



**DFWA VIC BRANCH**  
**61st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**26 AUG 2020**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The normal purpose of a President's Report to the Annual General Meeting is to summarise the Branch's activities over the last twelve months and to report to the Association's members the proper management of the Branch's affairs.

If we were in normal times the above would be the case. However, we do not find ourselves in normal times.

Members will be aware that the AGM was originally scheduled for May. But late last year / early this year COVID-19 appeared and quickly changed what was normal to what is now experienced as COVID normal. In early May, in anticipation of the first wave COVID restriction being lifted by early August, the Branch applied to Consumer Affairs Victoria (the regulatory authority) for permission to delay the AGM until 26 August. Notice of this decision was advised to members with the mail-out of the mid-year Camaraderie magazine. Then along came the second wave of COVID in Victoria which has thrown all plans out the window.

Taking into account the requirement for the Branch to hold an AGM and that, following the membership being notified of the revised AGM date, only one non-Committee member indicated his intention to attend the meeting and that, even in the unlikely event that COVID numbers reduce to zero, it is unlikely that public gatherings will be allowed before 2021, the Committee has agreed to the following actions:

- a. The publishing on the DFWA (Vic) webpage of this report; the Treasurer's Report and the 2019 Audit Report will constitute the AGM for 2020.
- b. That all Committee members will remain in their current positions until the 2021 AGM.
- c. That the 2019 Audit Report be provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission as required by the relevant Victorian and Commonwealth legislation.

**DFWA Victoria**

The Branch has continued to be well managed by the Committee and of particular note is the effort and attention that our Secretary / Treasurer brings to his duties and functions. Up until the Stage 4 COVID-19 restrictions being imposed on the Melbourne area, the office was manned most weekdays. When the Stage 4 restrictions were declared we applied for a permit to permit one Committee member to man the office but this request was denied and we have since moved to operating entirely online. While this is not the best of situations, it is manageable in the short term and we can only hope that by the end of the planned Stage 4 period COVID numbers will reduce to a level that would allow us to resume operations from the office. Time will tell.

## **National Executive**

If COVID can be said to have a silver lining it is possible to see one in the change in how the National Executive Committee (NATEX) is now operating. Since early this year NATEX has moved to more frequent on-line meetings which has allowed many issues to be addressed in a more timely manner than had previously been the case when NATEX only met twice a year.

On 30 June the ACT Branch un-incorporated and all previous ACT Branch members were transferred to the NSW Branch. This is in line with the DFWA Strategic Plan that was first developed in 2012. The Queensland Branch has indicated its intention to also un-incorporate but has held off while we await the development of a National Office structure and national constitution that allows for national management of ordinary membership. Currently, other than for members of the NATEX, DFWA National is neither structured, resourced nor legally able to manage a national membership regime. As a first step in moving towards a fully national organisation, a working group has been formed under the chairmanship of the Deputy National President to review the current DFWA National Constitution with a view to providing organizational options for both a new structure and a fully national constitution. It is expected that the working group will be in a position to make a recommendation to NATEX by the time of the DFWA National AGM in November.

## **Conclusion**

The last twelve months has brought individual and collective challenges that were never anticipated. The ability of the Australian community and those in leadership positions to take on these gives me great hope for the future. The Victorian Branch of the Association remains strong and is committed to advancing the welfare of the veteran community. These strange times have meant adopting strange solutions such as not being able to hold a face to face AGM. However, these times will change and the Branch Committee is committed to the ongoing support of our membership and working with the National Executive and other DFWA Branches in moving the Association towards a sustainable and productive national organisation.

Stephen Turner  
Commander RAN Rtd

President DFWA (Vic)

26 August 2020