

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH



Current Items of Interest

2 December 22

Dear Members,

Please read the following media releases carefully and, where possible, follow the links to the RSLA website that canvasses opinions through a survey. The website also provides information about the context in which these surveys are being conducted and related issues.

Feel free to engage in the survey as individuals and/or refer any comments you might have to Admin@rslwoden.org.au for consideration by your Board.

Jim Gilchrist

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7105507/RSLAustralia6>

RSL AUSTRALIA UNDERTAKING RESEARCH TO INFORM FUTURE STRATEGY

17 Nov



The Returned & Services League of Australia (RSLA) is conducting extensive research, including inviting input from its national membership, non-member veterans, and interested parties to help shape its future direction and enable it to better serve veterans and their families.

The research is being undertaken independently by market research specialists The Insights Grill, who recently conducted similar research for RSL New South Wales. The data will help shape RSL Australia's next strategic plan.

National President Greg Melick said the research project would help the organisation to better understand the current needs and priorities of both member and non-member veterans so RSLA can continue to meet the needs of today's veterans well into the future.

It involves both qualitative and quantitative research in a three-phased approach.

The first phase is now underway and centres around a short survey accessed through the RSLA's social media channels and website.

Following this, qualitative interviews will be conducted with 24 veterans across the country to understand a range of key issues and perceptions. The insights from this phase will help shape the main national survey, which is the project's third phase.

This survey, to be launched next year, will comprise approximately 20 targeted questions and should only take about five minutes to complete. A report will be made publicly available shortly after.

Greg Melick said the insight gained from the research would help shape the RSL moving forward and ensure it continues to meet the needs of Australia's service veterans and their families.

"We want to hear from the veteran community regarding what it thinks the RSL should focus on in 2023 and beyond," he said.

"A short survey recently released is just the beginning part of this national research project and will be used to find out initially what people believe the RSL should focus on and also to recruit participants for qualitative interviews.

"We look forward to the feedback. Everyone is welcome to participate, whether they've served or never served in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). The responses are 100 per cent confidential.

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ESO SECTOR JOINS TOGETHER TO PURSUE A NATIONAL PEAK BODY FOR VET-



PRESS RELEASE:

ESO Sector joins together to pursue a national peak body for veterans following Royal Commission outcomes

Australia's Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) sector has called for a national peak body to represent and advocate the needs of Australian veterans, their families, and ESO organisations.

The move follows a forum coordinated by the Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) and attended by representatives of more than 50 different ESOs.

The group in attendance discussed extensively the need for greater alignment across the sector to secure better outcomes for veterans, particularly in regard to achieving greater prioritisation of the veteran community's needs from all levels of government.

The forum collectively agreed that the ESO sector should pursue the establishment of a peak body organisation that could provide a single, clear voice on behalf of the industry was an essential requirement to achieving this and to shaping a positive future for the sector.

RSL Australia President Greg Melick noted the investment made by more than 70 representatives of the ESO community to attend the forum, and the collective commitment of the group to progressing collaborative efforts moving forward.

"The Australian veteran service and support environment is large, diverse and complex. However, this week's forum was a reminder that we all share a single, unifying purpose and drive to secure positive futures for all veterans, and their families, that have sacrificed and given so much in service to our country.

"To do this, we need to be clear, consistent and relentless in how we are advocating for veterans and their families with the government, and across society.

"It was collectively agreed that the establishment of some sort of peak body should be pursued by the sector to better enable this, a move that the RSL is fully supportive of," Greg Melick said.



The national ESO forum provided a platform for open discussion among Australia's leading ESOs on how to coordinate and work collaboratively to address the issues and challenges highlighted by the Royal Commission.

Greg Melick emphasised the importance of the Government moving to establish an effective body to implement the Royal Commission's recommendations.

"ESO Forum attendees agreed on the importance of a national implementation body as a core requirement and priority of the Government following the Royal Commission.

"The Royal Commission is an extremely important process to inform the work that needs to be done to urgently address the many issues facing Australia's veteran community.

"It is equally important that the time and resources being invested into this Royal Commission process is not in vain. It is critical that an authoritative body is established following this process to oversee the implementation of the recommendations that the Royal Commission makes to government.

"The proposed implementation body must be created with the authority, accountability, and financial commitment to ensure that the time, testimony, submissions, and considerable emotional investment that so many have made as part of this of this Royal Commission are used to benefit the future of all of Australia's veterans." he said.

The ESO Forum attendees were joined by Commissioners Nick Kaldas APM, Dr Peggy Brown AO, and Hon James Douglas KC.

In his speech to the forum, Commissioner Kaldas highlighted the critical role that ESOs will play as part of the Royal Commission's proceedings and its ability to shape a better future for all veterans and their families. He called upon ESOs to support the Commission in amplifying the need for greater attention, action, and commitment to the veteran community.

The ESO Forum was held in Canberra on Tuesday, 15 November and was coordinated by RSL Australia and RSL state bodies, facilitated by former MP, Gai Brodtmann.

National media contact:

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MEDIA RELEASE

28 November 2022

For immediate release

RSL Closely Monitoring Afghanistan Honours Issue

The Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) is closely monitoring moves for the return of honours and/or medals awarded to Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel who served in the Afghanistan war.

This follows the reported demand from the chief of the Australian Defence Force, General Angus Campbell, for senior officers to justify why they should keep awards, an outcome of the Brereton Inquiry into alleged war crimes and subsequent inquiries.

The Brereton Inquiry recommended a review of the honours handed out to ADF personnel who served in Afghanistan and General Campbell has now given some veterans 28 days to provide reasons for keeping their honours.

RSL President Greg Melick said this issue was one of significant concern to the Defence and ex-service community.

"Because little is known regarding the specific allegations accompanying the demands, the RSL will refrain from making any detailed comment at this time although as a general rule we consider it more appropriate to await the result of all investigations before undertaking such a course of action. In any event this issue should not detract from the brave and dedicated service of Australia's Afghanistan War veterans.

"The RSL will keep a close watch on developments and in the meantime, offer its support for the wellbeing of any veterans affected.

"Support can be accessed through RSL Branches and Sub-Branched and through the Open Arms counselling and support service. Contact details are available at www.rslaustralia.org/after-hours-care.

"Our position regarding the call on the honours and medals will be reviewed as more information comes to hand," Greg Melick said.

ENDS

National Media contact: Tony Harrison – 0417 318 178; tony@wearebright.com.au

ACT Seniors Card Review - We want to hear from you

Last week, the ACT Government announced a review of the ACT Seniors Card Program. As card holders you will be aware of the benefits that you may be eligible for, including government discounts on car registration and public transport, as well as discounts for local businesses across the ACT. As Canberra continues to grow, the ACT Government wants to ensure the Seniors Card continues to provide benefits that you find valuable and that the card itself is easy to use.

Whether you're a current card holder or eligible to be a card holder, now is your chance to have your say on the future of the card in the ACT. We are asking you to complete a short survey on the Seniors Card, including know how it can be easier to use and what benefits you'd like to see added.

The survey will ask you:

- if you value the card,
- whether it was easy to get,
- if you find it easy to use, and

what sorts of benefits you'd like to see added to card.

You have until 6 February 2023 to respond to a survey and let us know your thoughts.

To complete the survey, visit www.yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/seniors-card. The security of your personal information is important to us. This survey **will not** ask for any identifiable information.

To ensure your feedback is assessed without bias and to ensure a fair process of improvements, the ACT Government has partnered with an independent consultant to do this review.

Thank you

Office for Seniors and Veterans



Army



Music at Midday

The Band of the Royal Military College

The final Music at Midday for 2022. Don your Santa hats and bring your best singing voice, it's going to be a Christmas Spectacular! Come join the Band for a performance of all your festive favourites.

When: Tuesday, 6th December 2022 - Midday to 1pm

Venue: Canberra Theatre Centre, Civic Square, Canberra City

Entry: Gold coin donation supporting ACT Pet Crisis Support.

Bookings call (02) 6275 2700

or <https://canberratheatrecentre.com>





We acknowledge a report released today by the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare - AIHW](#) into deaths by suicide among current and former serving ADF members who served after 1985. A single death of any member of the Defence and veteran communities is one too many, and is felt deeply by all. This report helps us better understand at risk groups and assist us in targeting support to those who need it.

Current serving personnel, veterans and families who are experiencing concerns about their mental health are encouraged to reach out for support.

[Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling](#) provides free and confidential support 24/7 on 1800 011 046.

Defence personnel can contact their local health centre, the All Hours Support Line on 1800 628 036 or the Defence Member and Family Helpline on 1800 624 608.

For a link to the report and more info on the support available, visit: <http://spr.ly/6187M0zFW>

 <p>SAFE ZONE SUPPORT</p> <p>1800 142 072</p>	 <p>OPEN ARMS Veterans & Families Counselling</p> <p>1800 011 046</p>	 <p>Talk it over Mens Line AUSTRALIA</p> <p>1300 789 978</p>
 <p>beyondblue</p> <p>1300 224 636</p>	 <p>The ADF Mental Health Strategy All Hours Support Line The Right Support Right Now 1800 628 036 Call from outside and within Australia</p> <p>1800 628 036</p>	 <p>Kids Helpline</p> <p>We care. We listen.</p> <p>1800 551 800</p>
<p>SUICIDE CALL BACK SERVICE</p> <p>1300 659 467</p>	 <p>1800RESPECT NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT, DOMESTIC FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNSELLING SERVICE</p> <p>1800 737 732</p>	 <p>Lifeline</p> <p>13 11 14</p>



**COFFEE CATCH UP
EVERY FRIDAY 10-12**



Members and guests are welcome to join us for a chat and enjoy freshly brewed coffee & cake with former service mates. Every Friday from 10 to 12 in The Corey Room, Level 2A, of the Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley Street, Holder.

Please note that the Eddison Day Club is currently meeting on only a very casual basis for lunch at midday Fridays.



Contact Us

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PS.

Ever lost your copy of
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readily available to read on
our website
www.rslwoden.org.au