



Australian
Air League

FEDERAL OPERATIONS CIRCULAR #2

F/OC/2/22
28 February 2022

Guidelines for Local Political Engagement

1.0 Introduction.

- 1.1 This is a Federal election year and it is highly likely that it will be held in May.
- 1.2 As occurred at the last Federal Election in 2019 it is expected that there will be increased interest being shown by politicians and political candidates in the Air League, and the League will again welcome this.
- 1.3 Squadrons and Wings are encouraged to get to know their local identities because:
 - 1.3.1 It is an opportunity to share our stories and create awareness of the League;
 - 1.3.2 It is an opportunity to seek support for our squadron programs and facilities; and
 - 1.3.3 It is also an educational opportunity for our cadets to learn more about the Local Council, State and Federal processes.

2.0 General Guidelines.

2.1 Politically engaged but non-partisan.

- 2.1.1 When we represent the League, we need to put our personal views aside.
- 2.1.2 We need to treat all parties equally; so if we deal with one candidate in a particular constituency, we also need consider the other candidates.
- 2.1.3 Whilst we welcome pledges of support for the League, we need to treat them with caution.
- 2.1.4 And whilst we welcome offers of support we neither endorse nor support any candidates or parties.
- 2.1.5 We do not participate in distribution of any election materials like brochures, posters and billboards.
- 2.1.6 When the League appears in social media we gratefully acknowledge the support of MPs and candidates but we do not endorse them.
- 2.1.7 Also, we strive to balance social media posts so that the government and opposition receive equal coverage.

2.2 Coordination.

- 2.2.1 It is important that each Group is aware of local political engagement.
- 2.2.2 If any member is approached by MPs or candidates wishing to make a League related announcement or even local political identities visiting a Squadron Parade, Presentation Night or Branch AGM, for instance, please advise your Group Executive Commissioner as soon as possible and **before** it happens.
 - 2.2.2.1 Your Group may be able to assist with information or social media.
- 2.2.3 Please do not seek support for your local pet project without first checking with your Group Executive Commissioner.

2.3 On Message.

- 2.3.1 There are two areas in which members can engage politicians with relative 'safety':
 - 2.3.1.1 Our general messages on how the Australian Air League contributes to the Australian community and, especially, its youth (see ***Suggested Messages*** below); and
 - 2.3.1.2 Stories about your local members (as leaders in their schools and other bodies, their community service, their achievements and/or adventures – especially in aviation related areas).

2.4 Respect.

- 2.4.1 It is of utmost importance that all politicians and candidates be shown respect – regardless of a member’s own political views and how they relate to that person’s views:
- 2.4.2 Officers, especially, should always be mindful that they are setting an example of appropriate behavior to their cadets and others.

2.5 Preparation.

- 2.5.1 If you have local political identities visiting, please ensure that:
 - 2.5.1.1 Cadets and others know who the visitors are and what they do;
 - 2.5.1.2 Any officers or cadets who will speak, or be involved in other ways with these visitors, are fully briefed and rehearsed; and
 - 2.5.1.3 The event is well organized so that it runs smoothly and serves as a positive example of the capabilities of the members of the Australian Air League.
- 2.5.2 As most squadrons will already be aware, election day is a good day for fundraising and facilitating the visibility of uniformed members to the public, so the opportunity should be grasped.

3.0 Suggested Messages.

- 3.1 We tell young people that the Air League is about fun, friendship and flying
- 3.2 We tell parents that the Air League helps teach important life skills like leadership, discipline, self-confidence and teamwork.
- 3.3 We educate our members through a range of sixty short courses
- 3.4 Politicians want to hear how the League will help them, and our country, messages like:
 - 3.4.1 The Air League has been operating since 1934 with Squadrons in Queensland, NSW, the ACT, Victoria and South Australia – we are also keen to expand in to other states.
 - 3.4.2 Leadership training is an important facet of the Air League with all cadets getting the opportunity to develop these skills and gain life experience.
 - 3.4.3 The Air League is diverse and inclusive, representing the many different backgrounds and cultures that make up Australia today.
 - 3.4.4 Supporting the local community is an important facet of Air League life.
 - 3.4.5 We have often been described as the “Primary School of Aviation” – developing an interest in aviation as a career or hobby for generations of young Australians.
 - 3.4.6 There are 150,000 people directly involved in the aviation community.
 - 3.4.6.1 This number is growing by 3% every year.
 - 3.4.7 By 2035 it is expected the Asia Pacific region will need an extra 261,000 pilots and 285,000 maintenance staff.



Chief Comr Ray King, MSA
Chief Commissioner