



THE SUB-BRANCH SIGNAL

**DOING BUSINESS
WITH RSL
8:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

ANZAC HOUSE

28 St Georges Terrace, Perth
PO Box 3023
Perth Adelaide Terrace WA 6832
Website: www.rslwahq.org.au
Email: rslwahq@iinet.net.au
Tel: 9287 3799
Fax: 9287 3732

RECEPTION

Monday to Friday - general enquiries
Email: adminassist@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3799

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

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

MEMBERSHIP

Monday to Thursday - membership
enquiries, Sub-Branch enquiries
Email: membership@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3705

WELFARE

Monday to Thursday - welfare appli-
cations, emergency housing, food &
lodging grants, SS&A Relief Trust
Fund applications. Overseas pen-
sions
Email: welfare@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3707

ADVOCACY

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

FINANCE

Monday to Wednesday - all account
enquiries, Sub-Branch credits
Sub-Branch Insurance, information,
claims, grant application assistance,
DVA, Lotterywest (ABN, tax)
Email: helenb@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3703

PENSIONS

Monday to Friday - pension entitle-
ments, claims preparation
Email: pensions1@rslwahq.org.au
pensions2@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3709
9287 3710, 9287 3711

ANZAC CLUB

Monday to Friday - facilities book-
ings, catering/hospitality
Email: anzacclub@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3714

Prime Minister's Advisory Council

From time to time we are asked to explain the role and functions of the recently formed PMAC. It is best explained by looking at their Terms of Reference and from that the outcomes that may be anticipated.

Terms of Reference

The Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters is a body established to consider and advise the Prime Minister and Government on strategic and complex matters.

Its aim is to:

- provide advice on major issues affecting the ex-service and defence communities with a view to facilitating a better future for members of these communities;
- review proposed legislation and its impact on the ex-service and defence communities;
- advise on ex-service matters which impact directly on the responsibilities of other government departments; and
- consider and assist the prioritising of issues raised or referred by the Prime Minister and/or the Minister

From the above statement it would appear as though matters to be considered would be the strategic and complex issues rather than many of the ESO issues relating to Veteran entitlements and DVA procedures.

RSL Shop

Welcome to the RSL Shop - the new online shopping facility for RSL gifts & promotional products. The RSL Shop offers RSL Members an array of quality products suitable for a variety of uses. You can select from a wide range of RSL and Australian military branded products, or choose your own unique product to brand. The RSL Shop will ensure you have access to quality products at the lowest possible price and will also help in promoting a consistent, professional RSL image. I encourage all RSL members, branches and sub-branches are encouraged to contribute to promoting the professionalism of our organisation by purchasing your promotional products and gifts through the RSL Shop.

Merchandise.

The RSL has taken a new nationalized approach to supplying its members with merchandise, memorabilia and force specific items (ie, Navy, Air Force, Army) As such all RSL merchandise can be accessed and ordered through the following website.

www.rslshop.com.au

CLOSING DATES

Reminder:

30th April 2009 is the closing date for:
Meritorious Medal Nominations
Life Membership Nominations
Congress Motions

Please note that late submissions can not be considered



Capitol Radio 90.5FM

Negotiations have now been completed concerning the RSL presentation of a three hour weekly radio broadcast on Capitol Radio 90.5FM. The program entitled *The Listening Post* will go to air on Thursday 16 April, 2009 from noon to 3.00pm. Each week we will present a program with a different aspect of League operations and issues evident in the service and ex-service community. The first two issues will be presented by Ray Ward and will cover ANZAC Day and Veteran Affairs issues. In time we look forward to having Sub Branch involvement in the presentations.

Use of Word ANZAC

ANZAC is a protected word in Australia and New Zealand. In neither country is it legal to use the word in any other than its historical sense. In both cases it is legislation at the National Level that offers the protection.

There are a few exceptions:

- ANZAC Biscuits – granted on application to Minister for Veteran Affairs
- Geographic references – street names
RSL Buildings – ANZAC House.

Generally, where the name is used in a commercial sense for profit approval is difficult to obtain.

Members who observe breaches of the Act should direct any complaints to Department for Veteran Affairs.

The word 'digger' has no such protection however out of respect to service 'diggers' we ask that due reverence is observed in its use by commercial enterprises.

RSL's have no rights to dictate the terms of use of either word.

Membership Renewals

Sub Branches are asked to remind members who have not renewed membership for 2009 to please do so as soon as possible. Payment should be made direct to ANZAC House.

We will be sending out reminder noticed in the second week in May and hope this will not be a costly and major exercise.

To date we have 7792 renewals out of 9286 members listed at the end of 2008.

We look forward to 1494 members who have not renewed taking action on this matter.

DVA Staff Changes

We have been notified by Ian Campbell, Secretary to the Department of Veteran Affairs that our current Deputy Commissioner Mrs Vicki Ludwig will be returning to Canberra in early April and will be replaced by Mr Russell McLaughlan. We are sorry to see Vicki leave us but we do welcome Russell to the position – a position he previously held.

Patrons bringing their own food onto the RSL ANZAC Club facilities

Advice from our Insurance Broker is that the practice of patrons bringing food onto our premises may put the RSL in a situation where the food supplied by the patron affects another patron because of their dietary requirements, or medical condition. In these situations there may be a perceived responsibility by the RSL, not to mention bad publicity.

There may also be liability issues if the RSL was to assist in the preparation, or service, of the food. To ensure the RSL is protected from potential claims and bad publicity please note that ANZAC Club staff have control over the food supplied to Club patrons.

In operation this requires that the only food that can be supplied to patrons is by the ANZAC Club through the ANZAC Club kitchen. No food is to be brought onto the premises by patrons for consumption together with or separate to meals, or for preparation and subsequent distribution to patrons by Club staff.

Note: the term 'food' includes beverages.

Pensions & Advocacy Update

The Training and Information Program (TIP) coordinates DVA Pension practitioners in WA. The TIP Chairman is Darryl Dunlop and he can be contacted by telephone on 9367 5799 between the hours of 8.30 am to 4.00 pm Monday to Friday.

DVA Website:

www.dva.gov.au/grants_best_tip/tip/index.htm

Authorisation of TIP Practitioners

Authorisation of practitioners will be sanctioned in January each year. A letter will be forwarded to the President of the RSL Sub Branch identifying the practitioner member and his/her authorisation to practice. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to the member concerned.

Any person wishing to seek information about their authorisation to practice may contact Jim Boland, Senior Advocate (TIP Trainer) on 9287 3708 or at ANZAC House, 28 St Georges Tce, PERTH, WA 6000. e-mail: advocate@rslwahq.org.au.

To be covered by indemnity insurance (VITA) all RSL Volunteer Pension/Welfare Officers and Advocates are required to be financial and endorsed by their Sub Branch. Practitioners are reminded that they may only practice in the fields in which they are qualified

Victoria Cross Library

The Library is now open on Thursdays 10.00 am - 2.00 pm for member research and information



The Victorian Bushfires

The recent bush fires in Victoria have again brought home to us the destructive power of nature during periods of extreme temperature, strong winds, and drought conditions. But it has also highlighted across our community, but particularly in those directly affected, the qualities of courage, self sacrifice, determination, mateship and compassion.

Some of the stories emerging are absolutely heartbreaking, while others show stoicism, resilience, determination, and even in some cases, a sense of humour in adversity.

Our hearts go out to all of those affected, particularly those who have lost loved ones and friends, those who have lost their homes and, in some cases, their livelihood, and those now experiencing both physical pain and mental trauma.

At least one Vietnam Veteran lost his life, along with that of his wife and one other family member. Other veterans quite probably have been affected. Our Victorian State Branch stands willing to assist those in need, and substantial support has already been offered to the Victorian State Branch by our concerned members elsewhere in Australia.

The outpouring of community support to the victims of this tragedy has been nothing short of incredible. This is one of the few good news stories arising from these fires, and if it was ever needed, gives us reassurance that so many Australians remain willing to come to the aid of fellow Australians who have suffered so acutely.

The RSL encourages those government agencies, including of course members of the Australian Defence Force, who have some responsibility to offer immediate assistance or longer term reconstruction, to undertake these responsibilities expeditiously and with great compassion and sensitivity. Some of our own members may be able to make a direct contribution to the task of rebuilding lives and communities, while others may be able to make a financial contribution. The RSL is not conducting its own national appeal for bushfire victims but we encourage contributions to the principal appeal conducted by the Red Cross, or appeals conducted by other recognised organisations.

It is appreciated that many RSL members would also want to assist those in North Queensland who have been so badly affected by the floods in recent weeks.

Our thoughts are clearly with all those who are experiencing difficulties right across this country.

DVA Publication - 'You and Your Pension'

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has now published the the guide 'You and Your Pension', a comprehensive booklet for income support pensioners which contains information about their benefits, rights and obligations. The guide also contains information about health and aged care issues and other services provided by DVA and by other agencies.

This publication has been in existence since 1998 and has consistently been well received. Its development followed a significant level of consultation with members of the veterans' community and is well set out and informative.

The Ode

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."*

The Ode is taken from the elegy *For The Fallen*, by English poet and writer Laurence Binyon and was published in London in *The Winnowing Fan; Poems of the Great War* in 1914. The fourth verse, which became the League Ode, was already used in association with commemoration services in Australia in 1921 and not only adorns War Memorials throughout the British Commonwealth but is at the heart of all rites of the RSL. RSL Members involved in the conduct of ANZAC Day Commemorative Services are urged to use the words listed above.

ANZAC SERVICE – Jewish War Memorial

As ANZAC Day falls on the same day of the week as the Jewish Sabbath the usual Service at the Jewish War Memorial will be held at 10.30am on Friday 24th April, 2009. RSL Members are invited to support the General Sir John Monash Sub Branch and members of the Jewish Community by attending the Service.



Senior Travel Concessions

From 1 January 2009 Seniors Cards issued by States and Territories in Australia may now be used in all States to access travel concessions. This new National Scheme was the result of considerable discussion in recent years and a direct grant provided from the Commonwealth Government to individual States to cover costs.

Many veterans do not have pension or other entitlement cards that would allow them to access travel concessions outside their home State. Those eligible for Seniors Cards may now use this card to do so. It is a welcome improvement for those who wish to travel interstate particularly visiting family and friends.

Social Security and Veterans' Entitlements Amendment (Commonwealth Seniors' Health Card Bill) 2009

Veterans and families may wish to be aware that the Government has recently introduced into the Parliament a Bill to implement a 2008 Budget measure relating to the adjusted taxable income test for the Commonwealth Seniors' Health Card.

The measure will provide for adjusted taxable income for this purpose to include income from a superannuation stream from a taxed source (gross superannuation) and any income salary sacrificed to superannuation. It is the Government's view that measure will ensure that income received by seniors is treated in a similar way and will align with the Aged Pension, the treatment of income salary sacrificed to superannuation and will ensure that the income test is applied to all card holders consistently. The change will apply to Commonwealth Seniors' Health Cards issued under either the Social Security Act 1991 or the Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986.

It is noted that the savings expected to be achieved from Budget 2009/10 onwards will be of the order of \$30 million per year. While there has been no change to the thresholds for which the Commonwealth Seniors' Health Card applies, that is \$50,000 for a single person and \$80,000 combined income for a couple, these amendments will increase the potential for those receiving income from superannuation or making salary sacrifices to superannuation, to now be precluded from retaining or obtaining a Commonwealth Seniors' Health Card. It is noted that the Federal Opposition will endeavour to oppose this Bill, notwithstanding the inclusion of this measure in the last Budget.

RSL to Launch New Fundraising Initiative, Supported by VB

The RSL is proud to announce a exciting new partnership with Legacy and iconic Australian brand, VB, to launch a new joint fundraising appeal. The RSL in all states except Queensland are participating in this activity.

Details of the Appeal will be officially launched in April, with the aim to raise vital funds that will allow the RSL to continue to provide support for those current serving and ex-service men and women and their dependants, and to assist in the expansion of our ongoing welfare and educational programs.

The Appeal has the support of former Chief of the Defence Force General Peter Cosgrove.

"It's heartening to see a strong partnership emerge between the RSL, Legacy and VB for the benefit of so many in the Australian community," said Cosgrove.

The Raise A Glass Appeal will be launched on 25th March 2009 (21st April, 2009 at ANZAC Club Perth) and run throughout April in the lead up to ANZAC Day. More information will be provided in late March.

Message from Welfare Officer

The WA AGED Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Relief Fund Trust

**can HELP veterans/ADF personnel on low incomes, or those
unable to pay essential bills.**

Ring 9287 3707 (ANZAC House Welfare) for an Application form to be posted out.

