

# Athletics Australia Board meeting #240

The 240<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Athletics Australia (**AA**) was held on 11 April 2018 at the Gold Coast. The following is a summary of the key items discussed. As you would appreciate, in some cases detail must remain confidential, so some information is expressed in general terms.

## Recreational Running

In recent months, AA has been working with third parties that wish to invest to assist AA grow its recreational running products. Building these events and fit, healthy and active communities is a key strategic goal for AA, and it anticipates that there will be a positive impact for Member Associations (**MAs**) and throughout the sport.

Currently the AA Board is considering a proposal which would see – amongst other things – the development of a new framework which ensures recreational running events are managed at market leading standards, and which would see revenue returned to the sport. MAs have received initial details and AA management continues to work with MA CEOs and operational staff to develop a solution that is in the best interests of all.

At this meeting, the AA Board provided key feedback to management designed to assist in progressing this opportunity. More details will be provided as soon as practical.

The Board also discussed other potential opportunities for AA to partner with major organisations to deliver recreational running events in key markets. The Board encouraged management to continue these discussions in line with its strategic goals and, again, further details will be provided when appropriate.

## Junior Sport Policy

As many will be aware, AA has been consulting with industry stakeholders with a view to forming a Junior Sport Policy / Position Statement (**JSP**). This process has been led by AA's GM Participation & Community Development, James Selby, and AA Hall of Fame member and IAAF Athletes' Commission member, Benita Willis. The AA Board thanks all that have participated in this process.

The Board considered some of the key themes that had arisen in the consultation process including how the sport of athletics can impact child development and the health and wellness of participants, what role coaches and parents/guardians play, athletics in schools and the role of teachers, how to structure age-appropriate programs and competitions, and how to meet the changing needs of families and society. The Board also heard from the CEO of Little Athletics Australia (**LAA**), Martin Stillman, who had been briefed on the key themes.

The Board provided feedback to AA management which will be used as the consultation and development of the JSP continues in the coming months.

## One Sport

Immediately following the AA Board meeting, a joint meeting was held with the Board of LAA.

This session saw all directors participate in an open and productive discussion regarding the concept of "One Sport". One of the issues was to actually define what AA and LAA meant when referring to the concept, and to consider the opportunities which would arise from further cooperation between the entities and their respective MAs.

Each acknowledged that the key benefit of acting as One Sport is to improve the experience of athletics for members and the community. The Boards noted that, in many cases, it was the MAs who were leading the way in removing barriers and enacting One Sport initiatives.

The focus of the meeting was on what the organisations can do – as currently constituted – to improve the sport. The key outcome was that a working group will be formed, including AA and LAA representatives, to further define the vision and suggest key initiatives for driving towards One Sport. AA will work with its MAs to assist.

## Other matters

At the AA Board meeting, there was discussion on a range of other matters, including the following.

- **Commonwealth Games:** The CEO complimented the team leaders, including AA's Head of Delegation, Andrew Faichney, Head Coach, Craig Hilliard, team captains, Sally Pearson and Kurt Fearnley, and other athlete leaders on the work that had been done and setting up a strong and inclusive team culture. The Board complimented the team leaders and athletes on their performances to date as ambassadors for the sport.
- **Domestic Competitions:** The CEO complimented AA's Competitions Manager, Michelle James, and the entire team – including MA staff and volunteer officials – on a successful competition season.
  - o There was particular focus on the Australian Junior Championships, which (with 2,174 athletes) was the largest standalone Championships since its introduction. Great credit was given to the Technical Officials who worked tirelessly over the Championships in extremely hot conditions.
  - o The CEO commented that he would be leading a broader, operational and strategic review of the 2017/18 season, which links to broader strategic issues (eg future competition structure and the rolling calendar).
- **Para-athletics:** It was confirmed that the Australian Sports Commission has agreed to provide additional funds to AA over the next two years to further

develop the already excellent results achieved by our para-athletes, coaches and staff.

- **Strategy:** The Board was updated on the work that management had done since the last meeting after consultation with MA CEOs and MA Directors. Broader consultation will continue, however the focus will predominantly be on finalising key performance indicators.
- **AA Constitution and Annual Sports Performance Review (Governance):** The ASPR process is run by the Australian Sports Commission and it involves an analysis of the constitution, governance and integrity practices of AA – and all government funded sports. AA performed well according to the ASC's scorecard (achieving a rating in the range 80-100%). Notwithstanding this, the Board endorsed management working with the MAs to improve a number of areas, which will involve a review and refresh of AA's constitution, further integrity education, and improvement in child safeguarding practices. Work on this will commence immediately.

The next Board meeting will be held on 7 June 2018.

If you have any specific queries, please contact the AA office at any time on 03 8646 4550 or [athletics@athletics.org.au](mailto:athletics@athletics.org.au).

DARREN BOYD  
Company Secretary  
20 April 2018