

# 2018 | ANNUAL REPORT



**RSL**  
Queensland







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# 2018 IN REVIEW



RSL Queensland has been standing shoulder to shoulder with Queensland's Defence family for more than a century.

Originally formed by soldiers and sailors returning from World War I, we are still run by veterans for veterans. Our members are young and

old, female and male.

They have served overseas and at home, in armed conflict, peacekeeping missions and disaster recovery. What they have in common is service – to their country, to their communities and to their Defence family.

Today RSL Queensland is the largest ex-service organisation in Queensland. We provide practical support and assistance to current and former ADF members and their families in every corner of the state.



# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS.

In 2018, RSL Queensland provided a broad range of programs and services to support current and former ADF members and their families.



**Over \$1.4 million provided**  
for grassroots support by  
Sub Branches and Districts



**4,100+**  
calls handled



**144 individuals and families**  
helped into safe, permanent  
accommodation



**\$5 million committed**  
to physical and psychological  
rehabilitation through  
Mates4Mates



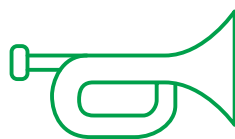
**\$750,000+**  
provided in crisis funding



**50 scholarships awarded**  
worth almost \$500,000



**Almost 35,000 members**  
across Queensland



**Thousands of  
commemorative services**  
and activities held  
across Queensland



**Free, online education  
resource launched**  
for Queensland  
schools and teachers



**4,700 DVA**  
claims submitted



**114 jobs found**  
for veterans and  
their partners



**\$1.6 million invested**  
in wellbeing programs



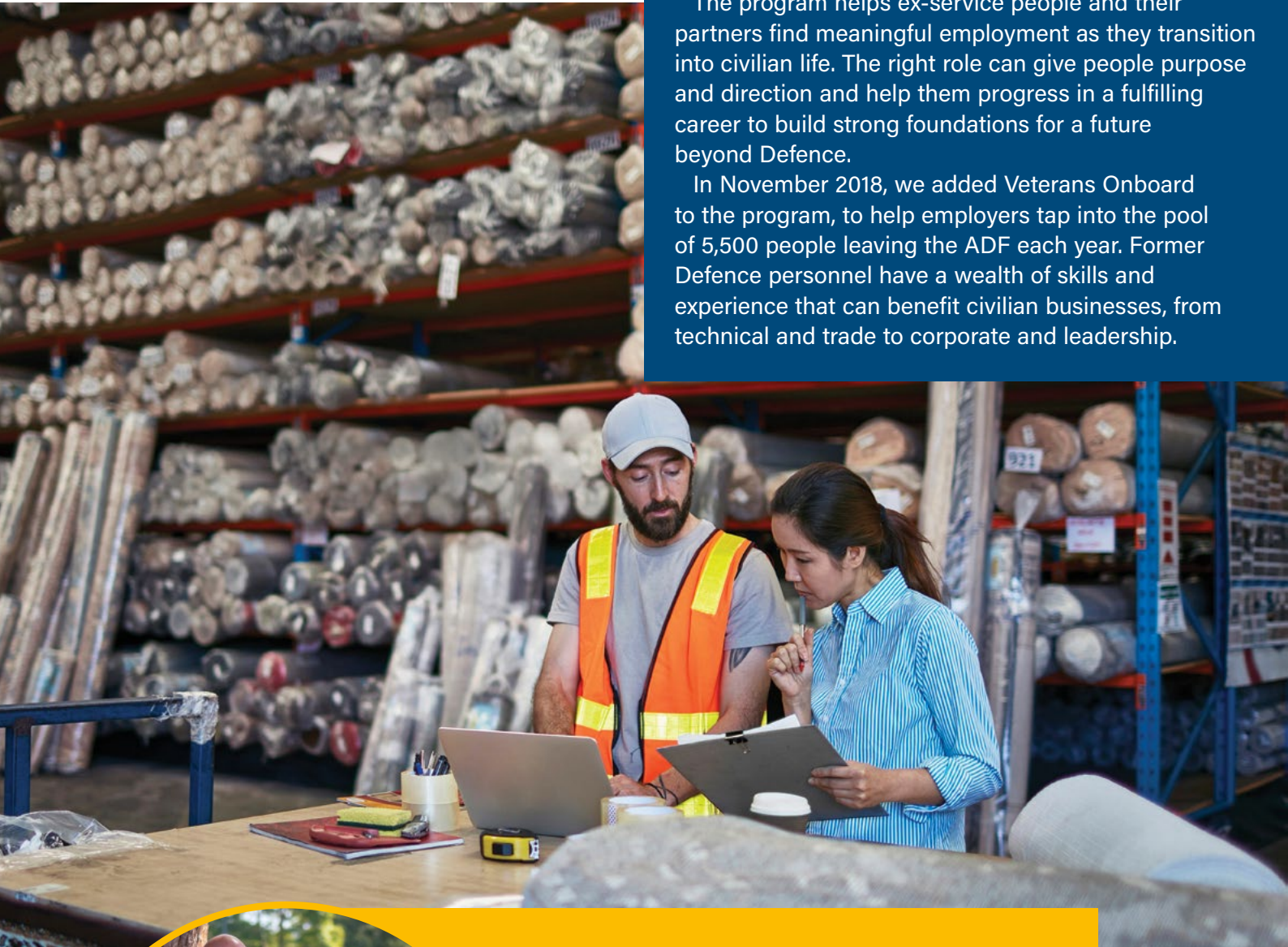
## HIGHLIGHTS.

### RSL Employment Program rolls out across the state

In 2018, RSL Queensland helped find 114 jobs for veterans and their partners. After launching a pilot in Townsville in late 2017, we rolled the RSL Employment Program out across the state in April 2018.

The program helps ex-service people and their partners find meaningful employment as they transition into civilian life. The right role can give people purpose and direction and help them progress in a fulfilling career to build strong foundations for a future beyond Defence.

In November 2018, we added Veterans Onboard to the program, to help employers tap into the pool of 5,500 people leaving the ADF each year. Former Defence personnel have a wealth of skills and experience that can benefit civilian businesses, from technical and trade to corporate and leadership.



#### VETERANS HAVE HIGH VALUE

*"The skills [veterans] have – knowing how to communicate, solving issues and working under pressure, their integrity, commitment and loyalty – are valued and much needed in construction."*

– The RSL Employment Program helped former RAAF serviceman Joe update his resume, practice interview techniques, get in touch with employers and eventually secure a role as a site engineer.

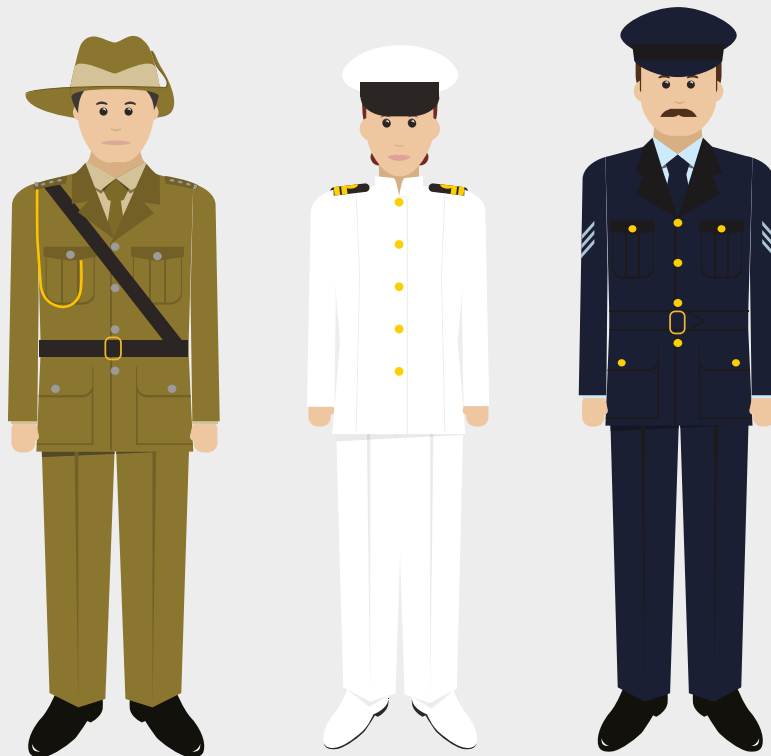




## Research directs future initiatives

In 2018, RSL Queensland concluded the Defence Family Research Project, the largest ever study of Queensland Defence personnel and their families. The research team made more than 10,000 phone calls, sent more than 50,000 emails and made public appeals for interested people to take part in the project.

The findings are helping us target and tailor our efforts to more effectively meet our Defence family's needs and work towards providing support that empowers.



### KEY AREAS OF NEED

Service has a profound effect on both the Defence member themselves and their immediate family, with 9 in 10 Defence members having at least one unmet need. Those transitioning out of Defence and families with children are two groups that are coping with added pressures and need additional support.

#### Physical and Mental Health

**42%** suffer from at least one mental health condition or need general mental health support

**63%** have at least one medical or physical condition

#### Employment



**15%** say finding employment is a significant challenge

**61%** of spouses of those currently serving are struggling to find work

#### Financial Planning and Assistance



Many are struggling with income levels and managing and planning for their financial future.

**4 IN 10** **OVER 1/3**

See finances as a key challenge

said that DVA claims are a major issue in their life

#### Relationships

**1 in 5** struggles with personal relationships







**FREEDOM SOUNDS**  
ARMISTICE CENTENARY CONCERT



## Marking the Armistice with the Sounds Of Freedom

Sounds of celebration drifted across Brisbane River on November 11, when thousands of people gathered at the Riverstage for RSL Queensland's Freedom Sounds concert. The concert echoed the incredible scenes of jubilation that broke out in cities and towns across Australia when peace was declared at the end of WWI.

It was also a chance for us to reach a wider, younger audience and highlight some of the many services we offer Queensland's Defence family. The Australian Army Band kicked off the afternoon of homegrown music, followed by Ash Grunwald, Kate Ceberano and Pete Murray.

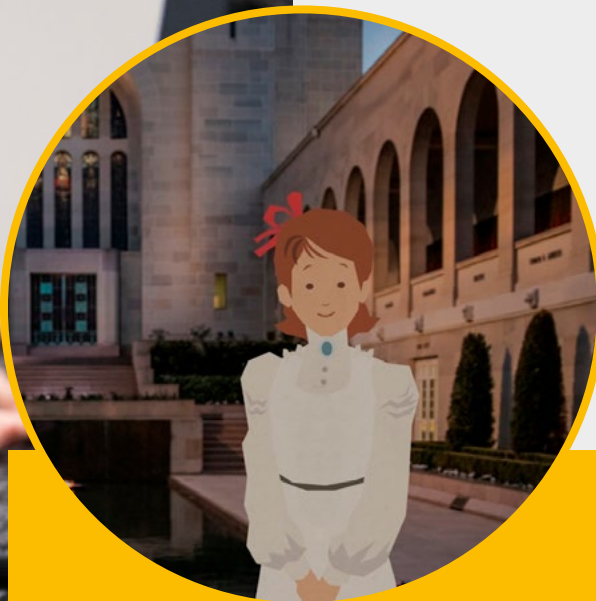


### AUSSIE ARTISTS REMEMBER

*"I am obviously very antiwar, so the ending of the First World War is a very important thing. I've done a lot of playing in Belgium and I've seen Flanders Fields, where a lot of the Australian soldiers died on that front line. I really tip my hat to those people. I think it's really amazing and we should remember and appreciate their sacrifice. This is a party and a celebration of peace."*

– Ash Grunwald was honoured to be one of the Australian musicians performing at Freedom Sounds.





## POPPIES AND THE ARMISTICE

*“The poppy was one of the first plants to grow in the devastated battlefields of France and Belgium. Even today, wild poppies continue to grow in these areas. The red of the poppy symbolised the blood and sacrifice of the many who died in the line of service.*

*“Only two bodies returned to Australia from World War I. The unknown soldier, now buried at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, and Major General Sir William Throsby Bridges, KCB, CMG, the commander of the Australian Imperial Forces, buried at the Royal Australian Military College at Duntroon. No other serviceman or woman who died during WWI returned. The red poppy represents those who never came home.”*

– One of the animations on the RSL Education website teaches students about when the poppy gained popularity and significance in Australian culture and Defence history.

## RSL Education portal launched

In July, we launched RSL Education, a free online education resource for Queensland teachers and students from Prep to Year 12. It includes a commemoration section, which covers topics such as why we commemorate ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day, and how Australia's involvement in past conflicts helped shape our society and culture.

In 2018, the RSL Education website attracted over 20,000 visitors and several awards. The animation ‘What will you do?’

took out a Silver for Digital Craft Animation / Motion Graphics, Bronze for Sound Design (TV, Cinema, Online) and Bronze for Art Direction in the Brisbane Advertising and Design Club Awards.

Because the education portal is delivered online, resources are accessible to all Queensland students, regardless of where they live. The resources also highlight opportunities where teachers and students might benefit from talking to their local Sub Branch. Check it out at [rsleducation.com.au](http://rsleducation.com.au).



## ANZAC and Poppy Appeals go digital

We strive to stay up-to-date with modern technology and were excited to go completely cashless for the first time for our 2018 ANZAC and Poppy Appeals in the Brisbane CBD. The 'tap and go' terminals were a huge success, with positive feedback received by the public and an increase of almost 40 per cent in revenue raised on both appeals.

We have organised these events since 2011 and all money raised in the Brisbane appeals is distributed to RSL District offices to fund welfare programs.

we've gone  
**CA\$HLESS!**





## EXPERT GUIDANCE EACH STEP OF THE WAY

*“As veteran services officers, our knowledge and expertise mean we can take you through each step of the process, and actually do a lot of the paperwork for those seeking assistance.”*

– Darrell Edwards, veteran services officer, Townsville (not pictured).

## Advocacy during a confusing time

Navigating the DVA claims process can be confusing, time consuming and stressful. For years, our dedicated Veteran Services Officers have been guiding veterans through the process and ensuring they get the most beneficial outcome. In 2018, our VSO team submitted 4,700 DVA claims.

## Helping hand with housing

Sometimes our Defence family needs a bit of a helping hand with housing and RSL Queensland offers several options, either on a temporary or a long-term basis.

- **Temporary accommodation** in Toowong and the Gold Coast is available for those living in regional areas who need to travel to South East Queensland for medical treatment. Located close to hospitals, these facilities have private rooms and communal kitchen and dining areas.
- **Long-term accommodation** is available for those who need quality, affordable housing. We have more than 80 self-contained one- and two-bedroom units across Queensland in Ayr, Cairns, Mareeba, Yeppoon, Emu Park, Mt Perry and Gayndah and Proserpine.







## Community and volunteering support

We could not adequately support the Defence community without the tireless work of our more than 230 Sub Branches around Queensland. The incredible volunteers who make up these organisations donate hundreds of hours every year to providing integral support in their local communities and fulfilling the RSL objectives.

Their support comes in many forms – from advocacy and lawn mowing to fundraising and supporting local schools. Sub Branches also dedicate their time to organising ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services to honour the sacrifice of our Defence personnel.

In 2018, we provided over \$1.4 million to Sub Branches and Districts to help them offer grassroots support in their communities.



*“When you leave the service, it’s a real wrench. Being part of the RSL gives me back some of the camaraderie. Just feeling part of a group, knowing that someone’s got your back...  
“It’s amazing how it hits you, especially at the Dawn Service. It’s showing respect for the people who didn’t come home and also for the people who did come home and are still suffering.”*

– For the past eight years, Redcliffe RSL Sub Branch member Cheryl Barrett, pictured left, has been coordinating the Redcliffe RSL Dawn Service, which is attended by up to 50,000 people. She and her team of volunteers – including Karen Hemers, pictured right – begin planning in October to ensure the service lives up to its reputation.



## An action plan for wellbeing

Sometimes veterans know they need help, but don't know what they need or even how to begin. Our Wellbeing Officers can be a guiding light. They meet with veterans to talk about the challenges they're facing, and then work with them to develop an action plan that they can work through at their own pace.

In doing so, they may provide referrals to a range of services – from emergency accommodation to financial counselling to employment support – or help them connect with others who know what they're going through. And they will be at the veteran's side all the way, helping them stay on track.



### LIFE CHANGING SUPPORT

*"I've gone from being a broken person with nothing, to feeling challenged and moving forward again. I have direction and purpose. I'm not the person anymore who rang up and was absolutely at the bottom of the barrel."*

– Army veteran Dylan Rushby says the support of RSL Queensland's Wellbeing Program was life-changing.



## No veteran should be homeless

It's a basic human need to have a roof over our heads. Sadly, some veterans are lacking just that. We partner with The Salvation Army and Wounded Warriors to find immediate emergency accommodation.

Once the veteran is safe, we help them get their life back on track with financial assistance to secure rental accommodation, help buy clothes and other essentials and pay immediate medical expenses. In 2018 we helped get 144 individuals and families into safe, permanent accommodation.



### GETTING DEFENCE FAMILIES BACK ON THEIR FEET

*"From the time that I approached those guys [the RSL] they have been amazing for both my daughter and I. They were able to get us into emergency accommodation the day that I approached them."*

– Army veteran Kimberley and her seven-year-old daughter were living in their car when she walked into Tweed Heads & Coolangatta RSL Sub Branch looking for assistance. The Sub Branch immediately sprang into action and put her in touch with RSL Queensland's wellbeing and homelessness programs.





### A SHOWER OF PRAISE HELPS HEAL

*"At 1:00am on 21 June 2000, my section post at Aidabasala was attacked heavily by militia. I didn't expect to survive that night. Events in Timor troubled me for 19 years until I returned there with my wife Belinda as part of the Timor Awakening program.*

*"We walked into a shower of praise and welcome from the locals. I finally felt proud. I realised I actually had helped. My feelings of betrayal and mistrust suddenly disappeared. After years of darkness, now I am coming into the light. Thanks to Veterans Care Association, RSL Queensland and Bolton Clarke for making this happen for us."*

– Timor Awakening participant Greg Murty with Aidabasala villagers and Veterans Care Association President Padre Gary Stone.

## Awakening a better sense of self in Timor

Touring a previously war-torn country and seeing the progress of its people can bring inner peace for veterans. That is the premise behind Timor Awakening, a renewal and rehabilitation program supported by RSL Queensland. In 2018 we helped deliver three in-country experiences, with over 60 veterans participating across the programs.

It is an opportunity for veterans to be embraced by whole communities, share stories with Timorese veterans, and see first-hand the positive impact of Australia's involvement in the young country's freedom in an 11-day tour.



## Trojan's Trek goes bush

Being 'out bush' with like-minded people can do wonders for your mental health. Participating in Trojan's Trek can provide a 'circuit breaker' for those struggling to cope with life beyond Defence.

In 2018, RSL Queensland helped the Trojan's Trek team deliver two treks for a total of 39 male and female participants. For six days, while camping in peaceful bushland, they learnt tools and techniques to adjust their thinking and behaviour, relate to others without anger or aggression, and build self esteem.

The program is delivered by veterans for veterans, so participants learn from those who have walked the same path before them.



### COPING WITH LIFE BEYOND DEFENCE

*"It's one of the best things I've ever done, and I'm going to be forever grateful that I have amazing friends who care enough to help me on my journey and get me to places like Trojan's Trek."*

– Ashlea Henley, former participant and now mentor for Trojan's Trek, described the program as a "trek of the mind".





## Scholarships open doors

Higher education and training opens the door to opportunities, and can improve a person's employability, sense of purpose and financial security. The RSL Scholarship program aims to empower ex-Defence personnel, partners and their children by supporting them through tertiary study or vocational training.

In 2018 we awarded 50 scholarships worth almost \$500,000.

## Human Performance Framework

A high level of physical and mental resilience is needed for Defence personnel to reach their full potential both during and after service.

Recognising this, 3rd Brigade at Lavarack Barracks in Townsville introduced the Human Performance Framework. RSL Queensland is the major supporting partner of this groundbreaking initiative.

The Framework is designed to enhance the resilience of its soldiers and their families through two aligned centres:

- **Human Performance Centre**, which provides both prehabilitation and rehabilitation programs to maintain or return soldiers to peak physical and mental performance.
- **GECKOS Family Centre**, which provides a place for Defence members, partners and families to build friendships, socialise and access information. Staff at the centre are familiar with the challenges of the Defence lifestyle and recognise that soldiers' resilience is dependent on strong family support.

### ADF PARTNERS CONTRIBUTE TO FAMILY STABILITY

*"The RSL Queensland scholarship program has supported me in pursuing a family friendly career that fits perfectly with the unique demands of service life."*

– Over a six-year period, Georgia Gard gave birth to two children and moved her family five times to follow her husband's postings with the ADF. She thought her career would never recover, but a scholarship of up to \$4,000 a year for up to three years is enabling her to study a Certificate III in Education and will greatly enhance her employment opportunities.





## Recoup at Digger's Rest

When you need some space, fresh air to breathe or just time away from it all to clear your head, Digger's Rest provides a welcoming retreat in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

Set on 22 acres, Digger's Rest gives veterans the choice of how much they want to engage with others. They can roll out a swag under the stars or stay in a cabin among the rolling hills.

Veterans can also choose how they spend their time while at the retreat – whether it's catching up with others around the campfire, working on a gardening project or simply drinking in the surrounds.

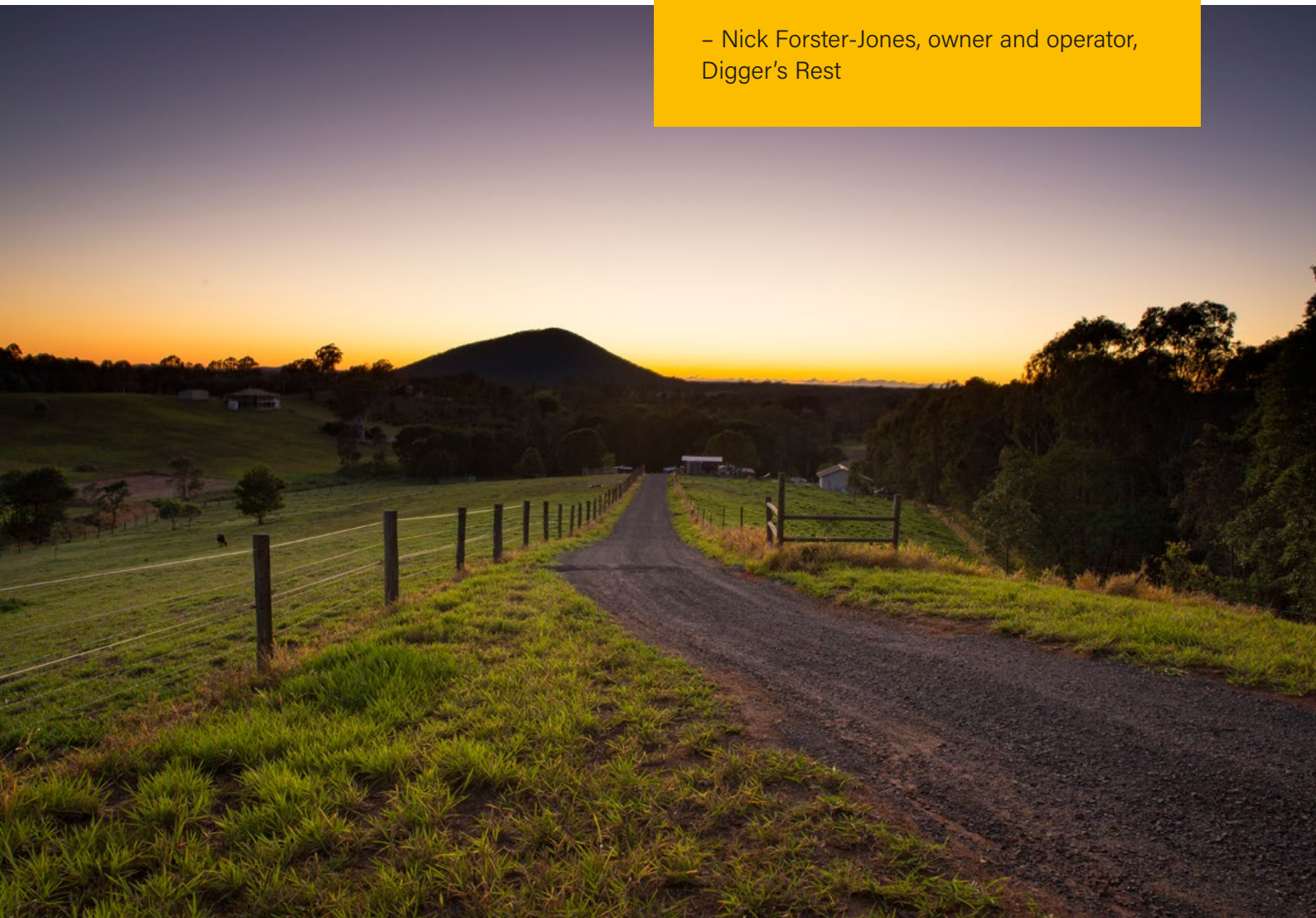
In 2018, our support enabled Digger's Rest to host current and former ADF personnel and families for a total of 297 nights.



### TIME OUT TO CLEAR YOUR HEAD

*"Out here, it clears their head, puts them in a different sphere and shows them there are things they can do, because they have served."*

– Nick Forster-Jones, owner and operator, Digger's Rest







## RSL RAEMUS Rover goes off-road to help veterans

In 2018, we helped the RSL RAEMUS Rover team deliver 27 workshop days, six race events and the opening of the RAEMUS Rover Park facility at Willowbank. The unique program allows veterans to gain a greater understanding of mechanics while working on the vehicles, experience the adrenaline rush of a pit crew at events, manage the logistics of competing, or aspire to vehicle navigator.

Being part of the off-road racing team is an exciting way for them to push their limits. It offers mateship and camaraderie in a team that knows all too well what they're going through.



### RACING REIGNITES THE SPARK

*"Being in the team has brought a massive passion and spark back to my life. It's great and I absolutely love it."*

– Cameron Sherwood, veteran and RSL RAEMUS Rover team member.



# Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation

## TRANSITION FROM SERVICE TO CIVILIAN LIFE RESEARCH

In partnership with RSL Queensland, Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation (GMRF) is studying the psychological impact of transitioning from military service to civilian life. This research will result in a unique tool which is hoped to contribute substantially to how military personnel transition out of the ADF.

Phase 1 of the study, launched in 2016, was the largest qualitative research study done on transition among Australian veterans. In 2018, the team progressed phase 2, a quantitative survey assessing the reintegration tool across current and ex-serving personnel.

Over 650 ex-service personnel completed GMRF's online Reintegration Study.



*"Our research goes beyond the statistics and attempts to understand more deeply why members are at such high risk of developing a psychological condition when they discharge."*

- Dr Madeline Romaniuk says that, thanks to its partnership with RSL Queensland, GMRF has begun several research projects to enhance the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families.



*"I got involved with the GMRF study to help bring awareness and voice to the silent and unseen struggles of the ex-serving member. I hope this study leads to viable options and solutions to move forward. I want my fellow ex-serving brothers and sisters to genuinely be able to say, 'My best years aren't behind me, they're in front of me!'"*

- Tim Thomas, ex Special Forces Commando.





## GLOBAL REINTEGRATION REVIEW STUDY

GMRF researchers are contributing to global understanding of the reintegration process, publishing an analysis of all studies published worldwide that examine the psychological process of discharging from the military. The review revealed transition includes the experience of extensive losses in three key areas – loss of community and culture, loss of purpose and loss of identity.

GMRF researchers recommended that any future initiatives aimed at improving transition should include consideration of these crucial areas.

## GP EDUCATION PROGRAM

Over 850 health professionals have now completed the GP Education Program. Operated in partnership with RSL Queensland, it helps GPs and other allied health professionals manage the symptoms and comorbidities of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

This program, delivered online and in-person, is based on the findings of GMRF's world-first study into the whole body impact of PTSD on Vietnam veterans.



# State President's Report



**TONY FERRIS**

*State President, RSL Queensland*

I believe I was elected as RSL Queensland State President in June 2018 because members were looking for change within the organisation. And when I took on the role, I made my strong stance on modernisation very clear.

We were not going to continue doing things the same way we had always done them. This was important not only to fulfil our obligations to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), but to stay relevant to the Defence community.

Consequently, you may have noticed a few changes in the second half of 2018, and you will continue to do so as we forge a new direction for our more than century old organisation. Our two key challenges were to change the public's perception of RSL Queensland and continue to improve on our core objective of caring for veterans and their families.

We have worked hard on these goals throughout 2018. I'm very proud of the fact that during the past year we found 114 jobs for veterans and their partners, launched a free online education resource and awarded 50 scholarships worth almost \$500,000 – to name just a few of our many achievements. You can find the full overview on page 5 of this report.

## **FREEDOM SOUNDS CONCERT**

Given 2018 was the Centenary of the Armistice,



we wanted to host a large-scale event that properly commemorated this historic occasion. Our Freedom Sounds concert at Riverstage in Brisbane echoed the celebrations that spontaneously occurred when the Australian public heard the news of the ceasefire 100 years ago.

Freedom Sounds enabled us to give back to our Defence family, honour the sacrifice of the fallen and provide a glimpse of what we are all about to an audience that might not be familiar with us. I felt privileged to be heading up an organisation capable of hosting such a successful event enjoyed by so many.

## **REVISING OUR CONSTITUTION**

The adoption of a new Constitution for RSL Queensland is essential – both for us to modernise as an organisation and to meet modern governance requirements.

We spent a great deal of time revising this document in 2018. We knew it was important to properly consult with our members, so we sought your feedback and I led a Constitution Working Party to work through the changes.

## **MEETING OUR MEMBERS**

Since taking on the role of President, I have made it a priority to get out into the community – meeting members and attending as many Sub Branch events as possible. The first six months

**“We were not going to continue doing things the same way we had always done them. This was important not only to fulfil our obligations to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), but to stay relevant to the Defence community.”**

were a whirlwind of activity and an absolute pleasure.

Whether speaking at commemorative events, attending 100th birthday celebrations or presenting Life Memberships, I was always overwhelmed by the warm welcome I received. I was also astounded by the passion and incredible work ethic demonstrated by our many dedicated volunteers.

While travelling, I had the opportunity to talk with members about issues affecting the League. This sort of one-on-one discussion is so valuable for understanding what is important to you, and I look forward to many more of these discussions during my tenure as State President.

## **OPEN AND TRANSPARENT**

When I took on the job, I also made a commitment to keep members informed about what is happening in their RSL. I have done this in several ways to reach our different audiences – via my From the President blog, my column in Queensland RSL News and in Facebook videos where I

answer questions posed by members.

You can rest assured that I will continue to keep you up-to-date and answer any questions you may have about activities and events in which I am involved.

## **MEMBERS ARE INTEGRAL TO OUR CHANGE**

I firmly believe that our organisation needs to evolve to remain relevant. But change is not created by any single person in the League; every member must be open to change and prepared to step forward into the future, a future in which our organisation is not only an icon but also a vital, integral part of local communities and the Defence family across Australia.

The RSL is only as strong as its members and I urge all current and former Defence members to get involved at this exciting time in our long history. Please, stand shoulder to shoulder with us as we support both our older veteran community and the younger generation of veterans who represent our future.



# Chief Executive Officer's Report



**LUKE TRAINI**

*Chief Executive Officer, RSL Queensland*

I'm in a reflective frame of mind as I write my final Chief Executive Officer's report.

The organisation is certainly vastly different now than when I first started. The 2015 Annual General Meeting was only my second day in the role of CEO, and I remember taking in the abundance of information from State Branch and delegates around the State.

In my initial address, I said it felt like I was "drinking from the fire hydrant!" The pace of change certainly didn't back off as we set out on an optimistic three-year transformation program to ensure the operations of State Branch reflected the expectations of a modern, high performing organisation – something all other ex-service organisations (ESOs) could aspire to and something to cement our position as the leading ESO in Australia.

I reflect on my grandfather's service in WWII and his involvement with the RSL, and I'm proud to have also contributed to the cause – first by leading the lottery business and then as CEO – to help raise almost one billion dollars for veterans (approximately \$988m) throughout my time here at RSL Queensland.

As CEO, I've also been proud to lead the organisation as we increased our total equity by around \$80m (a 64 per cent increase) and grew our revenue by almost \$50m per annum (a 60 per cent increase). This basis will ensure that RSL Queensland

can grow and diversify services for both members and the Defence community in the decades to come.

As grassroots members, I'd really encourage you to stop and recognise the RSL Art Union as the leading charitable lottery in the world and appreciate the value it offers to RSL Queensland in enabling services to veterans into the future. As a modern charity, juggling fundraising and developing and expanding service delivery at the same time requires a delicate balance.

When I reflect on 2018, I'm extremely proud of State Branch's achievements. Our activities were diverse and included \$5m committed to physical and psychological rehabilitation, \$750,000 delivered through crisis funding, 50 scholarships awarded worth almost \$500,000 and a total of \$1.6m invested in wellbeing programs.

We've seen a huge increase in requests for our advocacy services. Demand has increased by more than 35 per cent year-on-year, resulting in over 4,700 claims submitted in 2018 alone. To complement the traditional advocacy services we provide, I was immensely proud of several new services that came to life in 2018.

Top of mind for me is the RSL Employment program, which found 114 jobs for veterans and their partners – a new way in which RSL Queensland positively impacts the lives of veterans and their families in a new

**“I reflect on my grandfather's service in WWII and his involvement with the RSL, and I'm proud to have also contributed to the cause – first by leading the lottery business and then as CEO.”**

era of support.

Although those are impressive State Branch numbers, they must be recognised alongside the massive efforts of our members and volunteers around the State who gave up countless hours to help veterans and organise commemorative services and other activities. Your dedication ensures RSL is woven deeply into the fabric of Australian culture.

From a governance perspective, the organisation has really moved on from the 'we've always done it this way' approach and has substantially matured and modernised. The 2017–18 period was certainly intense and stressful for all involved, and a substantial body of work was required to navigate the organisation successfully through these modernising activities.

However, together with the Board, we were able to build solid foundations to move forward with our Governance Plan, which was referred to by ACNC representatives as one of the “the best we've seen” among all Australian charities.

I'd like to finish up by thanking you, the members.

Your energy, passion and commitment are nothing short of amazing and you have set the bar extremely high for me in terms of what I take with me into my next career move.

Thank you for your support, conversation and hospitality throughout my time here at RSL. I'll particularly miss my visits to our amazing Sub Branches, which included many great cups of coffee and scones!

Of course, none of our achievements are possible without a passionate, talented and capable management team and I've been blessed with some of the best divisional leaders a CEO could ask for. RSL Queensland is not only the leading ESO, it is now the most advanced, capable and financially sound veteran organisation in Australia.

I hope you see and appreciate the changes RSL Queensland has undergone over the past four years. I encourage you to approach the individual members of the management team and Board at State Congress, shake their hands and recognise the fantastic work they do every day on your behalf.



# State Deputy President's Report



**JOHN STRACHAN OAM**  
*State Deputy President  
RSL Queensland*

By any account, 2018 was a year of change. We had a new State President, a new Constitution in the making and many changes of direction for the organisation.

Naturally, these changes included the Directions Notice issued by the ACNC and the increased focus on governance that resulted.

**“My passion, however, is the League and how we can help veterans. This does not always need to be high-profile programs but can also be day-to-day assistance to veterans both inside and outside Sub Branches.”**

In order to comply with the Notice, all Directors were required to undertake a course with the Governance Institute of Australia. Others also completed courses through the Australian Institute of Company Directors. All members of the Board have now successfully fulfilled the required governance training.

My passion, however, is the League and how we can help veterans. This does not always need to be high-profile programs but can also be day-to-day assistance to veterans both inside and outside Sub Branches. You could say this is the real work of the League, or what it was formed to do!

We also have a prominent role to play in commemorations – an area many other ex-service organisations do not have the infrastructure to do, or the funds to execute. However, we need to resist any attempts by local or state government to impose extra costs on Sub Branches for these important days.

RSL Queensland is an organisation for all veterans, irrespective of age, and while this can sometimes be challenging, we must embrace it.

While we must adhere to corporate governance requirements, we must never forget our role and the Objects of the League.





# Vice President's Report



**EWAN CAMERON**  
*Vice President  
RSL Queensland*

## 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- Continued development of the State Council of Auxiliaries.
- Participation on the Defence Reserves Support Committee.
- Governance training with the RSL Queensland Board.
- Strategic planning with the RSL Queensland Board.
- Reinvigoration of the Board's relationship with Mates4Mates.

**“This is a positive indication that the community values these organisations and the ideals they support. I congratulate those who donate their time and resources to support these groups.”**

## ACHIEVEMENTS

RSL Queensland encourages the support of Army, Navy and Air Force Cadet schemes and I know many Sub Branches do this – actively participating with, supporting and advocating for their local units. I know the backing we provide is greatly appreciated by the cadet organisations.

The number of Army Cadet units increased again in 2018, particularly in North Queensland. This is a positive indication that the community values these organisations and the ideals they support. I congratulate those who donate their time and resources to support these groups.

During 2018, I visited many Sub Branch and District meetings, commemoration services and functions. As I also noted in my 2017 report, I saw many young servicemen and women volunteering to join RSL Sub Branches and participate in these activities.

Some are also accepting committee appointments in their Sub Branches. I am confident this trend will continue; however, we should be understanding that their careers and family will always compete for their time.

As always, it is a pleasure serving members as Vice President and I look forward to watching the organisation continue to grow and evolve.





# Audit & Risk Committee Report



**BARRY VAINS OAM**

*Audit & Risk Committee  
RSL Queensland*

## 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

Oversight of:

- Reporting to the ACNC regarding the Directions Notice issued in March 2018 and the development of the RSL Good Governance Guide.
- Development of a new State Constitution with a skills-based board structure, to be presented to members at the 2019 AGM.
- Delivery of LotOS, the new Lotteries operating platform.
- Management's review of RSL Queensland's 2019 insurance policies.
- Review of the 2018 external audit plan and 2017 draft audited financial accounts.

## COMMITTEE ACHIEVEMENTS

The committee plays a key role in assisting the RSL Queensland Board by having oversight of:

1. Financial reporting
2. Risk management systems
3. External audits.

During 2018, the committee comprised non-executive Board Directors Barry Vains OAM (Chair), Bill Whitburn OAM and Pat Fairon, and external members Jamie Whitehead, Michael Quinn and Barry Medlin.

The group's role is now to assess higher-level risks via a Quarterly Risk Report produced by management.

The Board reviewed the committee's Terms of Reference and decided on a restructure in 2019, with two board members and two external members appointed on a skills basis.

Looking ahead, 2019 should be less challenging for RSL Queensland, with the ACNC investigation and Directions Notice due to be finalised. However, we need to maintain momentum to ensure we address issues identified in the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan and implement solutions.

In a time of strategic change, the committee will continue to assist the Board with a focus on the audit and risk profile of RSL Queensland, to ensure it is best positioned to serve existing and future generations of veterans.







# RSL Queensland Tribunal Report



**PAUL PETERSON**

*Chair*

*RSL Queensland Tribunal*

## **2018 HIGHLIGHTS**

- 76 matters formally considered.
- Tribunal member Rod McLeod appointed to project team to draft the new Constitution.
- Registrar Graham Lucas retired after eight years of exemplary performance in the role.
- Bill Kernoczy appointed as the new Registrar.

**“In 2018, 11 Sub Branch members submitted 41 complaints – 26 fewer than in 2017. Of those, only five complaints proceeded to a formal hearing. ”**

## **COMMITTEE ACHIEVEMENTS**

In 2018, 11 Sub Branch members submitted 41 complaints – 26 fewer than in 2017.

Of those, only five complaints proceeded to a formal hearing. Of the remainder, the majority were not accepted for various reasons, including penalties already having been determined by the Sub Branch (16) and complaints not submitted in the format required by By-Law 7 of the RSL Queensland Constitution (11).

Of those accepted, three complaints were proven and two were not proven. Of the three that were proven, the penalties were expulsion from the League on two complaints and a reprimand on the other.

The Tribunal received seven appeals from Sub Branch members. Of these, six appeals were against disciplinary actions taken by the member's Sub Branch. Before these appeals could be heard, the original discipline was withdrawn by the Sub Branches, principally because such action did not comply with By-Law 7 of the Constitution.

One appeal (on three grounds) was against decisions of a disciplinary nature by RSL Queensland. All grounds of appeal were upheld.

RSL National received one appeal from a Sub Branch member who had been disciplined by the RSL Queensland Tribunal, with that appeal scheduled for a hearing in early in 2019.







# Lotteries Committee Report

RSL Art Union had a landmark year in 2018, raffling off Australia's first \$5 million prize home. It couldn't have come at a better time for the winner, who was going through a bit of a rough patch and living with his wife, two girls and extended family all in one property. Now they have an entire luxury apartment complex in Palm Beach to choose from!

We also addressed a key area of risk by internalising our operations. The two-year Lotteries Transformation Project successfully went live on 26 August, removing issues associated with Art Union's reliance on an external organisation for a large part of the management of our lotteries.

**“RSL Art Union had a landmark year in 2018, raffling off Australia's first \$5 million prize home. It couldn't have come at a better time for the winner, who was going through a bit of a rough patch and living with his wife, two girls and extended family all in one property.”**

The Transformation Project included improvements to three main areas of technology:

- A new operating system through which all ticketing and invoicing is supported
- A new website supported by a stronger analytics capability
- A new data warehouse that enables better reporting and analysis and more effective campaigns.

Just as importantly, however, the project also involved a complete review of Lotteries' capability and processes. This included collaborative processes with RSL Queensland's Finance and Technology and Innovation teams.

This change resulted in improvements to Lotteries' current operations, while also providing a platform for innovation that will enable the Art Union to realise its ambitious plans for growth.



**VIC READING**

*Chairman*

*Fundraising & Lotteries Committee*





# Constitution & Awards Committee Report

## 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- Recognising the achievements of RSL Queensland members.
- Assisting members and Sub Branches with Sub Branch and District issues.

“This is a particularly pleasing part of our role as it allows us to see firsthand the variety and scope of work our members and their families do, which makes RSL Queensland such a great organisation.”

## COMMITTEE ACHIEVEMENTS

The Constitution and Awards Committee is made up of six members with a variety of knowledge and experience, particularly about Constitutional matters. Members review all applications for the formation of Chapters, together with amendments or additions to the Constitution and its By-Laws, before providing recommendations to the Board.

The Committee also verifies applications for a range of awards and makes suggestions to the Board. This is a particularly pleasing part of our role as it allows us to see firsthand the variety and scope of work our members and their families do, which makes RSL Queensland such a great organisation.

This year, long-time member Vic Reading resigned from the Committee. I would like to congratulate Vic and thank him for all his contributions. We are now seeking expressions of interest from members to join the Committee to cover this vacancy and a further anticipated vacancy in December 2019.

Thanks to all our Committee members for their participation and assistance.



**DONALD DAVEY**

*Chair*

*Constitution & Awards Committee*



AUSTRALIA



RSL QUEENSLAND MERCH



# Mates4Mates Report



**RICK RALPH**  
*Chairman  
Mates4Mates*

2018 was a landmark year for Mates4Mates as we continued to deliver our vision of supporting all members of the military family.

In partnership with RSL Queensland and our community, we worked hard to deliver progressive support and rehabilitation services to current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force members who have physical and psychological injuries, and their families.

In 2018, our staff provided 26,242 face-to-face contacts nationally. Of note, we provided:

- 4,175 psychology appointments
- 8,062 social connections through regular activities
- 13,892 physical rehabilitation and wellbeing connections.

As the need for support continues to grow, we're committed to meeting the demand.

We know that for those experiencing injury and trauma as a result of service, Mates4Mates is a place of understanding, acceptance and community. Our staff are knowledgeable and adaptable, providing tailored services to all ages, ranks and areas of service.

We remain committed to best practice care, ensuring a sustainable and effective delivery model of service that improves short and long-term health outcomes for Mates and their families.

Our investment in staff over recent years has provided a solid foundation for the future, accelerating the pace of progress of our work across Australia.

This includes a strengthened partnership with the Soldier Recovery Centre in Brisbane, providing paid exercise physiologist services to current serving personnel, allowing us to develop more effective connections and outreach.

In addition, we supported 26 Mates in the lead up to competing in the Invictus Games in Sydney, many of whom took part in our adaptive sports program at our Townsville Family Recovery Centre.

These achievements, among many others, have ultimately been made possible by the support of RSL Queensland and its ongoing funding.

Looking ahead, we are committed to continuing to find ways to consolidate and align with RSL



Queensland and diversify and expand our sources of revenue to ensure continued growth.

While we have witnessed significant progress in the lives of Mates and family members who have accessed support, we know there is still a lot of work to be done in the community.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to supporting the Defence family, and there never will be, which is why we provide

a holistic approach to recovery at our Family Recovery Centres in Brisbane, Townsville and Hobart, and outreach programs across Australia.

Thank you to RSL Queensland and the RSL Sub Branches for your continued support in seeing veterans rehabilitated and supported. We look forward to partnering with you again in 2019 and beyond.



# State Council of Auxiliaries Annual Report



**LYNNETTE GAMBRILL OAM**  
*President*  
*State Council of Auxiliaries*

## 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- **Communication with Auxiliaries**  
We publish three newsletters a year to keep members informed about all Queensland Auxiliaries, particularly the State Council of Auxiliaries.
- **Visiting Sub Branches and Auxiliaries**  
We took several trips to Districts around the state to meet with Sub Branches and Auxiliaries to raise awareness of the RSL Queensland By-Laws related to Auxiliaries.

“We took several trips to Districts around the state to meet with Sub Branches and Auxiliaries to raise awareness of the RSL Queensland By-Laws related to Auxiliaries.”

- **Annual General Meeting**  
Our 2018 AGM was well attended by 65 delegates and observers. This was an increase on the previous year, and we are hopeful this trend will continue in 2019.
- **Camaraderie at Council events**  
Council meetings and functions are a great opportunity for members to network, socialise and meet Auxiliary members from around the state.
- **Invictus Games Laundry Bag Project**  
In conjunction with Auxiliaries in New South Wales and Victoria, we sewed 1,200 laundry bags for competitors and families attending the 2018 Invictus Games in Sydney. In Queensland, we put out a request for 100 bags and were pleased to receive back 250. Quilts were also sewn for each country that competed at the event, with three of these made in Queensland. The worthwhile project demonstrated what Auxiliaries can achieve when they work together.







# **RSL Queensland** **OBJECTS**

1. Provide for the sick, helpless, wounded, aged, vulnerable, destitute and needy among those who are serving or who have served in the Australian Defence Forces and their dependants.
2. Perpetuate the close and kindly ties of friendship created by a mutual service in the Australian Defence Force or in the forces of nations traditionally allied with Australia and the recollections associated with that experience.
3. Maintain a proper standard of dignity and honour among all past and present members of the Defence Forces of the nation and to set an example of public spirit and noble hearted endeavour.
4. Preserve the memory and the records of those who suffered and died for Australia, erect monuments to their valour, provide them with suitable burial places, and establish and preserve, in their honour, the annual commemoration days known as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and other commemorative days.
5. Encourage loyalty to Australia and secure patriotic service in the interests of Australia.
6. Protect the good name and preserve the interests and standing of members of the Australian Defence Force.
7. Encourage Members, as citizens, to serve Australia with that spirit of self-sacrifice and loyalty with which they served as members of the Australian Defence Forces, and
8. Provide welfare to the sick, helpless, wounded, vulnerable, aged, destitute and needy.



**RSL**  
Queensland





**RSL**  
Queensland