



The Hon Andrew Gee MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel
Federal Member for Calare

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW MEMORIAL FOR AFGHANISTAN VETERANS UNVEILED IN BRISBANE

A memorial honouring the selfless service and sacrifice of Australia's Afghanistan veterans has been officially opened at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium today.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the newly unveiled 42 for 42 Afghanistan War Memorial Gardens is a timeless tribute to all our veterans lost in the conflict and to suicide.

"Veterans who served in Afghanistan fought to defend our freedoms and values and to make Australia, Afghanistan and the world safer and more secure," Minister Gee said.

"Australia owes all those who served a great debt of gratitude and this memorial is an important acknowledgement of their service to our nation.

"The goal of not-for-profit 42 for 42 is to assist our veterans and their families through the establishment of this dedicated memorial to those who have lost their lives, and those who continue to suffer as a result of their service in Afghanistan.

"I thank 42 for 42 for its tireless work and commitment to create a meaningful space to reflect on the service and sacrifice of the Australian Defence Force in Afghanistan, and the continuing challenges many of our veterans face."

The 42 for 42 Afghanistan War Memorial Gardens has been supported by the Australian Government with \$90,000 in funding from the Saluting their Service grant program.

The gardens will be a place to remember the 41 veterans who were killed in Afghanistan. The number 42 represents all those who continue to experience the mental and physical impacts of the conflict.

"Creating this memorial has been a tremendous team effort. Our veterans and their families have come together with a clear vision and united in a common cause to build the memorial with support from Australian artists," Minister Gee said.

"The memorial displays 42 plaques which are cast and finished by hand, a life-sized bronze statue of a soldier and ADF dog, and also a mural dedicated to those who served in Afghanistan.

"I would like to extend my congratulations to 42 for 42 President Sean Mulqueen and all those who made this memorial possible, including the many businesses and individuals who have donated their time and money to ensure the legacy of our veterans lives on.

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling provides 24/7 free confidential crisis support for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families on 1800 011 046 or openarms.gov.au. **Safe Zone Support** provides anonymous counselling on 1800 142 072. **Defence All-Hours Support Line** provides support for ADF personnel on 1800 628 036 or defence.gov.au/health/healthportal. **Defence Member and Family Helpline** provides support for Defence families on 1800 624 608.

“Not only is this a place for quiet reflection and recognition of those who served in Afghanistan, it’s a place to educate visitors. They now have the opportunity to learn more about the conflict and the work that our servicemen and women undertook in Afghanistan through information contained on five boards at the memorial.

“While I was unable to attend the official launch due to current border restrictions, I’m eager to return to Brisbane when COVID-19 regulations allow, to visit the new memorial and honour those who’ve given so much to Australia.

“May the 42 for 42 Afghanistan War Memorial Gardens remain a testament to our veterans’ commitment to service, and our commitment to them, for generations to come.”

For more information on the memorial, its location, or the 42 for 42 organisation, please visit [The Memorial - 42 for 42 Incorporated](#). More information about how you can access a *Saluting Their Service* grant can be found [here](#).

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