

LONG DISTANCE RACING MEETING

**Minutes of the Long Distance Racing Meeting held at Notting Hill
on Friday, 4th May 2018. Meeting opened at 1.45pm**

Representatives Present:

John Fruzynski – Wangaratta, Greg Wagner – Wangaratta, Karl Cutrona – Wangaratta, Geoff Parker – Shepparton, Mark Baldwin – VPO, Joe Micallef – VPO, John Yates – VHA, Andrew Spiliopoulos – VHA, Henry Marciniac – VHA, Tony Price VPU, John Share – VPU, Leanne Share – VPU, John Simmonds – Gippsland, Geoff Duryea – Gippsland, David Leishman – GMPF, Rod Churchill – GMPF, Paul Gardiner – GMPF, John Saggars – WPF

Others Present: Sam Spiliopoulos, Kathy Spiliopoulos, Cam Murrells, Colin Walker

Points to consider

1. 400, 500, 600 mile racing
2. Larger number of birds sent to races
3. Animal Welfare
4. National/Combine Racing
5. Cost Savings

Paul Gardiner stated that cost savings would be made for all groups participating. More pigeons would be sent by more flyers participating thus creating a more prestigious race result i.e. National or Combine results could be calculated.

Andrew Spiliopoulos supported Paul Gardiner's comments by adding that recent races from Tasmania have resulted in excellent returns and thus taking pressure off from Animal Welfare groups.

David Leishman asked whether participation would be for all of Victoria.

Geoff Parker explained that a 600 mile race for the feds whose members are from Northern Victoria such as Shepparton and Wangaratta would require a race scheduled as a 700 mile race for Melbourne Metro members.

Henry Marciniac added that logistics could be worked out at a later stage and that 700 mile racing would unlikely be scheduled by Melbourne Metro feds.

John Yates estimated that by having everyone on one truck would result in thousands of dollars being saved. For this to occur, decisions must be initially made such as for everyone to agree to fly the same line as each other every year.

John Simmonds pointed out the North and North East lines made racing difficult for returns to the Gippsland area.

Joe Micallef suggested fly the North and North West lines only as this would be safer for the birds by keeping away from the mountains in the East.

Tony Price also added out that some feds have their Line of Flight in their Constitution, thus making change a little more difficult.

Paul Gardiner pointed out that Liberation Committees these days have up to date access to weather conditions at race points and along the line of flight. All weather conditions are monitored days in advance and decisions can be made on changing basketing and race days if needed.

John Yates stressed the need to be flexible with liberation dates.

General discussion took place with most feds concluding the season towards the end of November. John Sagers pointed out that the WPF were restricted by their Constitution and their season was scheduled to conclude the first week in October.

David Leishman commented on last year's 500 and 600 miles races, where the shared cartage worked well but things could have been done better with more warning. He also stated that by charging an Up Front Fee, the fee may be more difficult to calculate.

Henry Marciniac suggested that a little more be built into the cost factor and if there are savings, these can be refunded to the members or kept as a nest egg to offset the following year's Up Front Fee calculations.

Karl Cutrona suggested that these issues can be fixed at a later date and that the meeting should focus on the major points and that any progress made is a good step forward.

John Sagers asked how the costs would be split. General consensus was to split the costs on number of birds entered by each fed with a rate struck for the non Metropolitan feds.

Henry Marciniac stressed that part of the whole exercise was for cheaper transport for everyone.

Geoff Parker mentioned that the Northern Country clubs freight would already be cheaper than proportioning total costs by bird numbers. Paul Gardiner responded that perhaps they could give an indication of their current transport costs to calculate a rate for the country feds based on their current rate less a calculated saving by charging a price per unit used.

Joe Micallef said that some feds are already cheaper than others. General discussion concluded that some will save more than others. David Leishman said that he would expect a cheaper rate but would keep any Up Front Fees at the same level which may generate a refund at the end of the season.

John Sagers stated that it would become difficult to retain the services of a driver and their truck by cancelling the long distance races in their contract.

Paul Gardiner suggested that perhaps offering compensation for not going therefore creating a win win situation for both the driver and the fed.

Tony Price informed that the long distance races provided the greatest profit margins.

Rod Churchill stressed that various contractors should be given the opportunity to quote for the long distance races. Tony Price added that this was how the transport is selected for the National races where the cheapest and best quote is accepted.

Other benefits of transporting together put forward by Tony Price were that the VHA offered a second 500 mile race in its schedule. The second 500 mile race could be an attractive option for members wishing to compete in additional long distance races.

Paul Gardiner added that there would be further savings by racing the 500 and 600 mile races on the same weekend.

Andrew Spiliopoulos advised that all feds need to be more flexible with their schedules.

John Share requested that everyone have an equal say in all decisions. Andrew Spiliopoulos supported John Share's request.

David Leishman requested that a committee be formed to take this concept further.

John Share suggested that it was not only the Presidents and Secretaries of pigeon race organizations that have the greatest knowledge or feel for long distance racing requirements.

He suggested that members with this experience be invited to attend these meetings.

Henry Marciniac advised that racing from Tasmania will not be restricted by the Rota Virus.

Next Meeting Scheduled 1.00p.m Friday 15th June.

Meeting Closed 3.10p.m.