

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 - 2029

CAIRNS RSL SUB-BRANCH

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Our Recent Plans and Achievements	4
Vision Statement.....	5
Values.....	5
Our Objects	6
Strategic Issues	7
Our Activities.....	9
Our Strategies	10
Supporting RSL Queensland Strategic Direction	13



INTRODUCTION

The Cairns RSL Sub Branch Inc. stands as a pivotal part of the extensive network of 230 Sub-Branches spread across Queensland, collectively under the umbrella of RSL Queensland. RSL Queensland was established with the sole purpose of promoting the interests and well-being of both serving and ex-serving men and women of the Australian Defence Forces, along with their dependants. Aligned with this purpose, the Cairns RSL Sub Branch Inc. has embraced the RSL Queensland Objects outlined in section 3.1 of its constitution.

RSL Queensland's mission is to provide care, commemoration, and camaraderie to enable veterans and their families to live with dignity and respect.

Nestled in Far North Queensland, the Cairns RSL Sub Branch has been an enduring presence on the same site for an impressive 107 years. With a membership base of nearly 700 individuals, supported by over 40 volunteers and two full-time staff members, the Sub Branch stands as a vibrant and essential entity in the community.

The Cairns RSL Sub Branch is unwavering in its commitment to maintaining the strength and resilience of the organisation, ensuring it can effectively support Australian veterans and their families for generations to come. To articulate this commitment and guide its actions, the Sub Branch has developed a comprehensive strategic plan that charts the course for the next five years.

Acknowledging the importance of best practice governance, the Cairns RSL Sub Branch takes pride in seeking external expertise from qualified professionals. Over the years, this investment in external support has enabled the Sub Branch to uphold the highest standards of governance, especially vital for an organisation of its size and structure. The strategic plan not only encompasses the Sub Branch's objectives but also includes a dedicated section outlining how it aligns with and contributes to the broader RSL Queensland strategic plan, with a particular focus on enhancing governance practices.

In essence, this strategic plan serves as a roadmap, a testament to the Cairns RSL Sub Branch Inc.'s dedication to its mission, its members, and the broader community. Through collaboration, governance excellence, and a forward-thinking approach, the Sub Branch stands poised to continue its impactful service to Australian veterans and their families.



OUR RECENT PLANS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Cairns RSL Sub Branch Inc. has been actively involved in developing and maintaining strategic and operational plans. Having a structured approach to guide activities and resource allocation is crucial for the success and sustainability of the Cairns RSL Sub Branch. Reporting achievements in our annual reports enhances transparency and accountability

To ensure the effectiveness of the Cairns RSL Sub Branch planning efforts, we will undertake

1. Regular Review and Update:
2. Alignment with Mission and Goals:
3. Stakeholder Engagement:
4. Performance Metrics:
5. Risk Management:
6. Communication Strategy:
7. Resource Allocation:
8. Adaptability:
9. Training and Development:
10. Continuous Improvement:

By incorporating these considerations into the planning process, we will be able to enhance the agility and effectiveness of the Cairns RSL Sub Branch Inc., ensuring that we remain responsive to the evolving needs of the Veteran community and membership.

VISION STATEMENT

Caring for our Defence Family

VALUES

Our Values are the same values as the Australian Defence Force¹.

Courage, Respect, Integrity, Excellence, Service



OUR OBJECTS

The Objects of the RSL are to:

1. Provide for the sick, helpless, wounded, aged, vulnerable, destitute and needy among those who are serving or who have served in the Australian Defence Forces and their dependants;
2. Perpetuate the close and kindly ties of friendship created by a mutual service in the Australian Defence Force or in the forces of nations traditionally allied with Australia and the recollections associated with that experience;
3. Maintain a proper standard of dignity and honour among all past and present members of the Defence Forces of Australia and to set an example of public spirit and noble hearted endeavour;
4. Preserve the memory and the records of those who suffered and died for Australia, erect monuments to their valour, provide them with suitable burial places, and establish and preserve, in their honour, the annual commemoration days known as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and other commemorative days;
5. Encourage loyalty to Australia and secure patriotic service in the interests of Australia;
6. Protect the good name and preserve the interests and standing of members of the Australian Defence Force;
7. Encourage Members, as citizens, to serve Australia with that spirit of self-sacrifice and loyalty with which they served as members of the Australian Defence Forces; and
8. Provide welfare to the sick, helpless, wounded, vulnerable, aged, destitute, and needy.

STRATEGIC SITUATION

Far North Queensland has a rapidly growing veteran population, and it is important that we continue to expand our service offerings in line with the increased demand being felt across the state.

1. The estimated residential population of the Cairns region was 163.923 persons as at 30 June 2023. The region has experienced an average annual growth rate of 1.9% over the last 10 years.
2. Approximately 1050 people are employed directly in Defence roles in the region.
3. There are three Defence bases in the region:
 - HMAS Cairns
 - 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment (51 FNQR) in:
 - Cairns
 - Weipa
 - Thursday Island
 - RAAF Base Scherger
4. Within Cairns Local Government area there are 3339 DVA clients of which:
 - 2819 are veterans, the majority of which are aged over 50
 - Some 970 are disability pensioners while around 547 are service pensioners
 - There are approximately 208 war widows.
5. 680 Cairns RSL Sub Branch members
 - 205 are currently serving Defence Force Members
6. As long as there is a Defence community in Cairns there will continue to be a need for advocacy and Veteran Support and services.

Strategic Issues

1. Capital
 - Continue to plan and deliver events and services for members.
 - Continue to use monies to support the Cairns Veteran Community
 - Funds must continue to be expended on intended purpose.
2. Advocates
 - Continue to provide advocacy services for Veterans and their families.
 - Build on the advocacy services available at the Cairns RSL Sub Branch
 - Plan for the future and actively recruit and work with RSL FND and QLD on a permanent solution to continue to be able to offer advocacy services at the Cairns RSL Sub Branch.

3. Volunteers

- Decline in volunteering started in early 2010, but due to the Covid Pandemic Australia has seen a further decline in people volunteering.
- Continue to offer volunteering opportunities to our members and their families and actively recruit new volunteers. Volunteers will be recruited, inducted, and supported throughout their journey to understand the impact they are making in the Veteran Community.
- Volunteer coordinator to establish relationships and open communication.

4. Future

- The Cairns RSL Sub Branch is committed to supporting RSL Queensland 2030 Strategy and supporting the mission of providing Care, Commemoration and Camaraderie.

5. Facilities/Amenities

- Upgrade to access to the Sub Branch
- Vehicle to assist with ageing membership.
- Safe Place for Veterans.
- Onsite Storage
- Carpark

6. Income streams

- Diversify our income streams.
- Future income streams and investments to secure the longevity of the Cairns RSL Sub Branch.

7. Members

- Continue to grow our membership.
- Continue to support the Cairns Veteran Community
- Induction for membership
- Encourage younger veterans to join and be a part of the Cairns RSL Sub Branch
- Encourage serving members to become members of the Cairns RSL Sub Branch so not only can they be a part of the Sub Branch but also be a part of the RSL Sub Branch Future.

OUR ACTIVITIES

With respect to the furtherance of the Objects² and as guided by our vision, values and constitution, we may do any or all of the following:

- a. be part of a national association known as the League, which is non-sectarian, and in relation to party politics, non-partisan;
- b. establish and accept trusts having for their objects the welfare and benefit of members of the League its State Branches, or Sub- Branches, or of any member, or ex-member, of the Australian Defence Force, or their dependants;
- c. establish Women's Auxiliary and Citizens' Auxiliary branches of the League throughout the State of Queensland and in such other places as the association may, from time to time determine;
- d. seek the cooperation of like associations, corporations and/or other persons to further the principal and commemorative/patriotic objects;
- e. undertake all manner of charitable or other work to further the objects and to accept any specific or general gifts or bequests for such charitable or other purposes, whether conditional or not;
- f. make grants to and give assistance to such persons, trusts, groups, associations, societies, institutions or other organisations and authorities and to establish such scholarships as the association may, from time to time, determine;
- g. receive any funds and to distribute these funds in a manner that best attains the objects of the association;
- h. raise money to further the aims of the association and to secure sufficient funds for the purposes of the association;
- i. Maintain sub-branch premises;
- j. apply for and maintain such necessary licenses, authorities and permits to carry out the association's activities; and
- k. do all such things as are incidental, convenient or conducive to the attainment of all or any of the objects of the association.

The services we provide to veterans and their families include, but are not limited to the following, namely:

- Compensation and Wellbeing advocacy services
- Welfare assistance to those in need
- Fortnightly E-Sit Rep and President report
- Hospital and home visits
- Coordination of commemorative events and activities
- Monthly social events
- Three major events each year that recognise and acknowledge Veterans and their families
- Eulogy and Poppy Services
- Scholarship opportunities for Veterans and their families
- A free military museum.

² The Cairns Sub Branch Inc. Constitution, Section 3.2

OUR STRATEGIES

Concerning our Objects and in light of the strategic issues, we have agreed to the following strategies:

- 1. Provide for the sick, helpless, wounded, aged, vulnerable, destitute, and needy among those who are serving or who have served in the Australian Defence Forces and their dependents.**
 - 1.1. Continuing to provide responsive, caring, and professional Advocacy and Well-Being services.
 - 1.2. Maintain and improve Scholarships offering support for children of the Defence Family.
 - 1.3. Expansion of the networking and collaboration with existing community support services.
 - 1.4. Develop continuous improvement feedback loop mechanisms to assist in developing social and recreational programs/activities that engender camaraderie and formation of personal, family, and community Defence Family bonds.
 - 1.5. Establishment of Advisory Bodies to assist the Board in the access and provision of best practice services.
 - 1.6. Development of current initiatives into sustainable business plans to optimise Sub Branch services.
- 2. Perpetuate the close and kindly ties of friendship created by a mutual service in the Australian Defence Force or in the forces of nations traditionally allied with Australia and the recollections associated with that experience.**
 - 2.1. Continued production and distribution of the Sub Branch's fortnightly E- Sit-Rep
 - 2.2. Further develop the distribution of E-Sit Rep through regular fortnightly e-sitrep editions
 - 2.3. Continued enhancement and growth of the Sub Branch social media presence.
 - 2.4. Continued use of the member communication portal on the Sub Branch Web Site.
 - 2.5. Expansion of the networking and collaboration with other regional RSL sub-branches, Far Northern District, RSL Qld, and other non-RSL ESOs.
- 3. Maintain a proper standard of dignity and honour among all past and present members of the Defence Forces of Australia and to set an example of public spirit and noble-hearted endeavour**
 - 3.1. Ensure the actions, presentation, and decisions of Board Members and Staff maintain at all times a high level of personal and professional standards, dignity, and honour.
 - 3.2. Develop continuous improvement feedback mechanisms to ensure regular feedback is sought and captured for all Sub Branch members, all past and present Defence Force members, and all defence Cairns RSL Sub Branch Inc strategic partners to assist the Board in maintaining and enhancing dignity and honour.

4. Preserve the memory and the records of those who suffered and died for Australia, erect monuments to their valour, provide them with suitable burial places, and establish and preserve, in their honour, the annual commemoration days known as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and other commemorative days.

- 4.1. Continue to provide paid administrative support and structure towards the ongoing enhancement of the Kokoda Hall Museum
- 4.2. Maintain an appropriate level of funding for museum infrastructure and operations.
- 4.3. Continue the high-quality presentation of commemorative events through the development of a recognisable commemorative theme for each event that will highlight specific periods of conflict/peacekeeping.
- 4.4. Design and develop commemorative events/monuments for more recent and or forgotten conflicts.
- 4.5. Educate the general public on ADF activities.

5. Encourage loyalty to Australia and secure patriotic service in the interests of Australia;

- 5.1. Continued paid administrative support of:
 - 5.1.1. Cadet units that support and develop young people's loyalty and service to Australia.
 - 5.1.2. Local HMAS Cairns, 51st Battalion, and other Regular and Reserve Military Units.
 - 5.1.3. Networking and partnering with schools in the delivery of Sub Branch services and activities.
 - 5.1.4. Expansion of the networking and collaboration with other regional RSL sub branches, Far Northern District, RSL Qld, and other non RSL ESO's.

6. Protect the good name and preserve the interests and standing of members of the Australian Defence Force;

- 6.1. Ensure that the Governance and Operations of the Sub Branch are at all times maintained to the highest professional standards.
- 6.2. Provide ongoing opportunity for Professional Development opportunities for the Board, Volunteers, and Staff.
- 6.3. Enhance networking and partnering with established Defence Force presence within the Cairns and FNQ area to understand up-to-date concerns and interests of current serving members.

7. Encourage Members, as citizens, to serve Australia with that spirit of self-sacrifice and loyalty with which they served as members of the Australian Defence Forces; and

- 7.1. Establishment of a responsive and supportive volunteer network that offers ex service personnel and members an opportunity for continued service in the spirit of self-sacrifice.
- 7.2. Maximise members' stakeholder engagement in the Cairns RSL Sub Branch planning and service development processes.
- 7.3. Encourage those who are currently Serving or transitioning out of the Australian Defence Forces to volunteer/participate as a member of the Cairns RSL Sub Branch Inc.
- 7.4. Encourage those that have transitioned that have not yet engaged with the Cairns RSL Sub Branch Inc to consider doing so.

8. Provide welfare to the sick, helpless, wounded, vulnerable, aged, destitute and needy.

- 8.1. Identify and maintain partnerships with existing general community support services for their family and or significant others that enable an efficient and effective referral process for people in need.



SUPPORTING RSL QUEENSLAND 2030 STRATEGY

Cairns RSL Sub-Branch is part of the Queensland State Branch of the RSL. As such we are committed to supporting and implementing the RSL Qld 2030 Strategy.

RSL QUEENSLAND MISSION

To provide ***care, commemoration, and camaraderie*** to enable veterans and their families to live with dignity and respect – is our guiding light and underpins all that we do.

Care – Caring for the welfare and interest of Veterans

Commemoration – Enabling and supporting the commemoration of the service and sacrifice of veterans

Camaraderie – Providing avenues for veterans to rekindle their bonds of service and mateship

How will the Cairns RSL Sub Branch Support and Implement:

Care

- Continue to provide advocacy and wellbeing services to veterans and their families
- Provide emergency support to veterans
- Continue to work with RSL FND and QLD wellbeing to assist veterans and their families

Commemoration

- Continue to organise and hold commemorative services and events for the Cairns Community to honour our service people.
- Continue to be involved with RSL Queensland programs to educate young people on Australia's involvement in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations, for example, postcards of honour and Draw to Remember.
- Hold events to acknowledge and thank Veterans for their services for example International Women's Day, Thank You for Your Service Gala Dinner, and Peacekeeper Peacemaker Lunch.

Camaraderie

- Hold a variety of events to provide Veterans with the opportunity to rekindle and develop friendships.
- Offer volunteer opportunities to members.
- Work with other ESO's to raise awareness of available resources and activities available.



