



# The Transition Journey: From the Voices of First Responders

**Program Aim:** To promote a dignified transition experience for first responders that highlights the value of their services and future potential.



## Retirement + Medical Separation

N= 160 | 47%

“ I have learnt that there is a big exciting world out there and I should have transitioned sooner - I am excited to go out and get amongst it! ”

“ I learnt that I'm not useless, that I can achieve a life after the job. ”

## Transition to New Employment

N= 118 | 34%

“ I have learnt that I am more than a blue shirt and I have value and skills that are transferable in the private sector. ”

“ Serving my community was huge in terms of my identity... Little did I know that there are many occupations and roles outside of the first responder sphere specifically designed for that exact purpose. ”

## Career Maintenance/Re-engagement

N= 64 | 19%

“ I learnt about aligning my passions to a successful career progression. ”

“ I've been fortunate to relearn that I still have value to add to the workplace. ”

**342**

Completed  
program

“ I didn't feel like a number.  
The program made  
me feel valued. ”

## PROGRAM



“ Helping me see my potential and have the confidence to try something new. ”

“ Excellent support service with access to a large range of information and training to prepare you mentally, emotionally and practically to step into the job market. ”

“ I learned that my skills, experience and knowledge are valuable outside of my organisation. ”



## POTENTIAL IMPACT OF TRANSITION

Low confidence and difficulty identifying transferability of skills and experience

Loss of identity, purpose, connection

Increased vulnerability to social isolation, psychological distress and suicidality

“ I felt more like a quitter at the time and forgot to be proud of what I had achieved through my service and the help I had given the community. ”

“ I knew general duties policing was bad for me. However, I struggled as I still wanted to be there and went through a real sense of loss in a grieving process. ”

POOR WELLBEING

INJURY

NO PROGRESSION

POOR LEADERSHIP

LOW MORALE

BURNOUT

FEELING UNSAFE

NEGATIVE CULTURE

“ Like so many of us, I was extremely unhappy in 'the job'. ”

“ I felt burnt out from continual poor management and high workload over many years. ”

“ I learnt that when you ask for help it is available and it's ok to ask for that help. ”

## GAPS IN THE TRANSITION JOURNEY



- Limited access to resources
- Limited support for mental health
- Lack of coordination between relevant stakeholders
- Lack of information about skill transferability
- Limited preparation for loss of identity
- Lack of family support and social support networks
- Lack of post-transition support to ensure sustained success and wellbeing

“ Someone to understand the emotional rollercoaster that police officers feel when leaving the service. ”

“ Having somebody to talk to who understands first responder transition challenges. ”



## DRIVERS FOR TRANSITION

**FORTEM**  
AUSTRALIA  
Supporting THE BRAVE

