



Presidents Report to AGM for FY 19 /20

This Financial Year VCA has realized its vision of improving the level of health in the veteran community. At the tactical level we've been doing this through pastoral care, peer support and holistic health education, for veterans and their families. But now we've achieved real traction at the strategic level in influencing the DVA and other significant collaborators in Veterans health. The services we have provided to veterans and their families are first class. We have a robust management framework with strong governance and financial accountability. We have a competent and collaborative staff team supported by numerous volunteers. The Timor Awakening Program, developed and delivered by Michael Stone has produced outstanding results. We are enabled by funding support from our major sponsors Bolton Clarke and RSL Qld and other donors. Most significantly, graduates of our program are making positive contributions in the exservice community, and in personally funding RIAK retreat in Timor "paying it forward".

We delivered three Timor Awakening programs in the period, including a massive 35 person contingent to coincide with the 20th year INTERFET anniversary. 1000 people, including the December graduation class at RMC Duntroon, have received holistic health education presentations in the FY. We have had an average of 30 pastoral interventions every week in that same period. Evidence shows that over 300 Australian families now have significantly improved lives through Timor Awakening, let alone the thousands of Timorese veterans and their families we have touched. The English Language Institute and teacher accommodation at Same's Riak Retreat has been completed and a permanent water supply developed. We are making a positive difference in other peoples lives not just our own. The long-term legacy of the Riak Retreat program is beyond our imagining. COVIDs interruption, saw us have to postpone a planned Timor immersion in June 20, but saw us develop and subsequently deliver a peer support mentor and a domestic TA program on the Gold Coast

On a strategic level, DVA have engaged us in contributing to their Rehabilitation policy review, and we have teamed with RSLQLD in responding to a Request for Tender to become a DVA peer support provider. We have made submissions to Senate Inquiries, Defence and DVA on a range of Health and wellbeing initiatives.. Advocating and witnessing to systemic change from an illness focus to a wellness focus will be our biggest long term contribution to Veterans and their families. The Bolton Clarke Veterans Family Toolbox we assisted in, continues to be seen by many thousands and is the most innovative Veteran health educational video program in the world.

All of this has only been possible through the generosity of many volunteers and donors, too many to mention here, but we must formally thank key members of our management team over the period in Col Ahern, Michael Stone, Michael Robson, Jack Robson, Mark Game and Geoff Fry. Michael Albrecht, Rowena Langan and Candice Carroll have provided key personal support to clients. We have been blessed by advice from our wide range of health consultants of every discipline, with special thanks to Dr Ian Marshall, and Dr John Barletta,. Special thanks must go to Pat McIntosh and Katie Maloney, for unique contributions they have made. Mark Bowling from the Catholic Leader has facilitated excellent media coverage for us. Archbishop Mark Coleridge has given us his blessing and endorsement.

Thank you for your support and involvement. We are a caring association of "Good Samaritans". May God bless you for your compassion and concern.