



## Australian Rogaining Association Inc. President's Annual Report 2017/18

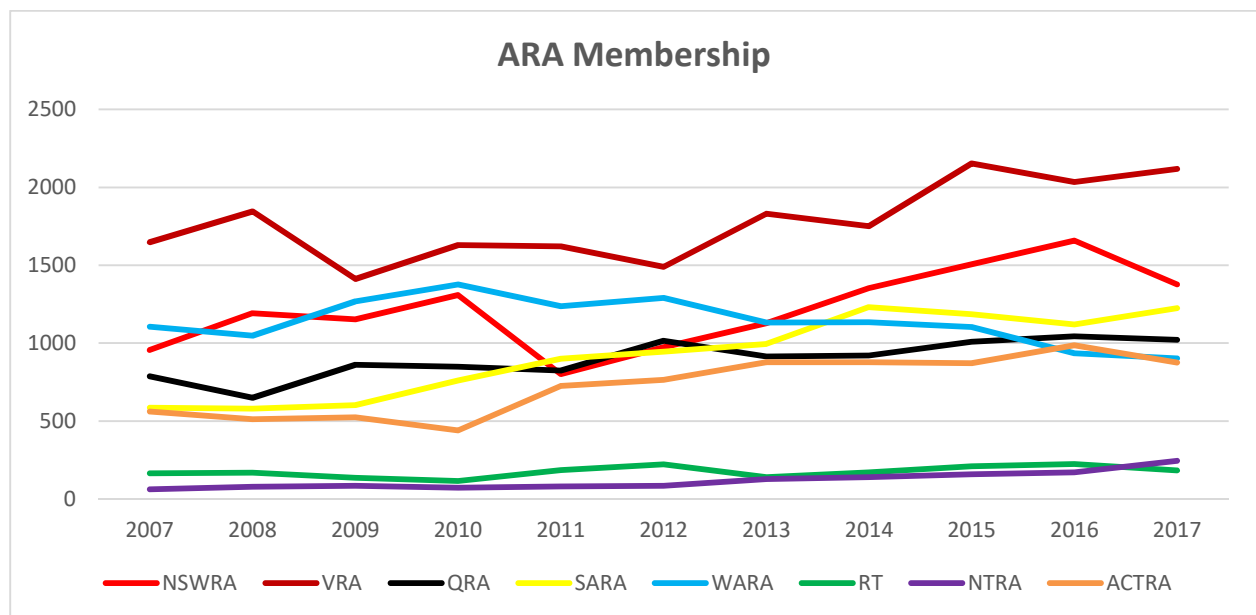
This President's Report is a compendium of the years' rogaining activities, since the 2017 Annual General Meeting and Australian Championship at Cooma.

Australian rogaining had another busy and successful year of professionally organised, technically challenging and enjoyable events. The calendar for 2017 saw a total of 63 events organised, with rogaines held on a regular basis throughout the year by all 8 member state and territory associations. Highlights were the 24 hour state championship events by the larger associations Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia.

A common theme discussed by delegates at the recent AGMs has been the challenge of developing a larger pool of volunteers for key roles. Initiatives and strategies to overcome a reliance on key people and to grow the volunteer base, will again be a topic for discussion at the 2018 AGM in Manumbar.

### Membership

Membership statistics collected by the ARA Treasurer indicate that total numbers in the sport remain close to 8000, which is just below historic highs. The graph below shows the membership growth in each state/territory over the last 10 years.



The recent trend has seen a plateauing of numbers. WARA have felt the effects of a loss of some key stalwarts of the sport and land access issues. However this is offset by pleasing growth by our most

remote group NTRA (no longer the smallest association!), SARA where a number of innovations have been implemented in recent years, and VRA. It is encouraging to see states like NSWRA formulating strategic plans to promote the sport, grow the number of events and participation rates.

## **Finances and Insurance**

The Treasurer's Report for calendar year 2017 shows that the ARA's finances continue to have a healthy balance. At the 2017 AGM, it was decided to set the Capitation fees at \$1 and the International Development Fund (IDF) levy of \$0.50 per member, but that the payment should be waived.

In late 2017, the Treasurer finalised the public liability insurance, and was able to again negotiate a favourable rate of \$2.91 per member. Included in the state levy is Association Liability cover to protect the Directors and Officers of the Association. Our long term broker is Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. Their contact details are on the ARA website: <http://rogaine.asn.au/Insurance/Insurance-Documents.html>

## **2017 Australian Championships – ACTRA**

ACT Rogaining Association hosted the 38th Australian Rogaining Championship near Cooma NSW on 6-7 May 2017. The "Ridgy Didge" rogaine provided very detailed spur gully terrain and open forest. Weather was fine but the night temperature dipped close to zero. The All Night Cafe's culinary delights were a highlight. The event attracted 320 competitors in 140 teams. Event coordinator was Jean Douglass, with course setters Ron Simpson and Jean Douglass. The vetters were David Singleton, Andrew Rowe and Judy Jenkinson.

Julie Quinn and David Baldwin from ACT won overall by a clear margin, followed by Thomas Brazier and Paul Cuthbert also from ACT, then Paul Guard and Tony Scott from Queensland.

The Intervarsity Championship attracted superb interest in 2017 with 19 teams. Winners were Fergus Macleod and Max Messenger from ANU, who were also the top team in Men U23. The Interstate challenge was won by ACTRA with a record score of 29.5 points. Winners of the open categories were:

- David Baldwin, Julie Quinn (ACT), First Mixed Open and overall
- Tom Brazier, Paul Cuthbert (ACT), First Men Open
- Gill Fowler, Jess Baker (NSW), First Women Open.

## **Future Australian and Australasian Championships**

The 2018 Australasian Championship is hosted by QRA on 25-26 August, near Manumbar in the Gympie region. The Event Director is Paul Guard, course setter Richard Robinson, with vetters Tim Frylink and Paul McIntyre. The ARC in 2018 was originally allocated to NTRA, but discussions with the NTRA committee identified that they were not yet prepared for the task. QRA kindly agreed to host an additional ARC, given that their previous ARC in 2013 was in North Queensland.

The Sun SEQer Rogaine terrain consists of gently undulating grazing land and fringing state forest areas. The topography is intricate spur-gully with many watercourses. Forest areas vary from open, through more dense forest to pine plantation with some remnant rainforest. At the official close of entries, there were 260 competitors in 120 teams.

The hosts for the next Australian/Australasian Rogaining Championships (according to the rotation schedule) will be:

- November 2019 – RTas (confirmed)
- 2020 – SARA (confirmed)
- 2021 – NTRA
- 2022 – VRA (the Australasian Championship is scheduled for New Zealand)
- 2023 – NSWRA

## **Intersivity Rogaining Championships**

Convenor: vacant

This year's Intersivity is being held in conjunction with the Australasian Championship at Manumbar, Queensland. It is officially sanctioned with UniSport (formerly Australian University Sport) at Level 3, which is reserved for endorsed events run by non-members. Intersivity Rogaining has been conducted under the auspices of UniSport and its predecessors since 1969. In recent years it does not have the same visibility as Intersivity events like sprint orienteering which is hosted by a university and run on a university campus.

This year, there are 7 university teams entered, from 4 states/territories.

The Intersivity Rogaining Championship is open to all tertiary students (full-time, part-time, undergraduate, or post-graduate). Since 2007, NAMSF has covered the travel costs of one team from each state in full. States are responsible for organising the selection processes to choose their representative team.

## **2017 World Rogaining Championship Latvia**

WRC 2017 was held in Latvia on 18-19 August 2017 in Rāzna National Park. The organisers promised this to be an area unused previously for rogaining or orienteering. The terrain was relatively hilly, with thick vegetation, an assortment of lakes, a network of tracks, mosaic of clearings and coniferous forests.

There were 426 teams, with the top placed from Latvia, New Zealand, Estonia and Russia. Interestingly for this WRC there was only one Veteran team in the top ten. For the first time, Australians did not win any categories. Best performing Australian teams were:

- Andy Macqueen and Greg King, 3rd Men Ultra Veteran
- Robin Spriggs and Sharon Crawford from USA, 3rd Women Ultra Veteran
- Tim Dent, Rob Taylor and Graham Anderson, 4th Men Ultra Veteran
- David Baldwin and Julie Quinn, 5th Mixed Veterans
- Ciara Smart and Murray Pinnock, 5th Mixed Juniors
- Tamsin Barnes and Lucy Wiegand from UK, 8th Women Veteran
- Geoff Lawford and Rod Gray, 8th Men Super Veteran.

## **Technical Sub-Committee**

Chairman: David Baldwin

Following the decision of the 2016 AGM, the ARC organisers are required to formally prepare a Water Management Plan detailing water locations, volume, resources and planned replenishment procedures. ACTRA produced an excellent detailed water plan for the Australian Championship in May 2017. The plan was not without technical adjustments on the day, with an unexpected locked gate causing headaches for water replenishment.

This process has now been implemented by the 2018 ARC organisers, with the Water Plan reviewed and approved by the ARA Executive.

The Technical Sub-Committee will retain the details of each plan and recommendations, in order to build knowledge and assist future organisers. The ARA's Water policy is on the website at:

<http://rogaine.asn.au/policy/documents/policy/water>

## **State Grants**

The ARA Grants Policy enables the ARA Executive to allocate up to 40% of annual capitation income to grants to support the sport through Member projects and capital expenditure. These are relatively low value grants, best suited to assisting the smaller associations.

A grant application was received from RTAs for the purchase of a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB). This device can mitigate the safety risk of individuals roaming the bush alone while course setting, in areas without mobile phone coverage. The grant was approved by the Executive to the value of \$744.

The ARA's grant policy is on the website: <http://rogaine.asn.au/policy/documents/policy/grant-policy>

## **International Development Fund (IDF)**

Convenor: ARA Treasurer Mike Aylott.

The ARA received a formal application from the organisers of WRC 2020, Bay Area Orienteering Club (BAOC), seeking a bridging loan to manage the costs of high quality mapping in advance of the receipt of entries. The IDF Sub-committee reviewed the detailed and professional application, which included the event budget, assumptions and projected cash flow.

The loan of US \$17,000 from the IDF was approved and paid on 30 June 2018. This equated to AUS \$24,450, due to a fairly poor exchange rate. The balance is due to be re-paid by 30 June 2020, or earlier depending on event receipts.

In considering the application, the sub-committee analysed the opportunity cost to potential future proposals whilst the funds are allocated to BAOB. There will be no interest on the loan and the ARA will bear all currency risk and some exchange costs.

Members are again encouraged to propose potential IDF projects and promote the fund when in contact with international rogainers.

## **International Rogaining**

The ARA is formally represented on the International Rogaining Federation (IRF) by President David Rowlands and delegate David Baldwin. IRF President Richard Robinson is Immediate Past President of the Australian Rogaining Association.

The following is a summary of IRF news:

- The IRF currently has vacancies open for the voting positions of Secretary and Treasurer, plus the non-voting Promotion/Development Manager.
- The IRF President position, currently held by Richard Robinson will become vacant in early 2019.
- The ARA proposed a change to the IRF Constitution to ensure that “No individual can vote more than once on any motion”. This ensures that, if a delegate from a country is also an office holder, they have only one vote. This change was passed unanimously by the IRF Council.
- The next WRC has been awarded to Spain, to be held on 27/28 July 2019, at La Molina north of Barcelona. The event is located in the Catalunya Pyrenees, straddling the border of Spain and France. Route choice to minimize climb will be a factor with the terrain varying from moderate hilly to mountainous.
- The following WRC has been awarded to the United States, and will be held in 2020 at Lake Tahoe, in the Sierra Nevada mountains of California.

## **World Championship Frequency**

The ARA put a motion to the IRF to set the frequency of WRCs to every two years, as it was until 2012. In the recent past, the IRF has held a World Championship as often as once a year, if there are acceptable proposals from member countries. However, the IRF Council had never established a formal policy for the frequency of WRCs.

ARA has maintained its strong view that annual WRCs are too frequent for most Australians and New Zealanders to afford to attend. The resultant “regionalisation” has reduced the value of the WRC, so as to not fulfil its role as per the IRF Strategic Plan: “to attract the qualified elite competitors from all member nations and beyond”. The ARA’s policy was driven by its member states and submissions from our elite rogainers.

The motion put by ARA and Czech Republic representatives was passed narrowly, meaning that World Rogaining Championships will be held in the even years onward from 2020.

The debate within IRF was extensive, with strong support for the status quo from some members of the IRF Executive in particular. The ARA has campaigned for the WRC to be held every 2 years since at least 2011 under the leadership of Richard Robinson:

- Within IRF Council, ARA opposed the award of a WRC in 2013 without a competitive selection process
- ARA proposed a motion in 2012 to evaluate the effects of holding the WRC in the consecutive years 2012, 2013 and 2014
- ARA’s submission to IRF in 2012 following a call for bids for a WRC in 2015
- ARA’s formal response to the IRF’s WRC discussion paper in 2013

- The ARA/IRF survey of participants conducted after the WRC in 2014
- ARA's contributions to the IRF Strategic Plan in 2015.

ARA has a responsibility to make this new policy work for the IRF. It is important that we encourage more Australians (particularly ARC category place getters) to attend the WRC, starting in 2019.

Longer term, the ARA must continue to participate actively in the IRF management and processes to be able to help shape the IRF agenda and debate into the future.

## **Information Systems**

The ARA is responsible for the domain [rogaine.asn.au](http://rogaine.asn.au) and the hosting of a number of websites for the following rogaining organisations:

- ARA
- IRF
- ACTRA
- NSWRA
- NTRA

David Baldwin spends considerable time managing the hosting, licenses, capacity planning and security updates. In future it may be prudent to formally allocate this role to an ARA Webmaster position.

The ARA website is still in the process of being upgraded and improved. Plans are in place to engage the original developers to complete this work using the remaining budget approved in 2014.

The National Entry System has taken a step forward through the efforts of Paul Guard and QRA. The next stage will be to migrate and adapt QRA's work to meet the requirements of another state association. The national goal is to develop generic modules that meet ARC entry requirements and can plug into existing state association systems.

David Baldwin and Paul Guard have continued to populate the ARA website <http://www.rogaine.asn.au> and Facebook page [www.facebook.com/ausrogaining](http://www.facebook.com/ausrogaining) with news items, calendar entries and results.

## **Executive Roles**

I would like to thank the ARA Executive team: Secretary Paul Guard, Treasurer Michael Aylott, Technical Committee Chair David Baldwin, and Richard Robinson our Immediate Past President, for their time and dedication to the sport of rogaining during 2017/18. The Executive has held regular Executive Meetings via Skype, at approximately six week intervals through the past year.

Thankyou to the ARA Council delegates and particularly the regulars who contribute to the lively discussions at the AGM held in the afternoon before the Australian Championship. We are indebted to the volunteers, committees and administrators within the 8 state and territory rogaining associations who continue to ensure the success of our sport.

## **David Rowlands President**