



**RSL**  

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**Victoria**

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# Consultation & Feedback

ELECTORAL REFORM ADVISORY GROUP

# Feedback Process

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- 17 Dec: Consult with membership seeking opinion and feedback.

- 17 Dec to 28 Feb: Seek feedback and answer questions from Sub-Branch and membership network on proposed changes.

- 28 Feb: Collate all responses, providing feedback to network.

- 5 Mar: Feedback to be published on RSL Vic website and social media.

- Week commencing 7 Mar: Begin drafting preferred model for State Conference.

# Why we're here

- RSL Victoria must strengthen its position as Victoria's most trusted and lead ex-service organisation.
- We acknowledged that many of our systems and methods are no longer best practice though they have served the League and its members well in the past.
- In 2019 the RSL Victoria State Executive undertook to update and modernise our constitution.
- At State Conference in 2021, a range of changes were suggested, with feedback received that RSL members wanted time to take part in the process.
- At State Conference in 2022, the proposed electoral reform will put to delegates, to help ensure that RSL Victoria is the ESO of choice for all veterans and is well placed to continue its important work supporting veterans and their families now and into the future.

# What we're proposing to change

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- VOTING FOR THE STATE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AT STATE CONFERENCE



- LIMITING TERMS OF OFFICE AND/OR CONSECUTIVE TERMS FOR THE STATE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

## What stays the same?

Motions to amend the RSL Vic Constitution will still be determined by Sub-Branch delegates at State Conference.

These proposed changes to voting ***do not*** impact the voting process for Motions or Remits at State Conference as they are confined to electing the State Executive of RSL Victoria

# What's New?

## Executive Terms of Office

*“Rulers are the servants, and the people their superiors... for the former to return among the latter does not degrade, but promote them”.*

Benjamin Franklin

- Service Members are elected for a term not exceeding 3 years.
- Maximum of 3 terms served concurrently (i.e. 9 years). Can return after a 1 term break.
- No more than 5, but no fewer than 3 of Members of the State Executive (including Officers) may be up for election at any State Annual Conference.

### **Rationale:**

- Limits on terms of office and/or consecutive terms are best practice in many governance settings within Australia, and helps ensure a greater connection between voters and leadership. Meritocracy is therefore encouraged and staleness negated. Introducing limits on terms of office and consecutive terms will encourage healthy competition, promote succession planning, and a support minimisation of upheaval during transitions between State Executive Officers and Members.
- RSL Victoria is *the* leading organisation within the ESO landscape, and is fortunate to have an abundance of leadership within its ranks that will gain opportunity and encouragement through introducing limits on terms of office and/or consecutive terms.

# What's New?

## Voting in Elections

There are a number of voting models proposed

- One Member, One Vote
- One Sub-Branch, One Vote
- A Hybrid Model
- The Current System

## Model One

### One Member, One Vote

- Propose that each Life or Service member directly casts a vote for the election of the State Executive.
- The preferential method of voting is used.
- Voting may be conducted through the Australian Electoral Commission or via a third-party, independent scrutineer. It can be achieved by postal ballot or electronic ballot online.
- One Member, One Vote allows each individual Life or Service member of the league to practice *direct democracy*. The voice of members will be heard, allowing those elected to lead with a clear mandate.
- It provides the elected President, the Officers and State Executive Members with reassurance that he/she is representing and advocating on behalf of a majority of Service and Life Members of the League.



## Model Two

### One Sub- Branch, One Vote

- Propose that each Sub-Branch has equal say in the election of the State Executive, regardless of size.
- Each Sub-Branch has a single vote and therefore an equal say in the election of leaders.
- The preferential method of voting is used.
- Voting is conducted through the Australian Electoral Commission or via a third-party, independent scrutineer.
- The RSL is an egalitarian organisation and all Life and Service members within it are equal. 1 Sub-Branch, 1 Vote will ensure all Sub-Branches have equal say through *representative democracy*.

## Model Three

### A Hybrid Model

- Propose that each Life or Service member directly casts a vote for the election of the State Executive, whilst each Sub-Branch casts votes based on their membership size.
- The preferential method of voting is used.
- Voting is conducted through the Australian Electoral Commission or via a third-party, independent scrutineer and can be achieved by postal ballot or electronic ballot online for individuals. Sub-Branch voting to be conducted through a correctly convened and conducted General Meeting.
- A hybrid model allows each individual Life or Service member to have their say in the election of the leadership, whilst also recognising the importance of Sub-Branches in the direction of our league.

## Model Four

### The Current System

- Current voting entitlement is determined by the number of Life and Service Members of a Sub-Branch, being anywhere from one to eight votes on a sliding scale.
- The preferential method of voting is used.
- No change to current method of voting at General Meetings.
- The current system offers members *representative democracy*, with active members determining Sub-Branch voting at general meetings. This ensures the primacy of Sub-Branch delegates in deciding the direction of the league.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Cost of voting

- The Australian Electoral Commission can conduct voting for charities at no cost, due to their charitable status. RSL NSW was recently required to pay to conduct its elections due to contracting a private provider through COVID complications. This would be a very unlikely scenario in future elections in Victoria.

## Why conduct voting through the AEC or an independent scrutineer?

- In 2021, the RSL Victoria appointed Independent Returning Officer disallowed a number of Sub-Branch votes due to electoral process compliance concerns. Conducting elections through the AEC or an independent scrutineer ensures that we can have confidence our voting is above scrutiny and reflective of an organisation that manages assets worth \$1.5b

# We need your help!

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Please provide feedback on your preferred voting model to [ERAG@RSLVIC.com.au](mailto:ERAG@RSLVIC.com.au)



All and any questions or suggestions are encouraged, and we seek your thoughts