

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL VETERANS ARTS MUSEUM



Senator Murray Watt
Minister Emergency Management
National Resilience Consultation
Department of Home Affairs

10 August 2023

Dear Minister,

This submission is in response to the discussion paper on *Alternative Commonwealth Capabilities for Crisis Response*.

The *Australian National Veterans Arts Museum* (ANVAM) is well placed to comment on this matter from two perspectives. The first relates to the victims of crisis, those members of our communities who experience the trauma that is often part of a crisis experience. At ANVAM, as Australia's only cultural institution with the primary purpose of supporting the wellbeing of the community, in particular the veteran community who are not strangers to trauma, we appreciate the value of early engagement with the community during and post crisis to support in the recovery process.

As part of the Commonwealth Government's consideration of non-defence resources to support in times of crisis, it is important that this support is also provided in the form of mental health crisis support, which may have the effect of increasing the resilience of the community and their ability to bounce back from crisis. This form of support may also be required by the responders to a crisis, and for some communities in the longer term.

An important feature of ANVAM's model in providing facilitated arts based support for the mental health and wellbeing of the veteran community, is that we are able to provide a resourced baseline service that is able to expand in times of crisis with the support of our extended network of veterans who are also arts mentors.

There are currently limitations on ANVAM's ability to provide this important service essentially related to the ongoing ten year negotiation regarding a permanent home for ANVAM within the former *Repatriation Commission Outpatient Clinic* in Melbourne. Use of this site is seen as fundamental to building a capability that is able to be deployed in times of crisis into communities, leveraging the skills and experience of our qualified arts and health professionals, and network of arts mentors.

The baseline capability ANVAM aims to develop, once resident in the former Clinic, will support the veteran communities wellbeing through ANVAM's established programs, while contributing to national and regional (South Pacific) resilience in times of traumatic crisis. This capability will be available to government to deploy as a civilian led capability, led by veterans trained by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in planning, logistics and operations.

PO Box 495 Flinders Lane Melbourne VIC 8009
312 St Kilda Rd Southbank VIC 3006

ACN: 605 494 291
ABN: 13 605 494 291
Est. 25 Apr 2015

info@anvam.org.au

JOINT PATRONS-IN-CHIEF

HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL THE HONOURABLE DAVID HURLEY AC DSC (RETD) AND
HER EXCELLENCY MRS LINDA HURLEY

To enable this capability requires two commitments by Government:

1. an intervention into the drawn out matter of the former *Repatriation Clinic* with a direction to the relevant party to install ANVAM as the Trustee of the site, and
2. ongoing funding to develop and maintain the baseline capability, and systems to call on ANVAM's arts mentors to deploy into communities to provide the arts based crisis response to support the mental health and wellbeing of those effected by the crisis and who are responding to the crisis.

The second perspective ANVAM offers relates to the important cultural assets and sites across Australia that help define the culture and identity of communities. These sites, if protected, can assist in the recovery of the community from a crisis, and if lost may hinder recovery. Examples may include important historical or public buildings, creative collections including libraries, private and public art, religious sites and so on.

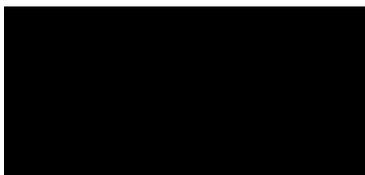
As a veteran led cultural institution ANVAM is well placed to be a facilitator in bringing other specialists to bear to prioritise the protection of cultural sites. Again this is a capability that ANVAM will develop over the longer term subject to respective governments identifying this as a priority in times of crisis, and investing in ANVAM's capability in this area.

Recommendations: ANVAM recommends;

1. Government invest in ANVAM as a capability to bolster Australia's national resilience as a cultural institution that will;
 - a. Provide teams to deploy into areas effected by crisis to support communities and first responders mental health and wellbeing through arts based programs
 - b. Support in the protection of cultural assets during times of crisis that will, in turn, play a role in communities recovery from traumatic crisis events.
2. Government direct that ANVAM be appointed Trustee of the former *Repatriation Commission Outpatient Clinic*, Melbourne, in accordance with the Land Acquisition Act s122.

We look forward to participating further in this consultation, and remain ready to respond to question should there be any.

Yours sincerely,



/ Mark Johnston
Chairman and Director