

EQUESTRIAN NSW 2018 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Firstly, let me apologise for having our AGM so late. I spent three months as Interim CEO at Equestrian Australia (EA), our highly regarded Finance Manager, Nichole Knox, unexpectedly resigned due to serious health issues, we contracted out our finance function and migrated from MYOB to Xero and restructured the office team. As well, NSW Fair Trading directed us to move to become a company. All of this meant that our audit process and AGM were delayed.

I'm pleased to report that the audit was completed without any qualifications, the new team is in place and our finance systems and reporting are adding real value to the organisation.

I'll deal with the company issue, later in my report.

HORSE AND RIDER WELFARE

Our most serious issue in 2017-18 was and remains the tragic deaths of Olivia Inglis and Caitlyn Fisher and the Coronial Inquest which begins on 13 May this year. ENSW is approaching the inquest as an opportunity to critically and independently review safety in our sport.

It's not an exercise to protect me, our Board or our reputation. As the CEO of Equestrian NSW, the Event Director of Sydney 3DE when Caitlyn died and having served on the panel that conducted the Olivia investigation, I take personal responsibility for the safety of our equestrian sports in NSW.

I agree with recent comments from Alistair MacKinlay, the Interim Chair of Equestrian Australia, that as sports administrators, we have not explained well enough all of the good work that has been done, including:

- Appointment of Roger Kane as National Safety Officer
- Cross Country judge first responder training video done by Eventing NSW
- Fitting of 100 MIM oxer sets
- Improved Risk Management and Serious Incident Management Plan templates
- Minimum paramedic qualifications and medical equipment standards
- Improved concussion protocol.
- Introduction of Equi Ratings (Ireland)
- Re-instatement of the EA Coaching Committee

Equestrian sports are inherently high risk and safe does not mean risk free. Our job as administrators is to ensure that all risks are managed to be as low as reasonably practical. We can always do more and members can be assured that the Equestrian NSW Board and I, together with EA and our Discipline Councils and Committees, will do what is needed to become the leaders in equestrian safety.

Discipline, Yellow Cards and Social Media conflicts have also been major challenges. Inconsistencies between the EA General Regulations, Disciplinary ByLaws, Member Protection ByLaws, Codes of Conduct and discipline specific Rules mean that complaints don't have a simple path to follow and be resolved.

As the dust settles at EA, we're keen to work with the other Branches, EA and Sport Australia to update our discipline processes to best practice and do a better job for our Members.

MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICES

Membership remained stable at 8,343.

The number of Senior Members increased by 1.7% and Juniors decreased by 5.1%. This is partly explained by 160 Juniors turning 18 in 2017-18 and moving into the Senior ranks, as well as ongoing drought in the bush, making it hard for families to afford to compete.

Supporter Officials increased by a healthy 7.5%, mainly due to the successful program run by Dressage NSW to recruit and train judges.

A breakdown of membership fees is included in the Annual Report, along with details about performance cards and ICDF funding

Insurance is becoming an ever-increasing cost to members, for two reasons:

1. Equestrian is now assessed as a sport prone to high impact, collision head injuries, similar to American football and rugby. Equestrian NSW is currently dealing with a claim for \$1m, brought by a rider who sustained a serious head injury at the 2010 Interschools Championships. Whilst it's inappropriate to discuss the matter, it highlights the consequences of what can happen in our sport. The new EA Concussion Protocol is aimed at improving the management of head injuries, to minimize the consequences when it happens.
2. Increased claims in recent years, including the Inquest and several six figure claims against coaches.

EA is currently conducting a review of its insurance. Based on feedback from Members, including Coaches, value, service and flexibility are the highest priorities.

FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

The financial results for 2017-18 were in line with the expectations set by the Board:

- At least Break Even (Actual - \$73k surplus)
- Minimum cash reserves of \$800k (Actual - \$850k)
- Protect equity of \$730 (Actual - \$807k)

More information is provided in the Annual Report.

Support to our Discipline Councils and Committees decreased 3% from \$344k to \$335k in 2017-18 and is the figure that is likely to be sustainable in future years.

Support for the Disciplines focuses on Administration, Swabbing, Education, Major Event Support, High Performance and Club Development.

In 2017-18, the NSW Office of Sport conducted an organisational health survey of ENSW. I'm pleased to report that we scored 87% across Governance, Financial Management, Leadership, Strategy and Risk Management, ranking us 12th of the 95 State Sporting Organisations surveyed.

We were surveyed again this financial year and our score improved to 92%.

In June 2018, NSW Fair Trading advised that Equestrian NSW exceeded the \$2m limit, including combined assets and income, for not-for-profit associations under NSW legislation. In 2017-18, Equestrian NSW received Income of \$2.6 million and held Assets exceeding \$1 million. Consequently, we have been directed to become a company under Federal legislation.

To achieve the change, Equestrian NSW needs to:

- Amend the Equestrian NSW Constitution to reflect our new company status.
- Submit the new Constitution to Equestrian NSW Members for review and approval, which requires a three quarters majority at a duly convened meeting.
- Elect a new Board, under the new Constitution.
- Make the necessary administrative changes (eg change the name on bank accounts etc).
- Apply to ASIC to become a Company.

ENSW is not doing this so we can eventually take over EA or create a competing organisation.

Equestrian Queensland, which has all of its Discipline Committees under its association structure, has similar turnover and assets to ENSW (about \$3.5m). The rules are different in Queensland, where there is no limit to the size of an incorporated association. In our situation, we're simply complying with a NSW Fair Trading direction.

There has also been a view expressed that we should run event expenses through our Discipline Committees, to get under the cap. We already are. Our Discipline Committees have their own bank accounts, but the legal entity that holds the bank accounts is still ENSW.

A draft amended Constitution was distributed to Members in November 2018 for review and comment. Apart from changing Association to Company and referring to the relevant legislation, other minor changes were made, including but not limited to:

- Recognising the relevant Equestrian Australia Policies and Bylaws;
- Making proxy voting easier; and
- Simplifying dispute resolution and disciplinary matters

Very limited feedback was received, with the most significant issue being compliance with Equestrian Australia Policies, ByLaws and Rules. Members want ENSW to have the option to critically review and reject changes if considered inappropriate (eg a new bio-security ByLaw). NSW Fair Trading has set a deadline of 30 Jun 2019, so that further consultation will be undertaken towards the transition.

EDUCATION

Based on feedback from our NSW Coaches we re-structured our Coaching Committee to be elected by only EA accredited Coaches.

David Cameron from our Board sat on the committee.

The Committee worked hard to:

- Lobby EA to re-instate its Coaching Committee
- Demand more transparency about how Coach fees were spent
- Have input to EA insurance to get better value and flexibility for coaches.

ENSW also supported our Discipline Councils to train more officials, with the number of newly accredited Dressage Judges being the standout success.

HIGH PERFORMANCE

NSW athletes currently make up nearly half of the athletes on the EA High Performance Squads.

ENSW continues to fund the NSW High Performance programs, along with EA, but the programs are now delivered by the Discipline Councils.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2018-19

Strategic focus areas for the Board and team in 2018-19 include:

Horse Welfare and Performance:

- Assist the Coronial Inquiry into the deaths of Olivia Inglis and Caitlyn Fisher.
- Work with Equestrian Australia and the NSW Discipline Councils and Committees to ensure that practical and relevant risk management and incident response plans are in place for all competitions.
- Ensure that Organising Committees have risk management training.
- Roll out more MIM fittings.

Member Services

- Improve the frequency and quality of communication with Members
- Grow membership by 2%.

Governance and Finance

- Move to become a Company limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act, as directed by NSW Fair Trading.
- In collaboration with other State Branches, re-negotiate the Memorandum of Understanding with Equestrian Australia.
- Contract out the Finance and Accounting functions and migrate from MYOB to Xero.
- Deliver a modest surplus and minimum \$800k cash holding.

Participation and Competition

- Assist Equestrian Australia with the refining and expansion of our participation programs.
- Support emerging Interschools competitions.

Education

- Attract, train and support officials.
- Assist Equestrian Australia to refine their coaching program.

High Performance

- Assist with the development of High Performance programs for all Disciplines.

From a personal perspective I've really appreciated the support from Peter and the ENSW Board. Every Director has expertise in relevant fields so that there hasn't been a situation where I didn't have somebody to turn to. Their dedication and professionalism is outstanding.

Our office team, located here at SIEC do an amazing job. The new team of Tina, Sue, Susie, Elysha and Linda are a pleasure to work with and I thank you for your contributions.

To you, our Members, I thank you for your support and wish you all the very best in the year ahead.

FINANCE REPORT

The detailed financial results are in the Annual Report, but in summary:

- Revenue decreased 17% to \$2,594k, due to not running National Interschools and the timing of State Interschools being staged in Jul 18 and not running Dressage Nationals.
- Membership Income increased by 2% to \$1,335k.
- Horse related income increased by 4% to \$371k.
- Expenses decreased 20% to \$2,252k for the same reasons as the overall revenue increase.
- A \$73k surplus was generated, which was in line with Board expectations
- Equity increased by 10% to \$807k
- Cash at year end was \$1,663k, including \$667k of membership prepayments and \$146k held in the Australian Sports Foundation related accounts, resulting in an underlying cash holding of \$850k, which met the Board's target of \$800k.
- Fees including Admin, Insurance and ICDF paid to EA increased by 2% to \$538k.
- Wages and salaries decreased by 3% to \$572k. This will go down again in 2018-19 without our Finance Manager, with a contra increase in Administration Costs to pay for our contracted finance service.
- Administration Cost went up 2% to \$167k, in line with CPI. IT Costs went down by 17% to \$17k as we chase better value telephone and internet suppliers.
- As mentioned earlier, we contracted out our finance function to Sports Accounting, who do Equestrian Victoria's books. We also migrated from MYOB to Xero. Both transactions were major challenges but went well. We're really starting to see the benefits from using Xero.
- We're so fortunate that Nichole Knox left us a legacy of excellent data integrity and accurate reporting, so the transition has been as painless as possible.
- In overall terms, the financial outcomes for 2017-18 were in line with Board expectations.
- 2018-19 will be a more difficult year. In the absence of timely guidance, we took a punt that the underwriting component of our insurance would increase by 20%. It increased by 82%, so that ENSW is absorbing about \$100k in premiums that would have otherwise been passed on to Members. This will result in a deficit of about the same amount.
- The 2018-19 accounts will also include two State Interschools, adding about \$500k to revenues and expenses, but not Sydney 3DE at about \$250k.
- ENSW is financially stable, solvent with solid cash reserves and disciplined financial management and I'm confident that this performance will continue.