



# Media Release

Senator the Hon Michael Ronaldson  
Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC  
Special Minister of State

Wednesday, 5 March 2014

VA014

## VETERANS URGED TO TAKE PART IN CONSULTATION

Today the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) will begin consultation with veterans, war widow/ers, their families, the Community and Public Sector Union and DVA staff about the future of some shopfront services in Victoria and New South Wales.

"The Government is committed to a stand-alone Department of Veterans' Affairs which delivers efficient services to veterans right across Australia", Senator Ronaldson said.

"As the veteran community changes so too must the Department adapt and respond to changing circumstances. More and more of our veterans, war widow/ers and their families are choosing the telephone or the internet to make contact with DVA. Visits to our shop fronts are declining and are down 28 per cent since 2009."

The respective Deputy Commissioners of DVA in Victoria and New South Wales will facilitate the consultation, commencing today, regarding the provision of DVA Veterans' Access Network (VAN) services in six regions.

Consultations will focus on shopfronts in Bairnsdale, Morwell, Ballarat and Frankston in Victoria and Wollongong and Gosford in NSW. In addition, Bendigo, Mildura and Warrnambool in Victoria, where VAN type services are provided by private organisations, will also be considered.

"This consultation process, which will conclude on 26 March, will guide DVA in deciding the future provision of current services", Senator Ronaldson concluded.

Information on how members of the veteran community can be involved in the consultation process is available on the DVA website, [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au).

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*Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) and Veterans Line can be reached 24 hours a day across Australia for crisis support and free and confidential counselling. Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 8 8241 4546)*

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