

A Proposal for the Future of the EFA Northern Territory Branch

A Discussion Paper for a meeting with Members of the EFA Northern Territory Branch

Background

The National Board has been discussing the status and administration of the NT Branch for some time. It is clear that the EFA NT, whose membership has been fluctuating between sixty and seventy-five, has not been able to service the needs of its members in recent years to the level approaching that of other Branches. A survey conducted of NT Branch members a few years ago also supported this concern and a change of direction.

The matter was discussed most recently at the 2005 Annual General Meeting. Prior to this AGM, the Queensland Branch had submitted an offer to carry out the member administration for the NT Branch including the provision of services that were already being made available to Queensland members and affiliated clubs.

Proposal

We are now proposing that the following changes be made to the administration and the constitutional status of the EFA Northern Territory Branch. This is just one of the possible options.

Member Administration

It is proposed that:

- the Northern Territory Branch and the Queensland Branch merge to become the *EFA Queensland and Northern Territory Branch* with all administration taking place from the Branch office based in Queensland.
- this new entity takes on all "ordinary" aspects of member administration, including affiliated clubs and horse registrations. This means among other things that:
- current membership is transferred, at no cost to members, to the Qld and NT Branch, as are clubs and horse registrations.
- new members join, clubs affiliate and horses are registered through the *Qld and NT Branch*
- NT-resident members are identified as such on the National Database (see reference to Teams below).
- the Branch newsletter will contain a NT-specific section.

- a Queensland and NT web site will be administered by the Branch Office.

Governance

A number of constitutional changes will have to be made to put the following into effect. We proposed that

- the NT Branch relinquishes its share in the Federation on the establishment of the *EFA Queensland and Northern Territory Branch*.
- "State" teams from both Queensland and Northern Territory will be recognised as separate entries and will be represented as such at State/Territory Championships.
- the *Old and NT Branch* is represented by one member on National Committees where National Committee membership is "representative".
- clubs affiliated with the Qld and NT Branch may nominate Sport Committee members.
- funds presently held by the EFA NT will remain in the Territory and be allocated to NT projects agreed to by members. Such monies will be administered by the Branch office.

Advantages of the proposal to NT Members:

- Better service to members – full-time professional staff offer prompt service and a full range of services not previously available in NT.
- Better communication with members - the Branch will investigate the option of having an 1800 telephone number available for members in the Northern Territory to contact the Branch office.
- The Qld Office already services remote areas and has a number of strategies to improve services and recognise the different needs of more remote areas.
- The Qld Coaching coordinator to assist existing NT coaches and help train and recruit new coaches to the NT
- Club newsletter, club support resources and club conference to support clubs with regular news on grants, management issues, and events management.
- Prompt response to e-mails from full-time staff.
- Members in the Northern Territory will be integrated into the National Database – this means improved service for members, registered coaches and officials with magazines, offers, and renewal papers. NT members often miss out on these at present.

- Access to other Qld sport development programs such as talent search squads, officials training, member education and clinics, others - need to list...)
- Retain access to the NT Department of Sport and Recreation funding, which will be allocated only to NT clubs and members.

Issues:

Charges for membership, horse registration, performance cards, etc.

Charges will ultimately need to align with those charged to existing EFA Queensland members. We propose that there would be a five-year progression to align membership fees for current members (new members join under Qld conditions). NT Members need to bear in mind that the additional services that will come from and through the larger combined Branch Office, will more than make up for any increases.

Performance Cards: If there is indeed presently a \$5 share of performance card income going to clubs, this will need to be addressed by the Queensland Branch: Again, the additional club support provided by Qld is likely to compensate for this. There are currently 57 Dressage horses = \$285. There would only be a handful of horses with performance cards in other disciplines, so the overall income share is marginal.

Existing Funds held by the NT Branch

These funds will be kept in a separate account and administered and accounted for by the Qld. Office. The funds will be used for NT activities only.

NT Government Funding

NT Branch could still remain as an entity (administered by Qld. Office), retain a bank account there (see above) and submit funding applications on its own account (and letterhead). Apparently, there are other sports in a similar situation. Some discussions with the NT DSR may be required.

Franz Venhaus, CEO

On behalf of the EFA National Board

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