

Executive Board Report
Chairman – General Manager
2016-2017

This AGM marks the end of an era for me as an ATHRA Director. In my time as an executive I have seen the organisation evolve and grow in an amazing manner. The restructure of ATHRA to a national model in 2010, and the introduction of online memberships are perhaps the two most significant initiatives implemented in my time, and I am proud to have been part of those processes. I believe ATHRA is well situated to move forward in a professional manner, but the incoming Board, and in fact all volunteers cannot afford to be complacent. We must continue to think of new and innovative ideas, and be bold enough to strive for their implementation.

For years, I have advocated active succession planning. It is essential that we continue to identify potential office bearers and officials at all levels of the organisation. It is particularly important to target the younger members, to introduce new and fresh ideas, and modern thinking. Such members should be encouraged nurtured as one never knows what tomorrow may bring, as recent events have once again emphasised.

It is important that I acknowledge the outstanding efforts of Vince Sherry with the online membership project. He was not the only contributor, but he certainly did the bulk of the work, at times in the face of strong opposition and criticism. Vince's presentations to the workshop was a reflection of his passion and attention to detail, and I extend congratulations and thanks for all that he has done.

I also wish to acknowledge Lloyd Fletcher's wonderful contribution as Membership and Affiliation Registrar over a four year period. His passion and dedication, plus the fact that he seemed to always go above and beyond expectations with the little things he did to assist, is recognised by all. Lloyd's resignation has come as a surprise to most, and he will be missed, but as with everything in life, we must move on. I wish to record my personal gratitude to Lloyd for his contribution to ATHRA, and for all he has done to assist me in my various roles. I would like to suggest that the incoming Board consider presenting Lloyd with a suitable Certificate of Appreciation recognising his efforts.

At this point it is appropriate to announce that Richard Greenhill has agreed to take on the role of Membership and Affiliation Registrar. I wish Richard all the very best and thank him for taking on this vital role

I also acknowledge and thank each of our Regional Managers, those new to the role, as well as those who left at some stage during the previous 12 months. The organisation cannot function without volunteers such as your selves, thank you for your time and efforts.

Thanks also go to our team of appointed officials, Mary Hughes, Sue Baillie, Richard Greenhill, Tony Hart and our team of Accreditation Trainers. A harmonious and dedicated workforce is essential to the smooth and efficient conduct of any organisation and your personal contributions are appreciated and acknowledged.

It is important to also acknowledge the hard working Club Secretaries and other club officials for their cooperation and support during the previous 12 months. I thank all club officials for their willingness to act as "volunteers".

ATHRA acknowledges our association with Affinity Insurance Brokers, Australian Natural Horsemanship, Barrack Saddles, Cavallo Horse and Rider, Dixon-Smith Equestrian, Fat Pony, Nash Custom Saddles, Ozzy Horse Ropes, Swish Horse and Tophorse. I believe it is appropriate to record special thanks to Paul Davenport and Affinity Insurance Brokers for their advice, assistance and cooperation throughout the year, not to mention their kind sponsorship of our dinner last night.

Thank you to all our business partners for their support during the previous 12 month. ATHRA looks forward to the continued growth in our relationships to the mutual benefit of all.

I would like to personally thank my Board colleagues Karen, Meg, Pam and Vince for their co-operation, support and loyalty during our term as Executive Board members.

This is my last annual report as an ATHRA Director, and for me the end of a 10 year journey, which has provided some extreme highs, as well as numerous lows. I know that life will change, and that adapting to a less stressful life style may take some getting used to, but I am looking forward to the change of pace. It is appropriate that I acknowledge the sacrifices made by my family Carole and Tyler. I am looking forward to spending more quality family time together.

I would like to close my final report with words I have used previously. ***It is important for us all to realise that what one may have done or achieved in the past, is not as important or relevant as what one does or may do in the future.*** I encourage a conscientious effort by all volunteers and members to work together in a spirit of respect, harmony and cooperation.

Alan Salter

Director - General Manager

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EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT- COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Well! What a year!! I have been in the role of Director, Communications & Marketing for just on a year. What a learning curve!!

Some of the areas under my 'umbrella' include club registration, member registration, the newsletter, information distribution, and marketing.

This has been a vastly different role to my previous 20 plus year career in forensic investigation and law enforcement. This change has been refreshing and one with which I have welcomed with open arms, although at times, like all of you here, I am quite pressed for time with the demands of a young family.

I am humbled to be in the company of such dedicated and skilled fellow board members, and without their support and guidance I would have found this role significantly more challenging. Alan Salter's positive guidance, encouragement and abilities as a general manager would be, I believe, up there with the very best in the private sector, yet he does this for a token sum. I believe that if ATHRA is to continue to get the level of dedication provided by, and required of a General Manager, then needs to become a paid position.

Also a big thank you to Vince Sherry. Vince is always ready to assist and support with my ongoing struggle to manage communications of a large database on a satellite computer system (and sometimes more than a little user error). Thank you Vince.

As most of you could well imagine, marketing is an area which was something that was quite new to me, as such, I have been fortunate to have the support, and knowledge of Sue Baillie, ATHRA's marketing manager. Sue has been instrumental in getting this area back up and running after being in a lull for some years. This area is a pivotal part of getting the ATHRA brand out there and Sue, who has been in the position for approximately one year has excelled in this position. I am sure with Sue's continued enthusiasm we will see this area continue to grow.

This past year has also saw a revamp of our quarterly newsletter Trail Tales. Our newly appointed newsletter editor Rachael Meek has done a terrific job of rounding up articles, photos and producing features. I thank you Rachael for your outstanding efforts and I look forward to seeing the readership of Trail Tales increase.

In summing up, I offer the following recommendations:

- That the yearly 'affiliation packs' ordinarily sent out to each and every club, Australia wide be limited to new clubs, and to those clubs who ask for the items provided such as the ATHRA stickers, pamphlets etc. This would reduce wastage of perhaps unwanted items that cost ATHRA money, reduce expensive postage costs, and reduce what is a labour intensive, time consuming task.
- That the production of the 'delegate books' that each of you have in front of you now be abolished. Each and every item in the books has been distributed to members electronically. In this day and age nearly all members have an electronic means of communication, and I believe that, again these information books are an unnecessary expense and again consume the time of the volunteer.
- As mentioned earlier that the position of General Manager, become a paid position, which reflects the knowledge and time required of the position.

Finally, I am proud to be a member of ATHRA, both as a club member and as a member of The Board. I am looking forward to the continued growth of the organisation which is involved in a pursuit I, and apparently many others are passionate about. The fact that each and every one of you here today has taken time out of your busy working and personal lives to be here is testament to the dedicated team we have. I look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Megan Galvin

Director

Directors Report – Access

As this is a two by two year appointment and not having the benefit of being in a previous Regional Manager role I planned to use the first year of this appointment to get a feel for the task at hand and gain an understanding of the scope of the issues. This proved to be a difficult year for me personally as I badly broke my leg, taking four months to get well again.

However from the issues that came to me during the year I would like to summarise the situation from my observations. Across the country it is very much a 'different courses for different horses' approach. It seems to be that in Western Australia there is a lot of recreational planning happening and the idea of 'hubs' has taken hold, with ATHRA being seen as the lead organisation representing horse riders. South Australia seems to have lots of legislation against horse riders and few riding on public land options, however, HorseSA has made some inroads in getting horseriding considered and are seen as the goto organisation representing horse riders.

Victoria has lots of access issues, all over the state with very passionate people taking up and tackling the local issues head on. The access issues seem to get somewhat mixed up with the brumby management issues and I am not sure ATHRA is seen as the lead organisation for recreational horseriding.

NSW has many local ATHRA contact people doing good work at both the local and state level. There is access to State Forests, you just have to let them know you are there so there are no major event clashes. National Park access ranges from OK, great, yes to big NO without reasons, in different parts of the state. However, there is general acknowledgement of horseriding particularly in regards the Bicentennial National Trail and there are many members of both ATHRA and BNT. As far as I can tell there is no links and dialogue with the managers of Crown Lands and the future use of the huge network of stock routes and travelling stock reserves for recreational riding is not being put forward as an option by ATHRA.

Queensland has a poor relationship with Qld National Parks in north Queensland and thanks to Claire Bourkes work over the years a great relationship with SE Qld Water catchment authority.

The common points seem to be passionate horseriders being available to talk to government agencies and prepared to go on their committees; aiming for harmony with other users like bicycle riders; and being persistent over a number of years.

My aim for the coming year is to draw together a strategy with the help of state representatives and have the website a place for organisations to find contacts for their state. I do note that the WA strategy took 3 years to finalise but drawing on their experience I hope this will be done this year.

As we know 'face to face' is the most effective. So I propose the strategy's guiding principles be the Act Locally, get to know the local managers of public lands, go on their committees with a 'win some lose some' attitude and in time become the 'go to' person for ATHRA as the lead organisation. I encourage you to have the 'long view' with access issues.

Finally I thank Alan Salter and the other Directors for their assistance during the year.

Pamela O'Neill – Director Access

Directors Report

There has been a great deal of activity from the Board in 2016. After last years AGM and the subsequent commitment to investigate, plan and implement an online registration platform, my role and that of other members of the executive has been extremely busy.

It was obvious that due to the unique membership process that is constitutionally required, ATHRA has had to build a software solution to meet all the requirements.

This has been done and I'm happy to report that it meets and in fact exceeds our initial goals.

The upgrade is going live on the 10th April 2017.

The next phase of the upgrade will be to integrate the merchandise e-commerce functionality. Our aim is to have this completed and live by mid 2017.

I have to be honest getting this upgrade to this stage has not been an easy task and has taken a lot of time, not only assisting in the build but discussing the upgrade with various ATHRA executives, testing the site thoroughly and making sure all our stakeholders have been kept up to date via email. The use of Mailchimp has made this task easier and has given ATHRA a more professional look to its communications

The Board is positive that this upgrade will position ATHRA well for future membership growth. Executive roles will be easier to perform and enable ATHRA to attract younger members into these positions in the future.

The world and Australia is changing at a fast pace, what is maybe the latest today is outdated tomorrow. Digital disruption is the catchphrase of the technology boom.

ATHRA must not kid itself in thinking it is a unique organization and somehow immune to these changes. If we had not adopted this change to online registration, the Board would have been complicit in condemning the association to a slow demise.

For this reason I urge our executives and in particular our Regional Managers to encourage and assist clubs in being part of this change by creating a PayPal business account and setting up their club details on the website. The clubs that do will be the beneficiaries of future membership growth. In 2017 ATHRA will look to increase membership via a strategic marketing plan with a target of attracting members 30+ years of age. Our first goal will be to create a working group that will report to the board on the following

- Strategy
- Investigate
- Plan
- Implement

We have already started this process by appointing Tony Hart to head this team.

In summing up I would like to make the point that our mission requires ATHRA to solid team. We have meetings like this to thrash out ideas and discuss all the pro's and con's of ideas we may have.

Once we leave here we must all be committed to the outcome, whether we agree or not.

We cannot afford to have any cracks in the management of this association.

ATHRA has created some great partnerships with brands that make ATHRA membership one of terrific value. We will continue to look for associations that will bring added value to the ATHRA offer.

I look forward to working with the new board over the next 2 years.

In finish I would like to thank especially Alan Salter and Tony Hart, they are terrific mentors and I have taken advantage of their experience on many occasions. I hope they will continue to remain on the side lines for referencing in the future.

Vince Sherry