

## **ROYAL COMMISSION ANNOUNCES FURTHER HEARING LOCATIONS**

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has announced public hearings will be conducted in Sydney, Canberra, Townsville and Wagga Wagga.

More details will be available once dates have been confirmed.

The announcement was made in Brisbane today, at the first public hearing to hear evidence from witnesses.

In his opening address, Counsel Assisting the Royal Commission, Kevin Connor SC, said for many veterans, Defence service was an “enriching experience from which they progressed to other fulfilling roles and careers”.

“Unfortunately for others, this is not their reality. They suffer and their families and loved ones suffer.”

Mr Connor revealed two public hearings will take place in Sydney, in February and March. The February hearing will run for 10 days.

Mr Connor also confirmed the Royal Commission would conduct hearings in locations where ADF facilities were located.

These include:

- Wagga Wagga, where the Army Recruit Training Centre is located Kapooka
- Townsville, where the Lavarack Army Barracks and a Royal Australian Air Force Base are located.
- Canberra, which is home to the Royal Military College Duntroon, the Australian Defence Force Academy and the Departments of Defence and Veterans' Affairs.

Mr Connor said the Brisbane hearing would include witnesses sharing their experiences of suicide.

The Brisbane hearing runs until December 10.