Moving Forward – employment post-service for Australian uniformed professionals in the Defence Force, Police, and Emergency Services

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Certificate of Authorship

"I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at Charles Sturt University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgment is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by colleagues with whom I have worked at Charles Sturt University or elsewhere during my candidature is fully acknowledged."

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Acknowledgment of Assistance

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Moving Forward

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Ethics, Biosafety and/or Radiation Safety Approval

This thesis reports on research involving humans.
The research was approved by the Charles Sturt University Ethics Committee. Approval number H16160.

Professional Editorial Assistance

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Abstract

Each year approximately 10 000 police, military and emergency services personnel leave their service organisation. The reasons for leaving vary but most of these personnel did not anticipate having to leave, instead believing that they had chosen a long-term career. Their post-service employment is often less satisfying than their service roles even when the working environment and/or conditions are objectively improved. This study explored the reasons why.

The study investigates the extent to which an identity connection to former employment influences job satisfaction post-service for former members of the Australian police, military and emergency services. The military included members from the army, air force and navy, and emergency services included firefighters and paramedics. In-depth interviews of 32 former members of these service organisations were conducted and analysed using a thematic analysis within an interpretative paradigm. The results indicated that these former service individuals have strong identity connections to their former service organisations and define themselves based on their former service roles. In doing so, they experience isolation and disorientation when leaving the service organisation and require support to effectively guide them through the transition process. As a result, typical job satisfaction determinants are inadequate to measure their post-service employment satisfaction. This was informed by the timeline of the participant narrations and the influence of key points in time, being the service environment, the individual experiences, and the transition experience.

Arising out of the analysis is a theory that helps categorise the complex dynamics that environmentally shape the individual experience of service personnel and how that impacts their transition. Introducing *post-service identity theory*, this newly developed theory explains how service organisations create ‘soldiers’ through training regimes in a hegemonic masculine environment that socially isolate the individuals and create an ‘us and them’ mentality with the non-service world. The exploration reveals that there is no process to un-create the soldiers, leaving them disoriented in the post-service environment.

Chapter 1 Introduction

In Australia, approximately 160 000[i] men and women are employed in an operational role in the military, police and emergency services[1]. These services are the Australian Defence Force (including Army, Navy and Air Force), the Federal and State police forces and services, the State ambulance services, and the State fire and rescue services. The roles include soldiers, seamen, aircraftmen/women, police officers, firefighters and paramedics. Almost 10 000[ii] of these men and women leave these services each year for a range of reasons, driven by either the organisation or the individual[2].

Once the decision is made (either by the individual or the organisation) that employment with the service organisation is ending, the transition period begins. Transition is defined as 'the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another' (Schlossberg, 1981). It is a term associated with separation from the Australian Defence Force but can be applied for separation from police and emergency services. Transition from each organisation differs in mode as well as the level of support offered during and after the transition period. The Australian Defence Force has a transition process in place that extends for a 12-month period and includes transition seminars to support career change as well as opportunity for financial support in certain circumstances[3]. Following the 12-month period, an individual's transition may then be handed to the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) for further support if eligible. There is no formal transition process in place for the Australian police and emergency services organisations. This research will examine the factors that influence the separation of individuals from these service organisations and the issues that arise in their transition. Ultimately this will help understand their job satisfaction in roles post-service and the way in which this influences their overall life satisfaction.

A study of job satisfaction amongst former employees of these service organisations contributes to an understanding of transition issues for this group and paves the way for new approaches to the management of

[1] Figure calculated in 2014 – see endnote
[2] Figure calculated in 2014 – see endnote
[3] Information retrieved from https://www.defence.gov.au/dco/transition/

post-service practices for each former employee. The way Australian uniformed professionals separate from their public service career usually includes one of the following: mandatory age-related retirement, medical retirement, voluntary resignation, involuntary resignation, or dismissal. Mandatory age-related retirement differs amongst the different public service organisations but generally ranges from 60 to 65 years of age (ALRC, 2012; AFP Act, 1979; QPS, 2014), with voluntary retirement permitted from the age of 55 (Perpitch, 2014, AFP Act, 1979). Medical invalidity retirement amongst these groups stems from physical and/or psychological injury as a result of a work-related event (Comcare, 2014). Voluntary resignation occurs when the worker chooses to leave the organisation and involuntary resignation occurs when the worker is given the option to resign to avoid being dismissed (AFP Act, 1979). Dismissal is when the worker's employment is terminated by the organisation (QPS, 2014; AFP Act, 1979). Upon leaving, these former service men and women seek employment in different sectors. In many instances, the career transition has different outcomes than they as individuals may have expected (Ruiz & Morrow, 2005), leading to varying levels of satisfaction amongst workers of this group in their post-service employment. For some, across all three of the organisations, levels of satisfaction with their new employment are often sufficiently low to place them in a state of doubt about their decision to leave their service organisation (Rothausen, Henderson, Arnold, & Malshe, 2017; Ruiz & Morrow, 2005). This was of interest to this study when considering the state of mind of individuals who have separated from highly group-identified work environments.

The background for this project stems from earlier research (Martin, 2011) and professional experience of the researcher, who works with police, military, and emergency service workers seeking career transition post uniformed service. The outcome that this Masters research reported was that for some of this group, the job opportunities that presented were good (because of higher salary and better conditions), however their job satisfaction was poor; and for other workers, the job opportunities did not present at all.

There are unique qualities to the police, military and emergency services as employment agents in Australia. The most obvious being the

training regime that is part of the initial induction into the organisation and other qualities include the uniform they wear, the weapons and equipment they carry, the shiftwork and long deployments and postings. There is also unique terminology where they 'serve' in the military rather than are employed and they separate from service in both the military and police when they leave the employment. The employment design for the emergency services is unique in that it is often two 12 hour nights and two 12 hour days that then leaves the remainder of a week for secondary employment. On that topic alone, secondary employment in all three service groups requires special permission from the service organisation. Whilst many of these factors, individually, are seen in the employment sector across many industries, the uniqueness for these service groups comes in the volume in which these factors are seen together for these employees. A further example is that military personnel in Australia do not have access to a trade union. Whilst these factors do not contribute specifically to post service issues for the former members, they signify differences in the employment environment that has lasting impact on the identity formation of individuals. This results in confusion that impacts post service job satisfaction.

Extant research suggests that a possible explanation for the low levels of job satisfaction after separation from the public service is the perceived occupational mobility by each individual in the uniformed professions. Ruiz and Morrow (2005) explain that police, for example, have a sense of self-worth that is not capable of being valued in the same way by new employers once they leave the public service organisation. The new employers have little to no understanding of the skills and knowledge acquired by the workers from the public service organisations and therefore are limited in their ability to understand the transferability of skills from the public service organisation to the new area of employment. Whilst this may be the case for any number of individuals undergoing career change, it becomes particularly obvious for organisations such as police, military and emergency services, who perform tasks, undertake training, and develop skills that are unique and often concealed from the public. This is directly related to the labour market and the individual human capital, where these individuals are not carrying sufficient worth in the labour market for re-

employment at a level that is reflective of their vocational skills (DiPrete, 1988; Hayes & Fitzgerald, 2009). Employers do not value the worker's skills the way the worker expects, and this leads to frustration and disengagement with the recruitment and redeployment process.

The military have better transition programs to support their workers when separating from the public service organisation, and they do provide a greater range of vocational level[4] qualifications during service, but individuals report that their occupational mobility is still limited by the fact that new employers do not have a full awareness of the vocational skills held by the military as a result of their previous service.

The question presents, why in some instances, are individuals expressing low levels of job satisfaction despite achieving a seemingly better job, with a better salary, better working conditions, less trauma, and less risk of harm to their selves? Why are a number of these professionals contemplating returning to the service organisation? Why are some professionals despairing in the loss of having the option to return to their service organisation? The psychological attachment to previous group-based work raises the question of self-identity versus organisational identity.

Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003) define identity work as active processes that serve to construct a sense of identity in individuals. For the purposes of this research, identity work is not just about how the individuals categorise themselves, but how experiences convert to images and representations that take on sufficient meaning to influence that individual's identity (Beech, 2008; Brown, 2015; Brown & Coupland, 2015; Evans & Sinclair, 2016 (b)). Therefore, identity work is the ongoing reproduction of self-identity, drawing upon the inner and external dialogues that influence the individual narratives and inform an individual's self-meaning (Beech, 2008; Brown, 2015; Brown & Coupland, 2015; Evans & Sinclair, 2016(a); Sveningsson & Larsson, 2006).

Ruiz and Morrow (2005) address the almost desperate state of police who are afraid to leave their service for fear of not knowing what to do next. However, there has been less focus in the literature on measuring the social and emotional impact of separation on uniformed professionals, particularly

[4] ADF is a registered training organisation https://training.gov.au/Organisation/Details/0050#

in Australia. There is extensive literature on the mental health issues associated with service of this type, particularly military, but less research exploring the role that identity work plays in the process. Overall, no research to date truly addresses the impact of poor quality or non-existent identity work on levels of job satisfaction in the workplace for former members of these three service groups.

There appears to be an internal dialogue that informs the self-identity of this group that has been largely influenced by the external dialogue of the public service organisation (Beech, 2008). However, it also appears that the individuals are unaware of the formation of their identity whilst in service and the way in which it affects their post-service working life. Upon separation from these specialist service organisations, the members of the group remain confused about how they fit in relation to others and their current employment situation – unable to completely leave their former employment behind, but not able to identify with their new job (Ruiz & Morrow, 2005). Further, they take with them expectations of recognition of their skills by new employers, as well as expectations of their place in society that was consistent with their status in their old employment but is not necessarily consistent with their new employment.

The team environment is a crucial part of these jobs, often essential to preserving the safety of each individual employee in a work environment that faces potential lethal risks during each shift. These uniformed professionals work in team environments that rely upon functioning group dynamics to ensure effective work practices and the appropriate use of Government resources (Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2002). This research highlights how the loss of the group environment can leave the individual feeling disoriented and unable to adapt to new non-group work environments. For all these individuals, the group environment commenced at the very start of their career in the organisation, created by the somewhat unique recruit training practices that often include boarding together. Combined with social isolation during this period and in different work-factor environments after training, the individuals come to rely heavily upon the group dynamic, work solely towards the collective goal, and begin to identify with the organisation to the exclusion of others from their previous ‘civilian’ life.

Moving Forward

To investigate the experiences of former members of the police, military and emergency services and to ascertain the factors that impacted their post-service employment satisfaction the following research questions are answered:

1. What is the nature of the identity-based connection between uniformed professionals and their work?
2. How does this identity-based connection influence individuals in their pursuit of work opportunities?
3. What factors determine levels of job satisfaction in employment post-service for Australian uniformed professionals in policing, military, and emergency services?
4. Amongst these factors, what is the relative importance of human capital and perceived occupational mobility as explanations for levels of job satisfaction post-service?
5. How do former uniformed professionals narrate their career transitions?

In this study of 32[5] former police[6], military[7] and emergency service[8] workers it was found that there is an identity-based disconnection between the former uniformed professional and their new organisation; that the identity connection with the previous uniformed profession remains intact and influential; and that support for identity work is as important as training/development when working with former uniformed professionals in career transition. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted by phone with the participants. A thematic analysis was applied and the timeline for the participants revealed key environments and experiences that impacted their connection to the service organisation:

1. Service environment
2. Individual experience
3. Transition experience.

The service environment provides a hegemonic masculine space that encourages a divide between service personnel and non-service members of

[5] 23 men and 9 women
[6] 14 police
[7] 12 military
[8] 6 emergency services

the community and transforms civilians into soldiers. The concept of creating soldiers arose early in the interview process with the term coined by one of the participants. Direct questioning of the participants about their reasons for joining the service organisations revealed a desire to be a 'policeman' or 'soldier' or 'firefighter' in only a small number of participants. For many, the reasoning was largely pragmatic and based in job opportunity or job security. As such, the creation of soldiers started once the individuals were in the job, and is reported to stem primarily from the training regime followed with reinforcement by the daily job tasks and roles. The training is unique given the military and para-military nature of these organisations and has a defining impact on the individuals. This impact is then reinforced with ongoing training and immersion into the job role. It is heightened by teamwork and camaraderie and the wearing of uniforms that defines each individual as part of a group.

According to Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) and Higate (2001), service organisations such as the police, military and emergency services are hegemonically masculine environments. Individuals, both male and female, trained and immersed in the work tasks of this environment, become most comfortable in the masculine space and thereafter struggle to adapt to less masculine environments. This affects job satisfaction post-service, particularly in work environments post-service that do not demonstrate the same hegemonic masculine characteristics given the unfamiliarity and changing environment. This leads to them pursuing the uniform by seeking post-service employment that is like their former employment and keeps them in the masculine space. Higate (2001) suggests that this delays the transition process and prevents them from undertaking identity work to disconnect their identity from the former service organisation.

Once the individuals leave the service organisation they report a feeling of organisational abandonment. This arises from a perceived betrayal of loyalty owed to them by the organisation, which stems from their commitment to the organisation that they believe should be returned to them in kind. The individuals have a misplaced idea of the extent to which any organisation is responsible for their post-service experiences. However, the unique nature of the organisations together with the specialist roles and the development of individuals within this environment creates an identity

connection with the organisation that cannot be ignored upon separation. Both the organisation and the individual need to work towards a positive solution that supports transition and improves post-service experiences.

Without sufficient transition support, former members of the police, military and emergency services struggle to identify with the post-service workplace and report feeling like strangers in a civilian world. The use of the term ‘civilian’ to describe workplaces outside the police, military and emergency services is common to participants from all three services. They develop an ‘us and them’ mentality during their training, induction, and immersion into the service organisation and struggle to detach from this post-service. They define themselves as their service role and need support to learn how to redefine themselves when they leave the organisation.

This inability to effectively detach from the service organisation presents itself in several ways. Firstly, the individuals appear to overrate their skills and knowledge in the civilian sector and become disillusioned when new employers or colleagues do not view them as valuable. It is important to note that this is just an ‘appearance’ and all participants were humble about their skills and knowledge, just confused as to how they are supposed to present themselves to civilian employers. Secondly, the individuals believe that the organisation has just left them without help, when they gave their whole lives to the organisation. The individuals are not actively able to identify the way in which they define themselves as their job role and therefore struggle to understand why the organisation is not responsible for helping them in their post-service state. Lastly, it is difficult for the individuals to rationalise that although their training and skill development was extensive, it is firm-specific and therefore does not easily transpose to other occupations. They understand this issue but are confused as to how to manage it in the post-service environment.

In identifying these themes and confirming the identity connection between individuals and their former service organisation, a theory has been identified and titled *post-service identity theory*. The development of this theory helps explain the complex dynamics that environmentally shape the individual experience of service personnel and how that impacts their transition. It supports recommendations for new approaches to transition for service personnel and can provide an understanding for both the individuals

and the organisations as to the issues affecting these members of the labour market.

The implications of this research can help theorists and practitioners to develop a better understanding of the role that identity plays in post-service employment and mental and emotional wellbeing. This leads to a number of recommendations for immediate business applications including the expansion of current non-government support agencies to include a four-step process that will 1. Aid mental health recovery, 2. Conduct recognition of existing skills, 3. Encourage learning, and 4. Support recruitment and redeployment. This is currently being done by separate agencies and for individual services, but not as a holistic approach.

This thesis is structured as follows: Chapter two provides a literature review which explores the concepts surrounding job satisfaction, propensity to serve and hegemonic masculinity, transition and identity work. Chapter three identifies the research design and methodological approach taken to explore the research questions. Chapters four, five and six present the findings, drawing out the themes of ‘forming a connection’, ‘separation and transition’ and ‘post-service job satisfaction’. Chapter seven provides a discussion of the findings and develops the post-service identity theory, while the final chapter draws out the contributions of the thesis to both theory and practice.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the salient aspects of the issues associated with job satisfaction, propensity to serve and hegemonic masculinity, transition and identity work for former police, military and emergency services personnel as they have appeared in the literature to date. This review serves to focus attention on those aspects that have received insufficient or no treatment in the literature and facilitates the identification of the central issue to be examined through this research.

There is little to no prior research in the area of job satisfaction and identity work for police, military and emergency services in Australia. It is only in the past ten years that research into transition processes and associated identity issues for the military has increased (Beech, Gold & Beech, 2017; Binks & Cambridge, 2018; Brunger, Serrato & Ogden, 2013; Higate, 2001; Mankowski, Tower, Brandt, & Mattocks, 2015; Robertson & Brott, 2013; Schmaltz, 2011). As recently as 2018, there is published work on the transition experiences of military, in particular male veterans from the British army (Binks & Cambridge, 2018). There remains little to no research on the transition process and any subsequent related issues for police and emergency services. Further, there is little to no research on Australian military, police and emergency services in this space. In the early 2000s Higate (2001) published work that related specifically to the transition of UK military and suggested identity issues that operated within a gender ideology. This formed the basis for further enquiries in this space as it related to the transition experiences and post-service job satisfaction for Australian police, military and emergency services. Higate (2001) briefly touches upon the suggestion that a pre-existing propensity to seek employment in a masculine space influences the original job choice to join the military and thereafter continues to influence job seeking in masculine organisations. As such, a starting point for the review of literature for this study was to consider the reasons that individuals chose to join the police, military or emergency services in Australia.

But the nature of this current research is more than just military transition issues. Whilst this contributes to an understanding of the identity

work of this group, further investigation was required across several disciplines to gather information about the existing literature in areas that impact on studies concerning police, military and emergency services in Australia. The focus of this study is job satisfaction post-service for former members of the police, military and emergency services, and therefore a review of existing literature in this area was pertinent. This included a review of literature in the areas of human capital and occupational mobility. Further, the investigation into the possible connection between these factors and identity work of these individuals required a review of literature in the area of identity work, with attempts to focus as closely on this participant group as possible.

What also became clear during the development of the research design was that there were several additional areas related to the transition of police, military and emergency services workers that required investigation. Areas such as their inclination to enter service organisations and how the presence of this propensity to serve may impact on their identity connection with the service organisation; an organisational review to consider the institutionalisation of individuals undergoing intense training in these service environments with specialist areas; and other issues that may impact on their transition experience, such as the continuity of employment post-service and the hegemonic masculinity of the service organisation working environment. Further, a review of literature on gender relations was required to pre-empt any differences or similarities between the male and female participants in this research project.

The challenge that presented in relation to a review of the literature was that much of the work on the labour market, including job satisfaction, human capital and occupational mobility, was generic in nature and little to no research dealt specifically with specialist employees from police, military and emergency services. Further, the work on the transition of these individuals from service organisations is almost exclusively focused on military veterans, with a further focus on those veterans in the US and UK (Beech, Gold & Beech, 2017; Binks & Cambridge, 2018; Brunger, Serrato & Ogden, 2013; Higate, 2001; Iversen et al., 2005; Mankowski et al., 2015; Robertson & Brott, 2013; Schmaltz, 2011). As such, there is little to no literature in this area for Australian military, and little to no literature

addressing transition issues for police and emergency services in Australia. As such, the literature about the transition of the military was reviewed at length and included to help support the findings on the military participants in this research, but also to investigate its transferability to police and emergency services. Further, its applicability to Australia is also tested.

To create the full picture of the literature relevant to this research, an extensive review was conducted and organised to replicate the planning behind the research project. That is, it started with a review of the literature on job satisfaction and then merged into the wider issues that arose, with an examination of the literature that describes the propensity to serve, the operation of the institution, the hegemonic masculine environment, the transition processes, and identity work.

2.2 Job satisfaction and economic factors

Once former members of the police, military and emergency services leave their service employment, and are actively participating in the transition process, post-service employment options become important. Even more important than the types of jobs that are available for this post-service employment group, is their satisfaction with the new employment. This is a key element to not only each individual's job satisfaction but also their life satisfaction and their overall wellbeing during the transition process. The literature in this area employs key determinants of pay, hours of work, job security, and career prospects to measure job satisfaction. For former members of the police, military and emergency services the added determinants of risk of harm to self, working conditions, and work/life balance, combined with the social services determinants of interpersonal or human relations, and personal motivation are also relevant (Brentari & Golia, 2008). D'Addio, Eriksson & Frijters (2007) explain that the most logical determinants to measure job satisfaction from an economic perspective are pay and hours of work, but from a sociological and psychological perspective, promotion and career prospects are the key determinants. They also address the additional factors of good health and being a public sector employee that can contribute to the subjective measure of job satisfaction (D'Addio et al., 2007). There is a range of different survey methods used, and a varying set of determinants in the literature

measuring job satisfaction, however overall there are common factors that inform job satisfaction.

Warr (1999) designed a comprehensive survey to measure job satisfaction that included the key determinants of wages and hours of pay, but also job security, job content, interpersonal relationships, and career prospects. Clark (2005) discovered from the International Social Survey Programme that most employees ranked job security and job interest above pay and hours of work. This informed the development of questioning about both the reasons the individuals from the police, military and emergency services elected to enter the service organisation, as well as questioning about how they felt about their post-service employment. D'Addio et al. (2007) suggest a distinction between the economic employment contract and the psychological employment contract, which then distinguishes between pay and hours of work and working conditions. They then separate the working conditions into intrinsic and extrinsic, with the former being pay, hours, work/life balance, job security and career prospects, and the latter being work relationships, risk of harm to self, work intensity and job content (D'Addio et al., 2007). They also suggest that individual characteristics not be ignored, such as age, gender; and that an individual's 'emotional state or mood' may influence reported levels of job satisfaction, regardless of the actual job (D'Addio et al., 2007, p. 5).

However, Brentari and Golia (2008) suggest that relying on economic determinants to measure job satisfaction is not effective for employees in the social services sector. This supports allowing a narrative by former members of police, military and emergency services to ascertain some of the differences between generic workplaces and those that fit within some of the boundaries of social services. Brentari and Golia (2008) identify human relations and personal motivations as the determinants of job satisfaction for social services workers. Their research suggests that any questionnaire used to measure job satisfaction will be most effective if it is '…well-matched to the sample of workers considered' (Brentari & Golia, 2008, p. 55). This informed questioning on why the participants chose to enter their service organisations, which could then be compared to their experiences in post-service employment. Al Jenaibi (2010) suggests that globalisation now influences the measure of job satisfaction and, at the very

least, integrates different concepts about job satisfaction. His research is based in organisational management and is somewhat outside the focus of this thesis, but with the changing climate of international security, increase in disaster response, and the militarisation of many international policing models (Greener-Barcham, 2007), globalisation is a factor worth some consideration in the design of the questions for the research. It begs the question whether job satisfaction should be measured differently for members of the police, military and emergency services. More importantly, it begs the question whether job satisfaction during the service period with organisations such as police, military and emergency services then has an impact on post-service employment satisfaction with different organisations. This research informed the comparative questioning of satisfaction with the service employment and satisfaction with post-service employment in this study. From an additional perspective, Irving, Coleman, and Cooper (1997) were early authors in the area of organisational commitment, and whilst it may not be specifically relevant to this discussion, it does contribute to understanding the identity disconnect that this group feel with new employment as a result of their continuing identity connection with their former public service employment. This is of use when combined with D'Addio et al.'s (2007) use of public sector employment as a determinant of satisfaction, particularly if variables present where members of the group have transitioned from one public service organisation to another.

2.2.1 Employability issues

Whilst there is extensive research on the organisational culture associated with service organisations such as the police, military and emergency services (Cochran & Bromley, 2003; Prenzler, 1997; Prenzler & Ronken, 2003; Sever, 2008; Stinchcomb, 2004), particularly in the sense of organisational culture and trauma (Restubog, Scott & Zagenczyk, 2011), and its effect on members of the organisations, there is limited research specifically targeted at employability issues post-service. Literature from several key areas was examined with an ultimate focus on occupational mobility (DiPrete, 1988; Hayes & Fitzgerald, 2009) and human capital (Becker, 1964) and how this may influence identity work. A natural digression occurred during the literature examination into the areas of social resource theory (Otto et al., 2011), social capital and labour market trends

(Behtoui & Neergaard, 2012), all of which helped shape the research problem and target the research questions. It is worthwhile taking a moment to define some of these terms to explain the intentions of the use of each of these subject areas and the relevance to the research.

Much of the literature includes human capital in the measure of an individual's social capital which is that individual's value as measured amongst their network of relationships in society. The literature is extensive across this range of terms and many of the definitions are intertwined, but for the purposes of this research, the literature was reviewed for its elements that contributed to a greater understanding of human capital and occupational mobility, and how they contributed to an individual's identity development work as relevant to the former members of the police, military and emergency services. The term human capital is best defined using Becker's theory from 1964 that proposes employees acquire two types of skill as a result of their exposure to the labour market, those that are transferable and those that are not. The issue for former members of police, military and emergency services is the non-transferable nature of many of their skills. Dobbie and MacMillan (2012) elaborate to describe transferable skills as general skills and non-transferable skills as firm-specific skills. Much of the research shows a connection between these skill sets and earnings (Dobbie & MacMillan, 2012; Kilpatrick & Felmingham, 1996), with general labour market skills measured by age and adjusted by education levels and firm-specific skills measured by firm tenure (Dobbie & MacMillan, 2012). In addition, studies have shown that earnings are also linked to occupation-specific skills, and industry-specific skills, essentially creating four categories of human capital for consideration (Dobbie & MacMillan, 2012; Kwon & Milgrom, 2014; Lazear & Oyer, 2004; Shaw, 1984). In the context of earnings, the research conducted across decades and countries has concluded that firm-specific skills have the lowest return, followed by occupation-specific and industry-specific skills, with general skills having the highest return (Dobbie & MacMillan, 2012; Kwon & Milgrom, 2014; Lazear & Oyer, 2004; Shaw, 1984). However, if earnings are not the primary motivator for post-service employment choices and subsequent satisfaction, then human capital measured by earnings is not as significant a benchmark. Instead, human capital needs to be measured by the

nature of achievable employment in a post-service environment, particularly with a focus on reducing underemployment. What is interesting about these findings is that the introduction of occupation and industry-specific skills as a category influenced the return on firm-specific skills. Where before, firm-specific skills may have held their own against general skills, the additional categories revealed this to not be the case, reducing the contribution of firm-related skills and tenure to worker earnings (Neal, 1995; Parent, 2000). This creates a confusing environment for former service members as they try to navigate their worth in a post-service environment and try to ascertain which of their skills are transferable, and which are positive contributions to new employment.

2.2.2 Occupational mobility

An examination of contributing theories in the area of occupational mobility helped support the assumption that a level of confusion amongst former members of the police, military and emergency services about the transferability of their work skills was contributing to their post-service job satisfaction. In 2011, Otto, Baumert and Bobocel conducted research on 'distributive justice principles' in a cross-cultural study (p. 255). What is most relevant about this research is that it draws upon social resource theory and provides an interesting perspective on uncertainty management theory (Otto et al., 2011). In terms of self-identity, these elements strongly influence the capacity for an individual to identify with their personal goals and dreams in addition to, or alongside, their employment goals and dreams. The literature provides some explanation why this may not be as clear cut for the members of the police, military and emergency services given the nature of organisational identity. Social resource theory, in this context, is best described by Behtoui and Neergaard (2012) as the 'pool of resources embedded in an individual's social network' (p. 42). These resources reinforce social hierarchy and influence the quality of jobs that an individual obtains and the subsequent income and workplace status (Behtoui & Neergaard, 2012). This is commonly referred to as social stratification and explains not only one individual's capacity to obtain certain levels of employment and create a certain position in the social hierarchy, but also the manner in which other individuals are excluded from positions on the social hierarchy and the obstacles encountered when trying to change that

exclusion (Adkins, 2005). This is particularly significant for members of a group whose workplace is hierarchical in a military and/or para-military way where the stratification occurs within the organisation as well as outside.

This led to an examination of uncertainty management to ascertain whether the lack of certainty of the individuals from police, military and emergency services in relation to the use of their skills post-service was situational or based in theory. Uncertainty management theory is a term commonly associated with Lind and van den Bos (2002) and is a useful tool to apply when measuring the benefits of education in relation to employment. This is particularly significant for the assumption amongst the former members of the police, military and emergency services that education influences the ease of their transition. According to Otto et al. (2011) uncertainty management theory states that it is a basic function of fairness in human lives to help people cope in the world on the basis that it is an uncertain place (p. 259). Typically, uncertainty management theory supports the idea that education during a person's lifetime contributes to a reduction in uncertainty and therefore improves a person's ability to cope in life. However, the training within service organisations is often so specific and non-transferable that it lends itself to a different interpretation of lifetime education and in a post-service environment broaches the reality that an individual has not been undertaking 'education' for the lifetime of their career but instead simply training and retraining for singular roles. The levels of uncertainty differ throughout the period of an individual's life and Hofstede (1980) believes that it is intensified in different cultures, but perhaps even intensified in different occupations. Whilst Otto et al.'s (2011) research was focused upon cross-cultural differences between Canada and Germany, the principles of uncertainty avoidance and uncertainty tolerance that they apply have a wider reach (Otto et al., 2011, p. 259). Interestingly, the terms were first referred to by Hofstede (1980) and they provide good insight into the reasons why individuals may remain in one form of employment over the long term. This is common in some members of the research group. Ruiz and Morrow (2005) state that this is normally the case in policing because there are no other options clearly available to the individual, not as a fact, but as a result of the individual's inability to

identify outside the organisation. Whilst commonly applied on a social scale, uncertainty avoidance can lead to reliance on social norms, rituals and bureaucratic practices, but it is interesting to consider whether the same uncertainty avoidance practices can be applied to occupation scenarios. This allows for the use of uncertainty management theory in other sectors, such as specific occupations, to see whether it is a factor in the manner in which employers invest in human capital, as well as the manner in which individual employees invest in them. It also has some significance as to the reasons why employees may, or may not, remain in employment long term. And, further, it may contribute to an inability to leave employment after long-term engagement as the degree of uncertainty increases over time. Otto et al. (2011) explain that individual differences in uncertainty management can be highlighted by an individual's tendency to avoid uncertainty but also by an individual's ability to tolerate uncertainty. This could be a significant factor in occupational mobility and should not be overlooked as an underlying motivation for individual decision making when it comes to employment choices.

At the heart of discussions of occupational mobility is the presence of boundaries and the way in which these are firstly identified, and secondly breached or crossed. The boundaries for occupations such as police, military and emergency services in Australia are tight, and cannot be crossed. For example, police cannot transfer from one police service or force to another without applying as a recruit and recommencing recruit training. No recognition is given for firm-related skills. They are viewed as non-transferable. This is explained by Hayes and Fitzgerald (2009), who use the term 'boundary crosser' when referring to those individuals who can not only exist across different occupations but can do so with the ability to translate occupational specifics to others (p. 432). The defining element for boundary crossers is that they hold certifications such as educational and professional qualifications that allow them to easily permeate occupational boundaries. This continues to be a common thread in the literature in that education is present in many of the defining elements of all areas contributing to occupational mobility. This is especially significant for the in-group comparison between emergency services, and police and military. Paramedics can transition to similar work, in or out of Government, and in

or out of the same State or Territory, which is not the case for police, military and firefighters. Yet, many police organisations in Australia train their recruits to the same Diploma level (AQF 5) as the paramedics[9]. Interestingly, Hayes and Fitzgerald (2009) focus upon the need to accommodate differences in occupational subcultures in order to breach occupational boundaries. With consideration of their work, combined with work-related skills discussed by Dobbie and MacMillan (2012), it becomes clear that the focus on occupational mobility being limited by occupational boundaries is a real consequence of the investment in human capital within the occupation and the movement of general skills across sectors. This raises some interesting questions in relation to the way employees can be developed within the firm and the investment return on the part of the firm if the skill development breeds general skill outcomes. To an extent, this explains the restricted occupational mobility of individuals from police, military and emergency services, because the organisational investment in the individual needs return within their own location, and not through transfer to another organisation. This is particularly so for the state funded police and emergency services, but the question could be asked whether this is a valid reasoning for the federally funded police and military.

The extent to which Hayes and Fitzgerald's (2009) work applies to general occupational mobility is limited by the fact that their study involved individuals who remained invested in their original occupation whilst working with other occupations. This is not typical of occupational mobility, where employees are normally exiting one occupation to enter another. However, it is even more common for employees to be exiting one firm to enter another, whilst still in the same occupation. This is extraordinarily difficult in the area of policing and military and breeds the need to change occupations rather than firms, particularly if individuals wish to remain in their current geographical location. But what is useful in Hayes and Fitzgerald's (2009) work that should be applied in occupations is the use of innovation and motivation to ensure inter-occupational cooperation. Their data is too small for generalisation, but interesting concepts arise in their ideas of using appraisals, evaluations, incentives, financial rewards, and idea generation as motivation for collaboration

[9] In Australia the education for paramedics has since changed to degree level (AQF 7)

between occupations (Hayes & Fitzgerald, 2009). The extent to which such practices could be applied to occupational mobility is far from conclusive.

So, it can be clearly stated that one of the important focuses of occupational mobility is the boundaries between occupations themselves and the use of broad occupational groupings. However, it remains to be seen whether police, military and emergency services transition issues could be better managed if occupational mobility was more fluid amongst these organisations. DiPrete, in his 1988 study of clerical workers in the US, identifies that occupations generally exist in a hierarchical relationship to other occupations and the boundaries between these are socially defined but can vary over time (DiPrete, 1988). DiPrete (1988) argues that the process of social redefinition of occupational boundaries is twofold with changes to the 'tasks' inherently creating changes to the 'job' and the comparison of these across occupations and across time is problematic (pp. 728–729). Essentially, occupational hierarchies are the starting point for an understanding of the skills associated with job titles and to attempt to compare these to other job titles in other occupations is defensible only when the comparison is conducted at a point in time (DiPrete, 1988). To compare across time is to risk a comparison that does not consider the shifting boundaries of the internal hierarchy and what it means to perform in that occupation at a particular point in time. This has an impact on police who are working pursuant to state legislation that is different across locations. Similarly, changes in technology and social organisation of work can create changes in the functional hierarchy of an occupation, and roles within an occupation will change because of changes to the component tasks (DiPrete, 1988). But the existence of these tasks and the fact that the tasks can be placed on an internal hierarchy is what allows for the change of the location of the boundary between adjacent occupations on a social hierarchy.

This is an easily understood concept when considered in terms of job titles that cross occupational boundaries, such as administrative roles, farming, legal or medical occupations. Grouped together, these roles are defined by their inherent tasks, not just in one occupation, but across a range of occupations. The boundaries are permeable and the capacity for change as a result of technology or social organisation spreads across all the

occupations. DiPrete (1988) focuses on clerical workers in the US but this work raises some interesting issues for the research group in Australia, as the individual State and Territory organisations firmly hold their occupational boundaries, usually refusing to acknowledge the transferability of skills between organisations. A serving police officer in one State can be required to undergo full recruit training in order to join a police organisation in another State. And whilst the military has no state or territorial boundaries, the capacity to transfer locations is only on the basis that they remain in the employ of the military organisation. Unlike police and military, there are private organisations that employ the services of emergency services workers and allow a transition from one occupational environment to another. DiPrete (1988) would suggest that this was a result of the lack of a culture of professionalism within the occupation and the inability to equate the skill level of jobs within the same occupation. The greatest point of interest here is that if the research group organisations cannot equate skill levels across boundaries of the same occupation, then the capacity for the skills to be recognised across the boundaries of different occupations is highly limited.

The theories related to job satisfaction and an examination of the labour market lends context to the way in which job satisfaction can be measured for individuals from the police, military and emergency services in their post-service environment. Importantly, an understanding of where they have come from is as important as the understanding of where they are now in their post-service employment. The literature has provided insight into a small part of the issues affecting these individuals in transition, but it also showed that a greater examination of the overall factors influencing these groups was required to try to ascertain the source of all issues related to transition. As such, further literature searches were conducted for specific information pertaining to police, military and emergency services to try to piece together the full picture of the career and post-service experiences of these individuals. It was considered that to understand what was impacting their lives when they left, a good starting point was to understand what made them join the service organisation in the first place.

2.3 Propensity to serve

Moving Forward

Studies about the recruitment and employment of individuals into the US military are plentiful (Brown & Rana, 2005; Faris, 1995; Ford, Gibson, DeCesare, Marsh, & Griepentrog, 2013; Ford, Gibson, Griepentrog, & Marsh, 2014; Maley & Hawkins, 2017; Mankowski et al., 2015). Primarily, they focus upon the propensity for military service and measure the extent to which that propensity evolves into actual service (Brown & Rana, 2005; Ford et al., 2014; Maley & Hawkins, 2017). This literature was examined to see if it lends some explanation about the identity connection of personnel in the services with their service organisation when in post-service employment. In particular, whether a propensity to serve remained throughout the long-term career of the individual, and therefore explained job satisfaction issues in post-service employment that was not of a service nature. Research in this area helped add context to the interview questions about the participants' aspirations before their service career, and how those aspirations changed in their post-service environment.

Further, the studies address the connection between propensity for military service and length of service (Ford et al., 2014). There is little to no similar research on propensity for service in police or emergency services. There is some literature relating to the attitude of young Australians to military service, which holds the capacity to draw some conclusions about propensity to serve, but nothing as specific nor definitive as the international studies (Wadham, Skrzypiec & Slee, 2014). Obviously, service is not restricted to these professions, with hundreds of other roles in society being service oriented, so it was literature that specifically addressed this type of service role that was sought. Maley and Hawkins (2017) examined the propensity for military service inside a cultural legacy framework, specifically as it exists in the Southern states of the US. Interestingly they suggest that there are normative pressures that influence individuals in their choice for military service that are both descriptive and injunctive norms (Maley & Hawkins, 2017). They explain that descriptive norms relate to individual factors such as age, gender and race; and injunctive norms relate to environmental factors such as family influences, education and religion (Maley & Hawkins, 2017). The latter is a significant influence as it draws upon the approval or disapproval of others in the choice to serve in the military (Maley & Hawkins, 2017). It is suspected that normative pressures

would have the same influence on individuals in their choice to serve in the police and emergency services, although no direct research has been located in relation to this. Brown and Rana (2005) confirm that existing research found that the former or current military service of family members influences the future service of their children, which Faris (1995) suggests is related to patriotism. Faris (1995) suggests that patriotic motivation stems directly from family influences, whilst Brown and Rana (2005) argued that individuals with family members who are currently or have historically served in the military will have a higher propensity for military service. Similarly, Legree et al. (2000) suggest that family members will substantially influence the individual decision to enlist, thereby further activating that individual's propensity for military service. This then lends itself to inquiry as to whether family influences are an important component of an individual's choice to join or enlist in the police, military or emergency services, and whether an identity connection is created before recruitment.

Expounding upon this, Brown and Rana (2005) found that the existence of family members with military service backgrounds is a moderating factor between that individual's propensity for military service and their actual enlistment. They studied this in a social exchange theory framework that suggests the exchange between the military and the individual is of reciprocal value, with the individual's human capital via service offered in exchange for military benefits including education with pay (Brown & Rana, 2005). The presence of family influence can be the factor that pushes the individual to follow their propensity for service and undertake the exchange (Brown & Rana, 2005). However, Legree et al. (2000) found that often the influence of family on individual propensity to serve was misinterpreted. Their study revealed that although young Americans were influenced by their family, often their actual understanding of their family's position in relation to military service was incorrect (Legree at al., 2000). But this did not prevent the fact that family influenced the transition from military propensity to military enlistment (Legree et al., 2000). The influence, albeit potentially misinterpreted, was present.

A limitation on the work of both Faris (1995) and Legree et al. (2000) is that they studied only males on the basis that the military is a male

dominated workplace environment. However, their work is confirmed in later studies by Ford et al. (2014) and Wadham et al. (2014) where both male and female participants were included; and by Mankowski et al. (2015) who studied female enlistment decisions. Ford et al. (2014) conclude that propensity for military service is one of the 'most valid predictors of enlistment available' (p. 12), however they also identify that propensity has no influence over eligibility and further, individuals without propensity may still enlist as a result of other factors such as regions with high military presence. Statistically, their results indicate that individuals who had identified that they were going to join the military were 13 times as likely to join as those who had said they would definitely not join and twice as likely as those who said they would probably join (Ford et al., 2014, p. 10). Further, they confirm that many enlistments arise from those who had indicated no propensity to serve (Ford et al., 2014). Their earlier work (Ford et al., 2013) indicates that propensity is related to tenure and that those individuals who said they were going to join and did so, stayed in service longer than those who initially said they were not going to join, yet enlisted anyway (Ford et al., 2014).

However, the recruitment processes in Australia are different and cultural differences in patriotism are apparent. From an Australian perspective, Wadham et al. (2014) studied the attitudes of young Australians to military service and although they indicate that attitudes to service may influence actual enlistment, they did not address the question directly. As such, they concluded that favourable attitudes to the military do not automatically correspond to propensity to serve, however they note that the reasons young people are attracted to military service are not significantly different from the testing conducted in North America (Wadham et al., 2014). Further, Ford et al. (2014) do suggest that other factors apart from propensity can result in enlistment, and a favourable attitude may be a factor.

From a gender perspective, Mankowski et al. (2015) (who studied female enlistment decisions) state that almost half their participants (44 percent) indicated that familial ties to the military were an important reason for enlistment in the military.

Moving Forward

Propensity to serve is rooted in the factors that contribute to an individual's choice to undertake a certain form of employment. The significance of this is great for military but also police and emergency services personnel as it lends itself to a need to examine their individual propensity to serve prior to enlistment in any of these service organisations, and thereafter the continued need to serve when transitioning from these occupations. Bachman, Segal, Freedman-Doan, and O'Malley (2000) reduce these factors to three key categories. Firstly, family background and demographics. Secondly, educational attainments and plans. Thirdly, attitudes, values and behaviours (Bachman et al., 2000). Whilst these categories can be applied to the military, it remains to be seen how they can be applied to police and emergency services. However, the specific factors that then make up each category are where differences occur. Bachman et al. (2000) in their study addressed factors such as parents' average education and residential region in the first category; included college plans in the second category; and attitudes toward the military were included in the third category. Further, Bachman et al. (2000) added the specific military requirements between propensity to serve and actual enlistment. Faris (1995) suggests that a move toward viewing the military as an occupation instead of an institution and attempts to apply econometric techniques to its function in the marketplace ignored the values of patriotism and citizen responsibility. As such, he suggests that the propensity to serve is in the measure of the individual's desire to serve their country, regardless of economic considerations (Faris, 1995).

What was also apparent in the literature on propensity to serve was the factors that do draw individuals to these types of occupations (Mankowski et al., 2015; Wadham et al., 2014). The US National Research Council's (2004) study into the employment aspirations of youth in the US is reinforced by the results of Wadham et al.'s (2014) Australian study, summarising the following themes as the basis of propensity to serve: learning opportunities, working conditions, external incentives, patriotic adventure, and equal opportunity. These factors are significant entering into this study as they help explain the reasons why individuals may enter the service organisations of police, military and emergency services in Australia. These findings demand a greater exploration of the motivation to

enlist or join service organisations such as the police, military or emergency services to measure the impact of these motivations during the post-service transition period.

It remains to be seen whether these themes are replicated in Australian military participants, as well as the police and emergency services. Wadham et al. (2014) explain that they qualitatively explored these themes which were statistically measured in the US study. Unlike the work of Ford et al. (2014) and Faris (1995), Wadham et al. (2014) found that familial connection and patriotism were in the minority. However, it is important to recall that the study by Wadham et al. (2014) was measuring attitude to the military rather than propensity to serve, therefore a greater focus was on the physical activities and resources of the individual Australian Defence Force services, such as the tactical ground warfare of the Army and the planes and helicopters in the Air Force. In the absence of any specific studies, Wadham et al. (2014) explore the Australian context of service in the military with factors that attract recruits, such as learning new skills, interesting job, work as a team, good pay, job security, parental approval, doing something for your country, and equal employment opportunity for women, to name just a few.

2.4 Institution versus organisation

Once the individuals have chosen to enlist or join the service organisation, the next logical step in examining their pathway from service to transition is to examine the organisations in which they serve. The need arose to investigate the way in which the practices of the organisation influence the identity work of the individual, and the influential moments that defined the individual in their service role. There is substantial literature around the institutionalisation of military personnel (Cooper, Caddick, Godier, Cooper, & Fossey, 2018; Godfrey, Lilley & Brewis, 2012), as well as some research into what is often termed cultural impacts on police (Prenzler, 1997). There is a small amount of research that touches upon this area for emergency services (Rich, Lepine & Crawford, 2010). Before organisational practices could be said to influence the identity work of the individual employee, the question of whether these service organisations institutionalised their workers needed to be answered.

Moving Forward

Faris (1995) suggested that a move of the military from an institution to an organisation contributed to a decline in recruitment numbers during the post-Cold War years. However, literature since that time indicates that institutionalisation in the military is still strong and remains a focus of studies in identity work for the transition of military personnel (Beech et al., 2017; Brunger et al., 2013; Higate, 2001). It is a multi-layered framework which begins upon entry to the military organisation and induction into the institution and/or culture (Prenzler, 2009; Sever, 2008), followed by membership of the largely hegemonic masculine organisation, which redefines the individual's identity in the transition from civilian to military (Brunger et al., 2013; Higate, 2001). An examination of the institution and the rituals that separate it from the civilian world (Godfrey et al., 2012) is key to understanding the processes and to ascertaining whether the reasoning can be applied to other para-military organisations such as police and emergency services.

As part of an examination of the socialisation of individuals within the military, Godfrey et al. (2012) explore the organisation of the body within a military framework. In context, the study examines how a previously civilian body is 'made fit for military purpose' (Godfrey et al., 2012, p. 542). It prompts discussion around the fact that individuals are transitioned from civilians to the military and conditioned to be soldiers, which is of great significance to any examination of the challenges facing military personnel who are transitioning back to civilian life. Whilst the work of Godfrey et al. (2012) is focused on the military there are elements that are transferable to police and emergency services. Essentially, Godfrey et al. (2012) address the fact that part of the institutionalisation of individuals in organisations such as the military is the way in which the physical body is transformed to a military body. Butler (1993) states that the body is the receiver of social meaning, which Godfrey et al. (2012) explain 'is governed through a range of institutional practices and discourses' (p. 544). In the military, and in a similar manner in the police and emergency services, these institutional practices include high-level physical training, intense discipline, humiliation, and separation from their previous life (Godfrey et al., 2012). Further, using Foucault's (1977) strategy of discipline and his theory of the docile body, Godfrey et al. (2012) explain

that isolating individuals (or their bodies) from society as a whole and tasking specific activities is key to creating an alternative non-civilian body. Cooper et al. (2018) suggest that these activities which take place in specific time and space are a process of training that become a transformative act; and that the 'transformation of the civilian into the soldier' takes place as soon as the individual commences basic training (Godfrey et al., 2012, p. 549).

The transformation takes place almost immediately when the individuals undertake basic training, and although the literature is focused on the military, similar practices are seen in the police and emergency services (QPS, 2014). Following the training, the workplace itself begins to reinforce the transformation on a regular basis. It starts with a uniform, which is a symbol of the change that is apparent not only to the wearer but also to the wider community. Godfrey et al. (2012) suggest that the use of uniforms contributes greatly to the socialisation of individuals when transformation activities are being used to create a new identity and group collective. In the military, but also in police and emergency services, the use of a uniform is twofold. In the first instance, the uniform helps the individual to identify with the group collective and shed their own individual characteristics. Secondly, the uniform identifies the individual to others as part of a group collective, with certain roles and expectations, and sets them apart from general members of society. Uniforms are not unique to these three groups but are part of the process of group thinking that is encouraged and utilised to redefine each individual. Godfrey et al. (2012) also suggest that rank is a further contributor to defining the group mentality because it uses both discipline and partitioning as a technique to foster competitiveness and rivalry. This in turn encourages the group mentality as the individuals strive to perform for recognition and work hard to hone the necessary skills and behaviours. Most importantly, for military, police and emergency services, in this context, the preparation for the undertaking of a unique form of labour is the most significant factor in the socialisation process (Godfrey et al., 2012); particularly when the labour can prove to be life threatening – for the individual, their peers, or members of the community. Foucault's (1977) work suggests that the instrumental coding of the body by the repeated activities and exposure in training detaches the

individual from the actual nature of their labour, distinguishes them from non-members of the group, and allows them to accept the most lethal of practices as a technical skill (Godfrey et al., 2012). This is essential for the operation of any military, police or emergency services organisation as it removes the need to think and replaces it with action under any external circumstances, such as the pressure of armed conflict. However, it is this coding of the individual that lends itself to the new identity within the military, police or emergency services group.

In addition, these practices and processes, repeated activities, and acquisition of technical skills are what give the individual capital within their organisation. Rank structures support this capital and provide the necessary power that is normal with increased capital. Bourdieu (1986) suggests that this sort of cultural capital is embodied in knowledge which Cooper et al. (2018) explain occurs in 'long lasting dispositions of the mind and body', however with these specific organisations it is often institutionalised and trapped inside rank, positions and roles (p. 162). Cooper et al. (2018) further explain that the absence of any 'offstage' area to which individuals can escape ensures that any former or pre-existing identity is removed (p. 159). It creates the concept of the 'total institution' where integration is the key and the military body is the result (Cooper et al., 2018, p. 159).

As this transformation continues to expand, the individuals in these service organisations become more focused on their role inside the organisation and less upon their role in the wider community. They begin to define themselves within the activities they undertake in the work environment each day. The question that arises is why this process remains so powerful when it is simply work tasks in a work environment. Woodward and Jenkings (2011) expand upon this concept and suggest that the primary component to the activities conducted in the institutional setting is because the individual is no longer 'being' but is now 'doing'. This becomes one of the largest contributors to the coding of these individuals, with little to no input as to how that coding can be undone when these individuals transition back to civilian life. Woodward and Jenkings (2011) suggest that the transformational ritual is based in the fact that these institutional identities have a materiality to them and the technical skills that construct the new

identity are learned (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011). Therefore, at the centre of the military identity is the act (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011). Thereafter comes immersion in the behaviours that will reinforce the identity associated with these acts; and continued participation in military events confirms a military identity (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011).

Once the individuals begin to identify as their role then their worth begins to change in the workplace. The more valuable they become to the service organisation the more human capital they build in that environment. It begs the question why this is an issue for former members of the police, military and emergency services and how can it be managed in relation to the development of their identity in a post-service environment. The literature provides a link between the activities and training seen in the military and mirrored to an extent in the police and emergency services, and the building of human capital (Davey, 2009; Godfrey et al., 2012). Davey (2009) describes the use of Bourdieu's habitus as an anchor to cultural capital, suggesting it is a tool to understand the positioning of individuals in their new environments. Bourdieu's (1986) theory of habitus is often contested as being ill-defined but the use of it together with cultural capital stabilises it as a tool to understand the narratives of individuals as they navigate change. Bourdieu (1986) uses cultural capital to help understand the types of capital that are non-material but arise from economic capital. He refers to capital in three specific guises: economic capital, cultural capital and social capital (Davey 2009; Bourdieu, 1986). He explains that economic capital is immediately transferable into money and cultural and social capital may be convertible into economic capital under the correct conditions (Bourdieu, 1986). For example, the use of social and cultural capital as a currency in police, military or emergency services can result in an increase in rank which can result in an increase in economic capital, namely higher pay and benefits. Cultural capital is most commonly understood in its institutionalisation into educational qualifications, with reference to the return on investment into oneself (Bourdieu, 1986). Social capital is the aggregate of the resources available from networking with others (Bourdieu, 1986), or in this case, membership of a group. Further, Bourdieu's notion of symbolic capital, described with reference to prestige and social honour captures the way in which capital can be non-economic

yet still create social inequality (Hatch, 1989). This is based on the notion that standing and achievement are part of a central motivation behind systems of inequality (Hatch, 1989). For the police, military and emergency services personnel, this concept helps explain the divide between them as service members and the non-serving civilians. Davey (2009) examines the use of cultural capital and social capital during the transition of three state-educated students to a private/independent school environment in the US. She follows their progression through the transition period and concludes that continuity occurs when there is a direct fit between an individual's habitus and their new field; whereas transformation occurs, with layers being built onto habitus, when there is a discord between the individual's habitus and their new field (Davey, 2009). Applying this thinking to the training process for police, military and emergency services, there is a possible discord between the individual habitus pre-training and the new field presented in the training environment. In fact, the work of Godfrey et al. (2012) suggests that the new field of the military is specifically adjusted at all times to be 'new' to all individuals to ensure a discord between their previous identities and their to-be established identities as military soldiers. Most importantly, it is the institutional recognition of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) that has the biggest impact on individuals within police, military and emergency services. This creates conversion rates that become both material and symbolic and contribute greatly to the identity of the individual within the service organisation as part of the group collective (Bourdieu, 1986). Once the individual leaves the service organisation they are then in possession of overall human capital that needs to be translated to the measures of worth used in the non-police, military or emergency services employment sector.

Understanding the group collective and associated training mentality and techniques is important to fully grasp the concept of institutionalisation in a workplace organisation and the way in which it impacts on the identity of the individual (Bergman, Burdett & Greenberg, 2014). King (2006) suggests that military institutions rely upon social cohesion amongst their groups because the nature of their labour demands commitment to a collective goal. The commitment to collective action is what creates a uniform response under combat conditions because it is the stress of such

conditions that is most likely to result in the deviant actions of individuals (King, 2006). As such, to avoid individuals responding to instincts of self-preservation, they are repetitively trained in activities that will ensure social cohesion in the group and therefore a group response to the situation. Most importantly, for the individuals, this repetitive activity and shared goals become deeply ingrained in not only the collective consciousness, but also the individual consciousness (King, 2006). Similar training is seen in police and emergency services, where the activities are the focus of the practice and are repeatedly and constantly performed until the group moves as one. Further, specialist groups in the police are even more similar to the military as they form the small primary groups that are responsible for elite tasks in addition to their standard role as police. This helps answer the question whether the same institutional issues apply to police and emergency services as well as military and supports the examination of identity issues for members from all three service groups.

It is also significant to an understanding of camaraderie in these organisations, that it is based in workplace requirements and collective goals rather than social relations. This has a potential impact on the social capital of the individual once they are no longer a member of that team, or no longer require those technical skills. It is suggested that these issues are possibly not unique to the military and will be investigated as part of this study for police and emergency services. King (2006) suggests that the work of Durkheim (2008) on the processes of group formation are applicable to the military. Durkheim and Swain's (2008) study of Aboriginal clans revealed that their participation in rituals committed them as individuals to the group and to each other (King, 2006). Further, acknowledgment of the totem was an acknowledgement of a hierarchy like that seen in military and para-military organisations (King, 2006). Durkheim (2008) considered these group formation processes to be universal (King, 2006). King (2006) explains that the military have developed procedures and techniques that sustain social cohesion in any environment. He suggests that this 'ritualistic priming' unifies the group around the collective goal and commits each individual to that group (King, 2006, p. 504). However, what is interesting in King's (2006) work is that he suggests that camaraderie in the military is a consequence of the group formation processes and not a pre-requisite.

King (2006) states that military sociologists often suggest that the relationship between individuals, in particular the bond between males, is the precursor to the social relations that secure the group mentality and commit individuals to the group collective. But King (2006) states that the comradeship seen between military individuals is a function of their continued and repetitive collective training drills, not from their personal exchanges. This contributes to a better understanding of the camaraderie seen amongst members of the police, military and emergency services, which is present even when personal relationships are not. This is addressed by Godfrey et al. (2012) who consider the group of individuals to be one military body as they undertake their training. They provide the example of passing out parades (Godfrey et al., 2012), which are seen in military, police and emergency services (fire services in particular), where the whole group is uniformed and moves as one as opposed to a number of individuals. King (2006) provides examples of highly successful British military operations that demonstrated incredible teamwork towards a collective goal amongst individuals who had been in conflict only hours before. He suggests that personal relationships are irrelevant to camaraderie in the military environment (King, 2006). Further, he provides examples of British military missions that have gone awry and yet were being conducted by groups who were known to be friends (King, 2006). The reports on the mission were that they could not get the team operating as one and/or their technical skills were lacking (King, 2006).

Considering this, addressing the issue of continuity of identity post-service becomes relevant. If individuals are redefined using physical and psychological training techniques that encourage them to embrace a group mentality and willingly participate as a member of a group collective, then continuity of this habitus will mediate the level of discord in their post-service transition. Whilst Davey (2009) suggests that continuity can be viewed as both a positive and negative experience, with one encouraging transformation and the other reducing discord; in the context of the military experience, and possibly transferable to police and emergency service experiences, Higate (2001) suggests that continuity post-service fails to allow the individual to effectively redefine their non-military identity. This addresses the need to strengthen transition processes and consider new skill

development as part of post-service employment preparation. Otherwise, the transition process is essentially delayed by allowing continuity of employment. This is a new understanding, that in light of the findings, should contribute greatly to improved transition processes for former police, military and emergency services workers post-service.

2.5 Masculinity

A theme that presents throughout the literature is the concept of masculinity and the way in which it influences identity issues for individuals in the workplace (Beech et al., 2017; Brunger et al., 2013; Higate, 2001) The literature is largely focused upon the military as a hegemonic masculine environment (Brunger et al. 2013; Higate, 2001) so a comparative study is required within this research to pursue the possibility that the same masculinity presents in the environments of police and emergency services. For this particular study, examining the concept of masculinity within the service environment supports the connection that the individuals have with their former employer and presents the challenges they face when pursuing post-service employment, and post-service life satisfaction. Further, understanding the influence of masculinity in the service environment helps in ascertaining the extent to which any differences between the post-service responses of males and females are contributed to by the masculine environment. With the body as a starting point, and with consideration of the physical demands of military training and service on the body, Godfrey et al. (2012) address the issue that it is the feminine comparison that serves to feed the conception of the masculinity of the military body. That is, a gendered body is produced in this environment where the military body is ‘first and foremost a masculine body’ (Godfrey et al., 2012, p. 553). Godfrey et al. (2012) state that ‘masculinity achieves meaning within patterns of difference’ (p. 553) and that success in the use of the body is measured with the masculine associations of not quitting and pushing through and contrasted to the feminine associations of weakness and giving up. Godfrey et al. (2012) suggest that the body is taken to even greater extremes in the military to create an almost robotic response that resembles the strength and ability of a ‘cyborg’ (p. 555). In this instance the ability exceeds even the masculine definitions and the gendered lines are further

blurred (Godfrey et al., 2012). It is important to note that the approach to the gendered body in this context is not male specific. That is, men and women are expected to achieve these outcomes to become part of the military body and achieving the masculine or cyborg height is the outcome of the training and repetitive behaviours available to both genders (Godfrey et al., 2012). Of course, this is a weighted statement given that the men enter the service training with the associations of masculine terminology such as strong and powerful whilst the women enter the training with the feminine associations of weak and soft (Godfrey et al., 2012). Therefore, the women need to prove that they are capable of the demands of the masculine associations, whereas the men just need to prove that they are not within the bounds of the female associations.

However, beyond the body are the activities undertaken in military basic training (King, 2006). King (2006) suggests that the activities and rituals performed by individuals during military training to ensure social cohesion and the group collective goals are hypermasculine. Failure to meet the requirements of these group tasks is to be associated with feminine behaviour, normally weakness, and exclusion from the group generally follows (King, 2006). King (2006) suggests that it is not just the activities but the masculine nature of the activities that render them fundamental to the formation of the social groups that perform their tasks with individual commitment to the collective goal.

Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) theory of hegemonic masculinity is relevant here as it suggests that hegemonic masculinity serves as a normative model wherein men learn to position themselves against other men. It confirms the fact that masculinity and femininity have meaning in relation to each other, and it is this relationship that renders gender a dynamic process in hegemonic masculine organisations (Buschmeyer & Lengersdorf, 2016). In its original form, hegemonic masculinity was a framework that explained the patterns of practice that allowed men's dominance over women (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The concept was explored in education with relation to male behaviour and bullying, in criminology in relation to the deviant behaviour of males, but also in media representation of men, such as war imagery (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). This addresses the question of whether women have

to appear and/or perform as men to be accepted in organisations such as police, military and emergency services. But also, whether men have to perform more intensely as men to also be accepted in these service organisations. Most important here is the application of the concept of hegemonic masculinity to organisations (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Barrett (1996) applied this specifically to the military where it was stated that hegemonic masculinity was entrenched but was becoming problematic from an organisational standpoint. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) do not dispute that masculinities are subject to change and that challenges to hegemony are common but to challenge the repetitive training techniques of the military, which are reflected to a certain extent in both the police and emergency services, would be a considerable challenge to deeply entrenched processes. As such, preventing an individual from defining themselves within the parameters of the organisation is unlikely to occur at that point.

There is some merit to be applied to critiques of Connell's (1990) original concept, in particular, the allocation of masculinity to certain hegemonic models (Beasley, 2008; Donaldson, 1993). This seems to be a fluid concept where an individual may be a hegemonic model in one environment, but not meet the same criteria in another. This position lends credence to the practices of hegemonically masculine organisations such as the military which include social isolation as part of their training techniques to establish masculine behaviours (Godfrey et al., 2012). The masculinity is then deeply embedded before any exposure to other potentially hegemonic masculine environments occurs, ensuring that the individual is dedicated to the single group collective and not externally influenced (Godfrey et al., 2012; Higate, 2001). The masculinity is then not questioned. This is important to understand considering Buschmeyer and Lengersdorf's (2016) claim that hegemonic masculinity is not one sort of masculinity in society. Where they suggest it is a space to examine power relations more than studies of men, and that new masculinities are arising all the time (Buschmeyer & Lengersdorf, 2016), it begs the question whether organisations such as military, police and emergency services are one of the slower moving areas to embrace these alternative masculinities. Higate (2001) suggests that masculinity in the military is strong, as do Godfrey et

al. (2012) with their discussion of the military body. While new masculinities are developing in the areas of education and 'involved fathering' (Buschmeyer & Lengersdorf, 2016, p. 199), these remain at a distance from organisations such as the military and its para-military counterparts.

Higate (2001) in his work on the transition of individuals from military to civilian life suggests that not only is the hegemonic masculinity of the armed forces part of the gender ideology to be considered in terms of the institutionalisation of individuals; it is also something to be considered during their transition period. He suggests that it is this gender ideology of the military that continues to influence the individual when they move into the civilian workforce. In fact, previous work conducted by Jolly (1996) indicates that almost 75 percent of surveyed participants pursued employment in what Higate (2001) considers to be 'masculinised institutions' (p. 452). This is significant when examining the transition practices of these individuals and the way in which their transition experience influences their post-service job satisfaction. Higate (2001) proposes that it is this continuity of employment in the masculine space that has an impact on the success of transition. He believes this behaviour is part of the camaraderie and masculinity of the institution with which the individuals now most comfortably identify and that they seek this out in future employment (Higate, 2001). It also serves as a barrier to successful transition because it is can be argued that so long as the individuals maintain this continuity they do not actually transition. They then do not need to invest in their own identity work. To draw this conclusion is to consider the fact that it is not institutionalisation or repetitive training or loss of camaraderie in isolation that are barriers to successful transition; but these factors as they exist and/or function inside the gender ideology (Bergman et al., 2014; Brunger et al., 2013; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Higate, 2001). Higate (2001) suggests that individuals will make non-conscious decisions to move into workplaces that have gender familiarity. He raises the possibility that the failure of these individuals to seek help post-service, particularly with emotional or mental health issues, the use of substances such as alcohol to excess, and increased rates of homelessness together with the types of future employment that are sought are all indications that

gender ideology forms part of these individuals' 'civilian trajectory' (Higate, 2001, p. 456). The most important element of Higate's (2001) work is his suggestion that the 'transformative effects of military service' are long term and need to be addressed accordingly (p. 457). This leads to the need to examine the literature directly surrounding the transition of individuals from these services.

2.6 Transition

Since 2011 there has been a substantial increase in the amount of literature available pertaining specifically to the transition of military from service, primarily in the US and UK (Beech et al., 2017; Brunger et al., 2013; Higate, 2001; Lancaster, Kintzle & Castro, 2018; Mankowski et al., 2015; Robertson & Brott, 2013; Schmaltz, 2011). The literature explores the various approaches adopted and draws out the implications of previous studies to the current research. In particular, it is important to ascertain exactly how a successful transition is defined. There continues to be a lack of research in the area of transition for Australian military or for police and emergency services generally. There is organisation-based research into retention and recruitment for the ADF which contributes some perspective on the personnel challenges for the organisation but does not delve deeply into the individual experiences post service (Thomas & Bell, 2007). Research in the areas of why individuals join the NSW Police Force and why individual police officers separated from the NSW Police Force contributes to the research in this area but does not specifically address the issues of transition for former police (Howes & Goodman-Delahunty, 2014). Further, research conducted by Ruiz and Morrow in 2005, based in the United States, provides excellent insight into social identity issues (together with many more considerations) for police leaving the organisation either at retirement or pre-retirement, and attempting to establish new careers. However, their research is based on current serving police, and not former serving officers. Ruiz and Morrow (2005) explain that many police stay in the organisation because when faced with the option of leaving, they exclaim 'what would I do?' (p. 1152). As such, the question needs to be answered of not only what police actually 'do' in employment post-service and whether it is meeting their expectations, but

also military, and emergency services to ensure an effective comparative study (Rothausen et al., 2017).

Higate (2001) is influential in this area and frames his work on the transition of members from the US military inside three key areas that are relevant here: masculinity, identity work and continuity. As seen above, Higate (2001) suggests that the strong induction techniques used for military basic training are effective for the goal because they are inside a hegemonic masculine structure. Further, he explains that a successful transition of military members involves identity work to redefine the individual post-service and that continuity from one masculine workplace organisation to another delays the actual transition process (Higate, 2001). In light of this, transition work needs to address a number of areas to be successful. Schmaltz (2011) suggests that future studies in transition could expand to other segments of the workforce that include dangerous jobs such as firefighting and law enforcement. She aligns these organisations through the nature of their work rather than their original training and masculine environments. However, her research is related to injured veterans in the US military, including physical and mental health injuries. Schmaltz (2011) indicates that change management from leadership roles is potentially a crucial factor in military transition and suggests that service members in general would benefit from being adept at change. Rizzo and Mendez (1988) found that there is little to no gender differentiation in leadership styles in organisations, but it is likely this would need to be further tested in a masculine environment as explained by Higate (2001) in the military. From an individual perspective, Schmaltz (2011) addressed the issue of self-efficacy and the manner in which this contributes to successful transition for injured military veterans. It is not an element that can be ignored but also delves into psychological repair techniques for individuals with mental health injuries and possibly exceeds the reach of this research. However, it is significant to note that Schmaltz (2011) raised the possibility that self-efficacy plays a ‘role in the degree of success’ in the transition process (p. 70).

Transition, as utilised by the ADF, has some consistency with Schlossberg’s (1981) transition theory. According to Schlossberg (1981), transition occurs when an event or non-event changes an individual’s

behaviour as a result of them changing assumptions about themselves. Further, new self-perceptions arise from changes in life and these perceptions help form coping mechanisms for individuals to manage various life events (Schlossberg, 2011). However, Schlossberg (2011) has parameters around the events that occur and notes that these should be perceived as transition points. The experiences of the police, military and emergency services are not always consistent with this theory. They seem to defy the processes and their self-perception is not in accordance with their experiences or with their transition. This begs the question, what is different for these individuals and why does transition theory in its usual form not fit them neatly?

In their study coaching five UK military veterans through transition, Beech et al. (2017) confirmed that the veterans did not have great difficulty securing employment post-service, but that they felt that their new jobs did not equate to their jobs with the military. Mankowski et al. (2015) echo this sentiment from their study of enlistment decisions in the US military where they discovered that many who left the military found themselves unemployed, but some also found themselves underemployed. The literature is not extensive in this area, but it is often touched upon in work on military transition. It is inextricably linked to the identity formation of military individuals and Beech et al. (2017) present a unique perspective that suggests some of the discontent with the civilian transition is the veterans' belief in their distinctiveness and the creation of an attitude of their 'hero like self' (p. 443). This is at odds with the group collective that creates and reinforces the identity in the first place (Godfrey et al., 2012). They are not distinct as individuals but as part of the greater military body (Godfrey et al., 2012), so it is suggested that their distinctiveness in the civilian world is highlighted by the lack of belonging to a new group collective in the civilian environment. That is, they are distinctive because they do not belong, not because they are better. Walker (2013) explained that within a constructive typology, these individuals describe themselves as a 'cut above civilians' (Beech et al., 2017, p. 445), but in normal social resource theory terms (Otto et al., 2011), they are actually not committed to their new group collective (Godfrey et al., 2012). It is expected that this is due to the different induction processes, lack of repetitive and physical training and whether

there is continuity of their environment, in particular the masculine environment (Beech et al., 2017; Higate, 2001). Robertson and Brott (2013), in their study of US military veterans transitioning into the education sector as teachers, quoted a veteran who stated that they spent seven years searching for a job that would give the same level of satisfaction as the military. They did not expand on how the differentiation in this 'level' was measured.

There is a similar disconnect when the experience of former members of the police, military and emergency services is measured against Adler's (1975) theory of culture shock. Adler (1975) describes culture shock as a five-stage developmental process including the honeymoon stage, the disintegration of old social cues, the reintegration of new cues, reintegration toward autonomy, and then reciprocal interdependence. Essentially, these steps describe how an individual adapts to a new culture and it is most witnessed when a move from one country to another is made. However, since his work in the mid-1970s (Adler, 1975), culture shock as a term has been adopted in other contexts, such as the workplace. The services are renowned for having their own culture (Colquitt, LePine, Zapata, & Wild, 2011; Cooper et al., 2018; Prenzler, 2009; Sever, 2008). The ability to straddle cultures is supported by culture shock theory, as individuals should be able to develop reciprocal interdependence, which means they can be fluidly bicultural between two (or more) environments (Pedersen, 1994). This does not appear to happen for former members of the police, military and emergency services once they are immersed in the culture of their service organisation and this research will endeavour to address the question why.

2.7 Identity work

Identity is often defined as a self-referential description that answers the question 'who am I? and who are we?' (Ashforth, Harrison & Corley, 2008; Ashforth, Schinoff & Rogers, 2016) and for the purposes of this research identity work is considered to be the work an individual does to establish their self-identity following separation from an organisation where there was a level of crossover between the organisation's identity and the individual's identity. The fact that individuals in the police, military and

emergency services create an identity connection with their service workplace is an important component of their transition process post-service. It can be attributed to their organisational engagement, which occurs inside a masculine framework, and allows them to define themselves in accordance with their job role. As noted above, much of the literature directly related to the identity work addressed in this research is specifically around the UK and US military. In order to measure the ability to apply identity work practices and issues across police, military and emergency services in Australia, literature on identity work beyond the military was sought to create a more rounded approach to the existing theory.

Identity work for the purposes of organisational engagement has been well researched (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Ashforth et al., 2008; Ashforth et al., 2016; Brown & Coupland, 2015; Brown & Lewis, 2011; Lok, 2010; Watson, 2008). With some relevance to police, military, and emergency services, Alvesson and Robertson (2006) explain that organisational identity casts individuals with a certain self-esteem. Their reference is in the context of elitism and is specifically focused on consultants who are seeking to ensure that one organisation is better than the next within the same field. As such, the relevance of organisational identity to this research is not direct, but Alvesson and Robertson (2006) do have some interesting findings in terms of the way organisational identity can be grounded in elitism and that categorisation in that group heightens the self-esteem and distinctiveness of the individual. For individuals in the police, military and emergency services, the nature of their work is elite in many areas and this has an impact on their perceptions of organisational identity (Brown & Coupland, 2015). Similarly, the nature of their work is such that they are often unable to disengage at the end of the workday. For example, police or paramedics will respond to a community need even if they are not on shift. Over time, and in line with the work of Woodward and Jenkings (2011), the individuals are less able to distinguish what they do from who they are. In their research on the separation between work and home life amongst ministers in the Episcopal Church, Kreiner, Hollensbe and Sheep (2006) highlight some significant organisational identity issues that can be transposed to individuals in this research group. Kreiner et al. (2006) state that, in employment such as the priesthood or ministry, it is virtually

impossible to distinguish between their role in the organisation and their self outside of the organisation. This is contributed to by factors such as being on call, holding skills critical to keeping society safe, and having powers to act in society even when not at work.

A level of engagement with an organisation is reflective of the nature of the role but also indicative of the need for levels of performance that exceed normal workplace requirements (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Ashforth et al., 2016). In their research with 245 firefighters, Rich et al. (2010) examined the application of Kahn's law of engagement and hypothesised that engagement with a job role provides greater indicators of performance potential, than usual performance management benchmarks. The research provided insight into the engagement of firefighters with their roles and confirmed that engagement with a role improves performance (Rich et al., 2010). Ashforth et al. (2008) offer insight into the capacity for the individual to not just be committed to the organisation but also to the collectives within the organisation and the roles played by individuals. Their literature review examines the four fundamental questions associated with identity work, namely those that revolve around the what, why and how of identification, and its application to the collective (Ashforth et al., 2008; Ashforth et al., 2016). Its significance lies in their capacity as authors to offer explanation as to why individuals struggle to separate from employment because they never question whether they 'had become what they were doing' (Ashforth et al., 2008, p. 325).

Organisational identity work is conducted primarily to align employees with the needs of the organisation and ensure longevity in their work life by engaging the individuals with the organisational needs on several levels (Brown, Dacin, Pratt & Whetten, 2006; Hernandez & Guarana, 2018). When this is combined with elite organisations that have unique high-level work task skills not mirrored by other organisations, and brought together with the power of the law, and high-level skills to operate unique and potentially dangerous equipment, the divide between organisational identity and self-identity becomes harder to distinguish (Brown & Coupland, 2015). This is imperative for organisations such as the police, military and emergency services and is a positive attribute in the individuals whilst they are active workers in the organisation (Brown et al.,

2006) but can have negative effects once they are no longer workers. With little to no relevant research in the area, the need for police, military, and emergency service workers to transition away from the organisation using identity development work to separate their self-identity from that of their former organisation is crucial (Hakak, 2015). Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) touch upon identity work in transition and provide a comprehensive discussion of identity narratives. They encourage further research into identity narratives and boundaryless careers, stating that the 'greater the magnitude or discontinuity of the role change the greater the need to justify it with a socially acceptable script' (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010, p. 150). They suggest future research to explore individual career reinvention stories and narrative work at an occupational level to support transition (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010).

2.8 Conclusion

In this review of the literature and research, three key areas of labour market factors, the organisational environment, and identity work are covered. The labour market factors were researched to investigate the way in which job satisfaction is measured in the labour market and how this applies to the police, military and emergency services. The literature revealed a consistently quantitative approach to examinations of the labour market with little to no research specifically targeted at any of the three service groups of police, military or emergency services. Further, the work in this area was typically focused on elements affecting workplaces and individuals whilst in the workplace and did not address transition processes between workplaces. Some of the literature provided insight into job satisfaction factors that will be applied in this current research as a baseline for attempting to understand the post-service job satisfaction experiences for former police, military and emergency services.

The literature and research on the organisational environment were also reviewed. The wealth of the knowledge in this space is sourced from the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) and its application to Australia will be tested as part of this current research project. Understanding the organisational environments is conducive to understanding the environment in which the individuals are potentially

institutionalised and the way in which this can impact on their service and post-service experiences (Bergman et al., 2014). In particular, understanding the organisational environments supports investigation into the way in which former members of the police, military and emergency services respond to new work environments following separation from the service organisation. This research is attempting to find reasons why there is a connection between the individual and the service organisation that is sustained after separation, and the earlier research and literature provides a base upon which this can be built.

The final part of this chapter reviewed literature in the theoretical space of identity work, transition theory, and culture. The research was investigated to identify existing theories that could explain the way in which former members of the police, military and emergency services transition from service to new employment, and the expected way in which they should respond to this change. Whilst there was an extensive amount of literature on social identity theory (Oakes, 2011; Tavares, van Knippenberg & van Dick, 2016), identity theory (Oakes, 2011), resource theory (Otto et al., 2011), transition theory (Schlossberg, 1981), and culture shock, its application to the three service groups was less pronounced. This provides the opportunity for this current research project to apply the theories to the participant group and find where and why the theories do, or do not, explain the experiences of the individuals in the post-service environment. As expected, the literature does not provide a ‘one size fits all’ solution for this participant group and the analysis of the narratives of the participants provides rich data for developing a more nuanced understanding of the issues within the Australian context.

The literature review was wide but maintained a focus on the service groups. Most of the relevant research was from the UK and USA with a strong focus on the military. There was little to no relevant research from Australia, nor with a focus on the police and emergency services. It has been observed that former members of uniformed service organisations may have difficulty achieving acceptable levels of job satisfaction when transitioning to civilian employment. This thesis seeks to understand the extent to which the role of identity work impacts this outcome in the Australian case and to identify strategies that Australian services might employ to improve the

post-service work experience outcomes of individuals. The literature reviewed also provided a basis upon which this current research project could be designed. The following chapter, research design and method, further details the research design and methodological approach taken in light of the pre-existing research and literature.

Chapter 3 Research design and method

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to investigate the transition experiences of former members of the Australian police, military and emergency services and seek understanding about how post-service job satisfaction affects the lives of these individuals.

The research goals included understanding the relative importance of the identity work required for successful career transition as well as explaining differing levels of post-service job satisfaction for former Australian uniformed professionals in the police, military, and emergency services. The research aims included the recommendation of strategies designed to enhance levels of job satisfaction post-service.

Emerging from the literature the research was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the identity-based connection between uniformed professionals and their work?
2. How does this identity-based connection influence individuals in their pursuit of work opportunities?
3. What factors determine levels of job satisfaction in employment post-service for Australian uniformed professionals in policing, military, and emergency services?
4. Amongst these factors, what is the relative importance of human capital and perceived occupational mobility as explanations for levels of job satisfaction post-service?
5. How do former uniformed professionals narrate their career transitions?

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the research design, reasoning for the chosen methodology, population and sample, and the data analysis. It also provides a list of the participant pseudonyms and relevant demographic information.

3.2 Methodology

The search for common themes across the post-service experiences of former members of the police, military and emergency services needed a methodology that was both flexible and adaptive enough to analyse the narratives of this group. At the outset it was not known whether the stories told by the members of this group would be reflective of individual sensemaking of their personal experiences, or whether they would demonstrate membership in a group that ultimately shared experiences. Several possible methodologies were considered, including interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and grounded theory, but thematic analysis was chosen as the most appropriate method. The analysis was primarily inductive as the recall of the participants was best analysed using a coding process that was open and not subject to pre-existing frameworks. As such, an inductive approach allowed for the analysis to be data driven.

With an epistemology based in a constructivist paradigm, the thematic analysis allowed for an interpretation of the realities of the individuals as portrayed through their narration of key events and activities. Discovering the underlying meaning of events in the individual transition experience using an interpretative approach allowed the reality to be constructed within the unique parameters of this group. This offered the most flexible approach and was anticipated to produce the most effective results.

3.3 The research design

In order to truly ascertain the range of factors potentially influencing the levels of satisfaction in post-service employment amongst former members of the police, military and emergency services, it was important to be able to speak with the individuals in a one-on-one environment with open ended questions guided by a fairly flexible framework (Denzin, 2001). As such, the research was conducted with a qualitative approach to data collection. This research methodology was selected because it was the most holistic way to engage with the participant group and it allowed for the gathering of rich qualitative data that could provide empirical evidence to address the five research questions (Honan, Knobel, Baker, & Davies, 2000). Thematic analysis was considered most suitable for an exploratory study such as this

as it provided a greater depth of knowledge and understanding about the factors affecting the members of the research group.

Using a semi-structured interview technique, the questions for the participants were built out of the following assumptions:

- Lower levels of education will result in the need for more identity work post-service. That is, employees with civilian qualifications at AQF level 4 and above will have higher levels of satisfaction with post-service employment.
- The more pragmatic the reasons for joining the service organisation, the less identity work will be needed post-service. That is, employees who enter the service organisation to make a difference, protect the community, or for variety in employment, will have lower levels of satisfaction with post-service employment than those who entered the service organisation for the wage, working conditions, or job security.
- The longer that these individuals are in service, the more identity work will be required to positively transition to new employment. That is, the longer a uniformed public servant is in service the lower the levels of satisfaction with post-service employment.
- Frustration with the organisation and/or medical separation as a reason for leaving will result in the need for more identity work done post-service. In particular, employees who leave the service organisation because of organisational issues, or forced medical retirement, will have lower levels of satisfaction with post-service employment than those who left voluntarily to pursue an alternative career path.

Thematic analysis was the most appropriate methodology to check that the foregoing assumptions were appropriate. The nature of this type of qualitative research analysis, with open ended and semi-structured questions, allowed the researcher to:

1. Assess the identity work undertaken by former uniformed professionals by conducting narrative based research.

2. Focus on the following lines of inquiry: reasons for joining uniformed service, what the work meant/means to them, their career transition journey, what happened for them and their perception of self during the transition journey, where they are now and how they perceive themselves in relation to their work, are they and how are they still connected to uniformed profession/als?

Arising within an interpretive paradigm (Simmons, 1995; Smith, 1996) it was crucial to ascertain the participants' perceptions of their positions in employment and their opportunities for the future, which could only be gathered by talking directly with them. It was decided that a pure quantitative approach may have failed to capture the emotional narrative and sensemaking by the participants (Polkinghorne, 2006; Smith, 2004) when focused on this subject matter. It was considered whether the previous preliminary interviews conducted would be enough to generalise the emotional response of the participants to the subject, and therefore allow for a more quantitative collection of data (Martin, 2011). However, after considerable thought it was decided that there was insufficient information and established survey constructs to generalise that component of the subject, therefore a qualitative study was conducted.

3.4 An appropriate design

Several different perceptions were sought from the participants and as such an in-depth range of questions was required for the interview process. First, to establish that there are issues with satisfaction in employability for members of this group in Australia post-service, one-on-one interviews were used to obtain an in-depth understanding of job satisfaction in a particular employment context. This required information pertaining to the employment options presented, available and secured by these individuals post-service, but also information about the perceived employment options available to these individuals post-service. Generally, research in the area of job satisfaction is often quantitative in nature as it is based in statistical analyses for which the data can be collected using survey questionnaires or similar (Warr, 1999). On this basis, it was originally decided that following the qualitative based interviews a scale would be developed and issued as

part of quantitative research into job satisfaction for this group. However, during the development phase two further decisions were made. The first was that a combined qualitative/quantitative research design would amass a level of data that would be too large to be managed within the confines of this research given it is part of a doctoral program. The second was that previous studies by researchers such as Higate (2001) and Beech et al. (2017) indicated that a quantitative study of this particular participant group was unlikely to be as effective as a qualitative based design that allowed for a free narrative. Although their studies (Beech et al., 2017; Higate, 2001) were focused on the military, it was anticipated that the outcomes could be generalisable to police and military for this particular research design. As such, it was decided that the use of interview questions that addressed issues of job satisfaction post-service would be appropriate to gather relevant information about this area for this participant group. Further, the use of comparative questions, such as 'what was the favourite part of your employment with the service organisation' and 'what excites you about your new employment' were sufficient to gather data that would inform the researcher about job satisfaction during and post-service for this participant group.

Second, identifying whether human capital factors were impacting on levels of post-service job satisfaction required one-on-one interviews to provide insight, especially in respect to which human capital factors might be considered the most relevant. Once more, the literature in the area of human capital often reflects the use of quantitative research designs (Dobbie & MacMillan, 2012; Kilpatrick & Felmingham, 1996), which are statistical in nature and rely upon rich data to draw effective comparisons. In particular, a focus on large sample groups who can provide straightforward earnings information is an example of quantitative research in the area of human capital (Dobbie & MacMillan, 2012). However, for the purposes of this research the use of the human capital subject matter was to analyse how the participants interpreted their own human capital and what experiences they had post-service that influenced their self-perception of their human capital worth. This required more than a statistical analysis of comparative wage outcomes from service and post-service employment. Instead it required a narrative that could be analysed through inductive reasoning

(Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2012). As such, it was decided that, with the use of appropriate guiding questions such as 'how long between when you left and when you started a new job' and seeking information about this transition period, a narrative could be established about their experiences in transferring their human capital. Intertwined with the other themes associated with job satisfaction, occupational mobility, and identity issues, it was considered the most effective way to ascertain the individual participant's understanding of their employability as a result of the worth built from their service employment.

Investigation of occupational mobility factors and how they might contribute to the level of post-service job satisfaction of these individuals in employment post-service in Australia was also a component of the research. Kilpatrick and Felmingham's (1996) study on labour mobility in Australia, which was followed by Hayes and Fitzgerald's work on occupational mobility in 2009, was quantitative in nature. At this point in the research design, it was clearly apparent that the labour related studies were quantitative in nature because the relevant data was most appropriately collected using surveys across a large sample group. However, these studies were not addressing the issues of this particular participant group from the police, military or emergency services; their key research factors were not intertwined with identity work. Loosely framed questions designed for this research such as 'can you list the pros and cons of your current role' and 'how do these compare to the pros and cons of the service employment' together with discussions of their current role and their past and current aspirations helped garner the narrative around their self-perception of their own occupational mobility and heightened the understanding of the impact this had on their job satisfaction.

An important distinction for this research design was that job satisfaction for this participant group was assumed to arise from their own self-perception of their human capital and occupational mobility. Therefore, more important than gathering statistics about their post-service earnings and capacity for promotion, was the gathering of rich narrative data about how they interpreted their new role and what factors they considered contributed to job satisfaction when in post-service employment. The use of questions such as 'how did you feel about leaving at the time' compared to

'how do you feel about it now' provided an avenue for rich data on their personal experiences in the transfer of their human capital, their opportunities for occupational mobility, and the ways in which these impacted their post-service job satisfaction.

The intricate task of ascertaining the way in which an identity connection to their service employment influenced their self-perception of their own occupational mobility and their human capital and the way in which this impacted job satisfaction in post-service employment supported the use of a qualitative research design for this project. There is support for this design in two different areas. First, previous research on identity work demonstrates a continuous use of qualitative research designs to acquire rich data using participant narratives (Bardon, Josserand & Villeseche, 2015). Bruner (1991) suggests that humans organise their interactions mainly in a narrative form and therefore create continuity by linking moments in their lives together (Ashforth et al., 2008). For this research project the retrospective nature of storytelling means that the participants could construct their narrative from their past but also give insight into their identity aspirations for the future (Ashforth et al., 2008). This perspective is crucial to understanding the life experiences of the members of this participant group and supports the use of the interview methods of research and thematic analysis herein. It provided for a much richer source of information pertaining to job satisfaction post-service than may have been seen with a quantitative survey design.

Third, previous research into the transition experiences of former military in the US and UK is dominated by the use of participant narratives analysed through an interpretive paradigm. This qualitative technique was investigated for the purposes of this current research and found to be the most effective means of gathering the required information from the participant group, given that the military component was the same, and adding in the police and emergency services who, it was proposed, operate in a similar service framework, albeit para-military. Robertson and Brott (2013), in their study into the midlife career transition of male veterans, employed a similar research technique within an interpretive framework, using open ended questions to 'determine themes and rich descriptions of their experiences' (p. 71). Schmaltz (2011) in her doctoral research into the

transition of injured veterans into the civilian workforce also used a qualitative approach, interviewing 25 veterans, stating that this research method allowed for a more 'comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied' (p. 83). Similar studies of the transition of military veterans to civilian employment, focusing on a range of different circumstances, have been conducted using semi-structured interviews by a number of different researchers (Ahern et al., 2015; Binks & Cambridge, 2018; Brunger et al., 2013). There has also been research on the transition from military life employing focus groups (Demers, 2011) and coaching interventions (Beech et al., 2017).

Fourth, the need to present recommended solutions for any issues that are established, based on what they may be, and why they may exist was an underlying factor in choosing a constructivist approach to the thematic analysis. This helped inform the nature of the questions that were compiled to inform the in-depth interview process.

3.5 Research questions

In developing the research framework, the following assumptions were at the centre of the investigation:

(a) For a substantial number of post-uniformed professionals there is an identity-based disconnection between the former uniformed professional and their new organisation;
(b) That for these persons the identity connection with the previous uniformed profession remains intact and influential; and
(c) That, therefore, support for identity work is as important as human capital development and associated occupational mobility when working with former uniformed professionals in career transition.
Therefore, the research questions are:

1. What is the nature of the identity-based connection between uniformed professionals and their work?
2. How does this identity-based connection influence individuals in their pursuit of work opportunities?

3. What factors determine levels of job satisfaction in employment post-service for Australian uniformed professionals in policing, military, and emergency services?
4. Amongst these factors, what is the relative importance of human capital and perceived occupational mobility as explanations for levels of job satisfaction post-service?
5. How do former uniformed professionals narrate their career transitions?

3.6 Population

The population from which the sample was extracted is moderate. The populations for each service group were acquired separately but the sample was taken from all three as a combined group.

As at February 2006, there was a total of 45 201 full-time sworn police officers employed across the different Australian jurisdictions (AIC, 2006). A search of the Australian Institute of Criminology and the Australian Bureau of Statistics reveals that similar data collection has not occurred since this time however Eurostat (Clarke, 2013), which monitors international police numbers, recorded the number at 49 242 in 2009. Essentially for the purposes of the research design, there are approximately 50 000 current full-time serving police across Australia.

As at 2014, there are 80 214 serving members of the Australian military, with 57 982 permanently active, 22 232 active reservists, and an additional 22 166 standby reservists (ADO, 2015[10]). Of this, 1 640 have been deployed to overseas hostile environments (ADO, 2015).

As at 2011, there are 9 729 paramedics employed by the Australian government (National Health Executive (NHE), 2015[11]); and 17 394 permanent firefighters and 214 000 volunteer firefighters (AIRC, 2011).

Further, approximately 3 000 police, 4 000 military and 1 000 paramedics leave the service each year (AIC, 2006; ADO, 2015; NHE, 2015). Approximately 394 volunteer firefighters leave each year, and there are no current statistics on the number of firefighters who separate each year (which may be a direct indication of the length of service).

[10] Australian Defence Organisation at www.defence.gov.au
[11] National Health Executive at www.health.gov.au

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Accessing the police, military, and emergency service workers across the country is not an easy task, particularly when seeking an in-depth interview that could take up to two hours of their time. As a result of this, they are a largely under-researched group. The three services were chosen to support both the exploratory and comparative nature of the research. The latter being in relation to previous Master level research performed on a police population only, and the former being the true nature of this research enquiry. The organisations are often closed to public enquiry, including research, and the members themselves are less than trusting of members of the civilian environment. Having access to this population was unique to the researcher and consideration of whether that access should be utilised was well addressed. Ethics approval included an explanation of the delicate and confidential nature of the participant's work environments and post service psychological status. The sample group was carefully selected from willing participants, ensuring that they had full understanding of their rights and that their consent was voluntary and could be removed at any time (see Appendix 3). Challenges were faced around recording the interviews and the participants relied upon their existing professional trust relationship with the researcher when sharing their experiences. Combine this with the need to have participants who have left the organisation it was identified that a pool of participants from a central location was needed. There are no current statistics available that clearly indicate the number of former service men and women who have left the organisations in the last one to five years. Further, there is no specific way to contact them, except through advertising in the different state and territory organisational union journals. This option was considered, however it presented new limitations in that the subscribers to the journals are union members, which narrowed the population.

It was decided that the database of current and former police, military, and emergency service workers who have applied for the RPL process with the researcher's business group (College for Law, Education and Training), would provide a suitable number of potential participants, all of whom fall into the population of former workers of these service organisations who are actively seeking re-employment. The database holds key information about the status of the potential participants, including which organisation they are, or were, employed by, whether they are current

or former serving officers, years of service, and rank. Further, the initial application form with CLET obtains permission for their details to be provided to selected parties for the purposes of research. Discussions with individual clients over time have indicated a willingness to participate in this sort of research if approached in the future.

To drill down even further, the gender breakdown for operational officers in these Australian organisations is, on average, 70 per cent male to 30 per cent female (AIC, 2006). It was identified that a similar representation amongst research participants should be sought if possible, to replicate this percentage breakdown from the organisations.

Further, on average, almost 90 per cent of the population of employees in these service organisations are employed on a full-time basis (lower amongst firefighters), and there is no race distinction during the recruitment process (AFP, 2013; VicPol; 2013; AIC, 2006). There are not any accurate statistics available currently in relation to the breakdown of race and age in the organisations. The standard minimum age of entry to these organisations in Australia varies from 16 to 18 years, and the average mandatory retirement age is between 60 and 65 years of age, depending upon the organisation. In selecting the sample from the population of police, military and emergency services it was decided that previous full-time service employment was required for at least part of their total service period, although a shift from mainstream military to reserves, as is required at the end of the military service period, was acceptable. Age, either pre-service, during service, post-service or at interview was not considered a significant factor in sample selection.

These distinctions are not as significant to the research purpose, as are the different reasons why individuals leave these organisations. This is not about their motivation to leave, as this was addressed during the data gathering stage, but the reason recorded with the organisation upon exit. For example, the options include medical discharge due to psychological condition, medical discharge due to physical condition, retirement due to mandatory age limit, voluntary redundancy if or when offered, disciplinary discharge (either voluntary or not), and voluntary separation. So whilst a participant’s age and race may be significant, it is more significant if captured in conjunction with the separation status.

3.7 Sample size

Given the qualitative nature of the chosen research method, and the outcomes sought as a result of the chosen methodology, the sample needed to be relatively small to allow for the conduct of the in-depth interviews, but still large enough to allow for conclusions to be drawn and applied from within the thematic analysis. This is not to say that any representativeness can be achieved without a quantitative study, but some claims should be able to be made if the sample is sufficient (Polit & Beck, 2010). It was considered whether the selection should be purposely chosen from these organisations, either on a percentage basis to ensure that each organisation was represented or on a selected number of participants from each state and territory. A percentage basis would work as a ratio, where NSW police form approximately 30 per cent of Australian police and therefore 30 per cent of participants could be drawn from the NSW field. This would be applied across the different organisations in the different locations, down to the AFP who would form .02 per cent of participants. The need for a percentage of the total population is not supported here, as that is not an immediate indication of a good sample group (Trotter, 2012). However, the percentages were considered here due to the hope to include the words 'Australian uniformed professionals' in the research topic and not adequately sampling across the states and territories would restrict the topic to, for example, 'Queensland and NSW uniformed professionals'.

In practice, this became unrealistic as it would require specifically targeting individual applicants in the RPL database in the hope of obtaining the requisite number of participants from each State and Territory. As such, it was decided that all applicants in the RPL database be contacted generally to seek their permission and willingness to participate in the research process, and to measure the spread of participants during the process. Previous research with military participants utilising a qualitative approach has varied in the sample number from seven (Binks & Cambridge, 2018) to 11 (Brunger et al., 2013), 24 (Ahern et al., 2015) and 25 (Schmaltz, 2011). Robertson and Brott (2013) employed a qualitative interview method with 102 participants, but the questions asked numbered only two and the

responses were in written form. It was decided that 30 participants was an adequate number of interviewees for the qualitative process.

3.8 Sample

The target group for the research is made up of three different employment types – police, military, and emergency services. For the qualitative research, the researcher intended to select 30 interviewees from a pool of almost 15 000 individual employees comprising former or current members of the police, military or emergency services, who had applied for RPL with the researcher's organisation. It was intended that the gender breakdown be approximately 12 females and 18 males.

The entire pool of possible participants was contacted by email to advise of the opportunity to participate in the research, and the respondents were segregated into their different employment types. From there, the intention was to randomly select ten interviewees from each employment type to participate in the interview process (Flick, 2007). However, it proved difficult to access ten participants from each of the services; instead there was an imbalance in the number across the three organisations, with police being the highest, followed by military. As such, at first selection, there were ten from police, ten from military and four from emergency services. Once the selections were identified it then became clear that females were underrepresented in the sample group when compared to their representation in the service organisations. Therefore, further female participants were sought. This was done by the issue of a further email to females in the database pool, advising them that females were underrepresented and calling for further volunteers to participate in the research. This increased the breakdown amongst the services to 15 from police, 13 from military and five from emergency services. Further attempts were made to increase the number of participants from emergency services. These attempts included the emergency services participants who had already been interviewed contacting current or former colleagues to see if they were willing to participate. This resulted in an additional two participants from emergency services being interviewed. Of these two, one was removed from the data analysis as they were still in service with the emergency services organisation. In addition, one participant from the

police and one from the military were also removed as they were also still in service with their organisations. This brought the participant numbers to 32 overall, with 14 from police, 12 from military and six from emergency services. Of this total, 23 participants were male and nine were female. There were no further female or emergency services volunteers for the interview process.

Several key demographic facts clarify the perspectives of the participants and provide further basis for comparison between individuals and within and between organisations. The participants' identities remain confidential and pseudonyms have been applied. These pseudonyms, together with information about age, gender, service organisations, years served and years since separation, are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Details of Participants' Police, Military or Emergency Services Employment and Separation

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Service Organisation	Years Served in Australian Organisation	Years since Separation from Australian Organisation
Barry	48	Male	Police	2	8
Lucy	35	Female	Military	10	1.8
Harry	39	Male	Military	4	17
Bob	60	Male	Military	6	17
Alastair	46	Male	Police	17	7
Michael	36	Male	Military	8	3
Jasper	54	Male	Military	6	27
Warwick	55	Male	Military	21	10
Neil	60	Male	Emergency Services	25	9
Charles	41	Male	Military	20	5
Matthew	47	Male	Police	23	5
Tom	49	Male	Military	29	2.5
Paul	59	Male	Police	10	29

Julie	46	Female	Police	22	5.4
Maria	52	Female	Police	27.5	4.5
Walter	53	Male	Emergency Services	19	9
Kyle	57	Male	Police	33	1.5
Raymond	34	Male	Military	15	1.5
Skye	38	Female	Military	15	6
Sebastian	47	Male	Emergency Services	13	4
Conrad	46	Male	Police	17	7
Henry	50	Male	Police	12	8
William	40	Male	Military	7	15
Donald	49	Male	Emergency Services	25	4
Ethan	50	Male	Police	16	15
Fred	56	Male	Emergency Services	30	1.5
Abigail	41	Female	Police	7	10
Kim	46	Female	Police	17	5
Natalie	31	Female	Police	8	0.4
Gary	44	Male	Military	10	5
Vanessa	36	Female	Emergency Services	16	1
Lisa	54	Female	Police	19	17

3.9 Data collection

Long semi-structured interviews, of between 45 minutes and two hours in length, were employed as the method for gathering data (Flick, 2007). The interviews were conducted by phone to preserve the anonymity of the participants and to encourage direct and honest interaction by the participants from the comfort of their own environment. In relation to the appropriate qualitative research technique, in-depth interviewing was chosen as the most effective tool to ensure the richness of the data collected. The in-depth interviewing approach facilitated the ability to discuss the questions directly with the participant, create a rapport with the participant,

and diversify the nature of the questions during the interview process. The options of a case study, group interviews, focus groups, and participant observation were all considered and dismissed for the primary participant data gathering as not being a suitable means to gather the relevant information. Observation of participants in their employment with the service organisation may have answered some questions in relation to occupational relationships and organisational culture but would not glean the relevant information for the study. Group interviews and focus groups were considered to reduce the research workload, however, neither was considered enough to ascertain the relevant, individual-oriented information required. Individuals in a group environment do not always share information evenly and certainly not when in a group of their work peers. It was decided that a one-on-one environment with the researcher and participant was best, with allowance for the presence of a support person if the participant wished. Participant observation was not an option as it would require a presence within each service organisation, and even if that was an option, it would need to be Australia-wide to encompass all organisations in the country.

Ethics approval was obtained for the research and participants were informed in writing of the consent process (see Appendices 2 & 3), including their options to terminate the interview at any time without consequence. Interviewees were advised that the interviews would be recorded although their participation would remain anonymous, however it was anticipated that some of the participants may have objected to the recording of the interview. In this case, they were to be assured that only the researcher and her direct research supervisor/s would have access to the recordings, that they would be allocated a pseudonym for the interview process, and that all the recorded and transcription content would be stored in secure servers. It was considered important that participants felt comfortable to say anything they wished, and given their background in policing, military and emergency services this can be difficult if the content was perceived to be on record. This was especially the case if any of them currently had worker's compensation claims, or similar, underway with the organisation's insurer. Clear explanations prior to consent, that were reiterated prior to interview in writing, ensured that the participants were as

comfortable as possible with the research process. No participants objected to the recording of the interview. With one participant the recording failed at the start of the interview but was started not long after.

The participants were provided with a list of support services within the research information and consent process to ensure they had access to support if needed during or after the interview. The participants were verbally informed at the commencement of the interview that the questions should not trigger any emotional or psychological response but if they feel uncomfortable they are free to terminate the interview at any time and seek support with any of the services listed in the information sheet or with their own existing service provider. Further, all participants were invited to have a support person present during the interview. No participants chose this option and no interviews were terminated by a participant. When participants demonstrated any emotional response to questioning, they were given time to gather themselves, and the line of questioning was changed to another subject.

3.10 Data analysis

The in-depth interviews were recorded and transcribed for effective data collection and record keeping.

The research data was narrative in form and a thematic analysis was applied (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010, Braun & Clarke, 2006). The interview transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis to gain a greater understanding of what commonalities were apparent in how the participants made sense of their reality during their transition experiences (Smith, 2004; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was selected as the most appropriate means of analysis because of its flexibility as well as its freedom from rigid theoretical underpinnings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The freedom to apply thematic analysis with inductive reasoning and with a constructivist approach helped provide detailed understanding of how the individual participants derive meaning from their reality (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was especially significant for this group of participants as an understanding of their perceptual processes when exploring their experience in their service and post-service states contributed to an understanding of the effects on their identity (Brunger et al., 2013).

Given the qualitative nature of the research there was no specific instrument to be used for the collation and review of the data, which made it difficult to validate and judge the reliability of the research, however NVivo11 was used as a tool to support the analysis. Although thematic analysis is renowned for not having guidelines the outline provided by Braun and Clarke (2006) was relied upon to support the techniques for analysis. The analysis commenced with the reading and re-reading of the transcripts to ensure familiarity and engagement with the data (Brunger et al., 2013). NVivo11 was used to identify emergent themes then these themes were explored in relation to the original research questions. This was repeated for all 32 transcripts. Following this, the themes from the individual transcripts were clustered and allowed for the emergence of key master themes (Brunger et al., 2013). The statistical data was extracted and compared directly, including elements that could be routinely extracted from the more open-ended questions, such as years of service. The master superordinate themes (Brunger et al., 2013) were then collated, compared and reviewed considering the research questions, looking for patterns that supported and explained the ultimate research topic. Recommendations arose from the comparative analysis of the data.

3.11 Conclusion

The implementation of the research design, and analysis of the data, resulted in a wealth of detailed information about the experiences of the participants before, during and after service. The application of a thematic analysis with inductive reasoning resulted in the emergence of key themes that helped navigate the experiences of the participants and to further understand the impact their service had on their future employment as well as their emotional wellbeing. The timelines that see the participants form a connection with their service organisation and role, separate and transition from the service group, and then navigate the post-service employment environment will be presented in the following three chapters. The three chapters, four, five and six, will present the findings in the context of the developed themes that were identified during the thematic analysis of the data and explore the ways in which the participants narrate their experiences.

Moving Forward

Chapter 4 Forming a connection

4.1 Introduction

The detailed narration by the participants of their employment experience both during service and after transition has revealed several factors that contribute to job satisfaction in post-service employment. These include service-based training, camaraderie developed in the service role, transition processes, and emotional and psychological effects of the service role. The individuals are exposed to these factors over time during their service period, and each factor contributes to the identity-based connection of the individual to the work and organisation. This individual identity work is necessary for their role in the police, military or emergency services, and supports their performance in that environment. However, in the post-service environment, the participants continue to maintain an identity-based connection to their former service employment. The reasons for this were explored. The questioning of the participants revealed a narrative arc that followed the timeline of their experience leading into the services, in the service organisation and their post-service environment. To understand the factors that contribute to the identity connection with their former workplace, it is necessary to step through the timeline of events that demonstrate factors involved in establish an identity-based connection.

This chapter presents the period of time in the experiences of the participants when the identity connection with the service organisation and role is first formed. The chapter explores the reasons a connection can be formed between an individual and a service organisation or role, as informed by the literature, including family connections to service, propensity to serve, training, team work, and job content as well as training and team work within a hegemonic masculine environment. Exploring these reasons for a connection allowed a detailed investigation of possible root causes of the identity connection for these participants in the Australian context. Understanding how the connection is formed is supported by exploring the participant family connections to service, their reasons for service, their training and teamwork – particularly within the masculine space, and the content of their job

Outlined in this chapter is how this study investigates why individuals choose to serve in the police, military or emergency services to ascertain whether those reasons contribute to a lasting connection to the organisation when post-service. This included an exploration of family connections to identify any generational links. The narration by the participants revealed that training and teamwork were key factors in the creation of an identity connection; and the operation of these factors within a hegemonic masculine space was an organisational influence (Millward & Haslam, 2012). These factors were influential at varying points in the timeline and impacted the identity-based connection to the service organisation in different ways (Millward & Haslam, 2012).

4.2 Family connection

Scholars have demonstrated an evidenced link between an individual's propensity to serve (in the military) and environmental factors such as family influence (Maley & Hawkins, 2017). Family influence is said to contribute to the propensity to serve in an individual as part of the injunctive norms that pressure an individual to respond to the approval or disapproval of others (Maley & Hawkins, 2017). One of the questions the research explored was whether a strong family connection to and/or influence from the service organisation could affect job satisfaction in post-service employment by creating a lasting connection to the service through personal ties, past and present. The questions were 'do you have any family that served in the police, military or emergency services?' and 'did that influence you to join or enlist in the service?' This line of questioning explored whether the participants joined or enlisted in their service role because of the perception that this would gain approval or disapproval from their family. The theory on propensity to serve is strongest in reference to the military (Brown & Rana, 2005; Ford et al., 2014; Maley & Hawkins, 2017). It was found in this study that there were more military participants who had an existing and influential family connection to the same military arm of service than police and emergency services.

Parents' aspirations for their children's future occupations are directly affected by their own occupational status, their personal perceptions of a good occupation, and their measure of actual possibilities for their children (Irwin & Elley, 2013). This includes police and military as job

aspirations for children amongst parents who were in intermediate or working-class occupations (Irwin & Elley, 2013). Many parents identified a desire for their children to have better opportunities in employment than they had, and in particular, not to have to undertake manual labour (Irwin & Elley, 2013).

There were very few participants who had any family connection to the service they joined (*n*= 4).

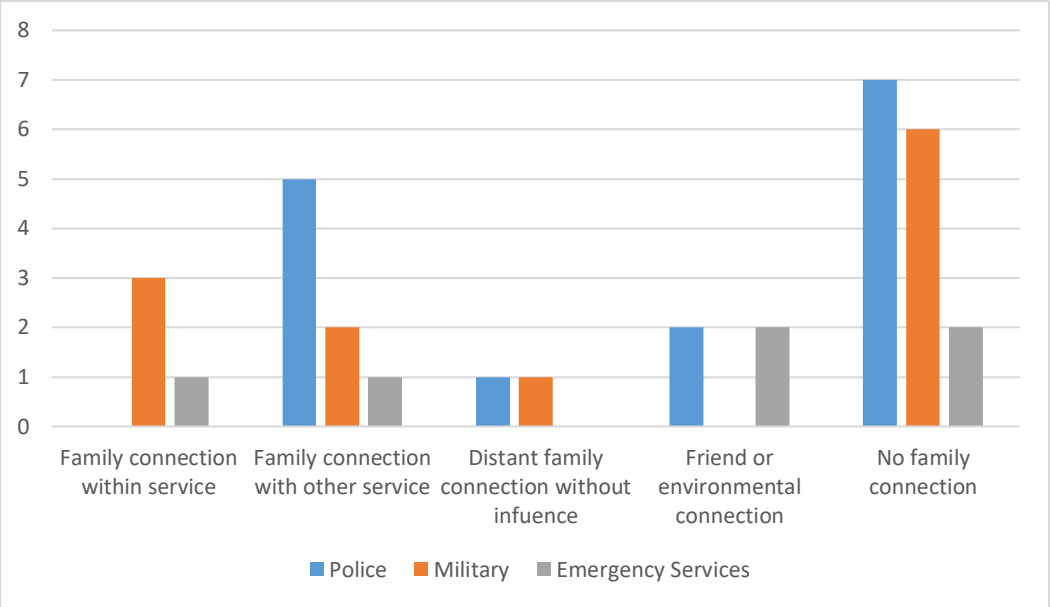

Figure 1: Family Connection as Per Service

When asked about the connections, Gary answered '*…my dad was in the Army at the time…my stepmother was in the Army…'* and Donald confirmed '*my father was a fireman'*. There were more who had a family connection to another service (*n*= 8) yet confirmed that the connection was not the primary influence on their decision to join. Henry (former police) explained

> *…my dad was in the Navy for a very, very short time. He basically took the optional discharge. But that didn't take any considerations at all because he never really spoke about it. I did have, I did have an uncle that worked at the air arms before they dismantled it. But again, not really an influence, I didn't have anyone to speak to about it, it was just one of things that I probably had a look at it . . . went down and talked to recruitment and joined so no real influences apart from advertising to be honest.*

Some participants believed, like Alastair, that although they had no direct influence from ancestors who served in the military, it still '*runs in the blood if you believe in such things*'; but others indicated a more direct influence from indirect connections such as Sebastian who was a former firefighter, but reported '*…my father was the assistant commissioner of police in Western Australia*' and Raymond who described his experience as:

> *Yeah, I basically just decided that, I went to the fire brigade actually because my uncle was a fire officer in the Metropolitan Fire Brigade in Melbourne. And I sort of wanted to be him my entire life sort of thing and I went to, I went to the fire brigade and at 17 I went oh just about to finish school, they just said to me mate yeah you've got to go and get some experience. So my uncle said to me go and join the Navy, because he was a clearance diver in the Navy. But I don't swim too good so I went and joined the Army instead.*

The majority of participants responded like Vanessa with '*Oh no, no. My mum was a teacher and my dad was a farmer*' and William who explained '*No, there was absolutely no influence. Both my parents are in the financial sector. Grandparents, one was a cheesemaker, one was a nurse and the other two were farmers*'. Amongst those who did have a family connection, some, like Skye, openly confirmed that the influence was strong and was the reason she considered service, stating '*My dad was military, he was a Navy chef but I didn't grow up with him so I always knew that I wanted to do what he did'*. In contrast, Harry considered family to be a big influence but not the sole contributor to his service choice, explaining '*Look, he was definitely a big, a big influence. But yeah, I don't know if he was the sole cause. I think it was something in me that I didn't, I don't really, I can't really explain either'*.

For those participants who confirmed family connections to police, military or emergency services, the desire to follow in their footsteps was strong. However, this was framed as a desire to follow the career pathway of someone they admired and saw as a role model rather than a means to gain approval or avoid disapproval as is suggested in the literature (Maley & Hawkins, 2017). The participants described it more as a desire to follow the lead of the family member or friend, because it seemed like a good job choice. This did not link them to the service role through loyalty or family tradition but instead through job security and good employment choices.

This, then, did not perpetuate a need to stay in the role, or to mourn the loss of the role as a result of family expectations.

Additional lines of thought were pursued during the interview process such as family responses to the end of service, but there was no indication that the former service individuals who had family connections to service suffered shame or disappointment as a result of family influence when exiting, instead describing family support. Those without family connections also described family support for their decision to leave the service organisation. Overall, the familial connection was small (*n*=4), with more participants having no family connection to or influence from their former service organisation or any of the three service organisations at all (*n*=15). Therefore, other factors were stronger at play for the participants in their decision to join these service organisations.

For instance, rather than responding to family influence, individuals who join service organisations are framed within a theoretical paradigm that suggests the propensity to serve creates different parameters for recruitment into police, military or emergency services when compared to other non-service positions. Why any individual chooses to enter a service organisation such as the police, military or emergency services can be framed inside the literature out of the US and UK on the propensity to serve in the military (Brown & Rana, 2005; Ford et al., 2014; Maley & Hawkins, 2017). The relevance of this literature was tested in this study by exploring the participants' propensities to serve and the influence of this on reasons for service and development of a connection between the participant and service organisation.

4.3 Reasons for service

Entering the service role does not, in and of itself, render a connection between the individual and the service role, instead it provides the environment within which a connection may be formed. Contrary to the literature (Brown & Rana, 2005; Ford et al., 2014; Maley & Hawkins, 2017), the reasons the participants gave for joining their service organisation were surprisingly pragmatic. They were reduced to job security, helping the community, job opportunity and variety (see Figure 2). A propensity to serve is largely patriotic in nature (Ford et al., 2014; Faris, 1995) and did not

influence these participants, except for some similarities drawn from their desire to help the community. Except for two participants, there was no reference made by the participants to economic factors such as wages as a reason for joining the service organisation, but this did present in discussions about post-service job satisfaction, where some identified that the security of the wages is missed. As such, wage security is considered as a factor in job security. Only one participant identified joining the service as a long-term goal. Each identified reason will be addressed individually.

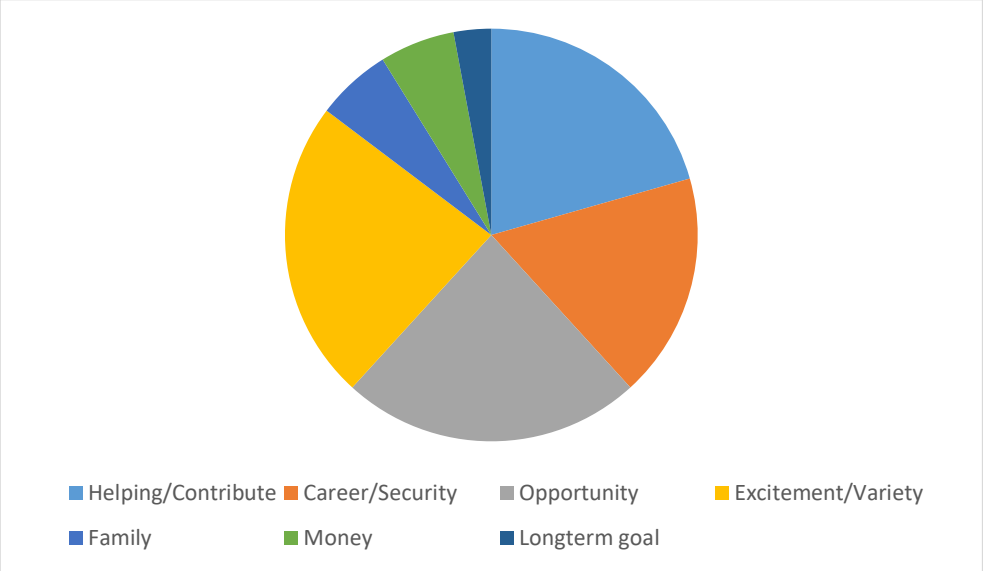

Figure 2: Reason for Joining

4.3.1 Job security

Income insecurity is the condition employees are trying to avoid when seeking job security (Wilczynska, Batorski & Sellens, 2016). Skye confirmed this when describing the service employment option as '*…it is very secure'*. Barry described the job choice as '*a good, stable career path, it was a way of life and it was something I was going to be in from the moment I joined to the moment I retired'*, and Conrad explained that '*…you joined it as a career for life'*. But Julie stated '*…that you had security, what I thought was security*.' Their perception of security when choosing to join the job was different to their perception of the security when they left. As the individual starts to learn which past career choices they would elect to choose again (Lévy-Garboua & Montmarquette, 2004), a change in the understanding of the perception of job security from the earlier job choice is

to be expected, when looking back from within a post-service environment. Job satisfaction comes not just from the job experience but from the differences between earlier experiences that highlight the preference between jobs (Lévy-Garboua & Montmarquette, 2004). Many participants entered the service anticipating a long-term career and secure job that would take them to retirement, and the impact of having that career cut short is greater than anticipated.

For some participants the idea of a long-term secure career in a government role was a good reason to choose the job. Job security is a basic factor when measuring job satisfaction (Clark, 2005). Interestingly, however, whilst job security was a reason for choosing the career it was rarely, if ever, a reason for enjoying the job or even an important enough reason to stay in the job. It was considered that if family connection influences propensity to serve, then it is a likely influence in seeking job security. That is, role modelling of those who have government employment that is seen to be secure in any economic climate and requires significant bureaucratic procedures to afford redundancies, is a motivation to seek similar employment. But the participants did not describe the family connection that way. In fact, those who did not have family connection also described job security as a factor. This suggests that a propensity to serve is less of a motivating factor than the basic economic factor of job security that influences this group as it does the wider labour market. The descriptions were the same across all three services. Whether it can be concluded that these participants are motivated by economic factors to seek a certain employment over a propensity to serve would require further research into an Australian population and what drives them to enlist or join. However, this group demonstrated the former under this line of questioning.

4.3.2 Helping the community

The second reported reason for entering the service organisations was helping the community. The desire to help the community was a strong factor for several participants across all three services (*n*=7). Public service motivation is characterised by altruistic aims to serve the public interest, help others and contribute to society (Bright, 2011). There is little evidence of a connection between public service motivation and the occupational choices of public service employees, however Bright (2011) suggests the

connection does exist. The participants did not indicate that their motivation was for public service organisations but they were vocal about their desire to give back to the community. For example, Tom summarised '*... at the end of the day, it's serving your country and it's making your country what it is really*' whilst Kyle explained '*you could actually help people'.* Lucy described entering service as *'a sense of serving and giving back and doing something for others, more to the point, I suppose',* and continued on to explain that from start to finish, the service job was '*still a role in which I feel like I can contribute'.* Many participants described feeling as though they were important because of the job they were doing, including Kim, who stated that '*it felt like being a useful part of society*', and Natalie, who said '*it gave me a sense of contributing to society, of doing something that was bigger than me, being able to help people and put myself second'*.

The desire to help the community and serve their country is not linked to any family connection and arises in the individual propensity to serve. In the work of Ford et al. (2014) and Faris (1995) the connection between patriotism and familial connection was strong, indicating a generational desire to serve their country. This was not apparent here. No participants indicated that they wanted to help the community because their family had done so in the police, military or emergency services; however, there was a small number of participants (n=2) who could relate family connection to volunteer behaviour in other organisations, such as surf lifesaving, that stimulated their own desire to help others. Importantly, the participants who indicated that helping the community was a factor in their choice of career were very passionate about it and spoke positively about their willingness to contribute through their employment in ways that are outstanding when compared to other jobs.

Of interest, however, is that being able to move from these service organisations to other employment that involved helping the community did not ensure job satisfaction amongst the participants. Three of the participants indicated they were now in roles that still helped the community. Whilst a reason for entering service, this factor did not automatically result in job satisfaction post-service for these participants, nor was it a direct factor in forming the connection between the individual and the service role.

4.3.3 Job opportunity

The third reason for entering the services, primarily reported by military and police participants, was a job opportunity at the time. Natalie described '*I left high school quite unsure of what I wanted to do, sort of stumbled across the police*'. The longer serving participants, like Paul, who entered at a young age, around 17 years old, recalled that it was about a job opening at the time, and they had no initial preference as to what that may be. For some, it was a time in life when parents told them it was time to stand on their own two feet. Walter explained:

> *No…I come from a family of seven, seven kids and you know so it was pretty much I just knew… by the time I left school, I needed to have a job and as soon as I got a job I needed to be sort of out of the house so bit different times then but yeah that was pretty much…the expectation.*

Gaining a job gave Walter the opportunity to contribute to the household and ultimately leave home. The job opportunity was about availability for work that he, and other participants, were deemed eligible for, and explains the reason for his service. Opportunity, in this sense, is about gaining any job, rather than a job in the police, military or emergency services.

Therefore, the opportunity for employment as it is available at any point in time is tied to a certain extent to the desire for job security. A number of those participants who described job security as a factor also made reference to job opportunity. For many participants, the entry into the service organisation was simply because the opportunity presented, and it was the most attractive job option at the time. This was more apparent amongst the participants who were recruited in the 1970s and 1980s and/or were in more rural or remote locations of Australia. In that instance, the employment choices were more limited. Some of the younger participants also expressed that opportunity was a significant factor in their job choice. Older participants identified that they felt it was easier to gain entry to these service occupations when they joined, given the differences in the population and streamlined entry processes.

Having said that, few of the participants overall indicated that they had any problems going through the recruitment process. This experience was the same for the men and women, and the same across all three service

groups. It was hypothesised that if an individual had to work harder to gain entry and therefore was more disappointed when leaving, this may have contributed to attributing job opportunity as a reason for an enduring connection to the service organisation, however this did not present at all amongst the participants. Further, it was assumed that familial connections make entry easier for individuals to follow in those footsteps, as family members may be able to influence recruitment, but that was not indicated by any of the participants. In fact, some participants who had family connections to one service, but chose to enter another service, made that decision as a direct result of the recruitment opportunity at the time.

Mael and Ashforth (1995) found that individuals could develop a sense of professional identity in preparation for entry to employment, and in particular for organisations such as the police (Carless, 2005). However, this relied upon the development of career commitment and attitudes prior to employment that were conducive to long-term success in that chosen career. Contrary to this, the participants who chose to serve or join because of the opportunity for employment did not indicate any pre-entry career commitment. They did not demonstrate any commitment to the service before entering and therefore had no identity development before joining or enlisting. Any connection to the service role was developed after entering. The job opportunity was the reason for service but did little to contribute to the connection between the participants and their service organisation post-service.

4.3.4 Variety and excitement

The final reported reason for entering the service organisation was variety and excitement. Many participants who explained that this was their reason, also identified one of the other key reasons as well. For example, Barry explained that the excitement was the '*initial draw'* but '*it's a career path, you know?'* and Paul recalled that the '*Commonwealth Police were recruiting…and it looked as if it would be something interesting to do'*. Only a small number of the participants (*n*= 3) identified excitement and variety as the sole motivation for joining the organisation.

The reasons for choosing to join this employment type are less important as isolated factors and more relevant to the overall employment experience of the individual. Alone, they offer little explanation about the

connection between these participants and their former service roles. There is little to no family connection that would explain disappointment in leaving the police, military or emergency services. The reasons for service distinguish the motivation of the individual participants to join the police, military or emergency services but are available for post-service employment as well. Therefore, they offer little to no explanation for the ongoing connection with the service role, nor offer any explanation for the lack of connection with the new post-service employment. A line of questioning was employed to further explore the connection between the participants and their former service employment. This questioning investigated the period after entry and starts with their training.

4.4 Training

For all three service groups, the police, military and emergency services, training was the first step in the job. Generally, this phase is referred to as recruit or basic training. All three services have a training regime that includes an academy type format where the individuals are immersed in the training for the immediate period following their recruitment or enlistment. Undertaking this training brings the new service members together and starts the process of upskilling them to be able to represent their service organisation as an operational member. It is the immersion in the group mentality, with no reprieve, during basic training that creates the institutional effect of the organisation (Cooper et al., 2018). Some police organisations in Australia allow participants to come and go from home during this period, but generally most participants, in all three services, stay at the academy or training facility during this time. The military has the added reinforcement of deployment to locations where there are no family and friends, and little contact with the same; as with the firefighters and paramedics who have shifts that involve sleeping at the station with their colleagues.

This team mentality and constant orientation toward group goals reinforces the identity connection. When asked about training for the service role, Lucy, the second participant interviewed, coined the term ‘creating soldiers’. This became a reference point for the remaining interviews. She explained that the training was a process of breaking them down as individuals and rebuilding them as soldiers. Although her background was

military, the concept also resonated with the participants from the police and emergency services. Lucy described the process as '*I felt like, whether it was intentional or not, they kind of break you down and make you feel like you can't do anything outside'*, but Harry was the most descriptive, explaining

> *in the Army they're basically, from basic training, you know, you're taught, get a bit of cunt about you. You know?...and it is, they basically deconstruct you and rebuild a solider. And those attributes are good in war and combat situations. But they just don't go down well in normal business office life. I laugh a little bit because I spent the first part of my life basically learning how to hurt people. And then in my later years I've learnt moreso how to help people.*

Following this theme throughout the interviews, it became clear that, especially for police and military, there was a level of training and an expectation of behaviour in service that changed who they were as people and made it harder to cope outside that environment. As individuals, many did not realise this until they were out of the service role, and therefore they did not have coping mechanisms in place. Charles described his perspective on 'creating soldiers' as '*I think, I think that's a very accurate statement that you know defence spends a fortune turning you into a soldier and they just cut you loose into the wind as soon as your career is over*'. This was supported by William, a police participant, who explained that when former military entered new employment they had to be:

> *…deprogrammed military because the rules of engagement between military and police are completely different where you just can't go out and indiscriminately shoot people. There's rules. And that was the hardest thing that some of our military guys had was that well why can't we do it this way, well because there's laws and we have to defend ourselves in three years' time when we're in the coroner asking those questions. They, you could see them understanding it but not agreeing with it, they're just going no we just do it this way, we can't do it that way.*

The impact of this sort of training outside the service job is substantial, as Gary described when saying '*Because they see, well they see like we, like males, like all Defence people do is I'm a level above civilians now because I've been trained like this and I'm supposed to protect you and you know and I see that some feel really isolated'.* Here we see the impact of this type of training and the manner in which it re-creates the person and changes the way they see themselves. The distinction between them as service personnel

and civilians demonstrates how they begin to identify not just with their teammates in the service organisation but identify themselves as distinct from the members of the community not in service. They begin to identify with their role and with the organisation and define themselves in these terms. Conrad described that police have a similar mentality that arises from the role and the training for the role, advising:

> *I used to think that I was invincible. The putting on of the uniform was almost a, it was the defence barrier, it was the, it was the thing that protected me from everything and at times it was like flicking a switch, okay I'm going to work, I'll put my uniform on, I'll walk through the door, righto I'm a policeman. I go into cop mode. The difficulty was when that cop mode overrode everything else. And it became all yeah pervasive, it invaded every, every part of your life*

Lucy explained that these sorts of transformations not only make it difficult to function in the civilian world post-service, but also make the individuals in service question whether they can even do anything else. She described: *'Like, oh what would you do? What would you apply for?'* This is a common theme, as participants expressed hesitancy to leave service because they did not know what they would do next (Ruiz & Morrow, 2005).

In contrast to the experiences of military and police services, there was no indication that the emergency services training involved breaking down an individual and rebuilding them as fire fighters or paramedics. There is some similarity in the individual development of skills that are unique to each service but primarily, there are similarities in the nature of the training environment. The shared experiences of former police, military and emergency services personnel during recruit or basic training revealed that it is not so much the skills and knowledge that are reinforced in this training but the demand for strength and power as entry criteria for the service teams. These are perceived to be masculine characteristics and the demands to perform inside this framework influenced the changing behaviour of the participants (Agostino, 1998). Police, military and emergency services are masculine organisations and the training occurs within this dynamic. The impact of this gender dynamic was explored.

4.5 Understanding a masculine space – hegemonic masculinity in police, military and emergency services

A hegemonic masculine organisation functions with masculine and feminine characteristics in contrast to each other (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). For former members of the police, military and emergency services, this means that the masculine characteristics of strength are encouraged and rewarded; and any negativity or weakness is labelled and punished as feminine (Agostino, 1998). This behaviour regime is applied to both men and women in the services. Matthew explained *'once they knew who you were and…that you could…do what you're told and help each other out then you become one of the boys type of thing….*'. It is systematic and opaque in nature, making it difficult for the individuals to understand the transformation of the way they see each other and themselves. Hegemonic masculinity can be difficult to define, but for the purposes of this work it is the nature of an organisation that is borne of masculine characteristics and in reinforcing these characteristics, either directly or inadvertently, oppresses female characteristics. The masculine characteristics of physical strength, commitment, endurance, power, as well as rank and hierarchy are valued and represent indicators of success in these organisations. In contrast, attributes (or behaviours) that are not valued and are discouraged, such as weakness, whingeing, complaining, disputing rank and hierarchy, questioning practices, lack of effort, failure to commit, and not playing as part of a team are characterised as feminine and are treated as measures of poor performance in these organisations. Jasper thought that *'it shouldn't be like that, it should be…people are actually given tasking on their strengths'*. Instead, his experience was that *'they're taught from early on that it's their way or the highway or you get charged'*.

This analysis does not delve into the lack of equal opportunity in the police, military or emergency services nor does it need to examine the oppression of women in these organisations. Instead, the concept of hegemonic masculinity is most effective in examining the identity work of this group when viewed as a lens through which masculine characteristics are encouraged and feminine characteristics discouraged, and both men and women alike are affected by this environment.

It is in this hegemonic masculine space that the first identity changes are experienced by the individuals. Lucy described it as being broken down and rebuilt as a soldier and Conrad described being a police officer as a feeling of being invincible and how the feeling pervaded every part of his life. Similar sentiments are described by all participants to differing degrees. Matthew recalled it as just doing what he was told, *'to sit down, shut up, and listen…*'. This is a result of the masculine nature of the training that starts with the development of a military body which is ready to face the necessary situations in combat (Godfrey et al., 2012). The participants from all three services, the police, military and emergency services, describe similar environments, where training is such that strength and power are enforced and weakness is discouraged. The use of masculine based activities with repetitive enforcement creates new identities in individuals by reinforcing behaviours that are conducive to their role, but less conducive to their everyday life (King, 2006). Vanessa explained *'..we were basically taken to a range with about 100-150 different firearms and we just got to shoot, it was an upskilling thing…*'. She further explained that they '*disposed of hundreds of thousands of bullets*'. The training creates new physical identities through the development of the 'military body' (Godfrey et al., 2012, p. 542), while also reinforcing new behaviours and practices to create service identities. Their socio-mental re-creation is also an embodied re-creation. The literature (Godfrey et al., 2012; King, 2006) confirms that these activities are crucial to the operation of the organisation but the impact on individual lives is considerable. The hegemonic masculine environment further enforces these masculine characteristics by positioning men against each other in a measure of their own masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Gary explained '*…your team became your life and that was pretty toxic…*'. This is apparent in the stories from the participants across all three organisations as they struggle with the loss of their team post-service, the likes of which are rarely replaced outside of service, and the lack of camaraderie that they feel in new employment. This group mentality that stems from the masculinity of the training and repeated activities is another important element in the individual's identity connection to the service organisation

4.6 Training in the masculine space

The training that occurs inside masculine organisations such as the military encourages an identity connection that permeates post-service life for the individuals (Higate, 2001). The reinforcement of the gendered dichotomy, where masculine equals strength and feminine equals weakness, starts at basic training in all three organisations, and continues to be enforced throughout service. Natalie explained *'yeah, I think…that's around masculinity. Men aren't allowed to be seen to cry. Men aren't allowed to do that sort of* thing'. Lisa described *'…Defence people tend to be I can take [it], I can do anything, you know, I've been taught really tough'*. The use of repeated physical and mental activities with masculine characteristics in a military training and operational environment redefine the individuals to connect with the group and the collective goal (Godfrey et al., 2012; King, 2006). In accordance with the literature (Godfrey et al., 2012; Higate, 2001; King, 2006), the participants from the military demonstrate this identity connection, but so did the former police and emergency services participants. The training of the physical body, and the adaptation of the mind, within the masculine space and to the extent required of the job content of police, military and emergency services, lends itself to a strong identity connection that is borne of the redefining of individuals into the actions they perform. Ethan described *'there were a few guys that kind of lost it because 'oh' we're losing our identity'*.

The participant descriptions about being broken down and re-created inside their service organisation role inform the understanding that they learn to define themselves by the skills and knowledge that constitute their service persona. Ethan explained *'…you got told to do something in the military there were no ifs and or buts, you did it or you basically got flogged*'. When in the service organisation role, they perform those skills and implement that knowledge without hesitation and without any opportunity for human deviation from the collective goal (King, 2006). It is this almost mechanical action that defines who they are in the role, but with constant reinforcement and implementation, it also starts to define who they are as individuals. Matthew explained *'it's like that old, you know, frog in tn a pot, you know, you don't know that you're dying until you actually die*'. With deployments, long shifts, and unusual working hours and

environments, the individuals begin to associate only with their activities. This forms their identity connection to the organisation by making them see their activities and abilities as the sum whole of their identity. Lisa explained that people say *'you know, we can tell you're in the military, we can tell, or you're a policeman or something…you're so hard'*. The service organisation hones these skills and reinforces the activities to create occupational boundaries that ensure the highest return on their investment. The capacity to create employees that identify so strongly with organisational goals helps secure longevity in employees and encourages commitment to the long-term needs of the organisation. The fact that many of these service personnel do leave before the end of their career does not change the needs of the organisation to gain as much internal capital as they can from the individuals whilst in service.

This is reinforced by the large part of the training for these services that is conducted in a team environment. Further, the tasks set for the roles during service are also team oriented. The impact of being part of a team was explored for its contribution to facilitating an identity connection.

4.7 Teamwork

A sense of belonging presents as a very strong need for the participants from the police, military and emergency services. During basic training and/or academy training and the reinforcement of activities in service, they are institutionalised into a group mentality with a collective goal (Bergman et al., 2014; Cooper et al., 2018; Godfrey et al., 2012). Whilst any team potentially has a collective goal, the descriptions by the participants indicate that being part of this group is more for them. Participants consider their teammates and the mateship and relationships formed as amongst their fondest memories. Charles explains that the '…*highlight of my military was being a team leader in Afghanistan*'. The repeated activities that cause the individual to be immersed in the environment, rather than tasked with single outcomes, and the collective goal in these organisations becomes less an outcome and more a code of practice. This means that it is a way of life that infiltrates their personal existence as much as it does their work life. The focus on these goals and being part of this team is often socially isolating as much of the activity cannot be shared with the world outside of the police,

military and emergency services, and if it is, it can be misunderstood. Camaraderie in these services arises from collective goals rather than social relations (King, 2006). The individuals come to rely upon their work colleagues not just for back up in the working space, but also support in the rest of their life. Many of the participants revealed broken relationships that were a result of the social isolation and demands of being part of an exclusive team, rendering them more reliant on those who have working activities in common. The participants describe this camaraderie as one of the single most powerful effects of working in the service organisation.

Being part of a team, and the camaraderie they develop and rely upon, was summarised by Barry, who stated '*You almost get to the stage where it's like well, these are the people that only really understand what you go through. And how you think*' and the same sentiment was repeated by most participants. William explained that it was '*a sense of being with like-minded people…*' and Kyle elaborated '*…I'm a bit of a loner at the best of times but you've got to work as a team.'* There was a strong common ground between each of the participants from each service, and the same common ground across all three service groups. For example, from the military, Paul stated '*I always use the term we…',* from the emergency services Walter declared *'in summary, probably just the mateship…'*, and from the police, Matthew stated *'it was like a brotherhood'*. Supporting King's (2006) definition of camaraderie as a group collective with a specific goal, it is significant to note that there was no indication, however, of camaraderie between the individuals from the different services. As a collection of first responders from three service groups they did not see themselves as a team. Except for a single participant who grouped police with emergency services, at no time did they refer to themselves as first responders across all three groups (police, military and emergency services), or law enforcement or border control across two services (police and military), or similar. They described their service only, which is understandable given individual experience, but was a reference point for where the team environment and camaraderie started and finished. It is service specific and not sector specific.

For the few participants who had been employed with more than one of the services, they confirmed that the teamwork and camaraderie in one service was stronger. Henry explained that this may be due to the fact:

> *of the Navy is they're actually living with each other and you're actually socialising with each other as well as working, and you have no other choice really, where police is different dynamics and different personalities, same with the military, but you don't have that, oh that kinship.*

This supports the notion that camaraderie is developed through living together as part of their employment. For the military, this was a definite contributing factor. Henry described the environment as:

> *I can't compare with fire or ambulance and all that, but I think, I think the dynamics based on the 24/7 together and you're relying on each other every single day, especially when you're out bush with the Army or on a warship, is probably why that is*.

Emergency services also spend periods of time together that equate to living with each other, when working a four on/four off shift rotation, which is two night shifts and two day shifts. On the night shift they have sleeping quarters and share meals and many of the usual home-like experiences. However, emergency services participants describe their camaraderie as based on friendships and kinships more than necessity, and do not specifically reference living in close quarters as a contributing factor.

Contributing to this difference between military and emergency services is the isolation from usual social contacts that occurs for the military service personnel but does not occur for either police or emergency services. As an example, when deployed to sea, navy employees have no social media and limited email contact. Lucy explained that they can come back after three months and have no idea what has happened in the country, in the world, or even with their own families. She continued to explain that they can spend three months wanting to get away from their colleagues, and then as soon as they hit land, they are missing them. This push/pull of interaction and interdependence signals a higher level of identity engagement. As Tom explained earlier, for the military, working together as a team is crucial.

Comparatively, Walter explained for emergency services:

> *You know the guys you know you work with, the social side of the fire brigade, the working side of it, even the lifestyle of it, you know*

> *but I think it's just you know it's just really good mates, guys that are you know like to have a laugh but you know when the job is on, the job is on…*

The emergency services participants are more light-hearted about their teamwork and the importance of being part of a team, focusing on friendship. Walter explained

> *we used to have a saying where they would say you know this job is a joke and we used to say well you know well actually fire brigade you know this joke is a job. And that was, that was sort of much how we sort of look at it….*

However, when the questioning was targeted together with their experiences in subsequent employment, or their high-trauma experiences in the service employment, they were quick to confirm that relying on their 'mates' in the team environment was crucial.

The former police participants never refer to themselves as being in any close quarters with their team members and have no common live-in environment. Yet, in many roles within policing, they have extensive periods of time together as a result of rostered shift work. Night shifts, for seven days in a row, would equate to more time spent together than the two night shifts that the emergency services workers have. Natalie describes '*…working in general duties and being on a car crew…driving around at three o'clock in the morning…'*. It does not seem to have the same impact with the police participants, and questioning revealed that this is because their shifts do not replicate any normal living conditions. Unlike the emergency services participants (Vanessa) they do not have kitchen facilities to cook meals together and they do not sleep in the same location. Instead, they will grab food whilst between jobs and are not permitted to sleep during a night shift. This creates a different dynamic for the police when compared to both the emergency services and military participants.

But the reasons for interacting within their teams are different only at a superficial level. In terms of social interaction and replicating daily life, the differences between the services are apparent. However, team camaraderie is still present. Despite these differences, and except for the combined police/military participants, there is still an enhanced feeling of camaraderie amongst the individuals in each of the services that is not

replicated, by their own reports, in any other employment that these individuals have been exposed to.

Tom described the teamwork as

> *that's the biggest thing, it's no, it's very, very rarely that you work autonomously, it's not that sort of environment. You have to, even if you don't like the person you're next to or working in a team with, you have to get on with them*.

Natalie echoed this sentiment, stating '*Yeah, just knowing that someone always had your back, you were in it together, no matter how good or bad things got, there was always someone there that understood and would support you*'. Barry summarised it succinctly, explaining '*So, you do become part of a special group, I suppose. And you do form some very close bonds*', but, of great significance for this group, Barry went on to further explain:

> *But as to how close and how strong those bonds would become and, you know, through the things that I've been subjected to and seen, no, I didn't, realise how deep the roots would go, for sure*.

This draws a distinction between being part of a team and belonging to a team and is the point at which the participants refer to their role activities as teamwork, but their team relationships as camaraderie. It stems from teamwork theory that identifies the characteristics of a successful team as those that rely upon interdependence and contain members who can interpret the needs of other team members (Baker et al., 2006). In particular, Baker et al. (2006) identify how extreme hierarchical differentiation in a team demands a great deal of cohesiveness. This is seen in high-reliability organisations such as health care (Baker et al., 2006), and is transferable to other service organisations.

Establishing that sense of belonging is threefold and occurs at different times in service. The first is the initial recruit training, where teamwork is demanded and set as an expectation for all the service period going forward. It is at this point that the commonality between individuals is set, even if they do not like each other, and the habits of backing each other up are established. Paul said *'... when you face danger and challenges with other people, you develop a relationship…'*. The second, is the attendance at traumatic and unique incidents that most members of the community never confront. This creates a common experience amongst team members that is

often not even replicated with individual spouses, family and friends. Donald explained *'… and you do share those…terrible times that you have at your workplace… the tragic moments and I suppose you lean on each other and…it's a support network as well.'* The third is present across all services but unique to each and is the 'us and them' divide. That is, the police have a common conflict with members of the community that creates an 'us and them' mentality. Members of the public become a source of potential confrontation and police band together to, one, enforce the law, and two, protect each other from any conflict that arises from enforcing the law. Kyle shared *'…it's got to be a team effort, you just can't know enough and you can't do enough on your own.'* For the military, it is most commonly associated with deployment, where they are together 24/7 for extended periods of time which results in them relying on each other not just in times of conflict and confrontation, but in daily happenings that would normally be shared with family and friends. Tom explained

> *when you do sort of on a ship when you're miles from anywhere, we do what we call damage control exercises where we simulate fire, floods and things like that and you have to be able to work as a team…*

For the emergency services, it is the time spent with each other, both before and after incidents, that is less about conflict and confrontation as seen with police and military, and more about trauma. The exposure to events that can rarely be shared with non-serving family and friends. Paul and Donald explained they share these incidents with comrades more than family.

Given that all participants expressed similar experiences around being part of team, further direct and indirect questioning was conducted around this theme. This was done with a focus on understanding the way in which the participants narrated the relationship between teamwork and camaraderie. Camaraderie is strong in service because it must be. The masculine characteristics are reinforced in these service organisations using team drills that place individuals in competition against each other with a view to ultimately uniting them within the group for the collective goal. This is the point at which the 'us and them' mentality is further developed and the individuals start to associate themselves as part of this group to the exclusion of others not in the group. Those others, over the long term, become the civilians. Foucault's (1977) work argues that group mentality is

one of the key components of the detachment of the individual from the actual nature of the activities and from non-members of the group (Godfrey et al., 2012). This is essential in organisations that train individuals in tasks which include lethal force and for situations that engage them in life threatening activities, and it is a point at which the individual forms an identity connection with the service role.

This institutionalisation is what creates the environment in which the individual is no longer being but is now doing (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011). The participant narration in this study supports the suggestion that the rituals of the activities in the institutional environment are transformational in nature (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011), and the technical skills are the act with which the individual identifies, and with repeated immersion in these behaviours, the identity with the act is reinforced. The individuals then start thinking as a group and no longer as individuals. It is the social cohesion of these groups that creates commitment to the collective goals (King, 2006), and the repetitive training stops any individual from deviating from the goal.

4.8 Teamwork in the masculine space

Examining this level of camaraderie inside a hegemonic masculine space offers further explanation as to its impact. When considering Godfrey et al.'s (2012) work on the military body, combined with Higate's (2001) work on identity forming in the masculine space, and Woodward and Jenkings (2011) and King's (2006) work on the masculine characteristics of the activities that are performed and repeated inside the service roles, it becomes easier to understand why the loss of camaraderie has such an impact on the individuals. The membership to this group and collective goal is dependent upon the skills of the individual and the way in which they are acknowledged in the masculine space. The narration of the participants indicates that becoming a member of this group was a recognition of their skills in the activities and their ability to belong. The desire to stay in that group then motivates repeated behaviours that demonstrate these masculine characteristics and validate their continued membership. Movement into specialist groups reinforces the collective goal and masculine characteristics further, and achieving higher ranks is an external recognition of the

individuals who are exceeding the requirements and deemed better in the group then even their direct counterparts. This means that, for these participants, the constant reinforcement through activities combined with group collective goals and a rank hierarchy, fosters an identity connection that replaces their pre-service identity. The literature addresses this issue for the military, acknowledging the group thinking within the masculine space that is targeted on collective goals. This study, however, has seen similar thinking and practices in all three service groups, not just the military. There are shared practices in the training of new service members that have a focus on the collective goal and instil this thinking within the masculine space. So, whilst the literature would indicate that this is a military-based practice only, it is seen in police and emergency services too.

This group training is in line with organisational identity work that is designed to align employees with the needs of the organisation and ensure longevity of the employees' working lives (Godfrey et al., 2012). For example, a higher level of engagement of fire fighters with their workplace resulted in higher performance levels (Rich et al., 2010). In this context, how these participants feel connected to the organisation and committed to the collective goals of the organisation influences the roles played by individuals (Ashforth et al., 2008; Ashforth et al., 2016). They confirm that immersion into the organisation is powerful and that individuals rarely have the opportunity to stop and realise that they 'have become what they are doing' (Ashforth et al., 2008).

4.9 Job content

Once this change occurs, the reasons for staying in service, and for struggling when post-service, become more about the job content and less about the reasons for entering service. If the choice to enter a service organisation for these participants is framed within the factor of job satisfaction, and related to job opportunity, and motivated by a desire to help the community; then job opportunity offers the entry pathway, and job security and helping the community are two factors that should remain as motivations to do the job. If fulfilled actively, they will contribute to an individual's positive attitude towards their job. However, within this group of participants, across all services, these factors morphed into something more. Job security was a certainty so long as they did not do anything that

breached the rules of their employment and remained physically fit and able to undertake their job roles. So that left the helping the community which was achieved in numerous ways so long as they performed their job roles. However, it is not just these factors that engaged the participants with their roles in the service organisation. In investigating this, job content as a determinant of job satisfaction is most relevant here (Warr et al., 1999).

When asked about their favourite parts of their service, Walter recalls '*lots of favourite times, I don't know if I have an absolute favourite time or one, probably for me I suppose the one I sort of talk about most is the Canberra fires*' which many may see as a tragic time, but for Walter it was the pinnacle of team work and camaraderie, as well as the ultimate use of his skills as an emergency service responder. For Alastair it was a multi-state heavy vehicle interception operation and the autonomy; for Vanessa it was working as the only responder at a small and single-staffed station; for Natalie it was a debate between spending time in a car with a partner at three in the morning on patrol or being on a ferry to help the ferry master if any issues arose with the passengers. For Jasper it was driving heavy vehicles, whilst for Michael it was deployment to Sierra Leone. For Warwick it was the travel. The stories exemplify the variety within each role in each service, but the majority of responses had a central focus on the people they were with and the challenging tasks they completed.

The participants, across all three service groups, described the variety of their job as one of their favourite parts. No longer did they explain their love of their job in terms of generic references to 'helping the community', but instead they could identify specific events that not only fulfilled their job requirements but also provided high levels of personal satisfaction and achievement within that role. The evolution from job security as a determinant of job satisfaction (Clark, 2005) to job content (Warr et al., 1999) is not unusual, given that the individuals have full exposure to the job once they are actively employed and have completed basic training. This full knowledge is not possible from outside the job, but a desire for variety could have been a factor for entry. This did not present for this group. As such, the love of the job content developed once they were in the role. It is significant that all participants verbalised their love of

the job with none expressing poor job satisfaction when narrating their time in the role/s.

The development and expansion of the factors that contribute to job satisfaction during service are important for this group, as they demonstrate the change and growth of the individuals from entry throughout their service. They are significant factors in their timeline of service that contribute to a better understanding of transition issues post-service. The participants wanted to go into the job for a variety of reasons, and once in the job those reasons expanded and motivations to stay increased. They reached for new personal goals and, for most participants, they achieved outcomes that were beyond anything they had imagined when they first enlisted or joined. At this point in their story telling, there is no indication why the participants would leave this employment. A return to the first factors that motivated them to enlist or join indicate that neither job security nor helping the community have changed. Therefore, it is logical that a reason they may leave this employment is because another job opportunity presented that in some way offered levels of job satisfaction that were not being met in the service role. This is the case for only a small number of participants (*n*=3).

It is here that the narrative arc of the participants begins to become apparent. The narration around this questioning was extensive. These individuals have an endless supply of what they call ‘war stories’ (Ethan) and their favourite moments are linked to actual ‘jobs’ or incidents as well as roles and teammates. However, they are already identifying with the organisation and their role at this point. Further questioning revealed that this is linked to their initial training but reinforced by the daily activities of their service role.

4.10 Conclusion

The participants demonstrate an identity-based connection to their former service employment in three main ways:

1. Defining themselves through the skills and knowledge that are a result of their service role.
2. Being part of a group with a collective goal.

3. Their identity formation is contextualised inside the values existing in a masculine space.

The exploration of their family connections to former service members and their reasons for service revealed that the identity connection to the service role begins during training and is reinforced when undertaking the activities associated with the roles. The reinforcement of a collective goal within a team environment also contributes to identity connection. In these particular service organisations, the hegemonic masculine nature of the environment, in which both training and service activities are framed, provides a strong influence for the development of an identity connection. The military participants describe their experiences as being broken down and then rebuilt into a soldier, and the police and emergency services participants echo this sentiment in the context of their own service roles. This has significant implications for their sense of self or identity when they leave the service and can lead to feelings of loss, disorientation and confusion that will be explored further in Chapter 5. They have established skills specific to their role and adopted the organisational goals as their own. This is the source of their identity connection to the former service role.

Chapter 5 Separation and Transition

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the point in the individual participant timeline that they separate and transition from the service organisation. Following the narratives of the individuals in Chapter 4 that focused on the identity-based connection participants have with their former service employment, this chapter now examines their experiences of separation from service. The chapter includes a focused analysis of why each individual is no longer with their service organisation and what prompted or motivated them to leave. The participants openly share their reasons for leaving and how they feel about no longer being in the service employment and these narratives begin the exploration of the transition process or period, including the time and processes related to their leaving. It also includes any compensation periods.

Addressing their reasons for separation, their transition experience and their overall health and wellbeing, this chapter describes how the individual participants discuss the organisation's role in their separation and how the transition experience affected their lives. This point in the timeline also warrants an examination of the emotional and psychological factors that influence the transition experience, because it is here, at the peak of the narrative arc, that the participants presented as most vulnerable.

When directly asked what their time in service meant to them, all participants responded favourably. Paul stated, '*it was probably the best time of my life*', and this was a sentiment shared by many of the participants. Words and phrases such as 'fantastic' (Barry), 'loved it' (Skye), 'sense of worth' (Walter), 'power' (Kyle), 'always rewarding' (Donald), and 'meant a lot' (Abigail) are amongst their answers in response to this questioning. The participants were passionate and emotional in their responses, and even those who chose to leave their service organisation because they felt it no longer offered them what they needed, spoke fondly about their time in the job. Conrad's description of '*it was my everything'* summarises the feelings within the group. There was no participant who stated they did not like their job in the service organisation nor was there any participant who stated their service period meant little or nothing to them. This was consistent for participants across all three service groups. However, even though the

participants verbalised a love for their job, they still left, and not at the scheduled retirement time. Understanding why they left their service role is critical to answering the following research questions:

- What is the nature of the identity-based connection between uniformed professionals and their work?
- How does this identity-based connection influence individuals in their pursuit of work opportunities?

Therefore, the question was asked 'why did you leave?'

5.2 Separating from service

The participants were able to articulate their reasons for leaving through direct questioning, although clarifying information was obtained in the answers to other questions. Each participant, across all three services, identified the catalyst for the end point of their service career and the motivation and/or reason for leaving. The reasons given by the participants for leaving the service employment included medical reasons (both physical and psychological injury), seeking a sea change, spousal pressure or family reasons, losing passion for the role or burnout, work/life balance, and organisational issues including frustration with management. For some participants, it was a combination of these six main reasons.

Of the total 32 participants, 25 separated from their service organisation for medical reasons, resulting from either physical and/or mental health injuries. Some participants suffered physical injuries, which prevented them from continuing in their job roles. Vanessa suffered a shoulder injury that resulted in medical discharge, stating that the workplace insurer '…*accepted it yeah*'. The distinction between resignation for medical reasons and medical discharge must be made, however, for the participants, both result in the same outcome and therefore are not viewed differently as Kim explained:

> *I had a, well had a back injury that the AFP was not supportive. It was, the work-related injury. And I just didn't feel that they were supportive, and I just got put in a desk job, and no one would really tell me what the future held, or did me any sort of plans of how to progress, and I just got frustrated and I ended up resigning. I just had enough.*

Moving Forward

Diagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or other related mental health issues such as anxiety or depression were the primary reasons for mental health injury related medical discharge. For example, Natalie stated: '*I was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder back in February 2016. So I started making attempts to get out, because I was scared of what I would do if I had stayed'*. Some participants explained they had not been diagnosed with mental health issues but became aware of their own coping abilities (or lack thereof) and this prompted their decision to leave. Conrad explained '*I went to a psychologist and he said [Conrad] I think you've reached your expiry date as a police officer'* while Donald reflected

> *I was becoming quite expectant that I was just going to be cutting people out of cars and dealing with the reality of the tragedy. And I was starting to feel a bit burnt out from that. I mean yeah so that was definitely, I didn't mention that earlier but that was definitely a major reason why I was leaving.*

In total, 22 participants identified this sort of mental wellbeing issue as a reason for leaving service. Although not necessarily formally diagnosed with a mental health illness, these participants still felt the burden of the psychological and emotional strain and consider themselves to have left because of mental health issues. This has a significant impact on their post-service wellbeing, their access to treatment options, and their post-service employment satisfaction.

For some participants, it was not mental health issues (or not just mental health issues) that prompted them to resign. Seeking a complete change in lifestyle was one reason, and doing this whilst employable enough to move on was a consideration. Henry explained that he had almost reached the end of the rank structure, and unless he wanted to swap over to officer ranking and start again at the bottom of the next rank structure, it was time to leave. Succinct in his explanation, '*I hit 30 and I thought I'm either going to be here till I die or I need to get out and be, do something to be employable still, that was my mentality…'.* With a different mindset, Matthew confirmed that he '*loved his job*' but wanted to get out of the State he was living and working in for a complete '*sea change*' and police do not allow any interstate transfers. Barry also had a complete sea change, when he '*went and managed an over 55 lifestyle village*' in another State.

However, the reason for Barry leaving was not the sea change, but the need to support a friend. He explained:

> *it came to a head where she [a friend] was actually sat in the carpark one day before her shift crying her eyes saying I can't do this anymore. So, the long and short of it is I was sort of getting to the point where I'd had enough anyway. So, we both agreed that we would do a complete different change*.

The sea change was the result.

For Paul, it was spousal pressure that forced the decision to leave the police and he explained '*Yeah it was, my former wife didn't want me to stay in the police force so I left. So that was the telling feature because she said I'll take the children and leave you*'. This is not an expected result given the lack of family influence to join the service. That is, although family connection to service played little to no role in the motivation to join or enlist, family members could and did influence the decision to stay or leave the service organisation. Jasper experienced similar influence, explaining

> *you sign up for three years at a time and then you get the option to sign up again. But at the time I'd met my first wife who wasn't very military orientated and it would have caused trouble through there. So sort of sacrificing one for another really*,

and Warwick stated '*I'd just reacquainted with my previous fiancée that I had before who said she didn't want to marry a sailor*'. Warwick also referred to becoming 'disillusioned' with the job, so the spousal pressure was more a contributing factor than a deciding factor for him. Warwick also disclosed '*I got out so I could get married and strangely enough six years later I joined back up again'*, reporting that he left the second time '*because my father was extremely ill'*. Similar reasoning was provided by Donald who had to work a second job more consistently because '*my wife had breast cancer so she wasn't able to work as much as what she was'* but he also explained that he was '*getting quite fatigued of constantly going to you know major accidents, like a car accident*'.

It became a common theme amongst the participants across all three service groups that whilst one factor might be the context for the decision to leave, there were other contributing factors that were just as significant. Most often, some form of emotional or psychological affect was identified.

Skye explains that family issues influenced her decision, but the factors appear threefold, when she stated:

> *Yes, my dad passed away. He passed away in 2009 and it, I was going through a lot of grief and I just, one, I wasn't functioning properly and two, I was so pulled in the maternal way that I just could not dedicate… I was a submariner so I was an elite force where you constantly go to sea so I couldn't dedicate 100% of my time and efforts so I didn't want to do a half arsed job, so I thought it would be best if I found a new career path… So it was a big decision maker, I had to make a decision whether I was going to parent or I was going to have a career and parent or you know.*

Not only was the functioning at work difficult, but the loss of a family member together with the demands of being a parent, made the service employment more difficult. For Julie the family issue was quite unique, but again a direct result of the psychological harm suffered in the service. She explained:

> *…I was obviously, you look back over time and you see that you're getting your PTSD and you're wearing out but the, the last year before I got out, I ended up actually my last shift was the [date removed] and everyone gets their nightmares and that's part and parcel of it all but I had my new, oh well he wasn't my husband then, my new boyfriend so I woke up one morning and looked at his arm and saw bruising on his arm. And I went I said oh what's that and he said oh you grabbed me last night. And I recognised the same finger mark bruising that I'd had on my own arms and I sort of just hadn't paid attention to. So then I went this isn't good, you're not only having the nightmares, but you're actually acting it out in your sleep… So yeah tidied up that week and went off completely sick then. And so it was from the August and I was discharged completely in the March.*

Some participants were quick to act when family or friends were affected by their service role. Whilst literature suggests that family and friends can influence whether an individual stays or leaves employment this is based in seeking approval or avoiding disapproval from family for employment decisions (Maley & Hawkins, 2017). However, this was not as straightforward for the participants. The family element of their decision was not dependent on family approval or disapproval but rather occurred because the family members needed them to make the decision to leave. This is often grounded in family or spousal concerns for the service member's own welfare, or for the sake of family cohesion.

Other participants were not as quick to act to save relationships that were impacted by their job. There was a definite negative impact on relationships for most of the participants across all three service groups. The common cause was not being home very much, which occurred frequently in the emergency services due to the need to work multiple jobs or, for the paramedics, long shift work hours. For the police, it was shift work, operations and training that kept them from home, and for the military it was deployments and training that kept them from home, as well as the postings that put stress on relationships. There was a pattern of broken marriages, with many participants on their second or third marriages; but there were also a number of participants who were still in the same relationship they had when they joined the service and were still together and fine. This was indiscriminate for both male and female participants.

Several of the participants decided to leave because they had '*just lost the passion for [the job]'* as described by Kyle. He elaborated, stating '*I thought, you know, I'm probably being more a burden to me workmates than anything else. I just lost my, lost the zeal you know'*. For the participants with this catalyst for leaving they cannot specifically identify the reason why they lost their passion for the job, but it appears to be related to the emotional and psychological pressure of the roles. The difference for Kyle is that he was close enough to retirement age, in his pension scheme, that he could leave and then have the opportunity to '*go and get another job so I'm getting two incomes'.*

The final reason for leaving reported by participants was organisational issues. Conrad described 'frustration' as a contributing factor to his leaving the police and Warwick described being '*disillusioned at the time, I just didn't seem to be going anywhere'.* Harry echoed this sentiment, stating

> *look, at the time, which was just prior to all the different deployments and conflict, at that time I wasn't going anywhere, the unit wasn't going to go anywhere and I was basically sick of doing pointless busy work, sweeping carparks and that other sort of bulldust that they get you to do.*

And Walter stated that he did not '*miss the politics of the job*'.

The six main reasons for leaving as reported by each of the participants were not unique to any one of the three service groups, nor were

they gender specific, with both male and female participants sharing similar reasons. Identifying the reasons why each individual participant left the service employment surfaced a deeper understanding of factors that may contribute to their job satisfaction in post-service employment. In particular, the factors that contributed to the moment that they decided they were no longer satisfied in the service employment, and acted upon that lack of satisfaction, are key to being able to pinpoint the presence, or lack thereof, of the same or similar factors in their post-service employment. Unfortunately, the emotional and mental health issues continue to be a resounding factor for most participants. These are factors they report carrying with them to their new employment.

5.2.1 Non-voluntary separation

Most participants reported that their separation from the service role was for reasons beyond their control, including health related issues. When separation is not wholly voluntary, two issues emerge. The first concerns how non-voluntary separation affects individuals when the job was their chosen long-term career. The second is understanding how this affects job satisfaction in future roles.

Many participants suffered medical issues that resulted either in a mandatory medical discharge or forced resignation for medical reasons. In neither instance do the participants consider it to be a voluntary separation from their employment. Similarly, those participants who were influenced to resign because of family issues, or organisational pressures, do not consider their resignation to be voluntary. Whilst they are realistic about the impact of the job on their health and understand that their choices were limited, the participants found themselves separated from a job they loved. The resounding issue here is the fact that the participants felt it was not truly their choice to leave. Instead external factors, including mental health considerations, weighed so heavily that they had no alternative. The participants were questioned about their claim for compensation when suffering work-related injury, and many participants advised they did not pursue recompense for their medical condition because, as Alastair explained '*I just didn't have the energy to fight*'. Vanessa was the single participant successful in her compensation claim for physical injury. However, the loss of income from no longer being fully operational, even

when compensated, was substantial and she confirmed '*I sold my house'* to cope with the financial loss. Vanessa was financially affected by the decision to leave, and stated that, by being compensated, she was now answerable to the ambulance service until age 61. That is, she has to report at set intervals on her medical condition, is limited in employment opportunities she is allowed to pursue, and has to reveal any business undertakings. No participants viewed post-service compensation as a positive thing, although they did not discount the fact that they thought they were entitled to some sort of compensation.

That the choice to leave the service position was not always understood as a choice by the participants per se is a crucial finding as it highlights the complicated nature of their separation. Many participants reported that they would still be in the service role if their circumstances had been different. This cannot be ignored as it potentially shapes their perspective on post-service employment. However, whilst possibly influential it is also part of their total transition experience and needs to be seen as an element of the whole experience. This is particularly so, because regardless of their desire to stay in the service role, many participants could not have continued, especially with mental health issues at play. This creates a dilemma for the participants because they know that they had no choice but to leave, yet had things been different they would have stayed. Some reported that they would even return given the opportunity, even though they know it would adversely affect their health. All these factors play a part in post-service job satisfaction for the participants. The connection to the service role is more apparent when the individual considers their separation not to have been completely voluntary and within their control. Job satisfaction can rely upon comparisons between previous and current employment experiences (Lévy-Garboua & Montmarquette, 2004) and the circumstances of separation further affect this comparison. When the comparison between past and present roles is not positive, post-service employment becomes problematic.

This finding starts to describe the way in which these individuals both define and perceive job satisfaction. If the preferred experience of the participants remains with their service role (Lévy-Garboua & Montmarquette, 2004), then they establish an ongoing connection to their

former employment that is problematic for their post-service employment. This connection is based in their training within the hegemonic masculine environment that focuses them on the strengths of the collective goal and being an operational member of a team, as discussed in Chapter 4 (King, 2006). Post-service employment that lacks this environment fails to meet their conscious or perhaps unconscious preference for the employment environment. This means that their job satisfaction is affected, and they remain unwilling and less motivated to disconnect from their former service role. The important learning here is that job satisfaction for the participants in the post-service environment is less about their new job and more about their ongoing connection to the service organisation. The participants show no reflective awareness of this situation.

Contributing to their seemingly unconscious and strong connection to their former service is their reasons for leaving. The challenge faced by employees in these organisations when separating is that most enlist or join with the intention to stay in the job for the long term. This is particularly the case for the older participants in this study. Therefore, the decision to leave long before retirement comes as a shock. With the less than voluntary nature of the separation, the individuals are left disillusioned and confused as to what their future looks like. This is one of the major contributing factors in the transition difficulties and is the same for the participants from all three service groups, with no discernible differences between the men and women.

5.3 Regretting leaving

A key finding of this study is that a feeling of regret to be leaving the service role both contributes to poor job satisfaction in the post-service environment as well as maintaining the connection to the service role. This is connected to Lévy-Garboua and Montmarquette's (2004) work on cumulative employment experiences over time that inform decisions about whether roles would be chosen again, and the way in which individuals can rank their job experiences from most to least favourable. Amongst the participants there are some simple regrets, such as leaving the money or leaving colleagues who were friends. But there are also some much deeper levels of regret. Knowing the reasons for leaving and, with an understanding

that the participants did not always view it as voluntary, direct questioning was conducted as to how each participant regarded leaving the service role, and whether they would go back if they were given the opportunity. Skye stated the following when asked directly if she regretted leaving, '*absolutely, breaks my heart still because you just don't find the… you just don't, I'm kind of institutionalised, you just don't find the same workplace outside of Navy*'. Natalie answered the same question with '*yep, almost every day'* which was similar to Warwick's response of:

> *but would I regret it, in a way yes I regret it every day. I miss the certainty of the day to day activities. I miss the pay packet. I've never been able to sort of replicate the pay and advantages that we had while we were out there. I mean you've got guys up at the mines at the moment they're earning $130,000, $140,000 a month, a year sorry, but life away from home up there is not the same as what we had as life away from home on a ship.*

Generally, the participants provided responses that rationalised their decision. They knew that they made the decision for a reason, whatever that may be, and were able to apply that logic to any feelings of regret. It was harder for those whose reason for leaving had changed. For example, Warwick had left the service because his wife wanted him to, and then he separated from his wife. Matthew left the State and therefore left the service, but did not stay out of state and ended up back in the service location. However, most were accepting of the situation. Their tone and emotion in their voice when discussing this part of their lives was not always positive, sounding more like they were accepting of their situation rather than happy with it. It is important, however, to acknowledge those participants who left because of medical issues who were able to express that they cannot regret leaving because their health demanded it. Even Natalie, who was forthright in her regret, also stated '*I know, I know deep down that I have made the right decision for me to leave, I know that I could never go back'.* This is an unfortunate situation for most participants and is expected to be a contributing factor to their lack of satisfaction in their post-service employment.

There were several participants who directly answered that they had no regret leaving. In reviewing their responses, the combination of their individual reasons for leaving, and their reported job satisfaction in post-service employment, appear to provide reasons for regret; but they verbally

discount any regret. This is a positive outcome and potentially bodes well for future employment satisfaction if one hurdle, that is them regretting leaving, is not present. For other participants, it was not a matter of regretting leaving, but they openly expressed how much they missed the job. They did, however, acknowledge that this is possibly because they remember the good times and forget the bad times. Some participants admitted that their spouses often reminded them of the bad times when they were having moments of potential regret. Others still, did have regret and acted upon that regret, by returning to service. After leaving for a second time, they were better able to put that regret aside.

Across the three service groups, former emergency service participants spoke most fondly of their time in service and regretted most the loss of camaraderie. The former military participants expressed both ends of the spectrum. They either truly regretted leaving or had no regrets at all and would not hesitate to make the same decision again. The reasons behind the differences in this for the military participants, based on their reporting, were primarily to do with rank and postings and individual experiences within the service. Finally, the former police participants expressed general levels of regret but always combined with an acceptance that the decision could not have been anything different. This was most often tied to the medical issues that prompted their leaving. There was no identifiable distinction between the genders with regret of leaving.

Understanding participants' regrets was a significant part of understanding their position on their former service job. For example, where the participants may have answered the question 'did they regret leaving?' with a resounding no, some were still able to say yes to the possibility of going back. This seemed to be a contradiction. However, what soon became clear is that the participants could willingly say that they would go back in if the opportunity presented, because they were confident that an opportunity would never present. This was not directly identified by individual participants, but an analysis of their overall responses revealed this finding. For example, those on medical discharge with diagnosed PTSD are not employable by these service organisations. Therefore, the question is hypothetical, and this may have affected the data in this area. Alastair explained it best when asked would he want to go back, stating '*Um I do*

but, I do, it would be impossible' and acknowledging that '*everyone advised me against, the medical people, everyone would think I'm crazy*'. Jasper described his thinking as '*I like to say that but every morning I keep finding yes I am injured'*, which is similar to Barry who explained '*Would I go back in now? I think my brain says yes but my body says no*'. Although a number of participants could actively identify why they could not, or would not go back, Warwick was one of the most convincing, saying '*I made a conscious decision that I wouldn't want to go back'*.

5.4 Staying in service

On this matter, indirect questioning addressed whether each of the individual participants would still be in service if the specific event that preceded their leaving had not occurred. This is of particular relevance for those participants who left for medical reasons, because if they had not been diagnosed with PTSD, or did not suffer the symptoms of this kind of mental health issue, or had not been physically injured, whether they would still be in the job may be a significant factor in their future job satisfaction. When asked, Charles disclosed '*Yeah definitely. Probably be on my fifth tour of Afghanistan. Having just got back from it*' and Paul enthusiastically responded '*Oh no I would have stayed, I think… I wouldn't have left for that, I would not have left. I can't say I wouldn't have left ever'*. Julie also shared these sentiments, stating '*I probably would have, I would have probably kept it going further and more, yeah I probably would have went along but obviously, you've got no choice in the matter'*, together with Walter who said '*probably not, probably I would have stayed*'. Kim was more reflective in her response stating:

> *I think I probably would have liked to think that I wouldn't be, but I probably would be... It's pretty scary getting out, and I think that's why a lot of people do stay, because I had thought of getting out, and I hadn't, so yeah it's hard to say. Those thoughts had crossed my mind, but, but I don't know if I would've taken that final step.*

Warwick and Neil would also still be in, with a resounding '*absolutely'* and '*definitely, most definitely'*, respectively.

It is important to capture their sentiments in this matter. It influences the way in which the data is understood in terms of their voluntary separation from their service job, which in turn helps in continuing to build

an understanding of the pre-existing factors influencing their post-service job satisfaction. It can be summarised as follows. Individuals from each of the services have some common and some unique reasons for leaving the service job. In addition, some of the individuals across all services, and from both genders, regret leaving, whilst most can rationalise the decision. And, finally, more individuals than expected, across all services and both genders, would possibly still be in their service position if the choice was available.

5.5 The transition experience

Once it was established that many participants did not consider their separation from the service organisation to be voluntary, it became important to capture the experience of these individuals during the separation period. Unlike other employment, the process of separation is referred to as transition. This is a formally used term for the military (ADF, 2019) and an informal but applied term for the police and emergency services (Blue Hope, 2019). The term transition is accepted by this group as the process of separating from their service employment and seeking a new job. Therefore, it refers to pre-separation, separation and post-separation processes and timeframes. For the military members of the Australian Defence Force, it usually commences one year prior to separation, involves undertaking a transition seminar (including resume preparation and job readiness support) and, for some, accessing financial resources (correlated to rank and years of service) to assist with resettlement. For the police and emergency services there is no formal transition process, simply a resignation from the employment. For all three service groups there are mechanisms for compensation when workplace injury, physical or mental, is involved in the separation but this can be a long process and take years to resolve. When members of this group refer to transition, they are also often referring to the organisational response to their leaving. That is, they include reference to their experiences with the employer during the transition period. This seems to influence their overall transition experience. Generally, the descriptions of transition experiences are negative. Direct questioning was used to ask the participants about their transition experience.

Moving Forward

In normal employment, should an employee choose to leave, they issue a resignation with the requisite amount of notice, are provided with their payout benefits, such as outstanding leave, and terminate their employment. This is a similar process whether the employee or employer issues the termination. In some circumstances redundancies are payable. Few other employment sectors use the term transition when someone resigns and seeks new employment. So why is the term transition used so heavily for these service groups? None of the participants could verbalise nor explain why the transition process was in place for their organisation, nor could they explain why the term transition was used for their separation when it is not used for other employment sectors. They did, however, relate to the term and agreed that their separation process was a transition (Schlossberg, 2011) and that it was different to any other jobs they had held. Few could explain why this was the case.

One of the negative aspects of having a transition process is that it places unrealistic expectations on the employer to support the employee once they resign. This is not a normal requirement in the labour market. Skye declared *'...the Navy just don't set you up for when you leave*', while Paul explained

> *I think the transition, and I can only imagine, the transition for people who have recently done active service in a war zone has a very, very, very different set of issues to anything I would raise or anybody who'd done you know 20 years police work would say. I think it also depends on the circumstances in which they leave the police force. I think people leave because they can't [stay], it's too traumatic for them. And I had the most, to me the most respect I had was not for the smartest guy I met, it was for the people who suffered the most doing the job.*

Paul also stated, '*From the organisation that they gave everything to at a cost that they can never be repaid for, I mean that's a terrible thing to have to try and manage your way through*'. Many participants referenced this point, that the organisation owes them more on transition than what is currently offered. This mentality is well established throughout the data, yet there is little conscious awareness amongst any of the participants as to why this may be.

The participants generally considered a level of responsibility lay with the organisation to help them transition successfully out of the service

employment and into other work. They did not specifically hold the organisation responsible for obtaining a new job for them but stressed the fact that they were not ready to face the world outside the service organisation and needed better support to make this change with less stress. The reasons why the participants tend to hold the organisation responsible for their transition issues are twofold. Firstly, many of them have work-related injuries, physical or psychological, that require attention by the organisation during separation. Secondly, the individual connection to the service organisation is encouraged through training and skill development in a hegemonic masculine environment consolidating an identity that is hard to discard post-service. The participants explained that both these responsibilities were poorly met by their service organisations. Charles explained

> *…they just cut you loose into the wind as soon as your career is over. Oh they'll say you know we've got to transition assistance scheme, it's utter bullshit. It's grossly inadequate at best, you know it's a few thousand dollars here or there. Honestly it was absolutely worthless to me.*

Walter reported *'the transition period was quite straightforward, pretty, pretty good. You know you get exit interviews and all the rest of the stuff',* but Raymond explained '*once I had discharged I got, I got the real feeling that I was sort of by myself'.* Skye explained that it was the lack of translation of her skills from military to civilian that made the transition difficult. She stated

> *But the Navy just don't set you up for when you leave, they say that, you know they give you these counselling interviews at the end of you know when you put your discharge in saying oh look these are all the things out here, these are the resume places to go, but they don't actually give you the pieces of paper to say well done, now you can have that and you can go and apply for something because you are qualified, because you're not.*

Although Walter's transition was smooth, he had similar issues with the translation of skills, explaining

> *The thing I struggled with probably the most was when you know the qualifications like you know can you please show us this, can you*

> *show us that and you're like well I've got this, I've got that, yes but you know do you have a certificate, I struggled. And probably the bit that I hated the most trying to get that sort of understood.*

Lucy noted that

> *when I, when I did put my discharge in and was going through all that process, it did feel very lonely. Like I didn't feel like I had a lot of support and in actual fact, I felt like I got more from [outside support organisation] than I did from the organisation that I had given 10 years to.*

Many participants believed their time in service was a sacrifice that required some sort of recompense or recognition from their service organisation. The work of Higate (2001) is influential in this area and his suggestion that masculinity, identity work and continuity impact on the transition process for the US military is supported in this current study. Schmaltz's (2011) suggestion that change management practices would benefit those transitioning from the military with injury and Gill's (2002) suggestion that service members in general would benefit from being adept to change are also both supported by this current study. However, the literature on transition processes for the US and UK military does not address organisational responsibility (Ahern et al., 2015; Brunger et al., 2013; Higate, 2001). This is touched upon in the studies of hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), but in the context of transition, the move from the service organisation remains the responsibility of the individual as it does in other forms of employment. The fact that the participants in this current study place the responsibility on the organisation is an indication of their lack of understanding of what is contributing to their transition issues and confusion over who should be responsible for fixing these problems. Charles states

> *for a start, transition is a misnomer, it's not a transition, you just drop off a cliff. You know once you're out of the military, you are gone. Yep it's a yawning chasm that you just fall into. And then it took me quite a while to find a job, mostly because of injury…*

However, Warwick demonstrated an understanding of the realities of employment transition, stating '*no workplace trains you for a career in another place'*. He suggested that the issues could be avoided if the service organisation explained the potential problems on separation at initial commencement. He explained

> *…we need to start, we need to transition our people to civilian life when they first move in and make them know straight away that if you want to have civilian qualifications then you're going to have to supplement your workplace training with outside training,*

but also reminded all service employees that

> *…what we have to remember…is that the military is training you for them to employ you, not for the civilian world to get someone that's been trained for nothing.*

Warwick was the only participant who had a realistic understanding of the organisation's role in the separation of its employees. The ADF offers transition seminars that are designed to link its separating members with services that will help them transition to the civilian world. This includes support for medical issues, resume preparation, and some advice around pursuing employment. The military participants view this transition process as inadequate at best. As recently as July 2019, the ADF through the Department of Veteran Affairs, now offers more comprehensive medical treatment for separated members to resolve ongoing health issues for its former personnel. The participants from police and emergency services describe no transition support when exiting their organisations. As is normal labour market practice, their resignations or medical terminations are processed, and they leave following the normal notice period.

For some long-term officers, in both of these service groups, there is sometimes a celebration of their service and the issue of a plaque reflecting their time in the organisation, but no participant in this study experienced this on exit. The unique factor here is that the participants have high expectations of the organisation's performance when they leave which is unrealistic in any labour market. As Warwick acknowledged, any workplace organisation is only responsible for training and preparing their employees for the job they are employed to do, they have no existing responsibility to train and prepare them for external jobs. However, there are several factors that complicate the process for former members of police, military and emergency services; all of which arise from the nature of the training in the hegemonic masculine environment (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) and their focus on the collective goal (King, 2006). These factors are then further complicated by the presence of physical and mental health injuries and the involuntary nature of the participants' exits from service.

For these participants, the inability to effectively communicate their skills and explain the way in which they can contribute to a civilian organisation presents a significant challenge. There is no single solution, given that the employment sector is wide and many different opportunities exist. However, there are means by which they can have their skills translated into qualifications recognised in the non-police, military and emergency services workplaces. By translating skills, the individuals from the service organisations are better prepared for recruitment processes outside the service organisation and are better prepared to compete with non-service personnel.

A second negative outcome is that these individuals consider their separation from employment to be a unique process. Participants described viewing themselves as somehow distinct from the rest of society. They verbalise themselves as separating from the service organisation and delving into the civilian world, as if the world they have been living and working in was not that of civilians. The fact that the resignation process is viewed as different to the process in other forms of employment, creates a stronger illusion amongst the individuals that their experience of leaving one job to go to another is different from mainstream employment practices.

5.6 The civilian world

The use of the term ‘civilian world’ by participants denotes the distinct line they draw between themselves and the rest of the community who have not served with police, military or emergency services. When questioning the participants as to why there is this distinction, few could articulate specific reasons other than it was their reality. There are practices in place within the services that literally distinguish the members from those not in service. Lucy explained that as a member of the military she did not have a Medicare card, and all her medical care was through the military at no cost to her. Once out of the military, she then needed help from family to understand how to pursue healthcare. This was just one example of how these service employees are distinct from other people in the community. The divide for the former police participants seemed to be because their role of law enforcement over the community they resided in created that distinction between them and the members of the public that they were

policing. For emergency services, the distinction between them and the civilian world was not as apparent. Instead, any reference to the civilian world was made when describing how the skills they had acquired whilst in emergency services needed to be translated to civilian qualifications before they could seek employment in private organisations. This was even the case when they were moving into other fire or emergency response related roles. Sebastian explained

> *And even to this day, I've got a mate of mine who is ten years in Melbourne, so he was a leading firey in Melbourne, then he was 15 years as a senior in WA and he still does not have Certificate III in Firefighting. And he's going through that now trying to get his Certificate III because he's going to, he wants to come and work with me here. But he's got to have the Cert III.*

The participants were quite vocal in this area and most were able to provide direct examples of where they needed to make changes in order to adapt to what they consider to be the 'civilian world'.

For the purposes of this study, the civilian world is defined as the world outside of the police, military and emergency services. Civilians are those individuals in society who have never served with the police, military or emergency services in Australia or elsewhere; and civilian skills are exclusive in their nature so that they do not include any of the skills acquired by members of the police, military or emergency services. Jasper confirmed that they become institutionalised in the service organisation even though '*they could still be say living among civilians and still have civilian friends'*.

Therefore, it is significant that any skills acquired inside the police, military and emergency services are considered, by the participants, to be unique to those organisations and cannot be equated in the civilian world. This widens the gap between the former service members and the world outside of service, further maintaining the 'us and them' mentality. Demers (2011) suggests that former military hold civilian employers accountable for not understanding the skills that they bring to the post-service environment and this contributes to difficulty gaining employment in the civilian world. Several participants struggled to gain employment when first separating from service however did not focus their frustration on civilian employers,

instead pointing the blame back at their service organisation for not better preparing them to leave.

Interestingly, the civilian world is referenced by all participants from each of their services in a separate manner. That is, the participants did not consider it to be the police, military and emergency services on one side, and the civilian world on the other. Instead, they saw their individual service organisation as separate to the civilian workplace, but not together with the other service organisations. Except for Natalie who was in the police and when describing her issues with the civilian world suggested '*I think it's the same with military'*, and those participants who had served in both the police and military, or military and emergency services, all participants made no reference to other service organisations when discussing the transition into the civilian world. This indicates that reference to a civilian world comes from within each individual organisation but not from the organisations as a group. At no time do the individuals consider themselves to be part of a wider group of organisations that are isolated from the civilian world.

The similarities in the reporting from the individuals in separate organisations in relation to the civilian world are due to similarities within the organisations that are not naturally recognised as shared. In fact, William explained that the former military members who joined the police with him '*...had to be deprogrammed because the rules of engagement between military and police are completely different where you just can't go out and indiscriminately shoot people'*. He thought that these members understood the difference '*but [did] not agree… with it, they're just going no we just do it this way, we can't do it that way*'. However, Sebastian, who was a firefighter, did see some unity, stating '*being an integral part of our community and also being an integral part of a much smaller community, that being the emergency services, us, ambos, coppers you know, that's a pretty tight crew'*. The differences are present and apparent when the service individuals are compared, but they have shared practices and environments that create the same issues for each individual in the post-service environment, regardless of which organisation they served with. This includes the hegemonic masculine space, the training, and the resulting development of unique workplace skills.

Each organisation, the police, military and emergency services, demonstrates a hegemonic masculine space. The participants are not aware of the hegemonic masculine nature of their service workplaces and show no knowledge of this concept. This means they are influenced by extrinsic factors that are beyond their understanding and are ill-informed to counteract the effects in their post-service environment. Some participants hint at an awareness, like Harry who considered entering the police after leaving the military but said he '*sort of planned to get away from the regimental side of it for a little bit*'. Gary stated, '*Because they see, well they see like we, like males, like all Defence people do is I'm a level above civilians now because I've been trained like this and I'm supposed to protect you'.* Gary's understanding of the environment is from his understanding of the training and the resulting skills, but he makes direct reference to '*we males*'. Similarly, Jasper explains

> *And they've got a short amount of time the instructors to get, you know, someone off their mother's apron strings into a combat soldier and with a war going on and their hands are tied as instruct[ors] on how far they can actually push the people.*

The strongest impact on the participants is the service-based training. The fact that this training occurred in a hegemonic masculine environment strengthens its effect on the individuals (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The resulting skills are masculine in nature. Bob compared the three arms of the Defence Force, army, navy and air force, suggesting they are all the same. He explains that the principles of service are taught stating:

> *the basic principles are the same, remove the source of ammunition, safety catch to safe, open the weapon up, clear the weapon, work and pass forward. And the same principles are there…And when we're dealing with a lot of our stuff, the same principles are there. We don't have to stop and take and do a take five and so on so yeah it's just the foundations I think are there.*

It is the quick response nature of their training and the ability to act without thinking that improves their performance in their service role, but the same skills are difficult to ignore when post-service. Natalie describes the training as:

> *…my job as a weapons trainer at the academy was to try and smash that into the student's heads, for lack of word choice, but to try and*

> *really emphasise to them that your life depends on this, and not only is it your life but it's the life of your partner and so much of our training was about officer safety and trying to get that hypervigilance and trying to get them to be aware and always be looking and be on edge and so I think it starts at the academy very much, but I don't think it really, really truly starts until they're on the street as a probationary constable and they start seeing things and experiencing things and start to feel the fear of what could potentially go wrong. I think that's when you know their eyes really widen and they really, that really starts to happen. But at the academy I think we try as hard as we can to try and get that into their head.*

However, it is not just the skills that isolate them from the civilian world. There are other occupations that have similar skill sets. Armoured security escorts (such as Armaguard or Chubb) are weapons trained and carry those weapons in the community. There was no indication by the participants that this job role was included with them when comparing themselves to civilians. There are humanitarian organisations that deploy their members overseas to conflict environments (such as the Australian and International Red Cross), but these members were not included as non-civilians with the military. It is the type and level of training, delivered within a hegemonic masculine environment, that creates the difference. The level of training in the military pushes the physical body to extremes that create a robotic response (Godfrey et al., 2012). Similar practices are reflected in the police and the fire service, but not in the ambulance services. In addition, the nature of the training is ritualistic and ensures adherence to collective goals that are hypermasculine and force social cohesion (King, 2006). This creates the act of men positioning themselves against other men, which is the normative model for hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Females in the roles are included and position themselves as men against other men and/or women. It is the high level of training and resulting high-level demands on the skill sets within the services combined with the social cohesion encouraged by hypermasculine collective goals that instigates these individuals to see themselves as separate to the civilian world. Natalie explains:

> *you go to a job and you have to treat everybody as though there is a potential threat that someone or something there could kill you, until you know that there is no threat and you only know that there is no threat when the job is over. So I think it's because of that, because you have to always be on edge, always be aware, always rely on this*

> *other person to have your back because you don't have eyes in the back of your head. I think it really does take over.*

In the civilian world, as they perceive it, there is no high-level skills training, it is questionable whether there are collective goals, and there are no consequences for weakness. This changes the landscape for the participants and sets them apart. From each service perspective, it is heightened by the fact that these skills are utilised to protect the 'members of the community' who make up the civilian world.

The entry 'back' into the civilian world is, therefore, a realisation that they are now one of the many who, as perceived by them, have no use for high-level skills, have individual goals instead of a collective focus, and are, essentially, weak. Julie explained that at job interviews post-service she learnt to '*think like a civilian, think like old nanas whenever I was answering any questions'*. Harry believes the issue starts with the training but becomes a habitual behaviour that does not fit into the 'civilian world', explaining

> *…because it's teaching, you know, be aggressive, win the fight, win the argument don't lose. And that's what it teaches you. Unfortunately, when you bring that out from that environment and you bring it into a civilian life and there's a missing pair of socks or something like that or, you know, there's an argument over, I don't know, who's going to take the rubbish out or whatever, you approach that augment or conversation, with the same, with the same perspective, in a manner not to lose. And it's not a deliberate thing, it's not a, it's just, it's a condition thing.*

He elaborates, '*…and all that training that you've been put through to basically, excuse the French again, teach you how to be a cunt…is not taken away. So, you're left then with it and left to deal with it and the repercussions of it for the rest of your life'*.

This is compounded by the rejection by their peers when they leave their service employment (see Chapter 6). In order to maintain the social cohesion and focus on the collective goals within service, the remaining individuals cannot associate with those who are essentially perceived to be weak. The former service member, whilst often recognised as a former member, does not have a continuing place in the fold, because they no longer share the single focus of the group. Barry described '*police officers*

that were still serving were like oh my god, you know, how are you coping, you know, do you think you've done the wrong thing, do you want to come back? I think it's just because they couldn't identify with the fact that I'd left'.

5.7 Translating skills

Obtaining new employment post-service is a primary goal of the transition process. For those participants who had time to plan their resignation and had looked for new employment before their end date, new work was obtained immediately. Overall, however, the period of time for this group to obtain new employment post-service varied from immediately to four years. Julie explained '*…the thing was I never had a backup plan. So firstly, being out of work for four years, you're like grateful for whatever damn job you can get*'. Maria confirmed that she had applied for '29 jobs' after leaving and had '25 interviews'; whilst Paul submitted '40 job applications', and both of these participants reported that the level of the jobs they applied for were lower than their rank at exit from the service. It was a common experience reported by this group that the skills and knowledge they had acquired in the service role did not easily translate into the wider workplace. In relation to translating their skills, it was a matter of accepting that this needed to be done and pursuing the opportunities to do so. For some it was more frustrating than for others. Skye explained that her training in the military did not translate well when she left, '*even that posed a lot of problems when I did get out because it's not a diploma in hospitality, you know like I'm a qualified chef but it didn't show my management side*'. The cookery qualification held by Skye from the military was not the same as the one expected in the non-military hospitality sector, but it is difficult to upskill in an area where the skills are already held. Conrad explained that he knew he had a range of skills from his time in the police, but confirmed

> *I think the thing in being able to transition was being able to demonstrate the transferable skills. I would say that education or having a qualification to be able to put on an application form to jump through a barrier or a cull point is certainly important though, yeah.*

The need for the specific translation of skills for this group was further highlighted by Bob who explained that his experience had shown that

'*employers could have a better understanding of what defence people can bring to the table*'. As a group, they believe that it is the new employer's responsibility to understand what skills they have, rather than their responsibility to demonstrate those skills in the most appropriate manner for that new organisation. Bob went on to elaborate:

> *well I'll give you an example, I, one of the units I've had to get is lead and manage small teams. And yet I can go as a captain, I can lead a company, company into battle but I can't, they won't recognise me to manage a team of five people*.

The translation of skills involves ensuring that relevant skills acquired by police, military and emergency services personnel whilst in the employ of the service organisation are easily translatable to employment in, what they perceive to be, the civilian world. So, whilst the individuals from the service organisations do not believe that anyone in the civilian world has their skills, they are poor at being able to recognise the skills they do share with the mainstream civilian employment. For example, the participants often focused on their unique specialist skills such as covert surveillance, extinguishing fires, and firing weapons, and therefore considered themselves less employable in the civilian world because employers did not understand the usefulness of such skills outside the service organisation. As such, to support transition the translation of more generic skills is crucial. Attributes such as leadership and risk management are skills that this group possess which are framed in the language of the civilian world. Mistakes are made by the participants when they attend civilian employment interviews and describe their experience in military, police or emergency services terms. They lack the training to be able to correctly interpret their own skills and connect the dots for civilian employers. This means that the distinction they make between themselves and the civilian world when in service, causes them a disservice upon leaving.

Many of the participants in this study had undertaken a skills transfer process and successfully held nationally recognised qualifications as a result. Although not directly addressed, several participants confirmed that holding the qualifications made re-employment easier and they were grateful for the support in more effectively translating their skills and knowledge. These skills were translated to nationally recognised qualifications under the Australian Qualifications Framework using

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Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTO) that are sufficiently equipped to conduct recognition of prior learning (RPL) assessments for this group. RPL is part of the requirements for an RTO and is a legitimate assessment process. This means that members of this group presented their employment history, and the RTO translated those skills and knowledge into nationally recognised qualifications that contain the same skills and knowledge requirements. This helped bridge the gap between the service organisation and the civilian world as the individuals can present to interview for mainstream employment with qualifications that are easily recognised by all employers and render them more competitive against other candidates. The majority of participants confirmed that this process helped them in their transition from the service organisation. Kim explained

> *But I gradually realised that, oh God I do have something to offer, and I should be doing something with the skills that I have. But, but that took a while. A million percent. If I hadn't have done that first, and hadn't sort of kept qualifications up to date, and wasn't able to go through the RPL process with you guys. But, yeah I, I would have been screwed I think without having some qualifications*.

Matthew confirmed a similar sentiment stating '*look yeah for sure, you know if it wasn't for you guys you know who did RPL then you know with what I, with all the security stuff and things like that, I think I would have crashed and burned years ago you know'.* The importance of having an organisation that can interpret the documentation provided for the individuals when they leave their service job and help them transition into the civilian world was confirmed by almost all participants. Whilst they have individual complexities, generally they are all seeking additional support to help them understand the civilian world, and in particular, to help them understand, firstly, why they do not fit into this new world immediately, and secondly, what they need to do in order to fit into it going forward. However, there was still no indication that this helped improve job satisfaction in post-service employment. It did, however, contribute to the participants being able to obtain post-service employment, and therefore was an important step in their transition.

5.8 New training experiences

Participants were asked if training would result in new skills that would give them a fresh outlook on life and therefore a fresher outlook on their new jobs post-service. Many were resistant to this suggestion, at best. Whilst they understood that their specialist skills were specific to their service role and that they should embrace new learning, they still disputed any *need* for greater skill levels than those they already held. Paul explained *'…I left the job and … she said what are your qualifications and I said none, …and she said well how did you do all this stuff and I said because I know what to do'*. They wanted post-service employers to more actively recognise these skills. Julie stated, '*I don't know…but I just thought I'm worth more than that, with my knowledge base'*. When asked about the expectation to convert their skills formally to recognisable qualifications for future employers, the participants accepted the need, but were not happy about it. Jasper stated, '*at this stage, I'm only really just getting the diploma I need for the job description that I've been currently in for ten years anyway'*. Charles agreed, saying '*Qualifications are important unfortunately'* and Skye explained '*I've been, I've been saving my money to get all of my Navy recognised into some sort of paper because the civilian world works on paper'*. The participants were frustrated with the need to convert their skills, when those skills should be readily apparent to new employers. It costs them time and money to do so, and only a few organisations are well equipped to assist them with the process. Some participants were unable to see the value of their skills. Raymond explained '*Well for me personally I don't really have any transferable skill. I mean if you look at my PMKeyS*[12]*, I've got skills coming out my ears. But in the civilian world, I've got ultimately nothing'*. However, like Matthew, they were also grateful to the organisations that currently support the translation of their skills. Those who indicated that they were, or would, pursue new training, were doing so for their own interest in those areas. Barry stated '*I'm still looking at training, I'm still looking to develop my own, myself personally. My next, my next goal is to do my security and anti-terrorism degree'.* Skye explained '…*sort*

[12] PMKeyS is an operating system that holds the military service record that lists all their competencies, skills, and learning undertaken whilst in service.

of… I've just started a diploma in August last year…because my main goal now is to become a nutritionist'. However, Skye also explained.

> *…going to uni is so overwhelming and so, so alien to me. I was at high school in an all-girls school, then I was in the Navy with on the job training and then suddenly now I have to try and be academic. So I enrolled but I got scared so I withdrew and then I signed up to do the diplomas because I thought baby steps might be better*.

But those who had no interest in new training struggled with the need to consider reskilling when their existing skills were not recognised. The tone and emotion behind discussions around new training for several participants was, at the very best, tired, and at worst non-enthusiastic. They feel undervalued as employees when seeking post-service employment.

However, whilst most participants disputed the *need* for new training almost all participants reported that they were quite open to undertaking new training and education opportunities and many had already completed, or commenced study of some sort, if it would help with new employment opportunities. The acceptance of training opportunities happened at all levels with some pursuing RPL for their existing skills at vocational levels, some pursuing new qualifications at vocational level, and some pursuing higher education at both bachelor and master level. Sebastian confirmed '*Yep, yep, hence why I've devoted the last four years to studying my arse off… just investing in the career…or investing in myself actually*'.

Most of the training being undertaken specifically related to their former or current employment pathways, however, there were a few participants, such as Skye, pursuing new employment pathways. Some were simply expanding their pre-existing skills, such as Paul who was a former police officer and pursued a law degree, '*the first thing I did was my law degree'* and Henry who advised '*I just finished both my Bachelors and Grad Cert in Emergency Management…but what I had in the background gave me more opportunities to complete that because I had credits'*. They were doing this to secure their skills for employment in the future, rather than relying upon existing skills that were not easily recognised. The participants explained that they had learnt from their past and were doing things differently for the future, but some wanted a guarantee of employment

before undertaking new training. Donald stated '*Yeah well I would… if I could see a career path, so if I could see okay I could go get this job if I get these skills, I would do it',* and Michael agreed, '*There's no point in me getting qualifications if they've got no relevance to a career path that I want to go into'*. They were openly frustrated at their need to do this.

A number of participants were able to verbalise their intentions or desires with training but were uncertain whether they would have the opportunity to pursue them further. The most obvious barriers for many of them were existing and ongoing emotional and psychological and/or physical injuries. Maria shared

> *because I get tired and I actually, like you see those goats and chickens that one minute they're standing up, the next minute they're falling over asleep, I can be typing and I will actually want to fall asleep and that's within half an hour… other days really good. You've got nightmares, you've got all the other things that go with post traumatic but everyone is different.*

But for some, other barriers such as time and money were presenting. Tom explained that finding the time was difficult, '*I want to…work towards a diploma and the job … like as it is now, it's really busy so I don't have the time to do it but that is my aspirations'*. For Matthew, the challenge was financial '*But a lot of it also comes down to you know finance as well which is, which is hard'*. Overall, across the services, and both genders, a willingness for retraining was present, but only because their post-service options were limited. Reluctance in this area is understandable, given the years of training many participants have undergone, and as mature workers they have less time to earn a return on investment in training. Therefore, recognition of existing skills that translate to the civilian world was most important. Utilising existing skills and reducing training costs and time were priorities, and then any retraining needed for future career paths would be explored by the individuals. With a combined recognition and learning approach, they were less resistant to new learning because they felt vindicated when some of their skills were acknowledged. There was some emotional exhaustion present amongst the participants when considering retraining and this was directly linked to their age and years of service. Alastair shared '*maybe 20 years ago I'd be like, no problems but at the minute it's like I'm sort of over it, it doesn't take much to piss me off where I just go, not really, I'm not really feeling it'* and Abigail stated '*then I*

think…oh God I'm 40, there's no, you know, I'm already half way through my career. Almost, you know, out the other end. If I start again, I have to start from the bottom, and you know...' Obviously the younger they were with fewer years in service the more inclined they were to embrace retraining for a new career path. However, there was no indication that a lack of training contributed in any way to their job satisfaction post-service. The participants were frustrated that they needed actual qualifications in order to confirm their existing skills, but this was an achievable option and the presence of the qualifications did little to improve their job satisfaction. It did improve their employment prospects, but once employed, their reporting of job satisfaction remained unimproved.

5.9 Transition challenges

The participants had different reasons for why they found transition challenging. Skye explained '*I was 16 when I joined. It's like someone getting out of prison and they've got to be re, re-established into the community, very similar I would say'.* Abigail explained that the perception of reality is different for service personnel and this cannot be changed. She stated:

> *I think it's more of what I said before, is that there is this real reality difference. Like we, ex-coppers, ex-military, all of that, we have a completely different understanding of what actually happens and, you know, every day you're faced with horrendous things you know. And, you know, from, you know, deaths to murders and rapes, and you know, you know I've interviewed seven year old rape victims, and you know, all of those horrendous things, and it becomes a part of your life, and it becomes a part of your whole reality. I have children now, and I'm over, and I know I am, I'm over protective, ridiculously over protective. You know, and my husband's the same. We know we both are, but you know, we have a different perception of reality to anybody else.*

Abigail also questioned whether transition challenges arise from the fact that any other job is never as exciting as policing. She stated

> *so, it's, you know it's exciting and it's, and I don't think you can get that from any other job. And, you know, and you get to a point where I suppose sometimes you're a bit angry at yourself because you've left, but you know that you did it for all the right reasons.*

Kim confirmed that the hypervigilance that comes from these service roles, police and military especially, takes a while to disperse, explaining

> *initially just to stop being vigilant all the time as well. Just to relax, and you're not on duty anymore, so don't worry about if someone's bleeding or whatever. That takes, takes a while.*

Natalie explained that she '*Just want[s] to heal. Just want[s] to be able to move on*' but neither she nor any others could specifically explain why there was such difficulty in 'moving on'. It presents as a challenge for all the participants, across all the services, and for both genders.

Harry explained

> *I honestly think the biggest downfall of service, of leaving service life is that there is no re-education or no reintegration into civilian life. You're chucked out there with your, with your, sort of, I guess, warrior attributes. And that had been trained into you. Whether it's, doesn't matter, Army, Navy, Air Force, whatever. And yeah, you're expected to then get by in a normal society where people don't understand or haven't shared those experiences, so they think that you're just angry or aggressive or whatever the word might be. It makes it very hard to fit in.*

When asked what the solution may be, Harry indicated perhaps some sort of '*deprogramming process*'. When the idea of 'deprogramming' was presented to other participants through direct questioning it became clear that they have difficulty separating their mental health issues from their inability to understand how their skills translate, and further how this impacts their post-service job satisfaction. In the strictest context, deprogramming would require the deskilling of all individuals in service, and although impossible to do, even hypothetically it is unlikely that any individual would want to give up the skills they have spent years developing. Even if it is specialised weapons use, as an example. Gary suggested '*educated support I think is the key'.* Warwick suggested that perhaps it was to do with the expectations of individuals going into service roles, which then impacted their ability to successfully transition to employment when leaving. He explained:

> *They hear electrical trade, they don't hear that you get a statement of attainment towards an electrical trade. You don't get the full trade. Electricity at sea, whilst it has the same effect, it'll still boot you across the room and do all that sort of stuff, the way we wire a warship is completely different to the way you wire a house. So why would the navy teach you to wire a house? They want you to go to sea. So it's selective hearing as much as anything else*

The challenges are varied but can all be attributed to the training and repeated activities of the service role. If the transition process is to remain for these service organisations, then the individuals will require better support in transition to understand their connection to the service role and the way in which this will impact their post-service employment.

5.10 Identity connection in transition

Across all three service groups, most participants made it clear that the transition period was an extremely confronting and confusing time. And for many, it was still not fully resolved years after leaving the service. Their reported feelings upon leaving the service and entering the civilian world, that feed an 'us and them' mentality, combined with their expectation of organisational responsibility for their transition and their need for 'deprogramming', indicates a strong link between the training that establishes their service identity and the struggles they face in transition and the post-service environment. This identity connection is explained by Woodward and Jenkings' (2011) work, which suggests individuals do not realise that they have become what they were doing. As such, being a police officer, a soldier/seaman/aircraftman/woman, or firefighter or paramedic becomes more than a job role, instead becoming the way in which they define themselves (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011). One of the unique experiences for this group in defining themselves this way is that they cannot continue to use this definition when they leave the organisation. This is different for other jobs and/or professions who can keep the title even when employment changes. For example, a lawyer or a carpenter are still qualified in those areas if they change employers or choose another profession. Whereas, in Australia, using the police as an example, a NSW police officer cannot transfer to the Queensland Police Service without repeating full recruit training, so, the same organisations do not recognise their counterparts from different states. And they are not police, nor can they use that title, once they are outside the organisation. Similar rules apply for emergency services, in particular fire fighters, and for the military. Thus, the loss of the professional identity post-service is swift and severe.

At this stage in their personal timelines, the connection to their service organisation comes from not being able to effectively communicate

their service role-based skills to new employers and feeling as though they are not suitable applicants for new positions. When this occurs, they hold on to their professional identity as a soldier/sailor/aircraftman/woman or police officer or firefighter or paramedic as they are most comfortable relating to the environment in which their skills still have some value. This creates a hurdle between the individual and the new employer as they are unable to communicate effectively. The participants described being unable to understand how their previous service-related skills and knowledge fit into civilian employment, or more commonly, why the civilian world could not grasp the true benefit of having them as employees based on these same skills. The individuals become disillusioned post-service and start to adopt the mentality that no one understands them anyway, so they just need a job that can support them and their families. This thinking leads to poor job satisfaction.

5.11 Health and wellbeing

The narratives of the participants identify other contributing factors to post-service job satisfaction concerns. The way in which the mental health issues impact the transition process is significant because it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which these issues affect the job satisfaction of the participants post-service, and therefore, it is difficult to distinguish any single cause. The transition challenges must be addressed with the assumption of underlying emotional and mental health issues, but not exclusively focused on them.

With many actual diagnoses of PTSD and the volume of emotionally laden data, it is important to examine whether there are differences in the psychological states across the three service groups, and how this impacts the transition period. Starting with the police, approximately four out of five participants were either diagnosed with PTSD or self-diagnosed. In particular, the police participants voiced frustration at PTSD not being managed appropriately at an organisational level, or that individuals did not take the steps they needed to acknowledge the issue and seek help. Abigail explained:

> *You know, most coppers I know that have left the job have been diagnosed with PTSD. And, they are, they're messed up, a lot of them. A lot of them are messed up. You know, that's quite tragic when they're, when you think about it, because they don't get, they*

> *should get some sort of psychological support following leaving the police force. Cause they struggle. A lot of them really struggle.*

Further, the effect of PTSD on former police needs to be accounted for when considering their transition into civilian life. Not just from the perspective of the management of their mental health, but to fully understand why transitioning to non-service employment is not as easy as it might be for others. Natalie described the following:

> *I know and that's the hard thing, it's, that people don't realise is that you know I still have post-traumatic stress disorder, I still struggle with a whole lot of that stuff. And it's not just a job, people who haven't been in the police or haven't, that don't know police or know law enforcement or military personnel, they don't understand, they do just think it's a job and they don't, they don't, they question what the big deal is. But you don't realise that it literally takes over your life, it becomes who you are. And trying to let go of that and become this normal person, it is a struggle.*

The former military participants experienced similar frustrations to the former police participants, but were less focused on the organisational responsibility of the military for their employees' transition, and more focused on the difficulties of managing life outside the service with mental health issues. Harry explained:

> *And that obviously carries into other careers and carries into my life and what it's actually done is, in some ways, it's made me a very, I guess, cold person at times, a very angry person at times. And has, had quite a significant impact on my relationship with both my wife and moreso my older son, he's 14. And it's only been in the last probably 12 months that I've come to grips, or come to the terms with that and sought help, both, both medication and counselling to try and curb my, I don't know if anger's the right word, but anger or aggression or…*

All emergency services participants described mental health issues to some extent, although there was great variation between participants. They were forthcoming with their descriptions and own understanding of their issues, and whilst some were most affected in post-service employment as a result of these issues, others were coping fine following distance from the service employment. Walter explained:

> *Yeah I have…you know I've been to a number of, a number of things that… you know… but I think, I think I've learnt to deal with it quite well myself. And I mean… I… you know everyone has their moments where you… you know… something happens and that thought… you*

> *know… that thought pops back into your head… but you know I'm sure you know what I'm talking about. But on the whole, I think I've been pretty lucky compared to some guys I've worked with and other guys I've seen.*

For emergency services, this acceptance may be their coping mechanisms, organisational handling, or their treatment options. No direct questioning was conducted in this area.

With more than 80 percent of the participants describing themselves as suffering either a diagnosed psychological condition, or an undiagnosed but symptomatic emotional state, from their time in either the police, military or emergency services, the ways in which emotional and psychological factors impact transition cannot be ignored. PTSD and related or similar mental health issues as well as physical injury can have a direct impact on life satisfaction, which in turn can impact job satisfaction, or vice versa. It is difficult to measure with this group how much of their job satisfaction in their new employment is related to their health and wellbeing, which many described as far below par when compared to how they were when they first entered the service organisation. This was expressed in the same manner across all three services and for both men and women. Amongst all participants, there was a mixture of despondency, resolved acceptance, frustration, anger, and defeat apparent in the narration of each individual's transition experience. This was clear from the tone and content of answers, and the way in which they described different elements of their life, both in and out of service. For approximately six participants there was an acute level of fear. For one, this was associated with the risk of being recalled to service within the five-year period after transitioning from the military; but for the others this was associated with the volatility of their employment status post-service, and constant worry about not having a job. This was worse for those participants with the responsibilities associated with family, such as mortgages, and other expenses related to children.

If transition, as a term, is going to be used for the separation of these individuals from the service organisations then the definition of a 'successful' transition needs to be well established. Work in the area of self-efficacy is important for injured military veterans but more research is required to confirm whether the same necessity exists for other dangerous roles such as law enforcement and fire fighters (Schmaltz, 2011). For this

group, self-efficacy contributed to their transition and they had all achieved new employment, but it did little to improve their job satisfaction in the new position. New employment may be the typical measure of successful transition, particularly from an organisational perspective, but the individual's job satisfaction impacts on their life satisfaction and needs to be included in the definition of successful transition. This is particularly important for future transition processes to make them as effective as possible for both the organisation and the individual.

5.12 Conclusion

Although there is little to no explanation as to why the term transition is used to describe the separation of these individuals from the services, it is a term embraced by the participants. It encompasses the separation period, literally, in terms of the organisational response to resignation, but also implies a period of change that is unique to the services and not experienced in other occupations. It is a factor that contributes to the distinction these individuals draw between themselves and the civilian world. Their reality is already altered by their training and job roles, and the perception continues when they undertake transition. The participants report their transition experience as generally negative and blame the organisation and civilian employers for the poor outcomes. They express dissatisfaction at the preparation offered to them by the service organisation they are leaving, and frustration with the fact that civilian employers do not recognise their service skills.

The fact that most separations from the service organisations are not voluntary contributes to the negative transition experience. The participants all narrate fondly their time in service and whilst some regret leaving, many confirm they would still be in the role if not for the mental, emotional or physical injuries that forced their separation. However, without direct questioning on psychological issues, it is apparent that there are still several other contributing factors to their level of job satisfaction post-service. Capturing the complexity and ambiguity of these issues was crucial to this research and was possible through the qualitative nature of the research design.

The transition process is a vehicle through which they continue to identify with the service and distinguish themselves from the wider community. Even upon leaving the practices are unusual, and the mentality remains fixed within the service thinking. The transition is another point in time that has a similar impact to that experienced in recruit training, and the fulfilment of their role as seen in Chapter 4. An examination of their actual post-service employment experiences will now follow to ascertain whether there is a point of disconnect from the service identity.

Chapter 6 Post-service Job Satisfaction

6.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the findings related to job satisfaction for the participants in their post-service environment. Once the participants reached the final point of their narration, having entered and then left the service and now become established in post-service employment, it was time to explore their post-service experiences in order to understand the factors that impact job satisfaction for these individuals. Two avenues needed to be explored here. The first was the issues that impacted post-service job satisfaction as described by the participants themselves. These were garnered from their reports of their post-service employment experience, including what they liked and what they did not, how the experience compared to their service employment, and how their new employment was affecting their everyday lives. The participants provided detailed information about their post-service employment and readily shared comparisons with their former service employment. A single participant expressed job satisfaction in their post-service role without contradiction, whilst the remainder of the participants who were working had conflicting perspectives on whether they were content in the post-service environment. To assist with context, Table 2 below sets out the employment sector the participants were working in at the time of interview and includes those not working.

Table 2: Details of participant's redeployment to which employment sector

Employment sector	No.
Security	2
Government (including defence contracting)	2
Training	3
Health	1
Investigations and compliance	7
Administration and communications	3
Community work (including disability and charities)	2
Construction (including marine)	1
Mining sector (including emergency response)	5

Corrections	1
Private sector emergency response	2
Self-employed	1
Not working (injury related)	2
TOTAL EMPLOYED	**30**
TOTAL NOT WORKING	**2**

The second avenue of exploration involved extrinsic factors that could influence job satisfaction in the post-service environment. These are organisational mobility and human capital as labour market factors that influence movement within the workplace (Hayes & Fitzgerald, 2009; Becker, 1964), as well as continuity of employment (Higate, 2001). These factors were viewed in the context of the participants' reporting of their post-service employment experiences together with their experience in their service role. The link between human capital development within occupational boundaries and positive re-employment opportunities was explored to see how this may impact the post-service employment experience for this group (Behtoui & Neergaard, 2012). Whilst the human capital of the participants was found to be strong, its effectiveness in the labour market was affected by occupational boundaries. This contributed in a small way to the negative experiences of the participants in their post-service employment searches.

The greatest impact on participant job satisfaction, post-service, was the need to translate skills that were developed in the service role inside a hegemonic masculine space with strong collective goals and social cohesion. The way in which the skills were developed and reinforced was as influential as the possession of the skills themselves. The service-based initial training and repetitive activities created a team environment with strong camaraderie that heightened the expectations of the participants in post-service employment. When these expectations were not met, job satisfaction suffered. In particular, the participants no longer had a sense of belonging and this influenced their willingness to commit to their new employment.

This indicated an ongoing connection between the participants and their service role, which is indicative of preferred experience that happens

when a new job is compared to an old job (Lévy-Garboua & Montmarquette, 2004), but for these participants, there were indications of more complex dynamics. The reasons impacting job satisfaction for the participants are multi-layered and these layers need to be examined separately and together in order to understand the overall effect on the participants.

The exploration of these factors links to the research questions:

- What factors determine levels of job satisfaction in employment post-service for Australian uniformed professionals in policing, military, and emergency services?
- Amongst these factors, what is the relative importance of human capital and perceived occupational mobility as explanations for levels of job satisfaction post-service?

A process of elimination was applied in order to delve into issues the participants were facing that influenced their job satisfaction in the post-service environment. Firstly, it was essential to measure the usual factors that contribute to job satisfaction, such as job security, income, job content, and camaraderie, in order to include or exclude them from each participant's individual experience (Warr, 1999). Secondly, the ongoing connection between the participants and their former service organisation was explored to understand the impact on their post-service employment experience. Thirdly, measures of usual labour market dynamics such as human capital and occupational mobility were applied to see how they influence post-service employment experiences for the participants (Behtoui & Neergaard, 2012). Lastly, mental health issues were considered, based on the reports of the participants, to better understand how the presence of ill-health could impact post-service job satisfaction (Creed & Miller, 2006). Amongst the participants, these factors were not present in isolation but are explored below individually.

6.2 Job satisfaction

Most participants did not demonstrate satisfaction with their post-service employment. Conrad described his initial post-service employment as the

'*worst six months of my life*' but then obtained another position and said, '*and yeah, I find it a lot more satisfying'.* He then expanded '*I'll come to work, and I'll do my job and I'll do what's expected and probably do a little bit more, but I'm not going to sink everything I have into a job'*. Sebastian previously confirmed that he regretted leaving the emergency services, stating '*…and I never wanted to leave…'* but then stated that one of his new colleagues was ex-Air Force and he was learning a lot from him, saying '*I like learning new stuff mate. I love it'*. This contradiction in the narratives of participants provided rich data to help understand the issues they face in the post-service environment. It is difficult to capture the participant emotion when reporting their post-service job experiences and translate it to pragmatic job satisfaction determinants. But systematically working through what factors were present for the participants in their post-service employment, and what factors were absent, measured against their tone and expression when narrating their stories, started to create a pattern for defining new job satisfaction determinants.

6.2.1 Job satisfaction determinants

The usual determinants for job satisfaction include job security, income, job content, and camaraderie (Warr, 1979). For the participants, the presence of these determinants in their post-service employment was explored and yet did not translate to job satisfaction. However, a lack of any one of these determinants did impact job satisfaction. Direct questioning on the subject elucidated reasons why they did not like their post-service employment and it became clear that it was the absence of factors from their former roles in service that contributed to their dissatisfaction. That is, they answered the question 'what was exciting about their new job?' with a combination of positives and negatives that included the absence of what they had previously experienced in their service role. The lack of camaraderie, the lack of variety, the lack of trustworthy colleagues, and the lack of stimulation were offered as explanations as to why they did not enjoy their post-service roles. Therefore, through their own narration, they widened the parameters for the determinants of job satisfaction. Largely, their job satisfaction relied upon their ongoing comparison between their new roles and their previous service roles. Lévy-Garboua & Montmarquette (2004) term this as preferred experience, and the application of their work here

suggests that the participants continue to regard their service employment as their preferred job and therefore new employment is subject to constant comparison.

This preferred experience indicated a connection to their former service role, and this was explored to examine how it influenced their job satisfaction in the post-service environment. The starting point for this research was to gain an understanding of why former members from police, military and emergency service organisations could, by all objective measures, appear to have better employment post-service yet exhibit signs of poor job satisfaction. Objectively, better employment is measured by factors that are established within the usual determinants of job satisfaction including income and job content (Warr, 1979). For the participants, this is observed in their new jobs with factors such as higher income, flexible working hours, no nightshift, no deployment, less danger and less physical, emotional and psychological stressors. However, subjectively, there are other factors that influence job satisfaction which do not always fit within the parameters of good employment as defined in the labour market. Amongst the participants, this was exhibited by a lack of commitment to the role, self-reported discontent with management and peers, lack of engagement in teams, and self-reported financial motivation only. These are in direct contrast to the way the participants talk about their time in the service organisation.

Finding new parameters for job satisfaction for this group of employees started with measuring the factors that they reported as creating job satisfaction in their former service employment. This included camaraderie, being part of a team, belonging, variety, and job security. It was confirmed that it is the lack of these factors that influences their future job satisfaction. Therefore, it became important to find not just what was present, but also what was missing. Their reasons and/or motivations for service as identified in Chapter 4 were job security, helping the community, job opportunity, and variety and excitement. Comparatively, their motivations for their post-service employment were income and job opportunity. While many participants identified seeking job security, most found security elusive. However, the reasons for service were not the reasons why they stayed in their service role for the length of time they did,

nor were they the reasons narrated for why they enjoyed the role, and generally, did not want to leave. The participants compared their new employment only to the service role experience, and therefore the job satisfaction determinants shift to be what they enjoyed in their service role.

At the time of interview, all but two of the participants were gainfully employed following transition from the service organisation. Tom is the single participant who expressed satisfaction with his post-service employment, stating *'…I love it'*, without any contradiction. A number of participants were able to identify positive elements of their new employment, if not overall satisfaction, such as Kyle who mentioned '*I needed a change…and it was a new challenge'* and Lucy who said '*I'm pretty … content would be a good word at the moment'*. Direct and indirect questioning addressed this issue with all participants, and a number of factors contributing to, and detracting from, job satisfaction were revealed.

6.2.2 Job security

Revisiting the reasons for service, the participant narrations indicate that they were seeking job security in post-service employment but relied heavily on job opportunity. Job security was required and sought after, as well as missed if not present in post-service employment. The absence of it contributed to poor job satisfaction but the presence of it alone was not enough to achieve satisfaction. These sorts of comparative responses were not as logical as may be seen in the usual labour market. The measure of job security by these participants was related directly to income and their capacity to continue earning it. The participants measured their current job security in comparison to their service role, and in terms of income and ongoing capacity to earn. For some, job security was sacrificed for higher income, for example, taking fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) positions in the mines that had high pay but uncertain rostering. Similarly, income was an important factor in their employment post-service, but it was not a remarkable contributor to job satisfaction. Responses from the participants that indicated they now 'do it for the money' did not convey satisfaction with the job. Instead, the participants were resigned to the fact that they needed to do this job for the money but did not express any great satisfaction. This was in stark contrast with their descriptions of how much they loved their service roles.

Moving Forward

If one of the reasons given by the participants for seeking employment in the service organisations was job security, it is understandable that any loss of job security post-service would affect job satisfaction. The usual determinants of job satisfaction (Warr, 1979) are intertwined with each other in the stories of the participants yet do not result in job satisfaction either as single factors or when combined. Few of the participants acknowledge that even though they had perceived job security in their service role, that the fact they separated, whether by choice or not, cut short that career and negated the job security. So, it is their separation as a result of any number of factors that removed the job security. The participants do not seem to see this as an indicator that their service role was not as secure as they first thought. Julie touched on this, saying '*It meant that you had security, what I thought was security. You had job, I had job satisfaction'*, but few participants were reflexively aware of the dynamic that a job they thought was secure, was actually not in the end. The participants held a subjective view of job security that was borne of a career that was expected to be long term. Yet, objectively, job security is limited in any form of employment, depending upon the circumstances of both the employee and employer. Regardless, the participants entered employment post-service seeking a level of job security which was not truly present in the first place. Of significance is that a job that faces trauma regularly and impacts the mental health of the individual is not generally a sustainable long-term career option. There are many career police, military and emergency service employees, so the issue of the lack of job security can only be raised for those who could no longer stay in the role. The participants need to redefine their understanding of job security and place more realistic expectations on employment post-service. They currently define job security as a job that is long lasting and not at threat.

For this group, a lack of job security outside of service stems from the inability to successfully translate and/or communicate their skill sets to the civilian world. They continue to speak in the language of their service organisation, and this is often misunderstood by civilian employers. For those seeking opportunities that represent a continuation of their service role within a different organisation, this presents as less of a problem. However, potential mental health issues post-service can affect their own perceived

longevity in such employment. This then threatens their job security. For example, participants who separated from the service organisation due to mental health issues will often experience mental health triggers if their new employment is in a similar space. This then affects their performance and job satisfaction and leads to them seeking alternative employment options more rapidly than expected. For all participants, coming from secure government employment, setting out into the civilian world with both government and private opportunities can be intimidating. Further, while the base income of service organisations is low, it is often boosted considerably by penalties for danger and allowances for shift work and overtime for 24-hour shifts, or by tax-free income for international deployments. These sums become difficult to match in post-service employment. Several of the military participants disputed this to an extent, explaining that the income in their arm of the military was not great, but they did have the security of a long-term career. Post-service, they describe having poor income and poor job security.

6.2.3 Job income

Many of the participants reported their post-service employment as an equivalent or better source of income. Some reported either less income than their service wage, or a lack of stable employment that disrupted income consistency and therefore impacted overall earnings. None reported either job satisfaction because of an adequate income or a lack of job satisfaction due to a lower income. Their dissatisfaction with the post-service employment was not centrally focused on income levels. Several participants acknowledged that the income was the reason they were tolerating a job they did not enjoy, regardless of whether it was adequate or not. Barry explained '*I suppose because I don't have that job satisfaction like I used to. I've now substituted that for money. And I've been quite lucky that I have had jobs that paid very well'*. In response to direct questioning Walter stated, *'the only thing that excites me at the moment is the money'* and Michael explained '*It's just basically a money cash grab'.* Harry indicated it was very straightforward, although he did not particularly enjoy his new job, it was '*more money and with less responsibility'.* Kim did indicate that it was not specifically about job satisfaction in post-service employment, but a change of priorities. She stated '*No. It's just a job. No.*

No. I feel like I've had the career that I always wanted, and ticked that off, and anything else now just, is just to pay bills I think'.

Although income was not a strict determinant of job satisfaction in the post-service environment for these participants, they did consider it specifically when identifying the need for a job in order to pay their bills. Therefore, job opportunity was an important element in post-service employment for the participants, as was seen in their initial reasons for entering service. Their discontent with having limited job opportunity, however, was higher when explaining their post-service job searches, than it was when explaining their original employment search that led to their service organisation. There were two apparent reasons for this. The first was the frustration that their skills developed in service were not recognised in post-service employment. Barry explained:

> *I've come back here to grass roots again, if you like. Start at the bottom. And again, where my, quite strangely enough, where my experience isn't recognised and doesn't count for anything. From coming over here and having a lot of experience, but, you know, not being accepted and not being listened to. But I just keep telling myself, well the difference is now, I keep telling myself this is just a job. Turn up, collect the money and go home*.

The second was frustration with having to even seek employment, when their intention had been to stay in the services long term. Many did not even know where to start to seek employment. For participants like Maria and Paul, who submitted a large number of job applications, they were ill-equipped to re-enter the job market. Combining job searching with struggles with mental illness added another level of complexity for the participants. Alastair explained, in relation to both job seeking and keeping employment: '*You know it's I'm just again I'm not well, like, so I haven't got the resilience I used to have, I haven't got the concentration I used to have. You know I'm running on reduced capacity*'.

6.2.4 Job content

Alastair's explanation can also be applied to satisfaction with job content. Although the job content may be satisfying, it is harder for the participants to enjoy it when their health is not optimal. It continues to be a consideration that it is more than just different job content that affects these individuals in their post-service employment. Alastair raised the possibility

that it was less about the new job content and more about the consequences of having spent time in the service organisation. With such variety in the service employment, and of course, as William describes, they *'…get to play with really cool stuff*', it is not surprising that post-service employment does not meet expectations for job satisfaction when the job content is different. The descriptions from the participants indicated that the job content of their post-service employment was not as rewarding nor as satisfying as their service roles. To fully understand this concept, the participants were asked specifically what issues they had with their post-service job and why it did not compare. Conrad explained that the new job was not as anticipated nor as promised, stating

> *it appeared to be you know non-confrontational going out on the road, talking to people, interaction with the public, but in a positive sense. It turned out to be six months sitting in a room with no windows looking at a computer screen largely which drove me nuts. And very, very quickly came to realise that it wasn't for me so I started looking for jobs*.

Donald explained that the new role was not as dangerous, stating '*…you don't have the same danger here at all, you know like really you rarely go to anything bigger than a bin fire so to speak*'. Fred described the difference as

> *it was the same type of job but just different, you know. You work with the same type of blokes, but the actual environment's different too, then it comes down to your clients, which is money and it's all about money, private industry.*

Neil explained

> *I just basically did simple work like driving special needs kids to school and driving limousines but the stress of being on the road and the stress of going to Sydney ultimately got the better of me there as well.*

When further questioned about the factors that impacted post-service employment satisfaction, Walter thinks it may be because '*…this is going to sound really bad, but I don't see the professionalism of it in my current job'* and similarly, Donald explains that '*you can't really trust anybody because they've all got their own agendas*'. This instigated questioning on the significance of trusting others in their new employment. The participants responded that being part of a team in their service employment was very

important to them and was not replicated in their post-service employment. When asked about the differences, Donald explained:

> *…in an office job you don't see some[thing] tragic and share that…tragedy between each other, but you don't have that sort of a bond. So and it's not something you share regularly but you do have those moments and I suppose that does build that strength of character. Because you know…like someone could be an emotional mess after an incident and I would never, ever judge for it because I'm involved with that too. But in a normal workplace, if someone came in and they were an emotional mess because of something that happened at home on the weekend, they would get judged for it…so I suppose there is that strength of unity within the fire brigade.*

Alastair elaborated that

> *Because obviously, yeah obviously, I haven't found my niche since leaving the police and sometimes I think you know maybe I should look for a role in another register like the SES or something like that or you know where I've still got that you know.*

This line of questioning ended with Natalie who said '*Excites me did you say? I actually hate my current job'.*

Two main issues were addressed following this line of questioning with the participants. The first was their lack of trust in post-service employment colleagues and the second was the search for the same sort of employment environment post-service and how that contributed to their job satisfaction.

6.3 Loss of camaraderie

The participants who become disillusioned with their post-service employment as a result of a lack of camaraderie describe trust amongst colleagues as an issue. The loss of camaraderie and an inability to replicate it in post-service employment is a key element in job satisfaction for the participants. When directly questioned about belonging to a team, both during service and post-service, the answers were consistent across all participants. No post-service employment described by the participants achieved the same level of team camaraderie. Participants generally considered this to be a flaw in the new employment environment and in their new colleagues and it strengthened their feeling of loss. 'It is just not the same' was the consensus amongst the participants. Walter explained

> *You've got a lot of guys that have had … experiences…but … it doesn't come across because it's not as, you're not so like living*

> *with these guys, albeit you know four days on, four days off, but you're not constantly in each other's world. And that becomes your world. And with this now I do fly in, fly out now, you know I see my guys you know for the seven days I'm at work but it's not, you know we don't socialise after work, we don't socialise once we fly off, everyone, and now I've been to a couple of different sites now and it's been the same and it's the same across all the crews, you know you don't sort of hear the guys talk about oh we all went and did this or we all went and did that whereas with the fire brigade you sort of caught up, that culture was there so.*

For some participants, they were able to acknowledge that they did not expect it to be the same, but it was still a shock at how strange it felt to no longer have those team members at your back. When directly asked, some participants confirmed that their new job role needed teamwork, but the level of commitment to the team and the subsequent camaraderie was not present. Raymond explained

> *I've always been exposed to a certain level of education for everybody, because you've got to meet that minimum standard and you've got sort of really highly motivated people as well that want to do something and that they want to be there… Whereas when you're working in mining, it's oh I got a job through uncle Bill or uncle Bob or whoever and I'm just here because I like the money. And you know the other thing was like they would go and get drunk every day after work where I would go to the gym and I was like an outsider because why are you, why are you lifting weights when you could be lifting a beer can.*

This is a clear indication that the lack of camaraderie in post-service employment is often because training in those employment environments does not focus on creating social cohesion in a group that has a collective goal (King, 2006). Donald stated

> *I miss working with people that you pretty much know that you can either trust them or you can't, there's sort of quite a defined line there where in the public sector you can't really trust anybody because they've all got their own agendas.*

The participants need to adapt to the needs of the new organisations and understand that their roles are different. This is a difficult part of transition for these individuals and requires a level of 'unlearning' of previous beliefs and habits. The participants must disconnect their expectations from those they held when with their service organisation.

Moving Forward

An examination of their connection to their service organisation was conducted to help understand how the participants' experiences when in service influenced their attitude to post-service employment. The participant stories reveal that the training they underwent with their service organisation contributed to this connection. Coming from organisations where basic training required them to bond together in groups where they proved themselves almost daily and where membership required a constant display of those skills and, most importantly, backing each other up, anything less than this is disconcerting (Godfrey et al., 2012; King, 2006). Through strict repetitive activities and social isolation, the training reinforces a group mentality and encourages individuals to rely upon each other each day (King, 2006). The participant narrations indicate that, over time, that constant reliance upon each other, the focus on group goals, the membership in a team, and the sense of being more than the civilians they have sworn to protect, help and defend creates a unique sense of camaraderie that is laced with duty and loyalty. Barry explained '*how close and how strong those bonds would become and, you know, through the things that I've been subjected to and seen, no, I didn't, realise how deep the roots would go, for sure'.* The fact that not only do they believe in and rely on someone else when it comes to personal safety but that others believe in and rely on them for their safety seems to create a new level of interaction and belonging. Barry confirmed *'…but again, I think it was this whole sense of belonging'.* Further, that the activities that support this tight knit group behaviour are often exclusive to their service organisation heightens the camaraderie, further excludes civilians, even excluding friends and family, and tightens loyalties even further. From the descriptions of the participants, the co-reliance increases even further when traumatic experiences start to occur and become part of the shared realities for the group. Paul shared that '*when you face dangers and challenges with other people, you develop a relationship and people call it mutual respect, they call it lots of things, but you develop a relationship'*. He elaborated

> *we took on a place one day and I wandered inside and I couldn't see anybody and the next thing…[a guy] with a nail in a baseball bat came out swinging. And I sort of duck and get out of this bloke's way going oh this is not good. And the next thing I remember is him staring over my shoulder and throwing the bat away because [name removed] had come around the corner and pulled out his weapon*

> *and pointed it straight at him and said straight off kill you. Someone prepared to do something.*

In such situations, they have common activities, common goals, exclusive skills, and shared trauma to link them. The camaraderie required to keep the collective goal at the centre of all activities and to support each other as individuals becomes part of a unique experience that the participants describe as having not experienced before, nor in any subsequent employment.

This is a strong camaraderie that is based in operational activity more than social interaction and therefore it diminishes greatly when the individual separates from the service organisation. For the individuals who come from this team environment where camaraderie is at the centre of operations, it is difficult for them to adapt to the loss of this in their post-service environment. They seek membership in similar groups and are surprised when the depth of camaraderie is not the same. The lack of camaraderie in post-service employment is often because the job content does not require it to the same extent, nor does the training reach a level of intensity that creates it, and therefore the individuals become perplexed by their new colleagues' lack of commitment to their job roles. Their view of a lack of camaraderie is skewed when compared to the views of others in civilian employment. This impacts heavily on their job satisfaction as they come to terms with individuals working for their own purposes. When they enter post-service employment that does not discourage individuals working for their own benefits, they become confused as to how they fit into that model and fail to understand how the job can be done properly in such an environment. Kim explained '*I feel really detached from it if anything. And, I have no sort of personal investment in it really. And, I know that sounds terrible but it's the truth'*. This thinking is then confirmed by the lack of a collective goal(s) in post-service employment. That is not to say that organisations do not have goals which their employees are working towards, but often the goal seeking is done individually. Without life threatening confrontation, and intense physical activities that require immediate reaction as a team, the way a collective goal is achieved is very different outside of service organisations. The participants report that in their service roles, they are drilled constantly to work as a team towards an outcome (King, 2006).

Activities that are repeated constantly enough that the individual starts doing as opposed to being (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011). This shifts their identity from an individual focus to one of the collective. When entering post-service employment, the shift to setting individual goals in order to achieve a collective goal is a considerable change for this group. It fuels the feeling of not properly belonging to a team and impacts their job satisfaction.

The participants' understanding of camaraderie was that someone else always 'had their back'. This presented in different forms, such as they knew how others would act at a job without speaking, no one else understands as much, and they could always rely on their teammates. This is not replicated in their post-service employment. Lisa explained

> *Yeah it's definitely not the same…And I know for a fact there were two policewomen, ex AFP coppers that I was working with and they would not carry guns. See as far as I'm concerned they shouldn't be working for the organisation because how does that help me out on the road, what if I need them to come help me?*

The development of camaraderie inside these service organisations is largely linked to membership of a team with a collective goal and the roles they all play inside this group. But for the participants their descriptions are not this simple. References to moments when they could function together in a job-related task with limited communication supports the work of Woodward and Jenkings (2011) who stress, from a military perspective, that the repeated activities undertaken in training and thereafter during the job render the individual to a state of doing rather than being. So, while the participants view this as an indication of solid camaraderie, it is the honed skills of individuals undertaking their set tasks in a workplace. In part, those skills demand attention to their team members and practices that ensure they protect and support each other against trauma. Participants do not always see it this way, instead responding to the human interaction with others.

It is here that there seems to be some blurring of the understanding that camaraderie is not friendship. When they leave the service, they have expectations that the camaraderie will continue and are genuinely surprised when it does not. Paul said about his new job colleagues

> *…and I thought…you don't, and I use the word brotherhood, you don't see yourself as part of a collective do you? Don't feel like part of a single unitary operation that has had a specific objective to*

> *which you all make your own special specific contribution, no you don't see yourselves, you see yourselves as individuals, many of which were pursuing career goals and this platform for you.*

The experienced camaraderie was a stable environment upon which the individuals came to rely amidst repeated traumas, behaviours, and social isolation. They fail to comprehend that the camaraderie was built out of their membership in the group, and when that membership is revoked, so too is the camaraderie. Their sense of belonging is heightened, and they know that no one else is going to understand them, both as individuals and as group members, as much as those with whom they shared this camaraderie. Walter describes

> *Yeah I think it's your shared experiences and relation, you can relate to that…you know what I mean… like if I talk to you know someone that I don't know, accountant or you know a solicitor or something like that, it's not a relatable job, but if you're talking to someone with an emergency services background, then all of a sudden it doesn't take long for the stories to come out…*

While the participants seem to be aware of their reliance on others, and it may be concluded that they have mistaken camaraderie for friendship, this is not the case. The participants express their need for camaraderie that is not particularly sought out or desired but is necessary all the same. In particular, the stories of the participants reveal that they fail to understand why they are not part of the group anymore. Especially, when the group was built around skills. Skills that they still possess. However, the fact that the skills are no longer utilised for the same activities, with the same group collective, weakens and eventually dissolves the camaraderie.

King (2006) explains that personal relationships are irrelevant to camaraderie in a military environment. The participants establish their camaraderie by undertaking the initial training, participating in the repeated activities that confirm their competency in that area, and then performing in the job repeatedly, coming to rely more and more upon those around them who share their group collective and understand their experiences. Sebastian confirmed this,

> *stating you could go to a job in [location removed] and we'd all just mesh, no matter the personalities, we'd mesh because we'd done it so many times that everyone knew their role.*

In accordance with King (2006) this creates camaraderie, not friendship. All participants in this study understood the concept of camaraderie as it exists within their service organisation. Most of the participants were able to describe working with team members that they did not particularly like, but still supported as a team member, including 'having their back'. Tom explained

> *it's very, very rarely that you work autonomously, it's not that sort of environment. You have to, even if you don't like the person you're next to or working in a team with, you have to get on with them.*

As Skye previously described, confusion often arises when deployed for long periods of time with the rest of the team. On one hand they could not wait to be away from their crew, yet as soon as deployment finishes and they are back with family and friends, they find themselves seeking out their crew members. In contrast to King's (2006) analysis there was a high level of emotion that surrounded the participants' relationship with others that was based in a dual understanding that they may have their lives in each other's hands. For the participants as individuals, this became more than just camaraderie but an investment in the health and wellbeing of each other, and the support needed to ensure not just a future in the job, but possibly a future at all. Although this may not extend to a personal relationship, nor are the usual parameters of a personal relationship required to be present to establish this camaraderie, it was personal to the individual participants. So, it is not difficult to understand why they miss this so desperately when it is gone. Nearly all participants described, in one way or another, the loss of camaraderie as one of the hardest realisations after they had left their service organisation. Harry describes '*Didn't sort of realise what you were going to miss until it was gone type thing'*. The participants describe that one day they have all this and the next day it is gone.

There was no distinction between the descriptions given by participants from the three service groups in relation to their feeling of loss after separation. They all spoke of the camaraderie as a crucial and appreciated side effect of their jobs, with only the emergency services participants extending that camaraderie to mateship. The emergency services participants, in particular the fire fighters, often referred to camaraderie as a shared trait with mateship. So, it is important to examine

whether there is a blurring of definitions for this group between camaraderie and friendship. However, the detailed responses of the participants from the emergency services, including their descriptions of being isolated once they left and not being able to return to that employment easily, confirms the same behaviours of the organisation and individuals still serving as in the police and military. As such, it is more a use of terminology rather than any difference in the nature of camaraderie in the fire services.

This is not to say that any of the participants did not refer to the friendships they had built whilst in the service organisation. Plenty had what they considered to be good friendships that were established whilst in service. However, there were several descriptions that indicated the friendship can become strained when one individual is no longer serving and the other is still in. Like any friendship, this possibly just stems from a change to what is held in common and changing shared interests. The female participants reported more successful post-service friendships than the men, but only descriptively. They did not describe any different behaviours post-service that would indicate a continued camaraderie for females post-service. Rather, relationships were more social media oriented and involved keeping in touch, remotely.

Many police and emergency service participants could describe being able to return to the station they had served at and being welcomed by their former peers, but this was often mentioned as an afterthought and in some cases seemed strained. Neil mentioned '*Yeah I can still walk into the stations here and be invited in for a cup of coffee and bit of a chin wag and those kind of things. So it's like a big family really'.* This confirms that there is no formal requirement from the organisation for former members to be isolated, it is just a practice. Matthew described attending a social function with former colleagues and his wife, and being surprised at the negative environment. His wife confirmed that he used to speak like that. He was genuinely surprised, explaining

> *I found it interesting how negative the police were about everything and my wife used to say yeah but that was you and I used to say no way and she goes yeah it was you, it's like that old, you know, frog in a pot, you know you don't know that you're dying until you actually die*

These small steps are indicators of a move from group camaraderie to individual behaviour as they start to work on their identity. It is here that we start to see indicators of a disconnect from the group identity toward individual identity that arises from a move away from group support toward self-reliance.

6.4 Loss of belonging

Following on from the loss of camaraderie, the participants spoke about losing their sense of belonging following separation from service. They struggle to understand what just happened in their lives and why the sense of belonging can never seem to be replaced. It seems that the longer they are in the service position and/or the more accustomed they have become to the camaraderie being a part of their lives, the more difficult it is to cope with the loss post-service.

Participants also explain that they feel as though they are treated as if they never did belong. Considering the masculine characteristics that they needed to demonstrate in order to get through basic training and become a member of the group, and the contrasted feminine characteristics that were demonstrated by those who did not make it through basic training and/or did not make it as a member of the group, their separation from the service is likely perceived as weakness (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) by their former colleagues. The separation process leads to the perception that participants have more of the characteristics labelled as feminine and therefore their membership, not just of the physical group, but in the emotional support group associated with membership, including camaraderie, is revoked. From the descriptions of the participants it does not seem to matter that they performed the same activities, at the same skill level with the same group members only hours/days/weeks prior; once they separated they are considered to no longer demonstrate the masculine characteristics that are reflective of membership in this group.

This is further demonstrated by the fact that former police, military and emergency services must go back through basic or recruit training if they separate from the service organisation and then choose to re-join or re-enlist. Similarly, their rank is stripped, and they recommence in service at the lowest rank. For some participants, when asked whether they would

consider returning to their service organisation, the greatest hurdle was that they did not want to start all over again. The organisation as an institution dismisses their masculine characteristics, as we frame them, around their skills and knowledge in the area, relegating them to be non-existent until proven once more. Their membership of the team has been terminated and they must re-prove themselves worthy of that membership in order to return. One participant stated that, to his knowledge, there has only been one person re-accepted by the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade after leaving, in all its history. Therefore, if the organisation treats the individuals as if they were never there, there is limited possibility of the camaraderie withstanding that sort of organisational declaration. Yet, this exclusion is not a formal nor official position. It is not as if current members are told to not have any interaction with former members. The group mentality inside the masculine space seems to take it upon itself and the individual group members respond accordingly.

For Michael, the teamwork was the difference in the post-service workplace environment, even though he perceived the job content to be the same. He was affronted by the lack of teamwork and that '*basically people are really in it for themselves in that job'*. The participants have been defined and cultivated in accordance with the masculine characteristics of the service organisation and find it strange and confronting if they move to an organisation that does not function in the same space. For those who choose continuity in type of employment, there are still considerable differences that become apparent, particularly concerning the collective goal and camaraderie. At the very least they run constant comparisons to their service organisation, whilst at the most, they continue to identify with their role from the service organisation and cannot effectively disconnect.

6.5 Continuity of employment – maintaining a connection

Higate (2001) suggests that continuity of employment in a masculine space, for former military personnel, essentially delays the transition process. Amongst the participants in this study, at least 25 out of the 32 participants were in jobs that showed a continuity of this type of employment. Two participants are not working due to disability. Interestingly, four of the five participants in employment that does not demonstrate continuity are female. However, the remaining five female participants do have continuity of

employment post-service. When considering job satisfaction for former police, military and emergency services in Australia, continuity of employment in the masculine space and lack of continuity in the masculine space can both contribute to issues in the new job. Each will be addressed in turn.

Considering that individuals in the police, military and emergency services have undergone basic training that enforces masculine characteristics and encourages membership of a group with collective goals in line with the organisational needs (King, 2006), it is not surprising that participants can succinctly narrate their feelings of having lost who they were before they joined or enlisted. For some participants, they were so young when they joined or enlisted that they know of no conscious identity other than their police, military or emergency services one. For those who were older upon entry, or who had other substantial employment prior to entering, the identity issues are still the same, however, they do have a greater recollection of who they were before. Yet, none of the participants could definitively describe what they needed to do in order to redefine themselves in the post-service environment. Higate (2001) suggests that breaking the continuity of employment in the masculine space is one factor in improving transition experiences for the military.

For former police, military and emergency services, continuity in the masculine space post-service allows the individuals to work in an environment that is somewhat familiar and to use their skills in a manner they are accustomed to. In Australia, some examples of the usual options include security work for police and military; hospitality risk management, including loss control, for police; emergency response roles with the mining sector for emergency services; government and private investigations for the police; project management and logistics management for the military. When using the terms risk management, investigations, emergency service response, and logistics there is an inherent indication of a continuity of skill use from the service organisation. Whether they are utilising these skills in a masculine space involves a closer examination of the organisations. However, the roles continue to be borne of masculine characteristics and this alone seems enough to create job continuity. For these participants, these options present for both the men and the women. As such, it is likely

that the new organisations are not hegemonic masculine environments to the level seen in the police, military and emergency services, but the characteristics of the roles remain in the masculine space. For many participants this allows them to sense a comfortable space and make the transition. However, according to Higate's (2001) model, the participants may not actually be transitioning effectively post-service but prolonging their identity connection to the service organisation. Rather than allowing for an identity connection to be created with the new employment, this continuity maintains their identity connection to their past employment and does not encourage any identity work for transitional development. Based on the participants for this study, this means that many do not transition at all, and remain in a state of identity disconnection from their new employment. For others, it delays the process and they begin to transition a considerable amount of time after leaving the service organisation. This can be confusing for the individual as they do not understand the impact such continuity had on their transition.

There were several participants who had maintained continuity of type of employment post-service, for example Lucy moving from the military to the Australian Border Force, and Walter from the fire service to an emergency services role with the mining sector. Higate (2001) suggests that breaking the continuity is better for identity work for his target group as it allows them to disconnect from identifying with the masculine characteristics of their previous employment and start to function more effectively in the civilian world. This was partially the case for participants in this study. Where continuity of employment was maintained, the participants faced several transition issues, including not recognising where they fit in the new role in comparison to the service role. Although there was continuity in factors such as regulatory enforcement, teamwork, uniforms, and rank, it was still considerably different to the skills and activities undertaken in the service organisation and as such a gap between 'us and them' still presented. The gap was the same for the participants who saw little to no continuity in their post-service employment, but they found it easier to explain and understand the differences, whereas those with continuity had expectations that it would be similar and found this was not the case. This indicates that continuity in employment post-service blurs the

transition processes and confuses the individual more than if they seek employment that is not in any way like their service role.

On the other hand, based on the narration of some of the participants, an immediate step into employment that has no continuity in the masculine space is confronting and uncomfortable at a time when these individuals are often not ready for such a drastic change. Maria explained

> *I'm just doing personal injury matters which I would never thought I'd ever, ever do. So I've gone from the top of the pile to coming down several rungs so it's hard*

and Julie agreed, stating

> *No, no. So it was really difficult. I thought I'd be able to just…due to you know being so long in the cops and the fact you're multi-thinged at everything…but yeah…so I thought I'd be able to walk into a job one day and say I want this job and I'd get it. It didn't happen.*

When faced with such a scenario they falter primarily because they do not see how their skills, previously built from activities and roles in the masculine space, apply in the new role. If nothing else, the reports of some of the participants indicate that they do not understand why their skills are not more easily recognised. This, again, feeds the 'us and them' mentality and makes them feel excluded from the civilian world. However, it does hasten their transition process as they learn to adapt to the changes quickly. Their job satisfaction is still affected by the lack of common goals with their peers, a lack of shared activities and skills, and a lack of understanding amongst employers (or colleagues) of their background and experience. They become isolated and soon realise that work is a place they go and secure income and is no longer the place that they immerse themselves in as part of their life goals. The participant reporting in this area is often laced with regret and resigned acceptance of the change in their life. Some participants report making a greater effort to seek satisfaction in other parts of their lives and relying less on job satisfaction to complete their day. They do, however, still address this with a sense of loss for what they were once capable of, and the way in which they were acknowledged and recognised in the workplace. Against assumption, this does not present with arrogance over a loss of power, which was expected amongst the police and military participants in particular, but shows a level of humility as they come to the

realisation that they will not have the same job satisfaction that they had once known.

A discontinuity in employment can create alternative challenges for the participants. In particular, the transfer of their skills to the civilian sector is, to a certain extent, dependent upon them finding new employment that requires similar skills. However, it is at that point in the transition process that it is important to ensure that the skills that are transferred are as generic and adaptable as possible, thereby allowing the individual to transition more effectively. For example, for a police officer, a focus on their administration and leadership skills is more generic than focusing on their investigation skills. Similarly, for military, a focus on their project management skills is more transferable than a focus on their risk management abilities. It is at this point that there is the first divide between the three services in this study. The emergency services are the group who see the highest tendency for continuity of employment. Both firefighters and paramedics have unique skills that are difficult to translate to employment outside their sector. In the research group, all but two emergency services participants had maintained continuity of employment. For the two who had not, this was a direct result of a serious physical and psychological injury that limited their ability to continue in the emergency services sector. Military and police participants indicated that with persistence and new learning, they could transition to new sectors and begin to understand how their skills were transferable. They were learning that they needed to let go of the fact that they were a police officer or a soldier, and to adapt in the civilian world by denying how things used to be and focusing on what skills were acceptable to continue to use. Amongst the firefighters and paramedics there were stronger perceptions that they were trapped by their skills and abilities within this sector. Their sense of identity was more strongly aligned with the profession and they could not distinguish those skills from more generic ones that could be used in different sectors. Although their initial training is not as rigorous as that of police and military, and they have activities and roles that are focused on helping the community with little to no instance of confrontation and certainly no instance of lethal force, their identity connection to the service organisation is the strongest. This is because of the higher number of options for emergency services to continue in similar employment with

other organisations, such as in the mining sector, private response employers, hospitals, and private first aid organisations. In all these roles, the tasks are similar, and continuity is easily maintained. In contrast, there are no similar roles for police and military in the community. Whilst security roles may be equated, they do not compare to the broad range of skills and knowledge held by former police and military, utilising only a small proportion of the skills and training, so the continuity is weak, at best. As such, police and military must react to a lack of continuity much faster and learn to equate their generic skills with roles in the civilian sector more swiftly than those from the emergency services. Of course, this also means that employment opportunities for the emergency services are more limited than those for police and military.

Higate (2001) suggests that continuity of employment often appears to be an immediate solution to transition issues for this group, but in fact, may simply delay the complete transition and identity disconnection from the service organisation. However, amongst the participants there were more indicators of job satisfaction in those who had continuity of employment than in those who did not. It is a natural tendency for individuals post-service to seek employment that is similar to what they were doing in the service organisation, particularly as they attempt to maintain an identity connection. They will look for employment in the masculine space where they are most comfortable operating and will seek opportunities to continue to utilise their skills and knowledge. This continuity of employment addresses some immediate hurdles, by minimising the impact of change and allowing better use of existing skills and knowledge, but such continuity does not conclusively contribute to, nor detract from, job satisfaction. The participants who chose continuity of employment indicated that although they thought it was the same, or similar, there are vast differences that they struggle to overcome. Often, the depth of camaraderie and focus on collective goals is not the same, even though the job content could be seen to be the same. This makes it harder for this group as they become disillusioned that things are so different and this impacts on their job satisfaction. For other participants, it is not what is lacking in the post-service employment, when continuity is sought, but what is similar. Adding in the issue of mental health, operating in similar environments with levels

of confrontation and rank and uniform, the reminders can become triggers for mental health episodes and bode poorly for both the ability to commit to the new employment, and the individual's health, wellbeing and employment longevity. Higate's (2001) work on breaking continuity is valid in encouraging transition from the environment in which mental health issues were developed and pursuing employment in areas that are less likely to trigger negative psychological responses.

Overall, members of this group need the opportunity to understand their identity connection to their former service organisation and undergo training and education to commence identity work that will help them disconnect. Understanding their individual goals and how they are aligned with the post-service employer's goals is a starting point. Being able to work with the experience and memory of good camaraderie and a collective goal can be used to contribute to new commitment to the post-service employment but should not be sought out as a replacement for the service role. Individuals need to redefine their individual self in the context of their new employment and start to re-create their identity around their new reality.

6.6 Human capital and occupational mobility

Recognition of human capital contributes considerably to the opportunities available for this group in post-service employment. The service organisations invest heavily in the training and development of their members but with the view of generating return on investment inside the boundaries of the organisation. This means that often such training and development is not easily traded in the civilian world. The individuals seeking employment post-service often have a view of their human capital that is inconsistent with the understanding of the potential new employer. This is usually a direct result of the inability to effectively communicate the skills and knowledge to civilian employers and to describe how they will benefit the new organisation. As such, the human capital from the time spent with police, military and emergency services quickly becomes a low economic currency and individuals, like Maria who struggled to find employment post-service, are often surprised by this.

Becker's (1964) theory is most relevant here and suggests that human capital can be separated into two distinct categories: skills that are transferable and skills that are not. Firm-specific skills have the lowest return on earnings and general skills have the highest (Dobbie & McMillan, 2012; Kwon & Milgrom, 2014; Lazear & Oyer, 2004; Shaw, 1984). As such, it is logical to commence the skills transfer with the general skills and work back through the other categories.

Given the high post-service employment rate amongst the participants (29 out of 32), overall, the human capital of this group has proven to be quite good. However, for the participants, the transfer of their skills to nationally recognised qualifications translated their experience into language better understood by civilian employers. Without this, their human capital is not fully understood nor appreciated in the civilian employment sector and this can greatly undermine their sense of worth. By their own admission, the participants tend to focus most on their firm-specific skills that naturally have the lowest return on investment, yet for them as individuals have the highest worth in terms of their commitment and the physical and mental demands of their training to achieve those skills. As such, there is a natural imbalance in the way firm-specific skills are perceived by the holder and the new employer.

Of the three service groups, emergency services participants present with the highest concentration of firm-specific skills. For some participants in this service group, some of the skills are also occupation- and industry-specific, but they have the lowest concentration of general skills across all ranks. The higher ranks in the emergency services do start to acquire general skills, but their number is low per capita of emergency services employees. As a result, the skills transfer process for emergency services employees translates to very specific qualifications, such as emergency management, and therefore reduces the opportunity for employment outside of their service sector. As is seen amongst the emergency services participants, all but two are working in organisations like their service organisation, with similar if not identical roles. Vanessa is one of the two participants for whom this is different. As a direct result of a severe physical injury, she is running her own business, outside of the emergency services sector. This

transition has resulted in a substantial loss of income and savings. Neil, the second participant in this situation, is currently not employed due to injury.

The lower ranks of the military have firm, occupation and industry-specific skills (Dobbie & MacMillan, 2012). For these members of the ADF, training in a plethora of general skills designed to ensure they have a force that can function in times of peace and war is provided. As such, basic administration and communication skills are taught early amongst the ranks, and leadership is encouraged almost immediately, given that the organisation functions in an environment with many teams. These skills are generally well translated.

For the police, their role within the community allows for the development of general skills that are transferable. Further, the demands on their roles for constant record keeping and reporting to superiors as well as external stakeholders such as courts, ensures that their skills in administration are strong. Leadership is encouraged and skill development is consistently ongoing. Their skills are the most transferable amongst the three service groups.

Without the capacity to translate the skills, the human capital for former members of all three service groups is difficult to measure in the civilian employment sector. This encourages continuity in the masculine space, as the firm, occupation and industry-specific skills are easier to relate to when the activities in the new employment resemble those performed in the service roles. However, the participant descriptions indicate that even in a similar environment, the full extent of their skills is never truly appreciated. This is because any non-service job will harness a reduced range of their skills.

Having identified the issues related to human capital, occupational mobility for this group presents several restrictions that are borne from the same issues arising with the recognition of human capital (Becker, 1964). Occupational mobility is a concept that impacts the transition of this group yet is rarely understood by them as individuals. The investment in their human capital as members of the police, military and emergency services is extensive and they recognise this through the constant training, repetitive activities, and equipment provided. However, as individuals, they often fail to see that this training and preparation is conducted within occupational

boundaries. These boundaries ensure the best return on investment for the organisation but can negatively impact the individual when they choose to separate. Instead of being able to take all their skills and knowledge, including direct experiences and information, to another employer they are left with a set of skills that they personally recognise as valuable but are unable to actively use in a post-service role. Some participants, who could use their skills in post-service employment, found that the partial use of their skills within a different context was not as personally satisfying. This leads to a level of confusion amongst the individuals as they try to discern what their actual worth is in the post-service employment environment. The military participants are the most accepting of the fact that many of their skills cannot be utilised in the civilian world. Operating in unique environments, with unique training and unique equipment, prepares them for the fact that they may not be able to use all those skills post-service. The participants in this situation are surprised at how little credit they are given in post-service employment for their general skills. Where their new employers see only their firm-specific skills, the individuals start to become aware of their more general skills that are not being fully utilised. This is often described by members of this group as frustration that although they may have led a team of 350 on a military operation, for example, their new boss will not let them lead a team of five.

The former police members in Australia are possibly the most aware of the concept of occupational boundaries because they know that they cannot move from police service/force to police service/force across state lines without redoing academy training. Further, they are aware that separating from their service or force will mean they have to redo academy training should they choose to re-join. However, they often do not understand this in terms of occupational mobility. Often, the former police members refer to themselves as ‘once a police officer, always a police officer’, but they do not understand that in doing so they are constraining themselves to specific occupational boundaries.

The emergency services have the greatest level of occupational boundaries, and therefore the lowest levels of occupational mobility because they have the lowest level of general and transferable skills. That is, the specific skills that they acquire during their service are such that they are

often only transferable within the same sector. Of course, higher ranks and greater years of service start to improve their general skills, but overall this is the most restrictive of the three service organisations in terms of occupational mobility.

6.7 Mental health challenges

A final critical finding is that the incidence of mental health injury amongst this group is high, both professionally diagnosed and self-diagnosed. This potentially has an impact on the way in which the group view their job satisfaction as their life satisfaction can be distorted by the presence of illness such as PTSD. This creates complexity for this group when trying to re-deploy them and ensure job satisfaction at the same time. It is also a difficult area to research because the identity issues together with mental health issues are intertwined post-service for most participants and cannot be studied separately or in isolation from each other. This prohibits the research from being able to conclusively ascertain whether job satisfaction issues post-service are related to mental health issues alone, to identity issues alone, to poor job satisfaction with the new role alone; or to the interconnection of one or more of these issues.

6.8 Conclusion

The opportunity to narrate their experience is crucial for these participants as it gives them a forum in which they can express all the emotions related to their post-service employment experience and allow the contradictions in their reporting to be recorded and analysed. Except for one participant who enjoys his post-service employment, and the three who are not working due to injury, all participants narrated their post-service employment experience with varying levels of emotion that spoke volumes about their job satisfaction. Their words were contradictory in parts, and the ability to expand on these points obtained rich emotionally laden data that revealed three key factors that impacted their job satisfaction.

The first is that most participants maintain an identity connection to their former service role that was created in initial or basic training and reinforced through repetitive activities when in the role. This identity connection creates expectations for their post-service employment that are

rarely met. The participants then become disillusioned about their position in the civilian working world and this in turn impacts their job satisfaction. They believe that they are undervalued in the post-service employment environment and resist the need to more explicitly translate and transfer their skills to improve their employability. Their reasons for staying in the post-service employment became practical and in direct contradiction to the reasons they had stayed in their service employment. This effect was exacerbated by non-voluntary separation from their service role and by ongoing psychological, emotional and physical issues.

The second factor is the participant human capital and their subsequent marketability in the civilian labour market. Generally, their human capital was good, with 29 out of 32 being gainfully employed. However, occupational mobility influenced the type of employment they could achieve post-service, and this encouraged continuity of employment which may have a negative effect on their transition and ultimately on their job satisfaction.

The third factor was prolonged mental health issues that impacted on their health and wellness and the ability to enjoy their post-service employment. Whilst psychological issues were not directly addressed in the questioning, the participants volunteered a volume of information related to their health in this area. There was evidence of negative effects on their job satisfaction as a result of lingering mental health issues.

None of these three key factors operate in isolation. Many participants are affected by all three and the resulting impact on their job satisfaction post-service is apparent.

This chapter, together with chapters four and five, has presented the findings and framed them within the themes that arose in the data analysis. Within the timeline of the participant's service, there is evidence that they form a connection with their service organisation and role as a result of the training within the hegemonic masculine environment that the service environment supports. This connection permeates their separation from service and impacts the way in which they adapt in their post-service employment. The following chapter will contextualise these findings and explore the three themes that have been drawn from the participant

narratives – creating soldiers, organisational abandonment, and strangers in a civilian world.

Chapter 7 Toward the development of theory

7.1 Introduction

Chapters 4 to 6 describe the findings of this study that arise from the qualitative investigation of the police, military and emergency services organisations that offer a service to the Australian public steeped in protection and law and order. This chapter provides the context from which the findings emerge and describes the environments that exist and/or are created to influence and impact the participants in their service and post-service experiences. The chapter will explore the themes that have arisen from the participant narratives – creating soldiers, organisational abandonment, and strangers in a civilian world – and demonstrate how these themes arise from individuals' experiences within the service environment. This chapter will show how these themes match the timeline of individual experience whilst in service and how they explain the connection between the participants and their service organisation and role and the impact this has in their post-service employment.

To facilitate their services, the police, military and emergency service organisations establish an environment in which individuals can be trained in a range of specialist skills, equipped with specialist tools of the job, and grouped together into specialist teams that can react and respond to threat and emergency as required. The individuals who choose to join or enlist with these organisations willingly give their efforts to this training and development and embrace the organisational culture. The result is an environment that 'creates soldiers' by training civilians to be specialists in response (as relevant to police, military or emergency services). This is done through physical training of the body, shaping and training of the mind through collective thinking, focusing individuals on a collective goal, membership of unique and specialist teams, and the provision of equipment and uniforms that identify them as distinct from the communities in which they live and work. To successfully achieve the goals of this transformation of civilians to service members, a hegemonic masculine environment is facilitated and encouraged, and the masculine characteristics of strength and power become the norm. Males and females, alike, are included in the collective when they demonstrate masculine characteristics and excluded if

they demonstrate weakness, which is characterised as feminine in contrast. The impact of this environment on the development of 'soldiers' is considerable. The organisational environment utilises social isolation as a tool and creates an 'us and them' mentality between service members and the non-service members of the community. It is this organisational environment that ensures the police, military and emergency services have teams that are functional and effective in their roles, but the cost of this team cohesion is the long-term impact on the individuals who participate in this environment.

This chapter presents a theory to help categorise the complex contextual dynamics that environmentally shape the individual experiences of service personnel and how that impacts their transition to post-service employment. This chapter addresses this complex dynamic and attempts to offer some explanation for the experiences of former service personnel when they separate from service.

7.2 Towards the development of a theory of post-service identity

The participants narrate their career transition across three themes. Firstly, upon separation they realise that they have been created as soldiers and have not undergone any reversal process. Secondly, they find the transition process confronting and feel abandoned by the organisation. Lastly, they find it difficult to adapt to civilian life, and they focus this on a perceived lack of preparation by the organisation to get them ready to separate. The way they tell their stories reveals that their perceptions of why they face challenges in the post-service environment are not reflective of normal labour market shifts. Their explanations are also not reflective of transition theory (Schlossberg, 1981), the theory of culture shock (Adler, 1975), or social identity theory (Tavares et al., 2016). This supports post-service identity theory, as a newly emerging theory, that is built from the participants' explanations that their experiences are different to what is normally seen in the labour market, both in employment and following separation.

A new theory can be developed when a phenomenon needs to be explained or predicted, and is usually a set of interrelated constructs (Kivunja, 2018). Post-service identity theory supposes that the relationship

between individual service members and their service role is a construct that cannot be explained in full by existing theories. Further, the relationship between individual service members and their former team members, the relationship between individual service members and the civilian workplace, and the formation of an identity that is neither malleable or transferable provide interrelated constructs that warrant explanation using a systematic approach. Post service identity theory applies a systematic approach to understanding the experiences of the participants, using boundary conditions. It applies to former members of the Australian police, military or emergency services who have been situated inside the service environment and follow the service experience timeline.

The participant narration of their service experiences reveals two key factors. The first is that they are aware that they have specialist skills and knowledge that are a direct result of the training and activities they experienced in the service role. The second is that they have no awareness of the identity connection they have formed with the service organisation and the way in which this impacts their post-service experience – importantly, this study shows that these two factors are tightly interrelated. The consequence of the latter is that they discover swiftly following separation from the service that something is different but have little to no understanding of what it is. They cast blame on the organisation, assuming that if they had been better supported in transition, they would not be struggling the way they do post-service.

In contrast to historical precedent, service in the police, military and emergency services in 2020 is voluntary in nature. This means that individuals elect to go into service as a job. The reasons for service and propensity to serve are generally pragmatic and have little to no influence on the post-service challenges that former service members experience after separation. The greatest impact on the individuals post-service arises from the fact that, within the service environment, the individuals undergo a transformational process that redefines them from civilians to service personnel.

Arising out of this, a theory of *post-service identity* is introduced. Post-service identity theory emerges from the iterative analysis in this study of the service environment of police, military and emergency services.

Notwithstanding each participant's voluntary choice to join or enlist in these service organisations, post-service identity theory finds its developmental roots in the relationship that the individuals forge with their service environment. Although the individual's experience is fluid, the service environment is generally static.

Post-service identity theory first situates individuals in the service environment, then follows their individual experiences (as collectively experienced) during the period of service, and finally their transition out of service. Applying the timeline of the experiences of the participants, there are three specific points in time that impact on their life in service. Firstly, they enter the organisation and are introduced to the service environment. Secondly, they experience the environment individually and collectively and this impacts their lives. Thirdly, they transition from service and face new challenges in the post-service environment. Within each of these points in time are occurrences that build the post-service identity theory.

The fluid experience of the individual within the static service environment means that considerable change happens to them at a personal and social level in terms of their identity. The identification process between the individual and the service organisation is powerful and leaves the individual with a *fixed identity* upon separation. *'Fixed identity'* is a term developed here through the analysis of the data to capture the state of being that the individual participants are left in when they separate from service. Post-service identity theory proposes that their identity connection is strong, but not as salient as seen in identity theory, leaving them in a state that presents immense challenges to overcome in the post-service environment. It is this fixed identity that influences their post-service employment satisfaction and has many of them considering returning to service, even when their physical or mental health would prohibit it.

7.3 The post-service environment

Post-service identity theory describes how individuals tend to suffer from an ongoing service connection in the absence of an active identity connection. And even then, extensive work is needed to undo the connection, or at the very least, sever the connection enough to start the formation of new connections. The nature of fixed identity is such that the participants

demonstrate a lack of willingness and/or inability to form new connections, particularly in employment. Like those recovering from loss, the participants are hesitant to expose themselves to more connections and become guarded and resistant in their approach to new workplaces.

At the centre of the dynamic is an identity connection to former service roles, that when not addressed, influences job satisfaction in the post-service environment. Post-service identity theory shows that the individuals will suffer from a fixed identity when post-service, even when all ties with the organisation are severed and they can rationally narrate a logic to their departure. Contributing to the fixed identity is the unique nature of social cohesion amongst military personnel (Beauchesne & O'Hair, 2013; Binks & Cambridge, 2018; Demers, 2011; King, 2012). From a sociological perspective, social groups usually cohere based on kinship (King, 2012). However, this is not the case for the participants as members of the police, military and emergency services. For members of these service groups, camaraderie is important but does not have to equate to friendship.

Normally cultural adaptation includes the ability to straddle two cultures (Adler, 1975). The participants in this study as representative of former service members of the police, military and emergency services did not display the ability to move between the cultures as easily. What this results in is service members experiencing a culture shock after entering the service and facing the likelihood of experiencing another culture shock when they leave. When measured against Adler's (1975) five-stage model for culture shock, the missing stage of adaptation to a change in culture for service members (reciprocal interdependence) results in an identity connection that permeates all aspects of the life of the individual. As a result, the impact of transition from service with the police, military or emergency services to civilian life impacts the individual's identity in such a way that it creates a fractured sense of self (Brunger et al., 2013).

Chapter 4 confirms that the identity connection is established through the recruit or basic training and subsequent undertaking of repetitive activities in a team environment with a collective goal. The training starts the process of creating the identity connection between the individuals and the service organisation as the embodiment of their service

role strips away their previous identity. From the individual perspective, undergoing recruit or basic training is part of the ritual of belonging to the organisational team. The individual goal becomes focused on meeting the strict physical and mental demands to ensure that they are perceived as strong and suitable for inclusion in the team environment. The individuals are not aware of the gender ideology that influences their behaviour that results in membership of the team (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Godfrey et al., 2012; King, 2006), instead viewing their participation only through the simplistic script of working to pass the training tests and integrate themselves as belonging to the group. In order to do this, they obey instructions, meet requirements, shape themselves physically and mentally as instructed, and adopt the collective goal of the team and the organisation as their own.

7.4 Creating soldiers

'…from basic training…they basically deconstruct you and rebuild a soldier…' (Harry)

The creation of soldiers is a practice of the service environment that is borne from a masculine environment and the failure to 'un-create' the soldiers after service leaves the individual intrinsically connected to their service role. As addressed in Chapter 4, the creation of soldiers is a term used to explain the dynamic between the participants and their organisation that creates a strong connection between them, which is particularly apparent when the members separate from service. It is systematic in nature.

The creation of soldiers in the military is well addressed in the literature, starting with the creation of the military body (Godfrey et al., 2012). This suggests that the individuals undergo training that causes a physical embodiment of the organisation. This occurs during recruit and basic training and is reinforced through ongoing training and socialisation (Godfrey et al., 2012). According to Foucault (1977) this is further reinforced using instruments, hierarchy, and collective judgements. There is a level of docile, group thinking that accompanies the military body which is organisational socialisation to ensure the 'bodies' are 'fit for work'

(Godfrey et al., 2012, p. 553). Consistent with the literature, undergoing strict and repetitive training that involves physical demands under the supervision of a hierarchy and with the use of specific and specialised equipment re-creates individuals into the physical manifestation of their organisation's ideal individual who is fit for purpose (Barrett, 1996; Foucault, 1977; Godfrey et al., 2012). When training is conducted in this environment, individuals are reshaped into a new form of themselves as their skills and knowledge are developed in accordance with the needs of the organisation. This change is precipitated by repetitive training techniques and practice drills that demand a level of physical strength and persistence that is reflective of a hegemonic masculine environment (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Godfrey et al., 2012). The development of the body for the service environment, as individuals are trained to 'be what they do' (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011, p. 264), encompasses hard labour to achieve strength for execution of service requirements. This works towards the development of the individual body as well as the collective body, ensuring that the individual becomes dedicated to the collective goal and commits to the social isolation that is created by membership of the team. The service groups create power relations and a gender regime to contribute to the institutionalisation of individuals, reinforced using repetitive activities that are demonstrative of masculine characteristics, as well as the use of uniforms, specialist equipment, and a hierarchy (Foucault, 1977). This contributes largely to the development of an identity that is masculine in nature and ensures that the individual service member remains focused on their membership in the team. This is done also by the organisational environment in the police, military and emergency services that subordinates non-members of the organisations, creating a divide between members and non-members. The identities are built during training and have an impact on the individual regardless of whether deployment is experienced. The participants from all three service groups experienced being divested of their civilian identities in order to embrace their 'military body' (Godfrey et al., 2012, p. 553).

To support the development of a military body, there is also a need to develop the mind toward organisational thinking. The significance lies in the way in which the individual views themselves within the team, within

the organisation and within the wider community. The military literature describes this in a number of different ways – a deeply engrained way of being (Beech et al., 2017), institutionalisation (Bergman et al., 2014), dependence upon the military structure (Brunger et al., 2013), militarism (Higate & Hopton, 2004) and military identity (Demers, 2011). Overall, there was a mindset shift experienced by the participants that arises from the physical training and the transformation from 'doing to being' (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011) which supports the us and them mentality and the resulting divide between them as service members and the civilian world. It is crucial to the organisations that they distance the individuals from their civilian identity and promote self-sacrifice and discipline that results in obedience to the organisation as the legitimate authority (Demers, 2011). This contrasts with the usual liberal civil values that are individualistic in nature. Demers (2011) suggests that this is a socialisation process that has the primary goal of recruit training that strips an individual of their civilian identity and replaces it with a military identity.

The difficulties faced by the participants as former members of the police, military or emergency services in their post-service employment are consistent with individuals who have connected with an organisation that operates within a hegemonic masculine environment (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). A hegemonic masculine environment, in the context of employment with police, military or emergency services, encourages strength perceived as the property of masculinity whilst discouraging weakness which is perceived to be a feminine characteristic (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). It is clear from the participant descriptions that this serves two purposes. The first is to train and develop individuals in a service environment that encourages masculine traits for acceptance into the social group, which can be demonstrated by males and females alike. The second is to create an environment of masculinity that not only distinguishes between strength and weakness as respective masculine and feminine characteristics within the organisation, but also distinguishes between the strength of members of the organisational team and the weakness of non-members of the organisation. Essentially, in order to meet operational requirements, the organisations have service parameters that include a hegemonic masculine environment, a distinct separation between serving

and non-serving members, and training and activities that create operational members who are ‘fit for purpose’ (Godfrey et al., 2012).

The transformation process that ‘creates soldiers’ is systematic and results in a change of identity for the individual that connects them to the organisation. The creation of soldiers is a by-product of the identification process. This connection permeates their service period but also their post-service transition. This ‘creation’ process within the police, military or emergency services environment lends itself to a change in the individual that creates a connection to the organisation and the roles performed, which is difficult to breach after separation from service. The individuals experience the connection because they are physically and mentally trained to embrace the organisational goals as a collective and participate actively and effectively in the team environment. This practice, together with a complex job environment that often results in trauma and mental health issues, means the individual service members move from doing their job to being their job (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011). This happens almost undetected by the individual and they adopt the role without hesitation. In doing so, the connection with the organisation strengthens, often to the detriment of their civilian connections and/or relationships. From a sociological perspective, the immersion in the culture of the organisation (Sever, 2008) should result in the development of the individual so they can function effectively both in and out of the culture (Adler, 1975). However, the hegemonic masculine environment of these organisations, together with the specialist approach to work tasks and activities, means that the individuals cannot straddle both cultures and they become solely immersed in just one. Usually, if they stay employed, the culture they are immersed in is the police, military or emergency services environment (Sever, 2008). This identification with the organisation is strong and is shared amongst members of the three service groups without discrimination. It is also seen in male and female service members alike. It is an institutionalisation process that requires focused identity work to disassemble following separation from service (Bergman et al., 2014).

Following separation from service, the challenges for former service members in the post-service employment environment are real. As individuals, they struggle to understand the ramifications of having an

identity connection with their former service role and/or organisation and usually are not cognisant of its presence or effect. The identity becomes fixed and the individuals struggle to escape the impact. This is highlighted through poor job satisfaction when post-service that is indicated by low desire to engage with the new workplace, disappointment in the performance of new colleagues, frustration with the lack of skills recognition by civilian employers, and a sense of loss after leaving service that is not solved through new employment. These satisfaction indicators are seen even though former service members often have better income, better working conditions, and less stress and trauma in their new roles. Despite these improved working conditions, their job satisfaction remains below what they describe when in service. This means many former service members either wish they had never left the service role or consider returning. Frustration is even more apparent in these instances as many have been medically discharged and can never return nor could they have stayed.

Not understanding the identity connection they have with their former service organisation means that many of these service personnel feel unprepared when they separate from service, and feel abandoned by their service organisation. These feelings stem from being part of the collective process that creates them into soldiers. Unfortunately, there is no reverse process that 'un-creates' them as soldiers when they leave. As such, they are left with a fixed identity that has no currency in the civilian world, they have a wealth of specialist skills that cannot be used in the civilian world, and they are ill equipped to sell themselves to civilian employers. This makes separation and transition a confusing time.

Identity theory (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Ashforth et al., 2016), social identity theory (Tavares et al., 2016), self-categorisation theory, and social resource theory (Otto et al., 2011) all provide different explanations for the way in which individuals self-identify. Identification occurs within themselves as individual persons, within the roles they occupy, and as members of a group. Identities are salient and adaptable depending upon the social environment. Post-service identity theory explains that the effect of service on the participants is such that their identities are less than salient and show signs of their person identities, role identities and social identities all being interconnected with their service role. This identity connection

dictates the way in which the individual participants perceive themselves within all social spaces, both during service and post-service. Unfortunately for the participants, they are unaware that they are defined by their service persona and therefore are shocked when they separate from service and struggle to relate in the post-service environment. In the post-service environment they discover that their personal identity is defined by the role they undertook in service (being what they are doing), their role identities remain connected to their service role even after separation, and their social identities are connected to the service role, their former service teams, and to the friends and colleagues that are commonly service personnel.

7.5 Organisational abandonment

It should not be underestimated how crucial the creation of the individual's identity connection to the organisation is for the smooth operation of the organisation. Post-service identity theory is built around this interaction. Meeting organisational needs will always remain the priority of the organisation, particularly when specific and specialist training is conducive to keeping members safe and ensuring they can act as required under all circumstances. This means that although the organisations are responsible for perpetuating the identity connection between individual members and the organisation, it is a complex process to blame the organisation for the resulting identity connection and the way this outcome challenges former service members when post-service. However, individual service members do hold the organisation accountable for the challenges they face post-service, usually feeling as though they were inadequately prepared for exit. This stems from the fact that the organisation creates them as soldiers (conceptually speaking) and does not take steps to 'un-create' them. This results in the individual service members experiencing feelings of organisational abandonment.

'…transition is a misnomer, it's not a transition, you just drop of a cliff…it's a yawning chasm you just fall into…' (Charles)

To help understand transition, Schlossberg states

> a transition can be said to occur if an event or non-event results in a change in assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one's behaviour and relationships (1981, p. 5).

Transition theory is applied to adulthood and helps to explain the application of coping strategies by individuals as they experience various events in their lives (Schlossberg, 1981). Transition through changes in life often results in new self-perceptions (Schlossberg, 2011). Schlossberg (1981) describes loss of career aspirations as a subtle event amongst numerous events that form transitions in an individual's life. Contrary to this, the participants do not describe their separation from service as a subtle event and instead report it to be a disruptive event that has substantial impact on their lives. This is in line with Schlossberg's (2011) later work on unanticipated transitions, although career change still does not make her list of these unanticipated events, instead she references major surgery or serious car accidents. Therefore, with reference to the literature, the participants suffer the consequences of a disruptive non-anticipated transition when they separate from service, when it should only be a subtle event and less disruptive in nature (Schlossberg, 2011). The significance of this for these individuals is their need to understand that transition is a process, not an event.

It is during this transition experience that former service personnel can start the process of disconnection from their former service organisation and re-identification as civilians (Hakak, 2015). There can be several hurdles for these former members to face during this period, but primarily, the issue is a misinterpretation of what transition means for service personnel. For former military personnel, they understand transition to be the process of exiting from the defence force but become confused when their personal investment in the transition process continues past separation, after the organisational support ceases. For former police and emergency services personnel, they do not undergo a formal transition process from their organisation however the term is often unofficially applied to their separation. Instead of understanding it to be a life-process as described by Schlossberg (2011), former service members view it as a part of their exit

from the organisation. When the organisation fails to offer support past separation, the individual former service members become disillusioned about the transition process and lose focus as to how their post-service experiences can be improved by their own actions. The individuals experience feelings of abandonment by the organisation which leads to blame being cast outward that does little to improve their transition experience (Hakak, 2015).

Contrary to the experience of the participants, separation from service is a career event and what follows thereafter is a transition process in their life, similar to other experiences such as leaving school, moving house, separating from spouses, having children, or losing loved ones (Schlossberg, 2011). The individual's ability to adapt to the transition is borne within their ability to change their self-perception. To successfully transition, the change in their behaviour and attitude needs to come from their willingness to disconnect from their service identity and redefine themselves as civilians. For the purpose of this discussion, that includes their ability to contribute to their own positive post-service job experiences. This means that holding the organisation responsible for their post-service challenges is not conducive to a successful transition.

Notwithstanding the processes that are suggested to assist with the transition of service members from the police, military and emergency services, it is important to capture the perspective of the individuals and their experience. Drawing upon the findings in Chapter 6, it is at separation that the participants experience the most distress and confusion around their identity. Here, in their personal timelines, they discover the extent to which they have been re-created into their service persona and, most importantly, the lack of tools to un-create themselves from this identity. Whilst in uniform and within the confines of their service role, the participants appear safe and secure in their identity. They may be struggling with the job, and experiencing vocational discontent or mental health issues, but they are stable in their identity. Once they separate from the service, their right to the identity is stripped, and they are left disillusioned and confused and unable to understand what just happened.

'okay bye, bye, have a nice life' (Lucy)

Feelings of organisational abandonment are significant for many of the participants. The identity connection with the service organisation and their service role means that they make assumptions about the way in which the organisation will manage their separation. The organisations, however, have a role to fulfil in the community and that is to make sure they can always meet their operational demands. When dealing with members who can no longer contribute to these outcomes, they are not active in managing their separation. Whether the responsibility lies with the organisation or not, the individual participants believe that it should. In the labour market it is unusual for an employer to assist an employee to gain new employment, and it is unusual for any employee to expect that this should be the case. This is a unique expectation that several of the participants hold and is directly attributable to the identity connection they have formed with the organisation and their role.

The identification of the absence of a systematic approach to the un-creation of soldiers, either at an individual or organisational level, is the contribution of this research that is framed within post-service identity theory. It is the post-service experiences of the participants that set post-service identity theory apart from other similar discourses such as identity theory or social identity theory (Tavares et al., 2016). Post-service identity theory frames the experiences of the participants at three intervals. Based on the findings addressed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, the first interval is the training and creation of soldiers within the service environment, the second interval is the individual adoption of the service-based identity to ensure inclusion in the team and focus on the collective goal, and the third interval is the post-service experience following separation from service. Importantly, however, the environment that is addressed above is a static environment. The organisations function within certain parameters and they 'wash, rinse and repeat'. The individual experience, however, is on a spectrum. The participants move through the static environment provided by the organisations, and although the experience for the individual may appear to be fluid and variable, few seem to be able to avoid the outcome. Unlike many environments that individuals experience, the service environment that fosters the individual experience causes it to be a one-directional

spectrum rather than a continuum. A continuum would indicate that individuals can move forward and back, or up and down, and this is not the case. The fixed identity that arises is facilitated by the fixed nature of the individual movement along the spectrum of experience. They do reach the end eventually and have all experienced similar stations of change along the way.

7.6 Strangers in a civilian world

Post-service identity theory posits that the divide between service personnel and the civilian world is exacerbated once the individual service member integrates with their new team within the service organisation and begins to work together with other members to achieve collective goals. As detailed in Chapters 4 to 6, the identity connection is forged out of physical and mental re-creation during service training and performance of the service role, it is strengthened by social isolation and the focus on collective goals, and reinforced by membership of the team that includes camaraderie and friendships. The identity connection often results in a loss of non-service oriented personal relationships which further strengthens the connection through increased isolation from non-service members, and further supports the divide between the participants as service members and civilians. The service members notice differences between themselves and their family and friends such as physical appearance, attitudes to local and world events, discipline and commitment to workspaces, and organisation and regulation of personal spaces and lives. However, it is after some time of performing the expected activities of the service role that the individuals are most impacted by the divide between themselves and their pre-service lives. During the performance of the activities the service members reinforce their membership in the team, continue to build relationships that support social cohesion, and begin to rely on other team members for physical and emotional support. This is often to the exclusion of their usual civilian support group. The result of this is an even stronger identity connection to the organisation and to the role in the team. The reference point for support, and therefore for belonging, shifts from the home and the previous identity to the workspace.

The divide between former service members and the civilian world creates an ‘us and them’ mentality that further justifies the subordination of

non-members (Brunger et al., 2013; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The divide is created during basic or recruit training and then reinforced through repetitive activities associated with the service role, from an organisational perspective. The divide is a crucial component of training as it better prepares the individuals to work in areas that involve enforcement of law, aggressive and assertive confrontation, and public safety. The 'us and them' approach is as much a practice as it is a mentality. Whilst individuals can develop the mentality, the practice is encouraged by the organisation they are in service with, making it as much an environmental issue (in service) as an individual issue. It is clearly perpetuated through the training and activities and is encouraged through membership of the team within the hegemonic masculine environment. The creation of an 'us and them' mentality supports the social isolation that is consistent with the training in a hegemonic masculine environment and strengthens the collective goal. The service members must show coherence with the group thinking, function in accordance with the team rules, and enforce the mandates of the organisation. Although each has a different focus, these sorts of applied powers are relevant to all three service groups.

'*maybe you people aren't as good as you think you are' (Maria)*

However, transition challenges faced by military personnel may be exacerbated by civilian attitudes to the armed forces (Binks & Cambridge, 2018). This means the divide can be multi-directional between service members and civilians and does not support a positive reintegration into the workforce post-service for former service members.

In Australia, employers are being asked to show their support for former military by pledging to consider former service members for employment, through various programs including the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program[13]. This is a public call for employers to demonstrate that they are actively bridging any divide that arises from their side as civilians. Yet, the service members are encouraged to apply for these employment opportunities because they have these former military skills.

[13] https://www.veteransemployment.gov.au/

Moving Forward

Civilian opinion about the individual participants and their capabilities in the post-service employment environment weighs heavily. Awareness surrounding mental health issues for former members of the police, military and emergency services is increasing and with it comes a new stigma. Civilian employers express concern around the mental wellbeing of former service members and how it may impact the workplace. This creates a hesitancy to employ, with or without formal diagnosis or valid information about each individual potential employee. Within the post-service identity theory, mental health issues are indirectly addressed as a likelihood, based on the number of participants who are formally diagnosed or self-report symptoms of mental health illness or injury. Therefore, no insight is provided here as to the validity of employers rejecting former service members because of mental health issues. Work is being done by a few organisations to extol the skills of former military personnel, and to a lesser degree, the skills of police and emergency services personnel. These are competing interests.

However, putting aside mental health issues, civilian employers do struggle to fully grasp the breadth of skills offered by individuals like the participants. This is a lack of awareness and understanding about the nature of the training, ongoing activities and work roles of these service organisations. The reasons are twofold. Firstly, the training conducted by these organisations is specialist and provided only for serving and/or operational members. The skills are unique to the needs of each organisation and developed within the confines of that service environment. Secondly, the work and daily roles of the members of these organisations is not always publicly announced, demonstrated or described. There are many facets to each job that are unique to the role and therefore there is little to no reason for this to be publicly displayed or shared. Some of the work is confidential in nature and needs to be kept away from non-members. The experiences of the participants indicate that this is part of the reason the divide between the civilian world and the service organisation/s is so apparent. The flipside to this is that civilians are unaware of the training and activities of the former service members and therefore cannot easily understand the way in which they can now fit into a civilian role using their service-based skills and knowledge. This knowledge gap between organisations, civilian and not,

facilitates difficulties in transition. Post-service identity theory alerts us to the consequences of this dynamic.

Post-service identity theory recognises that the participants are not aware of the changes to their identity nor are they aware that they separate from service with a fixed identity. The first indication for the participants that something is different for them after they leave the service job is when they seek new employment with organisations that are not police, military or emergency services. Often, they struggle to gain employment after leaving the service. Some of the participants submitted numerous applications and attended several interviews but were not successful. This is contributed to by limitations related to occupational mobility and human capital (Hayes & Fitzgerald, 2009; Becker, 1964). There are a few different layers apparent here. Firstly, the skills and experience held by former service personnel are firm-related skills (Dobbie & MacMillan, 2012), which are the lowest skills in the employment hierarchy and the least transferable (Becker, 1964). For many of the participants, income is not a primary measure of job satisfaction after separation from their service organisation, but it is a motivator for job choice. As the opportunity for employment becomes more limited, some participants were forced to accept work with lower incomes, resulting in underemployment. The introduction of occupation-specific and industry-specific as new categories of human capital further reduce the competitiveness of firm-related skills, leaving it as one of the weakest categories for work opportunities outside the organisation in which the skills are developed (Dobbie & MacMillan, 2012). The new categories mean that occupational mobility is a factor in preventing former service personnel from expanding their skills from firm-related to occupation-specific or industry-specific. This is because there is little to no occupational mobility amongst or between the police, military and emergency services organisations. These organisations invest heavily in the firm-related human capital of their employees and in doing so tighten the occupational boundaries. This is apparent through the restrictions placed on inter-organisational transfers for operational personnel (QPS, 2019).

Further, post-service identity theory postulates that, when separating from the service organisations, former personnel are not aware that the skills they developed in service are not easily transferable to employment outside

service. The participants consider themselves to be highly skilled and they carry their (now fixed) service identity with pride and therefore most are surprised to discover that their skills are not easily recognised by employers in the post-service environment. Service personnel often demonstrate no awareness upon separation that they will need to translate their skills into a form (such as nationally recognised qualifications) that is understood by potential employers. They become more aware of this as time passes after separation and begin to investigate ways and means to better translate their skills. This can be achieved for many of them, and by better translating their skills they become more employable to non-service organisations. The need to upskill or re-educate oneself when moving from one job to another is not unique but having skills and knowledge that are specialist in nature and not easily recognised by new employers presents unique challenges. The struggle for former service members is twofold. Firstly, they do not anticipate that their skills are not easily recognised in the post-service employment environment and therefore are poorly prepared for this realisation. Further, they face uncertainty as to how to manage this and how to explain their existing skills and knowledge to potential employers. Secondly, they do not fully understand the difference between their specialist skills and their soft skills and the way in which they can bring those skills into a new workplace (Becker, 1964). They are limited by their fixed identity and cannot distinguish between themselves as ‘soldiers’ and themselves as valuable employees with a range of versatile skills. This limitation prevents them from effectively communicating their worth to new employers and they require support and guidance to start the redefining process in order to successfully gain employment post-service. Overcoming this challenge does not make their post-service life any easier, it just adds to the hurdles they face after leaving. This includes frustration at having to address identity issues and obtaining employment that does not make them feel ‘better off’. Acquiring employment and tackling the issue of skills transfer does not automatically improve job satisfaction for this group in their post-service employment.

Unlike usual labour market indicators for job satisfaction, the participants do not report job satisfaction based on pay, hours of work, job security and career prospects (Warr, 1999). Many of them are generally

negative about post-service employment. The factors that impact job satisfaction for these former members in the post-service environment are a complex, multi-layered dynamic. It is this weave of issues that creates challenges when attempting to explain how the individuals are affected and why they have poor job satisfaction in the post-service working environment. The issues can be summarised as follows:

1. Not being able to gain employment easily after separation from service
2. Gaining employment post-service that:
    a. Does not have the same level of training
    b. Does not have the same focus on teamwork
3. Working in employment post-service where their individual skills and knowledge are not recognised and/or not acknowledged
4. Working in employment post-service where their individual skills and knowledge cannot be utilised and/or are not applied
5. Not committing to the new employment to the extent they did to their service organisation.

These issues are not mutually exclusive and can be attributed to three factors influencing the service members' post-service employment experience. Firstly, the divide between service personnel from the police, military and emergency services and the civilian world. Secondly, the need for translation of the skills and knowledge from service in the police, military and emergency services into language that the civilian world can understand. Thirdly, the complexities that surround continuity of employment.

It is noted that usual labour market indicators for job satisfaction, such as pay, hours of work, job security and career prospects (Warr, 1999) are important for service personnel when first seeking employment after separation. Often, once employment is secured, the former service members experience better pay, better hours of work and adequate job security and career prospects when compared to their previous service positions. Yet, these factors do not result in job satisfaction. The development of an identity connection between members and their service organisation becomes fixed

and permeates separation which makes it difficult for them to adjust well in the post-service environment. There is a common story amongst former members of the police, military and emergency services about the post-service environment in which new employment is sought. The adjustment difficulties present in varying ways in the post-service employment including but not limited to a lack of commitment to the new role, less investment in the goals of the new workplace, lack of trust of new colleagues, and lack of personal satisfaction in the work tasks. Although subjective in nature, these factors present as new determinants of job satisfaction for this group. In contrast, the usual labour market determinants of job satisfaction such as income, working hours and job content are relevant for job choices post-service but do not ensure job satisfaction. This is because the fixed identity maintains an existing connection to the service role and prevents engagement and identification with the new role.

Reported levels of job satisfaction can also be influenced by an individual's 'emotional state or mood' (D'Addio et al., 2007, p. 5). This is often a factor for the participants from all three service groups who medically separate from service due to either physical or mental health injury and can be directly related to fixed identity but also to other mental health factors. The injuries influence their daily wellbeing and impact their job satisfaction, and the interaction between the mental health diagnosis or issues and the issues related to a fixed identity create a complicated treatment environment. This is also a factor for those participants who were not diagnosed with a mental health injury but suffer emotional exhaustion and poor mental health symptoms as a result of their service employment which influence their emotional state when working in post-service employment. These issues have a negative effect on their daily life, and in turn influence their job satisfaction (Xu et al., 2016).

Given that many of the participants have weakened emotional resilience after separating from service, which impacts their job satisfaction, they can face challenges in transition even when not formally diagnosed with mental health illnesses (Brunger et al., 2013). This indicates that mental health issues are not the sole barrier to successful transition, but the presence of mental health injuries demands the need for resolution and/or stabilisation of the mental health condition in order to support re-entry to the

workforce post-service. Mental health issues and injuries were not directly addressed here, but two things are clear: the participants who are diagnosed with mental health injuries often struggle to manage their health, but it is not the sole contributor to the challenges they face in the post-service environment; and the participants who are not diagnosed with a mental health illness but self-report related symptoms often portray their struggles post-service as a combination of mental and emotional fatigue and other less understood issues. Those who do not suffer any mental health issues still face challenges in the post-service environment. With growing work and acknowledgement in this area (especially for military veterans), former service personnel are generally well versed on mental health issues and understand the consequences and impacts of psychological and emotional triggers. It is the combination of a fixed identity together with mental health issues that is less understood.

In addition, job satisfaction for former service members in the post-service environment is impacted by unrealistic expectations of new employment (Brentari & Golia, 2008; D'Addio et al., 2007, Warr, 1999; Xu et al., 2016). As described in Chapter 6, the participants are employable. This means that their human capital has translated effectively into the post-service employment environment. However, several participants feel underemployed following separation and are less satisfied with their new employment options as a result. This indicates that whilst their human capital allows for a transfer to employment, it may not result in a level of employment with which the individual can be satisfied. This presents in three ways. The first is expectations for teamwork and team engagement that are not met. The second is camaraderie and a lack of engagement between individuals that negatively affects work output. The third is organisational policies, processes and practices that do not meet the exacting expectations of the individual. These are indications of comparisons between old and new employment which are consistent with the work of Lévy-Garboua and Montmarquette (2004) who explain that the more employment experiences an individual has, the greater number of comparisons they can run between old and new employment. The 'experienced preference' results in feelings of regret (for leaving) rather than rejoicing when comparing their new job with their old (Lévy-Garboua

& Montmarquette, 2004, p. 136). This means that their job satisfaction is measured by the difference between their two experiences – the service role and their new role. The result is that the present value of the new job is not as high for the individual as their memorised value of their old role. This becomes problematic when there is no option for an individual to return to their former service role. A fixed identity further strengthens the preference for the former service role and impacts the ability for the individual to relate to their new employment environment.

One of the reasons the fixed identity remains so strong for the participants is because occupational mobility for the services is poor. As explained above, movement between State service organisations is not possible without retraining. This reflects poorly on the way in which the service organisations recognise the skills and knowledge of exiting service members. As such, recognition out of service by civilian employers can also prove challenging. This means that a lack of occupational mobility and a weaker translation of human capital can result in underemployment which subsequently results in poor job satisfaction.

With a fixed identity, responses to this 'experienced preference' include seeking employment that mirrors, in some way, the former service role. This type of continuity of employment (Higate, 2001) had both negative and positive outcomes for the participants. The expectation that the perceived outcomes of the new employment organisation are along the same lines as the service role and therefore the same practices are expected is heightened by continuity of type of employment (Higate, 2001). Conversely, interrupting continuity of type of employment prevents these expectations because the roles are sufficiently different that the individual can better grasp the concept that things are not the same. Continuity of employment presents complexities that cannot be easily solved. On the one hand, continuity of employment enables any individual to continue to use their existing skills and knowledge and to have a sense of familiarity in the new job role. On the other hand, breaking continuity of employment demands the development of new skills and knowledge and a need to embrace new attitudes and behaviours quickly. Higate (2001) theorises the post-service trajectory of former military in terms of continuity of employment to frame the gender ideology that is created through the

militarisation of the individuals in a masculine space. Continuity of employment as a concept is not presented as a solution, but rather as an explanation as to why military personnel face challenges when post-service, and continue to face those challenges for an undefined period after service (Higate, 2001). These experiences are the individual service members' irreconcilable need to maintain their military identity (Higate, 2001) and their masculine stereotypes (Brunger et al., 2013). If that is the case, then continuity of employment is not just a need to apply existing skills and knowledge, but instead is the seeking of a connection to former employment. This level of institutionalisation results in a fractured sense of self when individuals are forced to redefine themselves in the post-service employment environment (Bergman et al., 2014; Brunger et al., 2013).

Maintaining an identity connection to the service organisation and/or role influences the participants in their post-service employment pursuits, including their job choices. The choice of employment is often influenced by fixed identity because the participants are looking for jobs that will support their existing service-related identity. This has two main effects for the individual. The first is that continuity of employment can stall their identity work as they have opportunities to at least partially remain invested in work that is similar to the service role and this gives them no reason to change the way in which they identify in their lives. The second is that few jobs, if any, are similar to service roles and therefore the former service members become disillusioned within that employment and describe poor job satisfaction as a result. This is because they expect the work to be the same, but it is not. With consideration of the work of Higate (2001), the concept of continuity of employment for former members of the police, military and emergency services is problematic. There is the illusion of continuity in post-service employment, but differences are always apparent. Continuity of employment is based on similarities of role tasks, such as security, border protection, emergency response, armed guarding, investigations, or loss prevention, and typically many former service members could be said to have continuity. The error of this assumption is that no role in the post-service environment represents a continuity of employment. Key themes that shape the identity of former service members, such as creating soldiers and the us and them mentality, are borne within a

hegemonic masculine environment that is not often re-created in post-service employment. The combination of these factors (hegemonic masculine environment, training, and collective goal) is the key difference, where all the factors need to be present to create an identity in the individuals that is strongly attached to the organisation and not transferable to other employment.

Although Higate's (2001) work is most often used as a discussion of continuity of employment (Brunger et al., 2013), it is a simplified approach to conclude that his work can be distilled to the view that the same job post-service means a delayed transition and that a different job hastens transition. Instead, the type of job chosen by former service members reflects the extent to which their identity remains connected to their former service role. Consistent with the literature, the link between the individual and the service role that is created in the hegemonic masculine space using repetitive masculine activities and a collective goal, is difficult to disconnect from when post-service. Choosing jobs with a similar gender ideology is an indicator of the extent to which former service members work to maintain their masculine identity.

This helps understand issues with job satisfaction in post-service employment. Higate (2001) argues that a possible solution to post-service issues is for individuals to redefine their identity through employment that does not have any connection to their former service role. However, Higate's (2001) argument is not conclusive in this research because job satisfaction for the participants varies whether they have continuity of employment or not. The most significant factor that impacts job satisfaction when post-service is the individual's (now) fixed identity. In the post-service employment environment this fixed identity dictates their ability to assimilate into the civilian world and to achieve job satisfaction in their new role.

Figure 3 below graphically presents the experience.

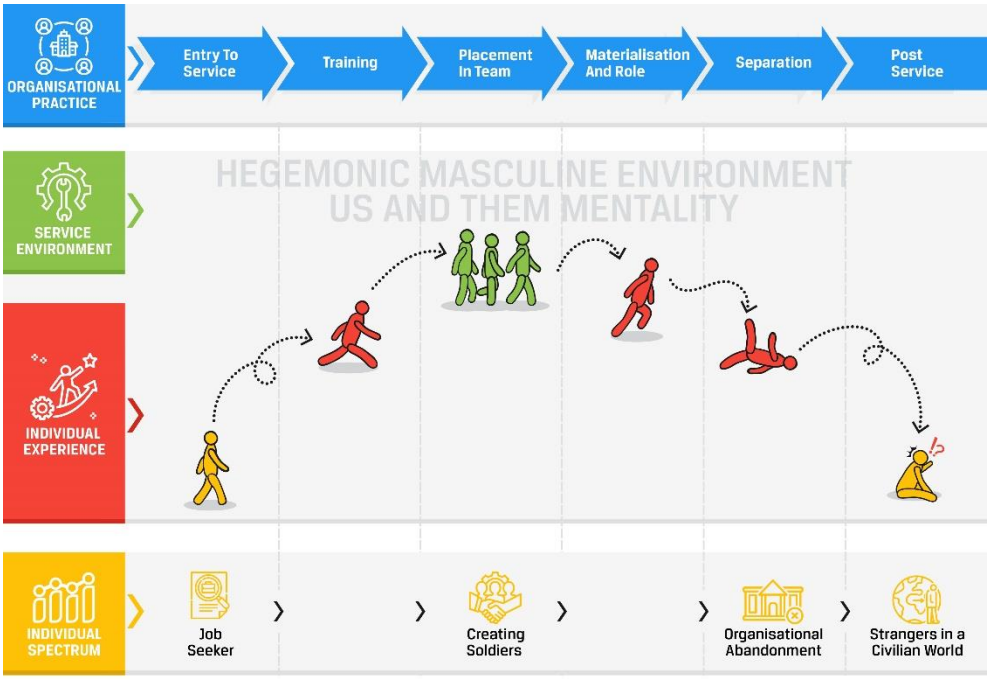

Figure 3: Individual Experience Within the Service Environment

7.7 Conclusion

Post-service identity theory stipulates that service organisations such as the police, military and emergency services create an environment of training and routine that creates an identity connection between individuals and the service organisation. The service organisations have a static environment that creates soldiers for the purposes of organisational needs and demand. In turn the individuals have a fluid experience of change as members of the service that creates identification with the service role, to the exclusion of other identities, particularly their former civilian or non-service identity. Unique to this group, the identity becomes fixed and does not follow the normal patterns of culture adaptation, causing the individuals not to be able to shed their service identity and adopt new ones in the post-service employment environment.

The participants narrate their career transition with little to no awareness of the identity connection they have formed with the service organisation. There are two levels of influence here: the service environment that perpetuates the connection and the individual experience that is receptive to the connection. Generally, job satisfaction issues for former service personnel in the post-service environment arise primarily from this identity connection with their service role. If they remain

connected to their service role persona and are unwilling or unable to re-create themselves in the civilian world, they can experience poor job satisfaction. The usual labour market job satisfaction determinants, such as pay, working hours, and career prospects, are not determinants of job satisfaction for this group. However, the absence of these determinants does result in poor job satisfaction.

The greatest challenge faced by former service members post-service is being unaware of how the identity connection influences their lives outside service. The former service members feel like they are strangers in the civilian world when they leave their service organisation and do not fully understand why they no longer fit into the world outside the police, military or emergency services. This theme arises through the us and them mentality of service personnel who undergo training in a hegemonic masculine environment of which the aim is to develop them from civilians to service personnel. There is no training to restore them to their previous status. This results in a fixed identity that permeates their post-service employment environment and causes the individual to feel considerable loss following the disconnection from their service organisation.

The personal development that is required post-service in order to return the service personnel to being employable civilians creates feelings of frustration amongst individual service members. They exit service with an extensive array of both unique and common skills and knowledge but feel underappreciated and misunderstood by civilian employers (Demers, 2011). This is consistent with the literature out of the UK for former military and often results in unemployment and/or underemployment (Brunger et al., 2013; Higate, 2001). For the participants, the ability to transfer their skills and knowledge to a format understood by civilian employers is a support mechanism in their post-service experience. This is a crucial step in improving the transition experience for former police, military and emergency services personnel.

The organisational abandonment felt by the participants following their separation from the police, military or emergency services creates a complex dynamic for the service organisations, the individuals and the post-service civilian employment organisations. The feeling that the organisation owes them better support upon separation is intrinsically linked to the

training that is undertaken by new recruits and/or members. It is the training environment that commences the re-identification process which strips the individual recruits of their former civilian identity and replaces it with an identity that is service-related and fit for purpose. Whilst role identification is normal for individuals employed in a workplace, the extent to which the service role identity is imprinted and becomes fixed upon the individual is largely related to the unique nature of the training and the hegemonic masculine environment in which the training takes place in these service organisations. When the role identity should adapt and change with the employment, for the participants from these service organisations, the identity becomes fixed on their service persona. This is due to the individual adoption of the role, the organisational demands on each individual's strength and commitment to the service role and service organisation, the parameters for inclusion in the service team, and the isolation from other social identities – especially their former civilian identity.

The creation of this identity is encompassed in the development of the individuals to be physically and mentally strong and fit for the service role that the individual participants view as being created as a soldier. There is no process to un-create these soldiers. The absence of this process leaves individuals confused and disillusioned in the post-service environment, because the level of identification was not expected and rarely matches any earlier experiences in their lives. They also do not find any similar experience in the post-service employment environment unless they swap from one service to another.

The added complication of poor mental health impedes job satisfaction for these individuals when post-service. With increasing support in the community, former service members are more forthcoming in their mental health struggles and share openly how this impacts their lives post-service. It is, however, impossible to draw conclusions about the issues impacting former service personnel job satisfaction post-service without considering that mental health issues may be a factor.

This chapter has provided a deep context from which the findings emerged. The following chapter will identify the contribution these findings can make to both practice and theory and the way in which the application of the findings can invite change. The themes developed from the narration

of the participants will be framed within the context of practice and post-service identity theory and fixed identity will be presented as a contribution to theory. Limitations and suggestions for future research will also be addressed.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

To investigate the experiences of former members of the police, military and emergency services and to ascertain the factors that impacted their post service employment satisfaction the following research questions are answered:

1. What is the nature of the identity-based connection between uniformed professionals and their work?
2. How does this identity-based connection influence individuals in their pursuit of work opportunities?
3. What factors determine levels of job satisfaction in employment post-service for Australian uniformed professionals in policing, military, and emergency services?
4. Amongst these factors, what is the relative importance of human capital and perceived occupational mobility as explanations for levels of job satisfaction post-service?
5. How do former professionals narrate their career experience?

It was found that there is an identity-based connection between former members of the police, military and emergency services and their former workplace, role or organisation. This has a negative impact on their lives and work in the post service environment because the usual factors that support positive job satisfaction are not present for these individuals and they struggle to adapt to post service employment. Their human capital is strong but under-represented in the non-service environment and their occupational mobility becomes crippled as a result of this. They narrate their service experience across a timeline that becomes stagnant in transition and represents an identity connection that becomes fixed and not malleable as is usually expected in identity work.

This chapter presents the contribution to theory, contribution to practice and limitations and future research that have resulted directly from this study. For the contribution to theory, post-service identity theory and fixed identity are further contextualised as a contribution to research in the area of post-service experiences for former members of the police, military

and emergency services in Australia. Further, the shared experiences of former members of each of these service groups are framed in the context of service-related experiences that are not unique to each group but are shared by members of all three.

The contribution to practice is twofold, presenting opportunities for the service organisations to review their training and role management practices, and providing individuals with a more structured pathway for navigating the post-service employment environment. Current practices around transition from the ADF will be examined as an example to inform the application of the new practices.

This chapter will conclude with limitations of this study and recommendations for future research in the area together with a final summary of the research purpose, method, findings, contributions and conclusions.

8.2 Contribution to theory

8.2.1 Fixed identity and post-service identity theory

The findings of this research support the development of a new theory, which has been titled post-service identity theory. Post-service identity theory is presented to fill existing gaps in the literature, and in practice, for the post-service management of former members of the police, military and emergency services. Its application is twofold. First, for the individual participants and their ability to move forward in the post-service environment; and second, for the police, military and emergency services organisations, some of which are currently experiencing public and executive scrutiny for their management of personnel as they transition from service.

Post-service identity theory illuminates the impact of a hegemonic masculine environment that offers specialised training in a team context with collective thinking. This environment is found in the police, military and emergency services organisations in Australia and is most apparent during the recruit training period and the subsequent reskilling and materialisation of the role using weapons, tools, and uniforms. Post-service identity theory shows that this environment is unique to these services and has an impact on the individuals who join or serve. The environment itself is a combination of factors that influence the individual service member to

such an extent that they begin to identify strongly with the role in which they have been trained. Beyond the normal role identification that is seen in identity theory, post-service identity theory explains that the level of identification by these members is not easily described simply as role identification. This is highlighted by the struggles faced by the individuals when they are in the post-service environment. They are unable to adapt to other roles and adopt other identities, instead becoming what they are doing. It is significant that the environment that fuels this sort of identification is unique to these service organisations. Future studies would be required to ascertain other possible service organisations that provide the same environment to cause this level of identification.

Further, post-service identity theory informs the development of a fixed identity in the individuals who are trained and serve in the defined environment. Fixed identity is a term developed out of this research to attempt to describe the differences in the role identification in the participants as former members of the police, military and emergency services. Distinct from the models of identity theory, social identity theory (Tavares et al., 2016), and culture shock, the participants exhibited limited awareness of their existing identity as service members and described a futility to their attempts to move away from the fixed identity. As per the focus of this study, many of the participants who present with fixed identity describe being dissatisfied with their lives after separation, with a focus on an inability to find satisfaction in post-service employment. The presence of a fixed identity needs focus in two areas. The first is to be able to identify it in former service members to raise their personal awareness of it, and the second is to be able to initiate active identity work to try and help individuals to move forward from service with these organisations.

8.2.2 Shared experiences across police, military and emergency services

The shared lived experiences of the participants from police, military and emergency services is a finding that is not addressed directly in existing literature. It is also not addressed for members of Australian police, military and emergency services organisations. There is considerable literature on the transition experiences of military members in the US and UK. This is to be expected given the high numbers of serving military in the US and UK armed forces, their presence in high conflict zones around the world, and,

for the US, their reported high rates of poor mental and physical health, often resulting in homelessness for military veterans. Because of this, many studies into the post-service experiences of US military are welcomed. However, there are few to no studies on the Australian military and their post-service experiences, and no located studies on Australian police and emergency service members post-service. This current study explored the possibility that the post-service struggles faced by the military as reflected in the literature were not only shared by the Australian military but also Australian police and emergency services. It was found that the police, military and emergency services in Australia have shared experiences in the transition and post-service employment space, including their job satisfaction after separation from service. Issues that arise from service-based training in a hegemonic masculine environment, together with repetitive masculine activities, collective goals, social isolation, and firm-related human capital with poor occupational mobility were found to not be exclusive to the military but shared by all three service groups.

By considering former members of police, military and emergency services to be part of one group of former service members, instead of former members of separate and distinct industry groups, information could be grouped together to help identify the individual issues that impacted post-service experiences, as opposed to organisational issues. For example, the ADF offers a twelve-month transition program for those separating for reasons other than mental health and has post-service transition seminars and processes that are developed to support separation from service. The police and emergency service organisations do not offer the same transition processes. Yet, the military personnel were not any better off in the post-service environment than the police and emergency services members. To say that the ADF transition processes are, therefore, ineffective has some basis however the findings across all participants indicate show that each individual needs to participate in identity work, skills transfer and retraining, if necessary, as a solution to the transition issues. The findings did not support the introduction of transition programs for police and emergency services to match the military, nor a better transition process for the military; but instead supported the need for new programs to support

transitioning service members from all three service groups, that are not connected to the organisations themselves.

Given the shared experiences, the individual participants will benefit from understanding that their issues post-service are not related directly to the organisation they separated from, but from the type of service they were trained for and commissioned into, and which instilled changes to their individual identity. Therefore, the solution lies with the individual and not the organisation. Un-creating their military, police or emergency services identity is not possible, but imparting an understanding of why they face these challenges and providing tools to support the development of a new identity will be most beneficial. The significance of the finding that the experiences are shared amongst all three service groups lies in the potential treatment options. Without an organisation to blame, individuals have a better chance of improving their own perspectives and taking ownership of their future. This includes their ability to secure future employment and to improve post-service job satisfaction. Further, understanding that the experiences of the three service groups are shared, better informs the allocation of support resources for separated members. At the moment, military get the largest allocation of Government funding for post-service support, and the community as a whole is less aware of the challenges faced by police and emergency services. Publicly acknowledging that former members from all three service groups share the same experiences, and thereafter the same post-service challenges, will help demand an increase in the support services available for police and emergency services.

8.3 Contribution to practice

8.3.1 Organisational practices

Two key themes that arose from this research were the creation of soldiers and organisational abandonment. These draw attention to the role the service organisations play in the post-service struggles experienced by the participants as former members of these organisations. From an individual perspective, the service organisations create an environment in which they break down individuals and create them into ‘soldiers’ and then when they leave, they do not restore them back to their pre-service identity but rather simply abandon them to the civilian world. From the organisation’s perspective, they provide rigid training programs that ensure their members

are fit for duty and when those members leave, the organisations replace them as is commonly seen in the labour market. This research raises the question as to whether the organisations should be held accountable for the impact they have on individuals who serve with them.

Currently the ADF are being held to account in the post-service environment for the poor mental health of their former members and rolling inquiries have been implemented by the Federal Government for former military members to address their risk of suicide[14]. This has an ongoing focus on the mental health of the former members with little focus around the way in which the organisations strip the identity of the members and rebuild them to be 'service made' products designed solely for their role. The organisations need to address their training methods and practices and start to enquire as to whether this could be done differently. From a business perspective this is a daunting prospect, but it is timely that the organisations start to consider whether many post-service struggles experienced by individuals could be prevented or minimised with changes to the training process.

The findings of this research invite service organisations from the police, military and emergency services to review their recruitment and training processes to consider alternatives that have different impacts on their individual members during and post-service. Social responsibility should extend to members inside the organisation as well as those separating from the services. Post-service identity theory highlights that these service environments currently fail to properly monitor the impact of their internal practices upon each individual. Mental health illnesses and injuries are measurable but those separating from service with a fixed identity face many challenges that can have an adverse effect on their mental health. This results in confused diagnoses and less than effective treatment planning. This leaves the individuals disillusioned in their post-service endeavours for support. This is an opportunity for the organisations to holistically address the issues faced by current and former members and identify whether they can improve their practices for the wellbeing of their staff.

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14 https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Foreign_Affairs_Defence_and_Trade/ADF_Mental_Health/Report

There are operational requirements for service organisations such as police, military and emergency services and these are not questioned in this research. What is questioned, however, is whether this is the time for these organisations to consider new and developing ways to approach learning and compliance inside a workplace and how this could meet operational needs for service organisations whilst better protecting their members from the adverse effects of rigid training in a hegemonic masculine space.

It is also an opportunity for service organisations from the police and emergency services to understand that their members are impacted in a way that is not unique to just military service personnel and to render services after separation to them in a similar manner to the ADF. It is an opportunity for the Federal and State Governments to review the similarities between police, military and emergency services personnel in relation to post-service challenges and to better focus support where and as needed. Support post-service and changes to practice during service are warranted to improve the experiences of former members of the police, military and emergency services following separation.

8.3.2 Post-service practices

8.3.2.1 A lack of services

This study has illuminated the lack of effective services for former members of the police, military and emergency services in the post-separation environment. This is not for a lack of trying by many organisations, government and non-government, but more a lack of understanding of the level or type of supportive services required to achieve the best outcomes. In the context of post-service employment, the lack of services is likely to be a result of a lack of knowledge or awareness of identity issues and the way in which these issues can influence post-service employment satisfaction. There is also some confusion around where the responsibility should lie – with civilian organisations or with the organisations from which the members have separated.

8.3.2.2 An example – the ADF

An examination of the practices of organisations in the post-service environment provided the following example. In early 2019 the Australian Defence Force issued a tender, inviting organisations to demonstrate their

ability to offer a transition process for separating members. The ADF had made the decision to outsource the transition and resettlement process. The significance of this action was the decision by the military to no longer take responsibility for the transition of its members out of service, except to fund another organisation to manage the process. It was unclear whether this was motivated by failings within the organisation to manage transition properly, or whether it was becoming outside their core business and therefore needed to be delegated.

But the action itself highlighted three key factors relevant to this current study. The first is that approximately 16 percent of transitioning members persist with the transition services offered by the ADF. The second is that the outsourcing of the transition process indicates a shift in the way in which the organisation takes responsibility for the separation of its members. The third is that the services demanded as part of the tender do not meet the needs of separating members as described by the participants. Therefore, it is likely that outsourcing is not going to solve any existing problems.

Consistent with the literature, the tender indicates a focus on the separation of military personnel from service, with no attention on the separation of police and emergency services. To adequately manage the needs of members from all three service groups, a transition support process that is separate from any of the service organisations is likely to be most effective.

The participants have described specific issues that they face when separating from the police, military or emergency services. In summary, these are physical limitations following injury and mental health triggers resulting in poor mental health; inability to relate to employers in the civilian world and feelings of not being appreciated in that environment; a loss of camaraderie and no sense of belonging.

As the support of military veterans post-service in Australia gains more exposure, and likewise groups and organisations are working to have police and emergency services personnel recognised as needing the same support, checks of the professional practices in place are warranted.

8.3.3 New approach to practice

Therefore, this study shows there are four steps that businesses in this space should follow to properly support separating members of the police, military and emergency services:

1. Recovery
2. Skills recognition
3. Learning
4. Redeployment.

Recovery as the first step is to understand that mental and physical health issues are not the only barrier to successful transition, they are but one of the barriers. This means appropriate medical treatment for all ailments should be sourced and applied as a first step. Mental health issues need to be resolved or stabilised as much as possible before any further transition steps are taken. Services are offered by registered psychologists with expertise in mental health issues related to trauma and these should be accessed. Medical practitioners can refer patients to psychologists with treatment plans that allow them to access psychological care under Medicare. Numerous not-for-profit and charity organisations are offering psychological services for the military, with an additional small number starting to offer services for former personnel from police and emergency services. It is recommended that any business seeking to offer support to transitioning members from the three service groups either engage psychological services, or work with existing organisations to offer this support. The mental and physical health of the participants was not directly addressed in questioning the participants but became apparent through the recalling of their stories. Therefore, the presence of these issues cannot be ignored and must be addressed in any practice application for their transition support.

Skills recognition as the second step is to ensure a recognition process to make sure that the individuals' skills and knowledge gained in their service roles are measured and, where possible, converted to the currency of the civilian world. The participants' descriptions that they could not effectively relate to the employers in the civilian world and that their skills were not recognised by these same employers arise from two

behaviours. The first behaviour is the continued us and them mentality that sets the participants apart, in their minds, from the civilian world. When they start to search for employment in what they perceive to be the civilian world, they fail to understand that they are civilians and that their position is secured in the community by them acting, relating and behaving like civilians. They need to be educated in the process of re-identifying as civilians, understanding that they always have been civilians, and be taught to communicate in an appropriate manner and with language that is common to the civilian labour market.

The second behaviour is the assumption by the participants that presenting at a civilian job interview with police, military or emergency services experience as their 'go-to' reference will secure them the position. Contrary to participant beliefs, civilian employers are not versed in the roles of service personnel nor do they ordinarily know what skills and knowledge they have acquired. Like any recruitment process in the labour market, the individual applicant needs to present to a potential employer with experience and skills that are relevant to the job they are applying for and will present them as the best candidate. Applicants in the civilian world do not assume that the employer is aware of their experience or existing skills and knowledge; instead, they inform them of this through the application and interview process. Former service members need to do the same. The need for this arises from the extensive training that these services offer to prepare their personnel to undertake their service roles, which is recorded in a manner that is not easily understood by civilian employers. This widens the gap between the participants and the civilian world and further facilitates the us and them mentality. The participants have access to their service records before leaving, which are lengthy and hard to decipher.

This leads to step three, learning. An important development as a result of this research is a focus on not only the recognition of existing skills but the availability of training programs that encourage adaptation to learning in the civilian environment and instil confidence in the former service worker of 1. their ability to adapt and learn outside the service organisation, and 2. their ability to grow and develop outside the group collective that is strongly apparent in the service organisations. Encouraging learning amongst these individuals will help them shed their previous titles

and start the process of disconnecting their identity by providing them with new tools and skills to redefine themselves in the workplace. It will help the former service workers to understand how they are perceived by the civilian world and the adaptations they can make to be confident operating in the new environment. In turn, new employers will have greater confidence in the individual worker and more easily recognise not just their newly learnt skills but also the full picture of their abilities when new skills are combined with existing skills.

Step four is redeployment and this is the point at which former members should have the opportunity to be employed in the post-service environment, without risk of underemployment. There are some mistakes being made in the treatment of former service personnel as many community groups and organisations attempt to weigh in on the subject. One mistake is developing and implementing new recruitment processes specifically for service personnel on the basis that existing recruitment processes do not properly appreciate nor demonstrate the existing skills of these individuals. This further isolates the individuals from the civilian world, perpetuates the us and them the mentality and fails to identify the need for the re-creation of the individual through the development of a civilian body and mentality. The recruitment industry in Australia and internationally invests extensively annually in the movement of people. To ignore a proven system and suggest that former service personnel need a different process will prolong the 'between-ness' experienced by these individuals.

Another mistake is suggesting that all service personnel from the police, military and emergency services transition into positions that have no continuity of employment. Processes need to be developed to help these members transition effectively even when continuity of employment is sustained. Of the 32 participants, 25 had continuity of employment. It is likely that opportunity for gainful employment would have been reduced if they did not pursue continuity of employment. However, if this continuity stalls their transition process then the issues need further exploration. This suggests that the use of the term transition is another mistake. The term transition needs to remain where it is currently used in the military as an administrative label for those preparing to separate and must not be used in

the post-service environment, nor should it be applied to police and emergency services. Continuity of employment needs to be identified as a natural option for these individuals in order to continue to utilise their existing skills and knowledge. Any interruption to continuity should be of their own choosing and only when it is in their best interests to pursue a new field of employment. Instead, practices should be implemented to assist these individuals with the issues that arise when they maintain continuity.

The findings from this study can inform the development of new business processes that should focus on career change support for former police, military and emergency services in Australia. Any new business practices to support career change for these personnel can now be equipped with four key pieces of knowledge informing the business development and design and to support the implementation of the four steps listed above. The first is that support for individuals separating from the police, military and emergency services is warranted and that their needs are different to those of others separating from employment in the labour market. The second is that mental health issues must be addressed and resolved or stabilised as much as possible before the individual navigates through the career change process. The third is that the use of the term transition is not helpful in the post-service environment and should be discouraged from use as it perpetuates the us and them mentality. Lastly, the fourth is that poor job satisfaction for former police military and emergency services in the post-service environment is the result of a labyrinth of factors that need to be addressed and unfurled in order to support career change. The most important factor amongst all this is that the individuals are educated on why they are experiencing the feeling of loss post-service and given techniques to help them adapt to the change.

8.4 Limitations and further research

8.4.1 Limitations

There are a few limitations associated with this research.

1. The participants were invited to participate in the research from a database of applicants for RPL. This means that they were already familiar with the RPL process or had already undertaken and completed the RPL process. As such, many of the participants had already undergone a skills transfer process. The research may result

in different outcomes with a group who was not informed as to this practice.

2. The researcher is an experienced trainer and assessor in the vocational education sector and has worked in RPL for police, military and emergency services over the past 13 years. As such, the engagement with the participants was easy as she has an established rapport and many trust her based on previous interactions. This may make replication of the research difficult.
3. The presence of psychological issues for most participants hampers the information gathering in some ways. Selection of a group who do not demonstrate any mental health injuries or issues may change the results.

8.4.2 Further research

This research sourced a wealth of data and the findings and analysis informed a new theory and conceptualised a new state of being for former police, military and emergency services. Considering this, further research in this space is encouraged to continue to source information for the individuals in this research group and present options to improve their post-service experiences.

Future research is needed to source solutions for the fixed identity state of former members of the police, military and emergency services. As part of planned research in the psychological space, the development of scales to create a measurement system for levels of fixed identity will hopefully inform treatment options. It is expected that a research approach that addresses the psychological elements together with the elements of fixed identity will lead to effective solutions for practice.

Further research is required to validate and refine post-service identity theory and the resulting fixed identity state affecting individuals. The application of the theory to other service organisations and/or other hegemonic masculine environments would test its validity and claims that it is unique to the police, military and emergency services. Similarly, research into the presence of fixed identity in any other occupations would be of interest. Further, inquiry into the role identity of currently serving members of the police, military and emergency services would provide comparative data in anticipation of their separation from service.

Now that the qualitative research has been done and has presented new theory to contribute to knowledge it would be interesting to see whether a quantitative approach would gather enough data to better generalise about the application of post-service identity theory to police, military and emergency services organisations in Australia and internationally and to further identify the presence of fixed identity in a larger number of participants. It is expected that, as mentioned above for treatment purposes, scales would need to be established to identify and measure fixed identity to enable this sort of quantitative research.

The suggestions for future research are far from exhaustive considering the increased focus on the post-service experiences of former military in Australia by the Australian government and the wider community. This focus should also be turned to former police and emergency services personnel. Continued research has the potential to provide better long-term treatment solutions and to better target public resources to support the former members of these service groups.

8.5 Conclusion

The goal of this research was to explore the post-service employment experiences of former Australian police, military and emergency services personnel to help understand their job satisfaction following separation from service. An extensive review of the literature was conducted and revealed little to no research in the post-service employment experiences of Australian police, military and emergency services. Research on military transition experiences in the US and UK was reviewed, together with literature on family connections, propensity to serve, job satisfaction determinants and labour market factors such as human capital and occupational mobility, hegemonic masculine environments, social identity theory (Tavares et al., 2016), identity theory, transition theory and culture shock. The examination of the literature informed the development of the research questions and the methodology for the study.

Using a qualitative interview technique, 32 former police, military and emergency services personnel participated in the research and their narratives were recorded and analysed. A thematic analysis with inductive reasoning ensured a constructivist approach could be taken to interpret the

realities of these individuals. This resulted in the identification of three key themes; 1. Creating soldiers, 2. Organisational abandonment, and 3. Strangers in a civilian world. These themes explained the individual experience as they navigated the service environment and were subjected to organisational practices as part of their service employment.

The narration by the participants of their individual experiences highlighted the training that members of the police, military and emergency services are put through at commencement and the way in which this training facilitates the creation of their military body and collective thinking. This training occurs within a hegemonic masculine space that encourages the masculine traits of strength and resilience as markers for membership of the team. As the individual experiences these changes they become more socially isolated and develop an us and them mentality that impacts on their relationships with non-service personnel. This is the basis for an identity connection between the service organisation/role and the individual. The nature of the identity connection permeates the post-service environment. This research has showed that this is because the identity connection is strong and becomes a fixed identity for the individual and does not demonstrate the usual flexible nature of role identity as seen in identity theory and culture shock.

An exploration of the elements of job satisfaction as seen in the labour market, including human capital and organisational mobility, revealed that the participants did not fit the usual parameters for job satisfaction in the post-service environment. New parameters were identified and offered some explanation as to why the participants faced varying struggles in their post-service employment.

Further, this research showed that the organisational environment within which the individuals form this fixed identity has unique and identifiable elements that inform a new theory. Post-service identity theory postulates that individuals subjected to service environments and organisational practices will develop a fixed identity that maintains a connection with the service group.

The development of post-service identity theory is a contribution to theory that is not currently addressed in the existing literature. As a new theory it supposes that the service environments and organisational practices

seen in the Australian police, military and emergency services provide a basis for the development of fixed identity in their members. Further, contrary, and in addition, to existing literature, this research presents a shared experience of identification and post-service struggles between members of the police, military and emergency services. Historically, research has been conducted only on these service groups separately.

The findings and analysis of this research support new contributions to practice for those organisations seeking solutions for post-service employment issues for former members of the police, military and emergency services. The practice application is twofold. First, for the individuals, there is a four-step process to coping with the transition from service. Second, for the organisations, there is now an opportunity to review training and environmental practices.

The four-step process for individuals includes 1. Resolving mental health issues, 2. Recognition and transfer of existing skills, 3. Encouraging learning, and 4. Redeployment to satisfactory employment. This process provides a road map for individuals to help them navigate the post-service environment and to understand the challenges they face following separation from their service organisation.

For the organisations, this is an invitation to review current training practices and the way the training is delivered and to see whether this may have an improved impact on service members, both during and after service.

The journey for former service members from the police, military and emergency services when navigating the post-service employment environment presents challenges that are confusing and confronting. This research has provided answers to the key questions around these experiences, including the way in which former members narrate their experience and the factors that impact their post-service employment. Going forward, former members of the police, military and emergency services can now be armed with more information, greater awareness, and prospects for future change that will support their transition from service and positively impact their post-service employment environment.

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Appendix 1

Interview questions

1. Recall for me your earliest memory of knowing what you wanted to be when you grew up – what led you to that decision? Who were your influences? What about the role interested you?
2. Tell me about how that dream of what you wanted to be changed over time leading to your work as a uniformed professional?
3. How did you make this happen?
4. Tell me about your experience as a uniformed professional? What did it mean to you?
5. Did you have any previous connection to the police service/force/ fire/ambulance service/military?
6. You have said about the first time you wanted to be a police officer/firefighter/paramedic/sailor/soldier/pilot/in the air force. How did the reality of the job differ from what you thought?
7. Thinking back to the job, if you had to summarise, what would be your favourite part?
8. Thinking back to the job, tell me, how does it feel to be a police officer/firefighter/paramedic/sailor/soldier/pilot/in the air force as a part of a team?
9. Can you tell me your very best experience as a police officer/firefighter/paramedic/sailor/soldier/pilot/in the air force?
10. Can you tell me why you left? What happened?
11. Had that not occurred, would you have chosen to leave?
12. If you had that time over again, would you have still chosen to leave?
13. What is it about the job that makes you second guess your decision to leave?
14. How long between when you left and when you started a new job? Can you tell me about that transition period?
15. How did you feel about leaving at the time?
16. How do you feel about it now?
17. In between then and now, have you felt differently about leaving? Why?

Appendix 2

Participant information sheet

Moving Forward - employment post service for Australian uniformed professionals in the Defence Force, Police, and Emergency Services'

The **researcher** for this project is:

Katrina (Kate) Martin

Kate is a student of the Charles Sturt University, completing a Doctor of Business Administration.

The **project supervisors** are:

Professor John Hicks Professor of Economics

School of Accounting and Finance Charles Sturt University

Dr Michelle Evans

Associate Professor in Leadership School for Management and Marketing Charles Sturt University

Invitation

You are invited to participate in a research study on the experiences of Australian police, military and emergency services as they leave their service organisations and gain or seek employment elsewhere. It is an important area of research because there are limited transition support processes for police, military and emergency services, and the employees from these crucial employment areas deserve better support when moving to new career choices. The interviews will contribute to understanding the issues police, military and emergency services face when leaving this employment.

The study is being conducted by Kate Martin from the Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Science at the Charles Sturt University. This project will form the final part of Kate Martin's research for the Doctor of Business Administration with Charles Sturt University. Kate has two University staff overseeing her research, Professor John Hicks and Associate Professor Michelle Evans.

Before you decide whether or not you wish to participate in this study, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish.

1. What is the purpose of this study?

The aim of this study is to investigate the job satisfaction of former police, military and emergency services. There is limited previous research that has addressed this area for police, military and emergency services and as such,

this new research will help to identify possible issues in job transition for police, military and emergency services and therefore help make that transition process better.

2. Why have I been invited to participate in this study?

The researcher is seeking former Australian police, military and emergency services to participate in this research. If you are still serving in any of these organisations then unfortunately you are not eligible to participate.

3. What does this study involve?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in an interview with Kate Martin. The estimated time commitment required of you would not exceed two hours. The interviews will be conducted by phone, to minimise the disruption to you, however, should you wish to meet with Kate in person, interviews can also be held at CLET head office at 63 Meron Street, Southport in Queensland, or at CLET training and assessment centre at 3 Milkman Way, Coburg North, in Melbourne.

During the interview, Kate will ask you a series of questions that relate to your employment after the police, military or emergency services. The questions are not set and may be prompted by your answers.

4. What is the connection between CLET and the researcher?

Kate Martin is the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) team leader and company director of the College for Law Education and Training (CLET) with whom you may have had dealings related to an assessment for RPL. Kate is pursuing this research independent of CLET as part of her Doctoral studies with Charles Sturt University. There is no connection between your RPL assessment with CLET and your participation in this research.

Kate has chosen this area of research to better inform CLET business practices in the future, but has maintained a clear line of separation between her as the researcher and her as an RPL assessor with CLET. Only information provided by you during the research interview, and following your consent to participate, will be used in the research. All information provided by you to CLET as part of your RPL assessment remains confidential and unable to be accessed by Kate for the purposes of this research.

You can rest assured that the information needed for the research is very different to any information provided for a RPL assessment by CLET and therefore the two have no reason or motivation to be combined.

5. Will participating in this research affect my assessment with CLET?

If you are a RPL applicant and/or student with CLET, your participation in this research will have no impact or effect on your assessment or studies with CLET. There is no connection between the research and the CLET RPL assessments, except that they are both targeted at police, military and emergency services.

Should you choose not to participate in this research, or choose to participate and withdraw your consent during or after the interview process, it will have no impact on your assessment, studies or relationship with CLET.

6. Are there risks and benefits to me in taking part in this study?

The researcher cannot promise you any direct benefits from participating in this research.

The researcher acknowledges that discussing your previous employment with the police, military or emergency services can cause some distress or trigger mental, emotional or physical responses to previous events, memories, or traumas. Whilst the nature of these interviews is not to focus on such things, it is possible that you may experience memories or triggers. We have included a list of support agencies for your reference, should you need assistance during or following the interview participation. We remind you that you can stop the interview at any time. You may also have a support person with you during the interview.

Support agencies:

- Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) 1800 011 046
- Walking Wounded 1300 030 364
- Police Post Trauma Support Group (PPTSG) 0468 832 564
- Lifeline 13 11 14

7. How is this study being paid for?

The research is being funded by the researcher.

8. Will taking part in this study (or travelling to) cost me anything, and will I be paid?

There is no cost to you for taking part in this research. There is also no payment being made to participants for participating in the research.

9. What if I don't want to take part in this study?

Participation in this research is entirely your choice. Only those people who give their informed consent will be included in the project. Whether or not you decide to participate, is your decision and will not disadvantage you.

If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw from the project at any time without giving a reason all your data and any identifying factors will be removed.

10. What if I participate and want to withdraw later?

You can withdraw at any time during the research process, including after your interview has concluded. You can notify the researcher of your wish to

be withdrawn from the project, and she will remove all your data and any identifying factors.

11. How will my confidentiality be protected?

Any information collected by the researcher which might identify you will be stored securely and only accessed by the researcher and her University supervisors unless you consent otherwise, except as required by law.

Data will be retained securely for at least 5 years at the Charles Sturt University.

The researcher confirms that your name and contact details will be kept in a separate password-protected computer file from any data that you supply.

12. What will happen to the information that I give you?

The data is to be reported in a thesis to be submitted for Kate Martin's Doctor of Business Administration degree. In the final report, you will be referred to by a pseudonym. There will be no reference to personal information that may allow someone to guess your identity.

With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded so that the researcher can ensure she makes an accurate record of what you say. When the tape has been transcribed, you would be provided with a copy of the transcript on request, so that you can verify the information is correct and/or request deletions.

It is possible that the data may be presented at academic conferences, or reported in scientific journals.

13. What should I do if I want to discuss this study further before I decide?

If you would like further information please contact:

- Kate Martin (researcher) – 0417 703 248 – kate@martinwilliamsgroup.com.au
- Professor John Hicks (university supervisor) – jhicks@csu.edu.au
- Associate Professor Michelle Evans (university supervisor) – mievans@csu.edu.au

14. Who should I contact if I have concerns about the conduct of this study?

Charles Sturt University's Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this project. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Executive Officer:

The Executive Officer

Human Research Ethics Committee Tel: (02) 6338 4628

Email: ethics@csu.edu.au

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome**.**

Thank you for considering this invitation. This information sheet is for you to keep.

Appendix 3

Consent form

Moving Forward - employment post service for Australian uniformed professionals in the Defence Force, Police, and Emergency Services'

The **researcher** for this project is:

Katrina (Kate) Martin

Kate is a student of the Charles Sturt University, completing a Doctor of Business Administration.

The **project supervisors** are:

Professor John Hicks Professor of Economics

School of Accounting and Finance Charles Sturt University

Dr Michelle Evans

Associate Professor in Leadership School for Management and Marketing Charles Sturt University

I agree to participate in the above research project and give my consent freely.

I understand that the project will be conducted as described in the Information Statement, a copy of which I have retained.

I understand I can withdraw from the project at any time and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing.

I consent to participating in an interview and having it audio recorded.

I understand that my personal information will remain confidential to the researcher and her supervisors.

I have had the opportunity to have questions answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that I can receive a copy of the transcript from the audio recording of my interview upon request.

Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	
Best contact number:	

NOTE:

Charles Sturt University's Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this project. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Executive Officer:

The Executive Officer

Human Research Ethics Committee Tel: (02) 6338 4628

Email: ethics@csu.edu.au

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome**.**

Endnotes

[i] This figure was calculated accessing each individual service and force in Australia and confirming their operational population in 2014 , including – Australian Federal Police, NSW Police Force, Victoria Police, Western Australia Police, Tasmania Police, Queensland Police Service, South Australia Police, Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services; Australian Defence Force – Army, Navy and Air Force; NSW Fire and Rescue, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Western Australia Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Tasmania Fire Service, South Australia Country Fire Service and Metropolitan Fire Service, Victoria Country Fire Authority and Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Australian Capital Territory Fire and Rescue. (Additional detail is in Chapter 3 – method.)

[ii] Figure calculated in 2014 from contact with above services but estimated because not all organisations had accurate figures. Number was cross checked with researcher's business organisation who work in the transition space for this group. (Additional detail is in Chapter 3 – method.)