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BRAKE.  
FOLD DOWN WIRE CUTTERS.  
OPEN ENGINE HATCH.  
REMOVE INTERNAL POWER PACK ACCESS COVERS.  
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REMOVE EXHAUST EXTENSION AND EXHAUST COVER SUPPORT BRACKET.  
REMOVE ALL BOLTS SECURING TOP EXHAUST COVER SUPPORT BRACKET.  
REMOVE LIFTING EYELETS FROM EXHAUST COVER SUPPORT BRACKET.  
REMOVE EXHAUST COVER SUPPORT BRACKET FROM VEHICLE.  
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A best practice guide for  
employing veterans

# Supporting those who served

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**BAE SYSTEMS**





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This document and information contained within it is provided for general information purposes only. Any guidance provided is only general in nature and does not take into account your organisation's circumstances. You and/or your organisation should thoroughly consider if the information is appropriate to your circumstances and needs.

BAE Systems Australia works with the organisations listed in this document [with respect to its approach to Veterans and employment/ engagement]. This is general information only. Your organisation must independently investigate and assess, and make an independent decision, regarding these entities or other entities.

## New careers for veterans

# Unlock the potential of veterans for your organisation.

BAE Systems Australia is a proud employer of veterans, who are defined as having served at least one day in any armed forces, and reservists, including those still active.

More than 10 per cent of our 5,000-strong workforce has served in the military.

Providing careers for veterans extends beyond our commitment to developing an inclusive and diverse workplace. We actively hire veterans for their wealth of knowledge, experience and skills they bring to all areas of our business.

Armed with strong personal skills and attributes, such as leadership, communication, loyalty, emotional intelligence, punctuality, commitment, persistence, resilience and agility — and a working knowledge of the defence force — veterans are uniquely placed to help us better understand the needs of our customers.

In 2020, recognising the value veterans bring to our company, BAE Systems Australia established a Veterans Advisory Committee.

Our Veterans Advisory Committee (VAC) was designed to provide advice and governance to BAE Systems Australia's leadership and employees on the issues unique to veteran employees and their families, today and into the future.

Since its establishment, the Committee has instigated a number of initiatives to ensure BAE Systems Australia is able to attract, recruit, transition and retain the best veteran talent.

The Committee's efforts were formally recognised when BAE Systems Australia was awarded 'Veterans' (Large) Employer of the Year' at the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Awards in 2021.

We're pleased to share our learnings and advice for other organisations seeking to unlock the potential of veterans, through this best practice guide. We acknowledge that these learnings and advice will undoubtedly vary in relevance and potential applicability, and should be taken with reference to your respective business context.





# Establishing a Veterans Advisory Committee

Following a grassroots staff movement, BAE Systems Australia's Veterans Advisory Committee (VAC) was established in June 2020.

## Steps for establishing a VAC

- 1 — Advertising
- 2 — Receiving nominations
- 3 — Shortlisting
- 4 — Advising
- 5 — Forming, Storming, Norming
- 6 — Establishment
- 7 — Annual refresh

In just over one year the VAC was able to affect significant change at BAE Systems Australia, by attracting, recruiting, and transitioning veterans into the company, providing a support network for veterans and their families, and importantly, giving veterans a voice.

### Concept development

As a long-standing employer of veterans, small veteran support groups had begun to emerge across BAE Systems Australia at a local level, before the establishment of the organisation-wide VAC.

With many of BAE Systems Australia's veteran workforce having first-hand experience of the difficulties faced when transitioning back to civilian life, they identified a need to create an empathetic and supportive work environment that enabled veterans to thrive.

Support for a VAC was raised and championed by several veterans across the business before the Committee was officially stood up in June 2020.

### Leadership endorsement

Armed with a concept, the veterans sought leadership endorsement from BAE Systems Australia's Chief Executive Officer. Articulating the 'why', and the tangible business benefits of a Veterans Advisory Committee were key to receiving approval and support.

Following CEO endorsement, it was important to secure Executive Leadership Team (ELT) sponsorship. BAE Systems Australia's Chief Operating Officer was appointed as the Committee's sponsor.

This sponsorship has played a critical role in helping to establish the conditions for success for the VAC. It has enabled the Committee to access funding, allowed staff to give up their time to attend, and supported the Committee's selection process.

### Terms of reference

The next step in establishing the VAC was creating a Terms of Reference (ToR), to outline what the Committee would do, and how it would do it. The ToR covered details relating to the Committee's selection process, composition, meetings, and areas of focus.

### Committee selection

The Veterans Advisory Committee was selected, composed of 10 veterans and/or immediate family members of veterans from across the business.

Within the selection process, an emphasis was placed on diversity, and seeking a broad representation of individuals across the business, from graduates right through to senior management, in a range of locations.

Applicants were required to highlight their background and experience, what they could offer, and their perspectives on veteran's issues at BAE Systems Australia. More than 50 applications were received — a strong result as that represented more than 10% of the current veteran workforce. This result demonstrates a desire amongst veterans to be part of an internal structure that would drive change within the workplace.

## Tips for establishing a Veterans Advisory Committee (VAC)

- > Ensure senior management buy-in by articulating the 'why'.
- > Recruit a diverse committee that represents all areas of the business — not an elite ivory tower.
- > Put your words into action — don't let the Committee become a talk fest.

Following a formal selection process, the committee was endorsed by the ELT Sponsor.

Once the Committee was appointed, two key focus areas were identified: veteran recruitment and transition, and veteran culture and retention. From there, a strategy was developed identifying key activities, initiatives and actions that would form the focus of the committee over the first 12 months.

The Chair of the Committee provides oversight on these strategies, secures funding, and manages day-to-day administration.





# Recruitment and Retention

Staff education, a tailored recruitment strategy and a supportive workplace culture can help your organisation recruit, and importantly retain, veterans.

## Recruiting veterans

### Advertising roles

There are a number of ways to promote your organisation and jobs to veterans across Australia.

At BAE Systems Australia, we do this through:

- > Veteran specific job boards, including the Soldier On job board, and the Australian Veteran Employer Coalition (AVEC) job board.
- > Posts on BAE Systems Australia's social media.
- > Our careers site, which houses a microsite specific to veteran employment
- > By attending veteran jobs fairs/events across the country; and
- > Word of mouth — committee members are often well-connected in their veteran communities, and are encouraged to seek out opportunities to talk about careers at BAE Systems Australia.

### Educating hiring staff

Educating hiring staff about the value of veterans, how their skills correlate to civilian roles and the unique challenges veterans may face is key to supporting the recruitment of veterans.

The education tools we have employed include:

- > Ensuring all Human Resources and Talent Acquisition staff complete 'Military Culture and the Workplace' RSL Employment modules; and
- > Identifying ADF veterans within our recruitment team/hiring managers who can champion veterans, and answer any questions that members of the hiring team may have, including how veteran's skills translate and correlate to civilian roles.

Where there aren't veterans in these roles we look for veterans within similar areas of our business who can offer advice on the translation of skills.

## Understanding veterans' skill sets

Australia's defence forces are among the most highly skilled in the world, with members of the ADF having access to world-class training.

To successfully recruit veterans, it is important to understand how these skills translate to civilian roles, along with unique military rank structures, job titles, and acronyms.

In some instances this can be achieved by hiring based on aptitude, attitude and potential rather than direct experience and qualifications.

At BAE Systems Australia, we have identified that there are 'obvious' veteran hires, and 'non-obvious' veteran hires.

An example of an obvious veteran hire would be an applicant who worked for the Royal Australian Airforce as an Aircraft Maintenance Technician, who then applied for the same role at BAE Systems Australia.

Non-obvious veteran hires are when veterans apply for a role at BAE Systems that requires a different skill set to the one they developed when working in the defence force, or where their skill set can be applied in a different way to what they did whilst serving. In this instance it is important to recognise that their skills are often adaptable and can still deliver immense value to your organisation. It's on these occasions that we need to consider hiring based on aptitude, attitude and potential, rather than direct proven experience.

To do this, think about the core competencies required of an applicant in your advertised role, and identify the competencies that can be taught, and the ones that can't. For example, if you were hiring a Commercial Officer, stakeholder engagement, negotiation and strategic thinking are all skills based on aptitude and potential rather than a knowledge of commercial or contracting framework competencies, which can be developed once in the role.

Often these roles require some flexibility and a period of time to build up experience and confidence before expecting productivity levels to be high. In essence expectations need to be managed and ensure the pressure on the incoming veteran isn't unrealistic.

## Providing feedback to veterans

As part of our recruitment process, BAE Systems Australia provides all applicants with the opportunity to identify if they are a veteran. We've made a commitment to, where practicably possible, provide feedback to veterans on their job applications — whether they have been successful or not.

## Interviewing veterans

Tips to help facilitate a successful job interview with a veteran include:

- > Make panel members aware they are interviewing a veteran.
- > The panel focuses on the candidate's aptitudes and attitude when in the non-obvious hire category, rather than direct skill-set.
- > The panel asks leading questions to draw the answers out of the candidate, particularly if the candidate doesn't have direct role experience; and
- > The panel asks candidates for examples of what they have done in their previous roles that they think is relatable to the role they're interviewing for.



## On-boarding veterans

### Educating line managers

Line Managers play a critically important role in helping veterans settle into the civilian workforce and lifestyle.

To help facilitate a smooth transition, at BAE Systems Australia, we work toward educating our line managers about veterans' skills, talents, and common issues they face — both mentally and physically — to ensure our veterans can have fulfilling employment, and to allow us to maximise their talent.

To do this, we seek to:

- > Identify champions across the business to influence line manager perceptions and build understanding — either a veteran in a senior role or a member of our recruitment team who has significant experience hiring veterans.
- > Facilitate peer-to-peer learning.
- > Provide focused support.
- > Undertake training and education activities; and
- > Encourage line manager self-awareness and development.

### Workplace support

There are a number of ways you can create a culture to support veterans within your organisation.

Recognising that commemoration is an important part of a veteran's identity, at BAE Systems Australia, we provide veterans with the opportunity to commemorate their experiences through events surrounding ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day.

This gives veterans the chance to build relationships with colleagues who have similar backgrounds and shared experiences, while educating the non-veteran community about the importance of these events, and the sacrifices of those who served.

In geographically focused locations across the country, BAE Systems Australia also supports sub-groups of veterans to frequently gather to network, discuss issues and opportunities, and provide peer-to-peer support.

### Mentors

At BAE Systems Australia, we have identified the opportunity to establish both a formal and informal (BAE Battle Buddy) mentoring network.

This will leverage existing veteran mentoring programs currently operational in various locations across the business, as well as providing a more 'bespoke' mentoring model to cater for each individual's wants and needs.

There are a number of ways you can facilitate a mentoring program within your business:

- > Identify a pool of willing mentors.
- > Understand your mentors' relevant skill sets and the type of mentee they could best support.
- > Understand the veteran recruit and the types of support that a mentor could deliver (adapting to a commercial environment, building a network, health and wellbeing, etc.)
- > Provide a formal mentoring framework.







## Policy and Support

Ensuring business structures are in place to support veterans is key to attracting and retaining your veteran workforce.

At BAE Systems Australia, we value our diverse workforce, and are committed to creating an inclusive and supportive work environment.

We recognise that veterans bring diversity of thought to our organisation, and as such, veterans are a pillar of our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, with a representative from our Employee Experience team attending VAC meetings.

BAE Systems Australia also offers military leave to all employees who undertake ADF reservist activities. While this is unpaid leave, employees receiving military leave, including cadets, are entitled to receive make up pay. Make up pay is calculated in the difference between the base salary received by the ADF and the employee's company base salary.

People Managers are encouraged to be supportive of currently serving reservists and allow them the leave they need to carry out their duties, when it doesn't have a detrimental effect on work outputs.

## Policy Types for Consideration

- Leave
- Support mechanisms for veterans moving through a DVA process
- Reservist pay
- Reservist leave
- Flexible workplace agreements
- Health and Wellbeing Leave



## Partners

There are many benefits to partnering with organisations that champion veteran employment.

At BAE Systems Australia, we've chosen to partner with a number of organisations which actively support veterans and their families.

As part of our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, these partnerships allow us to deliver meaningful support for our veteran community through tailored programs, supporting veteran recruitment and retention efforts, volunteering opportunities and enhancing our veteran employee experience.

They also provide direct benefits in terms of BAE Systems Australia's competitiveness and reputation as an employer of choice.

Aligning your organisation with veteran organisations, such as the ones outlined below, will allow you to develop a community of practice, facilitate regular check-ins and share learnings and resources. Some members of BAE Systems Australia's VAC are ambassadors for these organisations, providing a vital link between charity and industry.

It is important to note that these partners have been selected based on a variety of considerations, and each veteran organisation maintains a unique value proposition.

We recommend that before partnering with a veteran organisation, you undertake a detailed assessment to determine which organisation best complements your business and its goals.





## Soldier On

Since 2015, BAE Systems Australia has partnered with Soldier On to support the health, employment and rehabilitation of Australia's veterans, service personnel and their families.

BAE Systems Australia is a signatory to the Soldier On Employment Pledge, cementing our commitment to the provision of enhanced employment opportunity and understanding to veterans and their families. We are proud to have now been recognised as a Soldier On Platinum Pledge Partner.

## Right Management

BAE Systems partners with Right Management, the contracted Commonwealth provider of the Defence Force Transition Program. The Right Management Job Connections team proactively connect transitioning members to job opportunities that fit their career goals. This supports us in building our veteran workforce while creating pathways for ADF veterans by hiring on potential and aptitude.

## WithYouWithMe

WithYouWithMe (WYWM) is veteran-owned and a leader in diverse talent accessibility for the technology sector. It has a dual platform and service model that helps upskill veterans through training, education and recruitment, supporting the transition from the military into fulfilling civilian careers.

## Working Spirit and Helping Heroes

We are proud to work closely with organisations such as Working Spirit and Helping Heroes, supporting veteran rehabilitation through work placement programs.

## RSL Australia

BAE Systems is also a member of the RSL Employment Program, a program that supports veterans and Defence partners in their search for meaningful employment.

## Australian Veteran Employers Coalition

Being an AVEC member improves our employment catchment and provides opportunities to attract transitioning service members, job-seeking veterans and their partners.

## Legacy Australia

BAE Systems partners with Legacy Australia because behind every serving member is a family. These families also sacrifice so much to help their country. Partnering with Legacy gives us a chance to support them, when they need it most.



Soldier On's mission is to enable serving and ex-serving veterans and their families to thrive.

Soldier On staff work side by side with individuals and families, to strengthen resilience and develop meaningful connections with family members, mates, and the local community through a diverse range of health and wellbeing services, employment opportunities, learning and education programs, and participation in community, social, and sporting activities.

We welcome initiatives from organisations and people that support our veteran community, such as BAE Systems and the establishment of their Veterans Advisory committee. The Advisory committee has been a key driver in identifying best practice in not only the recruitment, but also the retention of veterans.

The dedication and example that BAE Systems have provided to the community speaks volumes to the commitment and leadership regarding Veteran Employment.

Soldier On appreciates the time and commitment that BAE Systems have put into providing opportunities within its business to drive initiatives in employing Veterans. The outcome of this will assist in sustainably improving the lives and wellbeing of these people, through mentoring, training, and employment.

Soldier On is committed to providing access to quality employment opportunities and as a national and local charity leader we are pleased to be able to work with BAE Systems to support the transition of veterans to civilian life

Soldier On is looking forward to continuing to work with BAE Systems as we work to make a difference.

## Case Study

### Alisha

As the partner of a serving ADF member, moving around a lot, changing jobs and beginning a new network was always just a 'given'. It was something that comes with being part of the defence community and so I felt that I was never in a position to think about pursuing a career - let alone seeking employment outside of the work I knew!

Working in hospitality gave me the flexibility to study International Studies full-time at University. However, when I finished, I found myself feeling quite lost as to the employment opportunities on offer in my location. I also felt insecure about applying for jobs with the knowledge that I would have to leave in only a couple of years' time.

I initially read about the Partner Employment Assistance Program (PEAP) online and felt I could really use the employment services that were on offer. The PEAP program offered a range of virtual Job Search Preparation workshops as well as the Job Connections service, which pairs you with an employment service provider. My PEAP registration took about 2 minutes and within a week, Andrea from Right Management had contacted me to begin the process.

Through virtual weekly meetings, Andrea worked with me to update my resume, helped me identify opportunities that aligned to my career goals and provided application and selection criteria coaching. I was able to isolate jobs I was interested in and had the opportunity to interview for a Business Development Associate role with BAE Systems Australia.

Aligning my values with an employer is so important for me, and from the moment I walked through the door at BAE Systems Australia, it felt like 'home'. BAE Systems is so passionate about supporting not just ADF members, but also their families.

Coming into BAE Systems Australia, I have had the opportunity to develop my professional and personal skills, develop relationships from some amazing people in Defence Industry as well as positively contribute to a workforce that is committed to enhancing Australian Defence capability and keeping our ADF personnel safe.

With the help and support from the partnership between Right Management and BAE Systems, I have found a career with a great company and in a great team that supports continued career development for serving and transitioning ADF members as well as their families.





## WITH YOU WITH ME

Like many other organisations BAE Systems Australia have been impacted by the shortage of digitally skilled talent within Australia.

However, through their initiatives of creating a Veterans Advisory Committee to support veteran employment into BAE Systems they have been able to see the incredible value that veterans bring into the organisation. This understanding has been instrumental to their ability to partner with us to focus on a veteran's potential to do the job in this case be reskilled to fill critical technology talent shortages, rather than consider their past experience. The shared value has led to 10 veterans participating in the WithYouWithMe program to identify their ability to be trained in critical trades like Cyber Security, Systems Admin, and Network Engineering and as a result gain meaningful employment. We are grateful to be partnered with BAE Systems who are sharing in our vision to help solve veteran unemployment. Javiera Soto; Defence and Technology Industry Executive, WithYouWithMe



Right Management is delighted to partner with BAE Systems Australia and their award winning veteran employment program. Thank you for sharing the BAE experience with other organisations and for all the support you provide to Veterans.



# Culture

Promoting a culture that recognises the service of veterans is an important tool for enhancing employee experience.

## Commemorative activities

Commemoration plays a vital role in recognising the service and sacrifice of veterans in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations.

Each of BAE Systems Australia's sites commemorates events of significance to our veterans — including ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day — in their own way, with VAC members taking the lead in organising activities.

For example, some sites choose to make an announcement over their PA system followed by barbeque, while other sites choose to organise a more formal event with a flag ceremony, bugler and guest speakers. Supporting these events is a communications campaign, to promote the event, recognise its significance to veterans, and educate our broader workforce.

Commemorative activities provide an excellent opportunity to educate your organisations' non-veteran workforce, by developing a mutual understanding of what it means to be a veteran, and allowing civilian exposure to a veteran's perspective.

## Recognition

BAE Systems Australia has launched a number of initiatives that recognise the sacrifice and service of veterans. An example of this would be the opportunity for staff to nominate a veteran working within the business to attend the National War Memorial in Canberra's ANZAC Day service.

Veterans have also been invited to test and trial new military technologies developed by BAE Systems Australia. This recognises the unique skills and experience that veterans have on the front line, while assisting our product development.

## Education

We believe that educating BAE Systems Australia's recruitment team, hiring managers and line managers about what it means to have a veteran in their team, their unique skills and abilities, and how they can best support veterans underpins the development of a supportive workplace culture for veterans.

We acknowledge that this may require a level of financial investment to ensure the education is built into people leader training, and that training needs to be ongoing, not just a 'once-off'.

## Opportunities for growth

Opportunities for secondments with the ADF, exploring support that can be provided for family members of serving members (for example, relocations), and ensuring that each year, new members are selected to join the VAC, provide opportunities for growth for veterans working at BAE Systems Australia.

## Communications

Keeping our veteran community connected is a primary goal of the VAC, and the VAC site on BAE Systems Australia's Intranet is an important communications tool to help us achieve this.

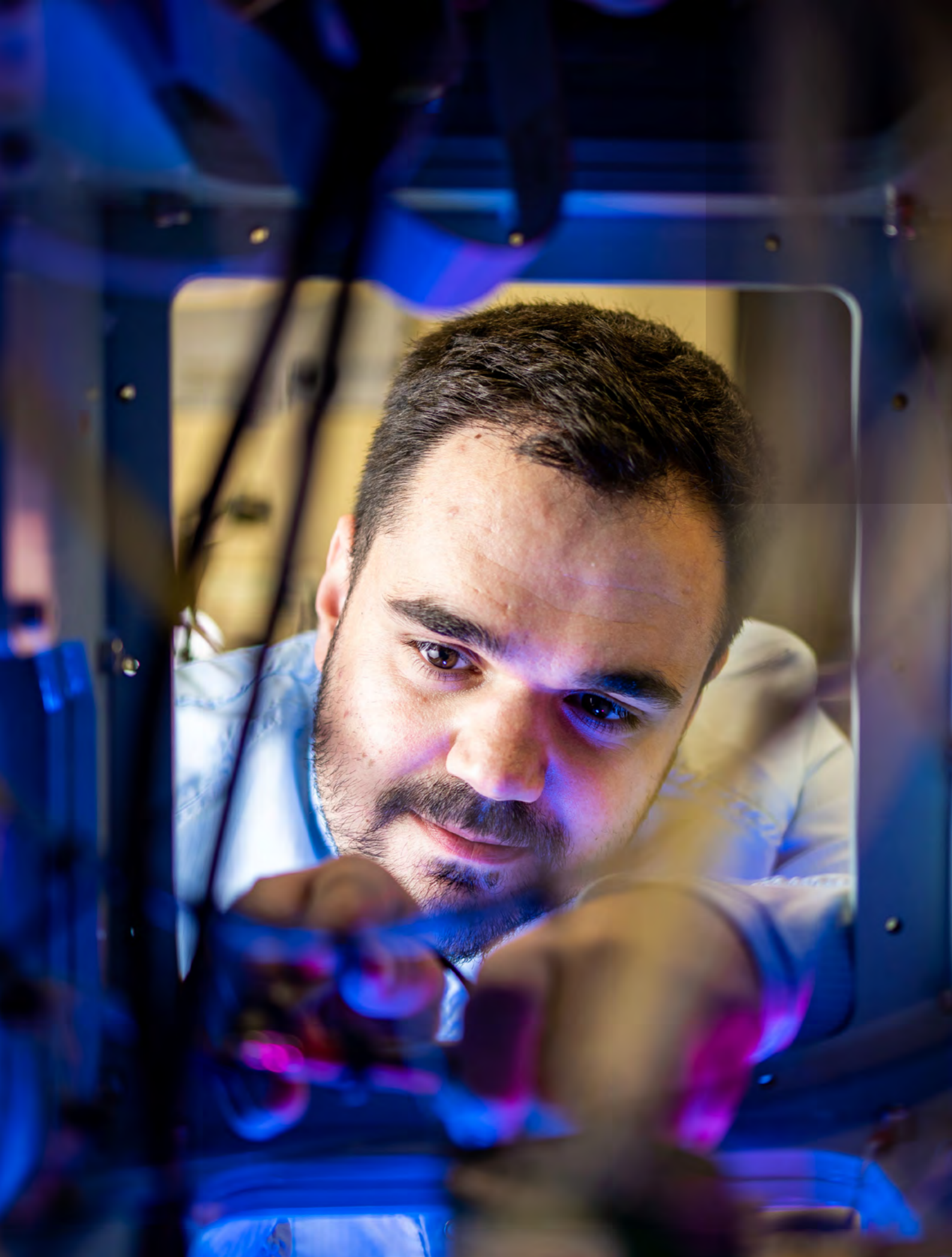
As well as including information about the VAC itself, the Intranet page also provides information about the range of support services available to veterans, specific communications, and includes details about upcoming events and activities.

Internal communications campaigns are also undertaken throughout the year, often aligning with key commemorative events. These campaigns promote the work of the VAC, educate staff, and provide recognition of our veterans.

These communications efforts are made possible by a representative from BAE Systems Australia's Communications Team being an active member of the VAC.

Through the VAC our veteran community is consulted on external communication campaigns, particularly relating to commemorative activities. This ensures that any veteran centric messaging is appropriate and relevant both in terms of content and tone.





## Continuous Improvement

Collecting and evaluating data surrounding your organisation's veteran recruitment and retention efforts can help you make well-informed decisions, set goals and provide appropriate support to your veteran community.

## Data Collection and Management

As part of BAE Systems Australia's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, we encourage veterans to self-identify through a range of mechanisms. This is done as part of our induction process, our recently-launched Self-ID project, and our Annual Veterans Survey.

The Self-ID project, managed through BAE Systems Australia's Employee Self Service portal, asks employees whether they are an Australian veteran themselves, as well as whether they are a veteran from another country, whether they are a partner of a veteran, and whether they are an ADF reservist. This information is treated in accordance with our privacy policy and is only available to select individuals for the purpose of information sharing.

Each year, the VAC develops a Veterans Survey. The purpose of this survey is to understand how veterans within our organisation want to be supported, as well as setting the agenda for the VAC for the coming year.

This process ensures that the VAC can evolve and improve so that the needs of our veteran employee can continue to be best met.



# Case Study

## Thomas

Thomas was enrolled in the Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (ASEME) from 2015-2016, completing his trade training in order to become an Electronics Systems Technician ('Boffin'). He was posted to ASEME in Adelaide where he went on to complete On-the-job Training at various military and civilian establishments until completion and posting to 1 Combat Service Support Battalion (1 CSSB) in 2017. Thomas was later posted to 16 Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery in 2019 until transition to SERCAT 5 in November 2021.

The decision to transition was voluntary after Thomas had recently purchased a new home with his soon-to-be wife. He just felt like the right time to move away from the Australian Defence Force (ADF), put down roots and discover his next career move. Thomas started his transition journey in March 2021 with the intention to transition in November of the same year. He felt giving himself a long lead time allowed him time to navigate any setbacks he might encounter. This way Thomas didn't feel any pressure and could transition as smoothly as possible.

Thomas was seeking a role with autonomy, and an opportunity to use his critical thinking and decision making skills combined with his experience in Operations Management prior to the ADF. The introduction to Soldier On came through a 'transition seminar' which transitioning members are required to attend. This is where Thomas became aware of Soldier On's Pathways Program, to which he signed on and began the process of looking for a civilian career.

"I was hoping that the Pathways program would be able to give me some assistance with updating my resume as I had not touched it ever since joining the ADF. On my

first meeting with Marlene, she offered so much more than just a resume! She helped better define my career plans post ADF and helped me discover options that I had never even considered. She also compiled a complete resume for me!"

The Pathways program also provided Thomas networking opportunities through their Professional Networking Events. These events invite representatives and organisations across multiple industries who are very willing to talk with candidates and hear about their unique experiences. Through this process Thomas considers himself fortunate to be put in touch with Jeremy, a Soldier On Ambassador and employee of BAE Systems.

"I met with him and found out he had already been passing my resume around his organisation and even arranged for me to meet with their representatives there that night! From there, I had an opportunity to interview with one of their Project Teams and was offered a position with the organisation!"

Soldier On really helped put Thomas on the right path for his career post Defence. Soldier On take the time to understand previous work experience and skill sets, which put candidates in good stead for a career that they would not only suit, but also enjoy.

Thomas joined BAE Systems as a Deputy Project Manager and we hope it will be a long and fulfilling career.



Our view is that the vast majority of veterans leaving the military have the skills, experiences and traits that make them ideal employees for any business. These include leadership, teamwork, resilience, a range of job specific skillsets and a mind set to go above and beyond to get the job done.

We identified that our business needed a common voice for our veteran community to ensure that we can continue to attract the best veterans talent in Australia and allow them to thrive in their careers post their service.

Establishing the Veterans Advisory Committee was an important first step as it formalised the recruitment of veterans and the establishment of a veterans centric culture in our business. We hope that this guide will assist other like-minded businesses to establish their own veterans employment best practice as we all work together to ensure that we best support those men and women who have served our nation.

Mat Jones  
VAC Chair 2020 – 2022



Our Veterans Advisory Committee is constantly evolving and adapting, and relies on the passion and commitment of its members to continue to serve our veteran community.

#### Contact details

The Veterans Advisory Committee:

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