



National Veterans' Affairs Committee Terms of Reference

The Returned & Services League of Australia Ltd

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the RSL National Veterans' Affairs Committee (NVAC) is to:

- provide policy, guidance and advice to the National President, the National Board (the Board) and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on matters pertaining to the laws, regulations and activities of federal agencies that apply to serving and former members of the ADF and their families; and
- provide oversight and coordination between State Branches for the delivery of veterans' entitlements, welfare and aged care support, consistent with:
 - the RSL Mission and objectives;
 - relevant legislative requirements; and
 - quality outcomes.

2. AUTHORITY

The Committee has no authority to make decisions on behalf of the Board except as set out in these Terms of Reference or otherwise delegated to it by the Board.

3. ROLE

1. The overarching role of the Committee is to:

- provide a forum to identify and review relevant legislation and policy that affects or could affect veterans and/or their families, and advises the Board accordingly on issues that should be addressed;
- provide the Board with policy and strategic guidance on the provision of support services and well-being to Veterans, their families and their communities;
- provide advice to the National President, CEO and the Board on information relevant to matters before Senate and House inquiries relating to veterans and serving and former members of the ADF and their families;
- advise the National President or their Delegate on actual or emerging issues to take to Government, the ESO Roundtable (ESORT) or other relevant authorities or agencies;
- anticipate emerging issues that could affect veterans or their families and advises the Board on recommended courses of action, including the need for research or proactive lobbying;
- advise the Board on how RSL resources can be deployed to optimise benefits available to and within the veteran community;
- ensure that representatives across the League raise and coordinate issues relating to veterans' entitlements and service delivery;
- review motions relevant to issues affecting veterans or currently serving members of the ADF and their families passed at each respective State Congress and provide advice to the National President, CEO and the Board as to how best to proceed in lobbying government on the issues raised;
- provide advice and assistance to the National President, CEO and the Board in the preparation of the RSL Budget Submission to government on matters relating to veterans' entitlements and service delivery issues and matters relating to provision of support to current and former serving members of the ADF and their families by all sectors of government; and
- establish effective liaison with agencies responsible for the development and application of legislation and policy that impacts veterans and their families, especially the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) and ComSuper.

2. In fulfilling its role, the Committee will adhere to the key objects of RSL Australia.

4. SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Committee shall provide the Board with advice and recommendations including, but not limited to:
 - a. undertake research, monitor and provide advice on matters relating to Veterans, including issues relating to mental and physical health, welfare, disability, ageing, employment, social inclusion and participation;
 - b. promote cooperation and collaboration across organisations dealing with issues affecting the Veterans, their families and Veterans' community; and
 - c. investigate matters referred to the Committee by the RSL National Board or other Veteran-related entities from within the League or from interested other parties.
2. On behalf of RSL National, the Committee may represent to Government, the Public Service, Ex-Service Organisations (ESOs) and other Veteran Service Providers (VSPs) and/or any other relevant stakeholders on behalf of the Veterans' community as well as:
 - a. facilitate a collective approach to raising issues with stakeholders and especially Government;
 - b. consult across the Veterans' community when developing advice;
 - c. conduct other activities as appropriate;
 - d. work with stakeholders on a needs basis to further RSL's intent on supporting not only existing Veterans from past conflicts but also newer and younger Veterans;
 - e. use sound business practice and good governance in helping achieve objectives and activities to broaden and strengthen the organisation's ability to continue to deliver Veteran support;
 - f. deliver proactive and enduring outcomes for Veterans in order for them to receive the support and assistance they need and deserve;
 - g. identify strategic initiatives to support Veterans and their families by infrastructure capability, systems, people and partnerships in the transition from military to civilian life including employment opportunities, well-being, welfare, advocacy for entitlements and compensation, financial and legal advice and other relevant and related support.

5. MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership of the Committee will comprise a minimum of 3 members and a maximum of 8 members, including the Chair, all of whom will have the right to vote.
2. The National Board shall appoint the Chair of the Committee
3. All Committee members must ensure that they have a clear understanding of the RSL structure, governance requirements and procedures.
4. Membership of the Committee will be determined by the Board from time to time with the Chair of the Committee to be a current member of the Board as a preference. State Branch representation is limited to one member each.
5. Should the appointed Chair not be available or present at a meeting of the Committee, an Acting Chair will be appointed from among Committee members present.
6. The Committee may, from time to time, co-opt the services of other individuals who have specific skills and experience to assist the Committee. Such action will require formal endorsement by the Board.

6. PROCEEDINGS

1. A quorum for Committee meetings will be 3 members.
2. The Chair of the Committee will have a deliberate and, when required, a casting vote.
3. The Board will review the terms of appointment of the Committee Chair and Committee members on at least an annual basis.

4. The Committee will meet as frequently as required to carry out its functions but must meet not less than four times per year. Members may attend meetings in person or via an approved digital system.
5. The Committee Chair should ascertain, at the beginning of each meeting, any conflicts of interest and ensure details are recorded in the minutes of the meeting and also maintain a register of all disclosed conflicts of interest.
6. The proceedings of Committee meetings are to be minuted and included in Board papers. Where a decision is required, a recommendation is to be included in the minutes with the support of written reports.
7. Minutes are not a verbatim recording of the meeting but should accurately record the resolutions of the Committee, key reasons for those decisions (where appropriate) and actions arising.
8. An action list from each meeting will be included in the minutes as approved by the Chair and will include accountabilities and the nature and timing of subsequent reporting.
9. Other members of the Board who are not members of the Committee may be invited to meetings under a standing invitation.
10. The CEO of RSL National may attend Committee meetings on invitation, given availability.

7. REVIEW

These Terms of Reference are to be reviewed by the Board at least every two years or reviewed earlier if and when considered desirable.