



## Australian Rogaining Association Inc. (24 Hour Cross Country Navigation)

16 September 2007

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RE: IRF Constitutional Change Article for IRF Newsletter

Dear Neil,

The following is an article produced by the ARA Executive to explain to IRF Members the ARA's rationale for changes to the IRF Constitution. This is written for publishing in the IRF Newsletter as soon as practicable.

Yours Sincerely,

Phillip Holman  
President  
Australian Rogaining Association

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### IRF Constitution Change

The Australian Rogaining Association (ARA) is stating below a proposal that would establish a representative and democratic International Rogaining Federation (IRF).

The ARA is the National Peak Rogaining Body for Australia. It was established 28 years ago and comprises of eight state associations with a total of 5980 rogaining members. The ARA is not currently a member of the IRF.

On 12 August 2001 the ARA wrote to the IRF stating the ARA's position that an IRF should consist of National Peak Rogaining Bodies, not individuals. The ARA stated a number of constitution changes that were deemed necessary to establish an International Rogaining Federation that the ARA could join as a member.

Subsequently, the IRF Secretary requested feedback from the IRF Members regarding these constitution changes. The feedback from IRF Members as copied to the ARA demonstrated that the majority were either in agreement with the ARA, or had a neutral position. On the key question of membership by individuals, the IRF Secretary suggested a phase-out process of four (4) years, which expired in 2006.

In January 2006, representatives of the IRF and ARA Executives reached agreement on the necessary constitution changes, together with a phase-out period of two (2) years, which expires on 30 June 2008.

Recently the ARA Executive canvassed the opinions of the ARA Council and their state associations in regards to these matters and the ARA's position has again been confirmed unanimously.

The ARA believes that there has now been enough opportunity for discussion. The ARA believes that the IRF Constitution changes should now be put to a vote.

Therefore, the ARA requests that the following IRF constitution changes be implemented as soon as possible:

- IRF voting will be restricted to Members, the President, Secretary/Treasurer and Immediate Past President.
- Members of the IRF will comprise National Peak Rogaining Bodies in each country, not individuals. A short transition period is necessary to allow those individuals who were given a vote before the ARA's position was known to be able to organise suitable representation through a National Peak Rogaining Body.
- Observer category will be maintained where a country does not have a Peak National Rogaining Body, to ensure a wide scope of voices on the IRF. These individuals have no vote.
- The majority of votes required for changes to the IRF constitution will be reduced from a 3/4 majority vote to 2/3 majority.
- The Commercial Operators position will be removed completely.
- The Founders positions will be removed completely.

The ARA established its position regarding National Peak Rogaining Bodies over ten (10) years ago and has recently confirmed this through a survey of ARA Council and their state association members. ARA believes that it is not in the best interest of the sport to prescribe a rigid structure for the organisation of the sport in countries outside Australia. The type of National Peak Rogaining Body suited to a country is best determined by the unique circumstances of that country and the decision is best made by the individual rogainers in each country. The ARA believes that a National Peak Rogaining Body could be an orienteering association, or an organisation promoting more than one type of sport, or a specialised rogaining association. The key criterion is that the body be proven capable to develop the sport of rogaining and willing to represent rogaining on the IRF.

To illustrate this, the peak rogaining organisation in a country could be an orienteering association such as USOF in United States of America, or a blended organisation such as the Czech Association of Rogaining and Mountain Orienteering in Czech Republic, or a rogaining association like ARA in Australia.

In addition, a number of outstanding issues and final details were identified during discussions with the IRF. The ARA Council has confirmed its position on the following matters:

- There should only be one organisation representing a country on the IRF (for example both NZRA and NZOF should not represent New Zealand). This is designed to ensure a single point of contact per country.
- Every National Peak Rogaining Body should receive 2 votes, rather than the current variable number determined by the IRF Council. A fixed number of

votes has been proven to be a fair voting methodology as implemented in the ARA constitution.

- Where a nation has IRF Member status through a National Peak Rogaining Body, then its states, provinces and regions should not have additional Observer status. This ensures a single point of contact per country.
- ARA agrees to pay an IRF membership fee set at approximately \$US1 per member of each Peak National Rogaining Body. ARA wishes to make it clear that should an orienteering association wish to join the IRF, its membership fee (if any) should only reflect the number of active rogaining members. The fee should take account of the individual circumstances of each country and be waived in the early years of membership by any Peak National Rogaining Body outside Australia.

The ARA's membership would provide the following advantages to the IRF:

- Additional financial reserves which could be used by the IRF in the form of grants to new and fledgling Nation Peak Rogaining Bodies to enable them to purchase infrastructure and fund initiatives to grow their membership.
- Bring additional experience and resources to the IRF Council. ARA delegates have been associated with large rogaining associations for many years. They have day-to-day access to the knowledge, materials and resources created and developed by the rogaining associations in Australia over the past 30 years.
- Establishment of one peak organising body for the sport. In the past, without the ARA being a member of the IRF, it has not been possible to produce agreed international technical regulations and rules, or a strategy for the sport of rogaining.

Australian Rogaining Association  
Phillip Holman (President),  
Richard Robinson (Treasurer),  
David Rowlands (Secretary)