

FALSE VALOUR CLAIMS AND BATTALION HISTORIES POLICY

Purpose

To resolve matters that have the capacity to bring into disrepute the good standing of the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) or its Associations, including:

- People erroneously challenging the legitimate history of the RAR.
- People falsely promoting themselves as having served in (not with) the RAR, thus undermining the legitimate service of members of the RAR.

Policy

The RAR Corporation and Associations have a responsibility to preserve the good name of the RAR for former and current serving members and future generations. Any accusations made about the documented history of the Battalions of the Regiment must be investigated. Likewise, if it becomes known that a person is claiming to have served in the Regiment and there is legitimate doubt, the matter must be investigated. Further, in order to properly represent the members of the RAR, its Directors and Officers will need to challenge false or defamatory accusations against the RAR or its Association, and may need to pursue claims, or challenge the official position on, matters that impact the health and wellbeing of current or former members of the RAR.

Guiding Principles

Due Process will be followed. The RARC will conduct itself in an objective manner to ensure that the burden of proof is placed upon individuals to demonstrate they are factually correct in assertions they have made which presents a high likelihood of arriving at the desired outcome of determining the truth.

Procedures

Battalion Association will be responsible for reviewing any Battalion documented history, including books. Unless it is an official history that has been commissioned by the Association, the historical account will not be endorsed by the Association but may be commended with a suitable disclaimer. Should a review of the historical account reveal inaccuracies, the inaccuracies should be referred back to the author in writing. The letter referring to the inaccuracies should be sent to the RARC for legal review before sending. In the event that the historical account is challenged by other than the Association, it is a matter for the author to deal with the concerns unless it is an official history, in which case the Association will investigate the accusations and respond to the accuser/s in writing. Again, the letter should be sent to the RARC for legal review before sending.

If it becomes known that a person is claiming to have served in the Regiment and there is legitimate doubt, the matter must be investigated by the Battalion Association in the first instance. If the investigation determines that the claim seems to be false or inaccurate, the Battalion Association is to send a full account of the claim being made, and the evidence that the claim is false, to the RARC. The RARC will initiate appropriate action after receiving legal advice.

Any evidence of a false or defamatory accusation being made against the RAR or its Associations is to be referred to the RARC. The RARC will consider the severity of the accusation and will recommend a course of action. The RARC will seek legal advice before pursuing the course of action.

All matters that impact the health and wellbeing of current or former members of the RAR that the majority of our members want the Association to pursue will be dealt with by the National Executive, either directly for RAR specific matters, or through peak bodies for broad national issues. The RARC will seek legal advice on the action proposed should it perceive any risk.

Members of the RARC should not communicate extemporaneously with individuals or third parties including the media during this process and requests for responses should be cleared by the RARC Board.