



## ATHLETICS NORTH QUEENSLAND

### Succession Planning – Changing Board Members

The purpose of this plan is to provide opportunities for potential leaders within our organisation to be identified and developed in readiness to move into leadership positions. Following the plan will allow a smooth transition of leadership where Board members can walk away from the association without being missed!

How the Board is structured will determine how often it changes and the nature of that change. Such changes usually occur through the annual election cycle and resignations. Whatever the reason however, the resultant loss of management experience can be disruptive, although there are also positive aspects of alterations to Board personnel. For example, new Board members may inject the organisation with fresh enthusiasm, increased expertise and new ideas.

Some sport Boards operate a rolling committee structure in order to facilitate smooth transitions from election to election. In this approach, a designated number of Board members stand down after a set period to enable fresh input from newly elected members. Even in these situations, there is the potential for corporate experience and memory to be lost unless the organisation is careful about the sequence and timing of the process.

An example of a rolling Board could be:				
Position	in	out	in	out
President	2013	2015	2016	2018
Director Administration	2014	2016	2017	2019
Director Development	2015	2017	2018	2020
Director Finance	2016	2018	2019	2021

Sitting Board members are eligible to re-nominate.

It is important for outgoing Board members to pass on as much knowledge as possible to the person replacing them. Via this process, new members can learn from past experiences, gain an understanding of how past successes were achieved and how to avoid potential problems. Such an approach emphasises the importance of keeping accurate and current records of all information relevant to particular roles. In more general terms, new members can also use previous minutes in order to become informed about past decisions of the Board. The change process can be better managed by including the training and



recruitment of potential Board members within the overall business plan. Including these issues in the planning cycle also sends a message about their importance to the organisation.

Handover procedures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new Board members will receive an Induction folder which will include but not be limited to the following.</li> <li>• All new Board members should be informed through written job descriptions about their roles and responsibilities. Briefings from the previous office holder are important to clarify these issues.</li> <li>• A senior official should brief the new Board about the organisation, its history and its plans for the future. This should be backed up with a written development plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Board members should be welcomed and encouraged to contribute. They need access to a past official who can answer any questions on how the organisation works.</li> <li>• New Board members need to know where all of the organisation's documents are filed and should have ready access to them.</li> </ul>

Some possible obstacles to a successful transition to be alert for are:

- The gatekeeper – one person holding all the knowledge within a system only they understand (mythical God called Janus(the gatekeeper) pronounced Ianus)
- Believing they are irreplaceable – considering that some members and volunteers are irreplaceable
- Poor records – a lack of formalised reporting procedures
- Poor management – a lack of volunteer management (i.e. recruitment, screening, orientation, training, recognition, replacement)
- Senior members take all – senior Board members taking all the administrative responsibility, restricting the development of new members with an interest in the area
- Time to go –Board members who have served Athletics North Queensland well for many years, but now may be reaching their 'best before date'
- Fear of change – a fear-of-change culture within Athletics North Queensland

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