



# Bowls Victoria Board Representatives Meeting with Gippsland and Strzelecki Regions: Wednesday 13 March 2013 Morwell BC

Attendees: **Bowls Victoria**  
Board Directors: Phil Gude & Creagh Bown  
Chief Executive: Graeme Bridge

**Gippsland Bowls Region**  
President: Jeff Amos  
BVRR: Don Carmichael (North Gippsland Bowls Division)

**East Gippsland Bowls Division.**  
President: Terry White Vice President: Ethel Curtis

**North Gippsland Bowls Division.**  
President: Deidre Relph Secretary: Ian Thompson

**Strzelecki Bowls Region**  
President: Joy Hargreaves (Apology)  
Deputy President: Peter Henwood  
Secretary: Tony Colwell

**South Gippsland Bowls Division.**  
Secretary: Peter Henwood

**West Gippsland Bowls Division.**  
President: Mal Grant Secretary: Gerald Winter

## Meeting Minutes

### 1. Welcome

Bowls Victoria Chief Executive Graeme Bridge welcomed all in attendance and introduced Bowls Victoria Board members to the Division & Region Representatives who in turn outlined their positions on the respective Division/Region Boards.

### 2. Structure

Bowls Victoria Chief Executive Graeme Bridge outlined the regional structure of Bowls Victoria and how it is intended to remain as sixteen skilled and strong Region Boards and the Committees needed to carry out required duties.

Region didn't have enough persons interested in nominating for positions which related to not being able to fill all committee positions.

Division Committees are all okay with sufficient numbers of people all fulfilling roles.

Getting people to take a role on was and is the most difficult part of the process.

If there is a shortage of persons able to take on roles there is an opportunity for a Delegation of Authority from the region to assist with Division committees that may need assistance.

It was noted in correspondence from Strzelecki Region that it is disappointing that none of their top players from either Division show any interest in becoming involved with administration duties at either Region, Division or Club level. Most people who are involved in administration are over 65 and many are in their 70's. It was suggested that the Division/Region Boards consider approaching suitable people to consider taking on roles, and highlight the benefits of being involved as a volunteer administrator and the valuable contributions they could make to the sport.

Levies for both Regions and Divisions were discussed and these apply for both. This is very much standard across the state with only the sums differing depending on the way they have been structured specific to their area.

### **3. Game Format Structure**

BV Chief Executive explained that there were a number of matters relevant to the conduct of the sport that were under consideration or had been determined and the following were all addressed with the representatives.

#### **3.1 Region Sides Format**

The format for the Men's Region Sides for 2014 will be 12 players per side.

Location for this event is yet to be determined as the Sports Marketing company BV employs for this are yet to deliver any advice regarding sourcing of a suitable location.

Financial implications for these events are making it more and more difficult to substantiate the extra player numbers associated with them.

#### **3.2 Pennant Format**

Number of ends, players per side, etc., will continue to be the decision of the relevant Division Pennant or Match Committee entrusted with formulating their competitions based on available numbers of teams and players. There is no set rule regarding the number of ends to be played or whether there is a requirement to conduct or not conduct afternoon tea. These are all decisions that lie with the respective organizing committees.

##### **3.2.1 Consistency of Pennant Rules Across the State**

Through correspondence received, EGBD raised that point that BV should consider having one set of rules apply for pennant across the state. It was explained that this would be extremely difficult as there were specific circumstances that were applicable in a number of Divisions and Regions where they had to employ certain rules to enable a competition. It was advised to the representatives that the one rule that was being employed in some areas regarding awarding results in Pennant matches where inclement weather was a contributing factor and a pre-determined number of ends had been played was in effect illegal to do as it was contracting outside of the Laws of the Sport of Bowls. If Divisions or Regions are permitting this to happen they will need to re-consider their pennant rules for the future.

##### **3.2.2 Pennant Participation & Equal Opportunity**

Correspondence received from EGBD highlighted concerns regarding

Saturday players winning a Grand Final can also play in Grand Finals on Tuesday in Midweek Pennant. Under the current Equal Opportunity Act provisions this is permissible, and once again highlights how the Division structures its pennant competitions. There is no clear cut way in which to restrict players from a competition if they are entitled under the act to participate. Saturday Pennant must be open to all affiliated members regardless of gender and picked on ability. Midweek pennant does have the ability to formulate specific conditions for competitions that can facilitate the participation of women & girls in the sport and restrictions can be placed on where men can play in a team or the number of men that can play in a team to provide opportunities for females to pursue leadership roles in teams. Gerald Winter to provide a copy of the West Gippsland Division Pennant Rules for consideration by Bowls Victoria Laws & Rules Committee Chairman.

### 3.3 Championship Events

Correspondence was received from EGBD, WGBD and Strzelecki Region regarding the issues they are facing with scheduling events and the inclusion of events on this year's calendar.

#### 3.3.1 Suggested cancellation of BV Novice Event (Strzelecki BR)

Strzelecki region have sought to have the Men's & Women's Novice Singles abandoned from the State Championship program feeling that the event served no great purpose and was cluttering up an already overcrowded calendar. Advice conveyed to the meeting was that these events would not be withdrawn from the calendar but would be discussed as part of the identified review process undertaken by the State Championship Committee at the end of each season.

#### 3.3.2 Structure of State Events (EGBD)

Play only Club Events in Singles, Pairs, Triples & Fours and then the winner at club level progresses to a Division/Region Event to determine an eventual winner to contest the state Finals. This would prevent duplication of events and free time up on the calendar. (Virtually a Ch. Of Ch. in each event commencing at club level) Whilst this was seen as an idea with some merit, it was also pointed out that there are a number of clubs that don't run specific club events in Triples and Fours for all genders and that there could be instances of mixed teams playing in these events. BV currently hosts gender specific events in all categories of play. This item also to be passed on to the State Championship Committee for review.

#### 3.3.3 Allocation of Venues (in Particular more use of Darebin) (EGBD)

Why is Darebin not used more for State Events and Sides Championship Events as it is central in the state to Regions and the Metro area. Common sense and not sponsorship dollars should be the main factor in considering locations for events.

Response to this issue was that Darebin in its current state does not have the infrastructure to support events that have numbers as large as what they are for Sides events. There would have to be considerable overlay to provide the level of facilities that would be required to host any of our major events, and the venue cannot support the event with volunteer numbers suitable to conduct large events. The Australian Open is serviced by many outside persons who are not members of the club itself.

## 4. Coaching

Concerns were raised and highlighted regarding the lack of support of this mechanism by BV. This issue was raised by all representatives in attendance.

4.1 Coach Training (EGBD)

Can Bowls Victoria allocate more resources to develop a coaching/training panel with members willing to travel to country areas? Coaching courses have been cancelled and there has been no indication provided of when these may be rescheduled. Calls and emails have not been responded to. Costs associated with travel and accommodation to attend courses to be conducted in other areas are prohibitive. Could this be subsidized or offset? Response given to this query was that BV is bitterly disappointed that they are not fulfilling the expectations of their members in delivery of these courses and apology given regarding lack of follow up. Lack of accredited Presenters & Assessors is having a bearing on us being able to deliver the accredited programs and this is going to be addressed via a recruiting strategy to involve more people around the state who are linked directly to Regional areas. BV will be investigating other options in direct consultation with Bowls Australia at a meeting to be conducted very shortly.

4.2 Development of New Bowlers (WGBD)

Division is interested in running a Junior Development Program. Would CDO Barrie Lester be available to assist with the implementation of a program? Seeking funding grant to assist with this proposal. Volunteers have been sourced to help run activities. What can be done to address the decline of affiliated membership? Could CDO be engaged to assist with promotion of activities to increase the interest in bowls. Encouraged to seek assistance and advice in the first instance from CDO Barrie Lester, and also for advice from BV Development Staff. BV Club Development & Support Committee will also be investigating opportunities to assist clubs in these areas. The CD & SC is looking to run seminars in identified locations through a forum process to provide as much assistance as possible to clubs to develop opportunities with their communities. As part of this process Information kits are to be put together to provide vital information regarding recruiting new participants to the sport.

**5. Administration of Regions & Divisions (Strzelecki BR)**

(Ways to encourage new personnel to take on roles)

Advice provided was around educating people to put something back into the sport. Delivery of a positive message regarding the benefits of being involved and providing vital linkages back to the bowls community. Have some specific role descriptions for potential new board/committee members so they are not in the dark about what responsibilities are involved in all roles.

**6. Possible new club – Churchill BC (WGBD)**

Update provided on this from Region Secretary and Division reps.

Lots of trees have been cut down at a projected site, but there appears to be no immediate funding available for the building of the venue. It is part of a multi-sport complex. It is anticipated that the formation of this club may result in members leaving other clubs in the area. This will be an ongoing concern for those clubs in facing dwindling numbers of members. There has been no approach to BV regarding affiliating the new club to BV. It would be seen as a positive step if the prospective new club administration were to contact BV so that we could direct them in specific areas in establishing their new club.

**7. Role of BVRR's at Region & General Meetings (BV)**

7.1 Communication and information flow from BVRR's (BV)

(How many BVRR's are on the Board of their Region or report on the matters raised at BVRR meetings back to their Regions?)

BVRR's make their reports to BVRR meetings conducted at Bowler's House,

and there is information that can be taken from these meetings and reported back to the Region/Division Board. It may be worth considering that BVRR's make a presentation to Board of Region/Division and highlight relevant matters. BV to forward copy of BVRR meeting minutes to Region Secretaries to make sure that information is communicated effectively

The issue of CCO's not passing on information in clubs was raised, and this is of great concern that the communication messages being sent out from BV are not getting through to the members. It has to be highlighted to CCO's that all information must be passed on to the relevant bodies that BV is conveying specific message to.

#### **8. Heat Policy Review (BV)**

Chief Executive advised representatives that BV was reviewing the current BV Heat Policy. This is being conducted by a sub-committee appointed to research all information possible prior to any consideration being given to changes in the current policy. Currently all Divisions & Regions are able to set a ceiling temperature for the conduct of events under their direct control.

The Bowls Australia Heat Policy is also under review at this time and other states/territories are also reviewing their policies.

What is specifically being looked at is a heat stress index which takes into account humidity, temperature and other influences affecting the well-being of players whilst they are participating on the greens. Other factors that are being investigated are heat factors associated with artificial greens (carpet & synthetic surfaces) and what effect this has on player welfare too.

#### **9. Sale of Bowler's House and relocation opportunities (BV)**

Advice provided that the sale of Bowler's House has progressed to an unconditional sale phase to be completed on 30 June 2013 following the full payment of the deposit. BV is considering all options available to them, whether to lease a property in the short term (possibly 2 years) and then look at buying or to consider buying in the market we have sold in. There are key points to consider regarding location, area of space required, specific requirements for car parking and availability of public transport. Members will be kept advised of progress involving this very important period of our transformation.

#### **10. Whole of Sport IT Program (BV)**

Chief Executive advised that Bowls Victoria is currently involved in identifying and negotiating through Bowls Australia a suitable and cost effective Whole of Sport Technology system that will link all state and territory organisations on one computer system. The current Sporting Pulse system is not sport specific to bowls and it is felt that it does not service the expectations of many current stakeholders. Other benefits advised so far have been the inclusion of a bowls specific Competition Management module that will provide opportunities at all levels of the sport. Online entry of scores and results capabilities so that up to date results can be displayed quickly and provide greater interaction amongst participants and media interest.

Ability to pay affiliation fees online via secure online payment process.

Clubs/Divisions/Regions would be provided free websites at basic levels and differing levels of access to specific areas of the system to allow updating of individual information relating to club members. High level protective security of information is assured as part of this system. BV is very carefully considering its options regarding moving forward with this proposal as there are costs associated with accepting to introduce a new technology to our members.

##### **10.1 Provision of BV Database information to Regions and Divisions (WGBD)**

This request has been facilitated and lists have been provided. What made this a lot more difficult on this occasion was the reluctance of clubs to return their updated

player lists prior to the deadlines advised. BV cannot process final lists if clubs have not forwarded their corrected lists and payments.

10.2 Updating of Club/Division/Region information on BV Website (WGBD)  
Incorrect and not up to date information displayed on BV website creates issues with people not being able to contact the right person in their Division or Region. Annual returns are sent to Bowls Victoria but if changes are made during the year, there has to be a mechanism to be able update changes to personnel.  
WGBD will be providing an update of their officials and it is expected that these will be amended on the online information guide.

#### **11. Bowls Victoria Region Visits**

Chief Executive outlined that President Rosemary Varty had expressed a desire for the Board of Bowls Victoria to attend specific combined Division and Region consultative meetings in identified Regional areas across the state where there would be an opportunity provided to exchange information with representatives from the Boards/Committees of those Regional and Divisional bodies. All BV Board Directors have been rostered to attend a series of these meetings during March and April. Specific requests have been sent out to clubs within the Divisions & Regions to submit items for discussion and these are being provided. Bowls Victoria are using these meetings to convey information regarding items of interest to all members statewide, and to inform the Regions and Divisions of outcomes that have been determined by the Board of BV. The meeting at Morwell BC is the first conducted in this series.

#### **12. Bowls Victoria Structure Review**

Chief Executive invited BV Board Director Phil Gude to address attendees on what formal processes had been undertaken since the formation of the Review Committee which was set up after the first meeting of the current Board last September. PG advised that it was a committee of two with former BV State President Graeme Hosken as the other member and PG as chairman.

A review of the staffing structure had been undertaken as a first priority and a number of strategies had been implemented to ensure that the organisation was servicing the needs of the members efficiently and effectively. Operational procedures have been addressed and a more effective reporting structure put in place for providing feedback to the Board from department managers. A Staff Operations Manual has been developed and introduced for all employees to comply with. Documentation has been presented to the Board highlighting 28 specific recommendations which have all been resolved for implementation and will streamline the way that Bowls Victoria conducts its business and provides better service to our members. The Review Committee has also provided a Board of Director's Charter & Guidelines for Operations which outlines responsibilities for Board Directors in conducting affairs for BV. A copy of this document is available online on the BV website. In the coming weeks and months the Review Committee will be interviewing all BV Committee Chairpersons and undertaking with them a review of their current Terms of Reference to determine if they satisfactorily meet the needs of the organisation and its members. The Review Committee has also met with the four CDO's and the feedback they have provided back to us highlights the need for more communication between the State body and the CDO's who are working for Bowls Australia and Bowls Victoria out in the field.

#### **13. Bowls Victoria Director Portfolio Responsibilities**

Information regarding specific responsibilities for BV Board Directors who have identified areas of Bowls Operation to report back to the BV Board was conveyed and discussed. President Rosemary Varty has distributed portfolios to individual Directors and they will be reporting to the Board at each meeting and furnishing

where required written reports together with recommendation/s as is appropriate in accordance with normal Board reporting requirements. Nine specific committees have been associated with a Director and the areas they encompass are Finance, Club Development, Championships, Coaching, Event Support, Metropolitan Pennant, Sponsorship-Marketing-Media, State Selection & Umpiring.

#### **14. General Business**

Don Carmichael raised the matter of retrospective awarding of Bowls Victoria 90 year birthday certificates. Suggestion that there be provision for an amnesty on the period of time for people to claim these, and for it to be ratified by the Bowls Victoria Awards Committee prior to being recommended to the BV Board.

Tony Colwell advised that the number of elderly female bowlers has reduced significantly and it is widely anticipated that there will be further decline in this area. The older ladies are not playing pennant as they do not want to play with men. Advice on this issue was that it is a matter for clubs to consider when they are nominating teams for their local pennant competitions. Do they focus on trying to facilitate an opportunity for everyone to enjoy a game or do they concentrate on winning pennants? It is very hard for small clubs who do not have the available players to assist due to heat, illness, etc.

The meeting concluded with thanks from Bowls Victoria for everyone's attendance, and it was stated that the meeting was very successful in providing excellent feedback from the Divisions & Regions and all of what was conveyed would be taken on board for further consideration.

Graeme Bridge  
Chief Executive  
Bowls Victoria