

RSL PFH DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2020

The events, meetings, and services I have attended in the last month are as follows:

1. Friday 1 May, Teams meeting with RSLQ CFO regarding RSL Queensland's 2019 Audited Financial Accounts.
2. Tuesday 5 May, chair Teams RSLQ Audit & Risk Committee meeting.
3. Tuesday 5 May, Teams RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
4. Wednesday 6 May, travel to Rockhampton to have RSL vehicle checked in accordance with KIA vehicle recall notice.
5. Thursday 7 May, Teams RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
6. Friday 8 May, travel to Rockhampton to attend and conduct a Poppy Service at the funeral of a Malayan veteran.
7. Tuesday 12 May, Teams RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
8. Tuesday 12 May, participate in Teams meeting with District Secretary and RSLQ's General Manager Membership & Network regarding COVID-19 Desktop Review of Sub Branch finances.
9. Thursday 14 May, Teams RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
10. Thursday 14 May, participate in Teams Mates4Mates Board meeting.
11. Wednesday 20 May, Teams RSLQ District Presidents meeting.
12. Thursday 21 May, Teams RSLQ Board meeting.
13. Friday 22 May, participate in Teams meeting with RSLQ General Manager Membership & Network and CFO, and President of Sarina Sub-Branch regarding Sarina Club closure.
14. Tuesday 26 May, Teams RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
15. Thursday 28 May, Teams RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
16. Thursday 28 May, to Rockhampton to meet with Executive of Rockhampton Combined Services Sub-Branch.
17. Saturday 30 May, participate in RSLQ's digital 2020 Indigenous Veterans Commemorative Service.

District President's Voluntary Hours and Kilometers Travelled Statistics May 2020

Voluntary Hours	117.5
Kilometers Travelled	315
Nights Away From Home	0

RSL Queensland Wins Employment Award

At a recent digital presentation of the 2020 Prime Minister's Veteran Employment Awards for Excellence, RSL Queensland was announced the winner of the Supporting Spouse Employment award category.

Since its launch in Townsville in April 2018, the RSL Queensland Employment Program has accepted 718 veterans and partners into the program and has secured permanent employment roles for 280 participants.

Since the launch of the program, the program was expanded Statewide.

During 2019, RSL National was successful in receiving a Federal Government grant to introduce the RSL Queensland Employment Program into other states. The program is now operating in South Australia with plans to expand to the other states and territories in the near future.

I am sure you will join with me in congratulating the General Manager Veteran Services, Rob Skoda, and his Employment Team, on the success of the program and winning such a prestigious award.

COVID-19 Virus

I bet that you are relieved that the Prime Minister has now announced a 3 Stage Plan to lift the COVID-19 restrictions we have been living with in the last three months. The first two Stages are only a gradual lifting of the restrictions and it will not be until Stage 3 takes effect on 10 July that we will start to feel our lives getting back to some semblance of normality.

I hope that you have been able to cope with the social isolation restrictions placed on us by Governments over this time.

I reiterate that the RSL and its members are not immune from adhering to these public health directions during the staged lifting of the restrictions and I urge you to desist from any activity that would put anyone at risk, especially many of our members who are in the older age bracket of the population and are vulnerable to the severe health complications that the virus can cause and result in death.

RSL Queensland will continue to communicate with the Sub-Branches and the membership regarding Government pronouncements.

Please let us know if you need help in coping with this situation.

Sub-Branch AGMs

As reported in my last newsletters, most of the District's Sub-Branches have been able to conduct their AGMs before Government restrictions forced the cancellation of some meetings.

It is now evident that those Sub-Branches that have had to postpone their AGMs will not be able to reschedule the meetings until after the 30 June cut-off date set out in constitutions. Now that the Prime Minister has announced a 3 Stage lifting of the public health restrictions, these Sub-Branches need to devise a plan to hold their AGM after 10 July when Stage 3 of the lifting of restrictions comes into effect.

Please note that a blanket extension has been given by the Queensland Office of Fair Trading which will allow Sub-Branches to hold the meeting in the 6 months after the 30 June.

PFH District AGM

As you are aware, the District Executive took the decision to postpone the District AGM which was to be held in Yeppoon on 27/28 March due to the escalation of the restrictions relating to the coronavirus public health emergency.

At District Executive has decided to hold the AGM on Saturday 18 July in conjunction with the scheduled District Council meeting. Given that the current social distancing restrictions will still be in place at that time, we have had to change the venue from Finch Hatton Sub-Branch. The meeting will be held in the Marian Hall where there is an abundance of space to allow us to conform with the social distancing restrictions.

Please note the following changes in relation to the AGM:

1. Only Sub-Branch delegates and District Executive members will be invited to the meeting. We have had to restrict numbers so we can meet the social distancing restrictions.

2. There will be no Annual Dinner in conjunction with the AGM. Given social distancing restrictions, it would have been near impossible to hire a venue and meet the social distancing restrictions.

2020 District Budget

As you would be aware, the 2020 District Budget was to be presented to the March postponed AGM.

The District Executive has general control and management of the administration of the affairs of the District under section 25.1 of the District constitution and the Executive has continued to run the District in the meantime.

I previously gave an undertaking that we would continue to pay the operating accounts of the District as they fall due but would not authorize the payment of funds that are not operational eg donations and capital expenditure proposed in the budget.

The 2020 budget will be presented to the AGM at Marian on Saturday 18 July for approval.

2020 State AGM/ Congress

The State AGM scheduled to be held in Brisbane on the week-end 27/28 June and postponed until Sunday 6 September has now been rescheduled to Tuesday 24 November due to the on-going COVID-19 restrictions.

Given the present uncertain environment, the current estimations of the duration of the public health emergency restrictions, and the availability of air transport, it would have been difficult to run a face to face AGM for over 200 participants in September.

The State RSL constitution stipulates that a technology meeting can be called with the permission of the Sub-Branch members. However, it only needs one Sub-Branch to vote no and the probability of all Sub-Branches approving of such is most unlikely.

RSL State is required under its constitution to hold the AGM by 31 December and if it is not possible to hold a face to face meeting in November due to the COVID-19 public health restrictions at that time, then RSL Queensland may need to go to the Sub-Branches and seek permission to hold a technology AGM meeting.

I would hope that the Sub-Branches would approve if it was not possible to hold a face to face meeting given the circumstances at the time. Such a technology meeting would only consider the basic governance documentation (audited financial accounts, acceptance of previous minutes etc) for acceptance and any other matters such as the new draft constitution would be deferred until 2021 when a face to face meeting can be held.

It is most likely, that there will be no annual dinner at the AGM when it goes ahead and for this reason and others, it was decided at recent District Executive meeting that the District will not send co-delegates to the AGM.

Australian Bushfires Crisis

As reported in the last newsletter, the bushfire crisis faced by communities across Australia over the summer months has caused devastation across many communities, especially in the southern states.

In response to this, RSL Queensland donated \$100,000 to support veterans in bushfire affected regions throughout Australia. The funds will be administered and distributed by RSL National.

The District Executive had included a donation of \$20,000 in the 2020 Budget for approval at the District AGM on 28 March 2020.

It was the intention of the District Executive to ask RSL National to administer and distribute these funds to veterans in need.

However, given the likely affect the coronavirus will have on our District, the District Executive has decided that the funds will now be held to provide financial assistance to our Sub-Branches adversely affected by the coronavirus crisis.

District Council and Executive Meetings

There has been no District Council meeting since the last one in November 2019.

Executive Council meeting were held on Saturday 8 February, Friday 28 February and by skype on Friday 17 April and Friday 5 June. The District AGM and Council meeting set for 28 March had to be postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

2020 District Council Meeting Dates

The District Executive decided to cancel the meeting scheduled for Gracemere Sub-Branch on Saturday 16 May.

18 July Marian Sub-Branch

19 September Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub-Branch

21 November Farleigh & Northern Beaches Sub-Branch (Mackay)

2020 AGM – Nominations for District Executive Positions

A nomination for each of the Vice-President and Treasurer positions has been received from incumbent Executive Members, Phil Luzzi and Dawn Salisbury, and their positions will be confirmed when the District AGM is held.

2019 Audited Financial Accounts

The Audit of the 2019 Financial Accounts has been completed by the auditor and reviewed by the District Executive.

The Audited Accounts have been signed off by the District Executive and will be presented at the AGM at Marian on Saturday 18 July.

75th Anniversary of the End of World War 2 in 2020

It was decided that funding would be provided in 2020 Budget and made available to Sub-Branches for the commemoration of the event.

The District Executive has included \$20,000 in the 2020 Budget for approval at the AGM when it is rescheduled.

However, this commemorative event may also be affected by the public health emergency.

State Board Meeting

A meeting was held via Teams on Thursday 21 May 2020.

Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025

2020 Business Plan

As resources have been diverted to respond to the coronavirus public health emergency and given the expected down turn in the Australian economy, there will be delays to programs planned in Horizon 1 of the 2020 Business Plan and reductions in revenue budget targets.

Management is in the process of conducting a complete review of the Horizon 1 time lines and the reforecasting the 2020 Budget which will be presented to the July Board meeting.

Highlights of the 2020 Business Plan were as follows:

1. Lotteries sales were expected to grow from \$130 million in 2019 to over \$150 million, strengthening sustainability.
2. A contingency fund was set aside to fund emergent initiatives identified in the 2025 Strategy.
3. There was to be three major strategic projects in 2020:
 - Reimagining membership.
 - Reinvigorating our brands.
 - Piloting a service hub.

2020 was to be a year to:

- Re-instate our relevance to the entire veteran community.
- Grow our influence across various stakeholders and governments.
- Strengthen sustainability in the future.

At this stage, it is expected that there will be a minimal effect on our plans and revenue growth.

Investment Strategy/Establishment of Investment Sub-Committee

The CFO is presently working with the Audit & Risk Committee in setting up a skills based Investment Sub-Committee.

The Investment Sub-Committee will provide direction and guidance to the Board and Management of RSLQ in the investment of cash and reserves which are surplus to operating requirements, RSL Art Union property prize portfolio purchases, and other business investment opportunities.

RSLQ presently has a large cash reserve figure which will be prudently invested to supplement the revenue stream of the Art Union activities.

At the meeting, the Board approved the Investment Committee's Terms of Reference and an Investment Policy.

The recruitment of appropriately skilled committee members is now in train. An opportunity will be given to RSL members with the necessary skills to apply for positions on the Investment Committee.

2020 Membership Renewals

Due to problems caused to the Sub-Branches by the coronavirus health emergency, the RSLQ Board has decided to extend the membership renewal cut-off date beyond 28 February. No alternative cut-off date has been set at this stage but a date will be set once there is more clarity in relation to the lifting of the public health restrictions.

New State Constitution

The Committee drafted a new constitution using the 2015 constitution as a base.

The draft of the new 2020 constitution was posted on the RSLQ website in early December and feedback and comments were sought from members up until the 21 February 2020.

A revised draft document has now been completed based on the feedback provided and this draft is now posted on the website.

There may be some minor changes to this document before being presented to members. Given the COVID-19 health restrictions, the new draft constitution may not be presented to members until the AGM in 2021.

RSL Queensland 2019 Audited Financial Accounts

The accounts have now been signed off by the Board and will be tabled at the AGM when it occurs.

ANZAC Day - Light Up The Dawn Campaign

The campaign was highly successful throughout Australia and consideration is being given to whether a campaign on a lesser basis could not be held in future years.

It has been stressed that if such a campaign was run next year it would need to be run in conjunction with publicizing the Dawn Service and not detracting from the service.

On Going Matters and Reminders

District Website/Facebook

Website address is www.rslpfdistrict.org.au

Sub-branches are encouraged to keep providing details of events, photographs, etc to Vice President, Phil Luzzi, or District Secretary, Lynette Phillips, for placing on the district website and facebook page.

Dental & Allied Health Program

The Dental Health Program has been incorporated into the new Dental & Allied Health Program which commenced on 1 January 2020.

So far this year, 26 applications have been approved at a cost of \$10,589.84: Dental \$6,004.00, Hearing \$1,943.29, and Optical \$2,642.55.

LiveLife Alarms Program

The program is permanent and continues in 2020.

So far this year, there have been 9 new alarms issued and 2 renewed at a cost of \$3,645.

Sub-Branch Presidents are reminded to keep an eye out for members who would benefit from the program.

District PAWS Coordinator

The District PAWS Coordinator will be liaising with Veteran Services at State regarding the running of further General Welfare courses during the year.

Donations to Mates4Mates

The District Executive has considered providing a further donation to Mates4Mates in 2020. \$5,000 has been provided for in the 2020 District Budget to be presented at the AGM on Saturday 18 July.

Sub-branches are encouraged to consider donating funds to Mates4Mates if they are in a position to do so.

District Secretary, Lynette, has the relevant paper work that needs to be completed and sent with your donation.

Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation (GMRF)

The District Executive has considered providing a further donation to GMRF in 2020 and \$5,000 has been provided for in the 2020 District Budget to be presented to the AGM on Saturday 18 July.

RSL Queensland has donated considerable funds to GMRF over recent years to enable the completion of the Vietnam Veterans PTSD study. Further, State is currently funding a study into the transition of servicemen and women from the services to civilian life.

Sub-branches are encouraged to consider donating to GMRF if they are in a position to do so as it would be worthy welfare spending.

District Charitable Objects Fund

A further \$100,000 of funds has been allocated to the District for 2020.

The guidelines and application form have been sent to all sub-branches. Please note that applications are limited to a maximum amount of \$10,000 and applications cannot be retrospective.

All applications need to be on the application form and be in accordance with the guidelines. Sub-branches need to ensure they familiarize themselves with this documentation before an application is made.

Sub-branches are encouraged to come up with worthy projects and apply for funding. You need to sell your proposal in the application.

So far this year, 1 application has been approved at a cost of \$ 2,274.80.

Sub-Branch Support Program

Funding is available in 2020 through this program for those sub-branches in financial need.

So far this year, no applications have been received.

Please refer to program policy and guidelines. An application needs to be made on application form.

Sub-Branches that are adversely affected by the coronavirus emergency and are in need of emergency funds to run their Sub-Branches need to consider seeking assistance through this program. Please give me a call to discuss you Sub-Branches' circumstances.

2020 Cadet Funding

State Branch has provided funding of \$ 27,399 for 2020.

The District Secretary put out an advice early in the year to Sub-Branches calling for applications by a date in late June so the District Executive can assess applications at meeting on Saturday 4 July and make recommendations to the District Council at meeting on Saturday 18 July.

However, due to the coronavirus emergency the closing date for applications will be extended to October so that Sub-Branches have more time to liaise with the cadet units.

Emergency Welfare

A budget of \$10,000 has been allocated for Emergency Welfare funding during 2020.

So far this year, \$2,983 has been spent on 4 veterans.

Since my last newsletter, there is now some clarity as to when the public health restrictions will be lifted with the Prime Minister announcing a 3 Stage Plan and the Premier announcing the lifting of travel restrictions within the State. Sub-Branches will now be able to plan to reopen, hold meetings, and commence fundraising activities. When doing so, please be aware that social distancing restrictions have not been eased and these restrictions need to be abided by when activities take place and Sub-Branch premises are to be used. It seems likely that during the remainder of 2020 our lives will remain restricted somewhat and some operating barriers will remain for Sub-Branches and members for some time to come given the challenges facing Australia at this time.

I ask Sub-Branch Presidents and their Executive members to continue to be on the lookout for veterans and RSL members who are doing it tough as a result of this current public health emergency. I know that this is a challenge given that a large number of our members are in the age group vulnerable to the severe health complications that can be caused by the virus. Please do not put them at risk by making social visits when you are unwell, but check up on them by telephone or through a family contact.

The District and State are in a position to provide financial resources if funds are needed.

Keep up the good work and remember that your District is here to help in any way we can.

Kindest regards

Barry Vains OAM

District President

The Last Post

Member ID	First Name	Surname	Date of Birth	Deceased Dat...	Owner	Last Financial...
1007192	Albert	Benson	4/02/1942	3/06/2020	Seaforth Sub Branch Inc.	SMLIFE
1570462	Colin	Bull	5/01/1939	2/06/2020	Yeppoon Sub Branch Inc.	SMLIFE
2406386	Athol	Carswell	22/02/1955	28/05/2020	Emu Park Sub Branch Inc.	SMLIFE
1541181	Graham	Sowden	22/04/1923	22/05/2020	Sarina Sub Branch Inc.	SMLIFE
1570477	Wallace	Blair	5/09/1925	8/05/2020	Mackay Sub Branch Inc.	SMLIFE
1526309	Verdun	Baker	19/04/1946	5/05/2020	Springsure Sub Branch	SM2020
1537685	Maxwell	Simmons	13/06/1947	3/05/2020	Gemfields Sub Branch Inc.	SMLIFE

Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation

Follow the link below to read the Tribute

<https://www.gallipoliresearch.com.au/support-the-foundation/newsletter/>

GMRF Newsletter

The Tribute is our bi-annual newsletter featuring the latest research news and community updates from the Institute and Foundation. The newsletter is distributed to our donors, discovery and corporate partners and through public areas of the Greenslopes Private Hospital, where we are co-located. To join our mailing list [click here](#). You can nominate to receive your issue of Tribute by post or email.

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