

AFP Blue Card

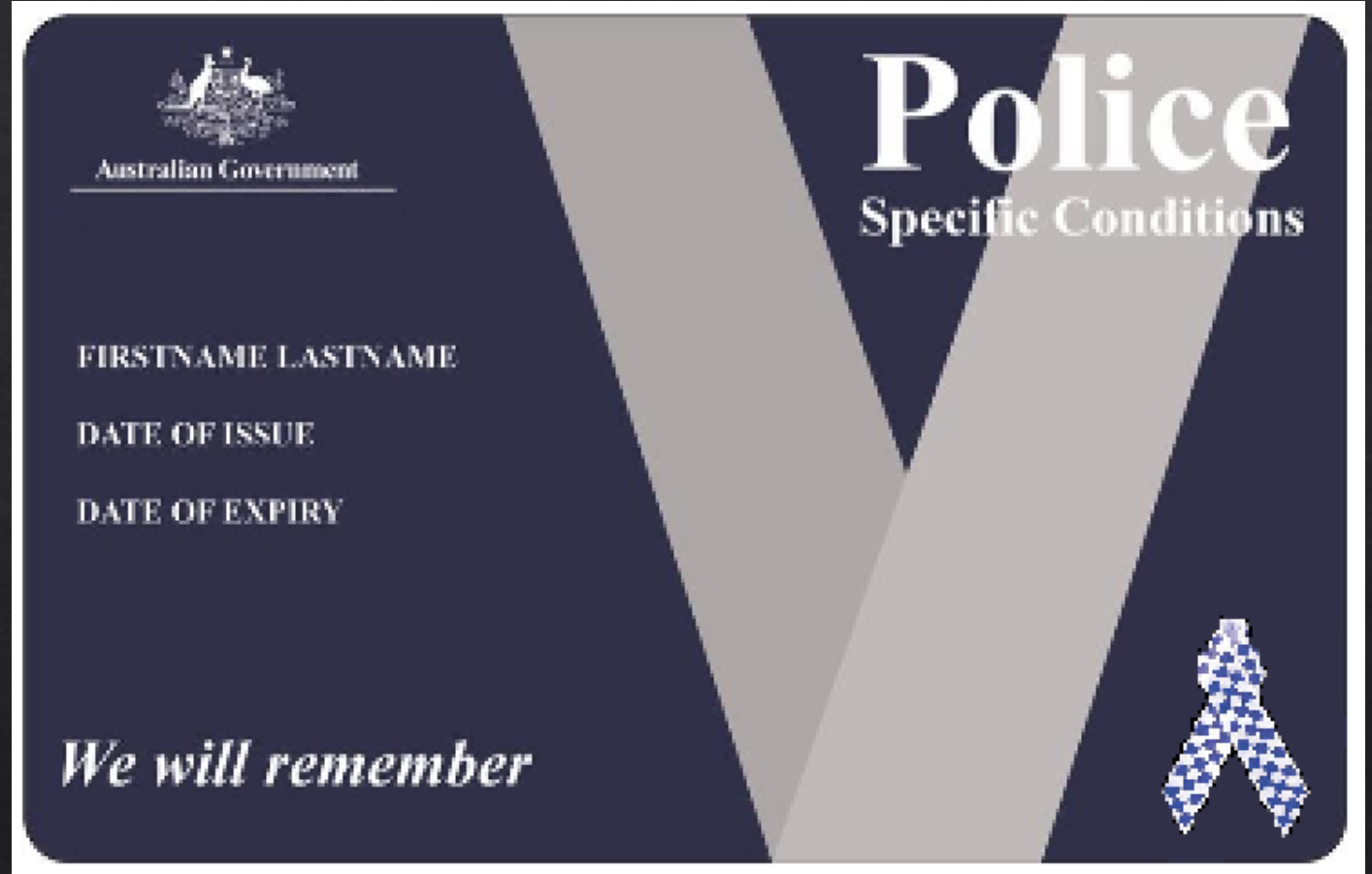


AFPA
Australian Federal
Police Association

**Presentation and costing of implementing
an Australian Federal Police (AFP) Blue Card
for all past, present and future AFP
appointees**

What is an Australian Federal Police Blue Card

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) Blue Card is an initiative that would provide past, present and future AFP appointees with ongoing medical and psychological assistance once their career with the Australian Federal Police has ceased



Why is an AFP Blue Card needed

All too often, we have seen former AFP appointees suffer from the effect of psychological injuries they sustained while employed. Sometimes, it takes years of trauma for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other psychological injuries to develop.

Due to a lack of services and difficulties in making a retrospective Comcare claim, many of these members will not receive the appropriate treatment and are left to fend for themselves.



1 in 4

former first responder employees experience probable PTSD (compared to 1 in 10 current employees,) and

1 in 5 experience very high psychological distress

*Beyond Blue 'Answering the Call'



Where do we start?

The AFPA believes that the current 'white card' and issued by the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) could be branded into a 'blue card' for past, present and future AFP appointees.

While far from perfect, the DVA has a framework and network in place that could immediately assist past AFP appointees and be there for AFP appointees who leave the organisation.

As we stand today, past AFP appointees have no options in seeking medical and psychological treatment for injuries they sustained while protecting Australia and Australians without covering the costs themselves.



What do we get?

The AFPA is seeking all past, present and future AFP appointees to have the opportunity to apply for a 'blue card', once they leave the AFP that will give them the same entitlements as the current DVA 'white card'.

This means:

- Medical treatment for accepted service-related injuries and condition
- Treatment for all mental health conditions
- Possible medical treatment for cancer (covered under non-liability health care)

Who is eligible for a 'blue card'

Eligibility for a White Card for a service-related injuries or conditions if you are:

- **a former AFP sworn officer, protective service officer or appointee that has performed operational duties**

You may be eligible for a White Card to cover treatment for any mental health condition if you:

- **have at least one day of continuous full-time service (CFTS) with the AFP**

What does it cost?

Information obtained via the Department of Veterans Affairs indicates the 'average' cost of a 'white card' is \$2160, based on 2019-2020 data, per person, per year.

The 'blue card' would only be applicable to police officers, protective service officers and AFP appointees that have conducted 'operational duties' and have left the AFP due to retirement, injury or a career change.

The number of eligible AFP appointees is estimated to be around 12,000 people.

12,000 AFP appointees x \$2160 = \$25.92 million

The future

As the AFP workforce expands and increases in age, the funding will also be required to grow.

The AFPA believes that former AFP appointees should be used as a 'trial' for future consideration of an Australia-wide roll out to all first responders.

If the trial is successful, the Federal Government and Department of Veterans Affairs could expand the initiative to state and territory police services with state and territory governments funding their former police officers.

Conclusion

We are asking for all sides of Government to commit to helping former AFP appointees who have diligently served and protected the community.

Whichever party forms Government after the next election, we are asking them to look after and take care of their Commonwealth first responders.

This can be achieved by the introduction of an AFP Blue Card that can be issued to former AFP appointees who fulfil the eligibility criteria.

We understand that this is a large commitment but given the fact that these former AFP appointees risked their life and mental health to serve and protected the Australian community, we believe it's a small price to pay.