

Proposed Changes to VRA Membership

The following is an detailed overview of proposed membership changes to the VRA. The final proposal and motion will be voted on at the VRA AGM on 17th May 2012.

How does our membership work now?

The VRA currently has the following membership types:

- introductory membership (once only, \$11 for 6 months),
- individual membership (12 months for \$22) and
- household membership (12 months for \$33 for all persons living at the one address).

Introductory membership is meant to encourage new members trying the sport for the first time. The idea is to have novices pay a reduced (i.e. introductory \$11) membership fee + event fee (\$23) for a total of \$34 for their first 6-12 hour event. It was introduced to incentivise novices as it was seen that the total cost of individual membership + event fee (\$22 + \$23 = \$45) was too high for a first event. We additionally waive any late fees (\$10) for novices to further encourage them to participate.

Individual membership is our regular membership fee, available for \$22 per person per year from date of payment. The fee covers things like insurance, newsletters and general operational costs of the organisation.

Household membership is provided to people living at the same address. Rather than a every family member taking individual membership, this form of membership is aimed at families though open to anyone residing together.

What are our usual Event Fees?

Our event fees have remained static for the past four years:

- 6hr, 8hr, 12hr events - \$23 adults or \$15 junior (under 18 years)
- 24hr - \$36 adults or \$18 junior
- Juniors (under 18 years of age) are free when on the same team as an adult in any event

Additionally, we hold the following per year

- 9 monthly rogaines (March – Nov)
- 3 of those events have rogaines on multiple days (April 2x6, June 2x6, Nov 2x6)
- 12 Rogaining days total

What do other Rogaining Associations do?

Other rogaining associations have differing models for memberships and event fees. A summary is provided here:

- QLD (\$20 individual and \$30 household for 12 months + event fees)
- NSW (\$0 membership fees + event fees from \$35 - \$90)
- ACT (\$10 adult and \$1 junior per calendar year + event fees)
- SA (\$0 membership fees + event fees)
- WA (\$18 adult and \$9 junior for one calendar year + event fees)
- New Zealand (\$0 membership fees + event fees)

Why change membership?

The committee has often discussed the pros and cons of removing the current yearly membership fee structure and implementing a simplified “event fee” which would be paid per person per event. Our belief is that removing the yearly membership fees and implementing a per-event fee (of between \$5-7 per person for a 6hr-12hr and \$8-\$9 for a 24hr event) would significantly benefit the VRA as follows:

Growing membership and participation – we want to increase the participation of returning Rogainers who participate infrequently. We have many novices coming to their first event who then never return. After the first event at the lapse of their introductory \$11 membership, the next 6hr event will cost them \$22 + \$23 = \$45. A per event fee minimises the return novice costs to incentivise them to return to rogaining.

Minimising volunteer effort – of particular focus is making membership simpler, and reducing volunteer workload of the Membership secretary and Admin managers who undertake large efforts to maintain the membership database.

Continue VRA financial operation – the proposed changes must be done on a neutral revenue change basis, ensuring the continued operation of the VRA and thus the organising and conduct of rogaines in Victoria.

Meet our constitutional requirements – we need to meet our constitutional requirements for members. This ensures that we can then adequately insure members and volunteers at events. The VRA Membership would now be defined as individuals who had completed a rogaine within the previous 12 months. As an incorporated association we need to charge a nominal membership fee however we will offset this with an equal event entry discount to make membership effectively \$0.

How will membership fees work?

We propose to charge a \$2 membership fees that is offset with an equivalent event entry fee discount (essentially set all membership fees to \$0). We propose to correspondingly increase the event fees to between \$5-7 per person for a 6hr-12hr event and \$8-\$9 for a 24hr event. There will be a 12 month transition period (July 2012 – June 2013) so that we do not financially disadvantage currently paid members.

The increase in event fees are to cover our reduced membership revenues (approximately \$5 per person) and adjust to our increased costs to conduct events (approximately \$1 per person). Event fees have remained unchanged for the past four years. There will be no change to fees (remains at \$0) for Juniors (under-18 years) who attend a rogaine with an Adult (Individual) member.

At the conclusion of the 12 month transition period, a 12 month VRA membership is included on entering any event. If you enter any other rogaine within the 12 month period, your membership is rolled forward by extending it for another 12 months from the date of the latest rogaine.

During the transition period the normal membership fees are reduced pro-rata. This is so that we do not disadvantage people who have just paid their membership fees when the per-event fee is introduced. Correspondingly we increase the event fees in three stages: at 6, 9 and 12 months with increases of approximately \$2 per event.

How do I know if I am still a member?

If you participate in a Rogaine you will automatically become a member for 12 months from the date of the Rogaine and included into our membership. During the transition period you will pay a reduced membership fee, and your membership will expire at the end of the transition period.

What happens if I have just paid my membership fees?

During the 12 month transition period, we propose a gradual reduction of the current membership fee structure with a corresponding increase in event fees as follows:

| Membership Type | Jul – Dec 2012 | Jan-Mar 2013 | Apr-Jun 2013 | Jul 2013 + |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Individual | \$15 | \$8 | \$5 | \$0 <small>(Note 1)</small> |
| Household | \$25 | \$15 | \$10 | unavailable |
| Introductory | \$11 | \$5 | \$0 | unavailable |

| Event Fee increase | Jul – Dec 2012 | Jan-Mar 2013 | Apr-Jun 2013 | Jul 2013 + |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| 6-12 hour events | \$25 (\$2 increase) | \$27 (\$2 inc.) | \$29 (\$2 inc.) | \$29 |
| 15-24 hour events | \$38 (\$2 increase) | \$38 (\$2 inc.) | \$44 (\$4 inc.) | \$44 |

Note 1: We will charge a \$2 membership fee that is offset with a corresponding \$2 event entry discount.

What are the challenges?

Changes to existing online entry processes (MASS), changes to our databases, determination of event fee for people who participate in all Rogaimes so that they are not unduly disadvantaged, the interaction of memberships with posted newsletters (note, there is a separate newsletter motion to be put forward at the AGM to cover this topic).

What is the motion put forward?

That the VRA:

- increase the per-event fee to cover reduction of membership fees at 1st Jul 2012, 1st Jan 2013 and 1st Apr 2013.
- abolish the current Introductory and Household classes of membership fees as at 30th June 2013.
- adopt a new cost of Individual membership class at \$2 to be offset by a \$2 event entry discount as at 1st July 2013.

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