



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: (08) 9287 3799
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Country Callers : 1800 259 799

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
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 Friday - welfare applica-
tions, 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 Friday - all account
enquiries, Sub-Branch credits
Sub-Branch Insurance, information,
claims, grant application assistance,
DVA, Lotterywest (ABN, tax)
Email: stateacct@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3703 or 9287 3718

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

LISTENING POST

Monday to Friday - editorial staff
Email: listeningpost@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3716

REPORT

Sub Branch Executive Meeting

The recently held meeting of Sub Branch Executives attracted an attendance of forty-five members representing twenty-six Sub Branches. Members attending were from metropolitan as well as country areas as far a-field as Broome, Dumbleyung and Bunbury. All in attendance were very pleased with the opportunity to discuss and share problems and administration issues with their fellow executives. The main focus of the day was financial management and sub branch administration however time was taken to address local issues.

Satisfaction was generally expressed with the membership renewal process when it was explained that RSL nationally was moving towards a National approach to membership that will eventually lead to a common membership card across Australia and a National Data Base of the 250,000 RSL members. It was pointed out that with the use of technology the work load in membership renewals and cost effective process will benefit all members and materially assist overworked membership officers and sub branch administrators. The ability for sub branches to 'do their own thing' in membership renewals will disappear with a more efficient and speedy allocation of the Sub Branch portion of the fee being set in place.

Negotiations as to costs are currently being undertaken with the supplier of the service and it is hoped that, provided an acceptable arrangement can be made, the new system will be operational for the 2011 renewal process.

The operation of Licensed Clubs attached to Sub Branches has been identified as an area of concern to the State Branch. This was explained to seminar attendees as one which had implications with the Australian Tax Office. As the RSL is exempt Income Tax, the same concession does not apply to Licensed Clubs operating as a Separate Entity with Incorporation under the provisions of *The Associations Incorporation Act 1987*.

We have sought legal advice on this position and acting on that opinion we have commissioned the preparation of a model constitution allowing for Incorporated Sub Branches to be established. This, if approved at the forthcoming Special Congress, will solve the problem. The sub branches that may be affected have been contacted and advised of the steps to be taken to be compliant with ATO laws.

Following on from this position, State Branch will also be commissioning a re-write of the State Rules and By Laws to bring it into line with the proposed Branch restructure.

While many of the changes required are necessary, and indeed obligatory, it should have minimal impact on Sub Branch operations – other than a more robust degree of financial accountability.

WA AGED RETURNED SAILORS, SOLDIERS & AIRMEN'S RELIEF TRUST FUND

Ready to Assist

**Veterans and Dependents in
Need or Necessitous Circumstances**

Apply: Welfare Officer – ANZAC House



Proposed Changes to the Governance of Military Superannuation Schemes

The National Executive is taking urgent action to challenge the proposed changes without due consultation with superannuants

On 31st October 2008 the Minister for Finance and Deregulation, the Hon Lindsay Tanner announced that “on 1 July 2010 the Boards of the Australian Reward Investment Alliance (ARIA), the Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme (MSBS) and the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Scheme (DFRDB) will merge to form a single trustee board.” The reason cited for this merger was that *“consolidation will bring more than 650,000 members and pensioners under a single trustee board, establish a greater pool of assets for investment purposes and apply best practice management approaches across all schemes.”*

A press release by Minister Tanner on 26th November 2009 quoted him as saying that *“the Government is committed to ensuring governance arrangements for its superannuation schemes are effective and consistent with the broader superannuation industry.”*

To give effect to these intentions, the Government introduced the *Governance of Australian Government Superannuation Schemes Bill 2010*, the *Comsuper Bill 2010* and the *Superannuation Legislation (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2010* into the House of Representatives on 4 February 2010.

The Government did not consult the RSL about these proposed changes to the governance of military superannuation schemes affecting many RSL members.

RSL Course of Action

RSL military superannuants:

- are not persuaded that the Government has made a case for the proposal to merge the DFRDB and MSBS Boards with ComSuper;
- seek factually based sound reasons why the merger should take place; and
- request the RSL be supplied with the Department of Finance Review on which the merger is based and with the Risk Analysis of the proposal to outsource administration of the merged system.

The RSL recommends that further Parliamentary consideration of the *Governance of Australian Government Superannuation Bill 2010*, *Comsuper Bill 2010* and *Superannuation Legislation (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2010* be deferred to allow military superannuants time to examine relevant information and make an informed assessment about this material.

ANZAC CLUB

Specials for Lent



Why not visit ANZAC Club with your Association or Group and enjoy our **Lent Specials** or just enjoy the hospitality of our friendly staff.

We will shortly be welcoming Michael Hatcher, our new Chef.

Bon Appetit!

Why not sample our new selection of wines?



Changes to DVA Cards

All Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Repatriation Health Cards (DVA Cards) are due to expire during 2010. From March 2010 DVA will begin reissuing all cards. As part of this reissue there will be some improvements made to DVA cards. All eligible veterans, war widows/widowers and dependants will be issued with a new card.

Changes to DVA Cards will not reduce eligibility for current DVA card holders.

The changes being made to the cards are to increase:

- veteran access to services;
- provider satisfaction; and
- security of the cards.

Specialised descriptions on DVA Gold Cards will remain unchanged, these descriptions include but are not limited to:

- Totally and Permanently Incapacitated;
- War Widow/Widower; and
- PoW.

Cards expiring between now and June 2010

Temporary DVA cards will be issued between now and June 2010 with a short expiry date. These cards will work the same as current DVA cards and offer DVA clients the same access to services. DVA clients who are issued with a temporary card will be issued a new look card before their card expires.

Veteran Access to Services

The magnetic stripe on the cards will contain the following information:

- full name;
- file number;
- card Type; and
- expiry date.

This change is expected to improve provider satisfaction, as this will enable providers to swipe DVA cards in the same way Medicare or Private Health Fund Cards are currently utilised. By improving the claiming experience for the providers it will increase the likelihood of providers accepting DVA cards.

All eligible clients living overseas will, for the first time, be issued with a DVA card. This will remove the need for veterans to contact DVA to receive a "letter of authority" when receiving medical treatment within Australia.

Entitlement to treatment overseas is limited to veterans that have an accepted disability/disabilities and DVA funds treatment of those accepted disabilities only. This process for receiving treatment while overseas will not change.

Security Upgrade

All DVA cards will have microprinting and a DVA registered hologram added as security features. The microprinting and hologram are added security features to ensure non entitled persons cannot reproduce a card.

Expected Arrival Date

The reissue of all cards is due to commence in March 2010. This process is expected to take 10 - 15 weeks to complete.

Membership Statistics

We are pleased to present our February Membership Statistics:

Life Members	158
Life Subscribers	85
Service Members	6,500
TOTAL	6,743
Affiliates	410
GRAND TOTAL	7,153

New General Service Medal for Korean Service Announced

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support Mike Kelly expected that the medal would be available for dispatch to some eligible recipients before ANZAC Day. Former defence force personnel who served in South Korea during the post-armistice period following the ceasefire on July 27, 1953 should now apply for the award. The Australian General Service Medal for Korea is being struck to recognise former Defence Force personnel who completed 30 days participation in operations in South Korea during the post-armistice period from July 28, 1953 to April 19, 1956.



As a Service to RSL Members and clients of Australian Defence Credit Union an Agency of ADCU will shortly be operating in ANZAC House.

Final arrangements are being negotiated and we expect to announce the Opening Date and Services that can be accessed prior to ANZAC Day





From The National Scene

Appointment of Permanent RSL Advocate to the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal

The National Executive decided late last year to take a more proactive role in hearings before the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal about Australian Defence Force pay and allowances.

To this end we have been fortunate in obtaining the voluntary services of Commodore Syd Lemon RANR as our permanent representative. The National Executive will fund attendance at all Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal pay case inspections and visits to ADF units to enable Syd to be fully conversant with remuneration issues brought before the Tribunal.

The National Executive is most grateful to Group Captain Phil Morrall for representing the RSL at DFRT hearings in Canberra pending the appointment of a permanent advocate; and values Phil's ongoing role as Chairman of the RSL National Conditions of Service Committee.

East Timor Honours Returning Aussie Troops

The President of East Timor, Dr Jose Ramos Horta, has presented medals and expressed his nation's gratitude to nearly 200 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel who are about to return home. In the ceremony at the Presidential Palace, President Ramos Horta praised the role Australian personnel have played in restoring and then maintaining peace in East Timor.

"Together we have been able to restore peace and security for the people who so much deserved it," President Ramos Horta said to the members of the International Stabilisation Force (ISF).

"As you depart for Australia I wish to thank you for the services you have provided us on behalf of the Australian people." The assembled Navy, Army and Air Force personnel were awarded with the Australian Service Medal and the Timor Leste Solidarity Medal. The ISF Commander, Commodore (CDRE) Stuart Mayer, was also awarded one of the highest accolades that can be presented by the President, the Medal of Merit (Medhala de Merito), becoming one of only a select few people from outside East Timor to receive the medal. CDRE Mayer thanked the soldiers, sailors and airmen and women for their hard work and commitment as well as highlighting the challenges that lay ahead. "ADF in East Timor have been instrumental in returning stability to the people of East Timor and created the stability and opportunity needed so that their nation can continue to grow. "In the months ahead the ISF will be looking to consolidate recent achievements and continue to provide that guarantee for the people of East Timor so that they can build for their own future."

Member Satisfaction Survey

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has conducted a Veterans' Satisfaction Survey regularly since 2000. As an ESO round table member veterans are advised of an upcoming survey. DVA has engaged an independent market research company, Ipsos-Eureka, to conduct research on client satisfaction. The research will consist of two surveys:

- A survey of clients under 45 years of age (younger clients); and
- A survey of the general client population.

Research participation assists in maintaining and improving service delivery, and client feedback helps to identify areas of best practice and areas of concern. Participation in the research is entirely voluntary and answers provided to Ipsos-Eureka will be confidential. Individual responses will not be seen by DVA.

The survey of younger clients will be a telephone survey conducted throughout March. An opt-out letter that allows clients to decline to participate in the survey will be released to approximately 4,200 clients in the next few weeks. The phone survey is expected to generate approximately 1,000 responses.

The general client survey will utilise reply paid questionnaire forms, with phone assistance available to clients if requested. Veterans who do not wish to participate in the research can simply ignore the questionnaire. Approximately 5,700 clients will receive these questionnaires with around 2,000 responses anticipated.

Following the survey completion, Ipsos-Eureka will be conducting focus groups to discuss the findings and tease out their understanding of the service delivery issues that are identified. These focus groups will occur in late April.