

DEBUNKING THE MYTHS

In this special Member Update, we provide facts to dispel myths and misinformation about RSL Queensland's proposed Constitution and By-Law improvements.

✗ **MYTH #1:** *"RSL Queensland's Constitution doesn't need to be changed."*

✓ **FACT:** *An updated Constitution will enable RSL Queensland to meet governance requirements, grow our membership, and fulfil our Objects into the future.*

What is being proposed	What is <u>not</u> being proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Comply with governance changes recommended by the regulator (ACNC). ✓ Introduce a Skill-based Board. ✓ Enable new member classes to grow membership and support Sub Branches. ✓ Reframe the Objects so that Sub Branches can enjoy tax concessions. ✓ Modernise the constitution to reflect ACNC good governance standards. ✓ Simplify wording so the Constitution is easier to understand and use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Ignore regulatory requirements, and potentially incur penalties. ✗ Reduce Service Members' control over, or say in, their League. ✗ Continue to ignore the ongoing decline in Membership until it's too late to fix.

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✗ **MYTH #2:** *“Auxiliaries are being dissolved & disrespected.”*

✓ **FACT:** *Auxiliaries will continue their important support work, recognised and appreciated by inviting them to become members of their Sub Branch.*

What is being proposed	What is <u>not</u> being proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Appreciate Auxiliaries by inviting them to be Members of their Sub Branch. ✓ Make Auxiliary Members of the League. ✓ Support the ongoing contribution of Auxiliaries as part of their Sub Branch. ✓ Auxiliaries will continue to be governed by Sub Branches. ✓ Auxiliary Life Members will retain this status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Disband Auxiliaries. ✗ Disrespect or diminish the contribution of Auxiliaries. ✗ Reduce the ability of Auxiliaries to support Sub Branches and veterans.

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- ✗ **MYTH #3:** *“The Council of Auxiliary has been sacked without consulting members.”*
- ✓ **FACT:** *The Board of RSL Queensland dissolved the State Council of Auxiliaries because the governance of Auxiliary is managed by Sub Branches.*

What has been done	What has <u>not</u> been done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Only the State Council of Auxiliary was dissolved by the RSL Queensland Board. ✓ No requirement for consultation ✓ No other Auxiliary has been dissolved. ✓ The State Council of Auxiliary is not the governing body of Auxiliaries - Auxiliaries are governed by Districts and Sub branches. ✓ There is no change to the governance of Auxiliaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Disrespect or diminish the contribution of Auxiliaries. ✗ Reduce the ability of Auxiliaries to support Sub Branches and veterans.

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✗ **MYTH #4:** “Service Members are losing control of their RSL.”

✓ **FACT:** *Service (Defence) Members retain exclusive control of RSL Queensland and all League matters, including election of District Presidents.*

What is being proposed	What is <u>not</u> being proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Members' voice to the Board will be retained through the State Council of District Presidents. ✓ Only Service (Defence) Members can vote on League matters. ✓ Eight Directors will be Sub Branch Defence Members. ✓ Seven Directors will be directly elected by members (<i>increasing</i> the number of positions directly elected by members by four). ✓ Additional independent Directors will <i>only</i> be sought <i>if</i> the Board believes there is a specific skills gap. ✓ The 2015 Constitution already allows the appointment of independent Directors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Reduce Members' votes or say in Board appointments. ✗ Disempower District Presidents. ✗ Increase the number of independent Directors.

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✗ **MYTH #5:** “We don’t currently have a duly elected State President.”

✓ **FACT:** Our Constitution requires that a State President remain in the role for three years and until Members vote again at the next AGM.

What is being proposed	What is <u>not</u> being proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RSL Queensland is fully compliant with our current Constitution (refer clause 9.4 & 9.5). ✓ Enable Members to elect their State President at the next AGM. ✓ Hold the AGM when it is safer to bring delegates together face to face. ✓ RSL Queensland and Regulators approved the change of date to December 2021. ✓ Following precedent - the previous State Deputy President stayed in his role until the November AGM in 2020. ✓ RSL Queensland’s current State President has made a public statement of his intention to re-submit for re-election. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Fail to meet the requirements of our Constitution. ✗ Risk delegates’ safety by conducting an unsafe AGM before they have had an opportunity to be vaccinated.

Clause 9.4 states that no Executive Officer may retain office for more than 3 years, and this is qualified with: without submitting himself or herself for re-election. It does NOT state that the executive office so held becomes vacant upon the expiration of the 3 years. It merely requires submission for re-election.

Clause 9.5 provides that it is at the AGM that each Board Executive Officer shall retire from office (before re-election). The effect of clause 9.4 & 9.5 when read together is that at no point will any of the Board Executive Officer positions be vacant. (There is precedence for this occurring. All members will recall that just last year, when the AGM was scheduled for November 2020, the State Deputy President’s office was never vacant – nor was this questioned.)

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✗ **MYTH #6:** “RSL will be overwhelmed by civilians.”

✓ **FACT:** RSL Queensland’s future Member recruitment will be firmly focused on gaining new Defence Members.

What is being proposed	What is <u>not</u> being proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage every Queensland Veteran to become a Member. ✓ Provide complimentary membership to all veterans. ✓ Take positive steps now to address the critical decline in our Membership. ✓ Work with and support Sub Branches to recruit new Defence Members. ✓ Create ‘digital’ Defence Members, to make it easier for new veterans to <i>initially</i> join. ✓ Ramp up marketing of the benefits of RSL Queensland membership to all veterans. ✓ Promote who we are and what we are focused on through advertising. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Try to recruit lots of members who aren’t Defence or their family. ✗ Stand by and hope veterans who aren’t Members become interested in joining.

The bigger RSL Queensland grows, the better we can represent veteran needs, influence positive outcomes for veterans via government, and help veterans through our network of Sub Branches and volunteers.

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- ✗ **MYTH #7:** “RSL Queensland illegally moved the date of this year’s AGM.”
- ✓ **FACT:** *Moving this year’s AGM to December was done in the interests of Member safety and was permitted by our Constitution and Government regulators.*

What is being proposed	What is <u>not</u> being proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The December AGM is permitted under our constitution. ✓ The AGM date was approved by the ACNC. ✓ RSL Queensland will meet its obligations with OFT by providing financials without requiring an extension. ✓ The AGM was moved to provide delegates the opportunity to come together in person later in the year when it is safer. ✓ Giving Members time to review and understand proposed Constitution changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Conduct an earlier AGM that risks delegates’ safety. ✗ Fail to meet the obligations of our Constitution and govt authorities. ✗ Use COVID as an excuse to delay.

The RSL Queensland Board wants Delegates to be able to experience a safe, face-to-face AGM. Current Australian vaccination rates, and the ongoing spread of COVID-19 variants, mean conducting indoor face-to-face events remains risky for now.

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- ✗ **MYTH #8:** “New member types will be able to vote on League matters”.
- ✓ **FACT:** Only Defence Members can vote on League Matters, and these have been clearly defined in the draft Constitution.

What is being proposed	What is <u>not</u> being proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The draft constitution defines “League Matters”. ✓ Only Defence Members can vote on League Matters. ✓ There will be clear reporting on all member classes. ✓ Only Defence Members can take up positions of President, Deputy President and Vice President. ✓ More Defence members in Sub Branches will improve the succession of Defence Member roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Permit non-Defence Members to vote on League Matters. ✗ Leave Sub Branches unsupported.

A ‘League Matter’ is any matter relating to the League, or its activities, including, without limitation, relationships with and representation on any committee or board of any League bodies, the welfare of veterans or those serving with the Australian Defence Force and commemorative events and subject to clause 13.18, the sale of any capital assets.

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✗ **MYTH #9:** *“Control of Membership is being taken from Sub Branches.”*

✓ **FACT:** *Only Sub Branches will approve Member applications for Sub Branches. RSL Queensland will support Sub Branches in recruiting Defence Members and will assist with the admin of some member processes.*

What is being proposed	What is <u>not</u> being proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Only the Sub Branch Board can approve Member applications for Sub Branches. ✓ Only the Sub Branch Board can approve a Member transfer to their Sub Branch. ✓ Sub Branches will continue to welcome new Sub Branch Members. ✓ RSL Queensland staff will assist Sub Branches with Member processing into a new Customer Relationship Management system. ✓ Volunteers will be able to spend more time supporting veterans, and less time in MMS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Take away Sub Branches' ownership and management of their Members. ✗ Permit those who aren't Defence Members to decide who can join RSL.

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- ✗ **MYTH #10:** *“No one outside of Defence will want to join the RSL.”*
- ✓ **FACT:** *Research of veterans and their families found many are interested in the RSL... but don't join due to outdated perceptions of RSL's focus, relevance and inclusiveness.*

What is being proposed	What is <u>not</u> being proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Help families of veterans feel welcome into the League. ✓ Enable families to contribute to, and continue the legacy of, veteran relatives. ✓ Grow Sub Branch volunteer workforces. ✓ Deepen the bonds between Veterans and the community. ✓ Enable civilians to demonstrate their respect for the service of all veterans. ✓ Provide prospect new Defence Members with what they say they want ... “a place where family and friends are welcome”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Deter or ignore family members interested in supporting veterans. ✗ Do nothing and let volunteer numbers continue to dwindle.

RSL Queensland's new Member Value Proposition and membership classes were built from the findings of widespread research – more than 12,000 veterans, members, and families were consulted, spanning all generations, services and service experiences.

Many family members are especially interested in joining RSL, motivated to contribute towards their family's legacy, and to better understand and support their veteran relatives.

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✗ **MYTH #11:** “*State Branch doesn’t care about Sub Branches.*”

✓ **FACT:** *State Branch is executing a comprehensive strategy to attract Members, create bright futures for veterans, and rebuild the community’s appreciation of all RSL is and does. Supporting, and investing in Sub Branches is critical to achieving all these goals.*

What is being done	What is <u>not</u> being done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Comprehensive discovery sessions with all Sub Branches to understand their key needs. ✓ Providing support via Managed IT services, merchandise reimbursement, grant funding and toolkits. ✓ Organising more support to come in 2021... including governance training, professional services and property management. ✓ Developing marketing campaigns to attract new Defence members. ✓ Addressing challenges with ATDP. ✓ Creating a team of people dedicated to helping Districts and Sub Branches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Assuming we know what Sub Branches need. ✗ Leaving Sub Branches to solve challenges alone.

Many veterans welcome the opportunity to connect with each other. Our Sub Branches are uniquely capable and experienced to provide this opportunity. The MVP, founded in research, is our new approach to attract more Members to the League. It includes initiatives that will deliver significant support to Sub Branches and volunteers, to secure the future of both our Network and veterans.

RSL Queensland staff are deeply connected to our organisation’s purpose, and are working to serve, support and grow the RSL under the direction of the veterans who form RSL Queensland’s Board of Directors.

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✗ **MYTH #12:** *“Sub Branch Services will be sabotaged.”*

✓ **FACT:** *State Branch is executing a comprehensive strategy to support Sub Branches.*

What is being done	What is <u>not</u> being done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Comprehensive District and Sub Branch discoveries completed to understand their key needs. ✓ Key needs identified in areas of service delivery including compensation, welfare & advocacy. ✓ Working with District Presidents to agree optimal approaches. ✓ Complementing the services delivered by Sub Branches. ✓ Addressing challenges with ATDP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Taking over Sub Branch services. ✗ Leaving Sub Branches to solve service challenges alone.