



Returned & Services League  
 Hawthorn Sub-Branch Inc.  
 (ABN 88 425 520 997)  
 605 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, Vic 3122  
[info@hawthornrsl.com](mailto:info@hawthornrsl.com)    [www.hawthornrsl.com](http://www.hawthornrsl.com)

## Agenda

### ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

#### Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> of July 11:00am

**References:**

- A. RSL Victoria Rules 3.9 Part 13, 13B *Ordinary General Meetings* dated 15 Jun 23
- B. RSL Victoria Email - 109<sup>th</sup> RSL Victoria – *Annual Conference Notice* of 14 Jun 24

Opening		
The Chairman – Drew Maddison Returning Officer(s) Greg Scarf / Marianne Gardner		
Roll Call		
Committee		
Name	Position	Membership
Drew Maddison	President	Service
Eamon Hale	Vice President	Service
Celia Hale	Secretary	Affiliate
Wing Chan	Treasurer	Service
Marianne Gardner	Membership Officer	Affiliate
Chris Wright	Appeals Officer	Service
Stewart Middleton	Bar Member	Service
Greg Scarfe	General Committee	Service
Sam Convey	General Committee	Service
Members		
Name		Membership
Apologies		
Marianne Doyle	General Committee	Service
Tribute		
The Ode.		



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### Outline of Meeting

Drew Maddison

In accordance with Reference A when a State Conference/Annual General Meeting is called an Ordinary General Meeting is to be held by all Sub-Branches to allow Members to decide on and vote in appropriate Delegates to attend and vote at the State Conference/Annual General Meeting on the Sub-Branches behalf.

RSL Victoria has deemed that the Sub-Branch 815 Service, Life, and Affiliate Members resulting in an entitlement of **Two** delegates in accordance with Rule 8.4(c) of Reference A.

In accordance with Reference A and as detailed in Reference B, an OGM is conducted to allow all Members to discuss and vote on Rule and Policy Remits for the approved Delegates to vote on HRSLs behalf at the State Conference/Annual General Meeting.

There will be a chance for attendees to raise general business however in accordance with Reference A if it is not an agenda item it can only be raised if the subject is deemed that it is in the interest of Sub-Branch that the topic be included.

All motions will be decided by a vote of handheld cards, from this a declaration will be made if the motion has been carried unanimously, carried by majority, or lost and will be detailed as such in the minutes. That entry is evidence of that fact, without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour of, or against, that resolution.

### Delegates for State AGM

Delegates;

Drew Maddison – President

Eamon Hale – Vice President

Observer - Wing Chan

Other -

Motion OGM 01/24 – That appointed Delegates for HRSL to represent the Sub-Branch and vote as directed from this meeting.

Proposed	Seconded	Result

Motion OGM 02/24 – That appointed Observer for HRSL to represent the Sub-Branch and vote as directed from this meeting.

Proposed	Seconded	Result

### RULE REMITS

The following remits that seek to amend the Branch Rules will be proposed and debated. These remits are special resolutions and therefore require a 75% majority to be passed and will be indicated as Unanimously, Majority, Lost.

Remit #	Topic	Moved By
1	Free Service Membership and opt out proposal	RSL Victoria



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<p>Rules affected</p>	<p>Part 5 Membership and Subscription Part 8 Annual Conference and Extraordinary Conferences Part 10 Election of a Branch Officer.</p> <p>Amend existing Rules 5.7, 5.10 (2), 5.12 (d), 5.15 (d), 5.16 (e), 5.17 (a) (1), (d), (e), 5.17 A (a), (b), (c), 5.18 (b) (C), 5.19 (a) (1), 8.4 (d), 10.3 (e) (3)</p>
<p><u>Rationale</u></p> <p>Strategic Outcome 3 (Updating Structure and Governance and increase our membership) of the RSL Victoria Strategic Plan (2023-2028) seeks to achieve the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Modernise the membership process and deliver what members want from a modern RSL Victoria.</li> <li>2. Increase in membership numbers.</li> <li>3. Reduce the average age and increase diversity of leadership positions across State Branch and Sub-Branches.</li> </ol> <p>Whilst the removal of service membership fees is not the panacea to achieving all of the above, it will be a critical step forward and form part of an overall membership strategy. Sub-Branch engagement and buy-in is critical to the success of any membership program, including ensuring that the member experience is inclusive, welcoming and ensuring that veterans are appropriately recognised in a respectful manner within Sub-Branches.</p> <p>A membership drive in itself, whilst may increase membership in the short term. If RSL Victoria and its Sub-Branches are not providing value and relevance then we will not retain members long term. It is far more difficult to regain membership than gain new members.</p> <p>When State Branch started the Strategic Planning process in December 2022, we had just over 23,000 life and service members across the RSL in Victoria, of which just 17% are under the age of 60 (3,974) and only 4% under the age of 40 (852). Predominantly our service members (68%) are over the age of 70 (15,459), and 25% are over 80 years of age.</p> <p>Service membership is in decline, and the average age of a service member now stands at 74 years old. Of the total, we have 2,512 female service members (12%) and 20,600 males (88%).</p> <p>Current Census data shows that of the 105,234 (including 10,841 current serving) veterans in Victoria, as of December 2024, there are 22,479 financial Life and Service members of the RSL in Victoria.</p>	



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Declining membership will continue to have an impact on the sustainability of many Sub-Branches.

It is critical to maintain a presence in all these areas to honour the League's charter of remembrance and commemoration.

Sub-Branch membership fees for service members vary considerably across the network.

RSLNSW conducted a membership renewal campaign, which commenced in September 2021.

1. The main areas of change were:

a. Fee free membership (Service)

- i. No membership fees for service
- ii. Sub-Branch Support & Assistance Fund setup by larger Sub-Branches for application by smaller Sub-Branches.
- iii. Shift from opting in rather than opting out to service membership at renewal.

b. On-line membership portal

- i. Reduce red-tape to onboard.
- ii. No proof of service, but disclaimer putting responsibility back on applicant.

2. Since launch RSLNSW service membership has grown as follows:

Year	Service Members	% on PY
2019	17012	
2020	17658	3.28
2021	18711	5.11
2022	20766	9.32
2023	22796	8.13

Motion OGM 03/24 – That Rule Remit #1 be approved by HRSL.

Proposed	Seconded	Result	Moved By
2	Free Membership to service personal		Hawthorn RSL
Rules affected	That the Branch Rules be amended to add in clause 5.19 (a)(3) - A Service Member who is still serving, whether in the regular or reserve Royal Australian Navy, Australian Army or Royal Australian Air Force, is not liable to annual subscription payments and their membership fee is waived.		



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	Subject to the outcome of the motion seeking approval of 11.2 Free Service Membership, this Rule Remit may be withdrawn.
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Rationale

At a time when the service membership of RSL Victoria is shrinking dramatically, it is imperative to remove barriers to membership and actively engage new members amongst those serving in the ADF. This remit will encourage membership and ensure that the RSL serves those who continue to serve us. By removing annual subscription fees for serving members, it will foster greater participation in the league and align with similar initiatives being undertaken in other states.

Victoria has a strong defence community including HMAS Cerberus, Puckapunyal Military Area, Albury Wodonga Military Area, RAAF Base East Sale, Williams and Point Cook, as well as a wide range of reserve units located across metro and regional areas. By offering free memberships for serving service members, especially during the formative stages of their careers and whilst they are concentrating on those careers, RSL Victoria will aim to attract and retain the emerging generation of future participants and leaders of the RSL. This will ensure that when they have time to commit to the RSL, the relationship is already established. It further ensures that our organisation remains relevant and supportive of those who serve our nation.

Motion OGM 04/24 – That Rule Remit #2 be approved by HRSL.

Proposed		Seconded		Result	
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Remit #	Topic	Moved By
3	Eligibility of the State Executive	Hawthorn RSL

Rules affected	<p>Part 7 State Executive 7.4 (c) Composition of the State Executive</p> <p><b>Amend existing Rules 7.4 (c) and replace with.</b></p> <p>A member of the State Executive who holds office pursuant to Rule 7.4(a)(1), (2) or (3) may only hold such office for not more than three consecutive terms (of three years each in accordance with Rule 7.4(b)).</p>
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Rationale

By allowing leaders a period of 9 years and then resetting the term limit after a 3-year break, it allows leadership to serve and grow over a lifetime, rather than stunting leadership growth. This will allow RSL to retain exceptional talent and knowledge, rather than arbitrability kicking leaders out after 9 years and never allowing them to serve again.

Motion OGM 05/24 – That Rule Remit #3 be approved by HRSL.

Proposed		Seconded		Result	
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**POLICY REMITS**

The following policy remits will be proposed and debated. These remits require a simple majority to be passed.



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Remit #	Topic	Moved By
1	Creation of Hardship Fund for 10B/Cs in relation to Remit 11.2	RSL Victoria
Background	To consider and adopt a Policy position as submitted by State Branch in relation to the creation of a hardship fund for 10B and 10Cs Sub-Branches that are experience financial hardship as a result of the approval of the Rules Remit 11.2 Free service Membership and Opt out proposal.	
<p><u>Rationale</u></p> <p>If the proposal of Free Service Membership is successful, it will be critical to support Bylaw 10 B&amp;C Sub-Branches through this transition. Whilst it is believed that all Sub-Branches will benefit from the abolition of service membership fees, the revenue generated from service membership fees, particularly for Bylaw 10 B&amp;C Sub-Branches assists in the ongoing running of the Sub-Branch.</p> <p>As at April 2024, there is a total of 5,808 service members across 211 x 10B/C Sub-Branches. The total number of membership fees collected by the 10B/C Sub-Branches is ~\$160,000 per year. The average fee is \$27.11.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Bylaw 10A network establish a 10B/C Service Membership Hardship Support Fund and voluntarily contribute towards supporting the fund over a three year period to support Bylaw 10B/C Sub-Branches with this transition.</p>		
Motion OGM 06/24 – That Policy Remit #1 be approved by HRSL.		
Proposed	Seconded	Result
Remit #	Topic	Moved By
2	State Branch Governance, Structure & Rule Review by 2025	RSL Victoria
Background	To consider and adopt a policy position that RSL Victoria will commit to a comprehensive review of State Branch Rules and Bylaws before the end of 2025.	
<p><u>Rationale</u></p> <p>The perceived shortcomings are evidenced in the structures, systems and procedures present in both State Branch and the Sub-Branch network. From a governance perspective, too many of the Rules concern themselves with either duplicating extant legislation and regulation, necessitating excessive administration and bureaucracy, and constraining officers of the organisation from freely exercising their duly appointed delegations.</p> <p>A renewal of these structures would potentially serve to ‘free the hand’ of the whole of the RSL in Victoria, including State Branch and Sub-Branches, better realising and/or pursuing their charitable objects. Further, creating a more effective governance model would help drive the delivery of efficiencies in the day-to-day management of the organisation.</p>		



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Motion OGM 07/24 – That Policy Remit #2 be approved by HRSL.				
Proposed		Seconded		Result
Remit #	Topic			Moved By
3	Life Membership for Affiliates			Box Hill
Background	To consider and adopt a Policy position as submitted by Box Hill RSL Sub-Branch that the Victorian State Branch should recommend to the National Body of the RSL that the award of Life Membership of the RSL should be extended to include Affiliate Members of the RSL.			
<p>Rationale</p> <p>It has long been the opinion of the Box Hill RSL Sub-Branch Committee that because of the declining numbers of veterans, Affiliate Members are becoming more important in taking senior roles in sub-branches and in furthering the objectives of the RSL, and it is the view of the Committee that it is both illogical and unfair to deny Affiliate Members the award of Life Membership of the RSL.</p> <p>The Committee therefore resolved at its meeting held on 26 April 2024 that the Box Hill RSL Sub-Branch should submit to the Victorian Branch of the RSL a remit for the 2024 State Conference of the Victorian State Branch of the RSL to the effect that Affiliate Members of the RSL should be eligible for the award of Life Membership of the RSL, noting that such a change to the Rules of the RSL can only be effected by the national body of the RSL.</p>				
Motion OGM 08/24 – That Policy Remit #3 be approved by HRSL.				
Proposed		Seconded		Result
Remit #	Topic			Moved By
4	National Veteran Support			Traralgon RSL
Background	To consider and adopt a Policy position as submitted by Traralgon RSL Sub-Branch in relation to all RSL Branches treating veterans as worthy of support in times of need, irrespective of their state domiciliary status.			
<p>Rationale</p> <p>Consistency in Support: Veterans move across state lines for various reasons such as employment, family, or health needs. Ensuring that they receive consistent support regardless of their current state of residence prevents disparities in care and benefits, which could otherwise discourage mobility and negatively impact their quality of life.</p> <p>Principle of Equal Service: Veterans have served the nation uniformly, often in environments whereas state boundaries were irrelevant. The sacrifices and contributions made by veterans were for the country as a whole, not for a specific state. Thus, it is equitable to ensure that their support is similarly unrestricted by state domiciliary status.</p>				



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In conclusion, treating all veterans as worthy of support irrespective of their state domiciliary status is not only a reflection of fairness and gratitude but also a practical and ethical approach to ensuring that those who have served the nation are adequately supported in times of need.

Motion OGM 9/24 – That Policy Remit #4 be approved by HRSL.

Proposed		Seconded		Result	
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Remit #	Topic	Moved By
5	Public Communications Plan	Inverloch RSL

Background	To consider and adopt a policy position as submitted by Inverloch RSL Sub-Branch in relation to requesting a comprehensive Public Communications Plan that highlights the vital role that RSL Victoria plays in advocating for veteran benefits and supporting veterans and their families.
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#### Rationale

We believe that it is crucial to raise awareness among the broader community about the free services and support that RSL Vic provides to veterans. By effectively communicating the various programs and initiatives that are available through RSL Vic, we can ensure that veterans and their families are aware of the resources and assistance that are available to them.

Our Sub-Branch in Inverloch is committed to serving our local veteran community and we believe that a coordinated public communication plan across various media formats, such as social media, newspapers, radio, and television, will help us reach a wider audience and better support our veterans.

We believe that by highlighting the services and benefits that RSL Vic provides, we can not only help veterans access the support they need but also ensure that the broader community understands the sacrifices and contributions that veterans have made to our country.

Motion OGM 10/23 – That Policy Remit #5 be approved by HRSL.

Proposed		Seconded		Result	
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Remit #	Topic	Moved By
6	Greater disclosure in reporting by 10As	Torquay RSL

Background	To consider and adopt a Policy position as submitted by Torquay RSL Sub-Branch in relation to requiring greater reporting disclosure by the 10A network on the actual monetary contribution and disbursement of funds to veteran welfare.
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#### Rationale

It is reported that the fifty-two (52) 10A gaming sub-branches provide over \$17,000,000 annually to Veteran Welfare in Victoria. The details of the origins, sources, and disbursement of the \$17,000,000 has not been defined, either collectively or by Sub-Branch and has never been published to the membership.





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Given that the Veteran Welfare Directorate is constantly short of funds, is suffering from excessive workload pressures and it is purportedly funded by appeals the obvious conclusion is that the \$17,000,000 contributed to Veteran Welfare is not being effectively dispersed to the organisation(s) that funding derived from commercial activity is supposed to resource.

The relevant legislation pertaining to not for profits conducting commercial activities stipulates that income derived from those commercial activities must be used for the purpose intended by the organisation's constitution and rules.

Members need to be satisfied that income derived by the 10A sub-branches is effectively utilised for veteran Welfare.

Motion OGM 11/24 – That Policy Remit #6 be approved by HRSL.

Proposed		Seconded		Result	
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### State Elections

For the position of State Senior Vice President there are two nominees:

Eamon Hale – Hawthorn RSL

Des Callaghan – Broadford RSL

CV provided by RSL Victoria to the members at the OGM unless requested prior.

The numerical voting preference as agreed by the members:

Eamon Hale	
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Des Callaghan	
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For the position on the State Executive there are three nominees

David Menz – Hawthorn RSL

Warwick McDonald – Bentleigh RSL

John McNeil – Dandenong-Cranbourne RSL

CV provided by RSL Victoria to the members at the OGM unless requested prior.

The numerical voting preference as agreed by the members was:

Warwick McDonald	
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David Menz	
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John McNeil	
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### General Business

HRLS Financial Report

Presented at OGM.

Motion –Financials for year 2023 be Motioned by HRSL.

Proposed		Seconded		Result	
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1. Update on Building Renovation and Grant process.

2. Veteran Ball update.

**Closure**

**Celia Hale**

**Drew Maddison**

Secretary/Meeting Secretary

President/Meeting Chairman

7<sup>th</sup> July 2024

7<sup>th</sup> July 2024