

VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADES VICTORIA (VFBV) WELFARE FUND
- RULES -

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RULES

(Adopted 31 October 2008)

1.0 Name

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) Welfare Fund (hereinafter referred to as the Fund).

2.0 Aim / Purpose

Support the ongoing health and welfare of Country Fire Authority Volunteer members, past members and their dependants, experiencing personal financial hardship/crisis by providing welfare grants, on a needs assessed basis, that may assist in alleviating stresses impacting on the individual's ability to maintain their involvement as a Volunteer.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

In these Rules, unless the contrary intention appears –

- "Association"** means Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV);
- "Board"** means the Board of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria elected in accordance with Clause 4.2 of the VFBV Inc. – Association Rules;
- "Annual General Meeting"** means the Association's Annual Meeting of Members convened in accordance with Clause 9.1 of the VFBV Inc. – Association Rules;
- "Board member"** means a volunteer member of a fire brigade appointed to the Association Board in accordance with Clause 4.4 of the VFBV Inc. – Association Rules;
- "CEO"** means Chief Executive Officer of the Association in accordance with Clause 13.1 of the VFBV Inc. – Association Rules;
- "CFA"** means Country Fire Authority;
- "Member brigade"** means a financial member of the Association whose annual prescribed rate of brigade welfare fund contribution is current;
- "Financial Year"** means the year ending June 30;
- "General Meeting"** means a general meeting of State Councillors convened by the President of Association in accordance with Clause 4.11 of the VFBV Inc. – Association Rules;
- "Registered Volunteer"** means –
- any person registered with the Country Fire Authority as a volunteer member; and
 - members of other brigades duly accepted and affiliated with the Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) Association.

Words or expressions contained in these Rules shall be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of the Acts Interpretation Act 1958, and the Act as in force from time to time.

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THE FUND

4.0 Committee Of Management

- 4.1 The Fund shall be administered by a Committee of Management (hereinafter called the Committee).
- 4.2 The Committee shall consist of two ex-officio members, that is to say, the VFBV President and VFBV Vice President of the VFBV Association and four members duly elected annually by the VFBV State Council at the general meeting held prior to the Annual General Meeting of the Association Board.
- 4.3 Membership of the Committee will be endorsed by the Association Board at the Annual General Meeting held in the month of October each year.
- 4.4 No member of the Committee shall continue in office upon ceasing to be a member of the Board or State Council of the Association.
- 4.5 Any casual vacancy occurring during the normal one year term of office shall be filled by an appointee of the Board in the case of an elected member for the remainder of that term of office and in the case of an ex-officio member until that office is again filled so that at all times the Committee shall consist of six members.
- 4.6 A quorum shall consist of four members.
- 4.7 The President, or if absent, the Vice President, shall be Chairman of meetings. In the absence of both the President and Vice President any person appointed pursuant to clause (4.2) above shall be Chairman of meetings. In the event of an equality of votes the Chairman of meetings shall have a casting vote.
- 4.8 The Committee:-
 - 4.8.1 Shall submit annually to the Annual General Meeting of the Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Association a report and balance sheet (duly audited) setting out statistical particulars of welfare grants made since the previous report and showing the financial position of the Fund at the date of the report;
 - 4.8.2 Shall forward a copy of the above report and balance sheet to every contributing member brigade;
 - 4.8.3 Shall appoint a Fund Secretary;
 - 4.8.4 May remunerate any person for special service performed for the Committee; and
 - 4.8.5 Perform all such acts as are considered necessary for the proper administration of the Fund.
- 4.9 The Fund Secretary shall:-
 - 4.9.1 attend all meetings of the Committee and keep accurate minutes of the business conducted;
 - 4.9.2 keep proper accounts of all payments into and out of the Fund;
 - 4.9.3 keep a proper record of all investments through the maintenance of a register recording all investments, investment movements, progressive balance and interest details;
 - 4.9.4 furnish the Committee with such information as may be required;
 - 4.9.5 conduct all correspondence;
 - 4.9.6 for the annual audit of the books of account to furnish the auditor with such information as may be required for the purposes of the audit;
 - 4.9.7 receive such salary as the Committee may from time to time determine.

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5.0 Welfare Fund Contributions:-

5.1 Public Contributions :-

5.1.1 The Public are invited to contribute to the Fund.

5.2 Brigades Contributions :-

5.2.1 Brigade welfare fund contributions shall be paid annually.

5.2.2 The annual amount of the brigade welfare fund contribution shall be determined from time to time by the Committee and different amounts for different classes of brigades may be determined.

5.2.3 The annual amount of the brigade welfare fund contribution as determined by the Committee is to be endorsed by the Association at a General meeting of the Board prior to the distribution of renewal of contribution notices to Brigades.

5.2.4 The Committee shall forward a notice of renewal of the welfare fund contributions to every member brigade. Brigades should endeavour to pay their contribution within thirty (30) days of receiving their notice. The responsibility for renewal shall remain with the Brigade.

5.2.5 No welfare grant shall be paid unless the appropriate brigade welfare fund contribution has been received by the Committee.

5.3 Receipts :-

5.3.1 A receipt in the name of the Fund is to be issued for all contributions, gifts and donations received.

6.0 Eligibility & Application Process :-

6.1 Any registered volunteer of a member brigade; any ex-volunteer of a member brigade who was a registered volunteer for not less than twenty years; or the dependant of any such registered volunteer of a member brigade, may be paid out of the Fund a sum or sums of money as a welfare grant as hereinafter provided.

6.2 Applications for support are to be submitted in accordance with the Application Process as detailed in **Appendix One** of this document. The application process will, from time to time, be reviewed and where required amended by the Committee. All changes to the Application Process must be subsequently approved at a General Meeting of the Association Board.

6.3 All applications will be totally confidential and are to be processed with the utmost discretion.

6.4 All applications for a welfare grant shall be determined by the Committee of Management and every such determination shall be final and without appeal (refer 7.0).

7.0 Ruling:-

7.1 The Committee shall determine at its discretion on the merits of the case:-

7.1.1 Whether to make a grant or not to make a grant.

7.1.2 The amount of the grant which shall not exceed a maximum amount as determined, following a recommendation from the Committee, by the Association at a General Meeting of the Board.

7.1.3 Payment of an amount in excess of the maximum amount would need to be referred to and approved by the Board.

7.1.4 Support may be in the form of goods and services, financed by the fund &/or arranged by the Fund Secretary, as opposed to cash grant.

7.1.5 The Committee may request further information or supporting evidence which may require the application to be resubmitted.

7.1.6 The time at which the grant or any part of the grant shall be paid.

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- 7.2 The ruling of the Committee shall be final and without appeal. The Committee is not required to provide an explanation for its ruling.
- 7.3 Notification and Payment:-
- 7.3.1 The Fund Secretary will, immediately following the Committee meeting, notify each applicants brigade Secretary of the Committee's decision.
- 7.3.2 A grant or any part of a grant shall be forwarded for payment to the Secretary of the brigade. Where both the Fund Secretary and Brigade Secretary have agreed, payments may be made directly from the fund to a service provider on behalf a fund beneficiary.
- 7.3.3 The Committee may, at their discretion, request the Brigade Secretary to obtain a receipt from the beneficiary of the grant and forward it to the Secretary of the Fund

8.0 Banking and Investments:-

- 8.1 The Committee shall appoint bankers to the Fund and may at any time dismiss the bankers and appoint other bankers.
- 8.2 All monies received shall be paid into a current account from which payments shall be made by cheque on the signatures of any two members of the Committee as approved by the Committee.
- 8.3 The Committee may invest the monies of the Fund as approved by the Board and in accordance with Clause 8.4 for such term of time as it determines.
- 8.4 Funds may only be invested in "approved investments". Approved investments are those approved by the Treasurer of the State of Victoria under the Borrowing and Investment Powers Act 1987. (ie. investment must be with (or guaranteed by) a bank or a State or the Commonwealth Government).
- 8.5 An investment register is to be maintained to record investment movements, progressive balance and interest details.
- 8.6 A reconciled statement sighted and endorsed by the President or in his absence the Deputy President, of all Bank accounts and Investments is to be presented to each Board meeting, other than the Annual General Meeting.

9.0 Audit:-

- 9.1 The Committee shall annually appoint an auditor who shall –
- 9.1.1 examine the books and accounts of the Fund and see that they are properly kept;
- 9.1.2 examine the securities and be satisfied that all money and securities are in safe keeping; and
- 9.1.3 present a certificate of audit for the purpose of Clause 4.7.1
- 9.1.4 The auditor shall be entitled to receive such remuneration as the Committee may from time to time determine.

10.0 Non Profit Clause:

- 10.1 The assets and income of the organisation shall be applied solely in furtherance of its above mentioned objects and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the organisation except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the organisation.

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11.0 Dissolution Clause:

11.1 If the organisation is wound up or if the endorsement of the organisation as a deductible gift recipient is revoked, the following assets remaining after the payment of the organisation's liabilities shall be transferred to a fund, authority or institution to which income tax deductible gifts can be made:

- gifts of money or property for the principal purpose of the organisation
- contributions made in relation to an eligible fundraising event held for the principal purpose of the organisation; and
- money received by the organisation because of such gifts and contributions

The Rules of the Fund shall not be altered in any way except by a majority vote at a properly constituted meeting of the Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Association Board and after not less than two month's notice of the particulars of the proposed amendments, omissions or additions has been forwarded to each member brigade. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is to be notified of any change to the Rules of the Fund.

Adopted the 31 day of October 2008

Gary Lytle
Association President

Mick Taylor
Association Vice President

Andrew Ford
VFBV CEO