



From the National President—Bill Crews

The Superannuation Issue

The National President advises that RSL made a submission on 29 March 2007 to the Government's Military Superannuation Review. They have since met with the Review Team and discussed with them the key features of our submission and our views on some of the separate issues they raised.

The Terms of Reference for this Review have a deliberate focus on enhancing defence force recruitment and retention. Attention is therefore very much on the present scheme – the Military Superannuation Benefits Scheme (MSBS). Notwithstanding, many of the more than 400 written submissions received by the Review focussed on the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme (DFRDB). This is where most of the present concerns arise, and this Review needs to acknowledge and respond to these concerns, notwithstanding that DFRDB was closed to new entrants after 1991, and there remain relatively few still serving who contribute to it. Our argument for giving attention to DFRDB is that the failure to do so will aggravate the prevailing disenchantment in the veteran and ex-service community, and this will have a particularly negative impact on recruitment and retention. That matter is well appreciated by the Review Team.

This Review will report to the Government, not to Department of Defence. The Government will respond, hopefully publicly, to the Review's recommendations, and we expect this may be during August/September 2007.

Some members of the League have been critical of our perceived lack of action on military superannuation, our deferral on some issues to the Regular Defence Force Welfare Association (RDFWA), and the moderate tone of our submission. It needs to be recognised that only one resolution on superannuation has come forward through our Congress processes in the last three years, and that resolution sought the rather ambitious outcome of no longer taxing DFRDB payments.

If superannuation is the burning issue some now claim, I must ask why members have been so reluctant to raise it until very recently?

This Review is the ideal opportunity now both to make known all concerns about superannuation, and to recommend practical solutions to enhance all of the superannuation schemes. We have been particularly forceful that there must be no detriment to existing scheme members, and no disadvantage to new scheme entrants. Fortunately this philosophy was addressed in the Minister's initial statement announcing the Review. In due course, the Review will need to explain the basis of its recommendations, and the Government will be obliged to explain the basis of its response to those recommendations, particularly if favourable recommendations are not accepted.

Our considerable thanks must be recorded to Mr Ian Mathews and Mr Bruce Brammall who has provided exemplary service in editing and publishing Stand To over a considerable period.

Stand Down

Some may lament the cessation of this publication. However, it has been shown not to be as effective as was initially expected in informing our members and key stakeholders. And it is expensive.

There are better ways to communicate. State publications will pick up on some of the content (including my periodic writings), and we have already begun to use the web page more extensively and to redesign it. Selected Federal Parliamentarians will be sent my periodic writings, and I have already put considerably more topical commentary on the web page.

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**ANZAC HOUSE
NEW OFFICE
OPENING HOURS
9 AM TO 4 PM
MONDAY TO FRIDAY**

**Please refer front
page for direct contact details
for various departments**



**THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF
AUSTRALIA WA BRANCH INCORPORATED**

The Sub-Branch Signal

June 2007

THE SUB-BRANCH SIGNAL

PRESIDENT'S PEN

Welcome Home Parade Cancelled

Following suggestions from a group of Vietnam Veterans' a steering committee was formed to determine interest in the conduct of a 20th Anniversary parade in Perth to celebrate the initial belated welcome home to Vietnam Veterans in Sydney in 1987. The committee was able to secure finance from the State and Commonwealth Government and infrastructure support from Perth City Council but, enthusiasm from the Vietnam Veterans was not conclusive. Accordingly, after much deliberation it was resolved to abandon the initial proposal in favour of some special acknowledgement of our younger veterans – ie. Post Vietnam. This alternative could be a positive outcome and consideration should be given to promoting the concept of a Parade to acknowledge the contribution made by our younger veterans to the defence of our country.

As the RSL represents members from all services engaged in all conflicts it would be appropriate for Sub Branches to consider whether this is a proposal that should be investigated. Naturally, support would need to come from the younger veterans and they would need to play a major role in the organisation and presentation of the Parade.

Would Sub Branches please consider the initiative and obtain comments from younger veterans as to whether they would support such a parade. Your response to this headquarters as soon as possible would be welcomed.

The Federal Election

The recent Budget was most positive for the Veteran Community, noting that veterans stand to gain from the wider budget measures beyond the additional allocations in the Veterans' Affairs Budget. The RSL Press Release covers the highlights, and it can be viewed on the National Website. It is expected that the next Federal Election will be held towards the end of 2007. As an apolitical organisation, the RSL does not provide its support to any party or candidates. As a general rule, RSL facilities should not be used for political campaigning purposes.

The Australian electors will decide who will form the next government, and we will work closely and cooperatively with whomever is elected. In the lead up to the election, the RSL will develop and present to all parties, a comprehensive statement to be called 'Issues Affecting the Veteran Community'. It will draw on our 2007/2008 Budget Submission.

However, unlike that submission, it will seek from all parties a public response to the key issues raised. In this way, veterans can be made aware of how each of the parties will approach both general and specific veteran issues. We will be particularly interested in any veterans affairs policy statements from the parties, whether in response to our request or otherwise.

Our Statement will be placed on the National RSL web page. There may be a desire, as there was in 2004, for all major ESOs to meet and present a collective view to all parties of concerns across the wider veteran community. We will contribute to such an activity, but it will not replace our own proposal outlined above.

DOING BUSINESS
WITH RSL
9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

ANZAC HOUSE

28 St George's Terrace, Perth
PO Box 3023
Perth Adelaide Terrace WA 6832
Website: www.rslwahq.org.au
Email: rslwahq@inet.net.au

RECEPTION

Monday to Friday -
general enquiries

OFFICE CO-ORDINATOR

Monday to Friday - PA to
State President & State Secretary,
Email: rslwahq@inet.net.au
Tel: 9287 3799

MEMBERSHIP

Monday to Thursday -
membership enquiries,
Sub-Branch enquiries
Email: membership@rslwahq.org.au

WELFARE

Monday to Friday - welfare applications, emergency housing, food & lodging grants, SS&A Relief Trust Fund applications.
Overseas pensions
Email: welfare@rslwahq.org.au

ADVOCACY

Monday to Friday - S31 reviews, Veteran Review Board, Admin Appeals Tribunal
Email: rslwahq@inet.net.au
Tel: 9287 3708

FINANCE

Monday to Friday - all account enquiries, Sub-Branch credits
Email: accounts@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9370 0200
Sub-Branch Insurance, information, claims, grant application assistance, DVA, Lotterywest (ABN, tax)

PENSIONS

Monday to Friday - pension entitlements, claims preparation
Email: pensions3@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3709, 9287 3710

ANZAC CLUB

Monday to Friday - facilities bookings, catering/hospitality
Email: anzacclub@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: (08) 9287 3714

Retired Aged Care**“Who said Retirement was a quiet life!”**

Residents of Menora Gardens and Pearson Villages have been involved in various activities during the month of June.

It was a full house in the community centre to hear a very capable, professional speaker in Alison Muir from the Macular Degeneration Foundation in Sydney. This session was aimed at informing residents about ways to reduce their risk of developing MD, management and treatment options for those who have MD and services available to those who have lost vision, to maintain their independence and quality of life.

Guests really got into the swing of the night and enjoying and participating in the spirit of the black and white festivities.

Entertainment for the night was provided by the Note-Crackers; a barbershop quartet who in turn are a part of The Westcoast Chordsmen Barbershop Harmony Club.

RSL Mount Lawley Inglewood Sub Branch hold their monthly meetings in the Menora Community Centre. This has generated many new members to the group from within the villages.

Shire of Dandaragan

RSL Care WA has received an Expression of Interest (EOI) to provide a Retirement Village in Jurien Bay from the Shire of Dandaragan.

The Shire is seeking expressions from experienced providers for that purpose.

A site of approximately 2.5 ha has been identified next to the medical centre and adjacent to the Senior Citizens Centre, bowling and golf clubs.

The site will provide for approximately 100 independent living units which will be sold on a lease for life basis.

It is proposed that the Senior Citizens Centre will be incorporated into the village and be shared as the Community Centre for all seniors in the town.

Veterans Affairs Committee**Closure of Cypress Cottage**

As advised in the last edition of the Sub branch signal the decision has been made to close Cypress Cottage on 30 April 2007. The property will be handed back to Homeswest, who will determine the future of the property.

With the closure of Cypress Cottage, the State Branch through the Welfare Officer will arrange alternative arrangements for those people to access emergency accommodation where this cannot be met from other sources. The emergency accommodation will be based on needs of the individual and the best arrangement to ensure any illness is appropriately managed.

PTSD Online

It has come to the attention of the State Branch that Monash University in Victoria is offering a treatment programme for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder through an online computer arrangement. It would appear this online programme is designed to be a research programme and is for any person who considers they may be experiencing the condition of PTSD. It is suggested that if you are considering accessing this online programme, that before making a commitment you speak to your GP or a qualified health professional.

Increasing the knowledge of Veterans issues by Health Professionals.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs has advised that a new partnership has been established with the Australian General Practice Network. Its establishment is to ensure that GP's are made more aware of the need to increase awareness of veterans and defence force personnel and their families, of the uniqueness of military service and the need to improve the access for these people to mental health services across the whole range of medical services and facilities.

Ray Ward, Chairman

**HELP US KEEP IN TOUCH
SUB-BRANCH OFFICE BEARERS**

PLEASE COMPLETE THE ATTACHED FORM
TO UPDATE OFFICE BEARERS
AND RETURN TO HEADQUARTERS AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE

**Report from Corporate Affairs Committee
New Office Manager at ANZAC House**

WELCOME TO VICKI LEE WHO HAS TAKEN
ON THE ROLE OF OFFICE MANAGER AT ANZAC
HOUSE FOLLOWING THE RESIGNATION
OF HEATHER ANDERSON.

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS**AS AT 27 JUNE 2007**

Service Members	9,381
Affiliates	1,446

**HQ POSTAL ADDRESS**

RSL WA Branch
PO Box 3023
Perth Adelaide Terrace WA 6832

BOARD OF DIRECTORS**MEMBERSHIP & YOUTH COMMITTEE**

The committee is now preparing for the 2007 “RSL Spirit of ANZAC National Cadet of the Year” programme. Invitations to nominate five cadets from each of the Services will be sent out shortly together with the nomination forms. The testing will follow the same format as in previous years except for the five minute speech the cadets are asked to prepare as part of their overall marks. We will be advising them of the destination of the tour beforehand and they will be required to prepare their talk accordingly. The winners will then be well informed of the military and historical significance of their visit.

The testing will be conducted at ANZAC House on Saturday, 3 November 2007 and the Presentation Evening will be held on Monday, 26 November. Once again, the committee would appreciate any donations sub-branches are able to give to help support this RSL youth programme.

The Community Youth & Education Display Unit (formerly known as the RSL Trailer) is having the

final touches done at the moment. I had a sneak preview the other day and was very impressed with the set-up. Medals from WW1 to present day have been mounted on display boards as well as decorations. Military uniforms will also be on display as well as ration packs, posters and various other items. The cost of the refurbishment was paid for by donations from Hollywood Private Hospital and the Australian Defence Credit Union.

Sub-branches can now make bookings for this unit by phoning Keith Boxshall on 0403426249. A deposit of \$300.00 from the sub-branch will be required at ANZAC House two weeks before the pick-up date. This amount will be refunded on return of the unit in good condition.

The committee would like to thank the members from the Nollamara RSL Sub-Branch for the magnificent job they have done in achieving such an excellent result with the changes to the trailer. Well done boys.

Olga Greig OAM, Chairman

STATE PRESIDENT'S GOLF TROPHY

Burswood Golf Complex provided the perfect setting for the contest of RSL's President's Golf Trophy. Some eighty players formed into twenty teams who all experienced a most enjoyable day. Right from the start players were put into the mood of the game with sponsors *River Bank Estate Winery* providing samples of their product to encourage the best golfing shots from the players. Another sponsor, *Landscape Development* was also there to offer advice to those who saw fit to explore more country than necessary. And, of course, *DVA* and our Insurers, *Allia & Doust* were present to see claims for injury, both physical and pride was correctly accounted for.

It was a fun day with teams from our valued sponsors and Sub Branches contesting the Ambrose event.

While everyone was a winner – we were pleased to announce at the Presentation Reception that **BGC Construction** was the outright winner of the State Presidents Golf Trophy for 2007.

We are deeply appreciative of the following sponsors for their support and to Ken Hamilton (RACA) and Doug Rasmussen (RSL) for organising the event.

Our Valued Sponsors

- BGC Construction (Builder Menora RCS)
- Hollywood Hospital
- A.E. Smith & Son
- S.E.E.E. Electrical Engineering (Fire Services)
- Retravision Wangara
- Bentleys MRI (Auditors)
- Allia & Doust (Insurance Broker's)
- Landscape Development (Landscape Gardeners)
- D.V.A.
- K-technic (Computer Maintenance)
- River Bank Estate (Winery)

