

ORIENTEERING VICTORIA REVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURES AND FEES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.

Q1. Won't we get lower participation numbers if we increase the event levies? Already we have very low numbers in the 25-40 age groups at bush events.

There have been low participation rates in the 35s and 40s for a number of years at more distant events. There is no evidence that the level of event levies has or will impact this group. There are many possibly reasons for this lower participation but none of them are likely to relate to the matters of this review. Other strategies need to be explored to solve this problem.

Park and Street (PAS) levies have increased over the past few years, yet participation rates at PAS and many club-level events remain strong. Few other "entry-based" activities would have adult fees less than \$5 or \$6. Advice from the PAS Committee is that an increase in the event levy to \$3.20 (Option A, C) or \$3 (Option B) would be acceptable, with a corresponding increase in on-the-day entry to \$5, and in season ticket prices, so that the increased levy is passed on to participants rather than borne by clubs.

Event levy increase in the order suggested for championship or State series events seem unlikely to affect participation when fuel costs and time expended are a much higher factor in attending more distant events.

Q2. Why are you lowering the club affiliation fee (Option A, C) – our club can afford to contribute to the running of OV.

This was originally suggested as an encouragement to clubs to join in this process of combining club and OV membership. It will be welcomed by many clubs. There are a number of ways that your club could apply this saving eg

- Charge just a nominal club membership fee so that the overall membership fee payable (OV + Club) is little more than the advertised OV fee. (Your constitution or Incorporation Rules may require *some* fee to be charged.)
- Direct your savings to improve the experience of your members, or new members (all of whom will automatically be OV members under the new scheme). Eg discounted club clothing; rebate on event entry fees for new members if they buy a season ticket or attend a certain number of bush/MTBO events, or enter a championship event.
- Some like-minded clubs could fund a development officer (or similar) position to increase participation. Eg to promote and organise a space-racing-type competition for juniors in a sector of Melbourne, or promote a PAS series (similar to OA funded participation programs).

Q 3. Why don't you have family memberships any more (Option A, B)?

Membership records are easier to maintain and membership numbers are easier to count when each member is an individual. A bonus is that membership renewal or set-up in Eventor will be much easier if everyone is just recorded as an individual.

And with virtually no 'hard mail' being sent nowadays, there is no need to rationalise mailing costs (by easy identification of a single mailing address).

Q 4. Most options are suggesting that *The Australian Orienteer* will be an optional extra to membership. How will that work?

One of the blockers against increasing member numbers is the high current cost of annual membership (which includes *The Australian Orienteer*). If that compulsory membership cost can be removed, then it is possible to significantly reduce the basic membership cost.

OV will work with Orienteering Australia to get an agreement whereby Victoria can de-couple magazine subscription from membership. We envisage that OV will need to guarantee to continue to take (and pay for at full rate) the same number of magazines that we currently receive by virtue of our current membership – currently 320 copies per edition.

Members will be given the option (and encouraged!) to pay for an AO subscription (currently \$26.50) in addition to their membership fee. But of course only one member of the family would do this. So if membership = \$25 + AO \$26.50, then the \$51.50 payable is still significantly less than the current senior membership fee of \$74. Similarly other membership types would still be saving.

And new members who aren't really sure about add-ons, can receive full membership of both club and OV without committing to that additional cost initially.

There is a financial risk that the 320 copy-level will not be reached.

Q 4. In an earlier paper you said that all those who participate in an orienteering event would have to become a financial member. Are you still going to do that?

This was an initial idea, but is not practical in the way that many of our events work. If we get to the stage where all event entry is electronic/online then we could address this again. But we currently have many people who only attend one or two PAS events in a year – to try to keep track of who has attended and who has paid a membership already, would be too difficult with current processes.

Once people have attended a few events, made friends among current club members, and would like to join up to get wider benefits than just a one-off run with a map, then we can encourage them to become a member – now of both club and OV.

We would still like all participants to sign up as casual members – this casual member registration has fallen off in 2014: We'd like to be able to include them in the weekly email bulletins, and to record their age category for statistical purposes. Would be great if all clubs could commit to recording email address and year of birth for all participants.

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On behalf of the OV Membership Structure Review Committee

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