



AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION INCORPORATED

STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES 2019-2022

ABF VISION

Australians recognise bridge as a sport which helps build their communities. This will be achieved by excellence in management and investment in innovative technology.

ABF MISSION

The ABF administers, communicates, fosters and promotes enjoyment and participation in the sport of bridge throughout Australia.

ABF VALUES

- 1•Being appreciative and recognising the efforts of our volunteers
- 2•Being tolerant and respectful
- 3•Being fair and professional in all our dealings
- 4•Honesty and integrity
- 5•Consistency in decision-making and problem solving
- 6•Being open and accountable

As the **national peak body** and main point of contact with the **international bridge community**, the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF) has a key role in driving a viable and vibrant future for **bridge in Australia**.

The ABF's central strategy is to *grow member satisfaction*, among the 37,000+ Bridge Club members in Australia, for expert to beginners, either in competitive or social competitions.

Engaged, happy members will reap the significant personal intellectual and social benefits of enjoying a game of bridge in well-organised, congenial environments. They will participate, progress, contribute, retain their membership and be more likely to recommend bridge to others. This will in turn promote the growth of bridge in Australia.

Through activities focussed on relationship building with members, driving leadership in bridge standards and pursuing operational excellence, the ABF's chosen areas of action are:

Relationship Building

- 1. Opportunities to build relationships and satisfaction with members**
- 2. Raise the profile of bridge and the ABF among bridge club members**
- 3. Stimulate broader public interest in bridge and in affiliated bridge club membership**

Leadership in Bridge

- 4. Represent, interface and liaise with internal and external bodies, including international bodies**
- 5. Host a robust calendar of events**
- 6. Establish pathways and opportunities for all levels, from beginner to international competition.**
- 7. Ensure high standards in bridge education and opportunities for performance improvement at all levels**

Operational Excellence

- 8. Provide the IT systems, scoring and rules for competition to make playing bridge “easy”**
- 9. Deliver management and operational excellence and efficiency, including sound financial management**
- 10. Ensure appropriate governance structures and succession planning**
- 11. Establish pathways and opportunities for Directors and Teachers**

TOPIC: Membership Growth

Objective: Membership Growth of 3% annually

Owner: Kim Frazer and Peter Cox

Timeline: November 2019

Strategies:

- ♥ **Utilise proven NZ model to work with clubs to establish annual plan for each club incorporating teaching, mentoring and development.**
- ♥ **Particularly target 40 – 60y/o age bracket which is under represented in national demographics**
- ♥ **Utilise ABF Marketing Special Project grants to support clubs with local advertising**

Measure: Total number of registered bridge players as of 31 March each year

Topic: Youth Bridge

Objective: Attract younger players by changing the image of bridge from a game for old people to a great game for all ages

Owner: Richard Wallis

Timeline: 2020

Strategies:

- ♥ **Develop overarching national strategy by Sept 2019, particularly targeting youth market**
- ♥ **Utilise targeted pictures/advertising**
- ♥ **Provide regular stories in newsletters and on social media of activities being undertaken**
- ♥ **Promote fun nights at bridge clubs**
- ♥ **Develop a social media strategy to attract the younger set**
- ♥ **Utilise faster paced learning for young people (e.g. bridge in a day)**
- ♥ **Utilise school holiday programs**

Measure: Increase in the both the number of younger members and the amount of bridge they play

Topic: Communications Plan (NOTE ELEMENTS OF THIS WILL BECOME PROJECTISED)

Objective: Develop a communications plan for ABF along with relevant communication channels for identified target groups.

Owner: Peter Cox

Timeline: 2020

Strategies:

- ♥ Identify key target groups, role of communication/key messaging and relevant communication channels (note this should include States, Territories, club members and the broader public)
- ♥ Develop communication channels, including:
 - ♣ Member email database 2020
 - ♣ Website 2020
 - ♣ Newsletter 2H 2019
 - ♣ Facebook 2H 2020
 - ♣ Marketing Trade Stand for Congresses Continue
 - ♣ Marketing Newsletters to States/Clubs 2020
 - ♣ Media kits Q2 2019
 - ♣ Brochures, flyers, posters Ongoing
- ♥ Develop ABF Brand Identity (logo, colors, styles and imagery) to use as a style guide for the look and feel of all external facing communications
- ♥ Develop communications plan and calendar for target groups across communication channels
- ♥ Implement communications plan

Measure: Implemented by target date (Except Member email database which is not in control of Marketing)

Topic: Communications – Website Upgrade (contingent on communications plan)

Objective: Refresh the ABF website

Owner: Mark Guthrie

Timeline: December 2019

Strategies:

- ♥ Review the structure of the website with view to making it user friendly for clubs, club administrators, directors, teachers, sponsors, prospective and existing members beginners to experienced, social to competitive
- ♥ Utilise the agreed new Brand Identity (see communications plan above) to refresh the look and feel of the website
- ♥ Include new sections with frequently asked questions (FAQs), polls and bidding forums. Address the relevance of items on the front page, for example the GCC links should remain at the top during the congress
- ♥ TBA. Cost and effort estimates to be provided by June 2019

Measure: Site updated by the end of the year, 75% approval rating from member feedback.

Topic: Email Database

Objective: Set up an email database for all 37,000+ ABF registered players

Owner: Mark Guthrie

Timeline: by end 2020

Strategies:

- ♥ Create and populate an email database using MailChimp. This can be replaced by our own solution when it is ready. The plan will be ready before end April 2019**
 - ♣ Use the SMS gateway database as a starting point.**
 - ♣ Import usable data from the Masterpoint system.**
 - ◆ Make it mandatory for clubs to provide email addresses when signing up new members.**
 - ◆ Provide incentives for people to want to use this – email delivery of the ABF newsletter and monthly Masterpoint reports for example.**
 - ◆ Include opt in/opt out options.**

Measure: Database has 15,000 valid email addresses and members can manage their preferences by the end of 2019. By end of 2020, 100% of members are on the database

Topic: Communications – Volunteer Rewards

Objective: Volunteer rewards and recognition

Owner: Dallas Cooper

Timing: Process in place September 2019

Strategies:

- ♥ **This will be informed by the communications plan**
- ♥ **Establish criteria for determining how the volunteer is recognised**
- ♥ **Identify the form of acknowledgement**

Measure: Recognise a volunteer from each state and territory on International Volunteers Day on 5 December each year and National Volunteer Week, usually in late May each year.

Topic: ABF Licensed Events

Objective: Encourage ABF licensed events to include mixed events to legitimize an additional avenue for team selection

Owner: Allison Stralow

Timeline: Commencing 2020

Strategies:

- ♥ Offer incentives to the licensed events (e.g. license fee or Masterpoint waiver)
- ♥ Identify a Mixed Teams event sponsor for all ABF and ABF Licensed events (e.g. Health Insurance Broker)
- ♥ Investigate allocating PQP's to mixed pairs or teams events

Measure: To have a major sponsor for mixed events in place by the end of 2019

Topic: Poor International Team Performance and Return on Investment

Objective: Win a medal at a WBF event by year-end 2023 in any of Open, Women, Senior or Mixed categories.

Owner: Kim Frazer (Sheila Bird)

Timeline: by the end of 2022

Strategies:

- ♥ Develop coaching plans for squads (both team & development)
- ♥ Identify funding requirements for key training and preparation activities
- ♥ Review selection processes to ensure sufficient quality of participants. Consider implementation of qualifying standards.
- ♥ Establish meaningful consequences for failing to undertake adequate preparation activities
- ♥ Develop pathways for 'talented' players
- ♥ Provide rewards/incentives for performance successes
- ♥ Consult with other National bodies to see what they do. Particularly the most successful ones.

Measure: 1. Placings achieved at WBF events, 2. Funding cost per medal

Topic: International Event Participation

Challenge: Poor International Team Performance & Return on Investment

Objective: Review international event participation and funding policy by September 2019

Owner: Roy Nixon

Timeline: To coincide with review of Playoffs Selection policies being conducted by the Tournament Committee but in any event no later than end September

Key Strategies

- ♥ **Examine the funding of the various Playoff Selections to see if we are getting the best value for money.**
- ♥ **Consider ways we might be able to lift team performance through a mix of incentives/financial penalties to train and play in key lead up events in their partnerships.**
- ♥ **Consider rewards for excellent performance at target events.**

Measures:

- ♥ **Reduce travel subsidies provided for participants in team selection Playoffs to release more funds for other purposes aimed at improving performance.**
- ♥ **Reduce or abolish funding for non-target events on the international calendar (e.g. Yeh Brothers, Rosenblum, CNBC).**
- ♥ **Introduce qualification standards for teams to get full funding for Target events based around
 - ♣ **players required to play in certain domestic national lead up events as a partnership/team;**
 - ♣ **agreeing to a minimum amount of coaching and organised practice**
 - ♣ **travelling directing to the event (no side trips) and arriving at the required time to acclimatise etc****
- ♥ **Introduce positive incentives and rewards for good and excellent performance**

Topic: Support Improvement and Performance

Objective: Enhance Directing by supporting development pathways and educational opportunities

Owner: Allison Stralow (John McIlrath)

Timeline: Commencing 2020

Strategies:

- ♥ Identify pathways for Director development; by 07/19**
- ♥ Prepare a development plan; by 07/19**
- ♥ Identify suitable candidates at states and national levels; by 09/19**
- ♥ Identify suitable mentors to monitor the development; by 09/19**

Measure: An increase in the number of Directors moving from Club to State to national Directors

Topic: Teaching Standards

Objective: Raise the standard of teaching in all clubs and support improvement and performance in teaching

Owner: Allison Stralow (Joan Butts)

Timeline: June 2019

Strategies:

- ♥ Identify 8+ Accredited Teachers and ABF Honorary Teaching Fellows to conduct CPD days; by 6/19
- ♥ Ask states and territories to identify areas that need teacher development; by 6/19
- ♥ Encourage states and territories to submit applications to run Continuing Professional Development 'CPD' days on a subsidised basis
- ♥ Commitment to educating teachers in the use of modern online technologies to enhance performance and improve communication with students
- ♥ Further development of the ABF Education website and facebook page as a vehicle for use by a variety of educators; to advertise courses, add news, bidding quizzes, hands to discuss
- ♥ Building a national awareness of the ABF Accreditation programme and its benefits
- ♥ Education and recruitment of ABF teacher trainers in each Australian state
- ♥ Maintenance of support networks for all teachers, via regular email and monthly update contact
- ♥ Opening up new areas for ABF Accreditation throughout Australia
- ♥ Increasing the number of Accredited teachers, and therefore ensuring an increase in ABF members through more effective beginners and later lessons
- ♥ Working towards setting an ABF National curriculum, with a standardised approach to teaching in clubs
- ♥ Increasing teacher support, online and other, and providing modern effective tools and materials for teachers' use (e.g. Teacher Resource Pack and videos)

Measures: Receive eight or more applications from States or Territories for accredited teachers and ABF Honorary Teaching Fellows to conduct CPD days. Development and evaluation of the effectiveness of these strategies via analysis of annual national surveys of both teachers and clubs

Topic: Systems, Schemes Scoring

Objective: Enhance and continue efficient performance of the Masterpoint Scheme

Owner: Roy Nixon

Timeline: Commencing in June 2019 and over the following 12 months as other systems are being developed under the ABF Technology Strategy September 2019

Key strategies:

- ♥ **Increase the awareness of Clubs and their Masterpoint Secretaries of what training tools and other information is already available.**
- ♥ **Identify how the existing Masterpoint Centre database of key information can assist the development of the new ABF owned basic systems.**

Measures:

- ♥ **From the June 2019 issue, commence a regular Masterpoint Centre column in the ABF Newsletter to inform players and Clubs what information already exists on the MPC website and what it is useful for.**
 - ♣ **include this in the new ABF Newsletter Editor's content guidelines**
 - ♣ **articles to cover online training videos, instruction manuals etc**
- ♥ **As part of the development of new ABF owned basic systems (membership database management, masterpoint status reports and promotions, direct player login and password) to be provided to all Clubs FOC, ensure that:**
 - ♣ **information provided by Clubs to populate MPC registration for both new and continuing players includes mandatory fields on their email, age and other relevant issues.**

Topic: Technology Systems

Objective: Develop the systems outlined in the ABF Technology Strategy paper such that the ABF can provide clubs with all the technology that they need as well as supporting congresses.

Owner: Mark Guthrie

Timeline: Create a plan by the end of March 2019

Key Strategies

- ♥ Create a plan by the end of March 2019 for reaching this objective to include:**
 - ♣ this includes a new scoring program developed with assistance from current developers**
 - ♣ membership database management**
 - ♣ Masterpoint management and payment**
 - ♣ Entries management and payment**

Measure: First usable part of system in place Q1 2020.

Topic: Critical ABF Roles

Objective: Under the current governance structure, ensure sustainability of ABF Executive by adding more formality and managerial professionalism to critical roles in the ABF.

Owner: Allison Stralow

Timeline: Commencing May 2020

Strategies:

- ♥ Identify critical roles that require managerial professionalism, example Treasurer; by 12/19
- ♥ Prepare a plan to move these personnel from volunteer to contractor; by 09/19
- ♥ Change the ABF Constitution to allow payment to key personnel if necessary

Measure: Agreement from ABF Council to move these critical roles from volunteer to contractor and to change the ABF Constitution to allow payment for roles if necessary.

Topic: Succession Planning

Objective: Under the current governance structure, ensure sustainability of ABF Executive by developing an agreed-upon succession plan for potential successors for each key financial and operational personnel

Owner: Allison Stralow

Timeline: Come up with plans by end December 2019

Key Strategies

- ♥ Identify key positions; by 07/19
- ♥ Review the requirements of each position; by 07/19
- ♥ Analyse the gaps in available personnel; by 09/19

Measure: To have an agreed-upon development plan in place by the end of 2019

Topic: Alternative Revenue Sources

Objective: Increase gross revenue by 10% or more by providing the means for potential alternative sources of funds

Owner: Kim Frazer

Timeline: by end 2020

Strategies

- ♥ Establish an ABF Foundation to enable members to make donations and bequests by July 31 2019
 - ♣ Milestones:
 - ♦ Present a detailed proposal to present to the ABF AGM by end March
 - ♦ Establish a communication plan to promote the objects of the Foundation to members by end July 2019
- ♥ Seek to maximise the ABF's national "buying power" through:
 - ♣ better follow up of sponsorship leads
 - ♣ centralised coordination with the states and territories
 - ♣ appointment of a dedicated Sponsorship Officer on a part retainer, part commission basis
- ♥ Increase gross sponsorship revenue by 10% or more
 - ♣ Establish the value of existing sponsorship April 2019
 - ♣ Create a database of the 36,000 members Sept 2019
 - ♣ Develop plans to exploit the value of the database Dec 2019
 - ♣ Approach potential sponsors Early 2020

Measure: 1. Percentage increase in revenue year on year,
2. Percentage increase in sponsorship revenue

Topic: Governance – Structure Review

Objective: Modernise governance structure to support the changing needs of the ABF's organisational model

Owner: Kim Frazer

Timeline: 2020 AGM

Strategies:

- ♥ Preparation of a paper defining the benefits of and rationale for changing the current governance structure for presentation to the 2019 AGM.
- ♥ Development of a set of recommendations for ABF Council consideration by mid-term 2019 meeting.
- ♥ Consultation more broadly with states/territories and other key stakeholders on any proposed changes.

Measure: A clearly defined pathway for implementing the changes

Topic: Club Help Desk

Objective: Establish national Help Desk function for Clubs

Owner: John McIlrath (Mark Guthrie)

Timeline: 2020

Strategies

- ♥ **Put together a roster of national and State Directors to provide cover for phone calls and email queries on issues connected with Clubs running events including Congresses**

Measure: A clearly defined pathway for implementing the changes

Topic: Financial and Operational Management

Objective: Instigate formal budgeting process

Owner: Roy Nixon, ABF Finance Committee

Timeline: by end September 2019

Strategies:

- ♥ **Set up a new Budget Sub-Committee (of the Finance Committee) at the AGM in April to oversee the new process to ensure consistency in application and key stakeholder consults**

Measures:

- ♥ **Budget Sub-Committee to draft budget application template and selection criteria (cost benefit analysis) to guide assessment of budget spending applications;**
- ♥ **Draft clear delegations of budgeted expenditure after approval to minimise interference during implementation phase.**
- ♥ **Send out a general request for proposals for funding to Committees and State/Territory bodies**
- ♥ **Hold consultations with national coordinators and event tournament organisers to obtain budget proposals**