

VLBA & RVBA Frequently Asked Questions Updated - October 2009

The following issues have been raised through recent queries from Clubs.

1. Why was the vote on unification deferred?

During the early stages of the second round of Town Hall Meetings the Joint Working Party received a clear message from bowlers that while they were satisfied with the idea of unification and with the draft constitution, more time was needed to work through the implications of changes to competition boundaries in country Victoria.

2. So what happens now?

The JWP made a commitment to consult with all those clubs and associations that have a legitimate concern over proposed changes to competition boundaries. The JWP wrote to all country Associations asking them to provide feedback on the proposed boundaries. Where required, further consultations have taken place.

3. How many clubs are directly affected by boundary changes?

Very few, probably fewer than 4% in total.

4. So when will the final vote take place?

Special General Meetings to conduct the ballot have been scheduled by the VLBA and RVBA at Moonee Valley Racecourse for Thursday 3rd December, 2009 at 1pm.

5. How will voting happen?

The VLBA and RVBA at State level will hold their Special General Meetings concurrently (same time and same venue ..see above). Delegates to the SGM's will cast their votes in accordance with the respective constitutions of the VLBA or RVBA. The vote will succeed if 75% or more of eligible votes cast in each association are in favour of unification.

6. How will the final vote be scrutinsed?

The VLBA & RVBA have engaged legal consultants to be the Returning Officers and scrutinise the vote.

7. What if there is a "No" vote?

If clubs don't vote in favour, unification won't happen and an opportunity will have been missed. It seems likely that more time, effort and money will go into sustaining two organisations in the face of greater pressure to modernise, both internally and externally.

8. How do clubs reach their vote in order to advise their delegates for the Special General Meetings?

Each club is different. Clubs (VLBA Sections and RVBA Sections) should refer to their own constitutions and follow the procedures outlined. Some clubs will need to call their own Special General Meeting while at others the Executive may be empowered to reach a decision. The JWP believes that all clubs should give all members the opportunity to be informed about the proposal and to have their say. (Note: at Club level the vote required may well be not 75%, but rather a simple majority only – please refer to your own constitutions to clarify this matter).

9. Will club constitutions need to change if unification goes ahead?

Not necessarily, but clubs will need to align their constitution with Bowls Vic eventually. A template will be provided to clubs at a later date to assist in this process. Each club will need to review its constitution to ensure that it complies with the Bowls Victoria constitution.

10. Where can we get a copy of the draft Constitution for Bowls Vic?

This has been mailed to all RVBA and VLBA Club Secretaries in mid-October 2009. Copies are also available from the official RVBA/VLBA website www.bowlsvic.org.au. If you have difficulty obtaining a copy please contact the RVBA or VLBA.

11. Why have the Local Government Boundaries been used in the determination of boundaries?

Advice from specialist consultants has led to the use of Local Government Boundaries for the determination of the new Regional boundaries. There was some confusion at the Town Hall Meetings because several bowlers mistakenly thought that they also determined competition boundaries within Regions. This is not so. Competition boundaries will be drawn following an extensive consultation process with Associations (see above).

12. Will Pennant change?

There will be no change whatsoever to the playing of the game of bowls as a result of unification. A small number of clubs in country Victoria will be asked to play against a different group of clubs than they have been used to, but this will only happen after extensive consultation.

13. What will be the structure within a Region?

The final structure will be decided once the competition boundaries (Divisions) are finalised. It is anticipated this will be early in 2010.

14. Are the Regional names finalised?

No. This will happen during the consultation process regarding competition boundaries. The current names are indicative only. The JWP are also seeking recommendations for Division names from Regions.

15. What will happen to the money held by groups of clubs if they find themselves in different playing Divisions?

The JWP is seeking independent advice on this issue, but it seems likely that the clubs themselves will need to decide how the money is best utilised.

16. What will happen to State Committees?

Clause 21.2 f of the draft constitution states: The committees of the Royal Victorian Bowls Association Incorporated and the Victorian Ladies Bowling Association Incorporated which were operating immediately prior to the establishment of this Association shall continue to operate as Committees of the Board of the Association subject to this Constitution until the end of the 2009/10 Bowls season, unless otherwise determined by the Interim Board.

17. What if we don't like what the new Board of Bowls Victoria does?

Several safeguards are built into the draft constitution to protect the sport from aberrant decisions by the Board. For example, it only takes signatures from 25 clubs to call a Special General Meeting in order to challenge the Board's decisions.

18. Will the Regulations supporting the Constitution be published prior to the vote?

No. Many of the decisions regarding the regulations should only be made by the new Board once it is elected.

19. What are the benefits of unification?

The proposed unification is essentially administrative and there will be lots of efficiencies as a result, for example: a more modern organisation, removal of overlap and duplication, one affiliation fee, greater consistency, greater responsiveness to members, more attention to developing and marketing the game, potential cost savings. The JWP believes there are many benefits, a list of which can be found in the accompanying table.

20. What's happened since the Town Hall Meetings?

A report on the meetings has been published in the May edition of *Bowls in Focus* and placed on the website along with updated boundaries. The Joint Working Party (JWP) has met regularly, paying particular attention to the consultation process over competition boundaries. The updated FAQ's will be made available to clubs who will also be able to download a PowerPoint presentation for use in their clubs if required. The JWP is now moving toward finalising its preparations for the vote on 3rd December, 2009.