



Modern Slavery Statement 2022

Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch)



RSL
Queensland

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Modern Slavery Statement

Date: 4 May 2023

1 Introduction

The Returned & Services League of Australia Limited (ABN 63 008 488 097) is a national network, comprising State Branches, District Branches and Sub Branches in each state and territory. Each State Branch, District Branch and Sub Branch is a separate legal entity, and they all operate slightly differently while working to fulfil the principal purpose of promoting the interests and welfare of serving and ex-serving members of the Australian Defence Force and their families.

This is the fourth Modern Slavery statement for the Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) (ABN 79 902 601 713) (**RSL Queensland**), an independent branch of Returned & Services League of Australia Limited.

RSL Queensland is a body corporate established by Letters Patent issued pursuant to the *Religious, Educational and Charitable Institutions Act 1861 (Qld)*. We are domiciled in Fortitude Valley, Queensland and employ approximately 436 people.

RSL Queensland is comprised of approximately 32,000 members across ten districts and 230 Sub Branches. RSL Queensland membership is open to any serving or ex-service Australian Defence Force member that has conducted at least 1 day of continuous full-time service or who meets the eligibility criteria set out in the RSL Queensland By-Laws.

RSL Queensland is also the sole member of Mates4Mates Ltd ACN 54 160 646 999.

2 Our Business and Objects

RSL Queensland was established in 1916 and is the largest ex-service organisation in Queensland, with 230 Sub Branches across 10 Districts. We offer advice, support and camaraderie to all current and former Australian Defence Force members and their families through the funds primarily generated by the prize home lottery, RSL Art Union.

RSL Queensland is consistently guided by the pursuit of our Objects:

- Providing 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.
- Perpetuating 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.
- Maintaining 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.

- Preserving 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.
- Encouraging loyalty to Australia and secure patriotic service in the interests of Australia.
- Protecting the good name and preserve the interests and standing of members of the Australian Defence Force.
- Encouraging 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.
- Providing welfare to the sick, helpless, wounded, vulnerable, aged, destitute, and needy.

Since our beginning in 1916, RSL Queensland has stood shoulder to shoulder with Queensland's Defence family. Over these past 103 years, we have proudly upheld our Objects.

Our purpose is clear: to ensure a bright future and enduring legacy for all veterans and their families. Our vision is to be the most valued and trusted partner to enrich the Australian Defence family's quality of life.

RSL Queensland is committed to operating our business lawfully and ethically and in only working with suppliers that are aligned to our values wherever possible.

2.1 Main Activities

RSL Queensland provides support and assistance to current and former Australian Defence Force (**Defence**) members and their families. These people have served overseas and at home, in armed conflict, peacekeeping missions and disaster recovery and they have all served their country, their communities and the Defence family. RSL Queensland services are targeted at each point in the Defence journey – from the point a new recruit transitions into Defence to their separation from Defence and life afterwards.

Defence members experience different needs depending on where they are in the Defence journey. When they first transition in, they have little need for external support. They are finding their feet, forging strong friendships, and becoming accustomed to the military life. As they travel along the path, they may encounter challenges – relocating with a young family, receiving an injury, deciding to transition out, experiencing difficulty finding civilian employment, suffering mental health or substance abuse issues, even becoming homeless. RSL Queensland has tailored our service offering to touchpoints along the Defence journey.

RSL Queensland is permitted by our Constitution to:

- undertake all manner of charitable or other work to further the objects;
- raise money to secure sufficient funds for the purposes of the organisation; and
- receive any funds and distribute these funds in a manner that best attains the Objects of the organisation.

RSL Queensland is predominantly concerned with the welfare and wellbeing of veterans and their dependants. Our activities include mutual support, breaking of social isolation and assistance with pensions entitlements and related matters. RSL Queensland also carries out commemorative

activities including ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, and other appropriate occasions, including commemorative activity in the community and particularly in schools.

RSL Queensland also runs the successful RSL Art Union to support our delivery of charitable or other work.

RSL Queensland's strategic goals are:



Care for the welfare and interests of veterans

We're focused on doing it with heart and improving our service offering, broadening our partnerships, and increasing awareness of the support available to all veterans and their families wherever they are based across Queensland and Australia.



Enable and support the commemoration of the service and sacrifice of veterans

We're committed to supporting and organising ceremonies, memorials and other commemorations - the cornerstone of how we show respect and our depth of gratitude to those who have served or sacrificed protecting Australia's interests.



Provide ways for veterans to rekindle their bonds of service and mateship

We're passionate about delivering wellbeing services, volunteering programs and social events that give veterans and their families a sense of belonging and purpose, so we can positively impact their quality of life now and into the future.

For more information about our 2030 Strategy, please refer to our website at: <https://www.rslqld.org/About-Us/Strategy>.

2.2 Our Supply Chains

2.2.1 RSL Queensland

RSL Queensland has the following main operations:

- Employment Program
- Advocacy of client claims to the Department of Veterans Affairs (**DVA**)
- Wellbeing Program
- Veteran Homelessness Program

- Short Term Accommodation
- Long Term Accommodation
- Scholarship Program
- Partner programs funded by RSL Queensland
- RSL Art Union, a prize home lottery that raises funds to support our charitable activities
- Commemorative events
- RSL Education
- Bereavement support
- Research programs

RSL Queensland also purchases products and services needed for the business' day-to-day operations including office supplies, employment and training of staff, external corporate services advice, leasing of office space, maintenance of capital assets, IT infrastructure and support services and travel.

Conducting these operations involve a number of supply chains including:

- Acquiring, operating, maintaining, and disposing of real estate assets (including construction)
- Management of ticket order forms for RSL Art Union, including cash handling
- Partner with several groups and organisations that offer specialist expertise or treatments to aid an individual's physical and emotional recovery
- Conducting and celebrating education services and commemorative events.
- Investment in IT hardware, infrastructure and systems

2.2.2 Mates4Mates

Mates4Mates is one of Australia's leading charities actively changing lives of current and ex-serving members of Australian Defence Force and their families who have been impacted by service. We understand how challenging it can be to overcome injuries and trauma, which is why we offer support proven to make a difference through four key areas of service:

- Psychological evidence-based services, including individual and group therapy. Our highly skilled team of psychologists are ready and available to help those in times of need.
- Physical rehabilitation and wellbeing services that are delivered by accredited exercise physiologists in individual and group settings, promoting balanced lifestyles.
- Social connection activities facilitating regular opportunities for mateship and peer support through social, recreational, and family activities.
- Skills for recovery programs enabling veterans and their families to develop new skills and learn techniques to help them find pathways to a positive future. These programs have a clinically therapeutic focus but are conducted as part of outdoor activities as well as one, two- and three-day intensive retreats.

Mates4Mates currently operates three Family Recovery Centres and one Veteran and Family Wellbeing Centres located in Brisbane, Townsville, Darwin and Hobart. In addition, Mates4Mates offers online and outreach services. These services are supported by 66 staff committed to making a difference.

Mates4Mates operate in close alignment with RSL Queensland and other ex-service organisations, including Open Arms, in our current locations and outreach areas to ensure veterans and their families have ready access to crisis services, advocacy, welfare, homelessness, and employment programs in addition to our core services.

Mates4Mates also have:

- A range of integrated IT systems with strict security guidelines (supported by RSL Queensland)
- Capabilities across service delivery, human resources, finance, marketing, and fundraising functions
- Infrastructure to support online service delivery, telehealth clinical services, outreach services and additional programs beyond our existing service centre footprint.

3 Risk Identification

RSL Queensland is working towards ensuring that our procurement practices and contractual arrangements support our approach to minimising modern slavery risks and establishing process to measure effectiveness of these approaches.

RSL Queensland considers that the direct risk of modern slavery practices within its operations is relatively low, considering all of RSL Queensland's operations and services are provided within Australia and its commitment to compliance with Australian labour laws. However, RSL Queensland recognises that there may be an indirect risk of modern slavery connected with its supply chains, within the following categories:

1. Facility Management, including contract cleaning, building and maintenance services of offices, service delivery locations and prize homes.
2. Services suppliers who provide services such as ticket sales who procure labour to staff these services.
3. Suppliers who have sourced goods and materials from overseas, including construction materials, IT and communication equipment and accessories, home furnishings used in prize homes and uniforms and merchandise.

In categories 1 and 2, the risk may be around suppliers who employ staff who although located within Australia are from vulnerable communities and do not engage them in line with Australian labour laws.

In category 3, the risk is around modern slavery risks that may be embedded within supply chains located overseas.

4 Actions Taken

4.1 Contractual Arrangements with Suppliers

RSL Queensland has continued to incorporate within its standard supply agreements provisions requiring suppliers to comply with all relevant laws, as well as provisions which expressly refer to, and demand compliance with, all applicable Modern Slavery laws. As we enter into new agreements, or

renew existing agreements, we have continued to work to ensure these provisions are included where appropriate.

4.2 Procurement framework review

In 2022, RSL Queensland engaged a procurement advisor to make recommendations in relation to that framework, including appropriate processes to address modern slavery risk within its supply chain. RSL Queensland developed a procurement team and implemented a procurement policy within the organisation.

4.3 Vendors of Interest

In consultation with business leads, the procurement team undertook a high-level review of RSL Queensland's vendors to identify "Vendor of Interest" who may, due to the nature of the goods and services they provide, be involved in Modern Slavery. Two vendors (uniform and merchandise) were identified as posing the highest potential risk and were approached by Procurement by telephone and then by email requesting information.

The procurement team were satisfied with the responses provided by the two vendors.

4.4 Employees

Our employees are required to comply with our codes and policies which requires them to act lawfully, ethically and with integrity and encourages them to raise compliance and ethics concerns. Any RSL Queensland employee who violates our standards may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

We ensure that no under aged people are employed within our company.

We have in place a whistleblowing policy which ensures that anyone who has concerns, for example, about how staff are behaving, has a means of raising their concerns confidentially including when this concerns suspicion of modern slavery. Both the RSL Queensland and Mates4Mates whistleblowing policies were updated in 2022.

4.5 At risk service providers

RSL Queensland has reduced the number of service providers who provide services such as ticket sales, thereby reducing the risk and providing RSL Queensland with an opportunity to have greater control and oversight in this regard.

5 Assessing the Effectiveness of Actions Taken

RSL Queensland will continue to assess the effectiveness of the actions we are taking to assess and address the risks of modern slavery practices in our operations and supply chains by implementing an internal review mechanism of any notified known or suspected instances of modern slavery in our supply chain. This is now scope to improve this policy, now that RSL Queensland has implemented a procurement policy.

6 Future commitments

In 2023, RSL Queensland intends on carrying out the following actions:

- continue to review and if appropriate, implement, the recommendations of its independent procurement advisor to embed a new procurement and vendor management framework, including measures to address modern slavery risk;
- ensure annual training is delivered to the organisation around modern slavery to ensure staff awareness of potential modern slavery risks in its supply chain; and
- continue to include modern slavery compliance clauses in all of its arrangements with new suppliers, where possible to do so;
- approach additional vendors who may fall into the “vendors of interest” category and conduct questionnaires to ensure compliance with contractual modern slavery clauses.

7 Internal Reporting and Consultation

RSL Queensland is the sole member of Mates4Mates. RSL Queensland will work with Mates4Mates to identify risks of modern slavery practices that may be present in the operations and supply chains of Mates4Mates and to assess and address those risks in line with the actions listed above.



Stephen Day
RSL Queensland State President/Chair
4 May 2023