

Memo 331.18

To: District Presidents and District Secretaries

From: Women's Bowls NSW Head Office

cc: Club Presidents, Club Secretaries, Board, Committees and Staff

Date: 20th February 2018

Re: Changes to District Operations

All good organisations review their structure and operations from time to time to make sure that they are in line with good governance practices and that they facilitate the effective and efficient running of the organisation. All Boards are charged with making sure that members receive a fair and consistent experience when dealing with or working within any organisation. In our State Constitution, clause 6, it states that the Board is responsible for the Districts and their boundaries, composition, operation and procedures. We are bound to take this responsibility seriously, however in the past it is possible that we have been less effective in establishing and managing operational issues and parameters to assist Districts to function well.

At our District President's Conference late last year, it became apparent that there are a number of inconsistencies throughout our organisation and this has occurred by stealth over a number of years, possibly due to a lack of direction, consultation or guidance from Head Office. Every District appears to have a different understanding of their objectives, responsibilities and duties and a different method of tackling these tasks. Every District does things slightly or sometimes dramatically differently to each other. Over time, some districts have strayed from their core duties to add events, tasks and responsibilities that are either not necessary or which add to their responsibilities, so that their duties have become overwhelming and cumbersome.

This is not a good outcome for attracting volunteers to District roles and has led to some Districts losing sight of the focus that Districts need to be effective. In addition to this, new technologies in recent years have meant that some previously very important District functions are no longer required as direct contact with members and clubs makes these processes more efficient.

Whatever the reason for these inconsistencies occurring, the situation needs to be remedied so that all players, officials and members experience consistency in their dealings and treatment by Districts across the State. Districts are a function of the Association and as such the Board is responsible for them conducting their duties legally, efficiently, consistently and most importantly, in a fiscally responsible manner, to ensure that membership monies are handled and utilised appropriately.

It is our concern that unregulated Districts run the risk of imposing another level of management in an already complex administration structure and we feel that making changes will simplify the experience for the end user and possibly make the sport more affordable and appealing to the broader community.

For this reason, the Board are undertaking to develop District rules and regulations within which Districts will be better able to operate, with the overarching aim being to assist them to focus on core responsibilities and provide a consistent delivery of service to members. We envisage that this development process will take several months and that at the end of it we will be able to provide clear documentation to Districts on their major and minor functions for the betterment of the Association and the Districts themselves. We hope to ease the burden on some Districts by lessening their concerns in relation to running events, meetings and other responsibilities and by making it clear where their duties begin and end. The new operational documents will provide comprehensive information for all members of District Committees in relation to overall District functions and individual committee functions.

At this early stage in the process, please be assured there is no hidden agenda to remove Districts. They are considered to be a vital tool in assisting clubs to conduct the business of running the sport at a local level and for conducting events that progress to Regional, State and Australian level. The purpose of providing clear regulations within which to work is to create a resource that will realise efficiencies in District operations to achieve better functioning, consistent Districts and to alleviate some of the demands and expectations upon a reducing number of volunteers who dedicate their time to conduct the administration of Districts.

Maryann Parcell
State President
on behalf of the Board of Directors