



**AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPER & PEACEMAKER
VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE**

HEIDELBERG REPATRIATION VETERAN CENTRE,
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Also assisting Veterans of Iraq, Afghanistan and Peacetime Service

*Commemorating 20 Years of The Deployment of the
Australian Contingent to the United Nations Advance
Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC)*

9th October 2012

**National President's Annual Report to the Annual General Meeting of 20th October
2012, held at RAAF Association at East Hawthorn, Melbourne, Victoria.**

Introduction

1. As we approach our annual AGM period again, I would like to take this time and thank those executives and state executives and members as well as their families for their continued support to the APPVA in 2012. We have seen some significant changes within the department to date. As an ESO we are concerned at future funding, it is more prominent now that we now need to look at external private enterprises for funding to ensure we can continue to support the ever growing veteran's community in terms of welfare and compensation.
2. To my colleagues who have provided positive support at the highest level I urge you to continue providing the level of feedback to our members and constituents and inform them of the changes that will/may have a significant impact in the way they live. I ask them to remain supportive to the association and inform them that this can only be achieved through their continued membership and faith.

National Forums

3. As the association heads into its 16th year of operation we have seen more of our members show interest at representing the association at the highest levels. To date we have fulfilled our obligations not only to our members but our constituents nationally. We are well represented on National/ State DVA Consultative Forums and have been heavily involved with issues that continually affect the contemporary younger veteran's and their families.
4. Your representatives on the National Forums are listed in this report as Annex A.

"Looking After Our Own"

Projects

5. The APPVA have been very active in responding to a range of Projects in 2012, ranging from submissions to the Defence Honours & Awards Tribunal as well as various Parliamentary Ministers to ensure procedural fairness is applied when medallic recognition issues arise for current and ex-serving ADF and Police Peacekeeping Veterans; to Mental Health Study and Humanitarian service recognition. This demonstrates the diversity of the APPVA and what we are capable of doing at Australian Parliament House/National and State performing in the best interest of our constituency.
6. I have provided a list of Projects that the APPVA have been involved in 2012, the projects are listed in this report as Annex B.

APPVA National Younger Veteran Outreach Program (BEST)

7. The APPVA National Younger Veteran Outreach Program (NYVOP) has always sought funds from BEST Grants to assist with a high demand of claims under a number of legislative Act(s).
8. The APPVA NYVOP still continues to operate under increasing budget cuts, were we have now seen our paid practioners reduce their hours of operation, our full time 40 hour per week practioners have now informed clients wishing to utilize our practioners that they will only be available during certain hours in the day and that some office will only open for hours, 5 days a week as oppose to 8 hours, 5 days a week.
9. The APPVA NYOP still produce on average between 1500-2000 claims over the past 12 months, this has been achieved through our National Entitlements Officer and our Case Officers Level 2 Pension Officers, Level 3 Advocates, Level 4 Advocates in Victoria, NSW, Brisbane, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania and Northern Territory.
10. As we now head into the 8th year of the current legislation that being the Military Rehabilitation Compensation Act (MRCA) 2004, there continues to be an increase of services that the association are able to provide with high level of expertise.
11. It is imperative that we continue to consult with APH/ DVA at National and State levels regarding the importance of continued funding to meet the demands of the veterans who require assistance both in matters of entitlement and welfare.
12. The APPVA require State Branches produce 6 monthly reports to the National Secretary no later than the 31 Dec and 30 June annually to justify our existing budget from DVA BEST.
13. The Paid Practioners must ensure that their BEST Activity Statements are sent to National as soon as possible, so that National is able to provide statistics as agreed within the Grant Deed under BEST.
14. I would like to thank Kevin Ryan and Rhonda Copeland for their continued tireless efforts in getting these problems sorted in a timely manner.

Resignations

15. Over the past 12 months we have had the following resignations from the APPVA:

Dave Pension CSC – National President (Aug 2011)

Paul Copeland OAM – National Secretary (Oct 2011)

Peter Vidler – NSW/ACT State President (Jun 2012)

Bruce Relph – NSW/ACT State Vice President (Jun 2012)

John Wyatt – NSW/ACT Entitlements Officer (Dec 2011)

Phil Pyke – Tasmania State President (Nov 2011)

16. I would like to thank those individual members for their contribution and dedication during their time in office and wish them well in their future endeavours.

17. One person will be awarded the National President's Annual Award for their outstanding devotion to the APPVA, which will be announced at the National QGM on Saturday the 20th October 2012.

New Office Bearers

18. Whilst we wish those resigning all the best in the future, it was pleasing to see a number of people interested in replacing those who had resigned. These people are:

Kevin Ryan, JP - National Secretary (Oct 2011)

Paul Copeland OAM – National Advisor (Feb 2012)

Phil Pyke – National Editor (Mar 2012)

Andrew Johnstone – NSW/ACT State President (Jul 2012)

Milan Nikolic – NSW/ACT State Vice President (Aug 2012)

Craig McCarthy – NSW/ACT State Treasurer (Jul 2012)

Christine Shoobert NSW/ACT State Secretary (Jul 2012)

Pauline Mazcowiack – NSW/ACT Entitlements Officer (Aug 2011)

Michael Romalis – APPVA Tasmania President (2011)

Nick Murnane – APPVA Tasmania Secretary (2011)

Branches

19. I am also saddened that the ACT Branch was disbanded in Oct 2012; the funds remaining in the ACT Branch will be put into trust until such time that the ACT Branch can be functionally operable again. I am also pleased to announce that the ACT Branch members will amalgamate with the NSW Branch.
20. The amalgamation will remain in force until such time that ACT Branch is capable of operating with a functional committee and members to look after their own affairs and in accordance with Office of Fair Trading.
21. The money held in trust for the ACT Branch will only be available when the Branch is fully operable; this agreement was approved and seconded by members of the NATCOM in October 2011.
22. Branches are required to produce QGM reports to the National Secretary as part of National Governance; this ensures that we are operating in the best interest of Consumer Affairs and the Office of Fair Trading under the National Governance requirements.
23. Due to our younger constituent base the association has had to look at long term goals such as how can we grow as associations and evolve in not only the short term but in the next 10 years. We need to remain open to changes such as what we are currently seeing now that is amalgamating in order to meet our member's needs.
24. The move to amalgamate will ensure that we provide/commit members to positions within office long term regardless of where they reside within the applicable state. In today's modern society we have the capabilities of meeting governance by having Skype meetings and using facilities that we have in place at present.

Achievements for 2011

25. Due to changes within the national executive and state executive levels the APPVA have continued to meet the priorities from our previous AGM in 2011 which was held in Brisbane, Queensland. These are priorities that we have had to respond to:

Badge of Respect, an APPVA initiative, issued to veterans families whose partners have deployed or are deployed overseas (nationally rollout by the Government Jul 12

APPVA response to the Review of the Military Rehabilitation Compensation Commission

Allocation of White Card under the Safety Rehabilitation Compensation Act 1988

The APPVA have become partners with The Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO) February 2012, to ensure that the consultation process between government bodies include Ex-Service Organisation Representation

Future Issues for 2012-13

26. Whilst the issues that has and are currently are being addressed, it is clear that the APPVA are still seeking resolution by the government on a number of matters, of these that hold importance in priority are:

Our Veteran Health and Well-Being

Continued consultations with Government bodies regarding matters of Entitlements, Compensation and Welfare

Ongoing Recognition of the service, courage and sacrifice of our constituents

Recognition of those ADF/AFP who have provided overseas Disaster Relief Operations, by awarding them with the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal (HOSM)

Seek approval through DHAT of awarding the Dag Hammarskjold Medal for those Australian Defence Force Peacekeepers who have died on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

APPVA continued media exposure to the public to have those who have made the ultimate sacrifice whilst on Peacekeeping Operations recognised on an Honour Roll at the Office of Australian War Graves in Canberra.

Recognition for those ADF who have served on UN Peacekeeping missions by awarding a Australian Peacekeeping Service Medal (APSM)

Funding to erect the National Peacekeeping Memorial in Canberra

27. There are some matters that have been and still require immediate resolution, these are:

The need for Residential Care Facilities for Younger Veterans

Raise the awareness to various Government Agencies that there is more of a need now to promote Pathways to Care for Younger Veterans and have a younger veteran's national forum in place.

Commemorations – needs to be further government funding towards the National Peacekeepers Memorial in Canberra.

Conclusion

28. The year 2011-12 has been another horrendous year, which has seen a significant increase in lobbying with various government agencies. This has been the focus of APPVA as we continue to represent our constituents concerns at the highest levels in Government and Defence in order to seek appropriate resolution of the past and current issues.

29. Our presence at higher levels of Government are more significant now than in the past years as we continue to work within the constraints of budget cutbacks delivering the best outcome for our constituents.
30. For me alone my appointment has enlightened me to think about the associations needs differently and focus on the long term goals rather than short term goals. I can only thank those current national executives and state executives for their cooperation throughout 2011-12 which has made my transition a lot smoother than past national presidents before me.
31. I look forward to meeting all NATCOM members at the up and coming APPVA National Conference as well as the AGM/QGM on the 20th October 2012.

Yours Sincerely,

Allan Thomas, JP
National President 2011-12

Annex A to
National President Annual Report
Dated 9 October 2012

APPVA National Forum Representatives 2011-12

National Forum	APPVA Representative
Prime Ministers Advisory Council	Phil Pyke (Tasmania)
Ex-Service Organisation Round Table	Allan Thomas (NSW)
Operational Working Party	Michael Quinn (VIC)
Emerging Issues Forum	Andrew Johnstone (NSW/ACT)
National Mental Health Forum	Milan Nickolac (NSW/ACT)
Vietnam Veterans' Health Study	Paul Copeland OAM (VIC)
Timor Leste Health Study	Steve Ager (VIC)

Annex B to
National President Annual Report
Dated 9 October 2012

APPVA Projects 2011-12

Project	Current/ Completed/ Being Reviewed
APPVA Response to the Review of the Military Rehabilitation Compensation Commission	Completed
SDI Grant	Completed
BEST Review	Completed/ Being Reviewed
SRCA Issue Paper	Current
Recognition of Peacekeepers on Roll of Honour at the OAWG	Current
Medallic Recognition of ADF and other Australian Agencies conducting Border Protection Operations	Current
Recognition of ADF Humanitarian Operations, Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal (HOSM)	Current
Dag Hammarskjold Medal for those Australian Defence Force Peacekeepers who have died on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations	Current
Recognition for those ADF who have served on UN Peacekeeping missions by awarding a Australian Peacekeeping Service Medal (APSM)	Current
Badge of Respect (APPVA initiative, rolled out by government nationally in Jul 2012)	Completed