

Scottish Veterans Commissioner

Making life better for Scotland's ex-Service community

This update provides a summary of the Scottish Veterans Commissioner 2025 independent progress report. Full details can be found on my [website](#).

The first Scottish Veterans Commissioner was appointed in 2014 and I am the third person to hold the appointment.

My primary role, as laid down by the terms of my appointment, is to:

"improve outcomes for veterans in Scotland, by engaging with, listening to, and acting on the experience of veterans, individually and collectively, and to be an ambassador for veterans in Scotland, helping public services focus on veterans experience of their service provision."



Susie Hamilton
Scottish Veterans Commissioner

Vision

A Scotland where the contributions and sacrifices made by veterans and their families are recognised and appreciated and where *all* veterans feel valued by society.

Strategic Priorities

- ◆ Our veterans and their families are empowered to make informed choices to secure positive futures
- ◆ The diversity of our veterans community is clearly recognised and valued, with support and services accessible to all
- ◆ Policy makers and service providers will be responsive to need, collaborative in approach and aligned in their efforts to maximise impact
- ◆ Our communities and employers better understand, value and support veterans as they integrate, contribute and build fulfilling lives

Scrutiny and Progress to Date

A key aspect of my role is to scrutinise and assess the Scottish Government's progress against SVC recommendations and publish this assessment in an annual digital Progress Report.

Since 2014 the SVC's office has:

- ◆ Researched and published **12 reports**
- ◆ Made **96 Recommendations** to Scottish Ministers - all of which have been accepted in full

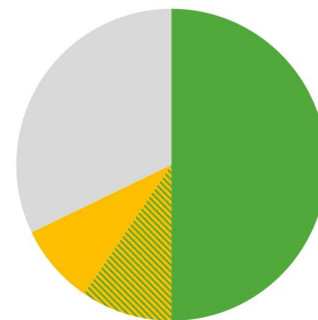
In my 'Veterans and the Law - 2024' and 'Veterans and Finance - 2025' thematic reports, I made 9 new recommendations which will be assessed for the first time in 2026.

The Scottish Government Veterans Minister and officials provided me with a set of planned or current activities against recommendations not yet achieved, with an update on the progress made against these activities. This has supported my independent assessment, alongside the information and feedback received over the year through my engagement work with the veteran community, statutory and third sector organisations, and researchers and analysts.

Of the 87 recommendations made in previous years and assessed in 2025, 42 have been achieved in full and 23 have been absorbed within the outcomes-focused recommendations. This year, no recommendations have been assessed as not implemented. There has been progress across an increasing range of areas, including those related to the 6 recommendations from my Anything But Uniform report which have been assessed for the first time.

2025 status of recommendations:

- Fully implemented
- Implemented but work should continue to embed
- Partially implemented
- Not implemented
- Superseded/absorbed



I will continue to monitor progress in delivery of all remaining recommendations, and will report annually on progress towards achieving those. I remain committed to listening and responding to the views and experiences of individuals and organisations from the veteran community, challenging policy and service delivery where required.

For full details of my 2025 Progress Report against all Scottish Government recommendations [visit my website here](#).

Notable Achievements

Notable recent achievements in the delivery of SVC's recommendations:



Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing has remained an SVC priority since the introduction of the role, and the delivery of the final outstanding recommendations from the 2018 Health & Wellbeing report represents a significant milestone.

The launch of the Veterans In-Service Injury Network in August 2025 was hailed as a welcome step towards creating dedicated pathways of care. However, its value will depend on consistent implementation across Scotland and the delivery of measurable improvement in outcomes for veterans.

Similarly, the Veterans Mental Health Pathway (VMHP), identified as a concern in last year's report, has seen steady progress towards implementation over the past year, but continued momentum is needed to deliver the pathway.



Employability and Skills Development

There has been encouraging progress in this area, with ongoing work to support spouses and partners, as well as Early Service Leavers, who may face particular challenges in the labour market.

I'm also pleased to see the continued development and embedding of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework tool on My World of Work, which helps Service leavers and employers translate military skills, qualifications and experiences for the civilian workplace.

Improvement Required

Some areas where I would encourage further progress by the Scottish Government:

- ◆ The General Practice Armed Forces and Veterans Recognition Scheme has the potential to make a real difference towards veterans accessing timely, appropriate health care. However, uptake remains disappointingly low, and increasing the number of GP practices who participate is essential to achieving equity of access.
- ◆ In the area of housing policy, progress on the Veterans Homelessness Prevention Pathway (VHPP) was highlighted as poor last year. Though it has since received renewed attention, it still requires a faster pace and greater scale of delivery to meet reasonable timescales.
- ◆ There has been positive progress across employability, skills and learning. However, I would like to see a more formal structure to provide strategic leadership and clearer collaboration between public, private and third sector partners to drive lasting improvement.

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