



Consultation Information Sheet: PwC evaluation of the Defence Community Organisation programs and services targeted at Defence families with children

PricewaterhouseCoopers Consulting (Australia) (PwC) Pty Ltd has been engaged by the Defence Community Organisation (DCO), a branch of the Commonwealth Department of Defence, to undertake an evaluation of the DCO programs and services that are currently provided to Defence families with children.

Who is the Defence Community Organisation?

On behalf of the Navy, Army and Air Force, Defence Community Organisation (DCO), offers a broad range of programs and services to help Defence families manage the military way of life. A subset of these programs and services are specifically targeted towards Defence families with children. These programs and services are the focus of this evaluation. More information about the DCO can be found via the [DCO website](#).

Who is PwC?

PricewaterhouseCoopers Consulting (Australia) or PwC is a professional services firm. A specific team within PwC will be working on this project, who bring knowledge and expertise in the areas of evaluation, policy development, program implementation and social policy (encompassing education, health and well-being) more broadly. Any questions about the evaluation can be sent to PwC via DCOProgramEval@au.pwc.com.

Who is involved in consultations?

Through online feedback and telephone interviews we are seeking to gain information and feedback from:

- Personnel involved in directly delivering the DCO programs and services (including the DCO staff).
- Personnel indirectly involved in delivering the DCO programs and services (including schools that are involved in administering the Defence School Mentoring Program).
- Defence families with children who may or may not have experience accessing the DCO programs and services.

What will be discussed during the consultations?

This evaluation is focused on the programs and services delivered by the DCO that are specifically targeted at Defence families with children.

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- understand the impact of the current DCO programs and services on Defence families and their children
- identify the enablers and barriers to delivery of the DCO programs and services, and key areas for improvement
- review more broadly the needs of Defence families and their children to understand what future support may be required

The programs and services under consideration for this evaluation are outlined in Table 1 below. Further detail about each of these programs and services can be found on the [DCO website](#).

Table 1: Overview of the DCO programs and services under consideration as part of this evaluation

Name	Brief description
Defence School Mentor Program	Mentors are based within primary and secondary schools across Australia for the purpose of providing support to the children of Defence families through on-site, direct and flexible assistance to students, parents, teachers and other support services.
Defence Childcare Program	Childcare assistance provided by the DCO includes individual case management service for childcare placement. Additionally, DCO also maintains a network of childcare centres around Australia.
Dependents with Special Needs Scheme	The Dependents with Special Needs Scheme provides a range of assistance options for Defence families with children with special needs. This includes a posting visit, special assistance during removals, access to services and/or equipment, education assistance and housing assistance.
Education Assistance Scheme	The Education Assistance Scheme comprises of a range of financial support to help eligible Defence families pay for some additional education costs for their children caused by a posting to a location within Australia. This includes support for tutoring, student accommodation etc.
SMART programs	The SMART suite of programs help Defence families develop their resilience, providing them with the psychological resources to manage the military way of life. This includes KidSMART and TeenSMART.
Defence Community Centre	Defence maintains community centres around Australia, where community group meetings or family-orientated activities can be held.

Source: DCO website.

What is the impact of COVID-19 on this evaluation process?

We appreciate that we are living through unprecedented times, with the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation impacting our day-to-day lives. As such we understand that key stakeholders for this evaluation may be operating in a business 'not-as-usual' environment.

To accommodate the impact of COVID-19 PwC is applying a flexible consultation approach, leveraging online feedback and telephone interviews to communicate with stakeholders. If for any reason you are unable to participate in the consultation during the suggested timeframe or via the suggested format please contact PwC via DCOProgramEval@au.pwc.com to discuss.

With your help, we can develop an understanding of the needs for Defence families and their children. This work will further support the DCO to ensure that they deliver programs and services that are designed and delivered consistently to meet the needs of Defence families and their children.