

Discussion Paper For Membership Fee Structure (Review 2014)

Introduction

The Victorian Orienteering Association (VOA), also known as Orienteering Victorian (OV) is a membership organisation with members drawn from the orienteering community. Various orienteering and other clubs, as incorporated organisations, are affiliated with OV; the clubs have members some of these also being individual members of OV.

Government funding is generally awarded on a per member or participation basis and OV would like to encourage more of the affiliate club members to join OV therefore providing a stronger support base for OV to attract outside support including Government funding to further develop the sport of orienteering.

Objective

The purpose of this review is to recommend a membership fee structure that will support an increase in participation in orienteering and that will help build a strong Association to organise and develop the sport.

Current State

A two tiered membership structure that has individuals joining both a club and the association raises the same question every year for individuals; Do I need to join *both* a club and the association and what are the benefits vs cost to me?

This also leads to a varying level of conflict between clubs and the association as to who is encouraging what or not.

Proposed Solution

Make the two levels of membership in a club and an association disappear.

Provide a structure that allows individuals to join a club affiliated with OV and then have the affiliated club nominate, join and make payments for each of their members that are actually competing in OV sanctioned orienteering events.

It is vital to the success of this change that it be demonstrated that this change is essentially revenue neutral to OV. For example, the first year revenue raised should be in line with the previous year plus a reasonable increase similar to previous years or in line with the CPI increase.

Steps Involved

1. OV to strike a membership levy that is low so as not to discourage individuals from joining clubs.
 - As a guide, membership cost should be so low that a prospective member would form the attitude "why would I NOT join...".
 - Membership categories would remain as they are currently.
2. Reduce the current Club Affiliation Fee to a nominal figure that solely covers the cost of registering that club. This fee will no longer be scaled to the club size.

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3. OV to strike a new event levy that will reflect a "pay as you go" basis. It is anticipated that this levy will vary in accordance with the type of member and event, as it does today.
4. OV to give consideration to expanding the season's ticket structure used by the Urban Orienteering Committee for Street-O to also be used in Bush-O events such as the State Series and Mountain Bike Orienteering events.
5. Clubs to create a Social Member type category so as to allow non-competing members to join their club with conditions applicable to that category. This also allows individuals to join more than one club if they desire and only be competing through one. Social Members would not be able to compete in sanctioned orienteering events at any level.
6. Orienteering Australia (OA) to provide options around supply of magazine; for example;
 - To no longer be a standard inclusion as part of the membership model for Victoria. Magazine is to be available as an optional subscription at a cost to be determined, or
 - Expand the content of the magazine to provide more benefits to an increase in Urban Street Orienteering membership, or
 - Consider a lower cost delivery mechanism such as a web based magazine or newsletter.
7. OV and all clubs to consider potential constitutional issues and changes required to allow the proposed fee structure change.

Constitutional Considerations

This section will be detailed more fully in a later revision.

- The first question is, are there any issues; there may not be any.
- OV guidelines will be based on the VOA Constitution.
- Club guidelines will be based on The Model Rules for an Incorporated Association.

Membership Scenarios and Fee Examples

This section will be detailed more fully in a later revision however we need to get accurate membership numbers (totals of each membership category) from the clubs to be able to accurately calculate scenarios.

Timeline

June - OV Council Meeting (20th June)

- Circulate this Discussion Paper prior to the Council Meeting so the clubs can read and digest.
- Get in-principle support from the clubs at the meeting.
- General discussion at Council Meeting with possible feedback from Warwick Williams re potential constitutions issues for both Clubs and OV.

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July (target 13th July)

- Update the Discussion Paper to address initial feedback from clubs and also include background, statistics, description of constitutional changes and membership scenarios (from the model). This will include the constitutional review by Warwick Williams.
- Circulate the updated Discussion Paper among the clubs for review and feedback.

September (target 14th September)

- Clubs provide feedback to the membership review committee.
- Evaluate feedback and incorporate into the Proposal Document as necessary.

October (target 5th October)

- Circulate the Proposal Document to all affiliated clubs and the OV committee.

October - OV Council Meeting (17th October)

- Vote on Proposal.

November (late)

- OV to arrange a special general meeting to ratify changes including any constitutional changes required.
- Clubs to arrange any special general meetings to ratify any constitutional changes required.

January 2015

- New membership structure commences.

Benefits

- Clubs can set and control their own membership fees and then pass on prescribed OV fee as required.
- No more confusion between clubs and OV about membership numbers.
- Stronger membership base will provide better access to government funds for both OV and the clubs.
- Clubs provide family membership which will provide lower entry cost to families.

Potential Obstacles

- Costs to some members will rise but some will also be reduced. Fundamentally if you compete more often it will cost more, if you compete less it will cost less.
- Both OV and affiliated clubs need to confirm that Constitutional change is not required in their organisations.