

RENT CHOICE VETERANS

Rent Choice Veterans is a Family & Community Services (FACS) initiative, in association with RSL DefenceCare. It applies to former members of the permanent ADF who are at risk of homelessness, and who have been on active service during wartime and/or in an operational area. This includes peacekeeping operations after 1 August 1990. It aims to build the client's capability and competency to sustain a tenancy and achieve independence in the private rental market.

To enquire about Rent Choice Veterans or if you know any veteran in need of assistance with housing, please contact RSL DefenceCare on 02 8088 0388 or info@rsldefencecare.org.au.

PEOPLE WE HAVE HELPED

A veteran determined not to give up.

Nicole joined the Defence Force with a sense of pride. She wanted to honour her grandfather's memory and was fortunate enough to travel to Papua New Guinea on deployment, not far from where her grandfather had served during WWII – the Kokoda Track.



Nicole spent seven years in the RAAF in both the air and fuel movements. Nicole loved her job, it was "fantastic, an amazing role" where she got to see Black Hawk helicopters, Naval aircraft and the American Galaxy aircraft. She also experienced a sense of "adventure, enjoyment and wonderful training". Unfortunately, there is also a "dark

side as well" – Nicole had to leave her dog with her parents when she joined, a burden to them and the first time her 10-year old dog had left her side since it was a puppy. Nicole was also exposed to noxious fumes from fuelling and had to deal with the stress and trauma of loading up fellow servicemen and women and watching them head off to fight overseas – several of whom never returned.

Upon discharge Nicole came home and, like many veterans, struggled with her identity – "it was pretty hard, I knew what to do in Defence, I knew who I was". Trying to adjust to civilian life, Nicole found it difficult to hold down regular employment and experienced a nervous breakdown. Needing two separate surgeries post-discharge and without a regular income, Nicole felt herself drowning fast – "I had to move in with my parents and was termed homeless, I thought about suicide".

Nicole continued to look for employment and moved into a share house. Unfortunately, she continued to struggle with anxiety and was facing homelessness once again. Determined not to give up, Nicole reached out to RSL DefenceCare. We were able to help Nicole with both claims and financial assistance. Nicole's claims advisor helped her complete forms to submit to DVA and to get a White Card. They also referred her to counselling services through VVCS and are continuing to work with her.

The Community Support team were able to assist Nicole with a bond and a few weeks rent so she had a place to live and could start to get back on her feet. "RSL DefenceCare really stepped in and helped me. If you hadn't have been there I would be on the street, I would have nothing, absolutely nothing. How do you say thank you for something like that?"

Nicole is still coming to terms with life after service, but as long as she stays positive and works through her problems, she has a bright future.

ANZAC APPEAL 2017

Thank you to RSL sub-Branches and Women's Auxiliaries for your fundraising efforts, volunteering your time and your overall support with the ANZAC Appeal - it is very much appreciated.

If anyone has not had a chance to get returns back to us, please do so as soon as possible. The fundraising team apologise if you have had trouble reaching us by telephone. Your patience is appreciated. The mobile telephone number is 0497 555 082 and our new email address is appeals@rsldefencecare.org.au.

POPPY APPEAL 2017

At the time of writing, fundraising in RSL NSW and its related entities has been stopped pending the outcome of a review. Information on when fundraising can recommence can be obtained from your sub-Branch.

CONTACT US

RSL DefenceCare is a charity helping current and ex-serving members of the ADF and their families in times of injury, illness and crisis. RSL DefenceCare is part of RSL Welfare and Benevolent Institution and is a Tier 1 RSL NSW recognised charity. ABN: 61 603 206 488. DGR: 752 766 491. CFN: 12317.

If you would like to discuss how RSL DefenceCare can assist you and your family, please contact us.

ANZAC House, 245 Castlereagh St, Sydney NSW 2000

Ph: 8088 0388 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm).

Fax: 9261 4558

Email: defencecare@rslnsw.org.au

Website: www.defencecare.org.au

Facebook: DefenceCare

Twitter: DefenceCare

Instagram: DefenceCare