

SNOWSPORTS UNIFICATION

Snowsports ACT, NSW Snowsports and Ski & Snowboard Australia

Member Information

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SnowSports ACT and NSW Snowsports have been engaged in discussions with Ski & Snowboard Australia (SSA) regarding a governance merger of the three organisations and the unification of snow sports across Australia.

A Special General Meeting of SnowSports ACT will be held on November 23, 2017, to vote on the resolutions to empower SnowSports ACT to commence negotiations with SSA as the first step towards unification. This vote represents a significant opportunity for us to become part of SSA and move all aspects of the sport into alignment.

Upon reading this document, you will have seen that a yes vote has the full support of the SnowSports ACT Board for the following reasons:

Streamlined governance:

- Increase capability at the local working level to run events and activities without the overhead of volunteers with board obligations
- Significantly reduce duplication of board and executive obligations and responsibilities leading to a reduction of costs to manage the executive (eg audit fees)
- Increased collaboration as governance structure will be streamlined so communicating decisions and meetings will be reduced at executive level

Increased support to local athletes and school participants:

- Reduced duplication between SSO and the SSA will increase outcomes to the events and activities
- Local athletes will have a consistent executive to engage for their development

Engagement with government

- Commonwealth will view governance reform as positive and engagement can be effective from the SSA
- Regional jurisdictions (ACT and NSW) will be able to see metrics (eg: participation) and local athletes pathway

Engagement with Sponsors

- Value to sponsors will increase if SSA represents the sport nationally
- Approach to sponsors will be consistent and effective which will increase success of securing funding
- Reduced confusion with the sport will enable executives to focus on attracting sponsorship funds

Increased career opportunities for SSO and SSA staff

- Reduced duplication in communication and other tasks will increase staff opportunities to do more projects and diverse their skills
- Reduce attrition and turnover in staff as they can work in other roles nationally and locally as required
- Increased recognition of their skills and increased development (on the job and training) in the larger and expanded structure.

THE UNIFICATION PROPOSAL

The Board of Directors of Snowsports ACT, NSW Snowsports, and Ski & Snowboard Australia (SSA) are proposing that the three entities unify the current governance and financial structures, streamline operational structures and relieve the State Sporting Organisations (SSO's) of the governance responsibilities of a stand-alone corporate entity.

This recommendation is in line with the 2006 Australian Sports Commission (ASC) Costello Review, which observed that snowsports is currently "over governed, relative to their size" and conclusively recommended that "a unitary governance structure would be the most appropriate".

This proposal has been discussed for over a year at board and community level. There have been three public forums held in Sydney, Canberra and Jindabyne where valuable feedback was received.

SnowSports ACT will be holding a Special General Meeting on November 23 2017 for members to vote on the resolutions to approve taking the necessary steps towards unification of snow sports across Australia. With the approval of members, the Board will be empowered to take steps, in the best interest of the organisation, to amalgamate the existing structures. This includes negotiating a new set of sub-committee by-laws, establishing a new Northern Management Board and dissolving existing corporate entities as required.

THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Snowsports in Australia is currently experiencing a period of significant growth due to sporting excellence, and increased community awareness and relevance. As a result, the sport, staff and volunteers are experiencing greater pressure to deliver on those increased demands.

A network of passionate volunteers oversees the majority of the governance and operational aspects of the SSOs - Snowsports ACT and NSW Snowsports. These volunteers have done an outstanding job to grow the sport over the past decade, leading to greater participation levels and more expansive athlete pathways. At the same time, the added governance demands due to the growth of our organisation, increasing legislative requirements which are currently duplicated at the State and National level, and with social expectations rising significantly, these pressures consume a growing level of resources that could potentially be better structured and utilised for the benefit of the sport.

In particular, there has been a significant growth in the Interschools Championships in NSW, ACT & QLD in the last decade, with a 30% increase in entries in the ACT-Southern NSW Interschools Championships, an 86% increase in entries in the Northern NSW & QLD Championships, and 42% increase in entries in the Australian Championships. With the Interschools competition being an entry-level event into the sport, this is a good sign that the sport will continue to have high participation levels in the coming years.

At current levels of resourcing, SnowSports ACT cannot continue on its current growth trajectory and still deliver all of the events and services it currently offers. Our Executive Officer is stretched to capacity and government funding to Winter Sports is not matching this rate of growth. The Executive Officer for NSW Snowsports completes a similar job to SnowSports ACT's Executive Officer and much duplication does occur, for example, E-Newsletters to members, promoting Australian events and programs.

These labour intensive requirements are not specific to just one organisation, but rather all three. A unified organisation will offer the snowsports community the best opportunity to streamline these requirements and better equip the staff and volunteers to focus on developing the sport.

We believe that benefits of a merger are now achievable, as it is built on the heightened level of trust, harmony and cooperation, which currently exists between the National and State Sporting Organisations.

Working together is not new, as all organisations, via our executive team and our discipline-committees, have been collaborating with pathway initiatives, events, and programs for many years. Further integration will enhance our ability to deliver the fundamental requirements of our sport, which will lead to increased funding, better access to facilities for athletes, and greater clarity in our channels of communication.

Collectively, the Board of Directors of SnowSports ACT and NSW Snowsports see this as an exciting development that will service and build the sport beyond the existing scope, increase our bargaining power with state and federal governments, whilst also improving governance and operational efficiencies. With the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics just around the corner, a decision to unify made before these Olympics is expected to put the sport in a better position before Beijing 2022.

BENEFITS TO WINTER SPORTS, MEMBERS AND ATHLETES

One of biggest benefits of the unification of the sport will be streamlining the current governance, financial and operational structures across the three organisations. This in turn will enable our staff and volunteers to focus on the delivery of a cohesive sports strategy across Australia.

The unification into the SSA Northern Division will facilitate numerous efficiencies across many organisational areas, including:

STRATEGY

One national strategy will enable the sport to operate with a renewed focus, streamlining the pathways and delivering on the needs of the snowsports community. A unified sport will also enable better collaboration and communication on key initiatives for each discipline, from national, state, to local level, delivering a move expansive impact and ensuring an increased capacity to implement change.

GOVERNANCE

As one entity, governance requirements will be streamlined, minimizing duplication of services and providing a higher level of protection for members, directors, volunteers, and staff. This will enable staff and volunteers to focus their attention on delivering better sport and community outcomes.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Through a merging of the three organisations, operation costs will be streamlined by removing staff from duplication of administration and governance duties. This will enable a restructure of the SSA Northern Division. Staff will be appointed to positions that will better service the sport and new employment opportunities will be developed. Better connections will be made between the current staff of Snowsports ACT, NSW Snowsports, and SSA. By combining experience and expertise, we will deliver effectiveness and efficiencies across the whole of sport.

OUR BRAND AND IDENTITY

The community, sponsors and other external audiences are often confused between the roles and responsibilities of Snowsports ACT, NSW Snowsports, and SSA. All organisations work hard to promote their activities, which is often undermined by confusion. As one entity, we will more clearly promote an understanding of who we are, what we do, and our combined strategic vision will strengthen our capacity to communicate and promote our identity.

NATIONAL SNOWSPORTS TRAINING CENTRE (NSTC)

A unified sport has a greater opportunity of being at the forefront of change, innovation and demonstrated impact. SSA, Snowsports ACT, and NSW Snowsports and have been involved in ongoing discussion with the NSW Office of Sport, Australian Sports Commission (ASC), Australia Institute of Sport (AIS), NSWIS, and the Office of Deputy Premier – John Barilaro, on the possible development of a National Snowsports Training Centre (NSTC) at the Jindabyne Sport and Recreational Centre.

The NSTC would be designed to provide a world class international off-snow training facility, servicing athletes at development, sub-elite and elite performance levels. This facility would cater for all disciplines and include accommodation for athletes and coaches.

Although the NSTC is not dependent upon unification, there are many advantages that a merged organisation could achieve. Government funding, facility management, and access to members would all be streamlined under the umbrella of a single administration.

Through the unification of the sport, SSA anticipates moving a significant proportion of its sport program and pathway operations to Jindabyne to take advantage of the close proximity to on-snow activities, training programs and facilities during winter.

SSA NORTHERN DIVISION ADMINISTRATION BASE

SSA has agreed to establish a Jindabyne office for the SSA Northern Division and its sub-committees, while maintaining a local presence in the ACT.

With a year-round operational requirement, the possible NSTC would be the appropriate location for administrative offices for the growing regional workforce and community hub for our Snowsports Community. Discipline Sub-Committees, clubs, pathway program camps, and sport-related social events could be hosted within this facility.

ACTAS and NSWIS would also be invited to coordinate its snowsports programs from these facilities, creating a larger and suitable connection within the pathways.

IDENTIFIED MEMBER CONCERNS

Snowsports ACT, NSW Snowsports, and SSA have held a number of Unitary Model Forums in Sydney, Canberra, and Jindabyne. The purpose of the forums was to have early discussions with our members about the merger, in order to understand the level of support and to assist with the identification of any challenges.

The three organisations have been working together and seeking independent advice to ensure the best possible outcome for the following challenges.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Concerns have been raised regarding the current assets and liabilities of Snowsports ACT and NSW Snowsports.

Snowsports ACT and NSW Snowsports financials and assets will be quarantined within its own sub-account. Current bequests with SnowSports ACT will continue to be protected.

The SSA Northern Division will have a newly appointed representative to the Financial Audit and Risk Committee (FARC). The management of ACT financial accounts will be administrated by the SSA Northern Division Bookkeeper, and will work alongside the SSA Accounts Manager.

All assets will remain with each sub-discipline committee as they are transferred across to operate under SSA governance.

GRANTS AND FUNDING

Meetings have been held with the ASC and other stakeholders including the ACT Government and NSW Office of Sport, in order to better understand what impact a unitary model may have on grants and funding for Snowsports ACT and NSW Snowsports.

These State and Territory Governments have confirmed that the SSO's will have continued access to state funding under the SSA Northern Division. It is a requirement to maintain state-specific funded activities and meet state-specific key performance indicators through current and future grant approvals.

The Northern Division Management Board will make sure that funding from the State Governments goes to appropriate ACT programs and events. There will also be an ACT sub – committee, the mandate will be to secure Government funding from the ACT Government and other grant programs, specifically to deliver to the ACT community, and make sure ACT programs, events and athletes are looked after.

It has been identified that the current National Sporting Organisation (NSO) and SSO structure is confusing and fragmented. This has been a major challenge when securing non-tied funding for the sport. By aligning the states under the NSO, it will give a clear path and access to events, activities, and programs, allowing a more streamlined approach when investigating commercial opportunities that would supply non-tied funding into the sport.

With tied State Funding, the unitary model will streamline activities with the intention to build the sport and the membership base. It will also allow the SSO better access to non-financial members, with shared information and activities interstate. As the SSO for Victoria, SSA has demonstrated that the merger has delivered an increase in financial support to the Victorian discipline areas and their specific programs and/or athletes.

ACT & NSW INTERSCHOOLS SNOWSPORTS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Concerns have been raised about the security of the ACT & NSW Interschools Snowsports Championships.

Any decisions regarding the control, operation and/or restructure of the ACT & NSW Interschools will be left to the Northern Division Interschools Committee. All current funding will be maintained from ACT & NSW Interschools to the SSA Northern Division. The ACT & NSW Interschools Snowsports Committee is in full support of this merger.

THE PROTECTION OF DISCIPLINE SUB-COMMITTEES AND THEIR VOLUNTEERS

Snowsports ACT, NSW Snowsports, and SSA are committed to ensuring that all of the good work being done locally is enhanced, by delivering outcomes more efficiently and effectively.

All three organisations are determined to preserve existing functionality of volunteer groups and community initiatives. All current NSW/ACT disciplines will function as they are now, with the same autonomy and governance principles, albeit reporting to SSA.

It is expected that communications and access to SSA programs and activities for NSW/ACT discipline sub-committees will be enhanced, providing better access to the NSO operational framework, aligning activities under the SSA Strategic Plan.

ACTXC

ACTXC currently runs a very active and popular year round training program for local junior athletes. This program would continue to run with the current branding and the ACTXC committee would continue to be in charge of the coaching, and program. Maintaining ACT identity with programs and uniforms will continue to be important to the ACT.

ALPINE COMMUNITY

During the Unitary Model Forums, we have received significant feedback on the structure and operational programs of the SSA Alpine Committee. SSA's current re-structure of the Alpine National Discipline Committee will provide a greater connection and level of cooperation with the SSA Northern Division Alpine Committee. SSA has recently instigated a renewal of the Alpine administration and pathway structure. It has been identified that improvements can be made to the current program and changes are required.

THE UNIFICATION PROCESS

SSA NORTHERN DIVISION

The SSA Northern Management Board and discipline subcommittees will be formed following approval from current SnowSports ACT members. The new SSA Northern Management Board will be a subcommittee of SSA Board and operate under similar by-laws to existing committees. The SSA Northern Management Board will be formed from ACT, NSW and eventually QLD, representatives.

The merger will require Snowsports ACT and NSW Snowsports to transfer its assets and liabilities to the SSA, relieving the two State Sporting Organisations of direct governance responsibilities. As QLD is not established as a SSO, this state will automatically be established under the SSA Northern Management Board. Any new financial or other activities will be established in line with the other States.

A similar merger has already occurred in Victoria, with regional activities channelled through State Discipline Committees and the Victorian Interschools Snowsports Committee. Further, the Victorian Government now recognises and funds SSA as the SSO.

SSA Membership rights will not be affected or diminished under the unification. SSA membership will be maintained for all willing participants and each will still choose to be affiliated with their region and preferred discipline.

THE DECISION PROCESS

Financial members of Ski & Snowboard Australia who are affiliated with SnowSports ACT and who are 15 years and older can vote on the resolutions at the Special General Meeting on 23 November 2017. Proxy voting will be available for those that cannot attend the meeting.

THE FIRST STEPS OF UNIFICATION

Following approval by the members, the assets and liabilities of SnowSports ACT and NSW Snowsports will be moved across to SSA. Following completion of this transfer, the State Sporting Organisations will be dissolved and the SSA Northern Management Board will be appointed.

Operational activities will move and continue under the SSA Northern Management Board, and in turn, the ACT, NSW and NSW/ACT Discipline Committees.

The process for integration will take place during the following 6 -12 month period with the majority of new practices in place by the end of next season.

NORTHERN DIVISION COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The composition of the SSA Northern Management Board will reflect the structure of the current SnowSports ACT and NSW Snowsports Boards. It will consist of both elected members and Northern Division discipline committee heads. Importantly the members of this board will not be directors but committee members, with compliance obligations being adjusted accordingly. Oversight and governance will rest with the SSA Board.

Attached is a copy of the proposed organisation chart which outlines the sub-committee structure. The NSW and ACT Sub-Committees will sit under the SSA Northern Management Board.

Where appropriate, positions for ACT representatives on the NSW/ACT Discipline Committees will either be maintained or developed, shifting the focus of activities to a Northern perspective. The aim will be to encourage greater collaboration between the discipline committees to coordinate events and athlete programs where possible.

THE MOTION FOR APPROVAL

The Board of Directors of SnowSports ACT, NSW Snowsports, and SSA, propose that the three entities unify the current governance and financial structures, streamline operational structures, and relieve the State Sporting Organisations of the governance responsibilities of a stand-alone corporate entity.

As a member, you are being asked to support the unification of the three organisations to become a division of SSA, known as SSA Northern Division – controlled by the Northern Management Board.

The following motions will be put to members at the SGM on November 23 2017. If members are unable to attend, they can complete a proxy form , the voting form will be forwarded to all members in and will contain the following motion for approval:

To consider and, if thought fit, pass the following resolution as an ordinary resolution:

THAT

- 1. the Board of SnowSports ACT Limited is authorised to transfer all assets, liabilities, business and operations of SnowSports ACT Limited to Ski & Snowboard Australia Limited; and*
- 2. the Board of SnowSports ACT Limited may take all steps necessary to effect this resolution.*

Proposed Organisational Chart

