

Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch)

Modern Slavery Statement

Date: 24 June 2021

Version: 2

1. Introduction

The Returned & Services League of Australia Limited (ABN 63 008 488 097) is a national network, comprising State Branches, District Branches and Sub Branches in each state and territory. Each State Branch, District Branch and Sub Branch is a separate legal entity, and they all operate slightly differently while working to fulfil the principal purpose of promoting the interests and welfare of serving and ex-serving members of the Australian Defence Force and their families.

This is the second Modern Slavery statement for the Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) (ABN 79 902 601 713) (**RSL Queensland**), an independent branch of Returned & Services League of Australia Limited.

RSL Queensland is a body corporate established by Letters Patent issued pursuant to the *Religious, Educational and Charitable Institutions Act 1861* (Qld). We are domiciled in Fortitude Valley, Queensland and employ approximately 342 people.

RSL Queensland is comprised of approximately 35,000 members across ten districts and 225 Sub Branches. RSL Queensland membership is open to any serving or ex-service Australian Defence Force member who has conducted at least 1 day of continuous full-time service or who meets the eligibility criteria set out in the RSL Queensland By-Laws.

RSL Queensland is also the sole member of Mates4Mates Ltd ACN 54 160 646 999.

2. Our Business and Objects

RSL Queensland was established in 1916 and is the largest ex-service organisation in Queensland, with 222 Sub Branches across 10 Districts. We offer advice, support and camaraderie to all current and former Australian Defence Force members and their families through the funds primarily generated by the prize home lottery, RSL Art Union.

RSL Queensland is consistently guided by the pursuit of our Objects:

- (a) Providing 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.
- (b) Perpetuating 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.

- (c) Maintaining a proper standard of dignity and honour among all past and present members of the Defence Forces of the nation and to set an example of public spirit and noble hearted endeavour.
- (d) Preserving 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.
- (e) Encouraging loyalty to Australia and secure patriotic service in the interests of Australia.
- (f) Protecting the good name and preserve the interests and standing of members of the Australian Defence Force.
- (g) Encouraging 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.
- (h) Providing welfare to the sick, helpless, wounded, vulnerable, aged, destitute, and needy.

Since our beginning in 1916, RSL Queensland has stood shoulder to shoulder with Queensland's Defence family. Over these past 103 years, we have proudly upheld our Objects.

Our purpose is clear: to ensure a bright future and enduring legacy for all veterans and their families. Our vision is to be the most valued and trusted partner to enrich the Australian Defence family's quality of life.

RSL Queensland is committed to operating our business lawfully and ethically and in only working with suppliers that are aligned to our values wherever possible.

Main Activities

RSL Queensland provides support and assistance to current and former Australian Defence Force (**Defence**) members and their families. These people have served overseas and at home, in armed conflict, peacekeeping missions and disaster recovery and they have all served their country, their communities and the Defence family. RSL Queensland services are targeted at each point in the Defence journey – from the point a new recruit transitions into Defence to their separation from Defence and life afterwards.

Defence members experience different needs depending on where they are in the Defence journey. When they first transition in, they have little need for external support. They are finding their feet, forging strong friendships, and becoming accustomed to the military life. As they travel along the path, they may encounter challenges – relocating with a young family, receiving an injury, deciding to transition out, experiencing difficulty finding civilian employment, suffering mental health or substance abuse issues, even becoming homeless. RSL Queensland has tailored our service offering to touchpoints along the Defence journey.

RSL Queensland is permitted by our Constitution to:

- undertake all manner of charitable or other work to further the objects;
- raise money to secure sufficient funds for the purposes of the organisation; and
- receive any funds and distribute these funds in a manner that best attains the Objects of the organisation.

RSL Queensland is predominantly concerned with the welfare and wellbeing of veterans and their dependants. Our activities include mutual support, breaking of social isolation and assistance with pensions entitlements and related matters. RSL Queensland also carries out commemorative activities including ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, and other appropriate occasions, including commemorative activity in the community and particularly in schools.

RSL Queensland also runs the successful RSL Art Union to support our delivery of charitable or other work.

RSL Queensland's strategic goals are to:



Transform the lives of veterans so that their average quality of life matches that of the general public.

Relevance



Become the leading voice representing the Australian Defence Community and the Ex-Service Organisation community as a whole.

Influence



Continue to grow a sustainable business that enables both relevance and influence to flourish.

Sustainability

For more information about our 2025 Strategy, please refer to our website at:

<https://www.rslqld.org/About-Us/Strategy>.

Our Supply Chains

RSL Queensland

RSL Queensland has the following main operations:

- Employment Program
- Advocacy of client claims to the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)
- Wellbeing Program
- Veteran Homelessness Program
- Short Term Accommodation
- Long Term Accommodation
- Scholarship Program
- Partner programs funded by RSL Queensland
- RSL Art Union
- Commemorative events
- RSL Education
- Bereavement support
- Research programs

RSL Queensland also purchases products and services needed for the business' day-to-day operations including office supplies, employment and training of staff, external corporate services advice, leasing of office space, maintenance of capital assets, IT infrastructure and support services and travel.

Conducting these operations involve a number of supply chains including:

- Acquiring, operating, maintaining, and disposing of assets (including construction)
- Management of ticket order forms for RSL Art Union, including cash handling
- Partner with several groups and organisations that offer specialist expertise or treatments to aid an individual's physical and emotional recovery
- Conducting and celebrating education services and commemorative events.

Mates4Mates

Mates4Mates is one of Australia's leading charities actively changing lives of current and ex-serving members of Australian Defence Force and their families who have been impacted by service. We understand how challenging it can be to overcome injuries and trauma, which is why we offer support proven to make a difference through four key areas of service:

- **Psychological evidence-based services**, including individual and group therapy. Our highly skilled team of psychologists are ready and available to help those in times of need.
- **Physical rehabilitation and wellbeing services** that are delivered by accredited exercise physiologists in individual and group settings, promoting balanced lifestyles.
- **Social connection activities** facilitating regular opportunities for mateship and peer support through social, recreational, and family activities.
- **Skills for recovery programs** enabling veterans and their families to develop new skills and learn techniques to help them find pathways to a positive future. These programs have a clinically therapeutic focus but are conducted as part of outdoor activities as well as one, two- and three-day intensive retreats.

Mates4Mates currently operates three Family Recovery Centres (FRC) across Australia, located in Brisbane, Townsville, and Hobart. The FRCs are supported by 38 staff committed to making a difference. We are currently establishing an additional centre in the Northern Territory.

Mates4Mates operate in close alignment with RSL Queensland and other ex-service organisations, including Open Arms, in our current locations and outreach areas to ensure veterans and their families have ready access to crisis services, advocacy, welfare, homelessness, and employment programs in addition to our core services.

Mates4Mates also have:

- A range of integrated IT systems with strict security guidelines (supported by RSL Queensland)
- Capabilities across service delivery, human resources, finance, marketing, and fundraising functions
- Infrastructure to support online service delivery, telehealth clinical services, outreach services and additional programs beyond our existing FRC footprint.

3. Risk Identification

RSL Queensland is working towards ensuring that our procurement practices and contractual arrangements support our approach to minimising modern slavery risks and establishing process to measure effectiveness of these approaches

In 2020, RSL Queensland continued its review of the potential risk of modern slavery practices across our operations and supply chains, focussing on the most significant risks and those risks which have the greatest potential to affect the most people.

During the assessment process, we considered risks that may possibly cause, contribute and/or be directly linked to modern slavery practices, in accordance with the Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs draft guidance document and other risk factors such as sector, industry, types of products and services, geographic locations and entity risks.

As part of this risk identification, RSL Queensland identified the need to establish a risk and compliance team, who would ultimately become responsible for the implementation and management of all modern slavery policies.

4. Actions Taken

Risk and Compliance Team

In 2020, RSL Queensland established a risk and compliance team, which comprises a team of five, who are responsible for risk and compliance across the organisation.

Due Diligence

RSL Queensland continued to carry out an assessment of our Tier 1 suppliers using the risk assessment carried out in 2019 to focussing on those suppliers that posed the greatest risk of engaging in modern slavery practices. This also included analysing the supply chains of the relevant Tier 1 suppliers to identify and assess high risk areas in the supply chain.

Employees

Our employees are required to comply with our codes and policies which requires them to act lawfully, ethically and with integrity and encourages them to raise compliance and ethics concerns. Any RSL Queensland employee who violates our standards may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

We ensure that no under aged people are employed within our company.

In 2020, all employees received training on the modern slavery legislation, and employees continue to have access to useful information on how to recognize different types of modern slavery including what to do if it is identified.

We have in place a whistleblowing policy which ensures that anyone who has concerns, for example, about how staff are behaving, has a means of raising their concerns confidentially including when this concerns suspicion of modern slavery.

Suppliers

We have updated our standard purchasing terms and conditions and supply agreements to include provisions which expressly refer to, and demand compliance with, all applicable Modern Slavery laws. Where possible, all new negotiated supplier agreements include these modern slavery provisions.

5. Assessing the Effectiveness of Actions Taken

RSL Queensland assesses the effectiveness of the actions we are taking to assess and address the risks of modern slavery practices in our operations and supply chains by implementing an internal review mechanism of any notified known or suspected instances of modern slavery in our supply chain.

Future commitments

In 2021, RSL Queensland intends on carrying out the following actions:

- (a) continue the analysis of Tier 1 suppliers (noting that the analysis in 2020 was disrupted due to delays associated with COVID-19);
- (b) refine the process of analysing suppliers, so that RSL Queensland has a consistent process for assessing the risks associated with suppliers, with the ultimate goal of applying this process to all suppliers across the organisation;
- (c) deliver the relevant training to the risk and compliance team, with the ultimate goal that, by 2022, the risk and compliance team is responsible for all aspects of compliance with modern slavery requirements; and
- (d) review all internal policies to identify any policies that are relevant to modern slavery, with the ultimate goal of updating all relevant policies to refer to modern slavery requirements.

6. Internal Reporting and Consultation

RSL Queensland is the sole member of Mates4Mates. RSL Queensland will work with Mates4Mates to identify risks of modern slavery practices that may be present in the operations and supply chains of Mates4Mates and to assess and address those risks in line with the actions listed above.



Tony Ferris,
RSL Queensland State President/Chair
25 June 2021