



# 2018

STATE CONGRESS  
MINUTES

CAIRNS

FRIDAY 22 JUNE 2018 – SUNDAY 24 JUNE 2018

**S CAMERON CSC**  
**STATE PRESIDENT**

**LUKE TRAINI**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

SATURDAY 23 JUNE 2018

1. **INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME – Mr Scott Denner, State Secretary and Mr Stewart Cameron CSC, State President**
2. **FLAME CEREMONY – Honorary Life Vice President, Mr Ray De Vere MC OAM and WO2 D. Lynch**
3. **REMEMBERING FALLEN COMRADES – One minute’s silence and ode.**
4. **CONVENING OF MEETING**

In accordance with Clause 6.1 of the Returned Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) Constitution, governing the convening of the Annual General Meeting and Notice of Meeting issued 23 February 2018, the 2018 State Congress of the Returned and Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) is convened.

Mr Robert Dick, President, RSL National Branch, declared the 2018 State Congress of the Returned Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) opened at 0855.

5. **ADDRESS BY THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT, MR ROBERT DICK**
6. **PRESENTATION OF THE HON. DARREN CHESTER MP, MINISTER FOR VETERANS’ AFFAIRS**

The Minister’s presentation addressed:

- The need for more partnerships with governments, ex-service organisations, community members, corporate and business sectors to work together to achieve practical outcomes for the ex-serving community.
- The Productivity Commission is undertaking a major inquiry to ensure the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) is fit for purpose as it enters its second century. A review of Legacy Services has also been undertaken.
- The 2018-2019 budget announced a new \$100m initiative for the DVA as it continued its transformation to be more of a customer friendly organisation. Total funding allocated to DVA is now approx \$11.2b per year which assists approx 288,000 veterans and their families. DVA’s role is to provide efficient, timely and easy access and support to veterans and their families.
- A main focus is the transition of the younger veterans as they move from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) into civilian life. Between 5500-6000 people leave the ADF each year with the majority transitioning quite successfully. For some, that transition is significantly difficult and results in mental health issues, a feeling of social dislocation, loss of sense of purpose and there is more work to be done in the transition space.
- Earlier in 2018, the Inaugural Prime Minister’s Veteran Employment Awards were held to acknowledge those businesses that were excelling in supporting veterans and to challenge other businesses not receiving awards to think what their business or corporation could be doing to support veterans as they make their transition.
- 72 service men and women have been selected to represent Australia at the 2018 Invictus Games. The Games will draw national attention to veterans and the issues required to support them.

7. **ROLL CALL**

<b>S. Cameron CSC</b>	State President
<b>J. Strachan OAM</b>	State Deputy President
<b>M. Brown OAM</b>	Brisbane North District
<b>P. Sterling RFD</b>	Far North Queensland District
<b>P. Fairon</b>	Gold Coast District
<b>V. Stanbury</b>	Moreton District
<b>B. Whitburn OAM</b>	North Queensland District
<b>B. Vains OAM</b>	Pioneer-Fitzroy-Highlands District
<b>T. Ferris</b>	Sunshine Coast & Regional District
<b>M. Foot OAM</b>	Western District
<b>D. Davey</b>	Wide Bay & Burnett District
<b>R. Cunneen</b>	Appointed Director

## SUB BRANCHES

Agnes Water/1770	Airlie Beach-Whitsunday	Allora
Ashgrove	Atherton	Babinda
Banyo	Barcaldine	Bardon
Bayside South	Beachmere	Beaudesert
Beenleigh	Beerwah & District	Bell
Biggenden	Blackall	Blackbutt
Boonah	Bowen	Boyne-Tannum
Bray Park-Strathpine	Bribie Island	Bundaberg
Burleigh Heads	Burrum	Caboolture-Morayfield
Cairns and Dist Ex-Servicewomen	Cairns	Caloundra
Cannon Hill Dist & Vietnam Services	Canungra	Capricornia & Rockhampton Region
Cardwell	Centenary Suburbs	Charleville
Chinchilla	Clayfield-Toombul	Clermont
Clifton	Cloncurry	Cooktown
Cooroy-Pomona	Coorparoo & District	Crows Nest
Cunnamulla	Currumbin/Palm Beach	Dalby
Darra	Dayboro	Deception Bay
Defence Service Nurses	Djuan	Edge Hill/Cairns West
Edmonton	Emerald	Emu Park
Esk	Ex-Servicewomens	Farleigh & Northern Beaches
Forest Lake	Gatton	Gayndah
Gaythorne	Geebung Zillmere Bald Hills Aspley	Gemfields
Gin Gin	Gladstone	Glasshouse Country
Goodna	Goombungee	Goondiwindi
Gordonvale	Gracemere & District	Grantham-Ma Ma Creek
Greenbank	Gympie (but not present for voting)	Harlaxton
Helidon	Herbert River	Herberton
Hervey Bay	Highfields	Home Hill
Hughenden	Innisfail	Ipswich Railway
Ipswich	Isis	Kawana Waters
Kedron-Wavell	Kenilworth	Kenmore/Moggill
Kilcoy	Killarney	Kingaroy/Memerambi
Kuranda	Kuttabul	Laidley
Leyburn	Logan Village	Longreach
Lowood	Mackay	Macleay Island
Magnetic Island	Malanda	Maleny
Manly-Lota	Mapleton	Mareeba
Marian	Maroochydore	Mary Valley
Maryborough	Meandarra/Glenmorgan	Miles
Monto	Moranbah	Mossman
Mount Isa	Moura	Mt Molloy
Mudgeeraba-Robina	Mudjimba	Murgon
Nambour	Nanango	NASHO CC
National Servicemen's	Nerang	North Gold Coast
Nundah-Northgate	Oakey	Orchid Beach/Fraser Island
Palmwoods & District	Pine Rivers	Pittsworth
Proserpine	Proston	Rainbow Beach
Ravenshoe	Redbank Plains	Redbank
Redcliffe	Redlands	Rollingstone
Roma	Rosewood	Runaway Bay

Russell Island	Samford	Sandgate
Sarina	Seaforth	Sherwood-Indooroopilly
Southport	Springwood Tri-Service	St George
St Helens	Stanthorpe	Stephens
Sunnybank	Surat	Surfers Paradise
Tamborine Mountain	Tara Chapter of Chinchilla	Taroom
Tewantin/Noosa	The Gap	Thuringowa
Tiaro	Tin Can Bay	Toogoom & District
Toogoolawah	Toowong	Toowoomba United
Townsville	Tramways	Tully
Tweed Heads & Coolangatta	Walkerston-Pleystowe	Wallangarra
Warwick	Weipa	Wondai
Woodford	Wynnum	Yarrabah
Yarraman	Yeppoon	Yeronga-Dutton Park

## 8. IN ATTENDANCE

Ashgrove	Atherton	Banyo
Bayside South	Beachmere	Blackbutt
Bray Park-Strathpine	Bribie Island	Bundaberg
Cairns	Caloundra	Cooktown
Currumbin/Palm Beach	Deception Bay	Edmonton
Emerald	Ex-Servicewomen's	Farleigh & Northern Beaches
Forest Lake	Geebung Zillmere Bald Hills Aspley	Goondiwindi
Greenbank	Herbert River	Hervey Bay
Hughenden	Ipswich Railway	Ipswich
Kawana Waters	Kedron-Wavell	Laidley
Mackay	Manly-Lota	Mareeba
Marian	Maroochydore	Mossman
Moura	Mudjimba	Murgon
Nanango	National Servicemen's	North Gold Coast
Nundah-Northgate	Oakey	Pine Rivers
Redbank Plains	Redcliffe	Redlands
Rollingstone	Sherwood-Indooroopilly	St Helens
Stanthorpe	Sunnybank	Tewantin/Noosa
The Gap	Townsville	Tully
Walkerston-Pleystowe	Woodford	Yarrabah
Yeppoon	Yeronga-Dutton Park	

## 9. OTHER RSL OFFICIALS AND STATE COUNCILLORS, VIPs, MINISTERS, MPs, DEPARTMENTAL AND SERVICE COMMANDERS

T Bishop	General Manager, Lotteries, RSL (Queensland Branch)
S Button	Chief Information Officer, RSL (Queensland Branch)
S Denner	State Secretary/General Manager - Operations, RSL (Qld Branch)
J Murray	Chief Financial Officer, RSL (Queensland Branch)
P Perring	Company Secretary and Governance Manager
V Reading	Chair, Lotteries Committee, RSL (Queensland Branch)
L Traini	Chief Executive Officer, RSL (Queensland Branch)
J Anderson	Principal Member, Veterans' Review Board
P Aspinall	State President, RSL (WA Branch)
S Brown	Wing Commander Ret'd
L Cameron	Deputy Commissioner Queensland, Department of Veterans' Affairs

D Chester MP	Minister for Veterans' Affairs
L Cosson AM CSC	Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs
D Crawford	Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation
R De Vere MC OAM	Honorary Life Vice President, RSL (Queensland Branch)
R Dick	President RSL National
M Dillman	Principal Lawyer, MacPherson Kelley Lawyers
L Gambrill	President, RSL (Queensland Branch) State Council of Auxiliaries
B Hollins	Brisbane Legacy
R James JP GAICD	Vice President Metropolitan RSL New South Wales
M Kelly AO DSC	Repatriation Commissioner, Department of Veterans' Affairs
J McCourt	Chief Executive Officer, RSL (West Australia Branch)
P McIntosh AM CSC	Chairman, Bolton Clarke
B Mickelberg MP	Member for Buderim LNP
P Murdoch	Registrar, Repatriation Medical Authority
C Orme DSC AM CSC	Deputy President, Repatriation Commission, Department of Veterans' Affairs
P Peterson	Chairman of Tribunal, RSL (Queensland Branch)
R Ralph	Chairman, Mates4Mates
J Richards	Independent Minute Taker to the Board of RSL (Queensland Branch)
A Rishworth MP	Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs
T Roe	State President, RSL (Tasmania Branch)
T Watson	Chief Executive Officer, Mates 4 Mates
R Webster OAM	State President, RSL (Victorian Branch)
A Whyte	Partner, Audit & Assurance, BDO Australia

## 10. APOLOGIES

Ewan Cameron	State Vice President
Wendy Taylor	District President, South Eastern District
James Brown	State President, RSL (New South Wales)
Biloela	Calliope
M Cameron	General Manager, People & Culture, RSL (Queensland Branch)
City New Farm	Hellenic
Holland Park Mt Gravatt	Jimboomba
Mt Perry	Mundubbera
Woodgate	Wowan

## 11. HOURS OF SITTING

*"That the hours of sitting be 0830 hours to 1730 hours on Saturday and 0830 hours to 1300 hours on Sunday."*

**MOVED: WOODFORD**

**SECONDED: MACKAY  
CARRIED**

## 12. APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICERS AND SCRUTINEERS

*"That RSL (Queensland Branch)'s independent auditor, Mr Anthony Whyte from BDO, be appointed as the Returning Officer."*

**MOVED: Inaudible**

**SECONDED: ROLLINGSTONE  
CARRIED**

Mr Terry Roe, State President, RSL (Tasmania Branch), Mr Robert Webster OAM, State President, RSL (Victorian Branch) and Mr Peter Aspinall, State President, RSL (Western Australia Branch) were appointed as the scrutineers.

### 13. AGM NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION OF STATE PRESIDENT

Mr Stewart Cameron CSC  
Mr Tony Ferris

Mr Robert Dick, President, RSL National assumed the role of State President of the meeting at 0922 during the voting process.

### 14. ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTION OF STATE PRESIDENT

A ballot was held with 199 delegates entitled to vote. Mr Robert Dick announced the results of the ballot as follows:

*"That Mr Tony Ferris was elected as the new State President of RSL (Queensland Branch)."*

The Delegates approved the result by acclamation. Mr Stewart Cameron CSC assumed the role of Chair of the meeting at 0945.

### 15. DESTRUCTION OF BALLOT PAPERS

*"That the ballot papers be destroyed."*

**MOVED: NORTH GOLD COAST**

**SECONDED: BARCALDINE  
CARRIED**

### 16. ELECTION OF DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE DELEGATES TO NATIONAL CONGRESS

*"That the Delegate and Co-Delegate to the National Congress be the State President and Deputy State President."*

**MOVED: MAGNETIC ISLAND**

**SECONDED: BARCALDINE  
CARRIED**

### 17. CONFIRMATION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*"That the following be confirmed as the Board of Directors":*

M Brown OAM	Brisbane North District
P Sterling	Far Northern District
P Fairon	Gold Coast District
V Stanbury	Moreton District
B Whitburn OAM	North Queensland District
B Vains OAM	Pioneer-Fitzroy-Highlands District
W Taylor	South Eastern District
Vacated	Sunshine Coast & Regional District
M Foot OAM	Western District
D Davey	Wide Bay & Burnett District
R Cunneen	Director
T Ferris	State President
J Strachan OAM	State Deputy President
E Cameron	State Vice President

**MOVED: ATHERTON**

**SECONDED: BANYO  
CARRIED**

## 18. THE HON. AMANDA RISHWORTH MP, SHADOW MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Shadow Minister's presentation addressed:

- A key element to successful transition from the ADF to civilian life is finding and maintaining employment after the ADF. Statistics show from the 5500 veterans who transition out of the ADF each year, 1 in 3 fail to find or maintain employment. Best estimates are the total unemployment rate for veterans after 5 years post discharge is approx 30%. For those who have not medically discharged, the unemployment rate is 11.2% which is twice the national unemployment rate. Those who find employment experience an average reduction of income of 30% and 19% are under employed in jobs beneath their capabilities. Whilst veterans have a diverse range of skills and experience, these statistics demonstrate that their skills are not necessarily valued or acknowledged by society and these skills are getting lost in translation. The development of RSLQ's ex-defence employment program is making a difference when it comes to employment. Government has a role in this space as well and needs to ensure it is doing better.
- Early 2018, the Australian Labor Party (ALP) announced \$121m Veterans' Employment Program which, if elected, will look at comprehensively addressing some of the issues around veterans' employment.
- The ALP has announced providing families a seat at the table through a National Family Engagement and Support Strategy which will develop a national footprint to address the fragmented nature of support services in both Defence and DVA.
- To address concerns relating to the long term use of anti-malarial drugs by members of the ADF, the ALP has moved to establish a Senate Inquiry into the use of antimalarials in the ADF. It is hoped the Inquiry will highlight how to best support those veterans who have had difficulty post service which has been attributed to taking antimalarials and ensure they have access to the support.
- The ability of veterans to access allied health services and specialist services across Australia due to the Medicare rebate freeze which has flowed on to the DVA fee schedule should be lifted immediately.

## 19. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING PROCEEDINGS COMMENCE

The Company Secretary conducted the Annual General Meeting proceedings.

## 20. AMENDMENT TO RSL (QUEENSLAND BRANCH) CONSTITUTION

*"That the draft Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) Constitution (2018) be adopted."*

**MOVED: RSL (QUEENSLAND BRANCH) BOARD**

**SECONDED: Inaudible**

An amendment to the draft Constitution proposed by Gatton and set out in the 2018 State Congress documentation was read:

*"That the Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) Constitution (2018) be amended to delete the proposed clause 13.2(a) and (b) and Appendix E5(4) and insert the following:*

***'13.2 Membership of State Council***

*(a) State Council will be comprised of each of the Presidents of the District Branches; and*

*(b) At the first meeting of the State Council, the State Council will elect from those District Presidents present a District President to chair meetings of the State Council for the period as determined by State Council.*

***Appendix E5(4) The Chair and Chairing Meetings of State Council***

*E5(4) If the appointed Chair of State Council is not present at a meeting, the District Presidents present at the meeting must elect another District President as Chair at that meeting.'*

Gatton read the rationale for the motion as set out in the 2018 State Congress Documentation.

**MOVED: GATTON**

**SECONDED: MANLY LOTA**

The meeting was asked if any delegate wished to speak for the motion: Nil.

The meeting was asked if any delegate wished to speak against the motion.

Mudjimba spoke against the motion noting there must be a nexus between the Board and the Council which is totally removed in this case.

The proposed amendment to the draft Constitution was put to the vote.

**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting discussed the first motion **moved by the RSL (Queensland) Board**, being the amendment to the draft State Constitution (2018), **with the amendment from Gatton.**

**SECONDED: CHINCHILLA**

The Chair, Constitution and Awards Committee was invited to read the rationale for the motion as set out in the 2018 State Congress documentation.

The meeting was asked if any delegate wished to speak for the motion: Nil.

The meeting was asked if any delegate wished to speak against the motion.

The following motion was put forward:

*"That the draft Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) Constitution (2018) lay on the table."*

**MOVED: MOURA**

Moura provided the rationale for this proposed amendment noting there had been a lot of angst amongst Sub Branches he had spoken to who felt there had not been enough time to have substantial input into the draft Constitution and required more time.

**SECONDER: Inaudible**

The meeting was asked if any delegate wished to speak for the motion.

The meeting was asked if any delegate wished to speak against the motion. Mudjimba spoke against the motion.

**MOTION FAILED.**

Clayfield-Toombul **moved** a procedural motion:

*"That our rules be suspended that would preclude that the moving and seconding of amendments to the draft Constitution from the floor and at the conclusion of debate of any amendments to the draft Constitution, the draft Constitution as amended be put to a final vote."*

**SECONDED: BEERWAH & DISTRICT  
MOTION CARRIED**

Standing orders were suspended at 1134 and resumed at 1211 for the purpose of continuing to conduct AGM business. No minutes have been recorded whilst the meeting was suspended however during the suspension Mudjimba proposed two different (although similar) motions that was eventually voted on.

## **21. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF 2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

*"That the draft minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting."*

**MOVED: BLACKBUTT**

**SECONDED: WONDAI  
MOTION CARRIED**

## **22. PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF THE STATE PRESIDENT (CHAIR OF RSL (QUEENSLAND BRANCH) BOARD) 2017 ANNUAL REPORT**

*"That the 2017 Annual Report be accepted."*

**MOVED: GATTON**

**SECONDED: TULLY  
MOTION CARRIED**



**23. AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL AFFAIRS OF RSL (QUEENSLAND BRANCH) FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2017**

*"That the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2017 be adopted."*

**MOVED: TIARO**

**SECONDED: MARIAN  
MOTION CARRIED**

**24. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR**

*"That BDO be appointed as the State Auditor for 2018."*

**MOVED: MT ISA**

**SECONDED: BUNDEBERG  
CARRIED**

**25. MOTIONS FROM STATE BRANCH, DISTRICT AND SUB BRANCHES**

Rescinding of motion passed at Annual General Meeting 2016

*That this Annual General Meeting 2018 rescind the following Motion passed at the Annual General Meeting 2016:  
'That the Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) set aside an amount not less than \$2m per annum topped up annually, for the sole purpose of providing monetary assistance for Sub Branches procuring welfare centres in accordance with procedures approved by RSL Queensland.'*

**MOVED: RSL (QUEENSLAND BRANCH) BOARD**

**SECONDED: MAGNETIC ISLAND**

Chair, Constitution and Awards Committee was invited to read the rationale for the motion.

The meeting was asked if any delegate/s wished to speak for the motion: Nil.

The meeting was asked if any delegate/s wished to speak against the motion. Manly Lota, Laidley, Orchid Beach and Mudjimba spoke against the motion.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Following the lunch break, it was assumed standing orders remained suspended until 1345 – refer to the Executive Summary to be read in conjunction with the minutes. During the suspension, Mudjimba put forward the following motion:

*"That reference to the term 'the Executive' be removed from E5(2)(a), E5(3)(a), E5(3)(b), E5(3)(c)(i) and E5(3)(c)(ii). That reference E5(4) be deleted in its entirety and be replaced with the following clause titled:*

***'Election of the Chair and Deputy Chair and Chairing of Meetings of State Council:***

- Under Clause E5(4)(a) *"The Chair and Deputy Chair of State Council should be the State Councillors elected by State Council from time to time."*
- Under Clause E5(4)(b) *"The Chair and Deputy Chair of State Council shall hold that office until removed by State Council by special resolution or until the expiry of his or her term as a District President. The Chair and Deputy Chair of State Council shall hold that office until removed by State Council by special resolution or until the expiry of his or her term as a District President at which time he or she may renominate subject to clauses E5(4)(c)."*
- *E5(4)(c) No Councillor should hold the office of Chair or Deputy Chair for more than two consecutive terms of three years. If the Chair is not present at the meeting or is unable to preside over the meeting at Chair, the Deputy Chair must chair that meeting. If neither the Chair or the Deputy Chair are present at the meeting or unable to preside at a meeting, the remaining District Presidents present must elect one of the remaining District Presidents present at the meeting who must preside as Chair.*
- Under Clause E6 *"The Chair of State Council shall be appointed by the Board as an appointed Director in accordance with Clause C10. The Chair of the Council shall report to each meeting of the Board on all material matters considered by State Council and the Chair of State Council shall report to State Council on all matters raised to the Board by State Council and the decisions of the Board on those matters."*
- *"That reference to "the Executive" should be removed from wherever else it appears in Section E."*

The motion for the amendment proposed by Mudjimba was put to the vote.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Mudjimba also suggested a second amendment was required relating to Clause 19 – By Laws however a properly formed motion was not put forward.

The motion for the amended draft RSL (Queensland Branch) Constitution (2018) with amendments from Gatton and Mudjimba was put to the vote.

**MOVED: RSL (QUEENSLAND BRANCH)**

**SECONDED: GATTON**

The meeting was asked if any delegate/s wished to speak for the motion: Nil.

The meeting was asked if any delegate/s wished to speak against the motion. Nil.

**MOTION DEFEATED**

#### Director Resource and Expenditure Guidelines

*“That the membership of the Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) approve the Director Resource and Expenditure Guidelines.”*

**MOVED: RSL (QUEENSLAND BRANCH) BOARD**

**SECONDED: GOODNA**

The Company Secretary read the rationale for the motion as set out in the 2018 State Congress documentation.

The meeting was asked if any delegate/s wished to speak for the motion: Nil.

The meeting was asked if any delegate/s wished to speak against the motion. Nil.

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### Review of Sub Branch Structure

*“That RSL North Queensland District Branch requests RSL (Queensland Branch) to undertake a review of the Sub Branch structure to develop options to reduce the administration and governance support to allow Sub Branches to focus on the Objects of the League.”*

**MOVED: MAGNETIC ISLAND**

**SECONDED: HOME HILL**

The delegate from Magnetic Island was invited to read the rationale for the motion as set out in the 2018 State Congress documentation.

Bribie Island proposed an amendment to the motion from *“...to reduce the administration and governance support”* to *“... to reduce the administration and governance burden”*. Bribie Island confirmed its support of the amendment.

**MOVED: BRIBIE ISLAND**

**SECONDED: MANLY LOTA**

The meeting was asked if any delegate/s wished to speak against the motion. Nil.

**The amendment to the motion was carried.**

The amended motion was put to the vote.

*“That RSL North Queensland District Branch requests RSL (Queensland Branch) to undertake a review of the Sub Branch structure to develop options to reduce the administration and governance burden to allow Sub Branches to focus on the Objects of the League.”*

**MOVED: MAGNETIC ISLAND**

**SECONDED: YEPPON  
MOTION CARRIED**

## END OF DAY 1 OF THE 2018 STATE CONGRESS

Day 1 of the State Congress adjourned at 1530. Day 2 of the State Congress commenced at 0830.

### 26. CEO PRESENTATION

Highlight's from the CEO's presentation:

- Achievements over the last three (3) years:
  - Tidying up the organisation and focusing the organisation on delivering its core objects
  - Transformation of State Branch to prepare the organisation for the work to come in the next decade
  - Improvement of governance practices – relevant policies and the RSL Queensland Good Governance Guide can be found on [www.rslqld.org/governance](http://www.rslqld.org/governance). Sub Branches can contact State Branch and request templates for these policies and procedures which can be adopted for individual Sub Branch needs
- Moving forward:
  - Over the last three (3) years revenue has increased from \$79m to \$129m and members' equity has grown from \$122m to \$190m
  - The expectations of the community, the regulator and the traditional views of Sub Branches need to reconcile to work together well
- Sub Branch governance:
  - Compliance paperwork is a requirement of the ACNC to remain as a charity
  - State Branch has been talking with the ACNC and the ATO around governance issues for Sub Branches. State Branch have formed a Sub Branch Finance and Governance team specifically aimed at dealing with the modern requirements of governance, to coach guide and mentor Sub Branches and provide the tools and templates required for Sub Branches to remain consistent with the laws that govern the charitable status of Sub Branches
- Communication:
  - The misuse of emails and social media is growing which is damaging the brand of RSL. Members should contact their District Office if they require any information or are concerned with any information
  - District Presidents receive detailed talking points on key strategic Board decisions and other topical issues raised in the Boardroom every month
  - Every program operated from Anzac House will contain the correct contact details of the person to talk to in communications going forward
  - Members are encouraged to either have a face to face conversation or telephone conversation with their District Presidents or District Secretaries to ensure everyone is on the same page

On behalf of State Branch, the CEO thanked the delegates, representatives of Sub Branches and their volunteers for their work they provide to veterans. The CEO also thanked the marketing team at State Branch and the District Secretaries for their work organising the 2018 State Congress.

### 27. STATE SECRETARY AND GENERAL MANAGER – OPERATIONS PRESENTATION

Scott Denner, State Secretary and General Manager - Operations provided a snapshot of 2017 in review highlighting:

- RSL Queensland conducted Queensland's largest ever project in the Defence Community
- Staff at State Branch assisted with 3400 claims with DVA (note this number does not include the work of PAWS representatives from Sub Branches supporting veterans with DVA)
- Commemorative services
- Funding provided to cadets
- Invested \$5m into partnerships and research for veteran specific issues

An update on current veteran services programs/projects, new initiatives and projects underway:

- A Well-Being capacity has been developed within State Branch to support smaller Sub Branches or where there is an extremely complex issue
- The Veterans' Homelessness Program through The Salvation Army has been a resounding success. 94 veterans and/or their families have been taken into the program since the 2017 AGM. The goal is to assist the veteran

community with permanent stable housing including addressing the issues that lead them to being homeless. RSLQ work with The Salvation Army in a Case Management approach which is veteran led to provide assistance with DVA claims, medical and dental care and veteran employment

- Welfare Financial Application Program for veterans which is a needs based program where State Branch can provide financial support if there are smaller Sub Branches who may be unable to provide that support
- State Branch has recognised there has been a decline in the number of Advocates available at Sub Branches to support families and have addressed this by increasing the number of trained staff as Advocates by 50% in the last 12 months
- In 2017, State Branch dealt with 4500 claims, 98 appeals of varying types, conducted over 5000 hospital visits and over 3000 client interviews
- Late 2017, RSL Queensland commenced a trial Employment Program based out of Townsville which proved to be an absolutely fantastic success. Subsequently the program has been rolled out State wide with 119 ex-service personnel access the program. Initial statistics are:
  - Of the 81 referrals received during the six months of the pilot program in Townsville:
    - 28 secured meaningful, significant roles
    - 32 are continuing in the program with further training, coaching and mentoring
    - 21 were referred to other services (people with complex needs which are impacting their ability to be employed)
  - RSL Queensland are now working with a number of employers (ie Downer and a large Defence contractor) to create a culture that is accepting of the veteran and maximises the skills of veterans
- An Innovation network was commenced with 1-2 representatives from each District who provide direct feedback from the grassroots of the organisation from Sub Branches into RSL Queensland to ensure that programs being rolled out are deliverable at Sub Branch level or are accessible at a Sub Branch. Some of the projects being worked on include an education website, building a stronger league, improvements to the membership/renewals process and communication with Sub Branches
- Defence Family Research Project conducted via a market analysis firm, Colmar Brunton, which was one of the 10 largest market research activities carried out in Queensland in 2017. The research was conducted to assist with determining the size, nature or demographic needs of the ex-service population in Queensland. An overview of the outcomes of the project was provided (refer to the Key Findings Report and statistical information provided)
- A brand refresh to align the RSL with what it actually does vs community perception, particularly for those current and ex-service personnel under the age of 50 who predominantly find that Sub Branches were not welcoming and inclusive to new members (refer to the draft RSL Queensland Brand Blueprint provided)
- The RSL Education Program will be launched post the 2018 AGM and is the best education program for children in Australia around veterans, veterans' issues and commemorations. The program was developed by educators in conjunction with Education Queensland and is aligned with the National Curriculum and the Queensland State Curriculum where that curriculum is different. The program is broken into age appropriate components, will provide tools, techniques, audio visual content and tasks for students and provides advice on how to engage with the local Sub Branch.

## 28. BREAKOUT FORUM FINDINGS

Outcomes of Future Structure for the RSL forum included:

- The demographic change needs to be carefully considered, particularly if many Sub Branch members are under the age of 50 and have families, as many of those members will not be available to perform the actual welfare work currently undertaken by the leadership of the Sub Branch
- There are different expectations from younger veterans and the organisation has to be responsive to the expectations of those people
- The administration burden on Sub Branches. Maybe State Branch can look at a finance system with a financial institution that can develop a system specific to the needs of the RSL
- The use of modern technology to help Sub Branches meet the regulatory and reporting requirements for the ACNC including ways to have information flow back to State Branch electronically
- There was a general consensus to keep Sub Branches and a broad consensus to keep Districts however there is a need to ease the regulatory burden and need to ensure our structures are responsive to the expectations of young veterans
- Whether to stay with 10 existing Districts and the current District boundaries or is there a more efficient and cost effective way to conduct business to incentivise younger veterans to join the RSL.

Outcomes of the Membership forum included:

- Engage with defence personnel as they are transitioning into the service which may provide a better opportunity to keep them involved after transitioning out
- Community engagement is vital to getting our message across about what the RSL does:
  - The Education Program with the Schools as outlined by the State Secretary
  - Develop a RSL app
  - The importance of speaking with one voice – fragmentation is of no benefit. There are many ESOs that are outdated. The RSL is an all encompassing organisation that can cover all
  - It is important to present a unified front
- Provide support to serving families during deployment – a benefit of engaging with defence personnel whilst transitioning into the service
- More females need to be involved. It is important for Sub Branches to be welcoming to female service and ex-service women and have activities tailored to their needs
- Communication to the public is very important. There should be television advertisements reinforcing the brand and highlighting the services provided by the RSL. Also look at other media to spread our message. The organisation needs to agree on one message. RSLQ currently has 250 separate voices saying separate messages.

## **29. FUTURE VENUES FOR STATE CONGRESS**

Members were asked to consider the cost of future Annual General Meetings as the ACNC has emphasised that the charitable dollar should be spent on charity. Members expressed their desire to continue with the current concept with the suggested future venue being in Brisbane. Delegates were encouraged to consider modern methods for holding Annual General Meetings and engage with their District Presidents to provide recommendations back to the Board.

## **30. MEMBERS' FORUM**

Members were given the opportunity to ask the Chair of the meeting a series of questions.

## **31. RSL (QUEENSLAND BRANCH) PANEL WITH DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

Rob Skoda, Manager – Veteran Services, facilitated a panel discussion on effective transition out of the ADF with the following panellists:

- Professor Nick Saunders AO
- Professor Darrell Crawford
- Wing Commander Sharon Brown Rtd
- SGT John Lay Rtd

## **32. CONCLUSION OF STATE CONGRESS**

The incoming State President, Tony Ferris, moved a vote of thanks for the outgoing State President for changing the direction of the League over the last three years.

The outgoing State President, Stewart Cameron CSC thanked the staff of RSL Queensland for their support, specifically the CEO, Luke Traini, the State Secretary, Scott Denner and his Executive Assistant, Mandy Bryant and closed the State Congress at 1130.