



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## RSL Queensland highlights need for younger advocates

The growing need for younger volunteer advocates trained in the areas of pensions and compensation was highlighted at the 95<sup>th</sup> RSL State Congress held at the weekend.

Over 400 RSL delegates, leaders and guests from around the state attended the annual supreme policy-making forum of the League in Queensland.

This year's focus was on younger leadership and membership within the League to ensure longevity of the RSL in Queensland in the face of an ageing membership.

RSL (Queensland Branch) State President Doug Formby AM said while there were more than a dozen fulltime pensions and welfare advocates working in RSL offices across the state, there were also over 460 qualified practitioners working out of the 254 sub branches who assisted veterans with pension and compensation issues.

“The majority of these volunteers have been helping veterans for upwards of five to 10 years and it's to be expected that many are now indicating a desire to step aside to enjoy more personal time,” Mr Formby said.

“Legislation and eligibility requirements for pensions and compensation are updated regularly by Government and this requires much training and dedication on behalf of the volunteer to ensure they provide the best service possible to our veterans and service men and women.”

Mr Formby said RSL Queensland facilitated extensive training programs for its fulltime advocates and pension and welfare officers annually and senior staff worked closely with sub branch volunteers and other ex-service organisations to ensure currency of information.

“This vital training also educates the volunteer on the needs and issues faced by younger veterans, the numbers of which are increasing and are also reflective of the growing number of females in today's modern defence force,” he said.

“Those at State Congress were urged to support their volunteers presently working in the areas of pensions and compensation but to also look to the future and identify who among the membership, particularly among our female members, could step up to fill vacancies when they arise.”

Mr Formby formally acknowledged the work of RSL members and volunteers across the state.

“It will only be through their continued commitment to the League and willingness to engage with our younger veterans and serving men and women that the future of the RSL will be secured.”

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel, the Hon Alan Griffin MP, and National RSL President Rear Admiral Ken Doolan AO RAN (Ret'd) were among those who attended the State Congress held in Townsville.

Mr Formby was re-elected as the preferred candidate for State President and confirmed the next 12 months will be his final term at the helm of RSL Queensland.

*ENDS*

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