

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

Thursday, 6 September

2018

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

Minutes

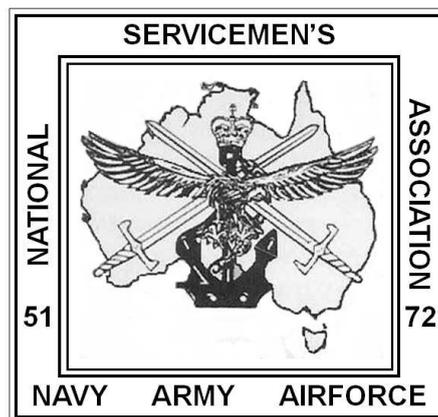


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1. OPENING OF MEETING

- 1.1 The National President and Chairman opened the meeting, advised of the new format to include a conference in the afternoon. Briefly outlined the guest speaker also welcomed members and observer guests Robert Owen and Robert Burne from National Service and Combined Forces Association and special guest Mr Allen May, Vietnam Veteran.

2. OBSERVANCE

- 2.1 The National President delivered the Ode followed by one minute's silence.

3. ATTENDANCE

- 3.1 The Secretary reported 23 present as per register and tabled the following:

- 3.1.1 Apologies: Mr Ron Brandy (Executive)
Mr Barry Presgrave (SA)

- 3.1.2 Proxies: SA – Mr J Thorn for Mr B Presgrave

- 3.1.3 **Motion:** *That apologies and proxy appointments be accepted.*

Moved: N Moulder (SEC)

Seconded: J Faut (ACT)

Motion Carried.

4. GUEST SPEAKERS

- 4.1 The Chairman advised the Shadow Minister of Veterans' Affairs, Amanda Rishworth, had accepted our invitation but at the last minute could not attend. Introduced in her place, Senator David Smith.

- 4.1.1 Senator Smith addressed the meeting and made the following points:

- i. He is the Senator for the ACT;
- ii. Background from Union movement with experience in science and engineering;
- iii. Father was a National Serviceman;
- iv. Paid tribute to the NSAA;
- v. If elected to government, would introduce an Armed Forces covenant similar to the UK;

- vi. Review DVA policy to include greater assistance to families;
 - vii. Acknowledge problems with children of Vietnam veterans;
 - viii. Concern re. policy and process from moving DVA support to My Aged Care;
 - ix. Concern re. Doctors attitude toward veterans. Matter needs to be reviewed, current government denies it is a problem; and
 - x. Invitation to assist in framing an Australian Armed Forces covenant.
- 4.1.2 The Chairman thanked Senator Smith, acknowledged some of the points he had made and presented him with a memento of his visit.
- 4.2 The Chairman introduced Ms Prue Monument, Director of Compliance for the ACNC. He urged members to take particular note of her presentation.
- 4.2.1 The following matters were covered by Ms Monument:
- i. Experience in working with ex-Service organisations;
 - ii. Role of ACNC as an independent regulator;
 - iii. Work with RSL; brief case studies;
 - iv. Limits on what can be disclosed;
 - v. Charity sector divers – 56,000 charities registered;
 - vi. Education and guidance – primary role;
 - vii. Urged members to keep all records and report annually. Notify any changes and be aware of obligations;
 - viii. ACNC can direct charities to undertake change with the power to remove offending persons;
 - ix. Responsible persons and directors should be trained;
 - x. Cautioned on conflict of interest;
 - xi. Advised that for a registered charity, all funds are considered charity funds regardless of where they came from;
 - xii. Suggest review Constitution to allow for external appointments; and
 - xiii. Promotes the limiting of red tape with a reduction in duplication.
- 4.2.2 The Chairman thanked Ms Monument and referred to some valuable information being presented, and requested members give special consideration to compliance. A memento of her visit was presented.
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5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING, MARCH 2018

5.1 No amendments requested.

5.2 **Motion:** *That the minutes of the meeting held Thursday, 8 March 2018 as circulated and amended be taken as read and accepted.*

Moved: B McIvor (VIC)

Seconded: C Shapland (NSW)

Motion Carried.

5.3 Matters Arising

5.3.1 *Item 6.2.2, Grant application:* The Secretary advised application for 2018 submitted in March with no response to date. Acquittal for 2017 submitted and accepted.

5.3.2 *Item 6.2.4, Memorial Service:* The Secretary outlined matters relating to forthcoming service on Friday, 7 September.

5.3.3 *Item 7.2.3, State of the Army document:* The Secretary to source document and pass on to each member.

5.3.4 *Item 8.1, NSAA future:* The Chairman requested update on status of each State. Following discussion, it was accepted that each member has implemented their own program.

5.3.5 *Item 12.1, spreadsheet workshop:* Mr Lane (NT) advised no one has taken up the offer.

6. ACCEPTANCE OF RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS FROM EXECUTIVE MEETING

6.1 **Motion:** *That the record of proceedings from the Executive Meeting held 2 August 2018 as circulated be taken as read and accepted.*

Moved: J Thorne (SA)

Seconded: B Sonter (TAS)

Motion Carried

6.2 Matters Arising

6.2.1 *Item 3.2.3, Military Shop sales and payment:* The Chairman advised of meeting with the proprietor and tabled a report showing \$16,533 of NASHO merchandise purchases and the resulting donation payment. Members discussed items covered.

- 6.2.2 *Item 3.2.3, National Sub-Branch email list:* The Secretary advised some email addresses had been received and remainder will be taken from state websites. Currently a work in progress.
- 6.2.3 *Item 3.2.4, National President's Bulletin:* Mr Callaghan advised next issue will be issued following this meeting.
- 6.2.4 *Item 3.2.5, Meeting with NSW RSL President:* The Chairman explained of several attempts to arrange a meeting and each had been cancelled by RSL – the latest being two days ago. A preliminary arrangement for a Sydney meeting in March 2019.
- 6.2.5 *Item 4.1.1, Digitising Nominal Roll:* The Chairman explained DVA suggestion that funds are available to upgrade the Nominal Roll. Following member debate, there is misunderstanding of what is required and what is meant by “digitise”. QLD delegates explained the current system. Following discussion, it was agreed the system meets digital requirements. Suggestion that contact is made with Alex Garlin.
- 6.2.6 *Item 4.1.2, ESOs speaking with one voice:* Following suggestion from previous DVA Minister, the Chairman will take up the matter with the new Minister at a forthcoming meeting.
- 6.2.7 *Item 4.1.3, Exceptional Hardship Discharge:* The Chairman agreed to take up this matter at his meeting with the Minister.
- 6.2.8 *Item 4.1.4, WA request re. introduction of National Service:* The Chairman described previous submissions and his belief that the matter had been covered. Advised that the matter will be canvassed whenever the opportunity arises.
- 6.2.9 *Item 5.1.1, President's Report:* Reference to future of the Association. QLD delegate reported considerable success in introducing National Policy paper to QLD branches and outlined positive attitude of QLD branches. Suggested contents of Policy paper be viewed together with State and Sub-branch Constitutions.
- 6.2.10 *Item 6.2.1, Canberra meeting subsidy:* The Chairman confirmed the subsidy to States in need will be paid as per 2017 subject to grant in aid application being approved. Discussion re. slowness of approval.
- 6.2.11 *Item 6.3, NSW Update:* The status of matters agreed was outlined by the Chairman. Outstanding matters were highlighted;
- i. Meeting with State RSL President;
 - ii. Closure of court case; and
 - iii. Bathurst Memorial Grant: It was stated that the responsibility for application should be either State or Sub-branch;

- 6.2.12 *Item 6.8, National Patron:* The Chairman gave details of his meeting with Dr Nelson at the AWM and the agreement to accept Patron. Letter of confirmation will be conveyed.
- 6.2.13 *Item 6.9, March 2019 meeting:* The Chairman confirmed the amended date for the AGM, Council meeting and election will be Tuesday, 19 March 2019 in Sydney. Venue TBA.
- 6.2.14 *Item 7.2, Financial outlook:* A background of National capitation fee increases was given by the Chairman who also outlined our dependence on a grant. Members were alerted to the possible increase of fees at the 2019 AGM. Discussion re alternative methods of National funding be investigated.
- 6.2.15 *Item 7.4, Vietnam Medal eligibility:* Members were advised of the submission to the Minister on behalf of over 3000 NASHOs who were deemed not eligible. Comment this had fallen on deaf ears. It was also pointed out that this request is at no cost to the government, as NASHOs are prepared to pay for the medal and that this matter has been ongoing since 1996. The Chairman told of the Association support and that the matter is now in the hands of the Defence Ombudsman.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

- 7.1 Members were circulated a copy of the correspondence register. Secretary highlighted the following items.
- 7.1.1 From VIC Branch: Advice re passing of Thomas Gartland. Members offered tribute.
- 7.1.2 From NSW Branch: Thanks to Council for support of State AGM and other matters.
- 7.1.3 From Chris Burgess: Concern re VITA insurance and matters relating to indemnity cover and issues with DVA. Members discussed VITA insurance cover with regard to qualified NASHO people in advocacy role and trained pensioner officers. Question arose 'Do we need insurance?' Treasurer to follow up before payment of next invoice.

8. REPORTS

8.1 President's Report

- 8.1.1 Presented by Earle Jennings (copies issued) and following points highlighted.
- i. Conference theme "Where to From Here";
 - ii. Reputation as a sound and sensible organisation;
 - iii. Achieved award of Service medals;
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- iv. Successfully developed our own Memorial;
- v. Established enduring legacy of scholarship foundation;
- vi. Current issues include attending NSW AGM; also, supporting project to obtain Vietnam Star for National Servicemen ruled ineligible
- vii. Concern for contraction of branches and the need to plan for services and advice to members if a wind up of funds and property;
- viii. Meetings with ex NSW member relating to some form of reconciliation; and
- ix. Discussions with National Service & Combined Forces Association executives.

8.2 Secretary's Report

8.2.1 Presented by Noel Moulder (copies issued) and following points highlighted.

- i. From March 2018 to September 2018, correspondence incoming and outgoing equalled 102 items; an increase of 32% over previous report;
- ii. All scheduled meetings attended, minutes taken and distributed;
- iii. Updating continues on National Association web site;
- iv. Corporate Seal used on updated NSW Charter;
- v. No amendments to Rules and By-Laws;
- vi. Executive and Council Directory updated;
- vii. Sub-branch register work in progress;
- viii. No advice of new memorials;
- ix. Applications submitted for 2018 grants in aid;
- x. Annual commemoration service at AWM organised and conducted; and
- xi. Revised format of Council meetings implemented.

8.3 Treasurer's Report

8.3.1 Presented by Carl Adams (copies issued) and following points highlighted.

- i. Explanation of payment shortfalls and surplus;
 - ii. Concern re ever decreasing capitation fees;
 - iii. Expenses at or near budget;
 - iv. Costs associated with Melbourne meeting and AGM;
 - v. Spasmodic and irregular payments of capitation fees;
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- vi. Consideration of issuing invoices based on previous year's fee payment;
- vii. Income from another source to maintain the status quo;

8.3.2 The following items were tabled and discussed;

- i. Summary of income and expenditure;
- ii. Statement of Financial Position;
- iii. Statement of Financial Performance;
- iv. Plant and Equipment Register;
- v. Budget with comparison;
- vi. Capitation situation by State; and
- vii. Reconciliation.

8.4 National Service Scholarship Foundation

8.4.1 Presented by Earle Jennings (copies issued) and following points highlighted.

- i. Launch on 9 March well supported by invited guests and National Council delegates. Disappointingly, few local NASHOs attended and little interest by local media. However, engagement with media is a work in progress;
- ii. End of March saw the Treasurer hand over Board responsibilities to Chartered Accountant, Justin O'Brien.
- iii. Work with Barwon Health Foundation has culminated in an agreement that provides for a collaboration between the two organisations. An unsuccessful approach to the Epworth Hospital Foundation and Monash Medical Foundation was disappointing, but contact will continue;
- iv. Fundraising event by Essendon Football Past Players Association resulted and receipt of \$5,000;
- v. Very positive result from attending a Reserve Forces function in Melbourne including an opportunity for discussion with the Sir Albert Coates Memorial Trust Ballarat (VIC);
- vi. A donation of \$600 from the Geelong Vietnam Veterans Sub-Branch;
- vii. Appointments with charitable organisations and business entities to promote Foundation;
- viii. The Board is researching options and opportunities to gain funding streams from private ancillary funds and philanthropic organisations; and

ix. Request for participation by members of the NSAA by being either friends of the Foundation of donors that will ensure an Australia-wide representation.

8.4.2 Members discussed financial situation of Foundation including a suggestion that funds from Sub-branches closing should be directed to the fund. Agreed a matter for individual Constitutions. TAS/NT request Friends of NSSF forms.

8.4.3 **Motion:** *That all reports as circulated be taken as read and accepted.*

Moved: F Miller (OTU)

Seconded: J Thorne (SA)

Motion Carried

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

9.1 From NSW Branch

9.1.1 **Motion:** *That the NSW Branch recommends to the National Association that dialogue with Legacy Australia be initiated with a view to allowing widows and dependants of deceased National Servicemen who did not serve in an operational area outside of Australia be eligible to come under the care of Legacy in some lesser form than Gold card status.*

9.1.2 The content of the motion was discussed in detail. It was pointed out that Legacy operate under a strict Charter based on a dying soldier at the front line requesting his mate to look after his wife and children. It was felt by members that the motion request does not fit this commitment. Agreed motion be held over pending investigation. President Earle Jennings undertook to take the request up with Legacy and bring back the motion to the March meeting.

9.2 Motion from the Floor

9.2.1 **Motion:** *That the National Executive be given authority to continue discussion with the National Service and Combined Forces Association with the view to be admitted as an affiliate association, to be ratified at the March 2019 meeting.*

Moved: T Stevenson (QLD)

Seconded: G Hand (ACT)

Motion Carried

10. GENERAL BUSINESS

10.1 Launch of National Service Rose

10.1.1 Mr John Thorne (SA) gave a presentation on the background and creation of a special rose in commemoration of National Service. He advised of a three-year programme of development and the current and future availability. He stated that the initial stock distributed had been exhausted but stock will be available through nurseries later this year and early next year at a cost of \$25.

10.1.2 Members discussed distribution and availability with a request for a list of nurseries carrying in stock.

10.2 AWM Service — Friday, 7 September

10.2.1 The Secretary advised members of requirements for forthcoming AWM ceremony.

11. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

11.1 Tuesday, 19 March 2019 in Sydney. Venue TBA.

11.2 With no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 5:10pm.