



FEDERAL OPERATIONS CIRCULAR #1

F/OC/1/19
12 April 2019

Guidelines for Local Political Engagement

1.0 Introduction.

- 1.1 It was announced yesterday that a Federal Election will be held on 18th May 2019.
- 1.2 It is apparent, in a number of locations, that there is increased interest being shown by politicians and political candidates in the Air League, and the League welcomes 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 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 them 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 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.

4.0 Conclusion.

- 4.1 A formal policy on these matters will be explored later in this calendar year.



Comr Ray King, MSA
Federal Operations Commissioner