



**MINUTES OF A STATE COUNCIL MEETING  
OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA,  
NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH INC.**

**Conducted Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017  
At St Mary's (The Train)**

**Opening**

1. The President established that a quorum was present and opened the meeting at 11am with a minute's silence.

**Attendance, Apologies and Proxies**

2. **Attendance and Proxies:** 2 Proxies from Bathurst

President	Greg Cant
Treasurer	Tony Walker (Delegate for Bathurst)
Secretary	Pam Forsdike OAM
Patron	Gordon(Dutchy)Holland
State Advocate	Ken Foster OAM
St Mary's	Sam Vecchio Andy Forsdike OAM Tony Mullavey John Foeken
Macarthur	John Lees Ray James Patrick O'Grady

3. **Apologies** Carol Ward CSM

**Visitors**

Nil

**Moved:** St Mary's **Seconded:** Macarthur that the Attendance, Apologies and Proxies be Accepted

**4. Previous Minutes**

**Moved:** Bathurst **Seconded:** St Mary's that Minutes of the previous Meeting be Adopted

**5. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

Nil

**6. Correspondence**

All correspondence has been distributed to the sub-branches

**Moved:** St Mary's **Seconded:** Bathurst Carried

**Business Arising from Correspondence:**

Greg asked what has been done in regard to the Web Site, Clive has paid for another year, we now have all the codes for the Web site. The next step is to make arrangements to have a meeting with John Howells and get everything set up with him. A meeting will be arranged with Greg, John and Pam to change over all the details.

**Moved:** St Mary's **Seconded:** Bathurst that inward correspondence be accepted and outwards correspondence be ratified

Carried

**7. Financial Report:** Financial Report was emailed to all Sub Branches.

The investment account matured this month, it was invested at 2.35% we received 519.48 in interest, I have reinvested it for another three years at 3.20%.

The Treasurer asked that when the sub branches put money into the State account can they please email the Treasurer to let them know, otherwise the Treasurer does not know which sub branch has deposited the money.

**Moved:** Bathurst **Seconded:** St Mary's that the Financials be accepted

Carried

## 8. Reports

- a. President's Report is attached.
- b. Secretary's Report is attached
- c. State Advocates Report is attached
- d. Sub-Branch Reports are attached.

**Moved:** Bathurst **Seconded:** St Mary's that all reports be accepted

Carried

## 9. Motions on Notice

## 10. Agenda Items:

Nil

## 11. General Business:

At the last ESO round table Jennifer Collins mentioned that the ATDP has been so successful in NSW that it is now going National.

There was some discussion on the new ATDP requirements which are now being implemented, some of the Volunteers are a bit reluctant to do refresher courses, however they can be accessed on recognition of prior learning and go on from there in the Sub Branch to be brought up to date with other requirements they may need to continue their Pension work.

We had a discussion last year on the quantity of State meetings for 2017, this came up because we couldn't get a quorum, we put through a motion to change the Constitution to bring down the quorum to a level we could manage and it is getting tougher to get people to the State Council Meeting. We discussed whether we need to have four State Council meetings per year, or whether we could have two State Council Meetings and two State Executive Meetings to which all Sub Branches would be invited to attend. Input would be taken from the sub Branches, all we are doing is removing the necessity for a quorum four times a year and having it only twice a year.

A motion was put forward by Macarthur

Seconded by St Mary's

That the State Council hold two meetings per year in March and September plus the AGM in March, Executive to meet as required.

Carried

Had an email from Victoria asking if we would like to have 65 crosses from those who lost their lives from NSW in Vietnam that they used in Memorial Services last year. St Mary's to arrange to have them brought up here.

Greg put forward that we should ask Brigadier General Charles New who is head of the RAAMC, he is still a serving service officer, he works very closely with St Mary's we send diggers to see him he charges no one anything except the Medicare fee, he has asked if he could be Patron as he would be very proud to be our second Patron for the VVAA NSW Branch because of the way St Mary's has worked with him, he has been very involved with the Veterans for many years.

Motion: Macarthur

Seconded: by Bathurst

That Brigadier General Charles New be asked to become the second Patron of the VVAA NSW Branch  
Carried

There was discussion on the increase of fees for the storage container, after discussion it was decided to leave the paperwork at Bathurst for the foreseeable future, Sam will look for a smaller unit.

Andy went to Wagga last week for the 21 Platoon March out, as you know we have been affiliated with 21 platoon for the past couple of years, he is wanting to have a Shield for the best in class at each pass out, with a small shield given to the winner and their name put onto the large shield which will be kept at Wagga base. After discussion it was decided to go ahead and order both, so they will be ready for the next March out later on in the year.

Ken mentioned that the Australian Government has been in talks with the Vietnamese Government and that there will be no Commemorative Mission from the Australian Government into Vietnam, there won't be the normal service at Long Tan on ANZAC Day, the only service will be in the Australian Embassy in Hanoi. At the moment they are allowing small parties to visit the Memorial, however that could change at any time. There was a paper come out wanting to change the name of Vietnam Veterans' day back to Long Tan day, after discussion the State Council decided not to support this change.

Pam & I had a meeting with Len & Wendy Schulz OAM we received a cheque which will go to St Mary's from the General Fund and another cheque from the Benevolent fund to go to Macarthur. We now have all the relevant paperwork, this now closes the Ryde City Sub Branch completely. There was a photocopier which Len has been told to donate it to a likeminded Organisation such as the RSL.

**12. Next Meeting:** Tuesday 9 May 2017 at St Mary's Train commencing at 11AM

**13. Closure:**

There being no further business the State Council Meeting was closed at 12.20PM

State President

Greg Cant

**STATE PRESIDENT  
MARCH REPORT**

2016 has seen our numbers become if not only more depleted due to members marching on but also due to age and ill health affecting the ability of a lot of our members being able to give of their time and energy. In December of 2016 we settled the final closure of Ryde-Eastwood sub branch and although all members of that now defunct sub branch were invited to continue an association with the

Vietnam Veterans Association through the St Marys Sub Branch only a small proportion of the Members have taken up that offer. I do not blame any members for now taking the time to enjoy their sunset years as I have also felt the pinch over the last 12 months or so and have had to take more respite leave than normal. However I must thank those that continue on to do the best we can for not only Members of our association but for the betterment of all veterans and ex-service members of the ADF. The coming year will see some major changes in NSW with the retirement of the Deputy Commissioner of Veteran Affairs Ms Jennifer Collins. Jennifer has put in a number of years and hard miles on behalf of the veteran community and has never been afraid to make the hard decisions that at times are needed to keep the DVA viable and relevant to veterans and their ESO representatives. Coming from a background in mental hospitals she certainly knew what difficulties that “Mental Health” issues meant to the ADF.

The change to the TIP training program to is going to be one of the major issues facing all ESO organisations this year. Without doubt it is going to cost us some pension officers and possible well fare officers, but I am afraid that this is the nature of progress and whether we like it or not progress as they say waits for no one. We as an organisation have always tried to get the “Younger Veteran” involved, however at this point very few of them have shown any inclination. I really don’t see this as changing in the near future, all though an examination of numbers I believe would show many more younger veterans are out on “Special Rate” (the equivalent of TPI) at this point (post East Timor, Iraq Afghanistan) against Vietnam Veterans at the same Post Vietnam era. All though we have seen an incredible number and diversity among new ESO’s supposedly supporting the younger vets, we still find that our younger vets who are covered under SRCA and MRCA are making their way to the doors of Sub Branches like The St Marys Out Post (now branded as the St Marys Veterans Centre). This centre completed over 500 claims in the last 12 months, the majority of these were under the post VEA period all though of course some were covered by multiple Acts.

Very shortly we will be in the midst of the ANZAC Day commemorations. I would urge all members to join with their comrades in arms at their local RSL Sub Branch to celebrate this occasion. Regardless of your feelings about the shenanigans going on at NSW State Council of the RSL, ANZAC Day is about the diggers not the RSL Councillors.

Greg Cant JP  
NSW State President of the VVAA  
Wednesday, 15 March 2017

## **STATE ADVOCATES MARCH REPORT**

Over the past year many of our practitioners have been concerned and involved in the progress of the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) as it continues to evolve and the influence and authority of the Training Information program (TIP) is replaced.

There have been briefings in regional areas and in Sydney at the Northern beaches, Eastern Suburbs and St Marys from the ATDP regional manager’s team and I understand that they are trying to arrange a venue for a further information session in South West Sydney in early April.

Recognition of prior learning assessment continue across Australia and will be available for some time into the future, I believe this is the easiest transition path from TIP to ATDP.

There has been a lot of miss information on this over the past year and I believe reading the information distributed by the ATDP team is worth reading before we believe some of the rumours, Any questions can be put to me or directly to the ATDP secretariat.

The Veterans Review Board continues to roll out the Alternative Dispute Resolution process and I for one see this as a positive way to improve the time taken to resolve n appeal.

The Department of Veterans Affairs also continue to work on processes to improve delivery times.

## Ken Foster

Ken Foster OAM JP  
VVAA NSW Advocate  
14 March 2017

### STATE SECRETARY MARCH REPORT

I had occasion to ring Trevor Lawrence over the past week to be informed that his health has declined to the extent that he has now residing in the Keith Payne VC Nursing home, at the moment he is in hospital as he has broken his leg. Our Event Co-ordinator Carol has had a total Knee replacement, there were a few concerning moments before and after the operation however she is now on the road to recovery. Our Vice President Andy attended the 21 Platoon March out last week, all went off very well, we have a new contact, Lt. Kaiya Chen who seems to be very interested in finding out more about the Vietnam Veterans, Andy is keeping in contact with her and we intend to go down for the next 21 Platoon March out.

Pam Forsdike OAM JP

### ST MARYS OUTPOST MARCH REPORT

All in all we had a very good and fruitful 2016 year.  
Our AGM was held on Sunday the 26<sup>th</sup> February, all committee positions were declared vacant.

**Elected unopposed representing no change, were:**

President Tony Mullavey  
Vice President George Perrin  
Vice President John Foeken  
Secretary Sam Vecchio  
Treasurer Ted Fish  
Assistant Sec. Graham Breckell  
Assistant Sec. Glenn Jones  
Assistant Treasurer. George Perrin

**Pension and Welfare, BEST Activity Report**

Total Claims Submitted= 647  
Total Claims Finalised=618

Total Interviews Only=2282  
Total Welfare Travel= 21,16 klm's  
Home Visits=336  
Hospital Visits=503  
Individual Patients Seen=4,707  
Funeral attended=41  
Outreach Travel=292 klm's  
Total Hours 2,198

That concludes my report  
Tony Mullavey  
President

### **MACARTHUR MARCH REPORT**

January, February 2017 has been a busy time with membership renewals and welfare work, we have 110 financial members at present and 23 of those are Life members. There are still a few members outstanding to pay their membership dues and our secretary and office staff are chasing those members up.

We have secured Bunning's BBQ days at both Campbelltown and The cross roads stores, these BBQ's raise much needed funds to help us continue our welfare work.

Our welfare officers are working on the required changes to welfare and attended an ATDP program recently and they are progressing through the program as required, they keep abreast of what is required and that they update the executive regularly.

Our monthly BBQ at Dredge cottage are well attended and our bi-monthly general meetings which are held at Dredge cottage are well attended. At the February meeting our AGM elections for all positions were held with the following results.

President Ray James & (Delegate to State)  
Senior Vice President Patrick O'Grady & (Delegate to State)  
Junior Vice President Ray Kushert  
Hon. Secretary John Lees & (Delegate to State)  
Hon. Treasurer Brian Fyfe

The Hon. Secretary will forward a full listing of all positions including management committee to the State Hon. Secretary.

We continue to have our social outings to various locations, these visits prove to be popular with many of our members. We have lost the use of the council bus as has other similar organisations in Macarthur region however we either travel by train and bus or in our own vehicles.

We at Macarthur are gearing up for a busy year for many reasons but I guess the main reason being that we are all a year older and getting much older so we need to keep in touch with one and other to keep an eye on each other and make sure we give assistance we're it's needed and immediately that it is needed.

We look forward to delivering the services to our members in the coming year as we have in previous years, and continue to work with both VVAA NSW Executive and VVAA Executive.

Ray James  
President  
Vietnam Veterans Association  
Macarthur Sub Branch

## **HUNTER MARCH REPORT**

### **YEARLY REPORT FOR NSW STATE COUNCIL**

I must apologies for the delay in reports to state, although I have been assured that they were sent.

We at Hunter Central Coast VVAA sub branch have had a lot of the executive being injured or taken ill. I myself have been in hospital 5 months out of the last 6.

We have taken on a busy schedule in our area. First we purchased a memorial, which is the Australian flag waving in the wind with the names of those who died in Vietnam. We aim in the future to find out the names of the local Vietnam vets who died since they have been home, and their names will go on the back.

Our other main project is a park next to the Toukley Bridge. We are building this park in conjunction with the tidy towns group. There has been a lot of complements from the public as to this area that they can now use for fishing and pick nicks. There is still a lot of ongoing work, with grass and various plants being laid.

We have had our AGM, with the same members being re-elected.

President: Trevor Lawrence OAM JP

Vice President: Graham Cook

Secretary: John Fraher

Treasurer: Robert Williamson