months of completing the workshop. Of those veterans who do not gain employment, the majority decide to continue with their service and use the workshop as part of their future transition. VEP is grateful for these ADF members attending because they become a communication channel within Defence. The workshop gives veterans practical knowledge on the NSW Government job search and application process. Participants are provided with resources and given practical scenarios to practice and gain confidence when applying for roles.



NSW Veterans Employment Workshop  
Anzac Memorial, September 2022

VEP facilitated the third annual NSW Veterans Employment **Roundtable** which was held at the Anzac Memorial on 2 November 2022. It was hosted by the NSW Minister for Veterans and chaired by the Director, Office for Veterans Affairs. The focus in 2022 was Veterans in Construction. It was attended by NSW Public and Private Sector employment representatives and organisations supporting veterans, organisations from the construction industry and the Australian Defence Force.

The roundtable was another positive opportunity to share information and ideas, with attendees discussing the gaps identified in veteran employment and discussing collaborations to support veteran employment initiatives. The key take-aways to follow up were:

- Progress data collection and understanding of veteran opportunities;
- Get the right building contractors to connect with the veteran for the best employment opportunities;
- Promote regional joint opportunities and industry placement; and
- Develop ideas to support veterans and their spouse/partner to move to regional Local Government Areas and utilise the Veteran Skills Program (heavily subsidised/fee-free training courses) to gain in-demand qualifications.

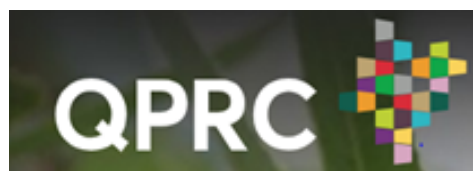


NSW Veterans Employment Roundtable, Anzac Memorial, 2 November 2022

As at 31 December 2022, there are 8 NSW **Local Governments** who have set up their own form of veterans employment program. If you remove the weapon and uniform, there is a veteran within the ADF who aligns with an equivalent job in local council, from General Manager to a man or woman on a front desk, truck and bus drivers, HR specialists, health officers and any number of other roles within council.

VEP continues to work closely with the NSW Office of Local Government to grow awareness of the Local Government Rank-to-Grade Guide and transferable skills of veterans. Campbelltown City Council continues to be the leading local council supporting veteran employment. The eight NSW Local Governments are: Lake Macquarie City, City of Newcastle, Campbelltown City, Blacktown City, Cessnock City, Tweed Shire, Uralla Shire, and Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Councils. They have set up their own form of veterans employment program and have started capturing data to be published in future reports.

*"If you remove the weapon and uniform, there is a veteran within the ADF who aligns with an equivalent job in Local Council, from General Manager to the man or woman on the front desk, truck and bus drivers, HR specialists, health officers and any number of other roles within council."*  
*Craig Delaney*



# Looking ahead

Throughout 2023 the VEP team plan to run Veteran Employment Workshops as a combination of face-to-face sessions at the Anzac Memorial and digital sessions for veterans based in regional areas, if a face-to-face workshop is not able to be run in regional NSW. At this stage, the first face-to-face workshop is planned for 20-21 March 2023 at the Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park, Sydney.

VEP will continue to engage with local governments, especially in regional NSW, to promote veterans employment within local councils and hopefully incorporate the Veteran Skills Program to ensure veterans and their spouse/partner have the relevant training to land the right roles within councils while encouraging them to access the heavily subsidised or fee-free training courses available. If you know a Mayor, local Councillor or Human Resources representative and think they would be interested in supporting veterans, please let the VEP team know.

VEP is also looking into assisting the ADF maintain capability through the continued support and employment of Reserve Force personnel.

Thank you for supporting veterans. Working together we can make a difference.



# Veterans Employment Program