

Oatley RSL Sub-Branch Limited

Finance, Expense and Travel Policy

1. Preamble

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following RSL NSW Standard Operating Procedures, RSL NSW Policy and Constitutions.

Standard Operating Procedures SOP 05

Standard Operation Procedures SOP 07

RSL NSW Constitution

RSL NSW Code of Conduct

RSL NSW Conflict of Interest Policy

The objective of this policy is to provide guidelines and clarity for members of Oatley RSL Sub-Branch Limited (including executive/board members) around the processes, controls and approvals for payments, receipts and expense reimbursements. This document also outlines the sub-branch policy relating to travel reimbursements, the use of member's motor vehicles for sub-branch business, executive/board members' reimbursements or allowances for home office, internet and mobile phones.

This policy does not undermine or weaken the processes and controls outlined in the various NSW Standard Operating Procedures, but instead aims to promote greater compliance, support fairness and transparency (to ensure all members are treated the same way), reduce uncertainty, ambiguity and misunderstanding, control spending and to prevent fraud.

The board has undertaken to create this policy to prevent the reoccurrence of excessive and unwarranted expense claims and unsupported, arbitrary reimbursements by previous executive members.

2. Sub-Branch Members

Members of RSL Sub-Branches are veterans either currently serving in or having served in the defence force. They are motivated by a desire to support veterans and their families, maintain camaraderie, contribute to their community through purposeful work like welfare and fundraising, and experience a sense of belonging and connection with others who share similar backgrounds or values. They are driven by a desire to give back, maintain pride in Australia, and continue the spirit of service and community found in the RSL.

Members of RSL Sub-Branche are volunteers. Volunteering Australia defines volunteering as time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.

3. Definitions

Sub-Branch	Oatley RSL Sub-Branch Limited
Executive Board Member	A director of the sub-branch who is a corporate board member and holds a position such as President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer
Non-Executive Board Member	A director of the sub-branch who is a corporate board member
Member or Sub-Branch Member	A service member of Oatley RSL Sub-Branch Limited
Reimbursement	A payment to a member who paid an invoice or incurred an authorised expense using their own funds. Generally, a reimbursement does not have a tax impact.
Expense	Reasonable business expense incurred by members while performing their official duties. Expenses need to be approved in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures prior to be incurred by members.
Receipt or Tax Invoice	An original document which includes details of the issuer, the expenditure, amount (inclusive or exclusive of GST), date and indication of proof of payment.
Allowance	An allowance usually consists of the payment of a definite or predetermined amount to cover an estimated expense and is paid regardless of whether the recipient incurs the anticipated expense. Generally, an allowance forms part of taxable income.

4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the executive team to ensure that:

- all sub-branch members are aware of this policy,
- appropriate controls are in place to ensure compliance with the policy, and
- any breaches are identified and dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner.

It is also the responsibility of all sub-branch members to ensure that any reimbursements comply with this policy.

5. Procedures

5.1 Reimbursement of Direct Out of Pocket Expenses

Volunteering is an activity undertaken without financial gain. It is unpaid and entered into without the expectation of financial reward. However, members in the course of their role in the sub-branch may from time to time incur out-of-pocket expenses.

Approval must first be sought from the board prior to incurring an expense. The board will examine the purpose, reasonableness and whether it is part of an existing budget. All claims must be supported by a valid tax invoice, statement of fees or receipt. Approval will be communicated via email or other electronic means. The treasurer will retain approval emails and file in the appropriate email folder. An expense for reimbursement will require the approval of the majority of board members including the secretary as required by SOP 07. Board member cannot approve their own reimbursement.

Executive members of the board hold visa debit cards. Where possible the cards should be used in lieu of using own funds.

5.2 Approval by Members at a General Meeting

As per SOP 07 all reimbursements of out of pocket expenses must be reported at the Sub-Branch general meeting, approved and ratified by members and reported in the minutes.

The treasurer in his or her report will itemise the reimbursements detailing the members name, amount and purpose. A motion will be raised for members approval.

6. Non-Reimbursement Items

The following items or categories will not be reimbursed or paid as an allowance to sub-branch members including executive and non-executive board members:

- Home office allowance
- Home internet or broadband allowance
- Mobile phone or home phone allowance
- Dry cleaning and laundry expenses for RSL coats, trousers and tie
- Expenses not related to sub-branch business or activity

6.1 Home Office, Internet and Phone

Sub-Branch members often perform volunteer work from home, using personal spaces and resources such as internet and phone services. While these resources are essential

for fulfilling sub-branch duties the apportionment of sub-branch related work to home use is considered minor. Therefore, the following principles apply:

- **No Reimbursement:** The sub-branch does not reimburse or provide allowances for home office, internet, or phone expenses. This principal aims to ensure that there is a consistent and fair approach to financial compensation in that only direct out of pocket expenses are reimbursed.
- **Past Practice:** Previous claims by passed executive members for both home office and internet/phone usage were arbitrarily determined, were unsubstantiated and far exceeded what would have been incurred by way of actual usage. The claims did not comply with section 7 of SOP 07. To prevent recurrence, such claims are now expressly prohibited.
- **Questions and Exceptions:** If you are unsure whether an expense is eligible for reimbursement, please consult the Treasurer before incurring the cost.

6.2 Dry Cleaning and Laundry

Jackets, trousers and ties are often provided to some members as part of their official role. These items of clothing are initially paid for by the sub-branch. Dry cleaning of sub-branch supplied jacket or other item are a personal expense. Like any uniform the initial item is supplied at the organisations expense, but cost of cleaning should be the responsibility of the member.

6.3 Non Sub-Branch Expenses

Any expense or part of an expense that is not related to sub-branch business will not be reimbursed. An example is where a member purchases paper or ink cartridges for a home printer the cost needs to be apportioned between home and sub-branch usage. The treasurer is to be consulted on how to apportion the cost.

7. Honorariums and Non-Financial Payments

Section 9 of the RSL NSW Standard Operating Procedure SOP 07 precludes the payments of honorariums by sub-Branches to its members. Payment of allowances to sub-branch members who hold executive or board position are not considered an alternative to an honorarium or a reward for volunteer work. Receipt of non-financial benefits such as free drinks or meals from the Community Club or other organisation are not acceptable and can lead to a conflict of interest or considered corrupt.

8. Travel Policy and Reimbursements

The objective of this travel policy is to provide guidelines and clarity for members undertaking travel for sub-branch business and reimbursement of travel costs. In particular, the policy will address the use of member's motor vehicles.

8.1 Approval

All travel must be approved by the Executive Board Members prior to undertaking. This ensures that all travel is necessary and aligns with the sub-branch goals and budget.

8.2 Reimbursement of Travel Costs

A member may be reimbursed for travel expenses in one of the following ways:

- **Predetermined Mileage Rate:** Members can claim reimbursement based on a predetermined mileage rate for the use of their personal vehicle.
- **Petrol Reimbursement:** Members can claim reimbursement for the actual cost of petrol used during travel.
- **Public Transport:** Members can claim reimbursement for the cost of public transport tickets.

8.3. Documentation and Purpose

Prior to undertaking the travel, a member must submit in writing the reason for the travel, how it aligns with the member's role, the destination, the basis and reason for type of travel and the approximate cost. The executive will assess necessity and determine the appropriate reimbursement method.

All claims must be supported by relevant documentation, including receipts for petrol and public transport tickets, and a log of kilometres travelled if claiming the predetermined mileage rate.

8.4. Compliance

All members are expected to comply with this travel policy. Non-compliance may result in denial of reimbursement and other disciplinary actions.

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