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The District Rationalisation Steering Committee The Returned & Services League of Australia (NSW Branch)



Agenda Item No:	3.3
Title	Principles and Criteria for Evaluating Options
Date	18 October, 2021
Sponsors	CEO State Secretary
Strategic Plan Pillar/Constitution Power	Goal 5
Action Requested	For decision
Recommended Resolution	<p>The Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Notes the rationale for developing organisation options.2. Approves the proposed principles.3. Approves the proposed evaluation criteria and weightings.4. Notes that the next stage is the development of options for organisation of Districts, including the optimal number of Districts

1. Executive Summary

The Strategic Plan requires the future Districts be organised on a sustainability and efficacy basis. The Constitution (Clause 13) stipulates the requirement for Districts and therefore, with the subordinate Standard Operating Procedures (SOP 10) and Strategic Plan provides the basis for identifying the principles. In turn, the evaluation and assessment criteria are derived from the functions of the Districts and the requirement for efficacy and sustainability.

2. Background

The Terms of Reference seek the Committee's approval of the principles by which the options for district rationalisation would be developed; and to evaluate and objectively assess the options. Therefore, principles need to be agreed, and to effectively apply them, agree to evaluation criteria and weightings.

The new RSL NSW Constitution was adopted in 2019 and provides the basis for Districts to be established and states: "Unless otherwise determined in accordance with this Constitution, the sub-Branch network will be divided into Districts as defined from time to time in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)."

SOP 10 stipulates that "the number and geographic extent of Districts may be reviewed and adjusted by the Board from time to time." (Clause 2.)

The Constitution requires Districts to (Clause 13):

1. Report to the Board

2. Consult with Members and sub-Branches within their District
3. Escalate matters concerning a sub-Branch or its members in their District to the District Presidents' Council
4. Provide support and encouragement to the sub-Branches in the District and encourage participation by the sub-Branches in District events and meetings
5. Assisting sub-branches to engage the community within the District and enhance the standing of RSL NSW within the local community
6. Act as a means of communication between sub-Branches and the District Presidents' Council on all matters
7. Formulate motions to be proposed for inclusion at an Annual General Meeting
8. Receiving, considering, consulting with sub-Branches on proposed sub-Branch resolutions and determining whether to endorse proposed resolutions for submission to RSL NSW for determination at an Annual General Meeting or General Meeting
9. Formulate motions: (i) on matters that may arise out of a report from the Board; (ii) on matters that may arise out of RSL NSW communications; and (iii) on matters concerning amendments to this Constitution
10. Appoint or engage other RSL NSW Members to assist with the management and operations of RSL NSW activities in its District
11. Coordinate RSL NSW related activities within their District
12. The Board can delegate its powers to a District Council (Clause 9.31) – essentially power to administer or undertake tasks directed.

Under SOP 10 (Clause 2)

The Districts functions are:

1. Liaison between the Board and sub-Branches and members in their District
2. Guide, support, and coordinate activities between sub-Branches
3. Prepare submissions, proposals and recommendations, and other information as required from State Branch
4. Representation at commemorations or other events (Clause 6)

3. Options

Options were not considered necessary at this point. Rather, it is essential to identify principles under which organisation options can be considered, to guide optimal structure.

4. Analysis

4.1 Principles

Districts have numerous coordination and administrative roles but are not accountable for sub-Branch performance including their regulatory compliance, that is a Board and sub-Branch matter. Nevertheless, the list of coordination and administrative duties and likely calls for support (training and execution) from volunteers in sub-Branches in the contemporary

compliance environment is extensive. Therefore, the key principles to consider in developing District organisation options must relate to effective coordination and administration and take into account the operating environment.

From the Strategic Plan, the Districts need to be organised on “an efficacy and sustainability basis.” Efficacy means *effectiveness and its ability to do what it is supposed*. Sustainability means *the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level*. Therefore, key principles of administration to be considered in developing options on the optimal number of Districts and their composition are:

- **Division of Work** – a District must be able to manage work fairly and efficiently, i.e., be consistent in span of control, e.g., number of reporting entities (sub-Branches)
- **Transparency and mutual responsibility** – Districts must be able to communicate and announce responsibility as accountability rests with sub-Branches openly and promptly, e.g., access effective modern communications capabilities
- **Discipline and focus on results** – A District must have the means to ensure sub-Branches follow the rules and provide guidance and support to improve performance.
- **Strong governance** – Districts are able to support sub-Branch compliance with the Fundraising Act, the Constitution, SOPs, and policies.
- **Efficiency** – as functions are limited and procedural (not accountable), the span of control can be large, supported by access to modern communications capabilities. There is a limited direct leadership function as sub-Branches are accountable to the Board for performance, not the District. (Although the Board could delegate accountability functions.)
- **Rate of effort** – to meet the myriad of administrative, coordination and support (training and assistance) responsibilities, volunteers need close administrative support i.e., District Support Officer

It is recommended that these Principles guide *the development of organisation options* for the optimal District Council structure. For instance, District organisation options could be based upon member numbers, sub-Branch numbers, communication capability/reach, accessibility (Geography) and others to satisfy the principles.

4.2 Evaluation and Assessment Criteria

Once options are developed by the guiding principles, criteria, and weighting (relative importance) is to be applied objectively to assist in identifying the best option.

No.	Criteria	Weighting
1.	Fair work distribution – is the option evenly distributing workload - 20	20
2.	Connectivity – accessibility to modern communications – relative access to reliable communications and ability to interconnect - 20	10

3.	Oversight and assistance – can support and assistance be readily accessed to help perform optimally - 20	20
4.	Affordability – relative to RSL NSW budget (pooled fund) and sustaining District Support Officers - 20	35
5.	Accessibility – how accessible are the lines of communication for in person access - 20	5
6.	Risk – Each option is to be assessed under the RSK NSW Risk Framework's five risk categories	10

5. Financial Implications

The proposed RSL NSW budget for District Support from calendar year 2023 is \$1 m, increasing incrementally to \$1.1 m from 2024. The proposed pilot will indicate whether the budget, including travel and subsistence is adequate, noting Districts do not receive significant 'central funding' from the 'pool' of \$50k.

6. Risk Analysis

Options developed are to be assessed against the five risk categories in the RSL NSW Risk Framework. Annexure B.

7. Management Responsibility & Reporting

The CEO is responsible for preparing the options paper.

Annexures

Annexure A – SOP 10

Annexure B – RSL NSW Risk Framework