

## **Q&A: EWA'S CONCERNS ABOUT THE EA REFORM PROPOSAL**

### **Q1. What concerns does EWA have with EA's preferred structural model?**

The proposed new structural model, referenced as a 'disciplinary model', places governance under a single national board with State branch boards to be dissolved. While the proposed centralised governance structure might streamline operations at the national level, it raises significant concerns for WA. The shift away from the current model could diminish local decision-making and hinder our ability to address the unique needs of our sport in WA, particularly in relation to our ability to seek funding for the SEC. The EA Board's decision to choose this model goes against the recommendations of the National Equestrian Strategy and Structure Working Group. In addition, EA has not provided any detailed analysis or evidence to support that their proposed model would benefit WA members.

### **Q2. How has EA consulted with EWA on the proposed national reform?**

Two roadshows were held last year with two representatives from the EA Board. The EWA Board invited EWA discipline chairs and other WA key stakeholders including the State Government to attend. Attendees at the roadshows raised significant concerns about the lack of detail and evidence provided to support EA's reform model, particularly in relation to costings and financial modelling, but these concerns remain unaddressed. While EA has indicated that the reform process would involve thorough consultation with each State, EWA's involvement has been limited. While EA has assured EWA that feedback is being considered the process has not reflected the level of ongoing genuine consultation initially implied.

### **Q3. What are EWA's concerns about the information provided in the *EA Reform Discussion Paper*?**

EA's Reform Discussion paper lacks comprehensive financial modelling, costings and evidence to support their case for change, making it hard to assess the impact on members, clubs, and the SEC. The paper proposes a nationally consistent member fee model, but without the necessary financial details, EWA is uncertain about how WA members' funds will be allocated, particularly regarding subsidies for the SEC. EWA also highlights the need for EA to provide evidence to support the broad statements outlined in the discussion paper. These details are essential for making educated and informed decisions about the proposed re-structure and its potential impact on our sport within WA.

In addition, EWA advocates for multiple reform options to be presented to members, each with clear pros and cons, allowing members to make informed decisions. Transparency in presenting these options will lead to better discussions and more thoughtful decision-making.

#### **Q4. If EA's proposed model is implemented, how might this affect EWA and its members?**

While EWA acknowledges that governance improvements are needed, particularly, at the national level, there has been no clear demonstration of how the proposed changes will lead to better outcomes for the equestrian community in WA. The issues highlighted in the "Case for Change" largely concern national challenges faced at a national level and do not directly affect the functioning of equestrian sport in WA. EWA is deeply concerned about the potential impact that EA's proposed centralised governance model will have on the ability to receive State Government funding.

EWA has received \$2.5 million over the past three years in funding support to assist with critical upgrades to the SEC and the continuous running of the sport. Under EA's proposed model, EA cannot guarantee that WA will continue to receive this crucial funding. If funding is lost and EA (operating under its new centralised model) ceases to manage the SEC for WA members, there is a risk that the lease with the City of Swan will not be renewed resulting in the SEC being handed back to the State Government.

#### **Q5. What are the other risks for WA community sports if a centralised model is adopted?**

Moving to a centralised model presents several other risks, including but not limited to, reduced local decision-making ability, potential reallocation of State held funds and assets to other States and territories, disengagement of volunteers, decreased participation levels and the loss of a strategic WA voice in planning and business model development.

#### **Q6. What are the next steps, and how can WA members stay informed?**

EWA will continue to provide updates as new information becomes available regarding the reform process.

To stay informed and ensure that your concerns are considered, members are encouraged to actively participate in any surveys and forums provided by EWA. Your involvement is crucial as we work through these changes and advocate for the best interests of equestrian sport in WA.