



# Media Release

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## ***beyondblue* and Invictus Games Sydney 2018 working together for mental health**

*beyondblue* and Invictus Games Sydney 2018 are working together to highlight the positive impact that sport, physical exercise and participation can have on mental health and wellbeing.

For the first time, the Invictus Games, presented by Jaguar Land Rover, will be held in Australia and more than 500 competitors – former and current military personnel from 18 countries – are in training for the October event in Sydney.

Every Invictus Games competitor has a story of survival and resilience; each has been wounded, injured or ill in the line of duty and is now representing their country through sport.

Equally inspiring are the stories of their supporters; friends and family who are recognised and celebrated by the Games as crucial to each individual's recovery.

Sport has played a vital role in the physical health and recovery of all these competitors, but it has also helped them maintain their mental wellbeing.

While mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression are as common among defence personnel as the broader community, exposure to violent or traumatic events places them at greater risk.

Many veterans and active defence personnel have also lost mates or family members in the services, while others have permanent injuries.

Adjusting to a civilian life can be isolating and stressful, and requires resilience as former servicemen and women seek and settle into new jobs and try to establish new social routines and networks.

***beyondblue* CEO Georgie Harman** said the Invictus Games were a fantastic example of how sport and exercise could help people regain confidence, a sense of stability and control by setting and achieving personal goals.

"Sport and physical exercise are always great for the body, but setting your mind to beating your previous personal best or reaching that next level of competition can give people something to strive for and a real sense of purpose," Ms Harman said.

"Sport is also a wonderful way to connect with others and to make friends which has an enormous positive impact on our mental health.

"*beyondblue* is thrilled to be working together with Invictus Games Sydney 2018. What a fantastic opportunity to get people talking about mental health and to highlight the importance of wellbeing, especially for those in the defence community."

*beyondblue* encourages individuals, clubs and sports groups across the country to get on board the Invictus Games Sydney 2018 '[Make Your Mark Down Under](#)' campaign. Making your mark could be as simple as going for a Walk and Talk with your friends and discussing mental health while showing support for the defence community.

**Invictus Games Sydney 2018 CEO Patrick Kidd OBE** welcomes the significant support working with *beyondblue* can offer and hopes the #MakeYourMarkDownUnder campaign will ignite interest among the *beyondblue* community nationwide.

"Invictus Games Sydney 2018 is an incredible opportunity for Australia," Mr Kidd said.

"At the Games we will witness some incredible stories showcasing the ability to overcome adversity. No matter where you are or what you do, there is a role for you in the Invictus Games Sydney 2018.



"This is a moment in time for us to come together as a nation, to be inspired by these incredible stories of resilience and actively demonstrate support for our defence community.

"Working together with *beyondblue* provides a significant platform for us to get people active and connected, supporting their physical and mental wellbeing while actively 'making their mark' to support our defence community.

"We are grateful for *beyondblue's* support and look forward to working together in the lead up to the Games in October," he said.

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**About Invictus Games**

The Invictus Games is an international sporting event for wounded, injured and ill servicemen and women, both active duty and veteran. The Games use the healing power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and generate a wider understanding and respect for those who serve their country. The Games also recognise the critical role played by family and friends. "Invictus" is Latin for unconquered, and it embodies the fighting spirit and resilience of our service personnel.

The inaugural Invictus Games took place in London in September 2014 and attracted more than 400 competitors from 13 nations. The second Invictus Games was held in Orlando, Florida in May 2016. Toronto, Canada, hosted the third Invictus Games in September 2017 and the fourth Invictus Games will take place in Sydney from 20-27 October 2018 and involve more than 500 competitors from 18 nations accompanied by around 1000 family and friends.

**Follow the Invictus Games Sydney 2018 journey:**

#IG2018 #MakeYourMarkDownUnder #GameOnDownUnder

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Instagram: [@invictusgames2018](https://www.instagram.com/invictusgames2018)

YouTube & Vimeo: Invictus Sydney

Visit: [www.invictusgames2018.org](http://www.invictusgames2018.org)

Watch: [Invictus Games Highlights](#) | [About Invictus Games](#)

Mental health professionals are available 24/7 at the beyondblue Support Service – 1300 22 4636 or via [beyondblue.org.au/get-support](http://beyondblue.org.au/get-support) for online chat (3p-12am ADST) or email responses (within 24 hours).