



# VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH INCORPORATED

Administrative Instruction 06/2011

## COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SUB-BRANCH MEMBERSHIP

### Introduction

1. The VVAA is defined as a non-denominational, non-political welfare organisation dedicated to the health, welfare and well being of veterans and their families. It therefore follows that if the VVAA or any sub-branch does not, or cannot, provide adequate support to the existing membership then the VVAA has failed to achieve its fundamental objective.
2. This AI provides details of some basic support activities that should be considered. However, local requirements may dictate a different approach to membership support because of specific needs. Whatever approach is taken the aim is to fully support the VVAA existing membership and this consideration should be foremost in any decision taken.

### Detail

3. There are a number of things that should be done to encourage members to retain their membership and to encourage other veterans to join the VVAA. Each separate topic will be presented under specific headings in the following paragraphs.

### State and Sub-Branch Meetings

4. Within our organisation there are different types of meetings and the philosophy of the VVAA is that all meetings are open to the membership with only a few exceptions. The different situations are explained as follows:
  - Sub-branches are required to hold an Annual General Meeting each year, (at least no later than two months after the end of the financial year) and all members should be sent a written invitation to attend.
  - Sub-branches should hold a Committee Meeting at least monthly and the membership should be informed that *all members are welcome to attend so that they can speak on sub-branch issues and vote accordingly.*
  - All members of the South Australia Branch are welcome to attend State Council meetings as observers with voting rights assigned to sub-branch delegates. If observers wish to speak on any issue being discussed they only need to obtain the approval of the Council Chairperson prior to voicing their opinion.
  - All confidential or controversial matters that need to be discussed without exposure to the general membership or sub-branch membership should be held over to the next scheduled executive meeting or a special executive meeting arranged so that the matters can be discussed within a closed meeting.

### **Subscription Notice**

5. All members should be forwarded a subscription renewal notice as separate correspondence or as a loose leaf in a newsletter. This reminds the individual of their membership status and allows them to place the notice with their normal household outstanding accounts to be paid in due course. An example of such a notice is attached and this can be altered and photocopied to suit a particular sub-branch.

### **Receipts**

6. It is essential that receipts are raised for every subscription paid and the receipt should be mailed to the member as soon as possible as advice that they are now financial for another year and also to reassure them that the subscription has been properly accounted for within the General Account.

### **Annual Membership Cards**

7. Although not essential, these are valued by most members as a reminder of their financial status and on occasions to advertise their involvement with an ex-service organisation. They can be posted with receipts at no extra cost.

### **Types of Membership Cards**

8. The VVAA has the standard Association membership card, which can be obtained from the State Secretary free of charge. However, because of the availability of business card software for personal computers, a number of sub-branches are issuing specific membership cards, which goes a long way towards developing local loyalties, comradeship and self-esteem.

### **Newsletter**

9. It is absolutely essential that each sub-branch produce a regular newsletter, which has clear objectives to keep the membership informed of activities and other relevant matters. As a guide such a newsletter may provide:

- \* A President's Report,
- \* The latest welfare information,
- \* Social and local notices,
- \* Reproduce veteran's information from other publications,
- \* Provide the names and contact information for the sub-branch committee, and report on the proceedings at State and National Council meetings.

### **Welfare**

10. With the characteristics of the VVAA clearly defined, as a welfare organisation and a registered charity, each sub-branch must have a Welfare Officer position on the Committee. The position can be filled by a person holding another position on the Committee but they must be TIP trained and the membership must be able to identify the person responsible for welfare.

### **Unfinancial Members**

11. If a member fails to renew their membership after six months the committee should be concerned that something is wrong: either the member has forgotten to pay, circumstances have changed and the member is unable to pay, or the member has a grievance with the council membership or sub-branch. In any case, a letter should be sent to each unfinancial member reminding them of their current status and inviting them to renew

their membership at their earliest convenience. The letter should also explain:

- \* Irrespective of the member's ability to become involved in sub-branch activities, their membership is valued as the subscription helps to keep the sub-branch viable and working within the veteran community.
- \* If the veteran has changed circumstances and cannot afford to pay the membership subscription, then perhaps the sub-branch could offer to pay it as a welfare gesture (as a welfare grant), until the veteran is able to meet his own financial responsibility.
- If the member has a problem with the sub-branch, its committee or membership and is concerned enough to withdraw from the sub-branch, then a request that a letter be sent to the President expressing his concerns so that the problem can be addressed and resolved by the committee may be a worthwhile tactic. In these cases always endeavor to keep personalities out of the decision process and in reply emphasize that the decision taken is a "committee decision".

### **Every Member is a Valued Member**

12. There is any number of other means to service the VVAA membership and when the occasion arises the members support should never be taken for granted. Every member should be made to feel that they are a valued member of the sub-branch and the VVAA.

### **Authority**

### **13. State Council meeting: 20<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

### **EXAMPLE ONLY**

From:  
Insert Sub-Branch Name Address

Insert Date

To: Insert Name of member Members Address

I am writing to inform you that, according to our records, your subscription has not been paid for this year. As you are aware, subscriptions are due in January each year, even though some members prefer to wait until ANZAC Day to make payment.

Unfortunately, we sometimes tend to forget and hopefully this has only been an oversight on your part. Please remember that the Association needs your membership to be able to provide support to Vietnam veterans and their families. Even if you are unable to become involved in sub-branch activities your subscription ensures that we remain a viable organization within the Vietnam veteran community. If a problem has arisen that I am unaware of; please contact me and hopefully the matter can be resolved.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Regards,

X Sub-Branch