



CHAPTER SIX

RNZRSA GUIDE TO ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

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RNZRSA GUIDE TO ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

6.1 Foreword

The requirements for admission as either a Returned or a Service Member are set out in the First and Second Schedules, respectively, to the **Rules of RNZRSA**.

The requirements for admission as an Member are set out in the **Third Schedule to the Rules of RNZRSA**.

The purpose of this guide is to assist interpreting and applying the rules, but does not in any way replace or amend the rules.

6.2 The Committee

As mentioned, the First and Second Schedules form part of the Rules of RNZRSA and the word "Committee" in the Schedules refers to the Presidents Forum.

6.3 Citizenship

Before getting involved in the relevance of a person's service history, you must ensure that the person is a citizen or permanent resident of New Zealand or a citizen of another Commonwealth country. Permanent residency means that the person holds the relevant documentation in terms of New Zealand Immigration Policy. A work permit is not sufficient.

6.4 Documentary Evidence

The emphasis in the Rules is on the production of documentary evidence, and it is the responsibility of the applicant to produce such evidence.

Oral assertions are not sufficient. Applicants unable to produce the necessary documents should be directed to the appropriate authorities in order to obtain copies.

For those who served in the New Zealand forces the address is:-

New Zealand Defence Force
Personnel Archives
Trentham Camp
Private Bag 905
UPPER HUTT

Office Hours - 8am-4pm

For those who served with the British Forces the address is:-

The Departmental Records Officer (Archives)
Ministry of Defence
Bourne Avenue Hayes
Middlesex UB3 IRF
UNITED KINGDOM

The only exception to the above concerns those who had CMT service in New Zealand. For a number of reasons neither Defence Headquarters nor the Labour Department can, in all instances, produce verification of such service. If for this reason an applicant is unable to produce documentary evidence of CMT service then they should complete a Statutory Declaration as evidence of service.

A sample is attached - it must be declared in front of an authorised person (Solicitor, J. P). A written supportive statement from a family member or someone who served in the CMT with the applicant would also be helpful.

The above applies only to CMT service in New Zealand.

6.5 Eligible Service

With the exception of Cadet Forces, there is no minimum period of service requirement in the rules.

In general, eligible service would come within one of the following:-

- The Armed Forces of New Zealand.
- The Armed Forces of some other Commonwealth country.
- The Armed Forces of an ally.
- New Zealand or Commonwealth Police Force.
- New Zealand Cadet Force.
- Some Merchant Seamen

6.6 Ally

There is usually very little confusion over this term if you remember that it should be taken to refer to (in war time) a country committed to fighting alongside New Zealand or (in peace time) a country with which New Zealand has defensive ties.

A "neutral" country, such as Switzerland, is not an "ally" and service in the Armed Forces of such a country does not qualify a person for membership of the RSA.

6.7 Police Force

You will note that this applies to the Police Force in any Commonwealth country.

The merger in New Zealand of the NZ Police and the Ministry of Transport (Traffic Safety Service) took place on the 1 July 1992. At that date a number of Traffic Officers completed their cross-training and became sworn Police Officers.

As sworn members of the NZ Police they are eligible for admission as Service members of the Association.

Some Traffic Officers did not wish to become sworn, they are classified as non-sworn members of the NZ Police and as such are not eligible for admission as a Service member of the Association.

6.8 New Zealand Cadet Force

Previously applicable to Officers only, of the NZ Cadet Forces. However the 1996 Dominion Council extended eligibility to former and current serving members of the NZ Cadet Forces providing they meet the following criteria:

- (a) Minimum of 12 months service in the NZ Cadet Forces. Evidence of such service must be produced by the applicant and should be in form of a "Cadet Records of Service".
- (b) Must have attained age 18 years or the legal minimum drinking age as defined in the [Sale of Liquor Act 1989 or any subsequent amendment](#).

The NZ Cadet Force, in its current form, was established in 1971. For the purposes of this clause qualifying service dates from 1971. Service in School Cadets units does not qualify.

6.9 Merchant Navy

This is probably the most commonly misunderstood section of the eligibility rules. Put quite simply, the merchant service was a civilian occupation and does not, in itself provide any eligibility for membership of the RSA. The only exception to the above statement applies to persons who served in a vessel of New Zealand or of any ally in a theatre of war during or World War II or the Falklands War and whose service in that theatre was marked by the award of the appropriate campaign medals awarded to services personnel in that theatre. Any person so qualifying may be admitted as a Returned Member.

No other Merchant Service qualifies for Returned Membership and there is no provision at all for Merchant Seamen to be admitted to Service Membership.

6.10 Membership Classification - Returned or Service?

Once the questions of citizenship and eligible service have been dealt with it is necessary to determine which classification of membership, Returned or Service.

6.11 Returned Membership

For this classification a person must meet one of the criteria set out in Rule 5 of the First Schedule to the Rules of RNZRSA.

6.11.1 War or Emergency

This must refer to a situation in which New Zealand or the Commonwealth was involved. Such service will always be marked by appropriate campaign medals.

6.11.2 Occupational Force

There have been very few of these. J Force was occupational. The BAOR may be deemed occupational up to 1 August 1952, after which date they would be more properly classified as a Garrison Force with the resultant eligibility for Service membership of the RSA.

6.11.3 AD Hoc Force

In future, these will be determined by the Presidents Forum Committee on the merits of each case. To date, the following have been accepted:

- Cyprus
- Zimbabwe/Rhodesia
- UN Peacekeeping Forces i.e Bosnia, East Timor, Afghanistan, Iraq etc

6.11.4 War Time Service in the UK

Rule 5(b) of the First Schedule of the Rules of RNZRSA creates two exceptions to the general rule regarding overseas service. These apply to "at risk" home service in the UK during the war, with such service being marked by either the Defence Medal or the Air Crew Europe Star and service in Northern Ireland during the continuing disturbance, again with such service being marked by an appropriate medal.

6.11.5 Merchant Navy

This has already been fully covered in Merchant Navy paragraph 5.9 above but to remind you, service in the Merchant Navy will only qualify if the applicant has campaign medals for service in a theatre of war during World War II or the Falklands War.

6.12 Service in South East Asia

Any applicant who meets the following criteria may be admitted as a Returned Member:

Service in the New Zealand and Commonwealth Forces in the Federated States of Malaya, Malaysia, Singapore or in the surrounding waters between 16 June 1948 and 31 July 1960, qualifying for the award of the Naval General Service Medal with clasp "Malaya" or the General Service Medal with clasp "Malaya" or the General Service Medal with clasp "Borneo" or "Malaya Peninsula".

Any other service in South East Asia would qualify the applicant for Service membership.

6.13 Gulf War

Any applicant who meets the following criteria may be admitted as a Returned Member:

Service on HMNZS Wellington during the vessels deployment to the North Arabian Gulf as part of the Multinational Interception Force enforcing the UN imposed sanctions against Iraq. Such service to have been between the 15 October 1995 and 20 January 1996.

6.14 North Arabian Gulf Blockade 1995-96

Any applicant who meets the following criteria may be admitted as a Returned Member:

Service on HMNZS Wellington during the vessels deployment to the North Arabian Gulf as part of the Multinational Interception Force enforcing the UN imposed sanctions against Iraq. Such service to have been between the 15 October 1995 and 20 January 1996.

6.15 Indonesia

Dutch Nationals who served in Indonesia up to 31 March 1946 qualify for Returned Membership. After that date, service would qualify for Service Membership.

6.16 Service Membership

Any person who satisfies the citizenship and eligible service requirements, but who does not hold any of the qualifications for Returned Membership in paragraphs 5.11 to 5.12 above, is welcome to join as a Service Member.

NZ Police and NZ Cadet Force - Such service makes a person eligible for Service Membership only.

6.17 Membership

(see Rule 4 of the Third Schedule to RNZRSA Rules).

6.18 Home Guard, Women's War Service, and Women's Land Service,

Any person who has served as a member of:

- (i) the Home Guard, Women's War Service Auxiliary or the Women's Land Service in New Zealand, or
- (ii) an equivalent organisation or organisations within the then British Empire

Any time between September 1939 and August 1945 and who does not possess the necessary qualifications for "Returned" membership, may be admitted as a Service member.

6.19 Savings

A number of instances have occurred where an applicant has been wrongly classified a Returned member, instead of a Service member. The most common example arose out of the misunderstandings over the status of persons serving in the South East Asia subsequent to the end of the Emergency.

The revised wording of **the First Schedule** clears up such misunderstandings and the purpose of the savings rule is to validate decisions already made so that a member is not required to change classification.

It is important to note however, that this provision applies only to wrong decisions on classification. Apart from the special case of home guard personnel referred to in 6.18 above, the "Savings" rule cannot be used to validate the membership of someone who does not possess the basic requirements for RSA membership, i.e. correct citizenship and eligible service or falsifying documentation.

6.20 Restriction

Any person being a member of any Party, Organisation or Association or other body, the allegiance(s) and/or objects of which are inconsistent with the allegiance and objects of the Royal NZ Returned And Services' Association (Inc.) shall be deemed to be not eligible for membership.

6.21 Online Member

If there isn't a RSA in your area, or if people want to become part of the movement without being involved at local club level, they can join the RSA Online.

When they join they will receive a special RSA Club Card, giving them access to retail deals provided by a large range of brands.

STATUTORY DECLARATION**OATHS AND DECLARATIONS ACT 1957**

I (state full name) _____

of (state full address) _____

State Occupation: _____

SOLEMNLY AND SINCERELY DECLARE THAT:

1. I undertook Compulsory Military Training in New Zealand.
2. The total period of my involvement in CMT was during the years 19..... To
19..... inclusive.
3. My initial "in camp" training took place at (state location).....
on (state approx. dates).....
4. My military service was completed in accordance with the conditions prevailing at that time and my discharge was in no way dishonorable.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Oaths and Declaration Act 1957.

Declarant: _____

Declared At: _____

Date: _____

Before Me: _____
(Justice of the Peace/Solicitor)

