

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



RSL
Queensland

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At RSL Queensland, we understand that life during and after service can bring with it unique opportunities and challenges.

We're here to help at every stage of the Defence journey.

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“I like to think that those who laid down their lives for our future are looking down and saying, 'We did not die in vain... our sons and our daughters have made a good thing of the freedom and the land that we kept for them'.”

MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN DAY DSC AM
State President, RSL Queensland

YEAR IN REVIEW



*RSL Queensland Remembrance Day 2022
ambassador Corporal Dan Keighran VC*

STATE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As we emerged from the challenges of the COVID years there was a sense of opportunity for the year that lay ahead of us as we went into 2022. We took that sense of opportunity and set three priorities: to align our leadership and tone with the nobility of our purpose, to establish a skills-based Board, and to set a new strategy to take us to 2030.

I am proud of the effort that has been made to align the way we lead with our purpose. But this is a journey that needs constant focus and attention. It will remain my most important priority while I hold the position of State President.

On the back of the agreement of members, we implemented a skills-based Board in the second half of the year, with the newly elected Board meeting twice before the year's end. My sense is that it will be a year or two before this arrangement

is settled and operating in a way we are all comfortable with, but we are headed in the right direction. I want to acknowledge and thank the District Presidents and our Deputy and Vice State Presidents, who discussed, examined, debated and ultimately as a group worked hard to encourage us to adopt this significant change in governance.

We have a new strategy which is founded on the business we are in: care, commemoration and camaraderie for veterans and their families. These are the pillars of the 2030 Strategy and our organising principles; they focus our whole organisation on activities that are aligned to our mission.

One of the most significant opportunities that lies before us is camaraderie. We know that veterans across the state enjoy the mateship and camaraderie that flows from their time in service, and there is more for us to do to help provide that opportunity for connection through our Sub Branch network. It's through this mateship that we are able to capture stories that showcase our purpose and tell the veteran community what we and each of our Districts and Sub Branches stand for.

"Our membership doesn't grow unless our people are out doing the right thing, and by their actions and example encouraging others to join and help. Their great work is reflected in our growth."

On that note, I want to recognise and congratulate the League at large. For the first time in many years, our membership numbers grew in 2022. Our membership doesn't grow unless our people are out doing the right thing, and by their actions and example encouraging others to join and help. Their great work is reflected in our growth.

I also acknowledge the League's outstanding display of care and camaraderie during the February floods, and the return of ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day commemorations without COVID-19 restrictions. The importance of these key commemorations goes without

saying, but their full-scale return was important to us and our communities, who were looking to come together for some normalcy after the challenging times brought on by recent years.

Supporting the work of the League are Rob Skoda and the team, who did an outstanding

job in 2022 while navigating a very difficult employment market. Right across the nation, there weren't enough people to do the work that everyone wanted done. Yet our people ran our very large veterans' services and commercial business without any significant problems, and they did it with good grace. I am very proud of the Executive Team for their leadership throughout the year.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the work that Mates4Mates does every day to support veterans and their families, particularly in the areas of mental and physical health and rehabilitation, and social connection. The complementary nature of our organisations ensures that we can connect our services and continue to help veterans and their families to give them the quality of life they deserve.

Major General Stephen Day DSC AM
State President, RSL Queensland



CEO'S REPORT

As I pause to review the year, I do so with the recognition that RSL Queensland's growth is a marathon, not a sprint. We will continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of veterans and their families.

Having said that, 2022 was a year of progress. We developed the 2030 Strategy under the key goals of care, commemoration and camaraderie, to reflect who we are and how we can provide for the needs of veterans, their families and the broader community. We have worked to create an environment where veterans and their families can be – and have been – supported by us all.

With our strategy in place, we got to work on delivering our new intent. We strengthened our services and engaged with other service delivery organisations to enable veterans and their families to access the support they need. I'm proud of the work that our team continues to put into our service development and delivery.

We turned soil this year on the RSL Queensland Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre in Stafford, which is due for delivery in 2023. We also implemented the Capital Works Program to support the update of Sub Branch facilities, with the program to be delivered in 2023.

It was affirming to have our RSL Employment Program recognised as a finalist in the Prime Minister's National Veterans' Employment Awards. Through this program, we were able to find 250 jobs for veterans and their partners in 2022.

With the implementation of the skills-based Board, our aim was to ensure that our State Council of District Presidents can effectively represent their members' issues and be supported to facilitate improvements for members. This support has been led by our Deputy CEO, Troy Watson, and his team.

"As we continue to adjust our approach to veterans, return to a humility of service and focus on our grassroots, we are seeing the benefits to veterans, their families, the community and our organisation."

We also solidified our support for our RSL mates in New South Wales and Tasmania to ensure they can deliver on services for their veteran communities, and to bring our State Branches into a more aligned and consistent support model.

Despite navigating economic challenges, our Art Union remains strong. Our team is committed to ensuring that the maximum percentage of available funds is apportioned to our services to support veterans and their families. I'm pleased to demonstrate this in this year's Financial Report.

The RSL's strength lies in bringing the community together, and I'd like to thank our volunteers, team members from across the Sub Branches and Districts, and our staff for their ongoing dedication.

As we continue to adjust our approach to veterans, return to a humility of service and focus on our grassroots, we are seeing the

benefits to veterans, their families, the community and our organisation.

What I've seen this year, and I expect we'll continue to see in the coming years, is a more common alignment: united by our purpose and working together to complement each other's strengths to facilitate care, commemoration and camaraderie for all veterans and their families.

To our State President, Board Executive, and incoming and outgoing Boards, thank you for your combined wisdom in 2022. Our growing membership and measurable improvements to veterans and their families is testament to the League's combined efforts.

Robert Skoda
Chief Executive Officer, RSL Queensland



STATE DEPUTY PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I'm proud to be involved in the progress of RSL Queensland, particularly that which we've seen over 2022. With our new skills-based Board being elected and Board members in place, we are looking to the future. I believe this Board will bring new ideas to enhance our capabilities for the benefit of veterans and their families and make RSL Queensland the best it can be.

It has been my honour to speak at many Sub Branches and events this year on varied topics, from my experience as a Nursing Officer to the RSL in general, and, importantly, on female veterans.

Despite being the only female Board member throughout the year, I have continued to feel supported to share my experiences and perspectives and contribute to RSL Queensland's ongoing progress. It is invaluable for our organisation to hear the voice of female veterans, and I commend my fellow members for embracing inclusivity in this way.

Like many of you, I continue to volunteer because I care. I am pleased to serve the RSL, our fellow members and veterans, and of course their families. I have thoroughly enjoyed the challenges of 2022, and I thank you for entrusting me with this position.



Wendy Taylor
State Deputy President, RSL Queensland

STATE VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year, I attended many AGMs in the state, as well as District Delegate meetings, and have had many opportunities to engage with our members and Delegates on issues that are confronting us as an organisation. Our Constitution at all levels has come up in many conversations, and our membership believes we need change to remain relevant to our younger veterans. Our model constitutions at all levels need to be modernised as soon as possible to incorporate outstanding amendments from the *Associations Incorporation Act*.

Our organisation is more complex than ever as we navigate governance, legal, risk management, workplace health and safety, and other areas under relevant legislations. The skills required to be a District President or a Director on the RSL Queensland Board have been discussed with me, and it is apparent that the people with the right skills need to be elected to these positions.

There were many key moments in 2022. Development work was completed on the strategic plan for the organisation to remain relevant, become the leading voice representing the interests of the Defence and ex-service community, and continue to grow a sustainable business into the future.

2022 was a year that laid the footings for greater things to come in 2023. Our members and staff should all be proud of their commitment and dedication to aiding our veterans and their families in what was a year of many changes.



Bill Whitburn OAM
State Vice President, RSL Queensland

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board provides strategic direction for RSL Queensland to meet its mission - to provide care, commemoration and camaraderie to enable veterans and their families to live with dignity and respect.

Drawn from our membership, our skills-based Board gives RSL Queensland the right mix of experience and representation to serve the needs of our members and the veteran community.

As veterans themselves, the Board Directors bring a unique and critical understanding of the lived experiences of our Australian Defence Force personnel.



MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN DAY DSC AM
STATE PRESIDENT

Stephen served in the Army for 40 years, including conflicts in Africa, East Timor, Iraq, and Afghanistan. In 2015, he left the full-time Army to work in business, before returning to full-time duty to lead the national drought response. Stephen now serves part-time as a mentor to Army Brigade commanders.



WENDY TAYLOR
STATE DEPUTY PRESIDENT

Wendy trained as a Registered Nurse, before joining the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps as a Nursing Officer. She served nine years in the Army Reserve and then 16 years in the regular Army, including senior nursing and Command roles in both the Gulf War and East Timor. Wendy was previously President of South Eastern District.



BILL WHITBURN OAM
STATE VICE PRESIDENT

Bill is a 40-year veteran who is passionate about his involvement with the RSL. He is actively engaged with rural and remote Sub Branches and understands the pressures they face due to governance complexities. He has a wealth of experience in HR, logistics, business processes, audit and risk, and workplace health and safety.



LES NASH
STATE COUNCIL CHAIR

Les is an experienced principal consultant in the accounting industry. He is skilled in managerial finance, government, accounting, public policy and corporate governance. Les is an ex-regular soldier with 25 years' infantry service throughout Australia and overseas. He joined the RSL in 1970, and has held many offices in both Far Northern and Moreton Districts.

TONY ORCHARD
DIRECTOR

Tony has spent 25 years working in the finance industry. He served for seven years in the Army and eight years as a Reservist. Tony is an active member of Ipswich RSL Sub Branch and holds a Bachelor of Business (Management), Advanced Diploma of Financial Services and a Diploma of Multimedia.

Specialty: financial management



NIC GOULD
DIRECTOR

As Managing Director and solicitor at Colwell Conveyancing Group, Nic has extensive experience in law, business strategy, risk management and governance. He served in the Army and the Army Reserve, including two postings to Afghanistan and in an advisory role at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

Specialty: legal, governance and risk management



CHRIS HAMILTON
DIRECTOR

Chris is the current CEO of RESQ Plus and has significant board experience, including as director of Legacy Australia, director of Jobs Australia Ltd, and as a member of the South West Queensland Hospital. Chris served for more than 40 years in the Army and Army Reserve, and is a member of Longreach RSL Sub Branch.

Specialty: stakeholder engagement and advocacy



ASH NAUGHTON
DIRECTOR

Ash is the CEO and part-owner of TwentyFiveFour Group, a veteran-owned retail company. He has been an active Reservist for more than a decade and is currently an Honorary Aide De Camp to the Governor of Queensland. Ash is an active member of Yeronga-Dutton RSL Sub Branch and holds a Bachelor of Commerce and Master of Business.

Specialty: strategy development and execution



“Care, commemoration and camaraderie – these are the guiding lights that we’ll be using to develop who we are as RSL Queensland and how we can help the League deliver those goals to veterans and their families.”

ROBERT SKODA
CEO, RSL Queensland



RSL QUEENSLAND 2030 STRATEGY

Our mission

RSL Queensland's mission is to provide *care, commemoration and camaraderie* to enable veterans and their families to live with dignity and respect.

As RSL Queensland looks towards 2030, it's important that our strategy reflects who we are and how we can provide for the needs of veterans, their families and the broader community. A strategy refresh in 2022 enabled us to re-assess our mission and strategic priorities, which have been brought together under three key pillars: care, commemoration and camaraderie. RSL Queensland's 2030 Strategy is a clear and simple plan to help us achieve our mission and meet the current and future needs of veterans and their families.

For our members, veterans and families, we have developed a Strategy on a Page that provides direction for the broader 2030 Strategy and keeps RSL Queensland accountable to those we serve. Our intent is to provide increased support to more veterans and their families, promote wider recognition of our service people's legacy, and offer a sense of belonging and purpose to all in the veteran community.



Strategy progress

With our 2030 Strategy guiding us, this year we progressed with:

CARE

Care for the welfare and interests of veterans

- Establishing RSL Queensland's first Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre in South East Queensland
- Providing increased financial support so Sub Branches can improve facilities
- Establishing partnerships with organisations that expand proactive health initiatives to improve health, wellbeing and education opportunities for veterans
- Contributing to, and supporting veterans and their families through, the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide
- Establishing a support program for incarcerated veterans.

COMMEMORATION

Enabling and supporting commemorations in honour of the service and sacrifices of veterans

- Acting as custodians of commemorative events to honour our service people and engage the community
- Highlighting the service of veterans by sharing their stories with the public
- Assisting other RSL State Branches to deliver commemorative campaigns
- Providing resources to educate young people on Australia's involvement in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations, including introducing the Draw to Remember initiative.

CAMARADERIE

Providing avenues for veterans to rekindle their bonds of service and mateship

- Building partnerships with RSL State Branches to help deliver better outcomes for veterans across Australia
- Facilitating State Congress to ensure the voice of our members is heard
- Collaborating with other ex-service organisations (ESOs) to deliver better outcomes for the Defence community.

RSL Queensland will enable the outcomes of the three strategic pillars of care, commemoration and camaraderie by providing support and enablement through:

- Communication – clearly communicating our mission and endeavours to the veteran community and society at large;
- Commercial resource – providing financial capacity and fit-for-purpose commercial structure to ensure RSL Queensland meets its mission; and

- Capability – having the necessary skills, processes and technology to set RSL Queensland up for success.

By doing this, RSL Queensland will achieve its goals of strengthening our connection to veterans; serving the holistic needs of veterans, securing our commercial capacity and assets, and enabling RSL Queensland and its ecosystem to accomplish its mission.

OUR IMPACT

2022 AT A GLANCE

In addition to the services provided through our Sub Branches, RSL Queensland delivered a range of significant outcomes to support veterans and their families from January to December 2022.



243

individuals and families helped into safe, permanent housing



813

nights spent in RSL short-term accommodation



\$3m

provided in emergency funding



3,503

new clients welcomed



6,251

claims submitted



71

scholarships granted



7,504

service enquiries received



250

jobs found for veterans and their partners



\$5m

spent on RSL Queensland Districts to support Sub Branches



5%

increase in RSL Art Union VIP monthly customer base

RSL Queensland's financial highlights

RSL Queensland has continued to experience financial growth but this has slowed due to challenging economic factors. Our year-on-year asset growth has positioned RSL Queensland to manage and navigate the current economic conditions and ensure we continue focusing on our service delivery and programs to support veterans and their families.

% of Art Union surplus supporting our charitable objects



Revenue growth



Surplus for the year



“We’re an organisation that recognises the importance of its brand and its heritage, but also recognises that – through and across our whole network of Districts and Sub Branches – camaraderie, care, and commemoration are at the forefront of everything that we do.”

ROBERT SKODA
CEO, RSL Queensland

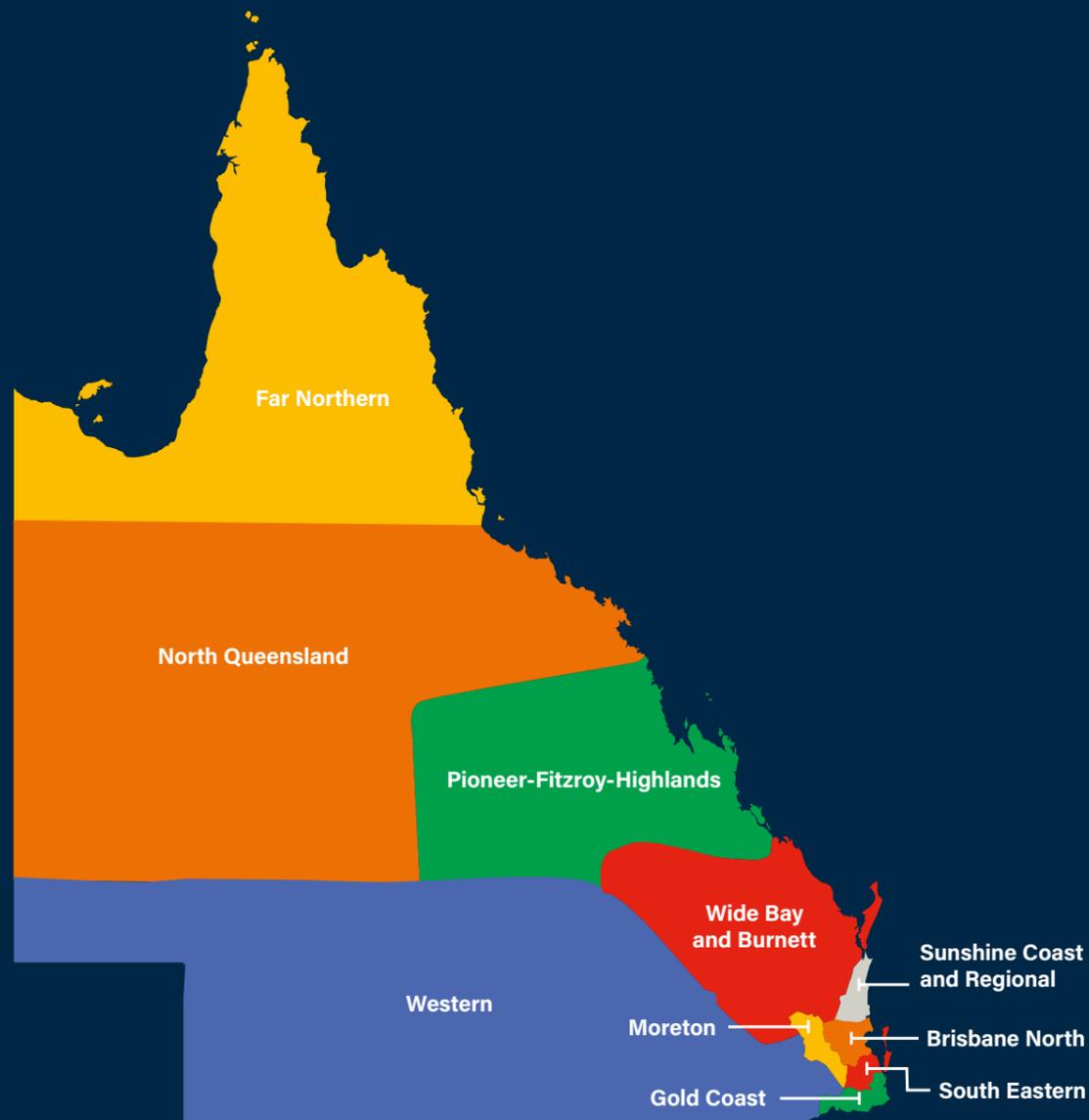
ABOUT US



*Afghanistan veteran and Paralympian
Curtis McGrath OAM PLY and
WWII veteran Dr Stan Mellick OAM
discussed what the ANZAC spirit means
to them ahead of ANZAC Day 2022.*

DISTRICTS AND SUB BRANCHES

After more than 100 years, RSL Queensland is still here for veterans and their families. Our support network of 10 Districts and more than 230 Sub Branches and Chapters provide a helping hand when it's needed most.



Brisbane North District

Banyo
Beachmere
Bray Park-Strathpine
Bribie Island
Caboolture-Morayfield & 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
Mount Molloy
Ravenshoe
Torres Strait Chapter
Tully
Weipa
Yarrabah

Gold Coast District

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

North Queensland District

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

Pioneer-Fitzroy-Highlands District

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

South Eastern District

Ashgrove-Bardon
Bayside South
Beaudesert
Beerwah & District
Bulimba District
City-New Farm
Coorparoo & Districts
Darra & District
Defence Service Nurses
Defence Servicewomen's
Forest Lake & Districts
Glasshouse Country
Greater Springfield
Greenbank
Hellenic
Holland Park-Mt Gravatt
Jimboomba
Kenilworth
Kilcoy
Kooralbyn Valley
Logan Village
Macleay Island
Manly-Lota
National Servicemen's
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
Palmwoods Chapter
Tewantin/Noosa
Woodford
Yandina-Eumundi

Western District

Allora
Bell
Charleville
Chinchilla
Clifton
Crows Nest
Cunnamulla
Dalby
Djuan & 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
Wallangarra
Wandoan
Warwick
Yangan-Emu Vale Chapter

Wide Bay and Burnett District

Agnes Water/1770
Biggenden Chapter
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
Mount Larcom
Mount Morgan
Mount Perry
Moura
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

WHO WE ARE

Across our Districts and Sub Branches, our members clocked up more than 392,757 volunteer hours on welfare and pension activities, commemorative events, fundraising and Sub Branch support.

RSL Queensland was founded in 1916 by veterans, for veterans. Today, we continue to provide support to veterans and their families, promote wider recognition of our service people's legacy, and offer a sense of belonging and purpose to all in the veteran community.

With more than 230 Sub Branches across 10 Districts, we provide practical support, assistance, advice and camaraderie to current and former Australian Defence Force members and their families across the state.

With a proud 100+ year history behind us, and the pursuit of our Objects guiding us, our mission is to provide care, commemoration and camaraderie to enable veterans and their families to live with dignity and respect.

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
8. Provide welfare to the sick, helpless, wounded, vulnerable, aged, destitute and needy.



ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

CARE



“Care is about helping those who carry some form of trauma as a result of their military service. It can be physical or mental trauma. We take care of the veterans who would like a hand, and their families too.”

MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN DAY DSC AM
State President, RSL Queensland

RSL Queensland’s holistic approach to care enables us to meet veterans and their families where and when needed. We have programs and people ready to help, and we partner with several groups and organisations that offer specialist expertise, interventions and events to support the overall physical and emotional recovery of veterans.

The services we provide to veterans and their families can be classified under the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare’s eight domains of wellbeing.



General intake and assessment

Our general intake and assessment (GIA) enables us to understand the needs of each veteran who contacts us and provide a tailored service plan, with automated referrals connecting them to services or providing further information based on their preferences.

In 2022, RSL Queensland extended the GIA to be client-initiated, making it accessible online to all veterans, regardless of whether they have connected with RSL Queensland or not. Through our network of ex-service organisations (ESOs), veterans engaging with other service organisations and Defence agencies such as Open Arms are invited to complete the GIA, and we encourage currently serving Defence personnel to complete the GIA on their phones when RSL Queensland visits Soldier Recovery Centres.

The GIA continues to be central to how we identify the services needed by veterans and their families, and how we streamline access to those services.

Justice and safety

DVA CLAIMS AND APPEALS

Our expert Compensation Advocates guide veterans through often confusing, time-consuming and stressful DVA claims and appeals processes to help them get the most beneficial outcomes.

In 2022, 6,251 DVA claims and appeals were lodged by RSL Queensland on behalf of veterans, their partners and their dependants.

Our advocacy assistance is provided free of charge to veterans and is available online, in person and over the phone.

“I had no idea what services we could access or what RSL Queensland could do. All I knew was that Garry had a part pension from injuries he received during his Army service. I thought maybe we’d be able to get some help with what we expected to be a lengthy time of caring for Garry at home. So I reached out, and that’s when I met (Compensation Advocate) Deanna Pringle. She called and said, ‘I can’t believe I’m telling you this, but Garry has been approved for a Gold Card’. When I passed on the news to Garry he just cried and cried. He said, ‘You’ll be alright now!’”

- Cathy Fairleigh, wife of late veteran Garry, who lost his battle with cancer

Health

WELLNESS PROGRAMS

RSL Queensland continued to offer a wide range of wellness programs to improve the wellbeing and social connections of current and former Defence members and their families.

This year, in line with the growing demand for proactive wellbeing programs within the veteran community, we extended our partnerships to help empower veterans to take charge of their mental health through programs offered by ESOs Survive to Thrive Nation and Swiss8. These programs aim to equip veterans with practical skills to improve their overall health and wellbeing, as well as social and mental wellness, and will be available from 2023.

In 2022, RSL Queensland partnered with 4 Aussie Heroes (Triumph Over Trauma), Diggers Rest, Happy Paws Happy Hearts, Legacy Brisbane, Operation PTSD Support, PTSD Resurrected Inc (Reboot Recovery), RSL RAEMUS Rover Racing, Veterans Care Association (Timor Awakening), Trojan's Trek, and Waves of Wellness (a pilot initiative).

ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

RSL Queensland Active Lifestyles events provided opportunities for veterans and their families to take part in engaging and rewarding experiences while connecting with fellow members of the Defence community.

In 2022, our Active Lifestyles programs included kayaking, leatherwork, pottery, photography, blacksmithing and rock-climbing events.

Participation in our Active Lifestyles program increased by 57% in 2022, with 187 people participating in events across nine areas, including Ipswich, Toowoomba, Cairns, Rockhampton, Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast.

"Even though I've done a fair amount of photography, he taught me a lot of tips and tricks. It was great to just improve my skills. Some people had good gear and some people were shooting on their phones. Everyone was able to get something out of it. We were all there for the same reasons and it was a good way to meet locals who've been through similar experiences. We can talk the same language."

- Courtney Billing, veteran and Active Lifestyles photography one-day workshop participant

Employment

RSL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The RSL Employment Program continues to support the Defence community in their search for civilian employment. For the third year in a row, the RSL Employment Program was recognised for excellence in supporting the employment of veterans and veteran/Defence partners by being named as a finalist in the Prime Minister's National Veterans' Employment Awards.

The national program expanded again in 2022, introducing an online jobs board via the RSL Queensland website, streamlining the application process. The program remains free of charge and is available online and over the phone.

In 2022, 250 jobs were secured through our program. Veterans made up 70% of those who secured jobs, and partners of veterans or Defence members made up 30%.

10 apprentice positions were secured for veterans with Ergon Energy, and 354 were received from employers seeking to hire people from our veteran and partners talent pool. We continued to strengthen relationships with Suncorp, Australia Post, One Harvest, Queensland Police Service, Hobart City Council, Aruma, Tradelink, Energy Queensland, Brisbane Motorways, Wodonga TAFE, Boeing, and BAE Systems.

"I had worked up to the rank of Major before I left Defence. When you leave, like many other ex-Defence members, I found it hard to know what industry and what job I would like to do. I wanted something that would maximise my strengths and abilities. The Employment Program was able to help me review my CV and really support my search for work outside of Defence."

- Jacinta Veitch, veteran and Project Manager at Boeing Defence Australia



Operation PTSD Support



Happy Paws Happy Hearts



Education and skills

SCHOLARSHIPS

The RSL Queensland Scholarships program aims to empower ex-Defence personnel, their children, and current or ex-serving Defence partners by supporting them through tertiary study or vocational training. Each scholarship is valued at up to \$4,000 a year for a maximum of three years.

In 2022, 71 scholarships worth a combined \$616,000 were awarded.

Scholarship recipients can use the funding for course fees, administration fees, textbooks, and equipment required to complete their course.

"At the very least, knowing that no matter what happens you have support there, is motivating. But then throughout my studies it has also meant I have the ability to take time off work when I have exams and still be able to, for example, afford to purchase textbooks. It's been a massive, massive help. And it has played a huge part in being able to really focus on my studies."

- Seraphina Smith, RSL Queensland veteran dependant scholarship recipient

Housing

HOMELESSNESS PROGRAM

Through our Homelessness Program, RSL Queensland continues to partner with The Salvation Army to help veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness into immediate emergency accommodation. Once they're safe, we help them find permanent rental accommodation and link them into our holistic range of support services to address their living condition, which is generally an outcome of complex underlying factors, not limited to the housing crisis and lack of affordable housing that communities continued to experience this year.

In 2022, 243 individuals and families were helped into safe, permanent housing through our Homelessness Program – a 15% increase in demand on the previous year.

Demand for this service continues to grow. In 2022, our expenditure on the Homelessness Program was \$2.7 million, and we grew our capacity with The Salvation Army from 60 to 75 veterans at any one time in the program.

"I was living on the streets in Toowoomba, and a couple of friends put me in touch with the RSL Sub Branch and they put me into a program run by the RSL and Salvation Army. They got me off the streets and after a while I obtained my own residence and I was working full time."

- Sam, a veteran who shared his story of being supported through the Homelessness Program

SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

Located close to the centre 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.

In 2022, 813 room nights were provided for short-term accommodation at Angus House.

Accommodation and all meals at Angus House are charged at just \$20 per day, with RSL Queensland subsidising these costs to ensure they're affordable.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

To support veterans and their families in securing affordable long-term housing, RSL Queensland operates more than 80 self-contained housing units throughout Queensland. We currently have independent living units in Ayr, Cairns, Emu Park, Gayndah, Mareeba, Mount Perry, Proserpine, and Yeppoon.

Income and finance

EMERGENCY FINANCIAL SUPPORT

For veterans who experience difficulties meeting their financial obligations for groceries, electricity, rent or transport, we can provide a limited amount of emergency funds on a one-off basis to help them through their immediate situation.

In 2022, we provided \$680,000 in emergency financial support under our wellbeing program – more than double the amount provided in the previous year.

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

This year we formalised a partnership with Bravery Trust to provide financial counselling to veterans and their families who need long-term support to identify the best pathways to work towards financial independence. The service is set to commence in 2023 and will be available across RSL Queensland's services network.

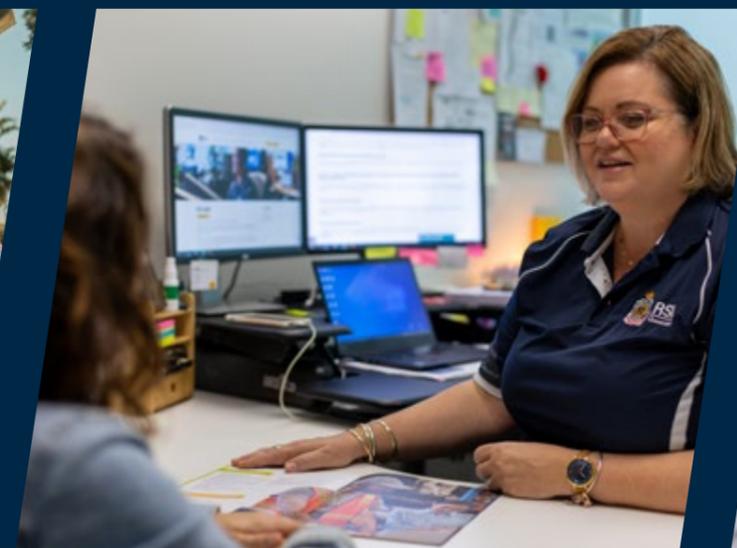
Scholarships



Homelessness Program



Income and finance



Financial counselling



Social support

RSL MEMBERSHIP

Members of RSL Queensland are part of a network of volunteers who not only share the bond of service but are also committed to giving back to their Defence family.

In 2022, there were more than 36,600 members across more than 230 Sub Branches and Chapters throughout Queensland.

Recognition and respect

FUNERALS AND POPPY SERVICES

For veterans who have no known family, RSL Queensland can arrange a dignified funeral service attended by RSL representatives.

We also actively seek out and give recognition to unmarked graves in which veterans are interred, ensuring descendants can properly honour their memory. RSL Queensland members can also provide a poppy service to complement the funeral of a service person.

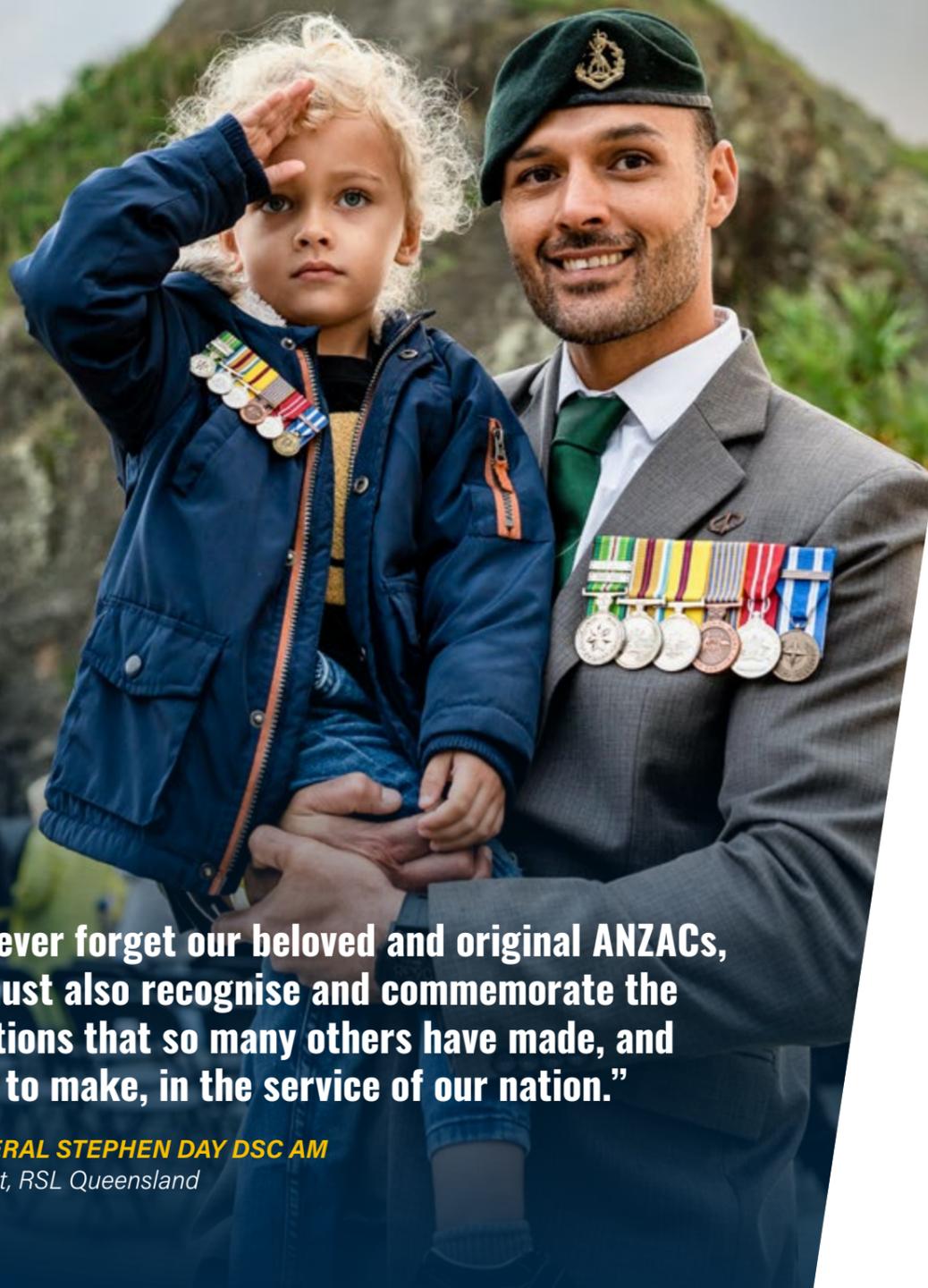
BEREAVEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

RSL Queensland can support families who have lost a family member who served in the Defence Force by providing emergency financial assistance and advice on compensation and entitlements.



In 2022, we had **7,504 enquiries** through our phone and email services – a **29% increase** on the previous year.

COMMEMORATIONS



“We will never forget our beloved and original ANZACs, but we must also recognise and commemorate the contributions that so many others have made, and continue to make, in the service of our nation.”

MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN DAY DSC AM
State President, RSL Queensland

Commemorations form a significant part of what we do at RSL Queensland. In line with our 2030 Strategy, of which commemoration is a pillar, we established a dedicated commemorations function within RSL Queensland to engage with the community, elevate our days and services of commemoration, and educate the public on their significance.

ANZAC DAY

In the lead-up to 25 April, our ANZAC Day campaign focused on the characteristics of the ANZAC spirit that live on in us all: humour, endurance, ingenuity, courage and mateship. We invited all Australians to honour our Defence community and commemorate in a way that was meaningful to them: by attending a local RSL service, lighting up the dawn at home, participating online, or taking the opportunity to connect with their local community.

More than 480 ANZAC Day services and commemorative events were held around the state by RSL Queensland Sub Branches.

“For me, it’s so important to be surrounded by my RSL family, mates and fellow veterans on ANZAC Day, to remember those who served and sacrificed for our nation.”

- Curtis McGrath, veteran and three-time Paralympic gold medallist

INDIGENOUS VETERANS’ CEREMONY

In conjunction with National Reconciliation Week, RSL Queensland hosted the Indigenous Veterans’ Ceremony on 28 May to commemorate, recognise and honour the invaluable contribution of thousands of Indigenous service people – both past and present – who have served and sacrificed for our nation.

“Not all veterans were treated equally by their nation, and we must remember the wrongs of the past, so we don’t do them ever again. Seeing so many people come together to commemorate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have served and continue to serve our nation brought a tear to my eye, and still does.”

- Ray Rosendale CSM, Indigenous veteran and keynote speaker at the Indigenous Veterans’ Ceremony

VIETNAM VETERANS’ DAY

Vietnam Veterans’ Day was commemorated on 18 August, the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. On this day, we remember the sacrifices made by almost 60,000 Australians involved in the Vietnam War and thank the many Vietnam veterans who volunteer their time in Sub Branches and in their local communities. We invited the community to join us in honouring our Vietnam veterans by attending a service or event held by their local Sub Branch.

“Vietnam veterans looked after one another. They stood shoulder to shoulder, even when many other Australians turned their back on them. Our Vietnam veterans made it their mission to make sure that the next generation of returned service men and women, and their families, received the respect they deserved.”

- Major General Stephen Day DSC AM,
State President, RSL Queensland

REMEMBRANCE DAY

RSL Queensland encouraged Queenslanders to Remember to Remember on 11 November, to pause and remember those who have served and sacrificed in wars and conflicts across the world. Our campaign was led by Remembrance Day ambassador Corporal Daniel ‘Dan’ Keighran VC, who was also involved in the service at the Shrine of Remembrance in Brisbane, while services and marches were held by Sub Branches across the state.

“As someone who has seen war and the horror of it, who has lost mates in combat, I absolutely understand the importance of recognising that service and making sure every Australian is aware of what happens when someone puts on that uniform. We need to remember without a doubt the sacrifice and service of those, and Remembrance Day is an occasion for us to do that as Australians – to pause, to remember, to pay our respects.”

- Corporal Dan Keighran VC,
Redcliffe RSL Life Member and RSL Queensland Remembrance Day ambassador

“Camaraderie is about social connection and enjoying the bonds that, uniquely, service in the military creates amongst folks who serve, and making sure that veterans aren’t lonely.”

MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN DAY DSC AM
State President, RSL Queensland



CAMARADERIE



Caloundra RSL Sub Branch



Marian RSL Sub Branch



Edge Hill/Cairns West RSL Sub Branch



Warwick RSL Sub Branch



Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub Branch



North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch

STRONG TIES ON SHOW IN FREEDOM OF ENTRY

Caloundra RSL Sub Branch, Sunshine Coast District

The connection and friendship between the Caloundra RSL Sub Branch and the 816 Squadron, a part of the Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Australian Navy, was on full display during a weekend of celebrations that included a flyover by MH60-R Seahawk helicopters.

The flyover on Remembrance Day was followed by the Freedom of Entry Parade on 12 November, which saw more than 100 personnel from 816 Squadron, the Navy Cadets, the Navy Band, and the Queensland Police Service attend. The ceremonial march was first held 26 years ago and is generally held every five years to renew the friendship agreement between the Sub Branch and the squadron.

WHEN HELPING BECOMES SECOND NATURE

Marian RSL Sub Branch, Pioneer-Fitzroy-Highlands District

Volunteering time to support others is the perfect example of mateship. For Marian RSL Sub Branch President John Edwards, volunteering is simply second nature. John conducts poppy services, represents the Sub Branch at events, and has been volunteering in some capacity for more than 25 years.

"I got involved helping other veterans because I could see they needed help. I thought I'd see if I can make a difference to their lives. I go and visit our members, take them to appointments or shopping, or simply collect their groceries. I'll help around the yard mowing lawns. Sometimes, it might be something as simple as sitting and having a cup of tea with them – giving them someone to talk to."

COLLECTING AND SHARING HISTORY

Edge Hill/Cairns West RSL Sub Branch, Far Northern District

Navy veteran Mark Richardson suffered an infection after discharging from Defence and eventually required a foot amputation. No longer as physically active as he once was, Mark enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts at university to keep his mind active and aid his mental health.

Mark is now putting his degree to great use, collecting and curating military history materials, including those from World War II. Mark shares his findings in presentations and guest talks at the Edge Hill/Cairns West RSL Sub Branch, where he is a member, during their monthly coffee connections catch-ups.

MAKING GOODBYES KINDER

Warwick RSL Sub Branch, Western District

Bruce McGowan has honoured his wife Belinda, who served in the RAAF for almost 33 years and sadly passed away in 2021, by bringing their idea of the Cuddle Bed Program to life. A cuddle bed allows family members and loved ones to lie together as the loved one passes or receives treatment.

Throughout their journey, Bruce has received support from the Warwick RSL Sub Branch. *"Our local Sub Branch has been a big supporter of the Cuddle Bed Program and given me somewhere to talk to people who have had similar experiences. They gave me networks, but they also provided the venue to do our first launch, and an opportunity to explain what we wanted to achieve."*

HONOURING THE SPIRIT TO SURVIVE

Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub Branch, South Eastern District

The Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub Branch commemorated the 80th anniversary of the Bangka Island Massacre in February by honouring the spirit of survival. The service marked the World War II tragedy that saw 21 nurses and many more soldiers killed on Radji Beach, Bangka Island, after the SS *Vyner Brooke* was bombed and sunk.

For Sub Branch Secretary Robyn Green, the anniversary carried a significant message. *"Theirs is a story of immense resilience – of surviving despite everything that's happened to you because you have to. One of the members that was marched out into the water survived. Had she not survived, the world would not have known of the atrocity that happened on that island."*

PASSING ON THE MESSAGES BEHIND ANZAC DAY

North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch, Gold Coast District

Engaging and sharing our stories with younger generations helps to keep the ANZAC spirit alive. North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch did just that when they attended Park Lake State School's ANZAC Day ceremony and connected with the students.

Staying on after the service, Sub Branch member Paul Schipansk read the famous story of 'Simpson and his Donkey' to prep students, sharing the important messages behind ANZAC Day.

SHARING OLD MEMORIES WITH NEW MATES

Sandgate RSL Sub Branch, Brisbane North District

At 99 years of age, World War II veteran James 'Jim' Grebert joined the Sandgate RSL Sub Branch as one of their newest and oldest members. Since joining the Sub Branch, Jim has rekindled his very fond memories and stories with younger members of the Sub Branch, something made easier by the sense of mateship and belonging that is in abundance at Sandgate. While some of the memories are hard to talk about, Jim credits his positive outlook with helping him cope, along with the camaraderie and support of his new mates.



Sandgate RSL Sub Branch

DIGGING DEEP IN TIMES OF DISASTER

Gympie RSL Sub Branch, Wide Bay-Burnett District

In late February, when the community of Gympie was faced with some of the worst floods in the region, many Gympie RSL Sub Branch volunteers played a vital role in helping those in need as they pounded the pavement to check on and help residents.

From digging trenches and moving things out of the way, to carrying people out of homes in waist-deep water, and then collecting items for people who had lost everything, the Sub Branch's 550 members all chipped in. *"It makes me emotional thinking about all the ways our community came together to help. They are an amazing bunch of people,"* Sub Branch Secretary Martin Muller said.

CHRISTMAS MADE MERRIER FOR VETERANS

RSL Queensland State Branch

An army of RSL Queensland staff and volunteers rallied together for the 2022 Christmas hamper drive, which saw more than 600 hampers hand-packed and delivered to veterans either doing it tough or undertaking outstanding work in their community. Districts and Sub Branches nominated deserving recipients, which included veterans who'd recently lost partners or who were experiencing social isolation, health issues, financial hardship, or homelessness.

Each hamper was tailored for its recipient's needs and filled with treats, handmade gifts and other locally sourced festive goods, plus a handwritten card and a \$100 supermarket voucher to put towards a special Christmas meal.

COMMUNITY EVENT STRENGTHENS VETERAN SUPPORT

North Queensland District

With a strong RSL presence in Townsville, RSL Queensland was proud to demonstrate the ongoing support of Lavarack Barracks by welcoming kids, families and community members to an interactive display of military training at an Open Day event on the base.

Hundreds of Townsville locals took up the challenge of completing an obstacle course, and visitors of all ages were able to check out the local barracks, meet Army personnel, view demonstrations from the military working dogs, and watch displays from artillery, helicopters and armoured vehicles.

The community engagement provided an opportunity for current serving families to understand and engage with the RSL and our services.



Gympie RSL Sub Branch



RSL Queensland State Branch



North Queensland District

ADVOCATING FOR VETERANS



RSL Queensland works to amplify the voices of veterans and their families to ensure they are heard by those who can effect change and take action to improve their wellbeing.

In 2022, RSL Queensland established a dedicated advocacy function to influence and inform decision-makers about the circumstances and needs of veterans and their families. The development of an advocacy strategy – the first of its kind for RSL Queensland – will provide direction for the coming years as we create and build awareness of the current and future issues that affect veterans and their families across Queensland, and advocate for veterans at the system level.

Our advocacy priorities centre on:

- empowering veterans' voices so they have meaningful ways of providing input
- telling the story of veterans and their families to increase awareness and influence the shape and direction of government decision-making
- positioning RSL Queensland as an expert on veteran welfare and partner for government.

In 2022, we supported the Royal Commission National Working Group, which has continued to advocate into the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide across many issues. We considered how recommendations handed down in an interim report released by the Royal Commission can best impact veterans and their families, and ensured that the specific interests of Queensland veterans and their families are represented.

As with our service delivery programs, our advocacy work is evidence-based and data-driven. This year, data from the 2021 Census was released, revealing that around 28% of Australian veterans call Queensland home. We will utilise this and other data from the Census, plus our own research, to inform and guide our key areas of advocacy. We are also embarking on a social impact journey, informed by clinical health data, that will enable us to better advocate for veterans in areas of concern.

In addition, RSL Queensland:

- reviewed the Queensland State Government's response to the Inquiry into Social Isolation and Loneliness, following an RSL Queensland submission in 2021
- supported the proposed Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (Enhanced Family Support) Bill 2022, as put forward by the previous Government
- provided detailed suggestions to DVA in response to their review of the Authority to Act form (D9325)

- made representations to DVA regarding the Boys decision in the Federal Court
- continued to work closely with the Australian Defence Force Retirement Association regarding the ongoing effect of the Douglas decision regarding military superannuation
- commenced submissions seeking Non-Liability Health Care for all Reservists
- commenced submissions seeking the harmonisation of DVA Funeral Benefits across the three relevant acts
- worked more closely with RSL Australia and other ESOs, with the aim to have future submissions reflecting collaborative views.

In 2022, RSL Queensland staff were advisers to or members of:

- the Queensland State Government Veterans' Council, which commenced in November 2022 and provides advice to the Queensland Government on veterans' matters, and manages Anzac Square and the Anzac Day Trust Fund
- the Queensland State Government Veterans' Reference Group, which assists the Queensland Veterans' Council to consult with the veteran community and provides advice to the Queensland Government on veterans' matters
- the Queensland Consultative Forum (QCF), which provides a mechanism for regular consultation and discussion between the Deputy Commissioner of DVA and ESOs about systemic issues that concern the veteran and Defence communities, arising from the range of DVA operations
- the National Veterans Advisory Committee (NVAC), an RSL forum with representatives from each RSL State Branch, which considers the range of issues that are raised with the RSL and reports its deliberations to ESORT
- the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) Region 1 Advisory Forum, which discusses training issues for advocates in Queensland and the Northern Territory
- the Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA), the national ESO representative providing feedback regarding Statements of Principle.

SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS

Enabling Districts and Sub Branches to provide care, commemoration and camaraderie within their local communities.

RSL Queensland members

Service members	33,229
Auxiliary members	1,422
Non-League members	2,026

Membership figures for January to December 2022

Our Districts and Sub Branches are at the core of what RSL Queensland does: providing care, commemoration and camaraderie to members, veterans and their local communities.

Supporting the work of our Districts and Sub Branches is our League Services, a team of people based in Brisbane and in the Districts, whose purpose is to make it easier for Sub Branches to support local veterans and their families.

As part of our dedication to supporting our Districts and Sub Branches, this year our League Services team:

- launched the Sub Branch Support Grants Trial, aimed at giving Sub Branches the opportunity to access additional funds for building repair and renovation works, so they have appropriate facilities to welcome and support veterans and their families
- supported Sub Branches with access to additional fundraising opportunities through merchandise sales by reimbursing the cost of commemorative merchandise for ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day
- provided financial support through the Charitable Objects Fund to help Districts and Sub Branches provide charitable and welfare support to the veteran community. This included funding for awards, funeral tributes, commemorations, accommodation, veteran welfare, medical expenses, social interaction and first aid
- following feedback from Sub Branch volunteers about their significant administrative load, introduced Administration Assistants in each District to further support both Districts and Sub Branch administration processes
- provided training to upskill 385 Sub Branch volunteers across the 10 Districts in areas including information and technology, data technology, the Sub Branch Knowledge Information Portal (SKIP), corporate governance, Charitable Objects Fund support, and AIS lodgements and support

- significantly upgraded the Sub Branch information service platform, with feedback received indicating its capabilities and the information available is in line with the needs of our Sub Branches
- progressed work on portals to streamline processes for Sub Branches, including a merchandise portal for easy ordering, and a print portal to order business cards and collateral online for dispatch directly from the printer, with both portals enabling ordering at no cost to Sub Branches
- reinvigorated RSL Community Link (currently being run by Bribie Island RSL Sub Branch) to enable family members to honour their relatives by wearing badges at commemorative events, and school and community groups to learn about veterans in their local community
- introduced Draw to Remember as a Remembrance Day activation for Sub Branches to engage with their local schools. The pilot initiative was designed to teach kids the significance of Remembrance Day and encourage remembrance through art as they spoke with veterans and sketched murals in chalk. 55 primary schools, each nominated by a local Sub Branch, participated across the state. Due to the success of this pilot engagement, it will also be rolled out for Remembrance Day in 2023.

In 2022, our membership grew for the first time in recent years. We also achieved a membership renewal rate of 88%.

Everything our League Services team does is in support of our Districts and Sub Branches, to increase their veteran support and opportunities for community outreach and engagement. The projects completed this year and those in progress for the coming years under our 2030 Strategy reflect a renewed focus and resources committed to developing the next generation of the League.

FUNDING OUR FUTURE

RSL Queensland commenced its first fundraising operations in 1956. Today, to enable our organisation to continue to provide a high level of care, commemoration and camaraderie to veterans and their families, we derive our income from a diversified stream including the RSL Art Union.

After several years of continuous, significant growth, the economic challenges of 2022 provided an opportunity for the RSL Art Union to learn new strategies and navigate its new circumstances. Pleasingly, the Art Union's resilience meant that we still achieved some key highlights and experienced a slight growth in our lottery in 2022:

- A \$10.6 million Gold Coast beach house and a \$12.5 million beachfront apartment complex broke new ground as RSL Art Union's largest ever prizes. The value of these prizes puts RSL Art Union in a market-leading position in Australia.
- The VIP monthly membership customer base increased by 5%.
- Work progressed on the new Art Union website, with the user-experience component completed this year.

The depth of data science and analysis skills within the RSL Art Union team was evident with forecasting and performance prediction proving valuable as we shifted to meet the changing economic environment throughout 2022. The Art Union's highly skilled team across all departments actively identified opportunities to mitigate some of the challenges that the RSL Art Union experienced:

- Re-evaluation of the approach to prizes was necessary to ensure the prize offering was appealing to customers amid cost-of-living pressures. A stronger emphasis on more liquid prizes, including gold and cash, was one consideration in the current economic climate.

- The sales channel experienced challenges, with the shopping centre kiosk sales channel affected by the high employment rate. Heavier investments in marketing were needed to compensate, with the return on that investment covering some of the shortfalls of the kiosk channel.

Consistent with recent years, about 96-97% of RSL Queensland's funds were generated by the RSL Art Union, with the remainder coming from investments and a small number of government grants.

It has long been part of RSL Queensland's strategic planning to diversify revenue to future-proof income. In a significant step in this direction, the position of Executive General Manager, Commercial & Investments was created this year to oversee enterprise-wide revenue generation for RSL Queensland across lotteries, the Prize Investment Portfolio and future revenue streams.

The introduction of the new skills-based Board has provided an opportunity to expand our investment portfolio, with the Board providing guidance on the types of investments to explore for maximum financial growth in the future.

With growth creation and leadership of RSL Queensland's revenue pipeline a focus at the executive level of the organisation, it's hoped that innovation and growth of new revenue streams will help drive profitable and sustainable growth, and support the expanding suite of veteran services provided by RSL Queensland.





**DELIVERING
IMPACTFUL
VETERAN
OUTCOMES**



MATES 4 MATES

Here for those impacted by service.

Since joining Mates4Mates as General Manager in 2022, it's been my absolute privilege to be part of such a supportive and life-changing organisation.

When I reflect on how much has been achieved in 2022, I am incredibly proud of what our staff have accomplished. It is their tireless dedication to supporting and serving the Defence and veteran community that inspires me every day.

Throughout 2022, Mates4Mates had more than 30,000 occasions of service across our mental health and physical rehabilitation services, social connection activities, and Skills for Recovery programs.

Delivered both in person and online, this included:

- More than 7,000 for physical rehabilitation and wellbeing services
- More than 3,700 for psychological services
- More than 2,600 for Skills for Recovery programs
- More than 17,000 for social connection activities.

The opportunity to meet and speak with our clients and their families this year has been invaluable. Hearing their experiences of how Mates4Mates has helped them, even in the smallest of ways, is a great reminder of the connection our staff and services have with the community.

This increased demand for services saw our investment in the regions around Australia expand in 2022, particularly in the Northern Territory and South East Queensland.

After being selected as the lead organisation to deliver the Department of Veterans' Affairs \$5 million Veterans' and Families' Hub in Darwin in 2020, it was great to see construction commence on site this year for the Mates4Mates Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre in Stuart Park.

In Ipswich, the decision to build a dedicated Mates4Mates Family Recovery Centre was met with an outpouring of support from the local community, with a site secured and renovations commencing in 2022.

After delivering social connection activities in Ipswich for the last two years, the centre will offer more support services, including psychological and physical rehabilitation and wellbeing services, and advocacy support from RSL Queensland.

The growth within Mates4Mates internally has also been a proud investment, with the building of the Mates4Mates executive leadership team being finalised in 2022, enabling a clear direction moving forward for our staff, clients and the organisation.

This includes the development of a strategic plan under the direction of the Mates4Mates Board. While Mates4Mates is a wholly owned subsidiary of RSL Queensland, we continue to operate as two separate entities with separate boards. The 2023-2030 Strategic Plan, Journey to 2030, was developed by Mates4Mates in alignment with the RSL Queensland 2030 Strategy to maximise the service offerings of both organisations. Mates4Mates and RSL Queensland have focused their alignment to ensure that the needs of veterans and their families are being met through their complementary support services.

Mates4Mates has been heavily involved in the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide as part of the Royal Commission Stakeholder Reference Group. Mates4Mates submitted its recommendations to give a voice to those who we support, while working alongside the government and other stakeholders to improve the lives of current and ex-serving Defence Force members and their families.

As we continue to move forward alongside veterans and their families, I want to say thank you to all the staff, clients, supporters and partners who have been instrumental along the way in supporting those who have been impacted by service.

Emma Whitehead

General Manager, Mates4Mates

w mates4mates.org

p 1300 4 MATES





GALLIPOLI MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation (GMRF) is committed to understanding the impact that military service has on veterans and their families, from both a physical and a mental health perspective. The long-standing partnership between GMRF and RSL Queensland is built on trust and a shared vision to create a brighter future for veterans through research. The partnership achieves its mission of improved quality of life for veterans and their families by providing evidence-informed programs to meet the needs of veterans.

Unlocking the power of research through translation and implementation

The Health Research Translation agreement, signed in February 2022 by RSL Queensland and GMRF, further enhances the commitment to improving the health of veterans and their families through building a dedicated GMRF translational research capability. The GMRF translational research team aims to accelerate research findings into clinical practice, healthcare policy and impactful veteran programs.

One of the projects within this agreement is the establishment of an RSL Queensland online learning platform that will house psychosocial modules targeted at veterans and their families. The aim of the platform is to improve the health and wellbeing of the veteran community through awareness, education and suitable online interventions. The psychosocial modules will be research-informed, with module content overseen by GMRF clinical psychologists, and evaluated within the GMRF Evaluation and Implementation Framework, under the expert guidance of GMRF Implementation Scientist, Dr Camila Guindalini.

Veteran employment research explores the transition from military service to civilian life

RSL Queensland-funded research into veterans' employment was published by GMRF in 2022, highlighting the main challenges faced by veterans in finding and keeping employment after they leave the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Four significant themes emerged as barriers to employment:

1. starting over, including finding work and starting from the bottom again
2. mental health, including perceived discrimination and impaired functioning
3. interpersonal cultural difficulties, including communication styles, teamwork and varied work ethics in civilian employment settings
4. organisational differences, including the variations between military and civilian organisational systems.

This study highlighted the need for evidence-based 'transition to employment' initiatives to target factors affecting not just the initial obtaining of employment, but also employment retention among veterans.

Giving evidence to the Royal Commission

A panel of GMRF experts previously gave evidence to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide on a range of issues relevant to health and wellbeing in veterans and their families, based on findings from research commissioned by RSL Queensland.

In April 2022, Dr Angela Maguire was again called as an expert witness to give evidence. On this occasion, she expanded on her research findings as they relate to the impact of military service on families, and the challenges that families and service providers face when navigating military and civilian systems of care.

We welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the Royal Commission hearings and to inform the findings from the Commissioners' reports.

"We at GMRF continue to be very proud of our successful partnership with RSL Queensland and the impact our research has in enhancing the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families."

– Miriam Dwyer, GMRF Chief Executive Officer

Miriam Dwyer

CEO, Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation

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COMMITTEES



The Board of RSL Queensland is supported through committees that assist in developing and managing the organisation's governance structure and capabilities by providing advice and recommendations.

Each committee is supported by departments within the organisation and works closely with the Company Secretary.

The Sub Committee structure has been established to ensure RSL Queensland can deliver its governance responsibilities in pursuit of our charitable Objects and our mission to provide care, commemoration and camaraderie to enable veterans and their families to live with dignity and respect.

AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

The Audit & Risk Committee provides advice and recommendations to the RSL Queensland Board to ensure an understanding and appreciation of the present and future risks regarding the financial and general operations of RSL Queensland.

**2022 Audit & Risk Committee Chairperson:
Barry Vains OAM**



NOMINATION & REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

The Nomination & Remuneration Committee provides advice to the Board on matters relating to shaping and maintaining the desired culture across RSL Queensland, including training, talent management and cultural initiatives, and processes and remuneration frameworks.

**2022 Nomination & Remuneration Committee Chairperson:
Ian Hall OAM**



INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

The Investment Committee provides support and makes recommendations to the Board in relation to investment matters and exercises any delegated authority from the Board regarding RSL Queensland's investment portfolio.

**2022 Investment Committee Chairperson:
Dr Adam Walk**



GOVERNANCE & CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

The Governance & Constitution Committee provides advice and recommendations to the Board on governance issues, memberships, Constitutions and By-Laws, including matters relating to the development of proposed State, District and Sub Branch Constitutions across RSL Queensland.

**2022 Governance & Constitution Committee Chairperson:
Bill Whitburn OAM**



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