



**DFWA VIC BRANCH
64th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 30 MAY 2023**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE DFWA (VIC) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

30 MAY 2023

I would like to thank the committee for your support over the last 12 months. In particular, Greg Powell who has provided outstanding support and maintains the office. Greg continues to maintain the administration for the Branch and continues to meet the governance obligations required. I would also like to thank Mike Gahan for volunteering to represent the Branch at the National RSL ESO forums in Sydney and Canberra, also John Scully for representing the Branch at the Victorian ESO Forum Summit in July last year.

Financial Management

The Branch's finances continue to remain sound despite the slow decline in membership. The Branch has sufficient funds to continue to operate for the next few years. I note that the Branch has received a number of donations which is a result from the donation slip that was included in the last Camaraderie.

The last twelve months

The last 12 months has been a busy period. Greg and I have attended a number of Deputy Commissioner (DC) DVA Victoria forums and I have sent the Minutes etc out to members of the committee for your information. These forums have been very informative and the DC has arranged to have a number of presenters attend to deliver information from their Organisations, such as Legacy and the Bravery Trust. I also attended the online DC DVA Budget update, which was sent out to all committee members. Brian Broadribb suggested we compare the budgets from 2022 and 2023. I am in the process of researching this to provide an update at a later meeting.

On the National front, the development of the National constitution has again been delayed and NSW Branch has taken over this task. I have my doubts that there will be a solution this year to finalizing the constitution due to Branches not being able to agree on some of the wording.

At the last online NATEX on 1 May 2023, an issue was discussed and will continue to be monitored on essential home services for senior Veterans. It appears that there is evidence that the Gold and White cards do not open the doors to services beyond the general Australian population when Veterans have been referred to and being managed by My Aged Care and their providers. I will keep the Branch in the loop on any developments of this.

I have had discussions with the WA Branch in regards to taking over their membership at the end of this year. I have informed the WA Branch that we are happy to take this on, however they will need to ensure that they transfer sufficient funds to cover the cost of Camaraderie and postage. I have also requested a full list of their members and will continue to engage with WA Branch on this issue. I have been informed that there are approximately 200 members that will be transferred.



In early March I attended the International Airshow at Avalon and after speaking to many Air Force personnel at the show, it was disappointing to hear that not many of them had actually heard of the Defence Force Welfare Association. I have broached this with the National President and I recommended that she meets with the three Service Chiefs to discuss how we can advertise DFWA to the broader Service community.

Also in late February, I met with the Federal Minister of Veteran's Affairs, Matt Keogh to discuss the Legislation reform, I sent the committee a copy of the presentation from DC DVA Victoria. National is now preparing a submission to be forwarded to the Veteran's Legislation Reform Consultation Pathway. The public has been asked to provide input to help develop a future implementation strategy that results in a simpler, sustainable, legislative framework to deliver a better future to the Veteran community. This consultation pathway went digital and community members were invited to participate in webinar sessions.

Later this year the Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide and Prevention will be visiting Victoria. The DC DVA Victoria forum held in February 2023 provided a presentation by DVA and Defence Legal Service. This organization is available to assist anyone who wishes to make a submission to the Royal Commission. Below is an extract from an email I received re the Interim Report:

In addition to the notification on 4 April 2023, as was noted, Defence in partnership with the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA), has led the delivery of five Interim Report recommendations (9 to 13). To date recommendations 9, 10, 12 and 13 have been implemented and recommendation 11 is well progressed. These recommendations sought to simplify the process for members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), veterans and their representatives to access records.

As part of this work Defence has established a single entry point called the [Information Access Unit](#) (IAU). The IAU will change the way requests for personal records and information are managed and will support applicants to access information in a streamlined, consistent and trauma-informed way. The IAU is for current and ex-serving ADF members, families and representatives to request information from Defence.

Further information on the implementation of the Interim Report recommendations can be found on the [Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Taskforce Intranet Site](#).

Lastly, I look forward to working with all of you in the next twelve months.

Daryll J Topp

Daryll Topp
President

28 May 2023