



RSL
Victoria

RSL VICTORIA

TRANSFORMATION PROJECT BULLETIN

EDITION 06
APRIL 2026

RSL VICTORIA TRANSFORMATION PROJECT ROADMAP PHASE 1 2026

SECURE INTERNAL SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY AUG - OCT 2025



- Launch Thoughtpost Report
- Statewide roadshow
- Funding extension.

- \$1.5M for design
- Legal review
- PMO setup.



SECURE PROJECT FUNDING FOR PHASE 1 AUG - DEC 2025

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE 1 JAN - DEC 2026



- Governance restructure
- Legal frameworks,
- Monthly progress reports

MODERNISE GOVERNANCE

- Update the legal structure
- Improve board skills
- Open up board membership
- Formation of a member council
- Review voting systems
- Rewrite the rules.



SUPPORT A SUSTAINABLE SUB-BRANCH NETWORK

- Review Sub-Branch viability
- Clarify regional structures.

ENHANCE FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP



- Streamline agency accounts processes
- Create a central gifts-in-wills program.

REPOSITION RSLV AS A MODERN VETERAN CHARITY

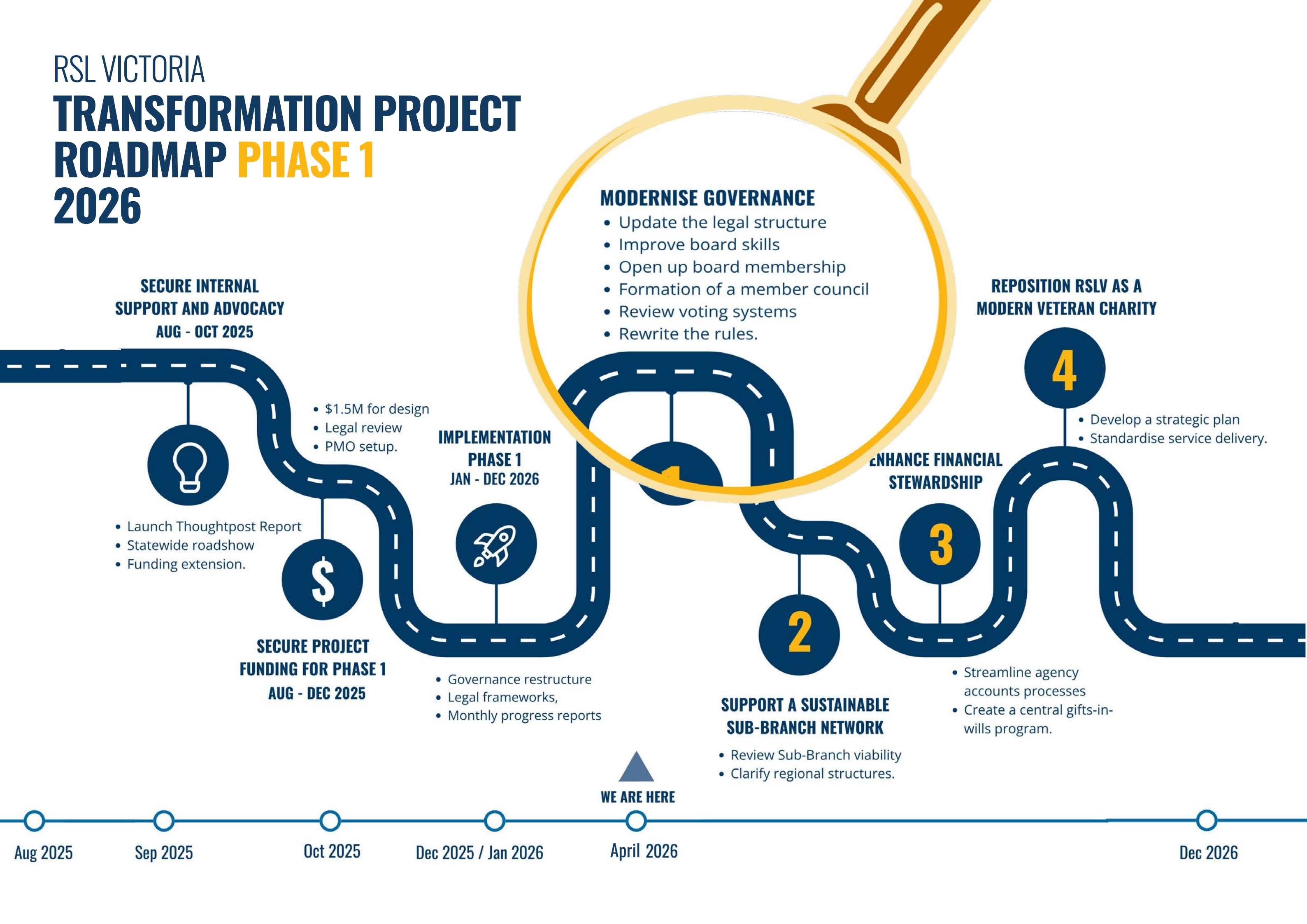


- Develop a strategic plan
- Standardise service delivery.

WE ARE HERE



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Aug 2025

Sep 2025

Oct 2025

Dec 2025 / Jan 2026

April 2026

Dec 2026

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to present the April highlights of the RSL Victoria's Transformation Project, which include:

- **Update: RSL Victoria's transition from incorporated association to company limited by guarantee:**
 - Why are we reviewing our governance framework?
 - Specialist legal and tax advisory support obtained
 - Next steps and ongoing engagement.
- **Other key Project developments:**
 - Infrastructure and capital works
 - Service model realignment – Surf Coast Geelong pilot
 - Increased engagement with younger veterans and underrepresented groups
 - Funding and Government Engagement
 - Forthcoming Quarter 2 Transformation Project activity.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE PROJECT DIRECTOR SUE CATTERMOLE

Welcome to the *Bulletin* for April 2026.

With Quarter 2 2026 upon us, this month's *Bulletin* provides stakeholders with updates on governance reform work and the continued development of our Statewide Service pilot across Surf Coast Geelong.

We are also nearing the completion of our engagement work with younger veterans and underrepresented groups, led over the past three months by Brett West in his role as Advisor, Veterans & Families Engagement, Consultation and Evaluation.

On a personal note, with the project governance in place and two major projects underway, my secondment to the position of RSL Victoria Executive Project Director draws to a close and I prepare to resume my duties as CEO of RSL Victoria.

It's been a privilege to be involved at the start of this major reform process over the last six months – the move was a necessary one given the scope of Project work and the speed at which it needs to be undertaken, and to ensure the transformation journey was set up for success.

I'd like to take this moment to thank RSL Victoria Chief Financial Officer, Jack Crawford, for stepping up as Acting CEO during this time and allowing me to put all my efforts into this crucial program of reform.

I may be returning to my CEO duties, but my responsibilities to continue steering this project remain – we are committed to this transformation so that the RSL is enabled and empowered to provide the best support, advocacy and wellbeing programs available, wherever veterans and their families find themselves in Victoria.

Warm regards,

Sue Cattermole
Executive Project Director
RSL Victoria



UPDATE: RSL VICTORIA'S TRANSITION FROM INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION TO COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE (CLG)

One of the Strategic Imperatives highlighted in the initial [Independent Review](#) into RSL Victoria by Thoughtpost Governance was the need for our organisation to establish a fit for purpose governance structure.

WHY ARE WE REVIEWING OUR GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK?

Our organisation's rules, processes and structures require improvement, modernisation and simplification to be better suited to the nature of the RSL's work, complexity, operations and mission. This change is also essential for the RSL to not just survive into the future but thrive.

The transition to a CLG model is being considered to provide the required enhancement of not just the above, but to also further improve transparency and regulatory alignment.

April's work in this area continued the investigation and review of the significant modernising of our governance to remain contemporary, compliant, and best positioned to support veterans and their families into the future.

Our review aims to strengthen RSL Victoria's governance framework, simplify our organisational structure, and ensure long-term sustainability.

SPECIALIST LEGAL AND TAX ADVISORY SUPPORT OBTAINED

RSL Victoria has engaged [HWLE Lawyers](#) to undertake a comprehensive assessment of our current governance arrangements, prepare a Structuring Options Paper and provide specialist tax advice as required.

This work will also include examining the five current entities within State Branch, which make the current governance structure overly complex.

These five current entities are:

- Returned & Services League of Australia (Victorian Branch) Incorporated
- Returned & Services League of Australia Victorian Branch General Appeals Patriotic Fund
- Returned & Services League Victorian Branch Welfare Trust Fund
- Returned & Services League Statewide Building Patriotic Fund
- RSL Victoria House Building Fund.

We are seeking HWLE's advice across cost, governance, decision-making, compliance, commercial performance, and strategic clarity to understand if these five entities could be streamlined.

The goal of the review is to identify opportunities to simplify structures, clarify various accountabilities, and reduce duplication between these entities. The review will also examine options for modernising our trustee and custodial arrangements to ensure strong governance and specialist oversight of Patriotic Funds.

Formal advice from HWL Ebsworth Lawyers is expected by mid-May 2026. This will be shared with all stakeholders once available.

NEXT STEPS AND ONGOING ENGAGEMENT

- The Advisory Panel for Work Stream 2 (RSL Victoria Governance Reform) is being established, with its first meeting scheduled for 7 May
- Engagement with Consumer Affairs Victoria has commenced, including a meeting between the State President and the Minister for Consumer Affairs held on 2 April
- A series of Constitutional Architecture Workshops with State Executive is underway. Sessions so far held focussed on organisational purpose and objects held (workshop held 31 March) and RSL structure and governing relationships (workshop held 27 April).

FURTHER INFORMATION ON RSL VICTORIA'S TRANSITION TO A CLG

To further familiarise yourself with the necessity of the modernisation of RSL Victoria's governance structures, definitions of both a CLG and incorporated association, and our independent legal recommendation to implement this change, please see below.

- For information on the transition to a CLG and RSL Victoria's ongoing accountability to members, please visit our Transformation Project FAQ webpage [HERE](#)
- For HWLE Lawyers recommendation for RSL Victoria to transition to an CLG, click [HERE](#)
- For the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission's definition of a company limited by guarantee, click [HERE](#)
- For the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission's definition of an incorporated association, click [HERE](#)
- To submit any questions relating to governance, or any other Transformation Project matter, please use our FAQ form [HERE](#).



OTHER KEY PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS - APRIL 2026

SERVICE MODEL REALIGNMENT – SURF COAST GEELONG PILOT

RSL Victoria is progressing the DVA funded service-delivery pilot in the Geelong/Surf Coast to ensure veterans and their families receive consistent, high-quality support wherever they are in Victoria.

This work focuses on realigning our service model, strengthening regional capability, and improving access to more complex support.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL WORKS

We are in the final stages of the planning process for the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) funded Geelong Hub. RSL Victoria is working closely with City of Greater Geelong to expedite local planning considerations. It is expected to commence the building works before the end of June 2026.

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNGER VETERANS AND UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS

Brett West's work as Advisor, Veterans & Families Engagement, Consultation and Evaluation concludes 8 May.

Brett's reports and recommendations on increasing engagement with underrepresented groups through targeted outreach, connecting with stakeholders including government and establishment of veteran and family advisory groups will be provided to State Executive for review and implementation.

This will assist to inform the re-positioning of RSL Victoria as a contemporary veteran charity and to remain relevant.

FUNDING AND GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

Discussions with DVA remain ongoing regarding Recommendation 86 of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (Ongoing funding for Veterans' and Families' Hubs).

This recommendation relates to operational funding for both the Wodonga and Geelong & Surf Coast Veteran and Family Wellbeing Hubs from 1 July 2026.

RSL Victoria is committed to ensuring our hubs are sustainably funded on an ongoing basis and able to deliver high-quality services for veterans and their families into the future.

FORTHCOMING QUARTER 2 TRANSFORMATION PROJECT ACTIVITY

Quarter 2 2026 will see the commencement of the structured review of Sub-Branch viability.

This review will be based on an agreed set of criteria that assess key aspects of Sub-Branch operations including the levels of veteran support and commemoration, long term financial sustainability of operations and Patriotic Funds, current and projected membership levels and overall governance capability.

By examining these areas in a structured and evidence-based way, the review will provide a solid foundation for developing governance framework to help Sub-Branches streamline the way they currently operate and where appropriate collaborate with neighbouring Sub-Branches to simplify and reduce their compliance and regulatory obligations.

PROJECT COORDINATION

An Operational Project Group has been established to oversee the transformation program of work at an operational level. The group met for the first time on 22 April and will continue to meet monthly.

The Project Control Board (responsible for project governance) and reporting through to State Executive continues to meet monthly and is currently reviewing the program of works for the remainder of 2026.



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

As part of our commitment to providing stakeholders with transparent and up-to-date information, please find the RSL Transformation Project financial performance for Quarter 1 2026.

As of Quarter 1, total project expenses total \$165,881 against a budget of \$290,374.

Please find more detailed Year-to-Date information on the next page.

OUR COMMITMENT TO STAKEHOLDERS

RSL Victoria is committed to transparent and inclusive engagement with our Sub-Branch network and external stakeholders throughout this process.

Any future changes to our governance structure will be subject to thorough consultation, regulatory approval, and member endorsement.

You will be informed of all developments during this transition process, and opportunities will remain open to provide your feedback and ask your questions.

Our focus remains on strengthening the organisation so we can continue delivering meaningful support to veterans, their families, and the broader community.

Please submit any questions or concerns around RSL Victoria's transition to a company limited by guarantee via our [FAQ form HERE](#) – your interest and queries are appreciated.



SCAN HERE
FOR FAQ FORM

	YEAR-TO-DATE				VARIANCES (ACT TO BUD)			
	VICTORIAN BRANCH INC.		GENERAL APPEALS PF		COMBINED			
PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2026	ACT	BUD	ACT	BUD	ACT	BUD	\$	%
RSL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT								
Transformation Project income								
League support fee - Transformation	237,784	217,933			237,784	217,933	19,851	
Other income - Transformation			100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	-	
TOTAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT INCOME	237,784	217,933	100,000	100,000	337,784	317,933	19,851	0%
Transformation Project expenses								
Salaries and employee benefits	95,729	70,910	50,999	117,300	146,728	188,210	41,482	22%
Consulting and other	19,152	79,654	-	22,510	19,152	102,164	82,012	81%
TOTAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT EXPENSES	114,882	150,565	50,999	139,810	165,881	290,374	124,494	43%
TOTAL PROJECT SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	122,902	67,368	49,001	(39,810)	171,903	27,559	144,345	524%



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