

# Rowing SA

## Constitution Reform 2021

### *Question & Answer (Q&A)*

#### **Background**

Following a broad range of initial consultation with the rowing community in SA and in conjunction with the distribution of the proposed new Constitution and Information Memorandum, we have prepared a Q&A document. To date we have held consultation forums with:

- The large, non-school clubs
- The remaining non-school clubs
- The school-based rowing programs
- The directors of school-based rowing programs
- The Heads of School Committee

There will be a further open forum in mid – December. Any interested club or individual is welcome to contact Philip Paterson (RSA Chair) 0418 840 634 or [philip@p16.com.au](mailto:philip@p16.com.au). Philip is happy to attend any committee meeting to talk to the proposed changes.

#### **The following has emerged from consultation to date.**

***Q : When will a Special General Meeting be called to address the Constitution?***

**A:** We were planning late 2021, however it is now planned for February 2022.

***Q: Why is the RSA Board proposing change to the Constitution?***

**A:** The current Constitution is neither contemporary nor democratic – refer previously circulated power-point presentation, also on [RSA website](#). In addition, there are a number of internal inconsistencies in the document that should be corrected.

***Q: The custodians of rowing are the non-school clubs where members tend to row into senior years / for life. Why would the Clubs allow the schools additional voting rights?***

**A:** The fact is that School programs represent 72% of the registered rowers in SA and contribute approximately the same proportion of registration income to the Association.

The proposed new model:

- Leaves the Clubs with greater than 50% of voting rights (simple majority).
- Should 72% of the rowing participants have no voting rights in the association?

- The proposed changes give clubs a simple majority and ensures that a 75% vote is required to pass a special resolution (***particularly, changing the Constitution***) requires a level of agreement between the Clubs, Schools and or the Foundation Life Members. The Board sees that as a democratic and appropriate outcome.
- The Board also believes that the new Constitution and structure will foster increased co-operation between the Club and School “factions”. That can only lead to a greater participation of past school rowers in the club environment – good for the clubs and good for the sport. Can we prove that – *no*, however we sincerely believe it will happen over time.

***Q: Why would the Schools’ with 72% of the active rowers agree to a new model that leaves them with less than 50% of the voting block? Why not split RSA into three entities?***

- RSA as asset owner, operator and Regatta facilitator/controller, servicing
  - SA Schools Rowing Association Inc.
  - SA Club Rowing Association Inc.

**A:** Simply economics, the cost of such a model and the access to the necessary volunteer / BRO resources would render such a model unaffordable in the SA rowing community.

***Q : Are Foundation Life Members disadvantaged by this proposed model?***

**A:** Foundation life members are a group of people dedicated to rowing, who in 1978 paid \$200 into the Association to assist in the funding of RSA’s on land assets at West Lakes. That donation entitled them to life membership and the right of an individual vote at RSA General Meetings when they physically attend.

- The proposed new constitution protects those rights and builds on those rights:
  - FLM retain an individual vote
  - They will be permitted to vote by post
  - Their proportional voting rights is more in line with their proportion of interested rowing community members

## **Rowing SA Board**

November 2021