

**The National
Servicemen's
Association of
Australia Inc**

Thursday, 7 September

2017

***General Meeting
of the National Council
held in Canberra, ACT***

Minutes

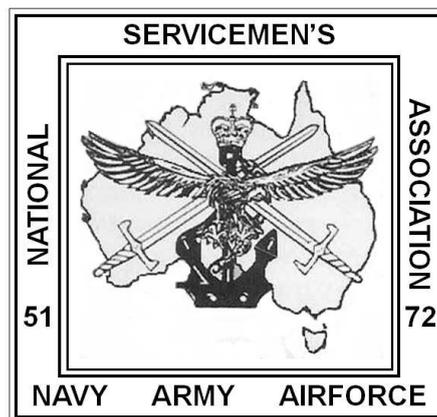


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1. OPENING OF MEETING

- 1.1 The National Vice President and Chairman, Rob Brandy opened the meeting (in the absence of Earle Jennings). He welcomed members and acknowledged the apology of John Clark, President of WA.

2. OBSERVANCE

- 2.1 National Ode of Remembrance (Vice President) and one minute's silence.

3. ATTENDANCE

- 3.1 The Secretary advises proxies and apologies. The Chairman acknowledged 18 members present as per the attendance register.

- 3.1.1 **Motion:** *That apologies, proxies and new delegates be accepted.*

Moved: N Moulder (SEC)

Seconded: B Mclvor (VIC)

Motion Carried.

4. GUEST SPEAKER

- 4.1 The President, Earle Jennings introduced the Hon. Mr Dan Tehan, Minister for Veterans Affairs and gave a brief profile and background on him.

- 4.2 The Minister thanked the Association for inviting him to speak. In a lengthy presentation, he covered the following matters:

- i. Special attention to veteran's mental health;
 - ii. The upgrading of IT systems at the DVA;
 - iii. The availability for claims on line;
 - iv. Upgrade white card availability;
 - v. New money to be injected into DVA programmes;
 - vi. Some programmes not getting funding support;
 - vii. The PM to announce veteran's employment initiative;
 - viii. Awards for business offering veteran-friendly jobs;
 - ix. The future of DVA; new money to carry forward;
 - x. Centenary of end of WWI 2018 funds available;
 - xi. The value of National Service;
 - xii. Appreciated Association's attitude toward the DVA;
 - xiii. Acknowledged the Association's work within the community; and
 - xiv. Thanked National Servicemen for their service.
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4.3 Vice President Ron Brandy extended a vote of thanks to the Minister.

4.4 Vice President vacated the Chair; Earle Jennings presided.

5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING, MARCH 2017

5.1 No amendments.

5.2 **Motion:** *That the minutes of the meeting held Thursday, 16 March 2017 as circulated be taken as read and accepted.*

Moved: F Miller (OTU)

Seconded: J Faunt (ACT)

Motion Carried.

5.3 Matters Arising

5.3.1 *Item 5.2.1, Ex NSW Debt:* The Chairman advised that the full amount claimed has been paid and the matter is now closed.

6. ACCEPTANCE OF RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS FROM EXECUTIVE MEETING

6.1 **Motion:** *That the record of proceedings from the Executive Meeting held 2 August 2017 as circulated be taken as read and accepted.*

Moved: J Thorne (SA)

Seconded: J Faunt (ACT)

Motion Carried

6.2 Matters Arising

6.2.1 *Item 6.1.2, DVA Grant:* The Chairman advised that the "Grants in Aid" has been received and will be applied to this meeting. Consequently, those States in need will have the costs of one delegate funded. They are WA, NT, TAS and NSW. They will receive compensation for two night's accommodation and one return airfare. The Secretary requested receipts for their expenditure and provided details of the basis of the Grant. Discussion took place re. method of compensation.

6.2.2 *Item 3.2.1, Protection of Name:* The Secretary advised of his contact with IP Australia and the suggestion that the name and business is protected by registering with ASIC and that unless we want to register as a Trademark in a particular style and font, it would be unnecessary.

- 6.2.3 *Item 3.2.2, President's Bulletin:* Members were advised one has been issued and another will follow this meeting.
- 6.2.4 *Item 4.1.3, Nominal Roll:* Explanation requested re. report indicating information obtained from State Archives. Why not National Archives? QLD delegate to follow up. The Chairman reported that his contact with the Secretary of DVA indicated that a Grant was available for States to digitise records. He recommended that this be followed up.
- 6.2.5 *Item 5.5.2, National Service Flag:* The Secretary reported that it is in the hands of the AWM and a study of the safe keeping agreement shows ownership has passed to the AWM.
- 6.2.6 *Item 4.1.1, National Service Rose:* Discussion re. a National launch. It was suggested it should be in September 2018 in Canberra and included as part of the annual AWM service, with a wreath of roses laid at the National Service Memorial. Members agreed. John Thorne (S) advised he had contacted the rose creator and all is well under way for mid-2018. He was told a bagged bush will wholesale for approximately \$18 and retail for \$26.
- 6.2.7 *Item 6.2.1, Ex NSW Debt:* Members requested further details on the matter. The Chairman and Secretary provided details and sequence of events resulting in payment. Members expressed concern that ex Branch Sub-Branches are not aware of circumstances. Members advised their President's Bulletin will show outcome. It was requested that ex Branch Sub-Branches be circulated with the Bulletin. The Secretary to obtain email addresses. Following discussion re ex Branch, the Chairman took the opportunity to express his opinion that it is his desire that long term, we should aim to get the NSW Sub-Branch back together, and at this stage, take a neutral approach following the outcome of the ex-Branch AGM, the National Executive should get together with the official NSW Branch to decide how we go forward.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

- 7.1 Members were circulated with a copy of the correspondence register. The Secretary sought requests for information regarding its content.
- 7.2 The following late correspondence was tabled:
- i. From Minister Veterans' Affairs – Ministerial Statement;
 - ii. From NSW RSL President – State Report; and
 - iii. From Charles Hardy – Incorrectly assessed reason for discharge.

7.3 Matter Arising

- 7.3.1 Ministerial statement item a request that Ex-Service community respond with one voice. Minister's suggestion formation of National Confederation of all Ex-Service organisations. Members discussed the practicality of such an organisation. Mr Brandy pointed out the existence of Alliance of Defence Service organisations (ADSO). Considerable discussion resulted in agreement that the National Executive investigate the matter and report to the next meeting.
- 7.3.2 NSW RSL President's report contained advice that all RSL fundraising had been suspended. Discussion on NSAA fundraising agreed no concern. Chairman requested that established and required accounting procedures be followed.
- 7.3.3 Mr Hardy request for NSAA to take up the matter of exceptional hardship discharge was discussed. Members were advised the background and reason for this assessment. Following discussion, it was advised that the matter has been taken up with authorities including the Minister and Shadow Minister with a request that discharge documents be amended to show honourable discharge. The Association awaits a response.
- 7.3.4 **Motion:** *That all correspondence as presented be accepted.*

Moved: R McIvor (VIC)

Seconded: J Faunt (ACT)

Motion Carried

8. LAUNCH OF NATIONAL SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

- 8.1 The Chairman advised members that the Executive had agreed on a press conference launch to coincide with a National Council meeting in March 2018 and the location should be Melbourne. This would mean the scheduled meeting for Sydney be moved to Melbourne. Following discussion, members endorsed the decision. This decision supported the advice received that "you get your credibility set in your local area and expand from there". Suggestions were put forward re. suitable venue, this to be investigated by the Victorian delegates and National Secretary.

9. ASSOCIATION PATRON

- 9.1 The Chairman explained the situation with regards to the previous choice of Patron and sought recommendations from members on suitable candidates. Several persons were suggested but each with their own pros and cons. Following debate, the suggestion that Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of the Australian War Memorial would be an ideal candidate. Members endorsed the suggestion he should be approached. The Chairman agreed to contact Dr Nelson.

10. SPECIAL PRESENTATION FROM WA

- 10.1 In the absence of WA President, John Clarke, Stuart Fairbairn, State Secretary presented a paper on the Singapore low cost National Service Scheme, with the recommendation that with some minor changes this could be suitable for Australia. Cost comparisons were discussed and members contributed to a worthwhile debate including details of a previous submission to Government Ministers. Following discussion, it was agreed the previous proposal could be refined using elements of the Singapore scheme and resubmitted. Mr Callaghan to action.

11. PLAN FOR NSAA FUTURE

- 11.1 The Secretary reminded members of the previously issued paper on Association policy for contraction. QLD was complimented on publishing extracts in their NASHO News. It was also noted that it was included in the last President's Bulletin. Concern was expressed that some States had not addressed the issue. SA advised they had raised the matter with all Sub-Branches and the overwhelming decision was that they continue and look at the issue in the future. It was noted that there exists amongst members a minority who believe the Association should set a date and close the doors. QLD advised a motion had been put to a State General meeting to set a date and when put to the vote, was soundly defeated. Following discussion, it was agreed that the contraction plan should continue, but be carefully monitored at Sub-Branch level. The Chairman raised several matters:
- i. Development of succession plans;
 - ii. All members should be involved and consulted in any contraction plan;
 - iii. National Executive will develop a succession plan; and
 - iv. State circumstances will vary; therefore, each State should address the issue to suit circumstances.
- 11.2 Mr Frank Miller, Chairman O.T.U. Association outlined their programme which is based on continuous monitoring of the situation.

12. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS

12.1 President's Report

- 12.1.1 Presented by Earle Jennings, copies issued and points noted as follows.
- i. The need to look to the future of our Association;
 - ii. The expelled NSW Branch has paid the outstanding capitation fees; the matter has now been settled;

- iii. The split membership in NSW deprives members of a united voice and the task of rebuilding is difficult;
- iv. On a National level, the ongoing drop in members reflects the reality of an end limited organisation;
- v. Three major things have been achieved;
 - a Public recognition of National Service contribution;
 - b Two medals for our service; and
 - c The creation of a National Memorial in a prime position as the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.
- vi. Our legacy to Australia is the tradition that we set. In the words of the Governor-General “despite the compulsion, we served our Nation honourably and well”;
- vii. The National Service Scholarship Foundation will live on into the future as another legacy to Australia; and
- viii. We must plan for the future with a united voice and purpose.

12.2 Secretary

12.2.1 Presented by Noel Moulder, copies issued and points noted as follows.

- i. Correspondence activities are down by 15%;
- ii. Emails account for 9% of all correspondence;
- iii. Matters requiring action have increased;
- iv. All scheduled meetings were attended and administrative matters completed;
- v. National Association seal was not used;
- vi. No amendments to the By-Laws;
- vii. Sub-Branch register needs updating;
- viii. Adelaide Memorial placed on register; and
- ix. Three grants obtained from the DVA.

12.3 Treasurer

12.3.1 Presented by Carl Adams, copies issued and points noted and documents discussed as follows.

- i. Summary of Income and Expenditure;
- ii. Statement of Financial Performance;
- iii. Statement of Financial Position;
- iv. Plant and Equipment Statement;
- v. Capitation Fee Analysis; and
- vi. Tentative Budget for 2018.

12.3.2 The following items were discussed.

- i. Income for the period;
- ii. Constraint on expenses;
- iii. Diminishing Capitation Fees;
- iv. Grant application to defray certain costs;
- v. Cost of meetings; and
- vi. 2018 Budget.

Several individual matters were debated by members.

12.4 Media & PR

12.4.1 Presented by Allen Callaghan, copies issued and points noted as follows.

- x. Background and experience in journalism;
- xi. Time spent in Canberra in the political scene;
- xii. Knowledge of how politics works;
- xiii. The ability to talk in the language of politics to politicians and bureaucrats to the extent that they listen; and
- xiv. Details of current President's Bulletin and future editions.

12.5 Australian Capital Territory Report

12.5.1 Presented by John Faunt, copies issued and points noted as follows.

- i. General meeting each month with good attendance;
- ii. Membership stable. Aging members provided transport to meetings;
- iii. Attended and laid wreath at Vietnam Memorial for Long Tan Day;
- iv. Member attended reception for US Senator McCain;
- v. Very active with social events including bus trips;
- vi. Fundraising raises sufficient funds to cover Branch costs; and
- vii. Very active in providing welfare for members with visits to hospital and nursing homes.

12.6 Northern Territory Report

12.6.1 Presented by Mike Lane, copies issued and points noted as follows.

- i. Financial members dropped by 50%, a concern but have not lost hope;
- ii. Developed a relationship with kindred association Vietnam Veterans (VVAA) NT;
- iii. Attendance and engagement in Remembrance Day service at Adelaide River War Cemetery. Liaising with Kormilda College to bring students to ceremony;

- iv. Benefits to new members include comradeship, visitation and support in cases of illness and bereavement;
- v. Community support including a small grant of \$500 to the Casuarina Secondary College;
- vi. Financial position of Branch is stable and able to pay all debts when they fall due; and
- vii. A proposal to reinvigorate the NASHO display at the East Point Military Museum in Darwin. Also, a proposal is the interment of a time capsule at the Darwin Cenotaph containing National Service memorabilia. Assistance is sought from members Australia-wide to provide items to meet the needs of both proposals.

12.7 New South Wales Report

12.7.1 Presented by Barry O'Keefe, copies issued and points highlighted as follows.

- i. National President attended State AGM;
- ii. Passing of Jim Bunce, a loss to the State Executive;
- iii. Official Branch denied access and participation in many areas because of aggressive nature of expelled Branch;
- iv. Branch has enrolled forty members, some from the expelled Branch;
- v. 603 on membership register, many unfinancial – a problem that needs to be addressed;
- vi. Some Sub-Branches suffering losses due to age;
- vii. Mid-State Sub-Branch developing a Memorial Pathway at Bathurst War Cemetery. This Sub-Branch have also contributed to NSSF project; and
- viii. NSW RSL with matters now in public area fail to respond to Branch requests.

12.8 O.T.U. Association Report

12.8.1 Presented by Frank Miller, copies issued and points highlighted as follows.

- i. The O.T.U Association continued to successfully celebrate the Scheyville Experience;
 - ii. Membership levels have remained constant;
 - iii. Noted Scheyvillian, BRIG Neil Weekes AM MC passed away on 6 March 2017;
 - iv. There is a special bond amongst those who trained at O.T.U Scheyville and more and more classes are holding reunions;
 - v. Increasing proportion of membership has now retired and this must be considered when scheduling events and functions;
 - vi. This year, members marched under the O.T.U banner in Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth ANZAC day commemorations;
 - vii. The Association is in a sound financial position with a six-year projection of income and expenditure being produced and regularly monitored by the Executive;
 - viii. With successful National reunions in 1993, 2001 and 2013, planning is underway for another gathering;
 - ix. Three editions of the Association's magazine have been published during the year;
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- x. Magazine editor, Neil Leckie, as unit archivist, has produced historic information on O.T.U Scheyville. He was able to determine that 2,598 National Servicemen commenced the course with 1,802 successfully graduating. It produced 240 Second Lieutenants per year for the Army; and
- xi. Their relationship with the NSAA continues to be very successful.

12.9 Queensland Report

12.9.1 Presented by Neal Freier, copies issued and points highlighted as follows.

- i. Thirty years since the formation of the Association in Toowoomba;
- ii. QLD now have 35 Branches;
- iii. Buses will take members to a 30th Anniversary event in Toowoomba with celebratory activities planned;
- iv. New members are being recruited and this is just keeping ahead of the Grim Reaper;
- v. Rebuilding and refurbishing of some buildings at the Wacol Heritage Centre has been finished with amenities for using the centre for displays;
- vi. Aging members from all over the State coming to Brisbane hospitals for treatment is placing a strain on Welfare Officers, however with some assistance they are coping; and
- vii. Nominal Roll activities continue with the number now at 78,000 with SA now complete except for second era NASHOs.

12.10 South Australia Report

12.10.1 Presented by John Thorne, copies issued and points highlighted as follows.

- i. Impressive dedication of the SA Memorial in March 2017. Outcome was a lot of hard work by members lead by Vice President, Barry Presgrave;
 - ii. His Excellency, the Hon. Hieu Van Lee AC, Governor of SA dedicated the memorial and spoke of experience with Australians in Vietnam;
 - iii. Planning under way for a rose garden of Remembrance adjacent to the memorial;
 - iv. State President invited to provide an article for FVA SA (Think Piece). This has generated positive feedback re. National Service;
 - v. ANZAC Day march was well attended with numbers a little down. Presentation of marches complemented. Following lunch attended by approx. 85 people;
 - vi. Letter relating to contraction of Association sent to all Sub-Branches, resulting in a unanimous decision to remain as they are for the foreseeable future and revisit the idea in future years;
 - vii. Publishing of State newsletter remains an excellent form of communication to all members state-wide; and
 - viii. State Executive continues to work as an excellent team and SA Branch continues to function as a viable and efficient organisation.
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12.11 Tasmania State Report

12.11.1 Presented by Bill Dabner, copies issued and points highlighted as follows.

- i. Tasmanian membership has stabilised with no new members, but no departures either;
- ii. Concern that second oldest Branch, Burnie, has had to close, but pleasing to see members transferring to Mersey Sub-Branch;
- iii. Midlands RSL have agreed to organise the 2018 Commemoration day and have extended an invitation to Chief of Airforce;
- iv. After 10 years as initial State President, followed later by another r4 years, I will be handing over the reins to a new President in April 2018;
- v. Having served 16 continuous years on the National Council, I have made great friends and acquaintances and congratulate the members on the great job they undertake; and
- vi. Unfortunately, some members in TAS consider these meetings, for financial reasons, are not necessary. The old saying "Sever the head and the body will cease to function."

12.12 Victoria State Report

12.12.1 Presented by Bob McIvor, copies issued and points highlighted as follows.

- i. The Victorian Sub-Branched of Warnambool and Northern Districts celebrated 20 years since formation;
- ii. Warnambool is headed by Vern Delany who has been a powerhouse for the Association at Sub-Branch, State and National levels;
- iii. Northern District have, over 20 years, been very active with welfare in the veteran and general community. Through the district, their work at the Heidelberg Repat. Hospital has been outstanding;
- iv. One lady from Northern District has fostered 150 children and raised 10 of her own;
- v. The NASHO Toy Drive for 2017 was once again well supported, assisting the Salvation Army with their work with underprivileged children;
- vi. Victorian members are very dedicated to annual commemorative events including Point Cook Airbase, Navy memorial HMAS CERBERUS, Remembrance Day, ANZAC Day, National Service Day and Vietnam Veterans' Day; and
- vii. Members continue to visit veterans at home, in special care units and day clubs.

12.13 Western Australia State Report

12.13.1 Presented by Stuart Fairbairn, copies issued and points highlighted as follows.

- i. Apology for State President, John Clark. Due to illness has taken 3 months leave of absence;
- ii. State meetings focussed on health and aging with special speakers focussing on improving lifestyle;
- iii. State Council have begun to discuss contraction plans for the Branch with the closure of one Sub-Branch and the likely closure of another;
- iv. It is encouraging that other Sub-Branches are still very active and despite the passing of key players, are still vibrant and proactive;
- v. Members participate in all State memorial activities and assist at RSL sponsored events; and
- vi. The WA Branch has put forward a proposal that the National Council encourage politicians to once again look at a new National Service scheme modelled on the Singapore version.

12.14 National Service Scholarship Foundation Report

12.14.1 Presented by Ron Brandy, copies issued and points highlighted as follows.

- i. The NSSF Ltd is a fully constituted Not for Profit Company Limited by guarantee and comprises of a Board of Directors;
 - ii. Currently, we have completed the build of the Foundation website and have asked individual to review the site and provide feedback on its content;
 - iii. Once the Board is fully satisfied with the functionality aspects of content and financial processes, the website will be launched;
 - iv. Information for those who may wish to leave a bequest in their will is also contained on the website;
 - v. For those who prefer a paper based approach, assistance for applications, general information and donation forms will be available by telephone;
 - vi. A hard copy application form that will enable individuals to become friends of the Foundation, donate, or both is now available;
 - vii. There is provision in the budget to enable initial production of information to introduce the Foundation to the broader community and provide documentation. We do however require further funds to continue marketing. We seek member assistance to achieve these aims;
 - viii. Our strategy to engage with and develop contacts with the Barwon Health system continues to grow with the development of a partnership for selecting and funding suitable scholarships. We seek to expand and explore similar opportunities in other States and regions;
 - ix. We are exploring fund streams derived from private ancillary, other philanthropic funds and organisations. This will ensure Australia-wide representation and demonstrate that our efforts are nation-wide in scope; and
 - x. Hard copy application forms were distributed to all members present.
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12.15 *Motion:* That all reports as presented and circulated be received.

Moved: B O'Keefe (NSW)

Seconded: S Fairbairn (WA)

Motion Carried.

13. BARRY VICARY AWARD

13.1 The Chairman provided background to the award and gave a profile on the recipient. He announced the award goes to Mr Norm Mallard. In the absence of Mr Mallard, the award was accepted by Mr Robert Brown. Mr Brown thanked the Council on Norm's behalf and detailed some on Norm's activities.

14. GENERAL BUSINESS

14.1 The Chairman provided an update following his meeting with the Military Shop and gave detail of our arrangements and relationship.

14.2 Member question re status of figurine. Discussion too place regarding arrangement for donation based on NASHO sales.

14.3 Advice to members re. forthcoming memorial service at the AWM.

14.4 Mr Callaghan clarified the position with regards to the white card as outlined by the Minister in his address.

15. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

15.1 Following agreement that the launch of the NSSF be in Melbourne, the scheduled meeting for March 2018 is Sydney will be transferred to Melbourne.

15.2 Following discussion, it was agreed:

- i. Council Meeting & AGM - Thursday, 8 March 2018;
- ii. Launch of NSSF - Friday, 9 March 2018
- iii. Location: Melbourne
- iv. Venue: TBA

15.3 With no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 4:40pm.