

RSL NSW
**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2018-19





LEST WE FORGET

CANADA

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The Returned and Services League of Australia (New South Wales Branch) (RSL NSW) was formed in 1916 and as at 30 June 2019 had 27,530 members and 347 sub-Branches throughout NSW.

OUR PURPOSE

Respecting, supporting and remembering our veterans and their families.

ACT OF INCORPORATION

The Returned and Services League of Australia (NSW Branch) is incorporated under an Act of Parliament - *RSL NSW Act 2018* No. 48.

ABN: 78 368 138 161

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

2018–19 was a milestone year for RSL NSW, during which we took steps to repair our organisation and rebuild trust with the community.

Firstly, we would like to acknowledge the contribution made by our outgoing President, James Brown. James served during one of the most challenging periods in the organisation's history. Under his leadership, the Board was united in working to overhaul governance systems and processes and focused on the RSL NSW mission of supporting veterans.

We would like to take this opportunity to also thank Mick Bainbridge, Greg Makutu and Scott Seccombe, who resigned during this financial year, for their contribution to the Board (and before that, RSL NSW State Council).

Finally, the Board would also like to thank Robyn Collins, who took the helm of a badly damaged organisation in mid-2017 and oversaw the transformation of ANZAC House, while laying the foundations for a new and professional culture of transparency and trust. In late May, Robyn announced her intention to retire, and we welcomed Jon Black as the organisation's new CEO in September 2019.

A number of new Directors also joined the Board in the first half of 2019. Phillip Bridie AM, John Hutcheson AM ADC and Jonathan Tuckfield filled casual vacancies, and David Bell and Sophie Ray were appointed as the first independent Directors. All have brought important experience and expertise to the Board.

As a board we are privileged to bring you the first RSL NSW Annual Report since 2015. This report covers the activities and financial results of ANZAC House. Sub-Branches, connected to RSL NSW through the constitution, are charities separately registered with the ACNC.

An annual report is now a requirement under the *RSL NSW Act 2018* and this report represents a significant milestone in the organisation's repair.

Another important step in repairing RSL NSW has been drafting a new constitution to comply with new laws and governance standards. The Board understands that many members had reservations about the first draft we took to a vote in 2018. In 2019, we have worked extensively with District Councils and their nominated representatives, who in turn consulted with sub-Branches and members, to produce a redrafted constitution to be voted on at congress in October.

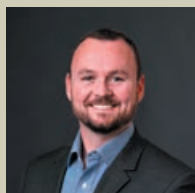
This new, improved constitution will lay the foundation for RSL NSW to deliver successfully on its mission to respect, support and remember our veterans and their families for the next 100 years.



Former Directors/State Councillors



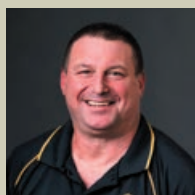
James Brown



Mick Bainbridge



Greg Makutu



Scott Seccombe



On 12 June 2019 a two-year suspension on fundraising by RSL and its sub-Branches was lifted. The suspension was imposed to protect well-meaning members and volunteers from inadvertently breaking the law. Significant work has been done both within ANZAC House and by the members to ensure that those responsible for legislative compliance are sufficiently informed as to their responsibility and the requirements under charitable fundraising legislation. Governance training for sub-Branch executives and trustees has been very helpful in supporting this.

Change within RSL NSW did not distract the organisation from its mission to remember the service of our veterans. In a year that marked the centenary of the end of WWI, we had a busy calendar of commemorative events. You can read more about them in the Remembering section of this report on page 28.

After extensive member consultation in late 2017 and early 2018, work on a strategic plan for 2020–2022 recommenced in early 2019.

In August 2019, the Board signed off four strategic pillars:

- Champion remembrance and camaraderie
- Meet the health, wellbeing and support needs of veterans and their families
- Be the voice for veterans and their families
- Govern responsibly to fulfil our charitable purpose

Our incoming CEO, Jon Black, will take over the development of operational plans to enable us to achieve our strategic goals.

The Board would like to thank all RSL NSW members for their patience and understanding during the past year. Much progress has been made and together we will continue the journey towards a stronger, healthier RSL NSW.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

2018–19 was a time of sweeping change as we continued the repair of RSL NSW and laid solid foundations for another 100 years of serving veterans and their families.



Given the outcomes of the Bergin Inquiry, ANZAC House was understandably the initial focus for repair. In late 2017, we started reviewing what needed to change and progressively brought on board the skills needed to repair and rejuvenate what is one of the most iconic and revered charities in NSW.

By mid-2019, we had almost completely overhauled our operations to ensure ANZAC House was fully compliant, efficient and effective. We also transformed our culture to a trust-based model underpinned by values such as openness, transparency, respect and reliability.

This would not have been possible without the patience, hard work and dedication of the entire RSL NSW family. I would like to personally thank all our staff, members, volunteers and supporters for their support and understanding during this time.

I would like to acknowledge in particular, the vital contribution made by all ANZAC House team members; those who have joined recently, as well as those who have stayed with us to help us better understand our history. This combination has helped strengthen our organisation and set RSL NSW up for future success.

One of the most rewarding outcomes of the repair effort has been the renewed focus on our charitable purpose and the vital services the organisation provides to ensure we help veterans and their families in their time of need.

As part of this and to ensure RSL DefenceCare could meet the current and future needs of the Defence community and continue its services, it has been brought into RSL NSW.

Another highlight from the year was the Invictus Games Sydney 2018. We are extremely proud of the many RSL NSW members and auxiliaries who generously raised money and volunteered during the event. They represented the very best of our organisation to a wider local and international audience and helped make the event a tremendous success.

Encouraged by the Invictus Games, we were delighted to support the launch of Veteran Sport Australia in October 2018. By providing financial assistance, support and opportunities, this new program will help veterans to access sport and recreational activities with the goal of improving their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

It has been an honour to serve as CEO during this transformative time in the organisation's history. It has not always been easy, but our achievements this year show we are well on the road to recovery and can look to the future with optimism.

I'm sure you will join with me in wishing the new CEO, Jon Black, the best as he steers RSL NSW through the next phase of its important journey.

ROBYN COLLINS

REPAIRING RSL NSW

An enormous amount of work has been done to repair RSL NSW's systems, processes and professionalism in recent years.

In 2019, ANZAC House, the headquarters of RSL NSW, is entirely different than it was just a few short years ago, with more qualified staff, better governance processes and strong finance systems. Today, we are better placed than ever before to ensure we are totally focused on our mission of supporting veterans and their families.

A new constitution

A critical part of the repair of the organisation was modernising our key governance document, the RSL NSW Constitution. A first attempt at a revised constitution was unsuccessful when put to the congress delegates in December 2018.

Following this, RSL NSW surveyed all sub-Branches to better understand their concerns. More than 120 sub-Branches responded and helped to shape the path forward.

In the 2019 re-drafted constitution, the Board has responded to the concerns raised by removing the requirement that sub-Branches need to restructure, removing the capacity for RSL NSW to have Executive Directors and reinstating the existing District Council structure.

RSL NSW consulted closely with District Council Presidents to present a simpler, more straightforward constitution for members to consider before the vote in October 2019.

The 2019 proposed constitution will:

- Ensure local branches retain control of property, cash and other assets.
- Give all Service Members the right to vote to elect the President and other Service Members as Directors of RSL NSW.
- Reflect the legislative changes already introduced in the *RSL NSW Act 2018* to update references to State Council to "the Board", and councillors to "Directors".
- Reduce the Board from 14 State Councillors to a maximum of 10 Directors.
- Require the Board to appoint at least one, but no more than two, Independent Directors who are not Members of the RSL.
- Limit Directors to holding office for a total period of nine years.

Finally, the constitution will be supported by new standard operating procedures (SOPs). These are in the process of being developed in conjunction with District Council representatives and will clarify operating procedures for sub-Branches on topics such as asset management, ceremonies, governance and administration.

Governance at ANZAC House

Since 2017 the Board has focused on improving the organisation's governance. Early work included the development of a Board charter, a conflicts of interest policy, a delegation matrix and a risk framework.

The establishment of the Board Audit and Risk Committee with two independent members was also a critical step in improving financial governance following the Bergin Inquiry.

An independently managed whistleblower hotline was established to provide a safe reporting mechanism for any issue of concern.

In June the Board appointed two Independent Directors, David Bell and Sophie Ray, to the Board in accordance with the *RSL NSW Act 2018*. Members can read more about David and Sophie on pages 32 and 33. The Independent Directors bring to RSL NSW a depth of experience and a fresh perspective on the strategic direction for RSL NSW in the period ahead.

The Board also took steps to reinstitute the State Branch Tribunal to hear disciplinary matters.

Since the end of the financial year, the Board has agreed on a new committee structure, including a governance committee to review the Board's current governance practices.

Financial reporting, systems and processes

One of the RSL NSW Board's first tasks in 2017 was the appointment of EY, a tier one accounting firm, to audit the organisation.

By the 2018-19 financial year, RSL NSW had achieved its second consecutive unqualified audit report.

In addition, ANZAC House has replaced all outdated, non-compliant and inefficient systems and processes to ensure future operations are transparent and in accordance with modern standards.

In particular, its new financial system, and new fundraising and accounting policies and procedures will allow RSL NSW, when it recommences fundraising, to ensure that it can track every dollar donated. This will enable RSL NSW to be confident that it is dealing with the proceeds of fundraising in the manner required.

Another example of how RSL NSW has reformed is the methodology (see diagram below) employed in the introduction of new finance systems and processes in ANZAC House. This methodology minimises the risk of a recurrence of the failures of the past and has been particularly effective in controlling credit card and other expenditure.



Enforceable Undertaking

In May 2018, RSL NSW entered into an Enforceable Undertaking with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). The undertaking required RSL NSW to implement and maintain a number of improved governance and accountability initiatives, many of which had already been introduced by RSL NSW as part of the overall repair agenda prior to entering the undertaking. RSL NSW has provided quarterly reports to the ACNC throughout 2018–19 and will continue to do so on an annual basis in 2019–20.

These reforms are vital steps in the long journey to regaining the trust and respect of our members and the wider community, and returning RSL NSW to our honoured position as the pre-eminent veterans' organisation in this state.

Governance training for sub-Branch executives and trustees

In June 2019, RSL NSW started delivering governance training workshops in conjunction with Justice Connect/Not-for-profit Law, a charity legal service. The training was organised in response to sub-Branches requesting guidance on the legal responsibilities of the sub-Branch Executive Committee members and trustees. This training was progressively offered to sub-Branch executives and trustees across the state in 2019.

Restoring sub-Branch fundraising

In June, RSL NSW lifted a two-year suspension on sub-Branch fundraising.

Fundraising by sub-Branches was suspended in August 2017 amid uncertainty about sub-Branch compliance and concerns that compliance failures could expose potentially hundreds of volunteers to sanctions under the law.

It became clear during the Bergin Inquiry that RSL NSW had an issue with fundraising compliance. Questions also arose about compliance at a sub-Branch level and the restriction on fundraising was considered necessary to protect hardworking RSL NSW volunteers from unintentionally breaching the law.

Sub-Branches can now apply to NSW Fair Trading to get back to the normal business of raising funds for veterans and their families. That has been welcome news to thousands of volunteers across the state.

THESE REFORMS ARE VITAL STEPS IN THE LONG JOURNEY TO REGAINING THE TRUST AND RESPECT OF OUR MEMBERS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY, AND RETURNING RSL NSW TO OUR HONoured POSITION AS THE PRE-EMINENT VETERANS' ORGANISATION IN THIS STATE.

RSL DEFENCECARE

Helping veterans and their families in times of injury, illness or crisis.

Serving in the Australian Defence Force can have a significant impact on health, wellbeing and quality of life during and after service. RSL NSW recognises that, as a result of service, veterans and their families may be socially isolated or disadvantaged, they may struggle to find work or fit in, and could be dealing with mental or physical illnesses that impact their daily lives.

RSL DefenceCare is RSL NSW's professional services arm, helping veterans and their families in times of injury, illness or crisis and supporting sub-Branch volunteers, who provide on-the-ground support throughout NSW. We understand that each veteran's situation is unique, and we help without judgement.

RSL DefenceCare's services are free of charge and include assistance with Department of Veterans' Affairs claims, advocacy at the Veterans' Review Board, counselling, support during a crisis or the death of a loved one, and financial assistance.

Our support is broad ranging. We may help a struggling veteran put food on his or her family's table; or help to pay bills when money is tight. We can provide counselling to veterans and their family members and when a veteran or family member passes, we may be able to assist with bereavement support and financial assistance. Our professional staff assist veterans to navigate the complex veteran support and claims system, and to access other community and ex-service welfare services where required.

With funding from Family and Community Services (FACS) and as part of the NSW Government Rent Choice Veterans Program, RSL DefenceCare has a dedicated professional whose role is to support veterans experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless.

HOW RSL DEFENCECARE HELPED IN 2018-19

509

VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

\$992k

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

2,169

CLAIMS LODGED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

170

APPEALS LODGED WITH THE VETERANS' REVIEW BOARD

189

COUNSELLING SESSIONS

FINANCIAL SUPPORT BREAKDOWN BY REGION

37%

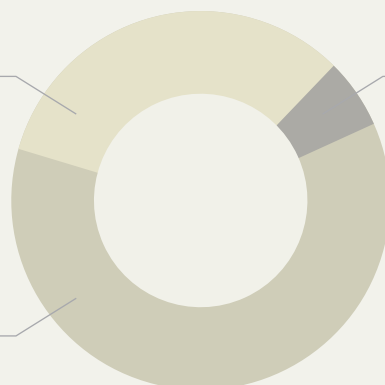
SYDNEY METRO

3%

INTERSTATE

60%

REGIONAL NSW



VETERAN SPORT AUSTRALIA

Veteran Sport Australia (VSA) was launched in October 2018 during the Invictus Games Sydney 2018. VSA is a national initiative focused on improving the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families through promoting and facilitating participation in sport and recreation activities.

VSA aims to connect with all Australian veterans; a population estimated to be in excess of 640,000.

Nationally, VSA works with sport, recreation and veteran organisations to improve the network of support available to veterans. The team engages with local communities, working with veterans and their families on the ground to get them active.

VSA also provides financial assistance to veterans in need and supports national teams and events for veterans, including the Invictus Games (working closely with the Australian Defence Force).

A highlight for VSA in their inaugural year has been the establishment of a pilot program to engage with the local community in the Newcastle and Hunter region of NSW. This has developed local relationships with:

- 19 defence-related, government and community organisations
- 18 local sub-Branches, ex-service organisations and veteran groups
- 18 sport and recreation bodies

VSA is delighted by the support received from the sport sector. A great example of the work and support of sporting organisations has been the National Rugby League's Battlefields to Footy Fields program, encouraging veterans to get involved with refereeing. The program has been a great success, with nearly 150 veterans signing up in the first six months.

WHAT VSA ACHIEVED IN 2018-19

2

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS SUPPORTED

Canadian Winter Sport Camp in February 2019 and the Warrior Games in June 2019

1

PILOT PROGRAM

A pilot program up and running in the Newcastle and Hunter region of NSW, engaging locally with veterans, their families and the community to support their involvement in sport and recreation

73

VETERANS SUPPORTED BY THE VSA FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Primarily supporting equipment, membership and services that would otherwise have been a barrier to their participation

25

VETERAN VOLUNTEERS

A network of volunteers to support VSA's work in every Australian state and territory

\$127,561

IN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO NATIONAL TEAMS AND EVENTS, INCLUDING THE WARRIOR GAMES IN JUNE 2019

“I DIDN'T REALISE HOW MUCH OF LIFE I WAS MISSING UNTIL I GOT INVOLVED IN SPORT. IT'S CHANGED EVERYTHING FOR ME AND MY FAMILY.”

Narelle Mason, a veteran who served for nearly 10 years in the Royal Australian Air Force Security Police. VSA supported Narelle to attend the Warrior Games in Tampa Bay, Florida in June 2019.

RSL NSW SUB-BRANCHES

RSL NSW has 347 sub-Branches, 23 Districts and 27,530 members.

Sub-Branch members play vital roles in their local communities, running commemorative services, helping veterans and their families in times of need, and providing social connectedness and camaraderie opportunities for veterans and their families.

Sub-Branches are grouped into 23 Districts, each of which has its own District Council headed by an elected President. There are 14 Districts across regional NSW and nine in the Sydney metropolitan area.

Many sub-Branches have dedicated welfare and pension officers, who reach out to local veterans and their families, providing support, comfort and referrals to ensure their continued health and wellbeing. These experienced volunteers join with other members, as first responders, reaching out to veterans and their families in times of crisis. Collectively their volunteer hours number into the tens of thousands every year, with much of their work unnoticed except by those they help.

The broader community is starting to better understand the importance of social connectedness to avoid isolation, especially for the health and wellbeing of our elderly. Through activities such as bus tours, meetings, lunches, commemorative events, and home and hospital visits, sub-Branches play a vital role in connecting with other veterans and their families in communities throughout the state.

In 2018–19, many RSL sub-Branches celebrated their centenary, having been formed when veterans came together after World War I to help each other and their families. RSL NSW is one of the original peer-to-peer support organisations in Australia, as veterans and their families who experienced the horrors of war found support and understanding from others who shared those experiences. The organisation continues to provide the same strong and loyal support today as it did over 100 years ago.

SUB-BRANCH SPOTLIGHT

Maroubra RSL sub-Branch

During 2018-19 Maroubra's 133 sub-Branch members (as at June 30, 2019) and Auxiliary were active in their local community, providing welfare support, bus trips and other activities for veterans. They also supported RSL DefenceCare through the 2018 Poppy Appeal and 2019 ANZAC Appeal, as well as providing a \$350,000 donation. They also donated to the Invictus Games, RSL AFOF, the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway, Legacy and the Vietnam Veterans' Federation.

Maroubra RSL sub-Branch conducted several commemoration services, including for the Centenary of the Armistice and ANZAC Day.

Tamworth RSL sub-Branch

Tamworth sub-Branch celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2018. Following this milestone, the 179 sub-Branch members (as at June 30, 2019) enacted a plan to include more younger veterans and women. Jayne McCarthy was elected as the first female president and younger veterans now make up almost 30% of membership.

Over the last 12 months, Tamworth sub-Branch supported the local veteran community through hospital and nursing home visits, and submitting 371 DVA claims.

Tamworth sub-Branch also took part in the 2018 Poppy Appeal and 2019 ANZAC Appeal, raising funds for RSL DefenceCare, and conducted one of Australia's largest regional ANZAC Day marches.

The sub-Branch is caretaker for 18 war memorials, including one of only 11 Sandakan memorials nationwide.

ANZAC House engagement with sub-Branches

During 2018–19, ANZAC House engaged with sub-Branch members in various ways to help the organisation in the vital work of repair.

In late 2017, consultation work started with member surveys and broader stakeholder engagement on the critical work of defining the organisation's purpose and developing a strategic plan. The results of this work provided the foundation for the high level strategy approved by the Board at its August 2019 meeting.

Throughout the year, Board members and senior staff from ANZAC House travelled across regional NSW to gather information and hear what matters to sub-Branch members and most importantly, what they wanted in a new constitution.

After an unsuccessful vote for a new constitution in December 2018, the Board engaged Social Ventures Australia (SVA) to survey members and sub-Branches to better understand their views on the aspects of the proposed constitution that required amendments.

Based on the results of this survey, the Board and staff consulted with District Councils to determine the best way forward for the constitution. District Councils elected a group of seven to work closely with the Board on a second draft. Known as the DC7, this group of experienced members helped revise the wording of the original draft constitution and incorporate the feedback and recommendations received earlier in the year. This revised version was released to District Councils in June 2019 for the first stage of extensive consultation prior to settling on a final version to be voted upon by delegates at the Annual State Congress in Albury at the end of October 2019.

In addition to consultation for the strategic plan and constitution, members have provided valuable input on a number of aspects of the repair, including a new RSL NSW website that was launched in August 2019, the reactivation of fundraising by sub-Branches and sub-Branch training on governance and compliance.

Establishment of the ANZAC House Sub-Branch and Member Support Unit

In March 2018, as part of its cultural change and in recognition of the importance of our sub-Branches and members, ANZAC House set up the Sub-Branch and Member Support Unit, a dedicated information resource and central point of contact for members and sub-Branches.

The aim of the unit is to improve service and support through a coordinated approach to handling enquiries and passing on feedback to the ANZAC House team.

In 2018–19, the Support Unit responded to over 12,000 telephone, email, mail and face-to-face enquiries. New software was developed in early 2019 to help us better track our response times and monitor information flows, so we can improve our service to members and sub-Branches in coming years.

2018-19

4,798

CALLS ANSWERED

5,127

EMAILS RECEIVED

2,812

POSTAL ENQUIRIES RECEIVED

33

FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS



Support Unit Team

HOW TO CONTACT THE SUPPORT UNIT

1300 679 775 (8:30am-4:30pm weekdays)
support@rslnsw.org.au

Communications

In response to calls from members for better communication about what is happening within the League, RSL NSW increased and standardised correspondence with sub-Branches during 2018–19. The State Secretary Newsletter moved to a weekly format and Circulars are issued as needed and when important information or changes to policies or procedures need to be communicated to sub-Branches. Additionally, all communications are now published on the RSL NSW website, and Facebook is being used more extensively for updates and information.

In May 2019, we opened the online Members' Suite, a dedicated members' portal on the RSL NSW website where information and resources specifically for sub-Branches and members can be freely accessed. ANZAC House also established a Members' Lounge in October 2018; a welcoming space, including a library of books, where members can drop in for a tea or coffee, or to visit the team.



Members' Lounge

RSL NSW Auxiliaries

The Auxiliaries are part of the fundraising arm of RSL NSW and also play an important supporting role to their sub-Branches and to the veteran community.

The work of the RSL Auxiliaries in 2018-19:

Invictus Games 2019

- 80 quilts made for participating countries
- 1,350 laundry bags made for participants
- Over 8,000 poppies made for family of participants

Quilt projects

- 5 Thank You for Your Service Quilts presented to service personnel
- Over 100 quilts donated to RSL LifeCare for the homeless
- Continued raising funds for RSL DefenceCare

Poppy Appeal and ANZAC Appeal

- Provided support to sub-Branches raising funds for RSL DefenceCare

Operation Possum

- Organising care packages to be sent to deployed troops

More new members joined Auxiliaries from January to June this year than the whole of 2018. Several new members are male, and we have our first male Auxiliary President.



SUB-BRANCHES

AS AT 30 JUNE 2019

- Aberdeen
- Abermain
- Adaminaby
- Albion Park
- Alstonville
- Arian Park
- Armidale
- Arncliffe
- Ashfield
- Austinmer-Thirroul
- Avalon Beach
- Balgowlah-Seaforth-Clontarf
- Ballina
- Balmain Rozelle
- Balranald
- Bangalow
- Baradine
- Barham & District
- Barraba
- Bass Hill
- Batemans Bay
- Bathurst
- Batlow
- Bega
- Belfield
- Bellinger River
- Belmont
- Belmore
- Bermagui
- Berowra
- Berrigan
- Berry
- Bexley
- Bingara
- Blackheath/Mt Victoria
- Blaxland/Glenbrook
- Blayney
- Boggabri
- Bomaderry
- Bombala
- Bonalbo
- Bondi Junction/Waverley
- Boolaroo/Speers Point
- Boorowa
- Botany
- Bowral
- Bowraville and District
- Braidwood
- Branxton
- Bribbaree
- Brighton Le Sands
- Bronte
- Brooklyn
- Brunswick Heads-Billinudgel
- Bulahdelah
- Bundanoon
- Bundeena
- Burringbar
- Burwood
- Byron Bay
- Callala Beach
- Camden
- Campsie
- Candelo
- Canley Heights
- Canowindra
- Canterbury/Hurlstone Park
- Cardiff
- Caringbah
- Casino
- Castle Hill and District
- Cessnock
- Chatswood
- Chester Hill-Carramar
- City of Albury
- City of Bankstown
- City of Blacktown
- City of Campbelltown
- City of Fairfield
- City of Lismore
- City of Liverpool
- City of Newcastle
- City of Orange
- City of Parramatta
- City of Penrith
- City of Queanbeyan
- City of Sydney
- City of Wollongong
- Cobar
- Cobargo
- Coffs Harbour
- Coledale
- Collaroy
- Combined Services
- Condobolin
- Coogee Randwick Clovelly
- Coolah
- Coolamon
- Cooma/Monaro
- Coonabarabran
- Coonamble
- Cootamundra
- Corowa
- Corrimall
- Cowra
- Cronulla
- Crookwell
- Culburra Beach-Orient Point
- Culcairn
- Cumberland
- Dapto-Port Kembla
- Darlington Point/Coleambally
- Davistown
- Dee Why
- Delegate
- Deniliquin
- Denman
- Dorrigo
- Doyalson/Wyee
- Drummoyne
- Dubbo
- Dunedoo/Leadville
- Dungog

- Earlwood/Bardwell Park/Marrickville
- East Maitland
- Eden and District
- Enfield/Croydon Park
- Engadine
- Epping
- Estonian
- Eumungerie/Coboco
- Finley
- Five Dock
- Forbes
- Forestville
- Forster-Tuncurry
- Ganmain
- Gerringong
- Gilgandra
- Gladesville
- Glen Innes
- Glenorie
- Gloucester
- Gosford
- Goulburn
- Grafton
- Granville
- Greek
- Grenfell
- Gresford
- Greta
- Griffith
- Gulgong
- Gundagai
- Gunnedah
- Guyra
- Harbord
- Harrington-Crowdy Head
- Hay
- Heathcote
- Helensburgh
- Henty
- Hillston-Ivanhoe
- Holbrook
- Hornsby
- Howlong
- Hunters Hill
- Huskisson
- Ingleburn
- Inverell
- Jerilderie
- Junee
- Kandos
- Karuah
- Katoomba
- Kempsey/Macleay
- Kendall
- Kensington
- Kiama/Jamberoo
- Kingscliff
- Kingsgrove
- Kirribilli
- Kogarah
- Kurri Kurri
- Kyogle
- Lake Cargelligo
- Lakemba
- Lambton/New Lambton
- Lane Cove
- Laurieton
- Leeton
- Lidcombe
- City of Lithgow
- Lockhart
- Lord Howe Island
- Lyndhurst
- Macksville
- Maclean
- Maitland
- Malabar
- Maltese Ex-Servicemen's Association
- Manilla
- Maritime Services Board
- Maroubra
- Mascot
- Masonic
- Matraville
- Medowie
- Mendooran
- Merchant Navy
- Merewether-Hamilton-Adamstown
- Merimbula
- Merriwa
- Merrylands
- Milton/Ulladulla
- Miranda
- Mittagong
- Moama
- Molong
- Moree
- Mortdale
- Moruya
- Mosman
- Moss Vale
- Mudgee
- Mullumbimby
- Mungindi
- Murwillumbah
- Muswellbrook
- Nabiac
- Nambucca Heads
- Narooma
- Narrabeen
- Narrabri
- Narrandera
- Narromine
- Nelson Bay
- New Zealand
- Newtown
- Norfolk Island
- North Bondi
- North Ryde
- North Sydney
- Nowra
- NSW Police
- Nyngan
- Oatley
- Oberon
- Old Bar Beach
- Ourimbah/Lisarow
- Paddington/Woollahra
- Padstow
- Palm Beach
- Panania
- Parkes
- Peak Hill
- Pelican Flat
- Penshurst
- Petersham
- Picton-Thirlmere-Bargo
- Pittwater
- Port Macquarie
- Portland
- Pottsville District
- Quirindi
- Ramsgate
- Raymond Terrace
- Redfern
- Richmond
- Riverstone-Schofields
- Rockdale
- Rooty Hill
- Rose Bay

- Sawtell
- Scone
- Seven Hills/Toongabbie/Wentworthville
- Shoalhaven Heads
- Shortland
- Singleton
- Smithfield
- Snowy River
- South Grafton
- South Hurstville
- South Lake Macquarie
- South West Rocks
- Springwood
- St Georges Basin
- St Marys
- Stockton
- Stuarts Point
- Sussex Inlet
- Swansea
- Tamworth
- Taralga
- Taree
- Taylors Arm
- Tea Gardens
- Teachers
- Temora
- Tenterfield
- Terrigal/Wamberal
- The Entrance/Long Jetty
- The Rock
- Tilligerry
- Tingha
- Tocumwal
- Tomakin
- Toronto
- Toukley
- Trundle
- Tumbarumba
- Tumut
- Ulmarra
- Ungarie
- Uralla
- Urbenville
- Urunga
- Wagga Wagga
- Walcha
- Walgett
- Wallsend and District
- Wangi Wangi
- War Veterans Village (Narrabeen)
- Waratah-Mayfield-Islington
- Warialda and District
- Warilla
- Wauchope
- Wellington
- Wentworth and District
- Werris Creek
- West Wyalong
- Weston
- Westpac Banking Corporation
- Windsor and District
- Wingham
- Wirrimah/Koorawatha
- Woodburn/Evans Head
- Woodenbong
- Woolgoolga
- Woonona/Bulli
- Woronora River
- Woy Woy/Ettalong/Hardys Bay
- Wyong
- Yamba
- Yass
- Yenda
- Young

The RSL NSW family also includes:

- ANZAC House Trust
- RSL Australian Forces Overseas Fund (AFOF)
- RSL Custodian
- RSL Day Clubs
- RSL LifeCare
- RSL NSW Auxiliaries
- RSL Welfare and Benevolent Institution (WBI)
- RSL Youth Clubs

District Councils

- Blue Mountains
- Central Coast
- Central Southern
- Eastern Metropolitan
- Far North Coast
- Far South Western
- Far Southern Metropolitan
- Far Western Metropolitan
- Hunter Valley
- Intra-Mural
- Lower North Coast
- Monaro and Far South Coast
- New England
- Newcastle
- North Coast
- North West
- Northern Beaches
- Northern Metropolitan
- Riverina
- South Western
- Southern Metropolitan
- Western
- Western Metropolitan

BEING THE VOICE FOR
VETERANS AND THEIR
FAMILIES.

RESPECTING

Through advocacy and lobbying work, RSL NSW provides a voice for the veteran community on matters including policy, welfare, health and wellbeing, access to services, rights and respect. One of the strategic pillars for the organisation is being a voice for veterans and their families, highlighting how vital this work is for our organisation.



80%

OF RSL NSW STAFF ARE
VETERANS THEMSELVES OR
HAVE A CLOSE FAMILY MEMBER
WHO IS A VETERAN.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images for Invictus Games Sydney 2018

HIGHLIGHTS

Invictus Games

RSL NSW was proud to be a founding partner of the Invictus Games Sydney 2018, which promotes the healing power of sport for our wounded, injured and ill servicemen and women. RSL members were involved in fundraising for and volunteering at the Games.

Veterans in the Census

RSL NSW lobbied strongly for veterans to be recognised in the next Australian census through the inclusion of a question about service in the Australian Defence Force. Clearer data on our veteran population will enable better decision making and more targeted service delivery.

Veterans' Compensation and Rehabilitation

RSL NSW made a submission to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Veterans' Compensation and Rehabilitation and appeared at a public hearing in February 2019. The commission's final report was made public in July. RSL NSW welcomed the report overall, particularly a number of recommendations that would streamline the legislative framework, but opposed recommendations to separate the functions of the Department of Veteran's Affairs and reduce the powers of the Veterans' Review Board.

Veterans' Advocacy and Support Services Scoping Study

RSL NSW worked on a joint response with RSL Queensland and RSL Victoria to the Veterans' Advocacy and Support Services Scoping Study, commissioned by the Department of Veterans' Affairs; with the response endorsed also by RSL Western Australia and RSL South Australia.

Suicide prevention training

Following a proposal to the government in 2018, \$4 million was committed towards Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training for RSL members and other ex-service organisation volunteers throughout Australia.



Veterans' Policy Debate

On 13 May 2019, RSL NSW hosted the first ever federal election veterans' policy debate as part of the 2019 federal election campaign. Held at the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park, more than 50 people heard Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Darren Chester MP, and then shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Amanda Rishworth MP, respond to questions on veterans' issues. At the debate, both ministers committed to implementing volunteer training and additional measures to assist in reducing suicide among veterans.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images for Invictus Games Sydney 2018

“THE SYDNEY GAMES WERE AMAZING IN THE SENSE THAT YOU’RE ON SHOW IN FRONT OF YOUR FAMILY AND AUSTRALIA. IT WAS A REALLY, REALLY GOOD THING TO REPRESENT MY PEERS AND MY COUNTRY AGAIN.”



THE HEALING POWER OF SPORT

After miraculously surviving a Black Hawk helicopter crash in Afghanistan in 2010, Special Operations Sergeant Peter Rudland woke up with severe injuries and an uncertain future. With a brain injury and multiple musculoskeletal injuries, Peter knew life would be completely different.

Peter understood it was unlikely he would go back to work, given he was unable to walk. Despite being at peak fitness, his goal of competing in his first Ironman in November 2010 was completely out of the question.

Faced with a long road of surgeries and rehabilitation which included learning to use a wheelchair, Peter says he was determined to regain his independence and sense of worth.

A turning point in Peter's recovery was a trip to the US to participate in preselection for the Warrior Games, a multi-sport event for wounded, injured or ill service personnel and veterans organised by the United States Department of Defense. Here he was introduced to a sport that would change the course of his life: recumbent cycling.

"Being on the trike was like being back on the road [training] by myself," Peter says. "When I got back to Australia, I decided I wanted to get a trike. I saved up and I bought one. From the minute I got it, I put it together and got out on the road and started to train."

Returning to sport – a passion he'd had since childhood – played a big role in Peter's recovery and rehabilitation.

"Cycling gave me something to focus on, a reason to get out of my house and to train and to get better. The first thing I wanted to do [after surgeries] was get better quickly so I could get back onto my trike. [With sport] your enthusiasm to get better, to get back to doing things, is there. Sport enables that frame of mind."

In 2016, Peter was selected to represent Australia at the Invictus Games in Orlando, Florida. The following year, he was the Australian team's Co-Captain for the Toronto Invictus Games where he took home gold in the recumbent cycling time trial and criterium. Then, in front of his family and friends, Peter competed in the Sydney Invictus Games in October 2018 in two events: cycling and wheelchair rugby. The event was a highlight for Peter.

"The Sydney Games were amazing in the sense that you're on show in front of your family and Australia. It was a really, really good thing to represent my peers and my country again," he says.

"At the Sydney Games, there were opportunities for people to see how far I had come in my training. It was very fulfilling to compete on the world stage and have people see the changes."

A true advocate for the benefits of sport and getting active, Peter urges other veterans to consider participating.

"Definitely get involved. If you approach it with the right attitude and want to make sport part of your life, do it. Do it for yourself, go after it and thoroughly enjoy it. It's a great opportunity to create positive change."

GET INVOLVED WITH VSA

support@veteransport.org.au

www.veteransport.org.au

WHEN VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE IN NEED, RSL NSW PROVIDES MORE THAN JUST A HELPING HAND.

SUPPORTING

Through our welfare arm RSL DefenceCare, RSL NSW provides services and support to veterans and their families who may be going through a crisis or managing mental or physical injuries and illnesses. We take a holistic and client-focused approach, offering practical and financial support, counselling and assistance with accessing veteran and community services.



\$90,708

PROVIDED BY RSL DEFENCECARE TO ASSIST VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES FACING HOMELESSNESS OR A HOUSING CRISIS



Photo courtesy of Australian Government Department of Defence

HIGHLIGHTS

Drought assistance

Many veterans and sub-Branches are located in areas hit hard by the ongoing drought. This year, RSL DefenceCare assisted 68 veterans and their families struggling to make ends meet as a result of the drought. This assistance included \$200,284.64 in financial aid to help farmers buy feed for their stock, pay their rent or electricity costs or buy food for their family.

Housing assistance

Veteran homelessness and housing issues continue to be significant and local sub-Branch volunteers are often the first to recognise or be alerted to veterans who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. RSL DefenceCare works closely with sub-Branch welfare officers and volunteers to provide immediate financial support or link people in need with services or crisis housing to help them get back on their feet.

In 2018–19, \$90,708 was provided to assist veterans and their families facing homelessness or a housing crisis.

Supporting veteran health and wellbeing

Veteran Sport Australia (VSA) partnered with the National Rugby League (NRL) to establish Battlefields to Footy Fields, a fully funded training program to support veterans interested in becoming rugby league referees. Launched in January 2019, the program has surpassed expectations, with over 100 registrations in its first six months. The program provides support throughout the process and delivers the training at a local level. On ANZAC Day 2019, the first graduate of the program, Troy Burgess, refereed in the Australian versus New Zealand Defence Forces rugby league match.

The role of sub-Branch welfare and pensions officers is vital to supporting the wellbeing and needs of veterans in communities across NSW. This support, along with the work of RSL DefenceCare and VSA, is a core element of RSL NSW and its charitable purpose.

“NOW ALL MY TROUBLES HAVE BEEN REMOVED. THE PLACE IS IDEAL. I’M VERY RELAXED NOW, AND I’M BACK AT WORK.”



Advocacy work by RSL NSW and RSL DefenceCare is vital for the development and ongoing application of programs that prevent veterans from experiencing homelessness. These programs are crucial for veterans like Andrew who face a housing crisis.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Like many veterans, Andrew Reed struggled on civilian street. After more than 15 years in the Australian and British armies, he missed the structure, discipline and camaraderie of the military.

Andrew was living alone in a small granny flat in Sydney when a friend contacted him to see if he would be interested in adopting a puppy. In need of a companion, Andrew chose the runt of the litter, a spirited little American Staffordshire terrier called Salty.

Before bringing Salty home, Andrew checked that his landlord was okay with him having a pet. She said yes at first, but changed her mind after Salty moved in. She gave Andrew and his new best friend just two weeks to find somewhere else to live.

“It was very hard to find a place in that situation, especially when you’ve got a dog,” Andrew says. “People were saying to me, ‘get rid of him’, but I couldn’t do that. I take responsibility very seriously, and if you saw him, you’d understand why I stuck with him.”

Andrew and Salty spent the next couple of years living rough. At times they stayed with friends, at others they slept in parks or the storage unit where he kept all his belongings. Andrew had to give up his job at Randwick City Council to stay by Salty’s side.

Living on the streets took a heavy toll on Andrew’s physical and mental health. “I was starting to get depressed, and my alcohol intake was going up,” he says. “When you spend all day on the street what else do you do? I wasn’t eating well either, so my health was suffering.”

A concerned member of the public noticed Andrew on their morning walk and, upon discovering he was a veteran, they reached out to RSL DefenceCare for help. Andrew was at the end of his tether when Mamour, RSL DefenceCare’s Housing Project Officer contacted him and offered assistance. Andrew says, “I’d just about given up. I was on the housing list but they told me I was two years away from getting a house. Then, all of a sudden there’s Mamour getting things organised. He worked on my application with FACS (Family and Community Services) and helped me through the approval process to find a home. He made mountains move in a very short time.”

RSL DefenceCare, through a partnership with the NSW Government Department, FACS, was able to help Andrew and Salty move into and furnish a home in Marrickville in Sydney’s Inner West. With a roof over their heads and a safe place for Salty to stay during the day, Andrew has been able to put his life back together.

“If I hadn’t had that support when I did, I probably would have been on the street for the rest of my life,” he says. “Now all my troubles have been removed. The place is ideal. I’m very relaxed now, and I’m back at work.”

CONTACT RSL DEFENCECARE FOR SUPPORT

info@rsldefencecare.org.au
02 8088 0388



Remembering the service and sacrifice of our veterans and serving defence personnel is a core pillar of the RSL NSW mission. Championing remembrance and camaraderie is a cornerstone of RSL NSW and sub-Branch services in the community.



REMEMBERING

HIGHLIGHTS

A Royal Reopening

A special service was held in October 2018 to mark the reopening of an extended Anzac Memorial in Sydney's Hyde Park, 100 years after the end of World War I. Joining the Prime Minister, NSW Premier and NSW Governor at the event were the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. Prince Harry laid a wreath of native Australian flowers at the Memorial's front step.

Water cascades and an underground hall of service, first conceived in the original design, have finally been realised in the reopened Memorial.

The RSL and Schools Remember

The 2019 RSL and Schools Remember ANZAC Service was another great success. More than 100 Sydney schools and 1500 students and supporters participated in this year's event on Tuesday, 9 April. First held in 1953, the event is entirely run by students, from the Master of Ceremonies and keynote address to the readings and musical accompaniment. The service is a collaborative effort between the Catholic Education Office, the Association of Independent Schools of NSW, NSW Department of Education and RSL NSW.

Victory in the Pacific (VP) Day

A commemorative service to mark the 73rd anniversary of the end of hostilities in the Pacific was held on 15 August 2018 at the Cenotaph in Martin Place.





ANZAC Day

In conjunction with the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, City of Sydney, Dawn Service Trust and other groups, RSL NSW coordinates and assists with the following community events to commemorate ANZAC Day:

- ANZAC Eve Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral
- Dawn Service at the Cenotaph, Martin Place
- Consular Corps Star Ceremony at the Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park (RSL NSW)
- ANZAC Day March (RSL NSW)
- Commemoration Service at the Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park (RSL NSW)
- Coloured Diggers March, Redfern
- Sunset Service at the Cenotaph, Martin Place (RSL NSW)
- ANZAC Day NRL matches

RSL NSW sub-Branches also organise, run and support commemoration services throughout NSW to mark ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, and other key events in Australia's military history.

RSL NSW also assists with a number of commemorative events on behalf of other veterans, including Indigenous Veterans Day on 31 May, timed to coincide with Reconciliation Week.

A Dawn Service with a Difference

This year, a very special ANZAC Day Dawn Service was held at the top of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. 100 guests climbed the 1300 steps in the pre-dawn dark. At the top they witnessed a commemorative address from veteran and RSL NSW employee, James Dallas, the Last Post, and stunning views of the sunrise over the harbour.

All profits from the event were donated to support veterans who have been wounded, injured or ill as a result of their service through the work of RSL DefenceCare. The event would not have been possible without the support of BridgeClimb, whose staff kindly donated their time on the day.

A CENTURY WORTH CELEBRATING

At 103, Bert Collins was the oldest veteran to march in this year's ANZAC Day commemorations in Sydney.

More than 70 years ago, Bert fought the Japanese in Merauke in what today is part of Indonesian West Papua. Merauke airfield, where he served as a searchlight operator, was buried deep in a crocodile and snake infested swamp. He still reflects on how fortunate he was to escape unharmed the day the Japanese bombed it.

"All of a sudden there was a terrific explosion and I got a whack on my left shoulder. I looked down and saw a bit of shrapnel. I was very lucky it didn't do any damage."

It wasn't the only near-death experience Bert would survive. In 2016, at the age of 100, he was diagnosed with stage 4 melanoma, a legacy of his war service years spent in the blazing tropical sun. The cancer spread to his brain, lungs and lymph glands. He was given six months to live. Still alive at 101, he was placed on a trial of a new drug, and like so often throughout his life, he fought and won. He is still cancer free.

Bert is one of few surviving members of his regiment, and was the only one well enough to participate in this year's ANZAC Day march. He says it was a great honour to participate and he was humbled by all the attention he received on the day.

"I was very proud to be there and see all those people showing their appreciation. I felt like the Queen of England. I feel it's important to return that respect to the public and thank them for the trouble they've taken to be there."

More than a century after it was first held, Bert believes ANZAC Day remains as important as ever.

"The men and women who go off to war see dreadful things, but they serve with bravery. It's something that should never ever be forgotten by anybody."

After his star turn this year, Bert is already thinking about the 2020 march. "I'm looking forward to it. When you're as old as I am and still out there marching you think to yourself, 'how fortunate am I!'"

"THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO GO OFF TO WAR SEE DREADFUL THINGS, BUT THEY SERVE WITH BRAVERY. IT'S SOMETHING THAT SHOULD NEVER EVER BE FORGOTTEN BY ANYBODY."





BOARD OF DIRECTORS



RONALD (RAY) JAMES JP | ACTING PRESIDENT

Appointed: May 2014 | Relevant qualifications: GAICD

A Vietnam veteran, Ray James served over 20 years in the Royal Australian Navy, with another 26 years in the Royal Australian Navy Reserve. He also served on the Transport Investigation Branch and NSW Police Force. Ray is a Life Member of the League and has held senior positions at sub-Branch and District Council levels and is currently a member of Ingleburn RSL sub-Branch. He is also Chair of RSL Custodian and Vice President of the NSW Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA).



DAVID BELL

Appointed: June 2019 | Relevant qualifications: MBA, BEc, BA, GAICD

A veteran of the Australian Army, David Bell is the Managing Director of C|T Group Australasia. He was previously the CEO of the Actuaries Institute and the Australian Bankers' Association. David has also managed corporate affairs with Westpac, IAG and Telstra, held a senior role at Ogilvy, was Chief of Staff to the NSW Agriculture Minister, Ian Armstrong, and worked with Anderson Consulting (now Accenture). He is also on the Medical Council of NSW.



PHILLIP BRIDIE AM

Appointed: April 2019 | Relevant qualifications: BSc (Mil)

Brigadier Phillip Bridie graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1981. He possesses well-developed leadership, general and commercial management skills through extensive civil and armed forces experience. He deployed to Afghanistan in 2014 and his brigade force generated Timor Leste Task Group 3. Phillip is a service member of Castle Hill and District RSL sub-Branch.



PHILLIP CHIN | STATE TREASURER

Appointed: September 2017 | Relevant qualifications: MRM, BComm, GAICD

Phillip Chin is the Risk and Quality Manager, Export Market Development Grants for Austrade. He has 15 years of experience in the public sector, including working in various roles focusing on compliance regulation, policy implementation, risk management, process improvement and performance. Phillip joined the Australian Army Reserve in 2007 and is currently the Sydney Detachment Commander in the Army Compliance and Assurance Unit with the rank of Major. He is a member of CPA Australia.

JOHN HUTCHESON AM ADC

Appointed April 2019 | Relevant qualifications: MA (IR), BA (English), GAICD

John Hutcheson is the CEO of Legacy Club Services, a not-for-profit providing governance, advocacy and beneficiary support to five Legacy Clubs in NSW looking after the families of veterans that have died or are dealing with severe physical incapacities and/or mental health issues. Prior to this, John served for 32 years in the Australian Army, including command of an infantry battalion and two Operational Joint Task Forces. John is a service member of North Bondi RSL sub-Branch.



SANDRA LAMBKIN

Appointed May 2017 | Relevant qualifications: BA (History), GAICD

Sandra Lambkin served in the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service from 1968–1971. A Life Member of the RSL, Sandra has held executive positions at sub-Branch, District Council and State level and is a service member of Tamworth RSL sub-Branch. Sandra is Chair of the Selections Committee; sits on the Nominations and Performance Committee and the Veteran Services and Policy Committee and is Vice President of RSL Australian Forces Overseas Fund (AFOF). She is also on the Board of Tamworth Community College.



SOPHIE RAY

Appointed: June 2019 | Relevant qualifications: GDLS, BA (Hons), LLB (Hons), GAICD

Sophie Ray is a business owner, former lawyer and non-executive director. She spent 14 years as a corporate lawyer at PwC in Sydney and London, where she also sat on the Board of the PwC Foundation. Sophie is currently a non-executive director of Big Fat Smile Group, Settlement Services International, and the Shoalhaven Women's Resource Group; and an executive director of her family's tourism business on the South Coast of NSW.



BRYAN SLATTERY

Appointed: May 2017 | Relevant qualifications: GAICD

Bryan Slattery is a Vietnam veteran and has been a member of the RSL on and off since 1975. He is currently a member of Bowral RSL sub-Branch. Bryan has worked mainly in small to medium businesses as a senior manager or owner/director. Prior to retirement in 2014, he was a senior manager with Defence Housing Australia in Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney.



JONATHAN TUCKFIELD

Appointed: June 2019 | Relevant qualifications: DMgt, CertIVFIMn

Jonathan Tuckfield is the Service and Sales Manager at NSW Farmers Association. He has had an extensive career in large corporations and small businesses, holding positions including managing director, national manager, account director and operations manager. Jonathan has served in the Australian Army Reserve for 17 years and is currently a service member of Young RSL sub-Branch.



LEADERSHIP TEAM



ROBYN COLLINS | CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Appointed: August 2017

Prior to her appointment as CEO, RSL NSW, Robyn Collins was General Manager of RSL DefenceCare, a charity providing professional services for veterans and their families in times of injury, illness and crisis. Her background includes over 20 years' experience in Australian charities, primarily in children and family services, and over 14 years in banking and financial services. In recent years, her primary roles have involved transforming and repairing charitable organisations, with an emphasis on cultural change and leadership in challenging circumstances.



SHANNAH BAICHOO | GENERAL MANAGER, REVENUE GENERATION

Appointed: October 2018

Shannah Baichoo has worked in the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. Her experience includes roles in the health, disability and education fields in the not-for-profit sector as well as senior roles in commercial and financial management, performance improvement and reporting. Shannah's most recent roles have focused on strategy development and implementation in response to business transformation.



MICHAEL HARTUNG | GENERAL MANAGER, VETERAN SPORT AUSTRALIA

Appointed: December 2018

Michael Hartung was previously the Chief Delivery Officer for the Invictus Games Sydney 2018, and a member of the 2018 Invictus Games Bid Steering Committee. Prior to this, Michael spent 10 years with the Australian Paralympic Committee (APC), carrying out roles including Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, Sport. During his decade with the APC, Michael held management positions on four Paralympic Teams (including Chef de Mission in 2010 and Deputy Chef de Mission in 2012).



LEANNE MEYER | GENERAL COUNSEL

Appointed: December 2017

Leanne Meyer has more than 20 years' experience as a private practice lawyer with leading Sydney law firms. During this time, Leanne's practice focused on large scale commercial litigation in State and Federal jurisdictions, with a focus on regulatory compliance and enforcement, acting both for regulators, and for clients in responding to regulatory actions. Leanne was seconded to RSL NSW to manage RSL NSW's response to the Public Inquiry under the Charitable Fundraising Act, and permanently transitioned to the role of General Counsel at the conclusion of the Inquiry.

NICK MOWAT | COMPANY SECRETARY

Appointed: February 2018

Nick Mowat has more than 25 years' experience as a governance professional and company secretary, having held senior roles at NRMA, Southcorp Wines and Normandy Mining. He is a Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia and the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators, an Associate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, an affiliate of the Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees and a trustee director of the IAG & NRMA Superannuation Fund.



RAJ NAIR | CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Appointed: September 2017

Raj Nair has extensive experience in the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors, working for organisations in areas as diverse as disability services, education, manufacturing and fast moving consumer goods (FMCG). With qualifications in finance and accounting, Raj has held various senior roles focused on business transformation and development, operations, performance improvement, financial sustainability, compliance and governance requirements.



JEFF O'BRIEN | STATE SECRETARY

Appointed: September 2017

Jeff has been employed by RSL NSW in a number of roles since October 2008, most notably as the ANZAC Day March Secretary and Membership Services Manager. Prior to commencing work with RSL NSW he was employed by a large medical company, managing the businesses logistic services. Jeff served as a full-time soldier in the mid-1990s with the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps.



WAYNE WATSON | VETERAN SERVICES MANAGER, RSL DEFENCECARE

Appointed: July 2013

Wayne Watson has over 30 years' experience working in the community sector. This includes roles working with people with substance misuse, people at risk of suicide, and with individuals and families caught up in the criminal justice system. As Veteran Services Manager for RSL DefenceCare, Wayne manages the delivery of services to veterans and their families including claims assistance with the Department of Veterans' Affairs, advocacy at the Veterans' Review Board and various types of community support.



GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

RSL NSW is committed to maintaining high standards of governance to ensure the organisation achieves its charitable purpose in ways that are transparent, accountable and effective.

Governance is reviewed regularly by the RSL NSW Board.

The Board's conduct is regulated by the RSL NSW Constitution, *RSL NSW Act 2018* (the Act) and the Board Charter.

The Board is responsible for:

- ensuring that the organisation meets its Charitable Purpose;
- setting and monitoring the strategic direction of the organisation;
- approving and monitoring financial reporting, budgeting and forecasting;
- risk oversight and management;
- appointing committees of the Board as may be appropriate to assist in the discharge of its responsibilities, determining their scope, objectives and membership;
- approving required delegations of authority;
- appointing and measuring the performance of the CEO and the organisation;
- ensuring that the Board is and remains appropriately skilled to discharge its responsibilities and duties, and ensuring the suitability of candidates for the position of CEO, Independent Directors or casual vacancies on the Board and approving such appointments;
- appointing and removing the State Secretary;
- approving rules that are consistent with the Constitution for the Election of Elected Directors;
- ensuring that RSL NSW complies with the RSL NSW Constitution, the *RSL NSW Act*, the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and all other relevant legislation;
- reviewing any matters pertaining to the appointment, termination or replacement of the external auditors; and
- reviewing and recommending any amendments to the Constitution, for consideration by Delegates at a General Meeting.

Committees

The Board has reviewed its committee structure to better assist in the discharge of its duties. The Board in August 2019 revamped the committee structure by establishing additional standing committees. The newly established committees include Board, Management and Member Steering Committees.

Each committee has a charter that sets out its role, responsibilities, composition and structure. The charters are reviewed regularly. Committees report to the Board at each Board meeting and minutes of meetings are provided to the Board.

2018–2020 RSL NSW Committee Structure

2018–2019	2019–2020
Finance Committee	Finance & Investments Committee
	Audit & Risk Committee
	Governance Review Committee
Nominations Committee	Nominations & Performance Committee
Selections Committee	Selections Committee
	Veteran Services & Policy Committee
Congress Agenda Committee	Congress Agenda Committee

Conflicts of Interest

All Directors are bound by the conflicts requirements of the Act, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Governance Standard, the Constitution and a formal Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Directors are required to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest at the start of every Board meeting, at which time the Board determines an appropriate response which may require a Director to remove themselves from discussions, decisions or votes.

Board composition and renewal

The Board of RSL NSW is comprised predominantly of Service Members who are elected by RSL NSW sub-Branches (Elected Directors). The term of the current Elected Directors ends at the rising of the 2020 Congress. In the months leading up to the Congress, an election for new Elected Directors will be held under the 'one Service Member-one vote' system prescribed in the Act.

The Board has recently filled a number of Elected Director casual vacancies. Phillip Bridie AM and John Hutcheson AM ADC, two service member Directors, were appointed to fill casual vacancies on 15 April 2019. Jonathan Tuckfield, a service member Director was appointed to fill a casual vacancy on 11 June 2019, pursuant to the Constitution. They will fill those positions until the 2020 elections.

During the period, the Board determined to appoint two Independent Directors, pursuant to the provisions of the Act. David Bell and Sophie Ray were appointed on 11 June 2019 on fixed term contracts which expire on 31 December 2021, unless they are re-appointed by the Board within six months of the end of their contracts.

Information about Directors and their skills and experience can be found on page 32. A Board skills matrix is being developed to identify the skills and experience of current Directors and the skills and experience that the Board considers necessary and desirable for the future. This matrix will help guide recruitment and renewal of Independent Directors.

Board governance review

In August 2019, the Board commissioned a review of its governance practices. Outcomes and recommendations of this review will be reported to the Board in early 2020. The review will include:

- an assessment of Board and organisation best practice for governance and how RSL NSW measures up;
- a description of how governance should work in the future at RSL NSW and what the key elements and objectives should be;
- specific recommendations for the Board to consider implementing;
- the advice of an independent governance expert that the recommendations of the committee meet contemporary expectations of best practice; and
- an implementation plan and timetable.

Board performance review

- The Board conducts a post-meeting review at the end of every Board meeting. The review includes:
- the conduct of the meeting and Director participation;
- the content, quality and sufficiency of Board papers; and
- whether the venue and facilities were suitable and conducive to an effective meeting.

Additionally, in 2019, the Board will begin reviewing its broader performance at regular (annual) intervals to ensure that Directors and the Board work effectively and efficiently to maintain high standards of governance and fulfil their functions set out in the Board Charter. The performance review will cover areas including the Board's role, strategic directions, oversight of service delivery, legal and regulatory framework, financial and risk management, knowledge of the veterans' sector and the relationship with the CEO.

Written resolutions of the Board

During the period, there were 16 meetings of the Board held by written resolution.

ATTENDANCE AT BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

	Number of Board meetings eligible to attend	Board meetings attended	Number of Finance Committee meetings eligible to attend	Finance Committee meetings attended	Number of Nomination & Performance Committee meetings eligible to attend	Nomination & Performance Committee meetings attended
Michael Bainbridge ⁺	7	5				
David Bell ^{###}	4	4				
Phillip Bridie [#]	1	4L 1				
James Brown ^{****}	16	12			1	1
Phillip Chin	16	16	11	11		
John Hutcheson [#]	1	4L 1			1	1
Ray James	16	15		2v		
Sandra Lambkin	16	16		1v	1	1
Greg Makutu ^{***}	12	12			1	1
Sophie Ray ^{###}	4	4				
Scott Seccombe ^{**}	4	4				
Bryan Slattery	16	16	11	11		
Jonathan Tuckfield ^{##}	3	3				
Independent Committee members						
Victor Guevara ^{LA}			5	6LA 5		
Mark Moore ^X			7	7		

⁺ Resigned on 20 February 2019

⁺⁺ Resigned on 11 November 2018

⁺⁺⁺ Resigned on 28 May 2019

^{****} Resigned on 19 June 2019

[#] Appointed to fill a casual vacancy on 15 April 2019

^{##} Appointed to fill a casual vacancy on 11 June 2019

^{###}

x

L

LA

v

Appointed as an independent director on 11 June 2019

Appointed as an independent member of the Finance Committee on 22 November 2018

Leave of Absence granted by the Board

Leave of Absence on Active Service granted by the Committee

Visitor

ANZAC HOUSE FINANCIAL SUMMARY

RSL NSW prepared special purpose financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2019. These statements were audited by EY who has provided an unqualified opinion. The comparatives reflect a change to the reporting period as at 30 June 2018 to a financial year. RSL NSW continued its core operations of Hyde Park Inn throughout the year, from which it derives the majority of its revenue. The increase in employee benefits expense and donations and welfare expenses follows from RSL NSW delivering the services of RSL WBI as well as support to the Invictus Games in FY2019. RSL NSW invested in new systems to support the focus on governance and compliance, represented in other expenses.

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

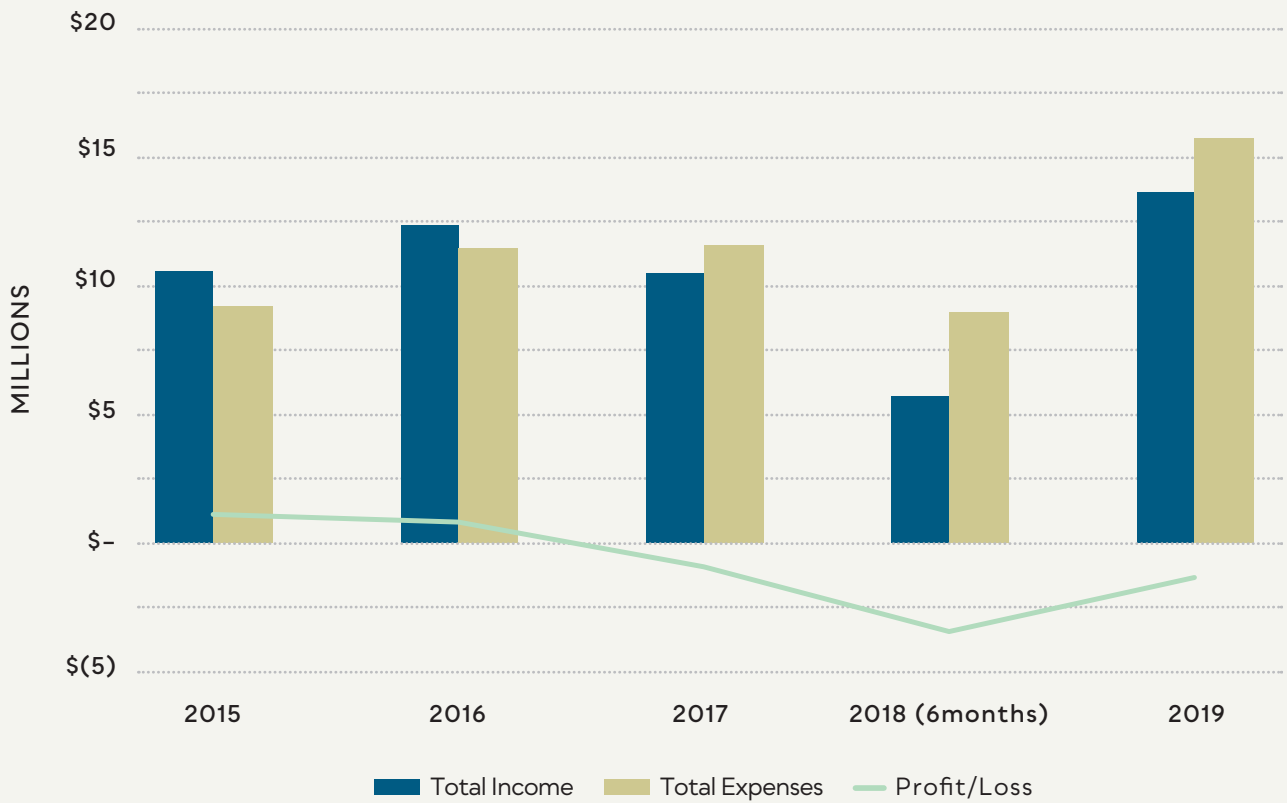
For the year ended 30 June 2019

	12 months ended 30 June 2019	6 months ended 30 June 2018
Revenue		
Welfare Related Income	71,266	82,051
Investment & Property Income	1,198,770	261,758
Hotel revenue	7,567,509	4,029,057
Members' Subscriptions	837,298	801,975
Other Income	4,175,924	610,906
Total revenue	13,850,767	5,785,747
Expenses		
Administration expenses	1,372,011	371,976
Cost of Sales	121,810	46,654
Communications & Publications Expenses	394,080	175,952
Depreciation & Amortisation Expense	165,085	26,697
Impairment Investment Property	-	2,436,075
Donations & Welfare Expenses	1,516,928	913,887
Employee Benefits Expenses	8,420,820	2,579,873
Hotel related expenses	1,858,201	1,289,269
Meeting & Travel Expenses	10,977	18,108
National & District Capitations	54,353	125,862
Property Expenses	464,971	205,607
Directors Expenses	61,807	30,509
Other Expenses	1,451,549	819,095
Total expenses	15,892,593	9,039,563
Net deficit for the period	(2,041,826)	(3,253,816)
Other comprehensive income		
Increase in the fair value of land and buildings	-	14,300,000
Net change in fair value of financial assets	313,116	207,002
Transfer of title of land and buildings	6,100,000	-
Other comprehensive surplus for the year	6,413,116	14,507,002
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	4,371,290	11,253,186

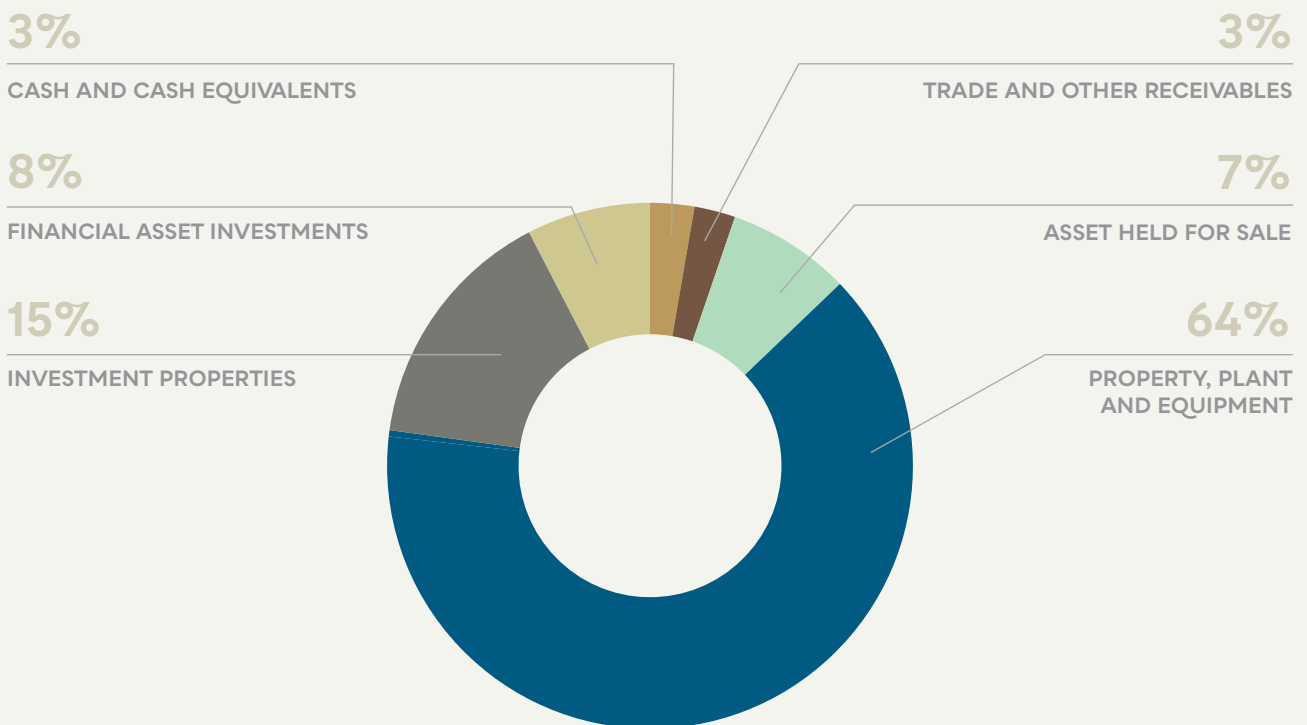
The statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

The full financial statements of RSL NSW, which have been provided to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs in accordance with the RSL NSW Act 2018 (NSW), can be downloaded at <https://www.rslnsw.org.au/documents/annual-reports/2019/>

5-YEAR PERFORMANCE SUMMARY 2015 - 2019



RSL NSW STATE BRANCH SUMMARY OF ASSETS



RSL NSW

ANZAC House
Level 5, 341 George Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Phone: (02) 9264 8188

Fax: (02) 9264 8466

Email: support@rslnsw.org.au

www.rslnsw.org.au

