

ANNUAL REPORT

2019



RSL
Queensland

RSL Queensland helped 7th Brigade host Explore the Barracks and Rock the Barracks at Gallipoli Barracks on 12 October 2019. The events were an opportunity to celebrate the end of the Brigade's Ready phase and thank the community for its support during this intensive period.



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State President's Report



TONY FERRIS

*State President,
RSL Queensland*

When looking back at the year that was 2019, I'm filled with optimism and enthusiasm for our great organisation. The year was a very positive year in terms of the changes in the evolution of the organisation and in the perception of what we do.

We have been going through this evolution for several years now, and it is a positive change that I'm proud to say our Board, our broad membership base, and our staff have embraced.

This year we have seen an effective transition of leadership, with our new executive leadership team picking up the ball and running with it. This has been fantastic to bear witness to and support; it has been a real positive for the organisation, and hopefully the constructive changes are evident in the way we operate and serve the Defence community.

This year we achieved so much in terms of identifying who we are, who we support and how we provide that support. We ended 2018 with two key challenges: to continue to improve on our core objective of caring for veterans and their families, and changing the public's perception of RSL Queensland.

I believe 2019 was a year of significant progress and outstanding results for our organisation in terms of both of these challenges.

TODAY'S VETERANS

RSL Queensland was founded to support veterans. After 103 years, the need for our support not only still exists but is far greater and more complex than ever before. Veterans of today come from a professional Defence Force, and many are without the experience of the civilian world they transition into after Defence.

Being able to support today's veterans starts with recognising that their needs are different. Then we need to identify what those needs are and how we can meet them.

Our services are changing to look after these veterans. Through our RSL Employment and RSL Scholarship programs, we are helping veterans transition back into the community and giving them something

to work with that is different to the military, as well as supporting their families to take steps toward employment or education.

It is a significant culture change for our organisation, in terms of how we develop, present and deliver our programs.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN CLUBS AND SUB BRANCHES

Research undertaken into our brand highlighted the common misconception about what RSL Queensland does. There is a lack of understanding that our organisation is a charity, with a critical issue being that of RSL 'clubs.'

The research found that half of those surveyed thought they were RSL Queensland members. However, only 14 per cent were Sub Branch OR service members, and 33 per cent were club members. What's more, almost 54 per cent of Queenslanders believe they are supporting RSL Queensland's charitable activities by patronising an RSL club.

Communicating the distinction between RSL Queensland and RSL clubs is an important one to make because the lack of understanding damages our brand and undermines the work we are doing to support veterans.

This is not to denigrate the approximately 40 RSL clubs that have a relationship with an RSL Sub Branch, or the 17 Sub Branches who own and operate their associated RSL club, because for those Sub Branches, the additional support of an RSL club can be invaluable.

However, we need to continue our education of the public, who must recognise that to support RSL Queensland and the work we do with veterans, they must donate to their local RSL Sub Branch. I have personally worked on communicating this through our available channels throughout the year.

REVISED CONSTITUTION

After eight months, our Constitution Working Party completed the final draft of the revised constitution in early 2019. I thank those involved for their effort and dedication in working through this important project.

While the draft is complete, it is still open for input. I have extended the time for feedback as the changes to the Constitution won't be voted on until the 2021 Annual General Meeting, when hopefully we're all able to be together in the same room again.

“When looking back at the year that was 2019, I'm filled with optimism and enthusiasm for our great organisation. The year was a very positive year in terms of the changes in the evolution of the organisation and in the perception of what we do.”

AGM

Speaking of our AGMs, we have decided to hold the next three meetings - for 2020, 2021 and 2022 - in Brisbane, resulting in significant cost savings for our organisation. Our 2020 AGM has also been impacted by the challenges of the global health pandemic, with a satellite process being implemented, resulting in further cost savings.

While some of these changes might be necessary for our times and present new challenges, I'm in full support of them, as any money saved is money we can better spend on veterans.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

It's been very encouraging to see that through the challenges this organisation has faced, we're still able to change and progress to being reputable and accepted by other ex-service organisations, as well as changing the perception of the public.

I commend the executive leadership team on their development of the 2025 Strategic Plan, which gives us the direction to drive forward our essential work for the coming five years.

Change is ongoing – our work is far from done – but it's a positive change that I hope our members join me in taking pride in.

Chief Executive Officer's Report



MELANIE WILSON
Chief Executive Officer,
RSL Queensland

RSL Queensland exists to ensure a bright future and enduring legacy for all veterans and their families. Every day I hear about the extraordinary work being done by our volunteers to support our purpose.

Whether it's a gesture as simple as visiting a fellow veteran in hospital, or the investment of many hours assisting with a DVA claim, they do it with heart and give generously of their time. Their efforts and commitment are vital as we work towards our vision of being the most valued and trusted partner to enrich the Australian Defence family's quality of life.

I joined this wonderful organisation on 1 July 2019, and the inspirational work of our volunteers, members and staff has meant that I have felt rewarded by this decision every day since. I have thoroughly enjoyed learning about our rich history and honourable heritage, our challenges – both past and present – and the incredible opportunity ahead to positively impact the lives of those we serve.

I'm extremely proud of our 2025 Strategy, approved by the RSL Queensland Board in October 2019, which refocuses our efforts on our core purpose: supporting veterans. Founded on three key strategic goals – Relevance, Influence and Sustainability – our plan represents the voice of the veteran and reflects the invaluable feedback provided by our members.

Our members told us about the challenges we must solve together if we are to regain our relevance in the broader veteran community, establish ourselves as a leading voice on veteran issues and ensure our founders' legacy lives on into the future.

As we work to realise our vision over the next five years, we must have the conviction to tackle some long-standing challenges.

- We will address our declining membership through a revitalised membership model that is representative of all veterans.
- We will reinvigorate our brand and launch a compelling and far-reaching marketing campaign to tell our story and increase awareness of the outstanding support we provide to veterans and their families.

“RSL Queensland exists to ensure a bright future and enduring legacy for all veterans and their families. Every day I hear about the extraordinary work being done by our volunteers to achieve this objective.”

- We will operationalise a comprehensive veteran services strategy across RSL Queensland and our subsidiary Mates4Mates that delivers support programs that are: targeted (to address unmet needs), tailored (to suit individual circumstances) and transformative (to improve lives).
- We will provide leadership within the sector to reduce the complexity for Government, while promoting transparency and best-practice governance standards. This work will position us as the leading voice representing the interests of the Australian Defence community, now and into the future.
- Our newly established Membership & Network team will drive a never-before-seen level and quality of support for our Districts and Sub Branches to ensure that we have a sustainable, effective and thriving veteran support network.

I am confident these focussed initiatives will deliver untold value for our organisation and position us well to significantly improve the experience veterans and their families have when engaging with us.

Importantly, as we look to the future, we also have reason to celebrate our past. In 1916, a group of soldiers returning from World War I formed what we now call the RSL. The organisation aimed to continue providing the camaraderie, concern and mateship shown among Australian troops while they were at war. 104 years on, in that very same spirit, we

celebrate numerous incredible achievements and give thanks to the extraordinary individuals who have tirelessly contributed to the success of RSL Queensland. Without their dedication to the veteran cause, we would not continue to exist.

This report shares our key achievements for 2019, and there are many. In direct support of our Objects, RSL Queensland provided \$1.2m in funding to Districts and Sub Branches to carry out welfare work, \$1.2m in direct veteran welfare support, in excess of \$1m in crisis funding for veterans in urgent need, \$2.8m in support of pensions and advocacy assistance, and our funding support for Mates4Mates continued with a financial contribution of \$5.6m to provide physical and psychological rehabilitation services.

Additionally, we sponsored 60 scholarships for veterans and family members, partnered with The Salvation Army to house 172 veterans in safe and permanent accommodation and helped 140 veterans secure employment through our tailored veteran employment program.

None of this would have been possible without our people. We have an amazing and talented workforce and we continue to invest in them. Their feedback continues to drive our initiatives, ensuring we build and retain the skills, behaviours and capabilities required to deliver our 2025 Strategy.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who works at RSL Queensland. It is your collective talent, diligence and dedication that will make our vision a reality.

State Deputy President's Report



JOHN STRACHAN OAM
*State Deputy President
RSL Queensland*

This year was one of looking forward and looking back; we moved ahead as a qualified Board and I spent time reflecting on the past at events I attended throughout the year.

In March we completed and were released from the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Directions Notice. As a Board we had a lot of work to do to comply with the Notice, including undergoing training and certification, and completed the requirements in under 12 months.

I'm proud to say that the Board are far more qualified today than we have ever been. This holds us in good stead to move forward with our duties.

In addition to attending several District AGMs in early 2019, I also attended the Victorian state conference in July. It's always good to attend these events as it provides an insight into how other states operate.

I also had the opportunity to reflect when I presented a 100th birthday certificate to a World War II veteran in Pioneer-Fitzroy-Highlands. It was a privilege to be part of the gathering of family, veterans and RSL Queensland members to recognise this significant milestone that many of us will never achieve. I don't believe we make enough of a fuss over the WWII veterans that we've got left.

I also spent time reflecting while attending the funerals of several RSL Queensland Life Members throughout the state. And I undertook the necessary task of sorting through the vast library of books held in storage and at ANZAC Square. Many books of significant military history have now found a place in our own library and more will be distributed throughout our Sub Branch network.

It is important to remember where we have come from, not just as a country and society, but as a grassroots organisation. RSL Queensland belongs to our members and we are all responsible for preserving the ideals and dignity of the organisation into the future.



State Vice President's Report



BILL WHITBURN OAM

*Vice President
RSL Queensland*

For me, 2019 was a year of listening and learning. I was elected into the position of State Vice President in June and spent the first six months engaging with the executive, visiting Districts to see first-hand what was happening throughout the state, and getting to know the complexities of the organisation.

As part of the executive, we are expected to get out and hear what our members have to say and what issues they are dealing with in their District. But this is also a privilege. I attended several AGMs in the north and south of the state, as well as delegate meetings. It has been invaluable to meet with people from other districts and gain a solid perspective on issues, which has certainly assisted me and other Board members in making respected decisions on what we should be doing as a Board and as an organisation going forward.

During my visits, I have been told countless stories and witnessed first-hand the dedication of our members and those who volunteer their services over long hours and arduous travel times to assist veterans and their families. Many volunteers get little more than a pat on the back for their contribution, and do not ask for any more either. The more we can acknowledge and support their work, the more veterans we can assist.

Supporting our Sub Branches and members is something I spoke to our staff about at a Town Hall event. I spoke about the RSL Queensland Objects and what it means to work for the organisation, ensuring staff understand how their role and responsibilities contribute to supporting veterans and their families.

Our members and staff should all be proud of their efforts in 2019; it was a year that laid foundations for greater things to come in 2020. You should all be proud of your commitment and dedication in aiding our veterans and their families.



OUR IMPACT 2019.

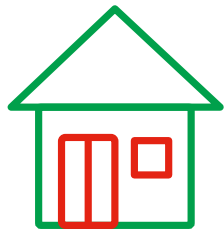
In 2019, RSL Queensland provided a broad range of programs and services to support current and former ADF members and their families.



Over \$1.2 million provided
for grassroots support by
Sub Branches and Districts



\$5.6 million committed
to physical and psychological
rehabilitation through
Mates4Mates



172 individuals and families
helped into safe, permanent
accommodation



33,427 members
across Queensland



13,000+ calls
handled



4,993 DVA claims
submitted



\$1 million+
provided in crisis funding



60 scholarships awarded
worth \$398,000



140 jobs found
for veterans and their partners



\$1.5 million invested
in wellness programs



Thousands
of commemorative
services



Health and Wellbeing
curriculum-aligned resources
released for schools and teachers



13% increase
of new Art Union VIP
monthly customers

RSL Queensland has been standing should
With 10 Districts and 233 Sub Branches, we

Brisbane North District

Banyo
Beachmere
Bray Park-Strathpine
Bribie Island
Caboolture-Morayfield
and District
Centenary Suburbs
Clayfield-Toombul
Dayboro
Deception Bay
Gaythorne
Geebung Zillmere Bald
Hills Aspley
Kedron-Wavell
Kenmore/Moggill
Nundah-Northgate
Pine Rivers District
Redcliffe
Samford
Sandgate
Sherwood-Indooroopilly
The Gap

Far Northern District

Atherton
Babinda
Cairns and District
Ex-Servicewomen
Cairns
Cardwell
Cooktown
Edge Hill/Cairns West
Edmonton
Gordonvale
Herberton
Innisfail
Kuranda
Malanda
Mareeba
Mossman
Mt Molloy
Ravenshoe
Torres Strait Chapter
Tully
Weipa
Yarrabah



RSL
Queensland

DISTRICTS A

...er to shoulder with Queensland's Defence family for more than a century.
...e provide practical support and assistance to current and former ADF members in every corner of the state.

Gold Coast District

Beenleigh and District
Burleigh Heads
Canungra
Currumbin/Palm Beach
Mudgeeraba-Robina
North Gold Coast
Runaway Bay
Southport
Surfers Paradise
Tamborine Mountain
Tweed Heads and
Coolangatta

Moreton District

Blackbutt
Boonah
Esk
Gatton
Goodna
Grantham-Ma Ma Creek
Helidon
Ipswich Railway
Ipswich
Kalbar
Laidley
Lowood
Redbank Plains
Redbank
Rosewood
Toogoolawah
Yarraman

Coast and Regional

North

Eastern

North Queensland District

Airlie Beach-Whitsunday
Ayr
Barcaldine
Blackall
Bowen
Charters Towers
Cloncurry
Herbert River
Home Hill
Hughenden
Longreach
Magnetic Island
Mount Isa
Proserpine
Rollingstone
Thuringowa
Townsville
Winton

Pioneer-Fitzroy-Highlands District

Blackwater/Bluff
Capricornia and
Rockhampton Region
Carmila
Clermont
Emerald
Emu Park
Farleigh and Northern
Beaches
Finch Hatton
Gemfields
Gracemere and District
Kuttabul
Mackay
Marian
Mirani
Moranbah
Rockhampton Combined
Services
Sarina
Seaforth
Springsure
St Helens
Walkerston-Pleystowe
Yeppoon

South Eastern District

Ashgrove District
Bardon
Bayside South
Beaudesert
Beerwah and District
Bulimba District
City-New Farm
Coorparoo and Districts
Darra and District
Defence Service Nurses
Defence Servicewomens
Forest Lake
Glasshouse Country
Greater Springfield
Greenbank
Hellenic
Holland Park-Mt Gravatt
Jimboomba
Kenilworth
Kilcoy
Kooralbyn Valley
Logan Village
Macleay Island
Manly-Lota
National Servicemens
Nerang
Palmwoods and District
Rathdowney Chapter
Redlands
Russell Island
Salisbury
Springwood Tri-Service
Stephens
Sunnybank
Toowong
Tramways
Wynnum
Yeronga-Dutton Park

Sunshine Coast and Regional District

Caloundra
Coolum-Peregian
Cooroy-Pomona
Kawana Waters
Maleny
Mapleton
Maroochydore
Mudjimba
Nambour
Tewantin/Noosa
Woodford
Yandina-Eumundi

Western District

Allora
Bell
Charleville
Chinchilla
Clifton
Crows Nest
Cunnamulla
Dalby
Djuan and District
Goombungee
Goondiwindi
Harlaxton
Highfields
Injune
Jandowae
Killarney
Leyburn
Meandarra/Glenmorgan
Miles
Millmerran
Mitchell
Morven
Oakey
Pittsworth
Quilpie
Roma
St George
Stanthorpe
Surat
Tara
Taroom
Texas Chapter
Toowoomba United
Wallangarra
Wandoan
Warwick
Yangan-Emu Vale
Chapter

Wide Bay and Burnett District

Agnes Water/1770
Biggenden
Biloela
Boyne-Tannum
Bundaberg
Burrum District
Calliope
Eidsvold Chapter
Gayndah
Gin Gin
Gladstone
Goomeri Chapter
Gympie
Hervey Bay
Isis
Kilkivan Chapter
Kingaroy/Memerambi
Mary Valley
Maryborough
Monto
Moura
Mt Larcom Chapter
Mt Perry
Mundubbera
Murgon
Nanango
Orchid Beach/Fraser
Island
Proston
Rainbow Beach
Rosedale Chapter
Theodore Chapter
Tiaro
Tin Can Bay
Toogoom and District
Wondai
Woodgate Beach
Wowan

AND SUB BRANCHES



RSL Queensland

OBJECTS

1. Provide for the sick, helpless, wounded, aged, vulnerable, destitute and needy among those who are serving or who have served in the Australian Defence Forces and their dependants.
2. Perpetuate the close and kindly ties of friendship created by a mutual service in the Australian Defence Force or in the forces of nations traditionally allied with Australia and the recollections associated with that experience.
3. Maintain a proper standard of dignity and honour among all past and present members of the Defence Forces of the nation and to set an example of public spirit and noble hearted endeavour.
4. Preserve the memory and the records of those who suffered and died for Australia, erect monuments to their valour, provide them with suitable burial places, and establish and preserve, in their honour, the annual commemoration days known as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and other commemorative days.
5. Encourage loyalty to Australia and secure patriotic service in the interests of Australia.
6. Protect the good name and preserve the interests and standing of members of the Australian Defence Force.
7. Encourage Members, as citizens, to serve Australia with that spirit of self-sacrifice and loyalty with which they served as members of the Australian Defence Forces, and
8. Provide welfare to the sick, helpless, wounded, vulnerable, aged, destitute and needy.



RSL
Queensland

OVERVIEW OF OUR 2025 STRATEGY.

A major achievement of 2019 was the development, approval and communication of the RSL Queensland 2025 Strategy.

Created through a consultative strategic planning process and endorsed by the Board in October, the 2025 Strategy is our blueprint for the coming five years as we chart a strategic course to become more relevant to veterans and establish ourselves as the leading voice in our sector.

In simple terms, the 2025 Strategy means renewed and reinvigorated attention on who we are, how we support our Sub Branch network and the value we provide for our members – today and into the future.

OUR NEW VISION AND PURPOSE

The 2025 Strategy refocuses our energies through a refreshed purpose: “A bright future and enduring legacy for all veterans and their families” and vision: “Be the most valued and trusted partner to enrich the Australian Defence family’s quality of life.”



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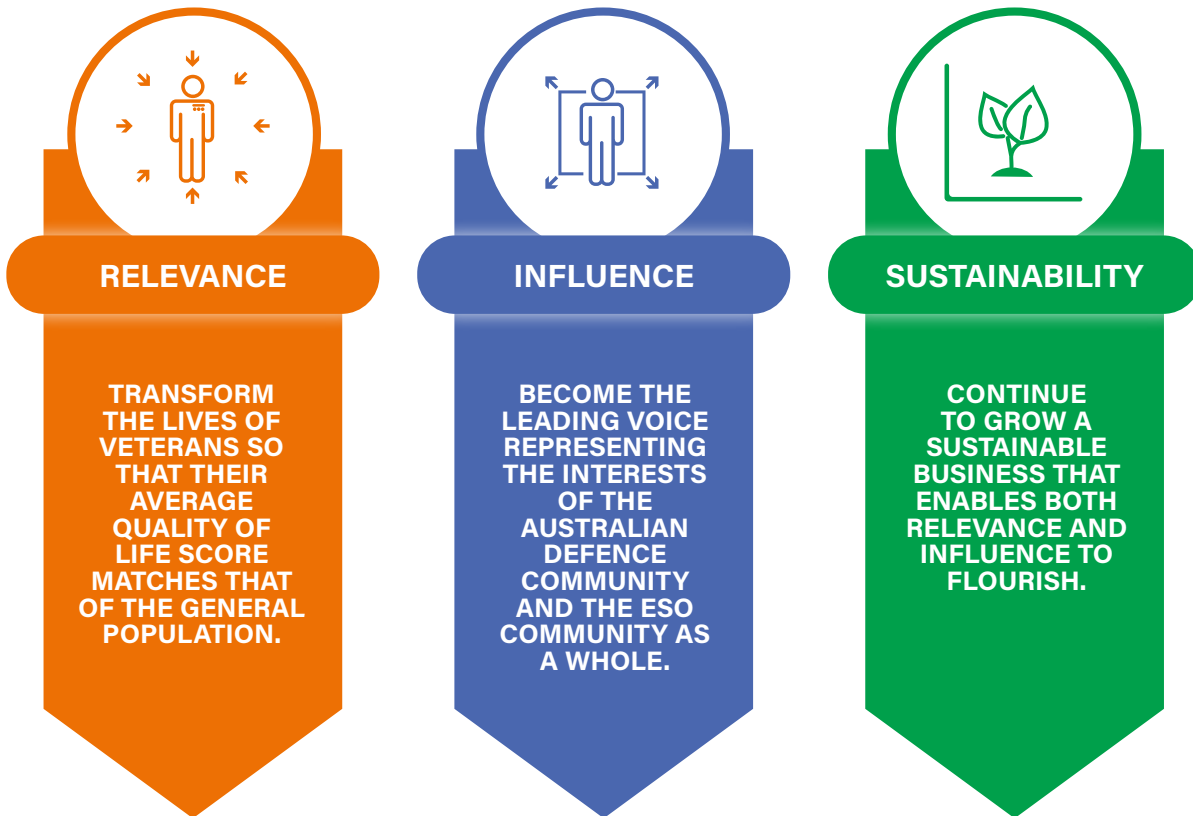
“Our new purpose statement and vision encapsulate our commitment to honour the sacrifice made by so many through ensuring the work we do each day is focussed, impactful and relevant.”

MELANIE WILSON
Chief Executive Officer,
RSL Queensland

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2025 STRATEGY

To realign the organisation to our reason for being (our purpose) and deliver on our new vision, three strategic goals were formulated to ensure we pursue our purpose and vision with drive and determination.



To support these goals, RSL Queensland developed three strategic pillars to ensure we focus on:

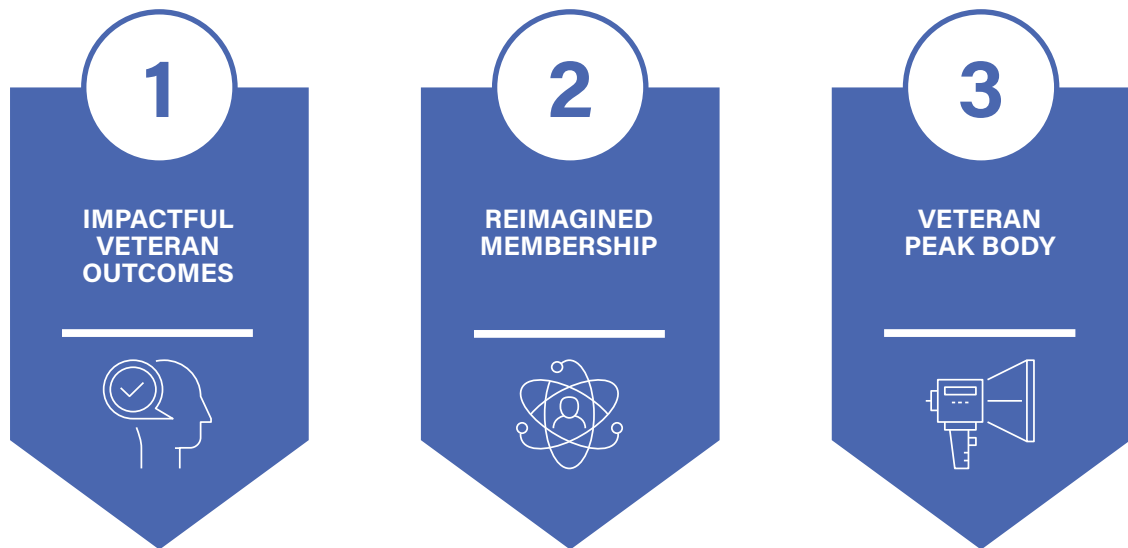
- outcomes that positively impact quality of life for veterans and their families
- transforming our member value proposition and the way we support and partner with our Sub Branches
- leading reform and standardising quality services that meet the needs of veterans across the Defence family.

For us to deliver on this, we also need to focus on three strategic enablers, the foundation elements of our business, to:

- transform the way services are delivered and customers and partners are engaged, to ensure we can scale our service delivery in a relevant and sustainable way
- build a cohesive and inclusive set of brands that are recognised for their valuable contribution to improving the quality of life of veterans and their families and that support our commitment to delivering value for our members
- continue to grow the Lottery, while diversifying revenue streams and wisely investing for the future sustainability of RSL Queensland.

ENABLERS AND PILLARS

PILLARS ARE OUTCOMES. We will achieve in the next 5 years.



ENABLERS ARE FOUNDATIONS. Required to deliver our pillars.



VETERANS ARE AT THE HEART OF OUR 2025 STRATEGY

In recent years, RSL Queensland made significant achievements in the areas of technology development, revenue growth, service delivery and governance standards and 2019 focused on transitioning from an era of intensive transformation to consolidation through conscious, controlled growth.

The development and endorsement of the 2025 strategy means everyone at RSL Queensland will have a shared, consistent view of who our customers are – our customers are our members and our clients, all veterans and their families, and our Sub Branch and District network.

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“Our 2025 Strategy ensures that veterans are at the heart of our decision making, and also ensures accountability and consistency in our decision making, by giving us better clarity on how we do this.”

SIMON BUTTON

Chief Information & Strategy Officer, RSL Queensland

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REIMAGINING MEMBERSHIP

In order to address declining RSL Queensland membership, our 2025 strategy has a renewed focus on growing membership and on reimagining what being a member could and should be so that, collectively, we will be more relevant to veterans and their families into the future.

“

“If we want to be in a position where we can truly improve the quality of life of veterans and their families, we need to regain meaning in the eyes of our customers, and as we begin to deliver on our 2025 strategy, you will see more support and service from State Branch for Sub Branches and Districts to ensure they can flourish into the future.”

LISA MCILROY

General Manager Membership & Network, RSL Queensland

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IMPACT AND ADVOCACY FOR VETERANS

By genuinely understanding and responding to the needs of veterans and their families, our 2025 Strategy means you will see us continue developing more effective services that address the needs of all veterans and their families.

We will also advocate more strongly on issues affecting veterans and their families and provide leadership in a crowded market of ex-service organisations, becoming a key influencer in improving the transparency and effectiveness of the Australian veteran support system.



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“We are committed to responding to the evolving needs of veterans and maintaining relevance with the younger generation of veterans and have a real opportunity to play a lead role in supporting the health and wellbeing outcomes of veterans and their families right across Australia.”

ROB SKODA

General Manager Veteran
Services, RSL Queensland

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**ANNUAL
HIGHLIGHTS.**



EXPLORE THE BARRACKS

A RARE CHANCE TO EXPLORE & ROCK THE BARRACKS

RSL Queensland has the honour of standing behind the Defence community during both the good times and the bad. On 12 October 2019, we enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate some of those good times when we helped 7th Brigade throw open its gates to host Explore the Barracks.

The open day was a chance to thank the community for its support during the Brigade's Ready phase, which saw thousands of personnel deploy overseas. When the soldiers returned home to their families it allowed them to rest and recharge.

Just minutes before the gates opened, the storm clouds that had been dumping rain for hours miraculously vanished to reveal blue skies. Over 12,000 people came through the gates to enjoy a rare glimpse of Gallipoli Barracks, which is normally closed to the public.

There were events for the whole family including kids' activities, food trucks, heavy vehicle displays, Defence community stalls, live demonstrations from 7th Brigade and fireworks accompanying musical performances.

In the evening, the gates closed to the public for Rock the Barracks, which acknowledged the hard work of 7th Brigade and the support of their families. The Hoodoo Gurus, Kingswood and the Australian Army Band all took to the stage to help celebrate the end of the Ready phase.



SHOWCASING RSL QUEENSLAND TO THE DEFENCE COMMUNITY

"I know the amount of effort and commitment that 7th Combat Brigade has put in during the intensive Ready phase, and it's only right that we should mark the end of that phase with a suitable celebration."

– RSL Queensland State President Tony Ferris used the event as an opportunity to remind the Defence community of the multiple ways RSL Queensland is available to support them – DVA claims, scholarships and employment assistance, education forums, and health and wellbeing programs.

*"It's a huge day for us, because we like to show off our wares and show the community and the nation in many respects, what we do for them.
"The soldiers of this Brigade and this garrison are at the end of 14 months where thousands of them have been deployed overseas. It's an opportunity as we thank those soldiers to feel the pride that comes with serving your country and being willing to make the sacrifices that go with it."*

– Commander of 7th Brigade,
Brigadier Andrew Hocking.





EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM EXPANDS

In 2019, RSL Queensland's Employment Program found 140 jobs for veterans and their partners.

We understand that the right role can give veterans purpose and direction and help them progress in a fulfilling career. It can also help them transition into civilian life or settle in after relocating.

Whether they are for a veteran or the partner of a current or former Defence member, RSL Queensland helps them take the next step towards finding meaningful employment.

We also help employers realise the value of former service personnel via our Veterans Onboard program. With 5,500 people leaving the Defence Force each year, Australia has a significant untapped human resource pool.

Former Defence personnel have a wealth of skills and experience that can benefit civilian businesses, from technical and trade to corporate and leadership. With online modules and access to strategy templates, Veterans Onboard provides employers with the tools to better understand veterans and how to use their skills in their organisation.

In an exciting development, towards the end of 2019 the Federal Government awarded a \$6 million grant to enable RSL Queensland's Employment program to roll out nationally.

Our program was chosen as the model for national expansion due to its success in Queensland. It's a great example of how our investment in practical, veteran-focussed services can have positive outcomes for our Defence family more broadly.

The funds are being administered by RSL National and began with an expansion into South Australia.



EMPLOYERS RECOGNISE VALUE IN VETERANS

“Being able to help RSL Queensland provide support to families that have served is extremely important to our company.

“Kate [Brauns] has fitted in very well with the team and is popular with everyone she’s worked with. She is a very, very bright person and certainly flexible.”

– Downes Group Operations Director Tony Vella says his business operates with family values and is proud to support the community. The organisation offered a work placement to surveying student Kate Brauns, the wife of a veteran and a client of RSL Queensland’s Employment Program.



FINDING VETERANS A PLACE TO CALL HOME

During 2019, RSL Queensland helped 172 individuals and families into secure, stable accommodation.

Safe, permanent housing is one of our most fundamental needs but sadly, some veterans are lacking just that. Whether they are couch surfing, living in their car or living rough, we can help veterans find a place to call home.

RSL Queensland partners with The Salvation Army to get those in need into immediate emergency accommodation. Once they are safe, we can help them find permanent rental accommodation, and link them into our holistic range of services including:

- assistance with DVA claims
- helping find suitable employment
- participating in our wellbeing programs.

“We work with the veteran to identify the sort of support they might need, while The Salvation Army supports

them in finding permanent accommodation, which may include anything from dealing with the Department of Housing to accompanying them to open houses,” says Veteran Services Manager Graeme Alley.

“Once they’re successfully settled, RSL Queensland steps back in to provide wraparound services that will set them on the right path to take back control of their lives. It’s not just about finding them somewhere to live – it’s about helping them create the stability in their lives that will enable them to thrive.”



GETTING OFF THE STREETS AND KICKING HIS ADDICTION

"I used alcohol to dull my feelings, so it wasn't until it started to mess with my career that I noticed it was a problem and it just took a hold of me and I couldn't let it go. I can't thank RSL Queensland enough for believing in me and giving me an opportunity to do this for myself. I want to give other people a bit of hope that there is help out there and they don't have to go through this alone."

"I've been sober now for one year, two months. I couldn't be happier. I'm starting to achieve things that I'd given up on. I want to stay fit and healthy, and I just enjoy getting out there in nature."

– Shortly after leaving the Army, *Sam became homeless and was living on the streets of Toowoomba when the local Sub Branch got him into RSL Queensland's homelessness program. The program helped him get his life back on track.

**Name changed to maintain confidentiality*

HOLISTIC VETERAN SUPPORT



The right support at the right time can transform challenging situations and brighten futures. As RSL Queensland evolves to meet the changing needs of our Defence family, a host of innovative services are being offered to improve the overall quality of life for veterans.

The key is being able to connect veterans to RSL Queensland at the various stages of their Defence journey – whether it is help with DVA claims as they are transitioning out or to get support from the RSL Employment program as they are re-skilling to take on a new career path.

CHANGING THE PERCEPTION OF RSL QUEENSLAND

“Prior to having experienced RSL Queensland, I think that it got lumped into the same category as another government organisation that soldiers are frustrated with, when it’s really not.

“I got an opportunity to speak at the North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch recently and I was really blown away by how much the members wanted to reach out and help younger veterans. I think RSL Queensland is really there to help us veterans, regardless of our age, move into civilian life a lot better. It’s pretty much integral that RSL advocates helped me to get those claims done. Without getting the claims accepted I don’t think I would be doing what I’m doing now.”

– After eight years of Army service, the prospect of life outside the military was daunting for Daniel Smith. But with the help of a trained advocate from RSL Queensland, Daniel was successful in getting his DVA claim processed, allowing him and his wife to move ahead with establishing their Gold Coast business, First Fruits Coffee.





SUPPORTING DEFENCE FAMILIES ALL THE WAY

“Our family has had a lot of interaction with RSL Queensland. My perception of RSL Queensland prior to all of this was that it was just for an older generation and not necessarily something we could access.

“But RSL Queensland is definitely for young veterans now. It’s somewhere you can go to ask for assistance.”

– Kate Brauns and her family are an example of how RSL Queensland can step in at different times with practical assistance that effects positive change. Initially, husband Mick worked with an RSL advocate to get his DVA claim processed. Then Kate successfully applied for an RSL Scholarship to help her pursue a new, meaningful career and re-enter the workforce. This led to her working with the RSL Employment Program, where our team helped review her resume, coached her through interview techniques and encouraged her to seek work experience. The family’s interaction with RSL Queensland didn’t end there – they also regularly join a coffee meetup with our sister organisation Mates4Mates and during his recovery, Mick participated in Timor Awakening, a rehabilitation and community engagement program run by RSL Queensland’s partner Veterans Care.



RSL EDUCATION

operations of the past century.

Drawing on more than a century of

supporting Queensland's Defence family, RSL Queensland launched an online education portal – RSL Education at rsleducation.com.au

RSL Education provides free teaching resources to

help with lesson planning, enhance learning with engaging multimedia content, and link classroom activities with the lived experience of the thousands of veterans who make up RSL Queensland's membership.

All materials have been developed by curriculum specialists to ensure they are accurate, reliable and aligned with the national curriculum.

As the landing at Gallipoli fades from living memory, it becomes even more important to make sure future generations understand the role Australia played not only in World War I, but in all the conflicts and peacekeeping

ANZAC APPEAL CONTINUES CASHLESS SUCCESS

RSL Queensland staff took to the streets of Brisbane CBD for the annual ANZAC Appeal on 18 April 2019. All money raised in the Brisbane appeal was distributed to RSL District offices to fund welfare programs.

In 2018, we moved to a completely cashless system for both the ANZAC and Poppy Appeals. The 'tap and go' terminals were a huge success, with positive feedback received from the public and an increase of almost 40 per cent in revenue raised compared to 2017. Following on from this great result, the 2019 ANZAC Appeal was also cashless.





REMEMBER TO REMEMBER

RSL Queensland staff and Defence Force personnel raised money during the annual Poppy Appeal on 8 November 2019 to help Districts and Sub Branches support veterans in their communities.

On Remembrance Day 2019, RSL Queensland called on Queenslanders to Remember to Remember and to reflect on the service and sacrifice of former and current-serving veterans.

Busy lives and competing priorities mean many Queenslanders forget to remember the significance of Remembrance Day. Queenslanders were urged to pause for a minute's silence at 11am on 11 November, a simple observance that many have forgotten over the years.

"Observing this significant historical event with a minute of silence and reflection is a mark of respect to the brave young men who fought and fell in the First World War, as well as their comrades who returned," said RSL Queensland President Tony Ferris.

FEATURE PARTNER PROGRAM: PTSD RESURRECTED

Serving in combat situations can expose service people to traumatic experiences, which can be difficult to reconcile with 'normal' life back home in Australia. Reboot Recovery is a five-day program run by husband and wife team Andy and Zoe Cullen that provides practical long-term solutions for dealing with the internal values conflict and spiritual trauma of combat.

Thanks to support from RSL Queensland, PTSD Resurrected provides the REBOOT Recovery course to veterans and their partners at no cost.





A FAMILY RESURRECTED

"I started to have some issues. Over there [Afghanistan] I was confronted with a lot of death and murder and a value of life that differed to my understanding of the world. And that challenged me. It challenged my spirit, it challenged my understanding of the world that we lived in and it started to impact on me internally, a lot more than I really expected it would.

"I became aware that I was suffering a few significant symptoms associated with PTSD. I'm talking about nightmares, hallucinations, I was extremely agitated all the time. I really isolated from my family and my friends.

"The REBOOT Recovery program looks at the root cause of why that's happening in their lives and that's often triggered by trauma. So, we look at things like forgiveness of self and others, guilt, shame, suicidal ideation.

"My favourite part of running REBOOT is seeing the transformation in individuals and families. We're so excited that RSL came on board in really helping us to facilitate the REBOOT Recovery programs across Australia. We're just so blessed to be part of the RSL community."

– Army veteran Andy Cullen's battle with PTSD put enormous pressure on his young family. But having benefited from participating in the REBOOT Recovery program in the US, he and wife Zoe are now on a mission to bring it to veterans and their partners in Australia.

SNAPSHOTS OF OUR PARTNER PROGRAMS

SCHOLARSHIPS

Higher education and training opens the door to opportunities and can improve a person's employability, sense of purpose and financial security.

The RSL Queensland Scholarship program aims to empower ex-Defence personnel, partners and their children by supporting them through tertiary study or vocational training.

In 2019 we awarded 60 scholarships worth \$500,500.

RSL Scholarships

EDUCATION HELPS NAVY VETERAN FIND NEW PURPOSE

"There's a number of challenges that you face when you leave Defence and it can be really overwhelming. It's been likened to a reverse culture shock, where you have to learn a whole new set of rules of engagement and new norms to participate in society.

"I fell into that category of being young, still focussed on having a career in Defence, but really didn't have any idea of where I wanted to go.

"The scholarships really ensure that you've got a bit more financial security to ensure that you can continue to study – to be able to move on with your life."

– For Navy veteran Deb Morris, education is a stepping stone between Defence and her new career path. An RSL Ex-Defence Queensland Scholarship is helping facilitate this time of personal growth. Deb believes RSL Queensland is working hard to understand the nature of contemporary service and provide services for veterans transitioning out.





WARTIME PHOTOS INSPIRE DAUGHTER'S PASSION

"Having the scholarship behind me really helps with focussing on my grades and my marks. Working 25 hours a week and trying to do 40 hours a week of uni really takes a toll on you. So being able to put that aside and focus solely on my degree and my work is really helpful. It is really important to keep that support going, because I know a lot of families do struggle when they come out of Defence. I would definitely recommend this scholarship to anyone who's eligible. Honestly, it's a bit of a life changer."

– Griffith University photography student Rhiannon Whitaker credits her father's photos of his time serving in East Timor for inspiring her love of photography. Rhiannon is now turning her passion into a career, thanks to an RSL Queensland Veteran Dependant Scholarship.



TROJAN'S TREK

Being 'out bush' with like-minded people can do wonders for your mental health. Participating in Trojan's Trek can provide a 'circuit breaker' for those struggling to cope with life beyond Defence.

In 2019, RSL Queensland helped the Trojan's Trek team deliver two treks for a total of 55 male and female participants.

For six days, while camping in peaceful bushland, they learnt tools and techniques to adjust their thinking and behaviour, relate to others without anger or aggression, and build self esteem.

The program is delivered by veterans for veterans, so participants learn from those who have been there before.

CHANGING PERSPECTIVES

"I came away with a completely different perspective; I see things exactly as they are and am driving forward. It's confronting, but not necessarily bad."

– Amy Vickers, former participant and now mentor.



ACCOMMODATION SERVICES

From crisis accommodation to independent living options in locations across Queensland, RSL Queensland provides a range of accommodation services for veterans.

Conveniently located close to the heart of Brisbane, Angus House provides a welcoming environment and all meals for veterans who need to access specialist medical treatment, convalesce after treatment, or take time out from a domestic situation.

For veterans who need subsidised, independent living, we have accommodation options in Ayr, Cairns, Emu Park, Gayndah, Mareeba, Mount Perry, Proserpine and Yeppoon.



ANGUS HOUSE PROVIDES A PLACE OF RESPITE

"Staying at Angus House provided me with an opportunity to stay close to the PA Hospital, to be on call and visit my wife and provide support to her and the medical staff."

"To me, the RSL is an extension of military service. Older veterans staying at Angus House feel a sense of security, support and respect. Veterans find it very difficult to trust people, and the RSL makes them feel like they haven't been totally abandoned."

– Medical treatment is a stressful and expensive process. To help relieve this burden, RSL Queensland offers short-term accommodation in Brisbane for regional veterans and their families. Army veteran Jan Beurskens and his wife Gea are two members of the Defence community who have taken advantage of this accommodation option that provides more than just a roof over their heads.



TIMOR AWAKENING COMMEMORATES 20 YEARS OF PEACE

Touring a previously war-torn country and seeing the progress of its people can bring inner peace for veterans. That is the premise behind Timor Awakening, a renewal and rehabilitation program.

During the 11-day tour, participants are embraced by whole communities, share stories with Timorese veterans, and see first-hand the positive impact of Australia's involvement in the

young country's freedom.

On 15 September 1999, Australian Forces led the deployment of a multinational peacekeeping force known as INTERFET to East Timor. About 5,500 of the 10,000-strong INTERFET were Australian military personnel and 22 countries participated in the operation.

For many Australian Defence members involved in the peacekeeping mission to East Timor in 1999, the traumatic events they experienced would be forever burned in their memories. Many described the horror they felt at witnessing the

chaos and destruction of a nation, and the deep, lasting ways it impacted them.

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of INTERFET, RSL Queensland hosted a delegation of six veterans on an eight-day tour of East Timor, now Timor-Leste. The chance to visit Timor 20 years later to see the positive impact of their involvement was an emotionally charged and healing experience.

The tour was organised and delivered through RSL Queensland's partner Veterans Care, which also runs the Timor Awakening program.



FINDING MY TRIBE

“Transitioning out of the military wasn’t an easy task. The biggest thing was losing your tribe. Things like attending this INTERFET commemoration have definitely helped me find my tribe again.

“I had a lot of guilt when I left East Timor. I felt like the mission wasn’t complete and I hadn’t done enough for the people.

“Coming back here has closed that door for me because I can see that the people have flourished. They’re growing stronger every day, they’ve managed to put behind the hardship, and they’re moving forward.

“I’ve seen more people dancing, a lot more Timor flags are flying and people have dental and health care. But the biggest thing I noticed was that people are now wearing prescription glasses, so they can actually see their beautiful country.

“The 20-year commemoration is a milestone for the people of East Timor.”

– Scott McAndrew joined the Army in 1988, served with 3 RAR in East Timor for INTERFET and Operation Spitfire and in the Special Operations Task Group in Afghanistan. In 2015, he crossed over to active reserves, before discharging in August 2019.



HUMAN PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Supported by RSL Queensland, the Human Performance Framework continues to thrive and evolve at 3rd Brigade in Townsville.

A high level of physical and mental resilience is needed for Defence personnel to reach their full potential both during and after service.

Recognising this, 3rd Brigade introduced the Human Performance Framework. The Framework is designed to enhance the resilience of its soldiers and their families through two aligned centres:

- **Human Performance Centre**, which provides both prehabilitation and rehabilitation programs to maintain or return soldiers to peak physical and mental performance.
- **Geckos Family Centre**,

which provides a place for Defence members, partners and families to build friendships, socialise and access information to assist with the challenges of a Defence lifestyle. The centre staff are familiar with the challenges for Defence members, partners and families due to the absence of members from home and the mobile lifestyle associated with Defence service.



INVESTING IN INDIVIDUALS

“I’d like to thank RSL Queensland from the bottom of my heart for what they are doing to help us with some of these initiatives. It’s a natural partnership, because RSL is just as interested in our people as we are.

“Whether it’s physical or mental, we’ve learned a lot about how we can help people to get back on the horse and we’ve learned a lot about how to help our people transition to life after wearing the uniform.”

- Part of Brigadier Scott Winter’s role is overseeing the Human Performance Framework
- an initiative of the 3rd Brigade that is supported by RSL Queensland. The program helps build the physical and mental resilience of its personnel to get the best out of them during and after service.

PARTNERING WITH GMRF TO HELP VETERANS TRANSITION



The Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation (GMRF), in partnership with RSL Queensland, is creating evidence-based real-world solutions to enhance the quality of post-service life for our veterans.

GMRF's Veteran Health Initiative understands that veterans may struggle with the transition from service to civilian life. In a 2019 study commissioned by the Departments of Defence and Veterans' Affairs, it was estimated that nearly half of ADF personnel who had recently transitioned met 12-month criteria for a mental health condition.

In partnership with RSL Queensland, GMRF is

working to better understand the difficulties associated with transition and inform targeted interventions. In 2019, this research focussed on:

IDENTIFYING THE REINTEGRATION SUPPORT NEEDS OF VETERANS

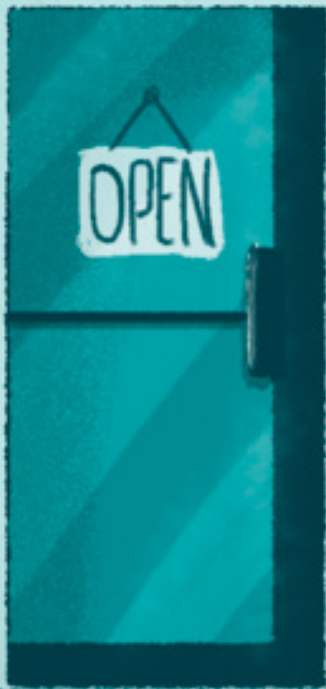
GMRF's Veteran Reintegration Study is a five-year, multi-phase study launched in partnership with RSL Queensland in 2016.

In 2019, the team completed the analysis of quantitative data on the transition experiences of 725 veterans. This research not only confirmed what had been found internationally, but also helped identify

factors that lead to a successful transition.

From these findings, GMRF researchers developed an adjustment and reintegration assessment measure aimed at identifying an individual's level of adjustment to civilian life from a cultural and psychological perspective.

The first of its kind available globally, the measure produced from this study will enable timely detection and assessment of reintegration difficulties. It will also significantly enhance clinicians' understanding of the relationship between transition and reintegration difficulties and mental health, which will lead to more targeted interventions.



GALLIPOLI
MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Remembrance through research

Find out more about GMRF's work
at gallipoliresearch.com.au

ASSESSING READINESS FOR CIVILIAN LIFE

Extending on the Veteran Reintegration Study, the Civilian Readiness Study was launched in April 2019 to improve transition for veterans by developing a method to determine 'readiness' for civilian life prior to discharge.

Recruitment activities began in 2019, with current service personnel who have commenced the transition process completing the first in a series of three surveys. The project received endorsement and support from ADF Joint Health Command and Major General Natasha Fox (Head of People Capability, Defence People Group).

This research aims to develop another measure to enable the timely detection and assessment of an individual's needs **prior to transition**. The research will also inform the development of education programs for current serving ADF members to "upskill" the individual based on their personal needs and better equip them for a smooth and successful transition.

"Thanks to the partnership of RSL Queensland, 2019 was a year of significant progress for GMRF's reintegration and transition research. By continuing to work together in 2020 and beyond, we can create the bright futures our veterans deserve."

MIRIAM DWYER

Chief Executive Officer
Gallipoli Medical Research
Foundation





MATES4MATES

Throughout 2019, Mates4Mates continued to actively change the lives of current and ex-serving Defence Force members who have been impacted by service, and their families.

As a subsidiary of RSL Queensland, Mates4Mates provides physical, psychological and social connection support services to those experiencing injuries and mental health issues.

To date, more than 4,600 people have directly benefited from their services

and continue to access support regularly. With over 25,000 face-to-face connections provided by Mates4Mates staff each year, they help the ADF community connect, recover and move forward from service-related injuries.

2019 Impact:

- 4,471 psychology appointments provided to support those experiencing mental health-related issues
- 11,518 physical rehabilitation and

wellbeing connections made to improve quality of life

- 8,422 social connections fostered through regular activities to connect Mates and families
- 1,171 outreach connections in regional locations across Australia to reduce isolation.

Taking on a holistic approach to service delivery, 2019 saw an increase in wellbeing practices, including mindfulness, which were integrated into more



social connection activities. From surfing to abseiling, activities were used to teach participants how to manage their emotions, self-regulate and move through mental barriers, all while in a safe environment.

Through each and every connection, supporting Mates and their families to improve both their mental and physical health was a priority.

In an effort to increase service delivery in the future, 2019 also saw the launch

of national fundraising initiatives, including a Tax Appeal and a National Appeal Day. Through each initiative, their community of supporters and the general public showed their support for veterans without hesitation.

These helped ensure awareness of Mates4Mates continued to build, and gave more people the opportunity to give back to veterans. As a result, more veterans will be

able to find the support they need for recovery, when they need it most.

With mates behind you, there's power to move forward.

"Breaking that isolation and finding other veterans that speak the same language is really helpful. It brought me back to life and got me living again. You realise you're not alone and others go through the same things."

– Lee, veteran

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS.

RSL QUEENSLAND'S
DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS



CEO Department Highlights

Chief Executive Officer Melanie Wilson joined RSL Queensland on 1 July 2019 and immediately began immersing herself in the business to learn about the challenges faced by Districts, Sub Branches and State Branch. Key achievements in 2019 included:

- Developing the 2025 Strategy, including establishing the Membership & Network team, which will enable a renewed focus on members
- Received two awards in recognition of the Lotteries Operating System – second place in the Australian Financial Review's Most Innovative Companies award for the government/not-for-profit/education sectors and Chief Information Officer Simon Button was named at 6th place on the CIO50, Australia's top 50 Chief Information Officers
- Over \$1 million in direct veteran welfare support provided
- Moving to stage two of the Veteran Reintegration Study through our partner the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation.

MELANIE WILSON

*Chief Executive Officer,
RSL Queensland*



Veteran Services Highlights

The Veteran Services department continued to grow its support of our Defence family through welfare, advocacy and support programs in 2019. Key achievements include:

- In excess of \$1 million in welfare support provided directly to veterans and their families across the state to assist with crisis funding, housing and homelessness support, and developing their skills for employment
- Two significant submissions to the Australian Government Productivity Commission for the Inquiry into Compensation and Rehabilitation for Veterans, with the aim of influencing recommendations for the Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Expanding the Human Performance Framework to 1st Brigade at Robertson Barracks in Darwin. The program is designed to enhance the resilience of soldiers and their families and is now available to all three combat brigades, having already been implemented at 3rd Brigade in Townsville and 7th Brigade in Brisbane. RSL Queensland is the proud major supporting partner of the ground-breaking initiative
- Moving to stage two of the Veteran Reintegration Study through the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation, which included the development of an assessment tool to measure adjustment within civilian life. This stage saw a multitude of surveys be completed within the ex-Defence population. The screening tool to ascertain 'readiness for civilian life' is still being tested within the current serving population. GMRF and RSL are awaiting publication of the findings for stage two results to date
- The release of the Services Catalogue, which draws together all services available to the Defence family through RSL Queensland and Mates4Mates. The foundational document is the start of the process of developing a veteran services strategy across the two organisations.

ROB SKODA

*General Manager Veteran Services,
RSL Queensland*



Lotteries Business Unit Highlights

2019 was a year of stabilisation for the Lotteries business unit, following the introduction of its new operating system, including a new data warehouse and website, in 2018. While adjusting to new platforms and processes, the department's key achievements included:

- Selling out five lotteries, including the largest ever prize of a whole apartment complex worth \$6.4 million. The ground-breaking prize proved popular with the lottery's customers, achieving unprecedented ticket sales
- Reinvigorating the VIP membership value proposition, including the introduction of new weekly and quarterly draws for this valued customer base. The new proposition was launched in the last quarter of 2019 and resulted in a 58 per cent increase in new VIP members over this period
- Introducing new sales channels, including door-to-door and outbound telemarketing, to provide greater resilience to the lottery and build upon the success of its existing shopping centre kiosk sales channel.

TRACEY BISHOP

*Art Union,
RSL Queensland*



Technology & Innovation Highlights

This year saw the Technology & Innovation department focus significantly on supporting veteran services and membership systems to remain modern and effective. Key achievements include:

- Technology upgrades across the organisation, including the development of SKIP and upgrades to the Membership Management System, to support frontline teams carrying out work in the veteran community
- Successful completion of the multi-year enterprise resource planning (ERP) project. The ERP drives the back-of-office of the organisation, including Human Resources, Corporate Services and Art Union, to support the overall operations of RSL Queensland
- Two awards in recognition of the successful implementation of the Lotteries Operating System in 2018: 2nd place in the Australian Financial Review's Most Innovative Companies award for the government/not-for-profit/education sectors, and Chief Information Officer Simon Button was named at 6th place on the CIO50, Australia's top 50 Chief Information Officers.

SIMON BUTTON

*Technology & Innovation,
RSL Queensland*



Legal & Governance Highlights

The Legal & Governance business unit is an enabling function with specialist capability across legal, risk and compliance and governance. RSL Queensland operates in a complex legal and regulatory environment, in a federated governance structure and as a registered charity, with the RSL Art Union as a regulated funding channel. Key achievements for 2019 include:

- Enabling RSL Queensland to support Sub Branches with their legal and governance challenges and administering public liability insurance and volunteers' insurance for traditional Sub Branch activities
- Supporting the Board to establish a new Remuneration and Nomination Committee, delivering the 2019 AGM, and finalising and lifting the Directions Notice issued by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission
- Assisting internal business units to enhance their activities. This included formulating partnership and sponsorship contracts with ex-service organisations who deliver tailored support services to the Australian Defence family, to supporting the RSL Art Union to unlock new distribution channels through door-to-door sales and outbound calls in a way that is legally compliant and protects the RSL brand.

MARIA FORGIONE

*Legal & Governance,
RSL Queensland*



Corporate Services Highlights

In 2019, the Corporate Services department oversaw Finance, Asset Management and Sub Branch Compliance Services teams. In addition to completing a comprehensive 2020 Financial Plan following the development of the 2025 Strategic Plan, key achievements include:

- System improvements, with a new payroll system introduced to provide one source of truth and lay a significant building block towards a more sophisticated HR information system. Additionally, a new invoice automation system, enabling 99 per cent of invoices to be processed through automation, provides consistency of data and process, resulting in time-saving efficiencies and increased vendor payment accuracy across the organisation
- Utilising assets effectively and efficiently, leading to an eight per cent reduction in the vacancy rate for RSL Queensland's commercial property portfolio. A review and negotiation of the statutory charges for the property portfolio, including rates and land tax, also resulted in total savings of approximately \$100,000
- Supporting Districts and Sub Branches through the complex internal process of lodging their ACNC annual information statements electronically. Also facilitated professional fiscal governance support for Districts and Sub Branches to navigate and resolve financial issues.

GREG PRATT

*Corporate Services,
RSL Queensland*



Human Resources Highlights

The Human Resources department undertook significant programs in 2019 to prepare the organisation for growth. Key achievements include:

- The development of a Talent Acquisition Team to ensure RSL Queensland is able to attract and recruit the highest quality candidates, quickly and within budget. A key project was the creation and implementation of an assessment centre to establish a new Veteran Services Online Claims Team, with candidates participating in a range of activities to identify key competencies
- Improvements to the employee experience, including implementation of the new HR system as part of the enterprise resource planning (ERP) project. This employee experience program introduced employee self-service to enable access to and management of their employment details, and links to the new payroll system. A thorough process for onboarding new employees was also introduced, which significantly improved the new employee experience
- Commencing the organisational design to support the 2025 Strategic Plan. This includes ensuring the right number and skills are in place in the executive structure to deliver the strategy.

LEIGH GOLDSMITH
*Human Resources,
RSL Queensland*



League Highlights

2019 was a year of significant change and growth for RSL Queensland. Business units across the organisation delivered key projects that benefit the membership and impact the future of the League.

RSL Queensland invested in and delivered projects that support our membership base, Sub Branches and District offices across the state. Key achievements include:

- Launching the Sub Branch Knowledge and Information Portal, known as SKIP. The central resource hub provides direct online access to current information and resources across all business units, and is a secure platform for Sub Branch data to be safely stored and accessed
- Sourcing, leasing and fitting out accommodation for three new District offices, in Sunshine Coast (combined District and Veteran Services office), Gold Coast (adjacent to Veteran Services office), and Brisbane North. The new locations provide better access to services and meeting places for Districts, Sub Branches and members
- Expanding compliance support to Sub Branches to provide best business practice support to conduct their operations. A dedicated team assists with grant writing, compliance issues, and educating Sub Branches on their requirements.



State Council of Auxiliaries Highlights

The RSL Queensland Council of Auxiliaries is committed to ensuring that current auxiliaries continue, and new auxiliaries are created to support RSL Sub Branches. Key achievements in 2019 include:

- Growth and changes among auxiliaries, including the formation of new Citizens' Auxiliaries in Wondai, Taroom and Mitchell. Several existing Women's Auxiliaries changed to Citizens' Auxiliaries, including Gaythorne, Pine Rivers, Murgon and Meandarra/Glenmorgan, with the latter two auxiliaries increasing from eight to 24 members
- Relocation of offices to Bray Park/

Strathpine RSL Sub Branch in Lawnton. Thanks to the Sub Branch and to State Branch, the Council is now equipped with suitable meeting spaces, technology and equipment to carry out their role as a state council

- A successful AGM held in Brisbane, with 30 auxiliaries in attendance, and the election of Sunshine Coast District President Ian Hall to the role of Board Liaison Officer.

The Council would like to acknowledge the passing of previous State President, Lynnette Gambrell OAM, in August 2019. Lynnette was dedicated to her role and worked tirelessly within the Council for many years.





GOVERNANCE AND RISK.

**RSL QUEENSLAND'S
GOVERNANCE JOURNEY**



RSL Queensland is a charitable organisation that has been operating for more than 100 years, serving the changing needs of veterans and the Defence family. In this journey, RSL Queensland has evolved its governance practices to ensure we align to the expectations of our members, veterans, regulators and the public so that we can continue to serve the veteran family in line with the Objects of the League.

Our success is built on robust governance practices to ensure RSL Queensland remains transparent and accountable, supporting sound decision making that serves the veteran family, RSL Queensland and the League.

The *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Act 2012 (Cth)* sets out Governance

Standards that must be met to maintain our charitable status. The Governance Standards provide minimum requirements for how charitable organisations operate, ensuring they retain their nature and character as a not-for-profit organisation, remain accountable to members, comply with Australian laws, and ensure their Responsible Persons, being directors and members of the management committee, discharge their duties at law to maintain public trust.

RSL Queensland is part of the League, comprising District Branches, Sub Branches and members. Each District Branch and Sub Branch is a separate legal entity, and they all operate slightly differently while

working to fulfil the principal purpose of promoting the interests and welfare of serving and ex-serving members of the Australian Defence Force and their families.

RSL Queensland is an independent branch of the League, a body corporate established by Letters Patent issued pursuant to the *Religious, Educational and Charitable Institutions Act 1861 (Qld)* which was repealed but expressly recognised in the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Qld)*.

RSL Queensland's Board regulates itself through a Board Charter and adheres to a Code of Conduct developed to help Board members discharge their duties as

Directors in order to meet legislative requirements and strive for the highest standards of business and ethical conduct. The Code of Conduct also assists Directors to understand the expectations around personal behaviour and communication.

RSL Queensland is comprised of approximately 35,000 members across 10 Districts and 222 Sub Branches. Membership is open to any serving or ex-serving Australian Defence Force member who has conducted at least one day of continuous full-time service or who meets the eligibility criteria set out in the RSL Queensland By-Laws. RSL Queensland is also the sole member of Mates4Mates.

Every organisation relies on a social licence to operate. A social licence is a governance term which describes the trust and confidence that the Australian community

and stakeholders across government, regulators, veterans, customers, and the public place in RSL as custodians of the ANZAC legacy.

Good governance provides the Australian community assurance that we have systems and processes to support sound decision-making, across our Board and Board Committee structures, and our Annual General Meeting and annual reporting is important for ensuring we are transparent with our members.

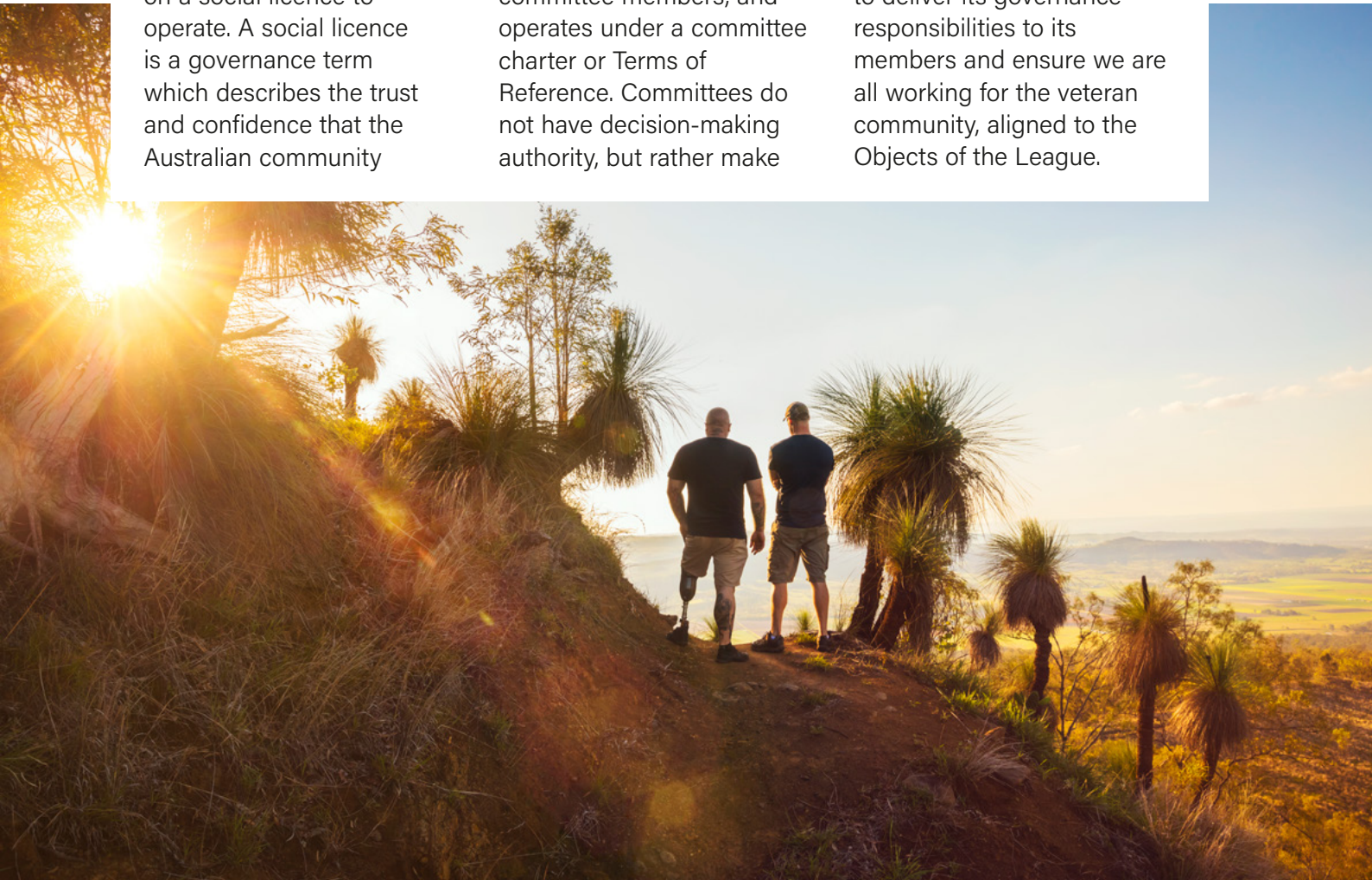
The Board is supported through committees which assist them to mature the organisation's governance structure and capability. Each committee is comprised of members of the Board, and in some cases by additional independent committee members, and operates under a committee charter or Terms of Reference. Committees do not have decision-making authority, but rather make

“RSL Queensland is a charitable organisation that has been operating for over 100 years, serving the changing needs of veterans and the Defence family.”

recommendations to the Board. Learn about our committees on the following pages.

In 2020, a separate Investment Committee will be established to support the Board in its investment decisions.

Each committee is supported by Business Units such as Legal & Governance and Finance, to ensure RSL Queensland is able to deliver its governance responsibilities to its members and ensure we are all working for the veteran community, aligned to the Objects of the League.





LOTTERIES COMMITTEE

The Lotteries Committee has oversight over the performance of RSL Queensland's Art Union funding arm, which enables the provision of welfare services to veterans and the fulfilment of the Objects as set out in the RSL Queensland Constitution.

Achievements of 2019

- Supported the development, ratification and ultimately Board approval of the Lotteries' five-year Strategic Plan
- Guided the development of a revised RSL Lotteries VIP value proposition, the first significant change to the program since the lottery was in-sourced in 2006
- Reviewed and provided input around the Lotteries' performance against key metrics, including growth, churn and the return of funds to RSL Queensland
- Helped management understand the opportunity and risks around the development of new VIP sales channels, with the aim of growing the Lotteries' resilience.

JOHN STRACHAN OAM
Chair, Lotteries Committee



AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

The Audit & Risk Committee has oversight over RSL Queensland's financial reporting, including the preparation of financial accounts and annual statutory accounts, and oversight over risk management.

Achievements of 2019

In December 2018, the Board resolved to create a skills-based committee comprising external, independent members, preferably with Defence service backgrounds. Two independent committee members, Helen Coyer and Mark Grey, were recruited in early 2019. They joined Board members Barry Vains OAM (Chair) and Bill Whitburn OAM to form the committee during 2019.

In accordance with good governance practice, the Audit & Risk Committee oversaw the tender of the 2019 financial audit. This led to the Board's appointment of Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) as RSL Queensland's external auditor.

During 2019, the committee oversaw the following work undertaken by management:

- Reviews of the Board's Risk Appetite Statement and Risk Policy, 2020 insurance policies and the Lotteries long-term financial plan
- Development of a Business Continuity Plan
- A review of the 2018 Audited Financial Statements and the 2019 Financial Audit Plan.

BARRY VAINS OAM
Chair, Audit & Risk Committee



CONSTITUTION & AWARDS COMMITTEE

The Constitution & Awards Committee provides the Board with recommendations on memberships, RSL Awards, Constitutions and By-Laws.

Achievements of 2019

- Three Meritorious Service Medals were awarded in 2019 – to Miles Farmer from Sherwood Indooroopilly RSL Sub Branch, Greg Peak OAM from Kedron Wavell RSL Sub Branch and Peter Jones from Deception Bay RSL Sub Branch. This medal is the highest award that can be given to an RSL member and is presented in honour of their commitment to helping veterans
- A total of 25 Life Membership and Gold Badges were awarded in 2019
- Eighteen 50-year Membership certificates were awarded, including to members of the State Council of Auxiliaries.

MERV BROWN OAM
Chair, Constitution & Awards Committee

NOMINATION & REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

The Nomination & Remuneration Committee was established in March 2019 and supports the Board with selection and appointment practices, performance evaluation and Board composition and succession planning, and includes remuneration frameworks.

Achievements of 2019

- Reviewed the remuneration framework and made recommendations to improve salary alignment
- Made improvements to the Short-Term Incentive Program
- Reviewed the Chief Executive Officer's Key Performance Indicators.

WENDY TAYLOR

Chair, Nomination & Remuneration Committee



TRIBUNAL

Under the RSL Queensland Constitution, a separate independent Tribunal is established which does not include any members of the Board. It is made up of appointed volunteer Service or Life Members. The Tribunal hears disputes and disciplinary matters on League matters affecting members, with a right of appeal to the RSL National Tribunal.

Achievements of 2019

- Reviewed 33 matters – including 86 member complaints
- Conducted three disciplinary hearings
- Participated in the 2020 Constitution Working Group and By-Law 7 rewrite.

PAUL PETERSON

Chair, RSL Queensland Tribunal



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS.

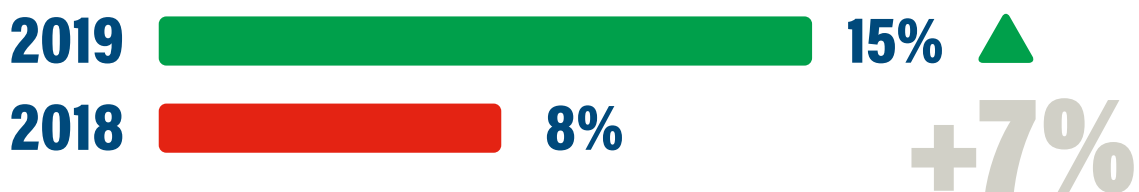
RSL QUEENSLAND'S
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

ORGANISATION FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

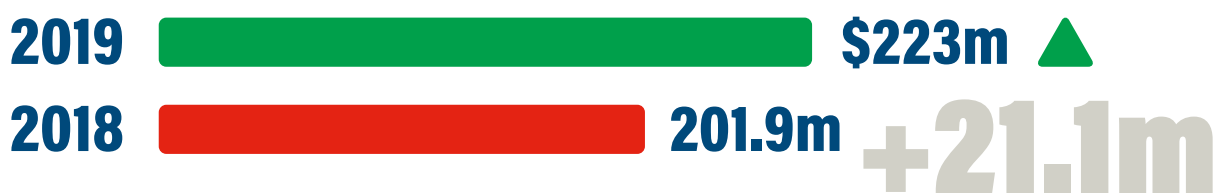
TOTAL YEAR-ON-YEAR NET PROFIT



TOTAL REVENUE GROWTH YEAR-ON-YEAR



TOTAL YEAR-ON-YEAR NET ASSETS



TOTAL YEAR-ON-YEAR REVENUE GROWTH





RSL
Queensland