



THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA  
WA BRANCH INCORPORATED

Issue 9/2009  
Sub Branch Signal

# 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](http://www.rslwahq.org.au)  
Email: [rslwahq@iinet.net.au](mailto:rslwahq@iinet.net.au)  
Tel: 9287 3799  
Fax: 9287 3732

**RECEPTION**

Monday to Friday - general enquiries  
Email: [adminassist@rslwahq.org.au](mailto: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](mailto:rslwahq@iinet.net.au)  
Tel: 9287 3799

**MEMBERSHIP**

Monday to Thursday - membership  
enquiries, Sub-Branch enquiries  
Email: [membership@rslwahq.org.au](mailto:membership@rslwahq.org.au)  
Tel: 9287 3705

**WELFARE**

Monday to Friday- welfare applica-  
tions, emergency housing, food &  
lodging grants, SS&A Relief Trust  
Fund applications. Overseas pen-  
sions  
Email: [welfare@rslwahq.org.au](mailto:welfare@rslwahq.org.au)  
Tel: 9287 3707

**ADVOCACY**

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

**FINANCE**

Monday to Friday - all account en-  
quiries, Sub-Branch credits  
Sub-Branch Insurance, information,  
claims, grant application assistance,  
DVA, Lotterywest (ABN, tax)  
Email: [helenb@rslwahq.org.au](mailto:helenb@rslwahq.org.au)  
Tel: 9287 3703 or 9287 3718

**PENSIONS**

Monday to Friday - pension entitle-  
ments, claims preparation  
Email: [pensions1@rslwahq.org.au](mailto:pensions1@rslwahq.org.au)  
[pensions2@rslwahq.org.au](mailto: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](mailto:anzacclub@rslwahq.org.au)  
Tel: 9287 3714

## Reminder

Sub Branches are reminded to return their audited Annual Financial Statements to this headquarters no later than Friday 30 October 2009.

Sub Branches who cannot meet this date are asked to contact

Mr Ken van Lit on 9287 3718 without delay.

Those who fail to respond will be contacted.

## **SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING**

*Adjourned Portion of State Annual General Meeting*

Sub Branches are advised that the Adjourned portion of the  
Annual General Meeting  
is to be held on

**THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER 2009**

**Gallipoli Room  
ANZAC HOUSE  
PERTH**

**11.00am**

**BUSINESS**

To consider, and if appropriate adopt,  
The Annual Financial Statement for 2008 -2009  
of

The Returned & Services League of Australia  
WA Branch Incorporated

In accordance with Rule 31.2 of the State Constitution a quorum of 25% of  
Sub Branches entitled to vote and present in person is required.

**Representatives from 32 Sub Branches are required to attend to transact business**

## RSL Raffle

Thanks to members who have sold raffle books in our current Raffle. If you did not receive a book and would like to assist RSL Welfare please contact ANZAC House and we will send you a book. If you would like more books, please ask. If you have sold your book, please return the ticket butts with the money to

## MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL

***New members joining between 1 October and 31 December 2009  
will receive membership up till 31 December 2010***

**Three Months Free Membership!**

**Membership Officer/ Sub Branch Secretary please contact Kathy  
at ANZAC House for details**



### Raise – a – Glass Fundraising Project

You will be aware of the fundraising project conducted by Fosters over the ANZAC Day period. The beneficiaries of the campaign were RSL and Legacy. Last week we received just on \$30000 as our share of the proceeds. We are please to advise that this amount will be applied to our RSL welfare programs. We have been advised that Fosters intend to conduct the same fundraising project for the next two years.

### RSLWA Website

Our website is now fully functional and contains much information on RSL and general welfare matters. We hope you find it of interest and will regularly use it to seek information on League activities. The site is: [www.rslwahq.org.au](http://www.rslwahq.org.au)

### New Sub Branch

We are pleased to announce the formation of the City of Belmont Sub Branch. This has been formed from the amalgamation of the Rivervale-Carlisle and Belmont Sub Branches and was constituted on 27 September 2009. At the ceremony, President Alan Richardson was presented with the new Charter and a National Certificate to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the former Belmont Sub Branch. We welcome our new Sub Branch to the Register and wish them well for the future.

### Change of Name of Sub Branch

The Eastern Hills Sub Branch was formed by the amalgamation of several Hills District Sub Branches some time in the 1970. The amalgamation was due to the smaller Sub Branches not being viable due to falling numbers. The host Sub Branch, Mundaring which was founded on 28 June 1929 surrendered its title in favour of the new name – Eastern Hills.

With the view to a clearer identification of the Sub Branch members have requested a return to the title - Mundaring Sub Branch – and this has been approved by State Executive. With a clearer geographic identification it is hoped the Sub Branch will experience a period of prosperity.

### Christmas Arrangements

Advance notice is given that ANZAC House and Club will close at 3.00pm on Wednesday 23 December 2009 and reopen for business at 8.30am on Monday 11 January, 2010.

### New National President

The recently held RSL National Congress in Adelaide marked the beginning of a new era for League with the election of RADM Ken Doolan AO as National President. RADM Doolan replaces MAJ-GEN Bill Crews AO who concluded a period of six years in the position.

The election of RADM Doolan also is of significance as it will be the first time in the 93 year history of the League that we have had a Naval Officer as our National President. The Army has finally relinquished the position to the Senior Service! The change over was a moving time and centered upon MAJ-GEN Crews, in his closing address to Congress paying tribute to the support he had enjoyed from the membership in his endeavours to project the image of the RSL into the community as a caring group focused on the welfare and care of veterans. A full text of his address is on the WA Website in a Special Edition of the Sub Branch Signal. I commend it to you so you may appreciate the work he did and the achievements he made during his term of office.

On your behalf I took the opportunity to wish him well in his retirement

### RSL Priorities 2010 Budget

As has been custom for a number of years the RSL Nation Congress approves a number of issues that are placed before government for inclusion in the Veteran Affairs Budget. In the past we have been successful in achieving most of our claims. At the recently held National Congress of the League held in Adelaide the following seven items were approved for inclusion in the budget submission which will now be placed before government as part of the budget process. This submission is made at this time so that our items are considered by government for the May 2010 budget. All seven items that are listed below are in priority order but we do not necessarily expect that all will be agreed to but we do expect equal standing for implementation. This is not to suggest that all will be given consideration by government but at least they are made aware of our issues. Although not a part of this article, there are many other items that are passed at the State Congress's and are passed at National Congress. These are included as a supplementary list for consideration by government either through the budget process or other avenues that government has available to address these.

The approach of listing a small number of items was developed a few years ago so that by submitting a lesser number of items as our priority issues the RSL would have an increased possibility of being successful in some of these than trying to have every item considered as part of the process.

### Membership Statistics As at 24 September 2009

Service—9 200

Affiliates—1 718

Total—10 918



## Priority Items

### INDEXATION

*That the indexation of all components of Military Superannuation under the DFRDB and the MSBS schemes be calculated with reference to both the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE).*

This item will now be an important one given the recent publication of the Mathews Report into indexation released by government in which it maintains that CPI (which lacks creditability) be the only form of indexation for these pensions. There will be other measures taken to address this issue but in the meantime it will remain as one of our most important budget items.

### CARBON POLLUTION REDUCTION SCHEME

*That the Government ensures that the proposed 2.8% increase in the Disability, Service and War Widows Pensions, due to the expected increases in the living cost index from the introduction of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme does reflect the real cost of living increase.*

The proposed scheme, if implemented, will have serious impact on the provision of the basic necessities of life. We must demand that there is no impairment to the quality of life of pensioners, especially veterans, widows and other disadvantaged groups.

### PHARMACEUTICALS

*Those entitled Veterans are provided with free pharmaceuticals for accepted disabilities.*

This is currently being further examined by government through other forums but it is still an important one as far as the RSL membership is concerned and so it is placed on our list of priorities for that reason.

### MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS AND REHABILITATION.

*That the Government develops a national mental health rehabilitation scheme for veterans suffering with chronic mental health problems based on individual case assessment and management programs*

It is our aim to see the implementation of a previously conducted DVA Report that recommended "That DVA provides support, including financial support, for appropriate community accommodation models to meet the need of veterans with mental health issues e.g.: step-down accommodation for short term rehabilitation, care reviews/renewal and relapse support."

### RESIDENTIAL CARE –YOUNGER VETERANS.

*That the government develops a system to ensure access to appropriate accommodation for disabled veterans' who require 24 hour supported living but are too young to qualify for aged care services.*

We seek affordable and age appropriate accommodation options for veterans who are unable to live in the community and are too young to access the Commonwealth funded residential aged care system

### VETERANS' AGED CARE

*That the government remove the barriers to Veterans' and War Widows accessing higher levels of community aged care and thereby enabling them to make informed and appropriate choices regarding their ability to continue to live in the community. For Nursing Home accommodation ensure that the Special Needs status of Veterans is recognized consistently across all states in the annual advertising and allocation of new aged care places and packages.*

Many Veterans and War Widows are reluctant to leave DVA Veterans' Home Care (VHC) and access DoHA funded Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) when their care needs increase. As a result their safety and well being can be compromised as their care needs become more complex and exceed the intent and capacity of the Veterans' Home Care Program. As resources are being stretched to support this group access to VHC for Veterans and War Widows with less complex care needs can also be affected.

### HOME RESPITE CARE

*That the DVA adequately resource the provision of the yearly allocation of 8 days of in home respite under the Veterans' Home Care Program (VHC)*

Under the VHC program there is a capped limit of 196 hours (28 Days) for in home respite care or residential respite care in a financial year. By using the in home respite for 24 hourly care, the yearly allocation is just over 8 full days. Some house bound veterans have a desire and or a need not to be accommodated in a nursing home but rather remain in their own home during their Carers respite. These are the Veterans" we seek 24 hour in home care for.





## Review of DVA Funded Advocacy and Welfare Services

Advice has been received that the Department of Veterans' Affairs has commenced a review of DVA Funded Advocacy and Welfare Services which encompasses:

Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST)

- Training and Information Program (TIP), and
- Veteran and Community Grants

This review arises from some concerns expressed during the BEST Grant Funding Round for 2009/10 and issues raised by Ex-Service Organisations about the operation of the BEST program and associated support programs.

The review will incorporate recommendations contained in the independent Study into Suicide in the Ex-Service Community by Professor David Dunt. Specifically recommendation 8.1 refers to pension officers, welfare officers and advocates.

In this regard, the RSL has produced a discussion paper, a copy of which is shown separately under 'National President' on this webpage.

The review will be conducted by Mr David Bachelor and Ms Olivia Witowski and is expected to be completed by the end of 2009. The Terms of Reference, together with the Consultation Framework, will be advised by the Department in the near future.

## Suicide Awareness—There is something you can do!

Are you concerned about the welfare of a mate or someone in your family?

Current and former serving members of the Australian Defence Force are some of the most resilient people in the country but their mental health can suffer, just like the rest of the Australian population.

An initiative of VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service, Operation *Life* workshops can give you the "know how" to recognise when a mate or family member needs help, and the skills to help them.

A Welfare Officer for an Ex -Service Organisation recently attended an Operation *Life* workshop saying, "It's given me the confidence to approach someone who I am concerned about and to ask the relevant questions. You don't have to save them yourself - just put them in touch with others who can help."

If you know someone who is doing it tough or going through a significant life change, Operation *Life* workshops can help you help them.

Changing life situations, such as the loss of a loved one, retirement, financial problems, discharge from the Defence Force or physical illness, can affect someone's ability to cope. Changes in everyday behaviour, losing interest in things previously enjoyed, taking less care of themselves than usual and engaging in risky or self-destructive behaviours can all be signs of a person at risk.

Most people with thoughts of suicide signal their distress and invite help. Often these opportunities are missed, dismissed or avoided - leaving people more alone and at greater risk.

Operation *Life* workshops can help. 'safeTALK' is a half-day presentation on identifying at-risk behaviours and accessing support. It can help members of the veteran community to recognise someone who might be having thoughts of suicide and to link them in with appropriate help.

'safeTALK' workshops are currently being offered across Australia, so get some mates together and register your interest.

To register or find out more about Operation *Life* workshops, contact the VVCS on **1800 011 046** (during normal business hours).

