



EQUESTRIAN
AUSTRALIA



September 2023

NATIONAL STRUCTURE DISCUSSION PAPER

Prepared by: Equestrian Australia Board

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Equestrian sport in Australia has a rich history of achieving success on the world stage over the decades. Our unique sport has both great potential and challenges for its future sustainability. The world of sport has evolved in recent times, and with the lead-up to Brisbane 2032, there are incredible opportunities on the horizon.

There's a strong desire among our members for positive change; to move beyond governance issues that have held us back in the past. We all recognise that our current structure has become inefficient and is no longer suited to our sport's needs. It's clear that we need to find better and more cost-effective ways to deliver our sport and support our members, coaches, clubs, officials, volunteers, and stakeholders. We also value the importance of local knowledge and expertise, as it forms a vital connection with our stakeholders and members. The challenge is to create a structure that optimises resources, streamlining service provision and putting the resources and decision-making directly into the sport.

To address these challenges, the Equestrian Australia Board is proposing a new structural model that aligns with our strategic objectives and adds value to our stakeholders, centred around three key pillars:

- strong foundations,
- sustainable growth, and
- excellence in performance.

We have considered the recommendations of the National Equestrian Strategy and Structure Working Group which were made after extensive consultation, analysis and benchmarking against best practice globally. Each potential structure was measured against criteria focusing on efficiency, effective service delivery, member engagement, growth potential, and stakeholder relationships.

The newly proposed structure is designed to reduce resource duplication, improve outdated membership models, minimise complex governance structures, and enhance commercial value.

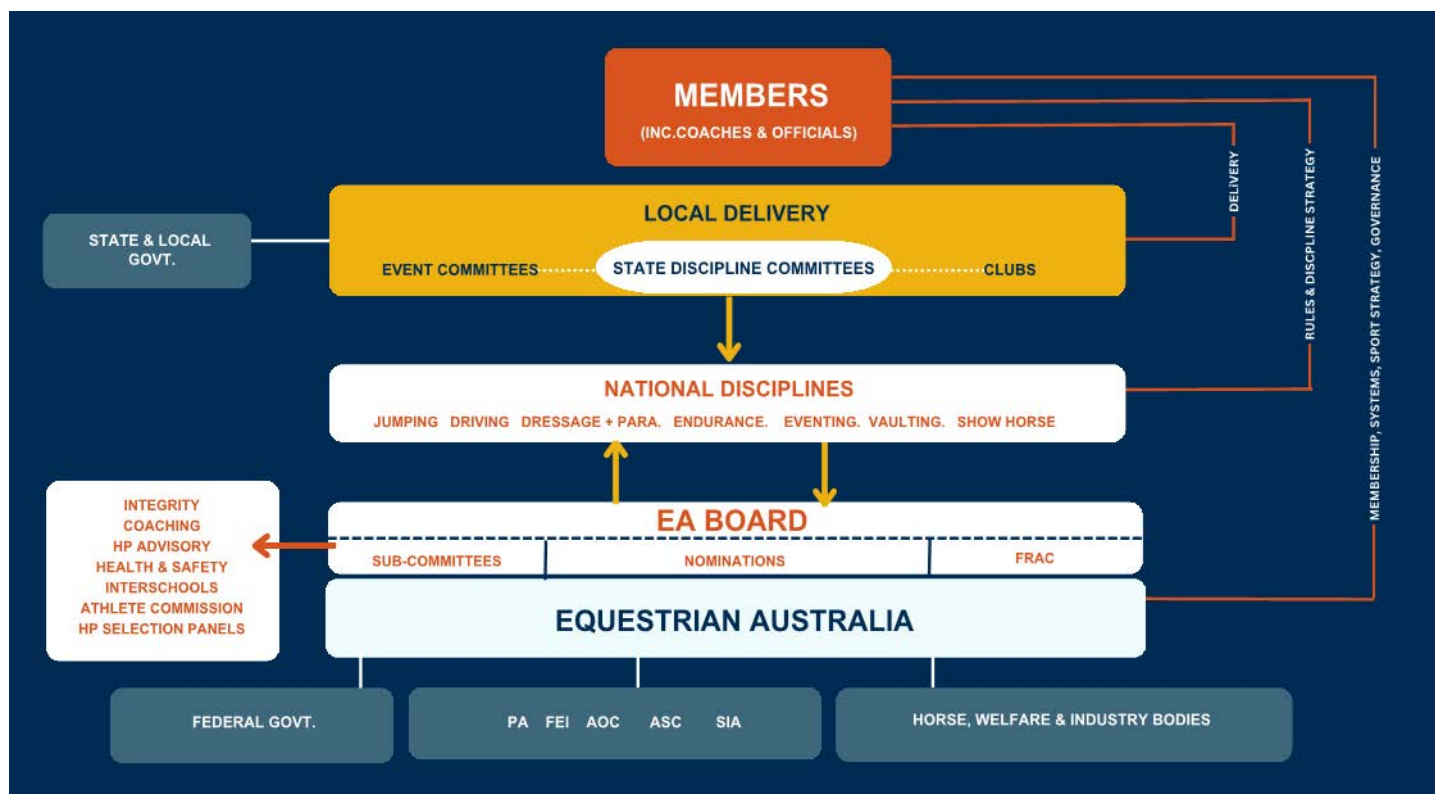
The key elements of this change include a discipline-based model with:

- National Discipline Committees with enhanced autonomy, budgets and resources;
- improved local delivery;
- closer alignment between state/national committees;
- knowledge sharing;
- shared national services;
- a streamlined member model;
- operational efficiency improvements;
- enhanced IT and systems; and
- reallocating resources towards member services and sport growth.

The structure puts the member and the sport first and foremost and is shown in outline in Figure 1 over the page.

This transformation will happen in phases to ensure thorough consultation and minimise implementation risks. It will result in a governance framework that is fit-for-purpose in the future, incorporating flexibility within a structured framework. We believe these changes will position Equestrian sport in Australia for success in the years to come.

Figure 1: Summary New National Governance & Stakeholder Structure for the sport of equestrian in Australia.



Note: This is not a representation of workforce

We believe these changes will position Equestrian sport in Australia for success in the years to come.

The EA Board will be seeking feedback from all stakeholders (State Branches, NDCs, SDCs and members) in the coming months so that we can all work together to set the sport up for future success.

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1. BACKGROUND

In early 2022, the EA Board, commenced a process to develop:

- A national strategy for the sport of equestrian in Australia (the **National Strategy**); and
- A structure (the **National Structure**) that would enable the most efficient and effective delivery of that strategy.

The strategy and structure development were two complementary and parallel pieces of work that were to converge to deliver the National Strategy and National Structure for the sport of equestrian in Australia (**National Strategy & Structure**).

Having finalised the National Strategy (Appendix 1) in August 2022, the focus became the development of a complementary National Structure.

1.1 THE NATIONAL STRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The process to develop the National Structure recommendations contained in this report was involved and included hundreds of hours of stakeholder consultation as well as additional hours of research, scoping and analysis.

The process undertaken included:

- Environmental Analysis
- Current State Mapping
- Comparative Analysis
- Consistent Stakeholder Consultation
- Synthesis
- Report & Recommendation(s)

1.2 REPORT PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Summarise the development and scoping process undertaken;
2. Synthesise key elements and recommendations derived from this process;
3. Analyse and consolidate information and research findings; and
4. Recommend a final National Structure for adoption.

2. CURRENT STATE: THE SPORT OF EQUESTRIAN IN AUSTRALIA IN 2023

Figure 2: Summary Diagram of Current State Governance & Key Stakeholders for Equestrian in Australia.

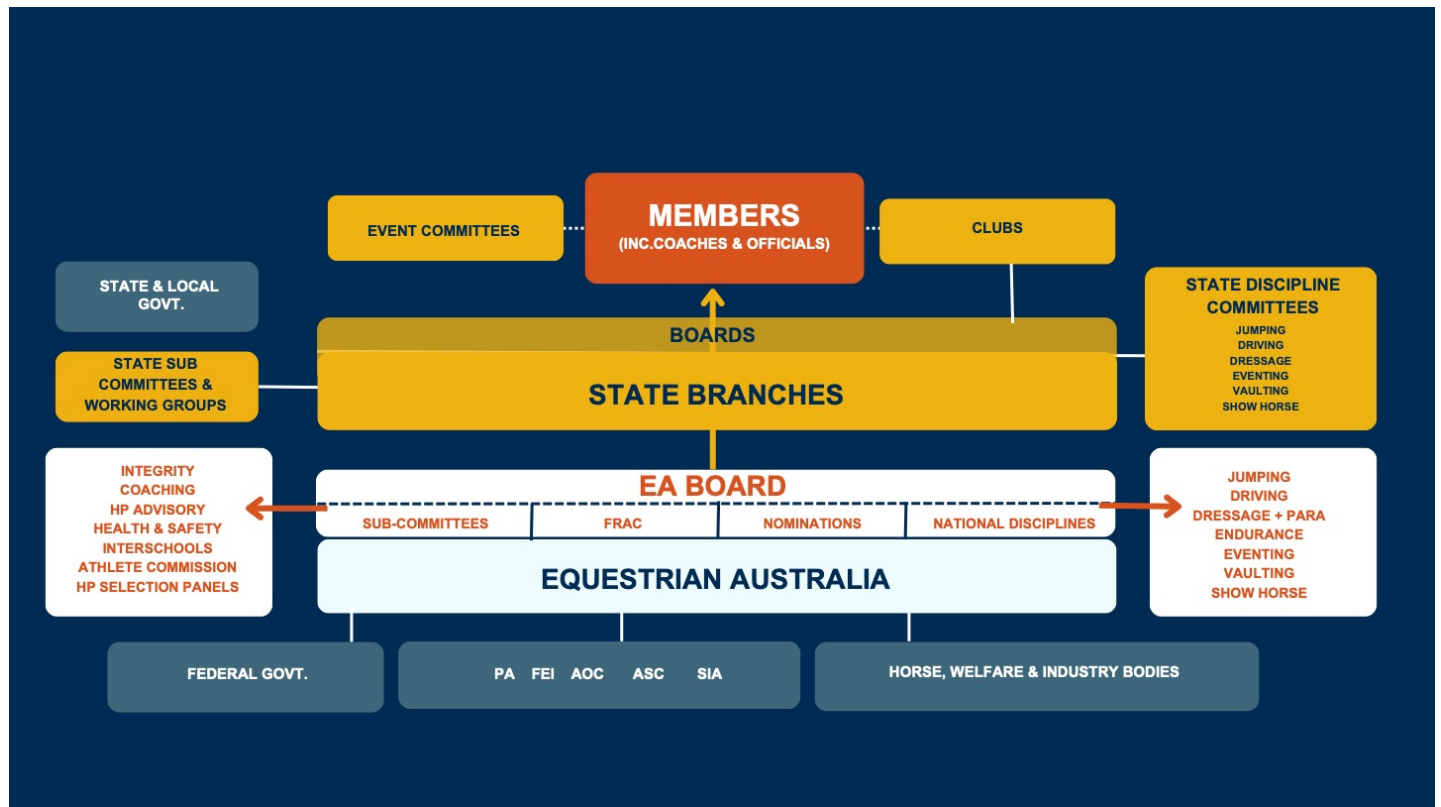


Figure 2b: Structure outlined by administrators when in Voluntary Administration.



As indicated in Figure 2, the sport of equestrian in Australia currently operates under a federated governance model with EA and each State Branch a separate legal entity. These entities have boards, sub-committees, working groups or advisory groups that operate across the country.

Members are both EA members and members of their respective State Branch.

High performance at a national level is the exclusive responsibility of Equestrian Australia. EA is also responsible for managing relationships with federal government agencies, national sport agencies, major games bodies, horse and industry bodies, as well as international federations.

State Branches represent the main touchpoint of our sport with members, clubs and event committees. They provide services to their members, in some case operate facilities, and manage relationships with key state government and sport agencies.

The sport of equestrian in Australia, also relies heavily on volunteers to govern the sport and each of the Disciplines that we operate. This is expanded on further below.

2.1 EA & STATE BOARD GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEES

Like many other Olympic sports and indeed corporate entities, the sport currently uses governance and business sub-committees to manage responsibilities, impart a level of independence and engage professional knowledge that may (or may not) exist in the sport. It is a complex structure for only 20,000 members.

This includes committees in the areas of:

- Finance, Audit & Risk,
- Nominations,
- Health, Safety and Welfare
- High Performance etc.

Table 1 provides a list of ‘non-discipline’ committees that operate nationally across the sport.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY TABLE OF GOVERNANCE & BUSINESS SUB-COMMITTEES OPERATING NATIONALLY

	EA	ACT/NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
Finance, Risk, Audit	Y	Y			Y		Y	Y
Fees & Levies	Y							
Nominations	Y							
Health, Safety & Welfare	Y							Y (Horse welfare)
Athletes Commission	Y							
High Performance (including Pathways)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Marketing & Comms		Y						Y

This doesn't include state squads.

2.2 NATIONAL & STATE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES

Structurally, the sport of Australian equestrian is made up of disciplines that have their own rules, competition structures, officials, and cohorts of member participants. These disciplines are:

- Jumping
- Driving
- Dressage
- Para Dressage
- Endurance
- Eventing
- Vaulting
- Show Horse
- Interschool

* Interschool use the national/state discipline rules

Committees exist across all Disciplines at national and/or state level. Table 2 shows the number of committees we have nationally, and the volume of volunteers relied upon to service these committees.

We currently rely on over 270 volunteers to sit on our various committees nationally. This volume of both committees and volunteers is largely unsustainable. Additionally, best practice governance structures both inside and outside of sport, generally suggest centralisation of controls and responsibilities with embedded accountabilities ('checks and balances') to enable clarity of oversight, decision-making, consistency, and reporting. The significant dispersment of decision-making and accountability as well the volume of committees, at governance level, is at odds with the model used by other Olympic sports.

In some circumstances, there may be a different set of rules and regulations for clubs in each state (affiliated with EA) which imposes different challenges for each state.

TABLE 2: SUMMARY TABLE OF DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE MEMBER NUMBERS NATIONALLY.

Discipline	Number of Committees	Committee Members (approx.)		Total
		National	State'	
Coaching	6		38	38
Dressage	8	6	38	44
Driving	3	5	9	14
Endurance	1+	6		6
Eventing	7	8	38	46
Jumping & WC	8	6	38	44
Show Horse	7"	8	38	46
Vaulting	5	6	9	15
Interschool	6	6	14	21
TOTAL	51	51	222	273

Total above does not include Organising Committees for Events.

* Includes 3 second delegates

" There is an unaffiliated organisation, Show Horse Council of Australasia Inc which has 9 interstate constituent affiliates (Vic, WA, Qld, SA, Tas, NT, NSW)

' South Australia committees have a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 12 members. 9 members Board appointed & 3 co-opted members

Some states have less members than committee members

2.3 DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE STRUCTURES

TABLE 3: BREAKDOWN OF VARIED GOVERNANCE & STRUCTURES OF DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES NATIONALLY

	EA	ACT/NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
Legal Structure	Sub-Cttee	Sub-Cttee/Inc	Sub-Cttee	Sub-Cttee	Sub-Cttee	Inc.	Sub-Cttee	Inc.
Coaching	Y<+	Y		Y*		Y#	Y	Y#
Dressage	Y	Y^	Y	Y	Y	Y^	Y	Y^
Dressage Officials	Y#	Y	Y#	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y=
Driving	Y	Y		Y				
Endurance	Y							
Eventing	Y+	Y^		Y	Y	Y^	Y	Y^
Jumping	Y	Y^	Y	Y	Y	Y^	Y	Y^
Show Horse	Y+	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y#	Y	Y
Vaulting	Y	Y		Y	Y			Y"
Interschool	<	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y"
Horse Welfare	Y(NHSWC)							Y

* Coaching Advisory Group

Sub-Committee

^ Separate Legal Entity

" Converted to a Working Party due to lack of members

< Restructure in process

+ State Representative

= Dressage Judges Task Force

National Discipline Committees (**NDCs**) are Sub Committees of the EA Board. Hence, the EA Board effectively operates 6 governance committees, an additional 7 NDCs, as well as several other committees such as Coaching and Interschool.

At state level, State Discipline Committees (**SDCs**) vary in both composition and governance structure. Some are constituted as working groups, others are their own legal entity operating outside of the State Branch, and others are sub-committees of State Branch Boards. Table 3 summarises how these structures operate and provides an indication of how they are dispersed nationally.

2.4 DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE ROLES

Discipline Committees are regarded as the experts for their respective discipline. At National level, they set the rules for the Discipline, operate events, approve officials and make recommendations to the EA Board.

Not every Discipline has a committee at state level. Moreover, the responsibilities and work undertaken by SDCs nationally, is disparate and inconsistent. Table 4 summarises these roles.

TABLE 4: SUMMARY ROLES OF DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES BY STATE

	Coaching	Dressage	Driving	Endurance	Eventing	Jumping	Show Horse	Vaulting	Interscholar
EA		Sport Rules & Policies (National & FEI) - Recommendation and Advice to Board Safety & Risk Management Events - National Champs EOIs, appointing of host Officials - approval of National Officials, recommendation & advice on pathways Sport Development at a National level Support/guidance/development of sport/athletes/coaches/officials Appointment of Working and Reference sub-committees Communication with State Committees							
ACT /NSW (7)	Education Calendar Pathways Communication Awards Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety		Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Events Sponsorship Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety
NT (3)	Education Calendar Pathways Communication Awards Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety				Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety		
QLD (7)	Education Calendar Pathways Communication Awards Health & Safety	Calendar, Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety		Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Events Sponsorship Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety
SA (6)	Education Calendar Pathways Communication Awards Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety		Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Events Sponsorship Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety
TAS (4)	Education Calendar Pathways Communication Awards Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & safety			Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety		
VIC (5)	Education Calendar Pathways Communication Awards Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & safety			Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety		Calendar Selections Education Events Sponsorship Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety

WA (6)	Education Calendar Pathways Communication Awards Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & safety			Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Clinics Events Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Education Clinics Sponsorship Pathways Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety	Calendar Selections Education Events Sponsorship Awards & Recognition Communication Rules & Bylaws Health & Safety
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ROLE DEFINITIONS

Calendar	Developing calendar of events, championships, competitions and education
Selections	Criteria for squads and selectors. Selection of teams and squads either for pathways and/ or high performance
Education	Seminars, workshops, training for Officials, coaches and volunteers
Clinics	Rider development clinics, & HP clinics
Events	Championships, competitions either facilitated, hosted by the Committee or Clubs
Sponsorship	Securing and managing Sponsors
Pathways	Development clinics and programmes. Some pathways/development activity is referred to as High Performance
Awards and Recognition	Award nights, End of Year Awards and Leaderboard
Communication	Newsletters, websites, social media and member and affiliate engagement
Rules and Bylaws	Input and implementation of national rules. Establishing state level rules and by-laws. Management of sub-committees
Health & Safety	Education and compliance support for organising committees

2.5 WHAT ARE WE SOLVING FOR?

Many of the problems and environmental threats that exist are provided in the SWOT Analysis detailed later in this report at Table 5. Broadly speaking, these problems include:

- Duplication of resourcing across the sport;
- Outdated membership models;
 - Additional layers of Governance, not required for effective management;
 - Complex and confusing entity structures at the State level;
 - Several hundred volunteers required at Governance level;
 - The Disciplines (the experts in their sport) not having the right amount of influence in how the sport is run, limiting growth opportunities;
 - Limited commercial value;
 - Disaggregated IP and assets;
 - Inconsistent member experience across the country;
 - Inconsistent policies and bylaws;
 - Limited alignment between State and National Discipline Committees;
 - Disjointed pathways;
 - Confusion around touch points and communication channels;
 - Conflicts of interest caused by unnecessary layers of governance and layers within state branches; and
 - The inability to gain high performance qualifications from Australia (mainly dressage, showjumping and para).

3. THE CASE FOR CHANGE

The complex governance and committee structure of the sport has historically hindered rather than enabled the delivery and administration of the sport. As a result, the sport has endured significant challenges such as:

1. A Coronial Inquiry into the deaths of two young riders due to inability and obstructions to implement safety processes.
2. Equestrian Australia being placed into Voluntary Administration to resolve Governance issues (and the organization spending over \$800k on the process, with limited tangible benefits).
3. AIS assumed control of the High Performance program.
4. A new Constitution that again needs revision to be fit-for-purpose.
5. Australian Sports Commission funding being withheld.
6. The Australian Olympic Committee threatening to “withdraw recognition” the sport at the Olympic level.
7. A Parliamentary Inquiry in NSW.
8. The resignation of the entire ESA Board, rendering the organisation defunct.
9. A large volume of complex complaints, that are very difficult to resolve.
10. Court cases and other judicial matters consuming time and resources.
11. The regular turnover of the EA Board (and in some cases, State Boards).
12. Outdated and antiquated processes that hinders efficiency and causes frustration of staff, volunteers and members.
13. The inability to provide a clear national pathway for our athletes.

This has held back growth, impacted reputation and added a significant layer of additional costs.

Since coming out of Voluntary Administration, there has been some positive progress to address some of these issues. However, systemic problems that have existed for decades, remain. These require meaningful changes that can only be brought about by reforming our structure and model of operation. Without meaningful change, the sport will continue to be stagnant. Through change EA can focus on enhancing member service which is constrained by all the problems.

There is collective recognition that the sport cannot continue down the same path indefinitely. The call from our members and stakeholders has been loud and clear - we need a circuit-breaker that compels progress. A structural change with sufficient consultation to weigh up all the differences and anomalies that are part of our unique sport.

We need to find better, more efficient, and economical ways to deliver our sport and to service our members, coaches, clubs, officials, volunteers and stakeholders. Moreover, local knowledge and expertise remains crucial. It provides an impactful and meaningful point of connection with our stakeholders and members. As such, the National Structure aims to incorporate both elements by anticipating a level of autonomy and flexibility within a framework.

TABLE 5: SWOT ANALYSIS FOR THE SPORT OF EQUESTRIAN IN AUSTRALIA

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly engaged, passionate members in our sport • Large, nationally engaged volunteer workforce • Strong, sport-specific and discipline knowledge • International results at Major Championships • Leading Health & Safety processes • An agreed Nationally Aligned Strategy • Largely unified change commitment across the sport • Attractive competition opportunities for members and participants • Control over accreditation of officials • A touchpoint with coaches • Relationships with national sport agencies, government, and international sport/games bodies 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispersed decision-making • Excessive reliance on a volunteer workforce to perform governance and decision-making functions • Lean workforce with resources stretched across multiple responsibilities at all levels • Legacy impacts of VA to reputation, systems, and momentum • Out-dated operating systems supporting our members and our people - IT, websites, database • Confusing and inconsistent structures across the sport • Lack of national consistency in structure, processes, and policies • Duplication of effort across multiple areas of the sport • High turnover of governance and committee members creating discontinuity of decision-making • The lack of accessible facilities and heavy reliance on facilities that requires maintenance and capital expenditure • Heavy financial investment on participants creating a significant barrier to membership • A weak value proposition for coaches • A weak value proposition for sponsors and partners due to a low event asset touchpoint • A litigious membership and participant community
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development and progress in systems and automated process supports that may be leveraged by the sport to streamline business and sport operations as well as improve member servicing • A call for structural reform from the sport and its stakeholders • High level and high value brand and sponsor engagement in the sport of equestrian and with Equestrian events globally • A thriving adjacent equine industry and ecosystem that can be leveraged for meaningful partnerships • The volume of equestrian events and competitions run and attended nationally by members • A void in national oversight, co-ordination, and involvement in the delivery of events and competitions by sport • The lack of a single-source coach accreditation and learning framework for coaches and officials in the sport • An increasing focus on horse welfare placing pressure on Racing in Australia and other adjacency actors which the sport may be uniquely placed to take a leadership role • A geography that has large rural expanses • An increase in funding and grants to regional areas that are often aligned with equestrian facilities, events, and rural hubs 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased cyber threat activity and regulatory and membership focus on the security of personal and private information • Third-party or commercial events • A general decline in overall volunteering numbers in Australia coupled with an aging volunteer demography • Equestrian being removed from major competitions (eg. Olympic Games), largely due to cost and horse welfare concerns • The emergence and popularity of new, attractive, and low-cost sports into the marketplace • The popularity and participation rate of equestrian sports, declining globally • An increasing focus on horse welfare placing pressure on the sport's reputation and overlays of compliance • Declining levels of government investment in sports and greater overlays of control and accountability against funding • Event actors in the equestrian eco-system seek to further consolidate and expand their footprint on event assets and hence, curb sponsorship and commercial opportunities for the sport

The above SWOT analysis suggests a number of clear opportunities and actions that the sport should take to ensure sustainability and growth, into the future. Broadly, these include:

- 1. Implement shared services** to improve consistency and resource efficiencies in service delivery for our sport.
- 2. Improve IT & Systems** to better support our people, enable better service delivery to our members, and better mitigate cyber risks to the information we manage.
- 3. Enhance education, accreditation and pathways for coaches and officials** to increase the value return to the sport and coaches/officials and to develop a clear value proposition.
- 4. Structural reform** to:
 - improve governance;
 - improve operational and financial efficiency;
 - reduce structural complexity;
 - reduce the reliance and volume of committees;
 - empower sport and service delivery with more effectual use of resources, knowledge, skills and experience across the sport;
 - improve commercial viability and growth opportunities; and
 - improve member experience and service consistency.

5. **Explore a national event sanctioning framework** which may elicit value to future sponsors, open new commercial opportunities and provide scheduling, oversight and reporting value to our members.

In collaboration between EA and State Branches, we are pleased to advise that work is currently underway to:

- implement shared services across the sport,
- improve IT and systems,
- enhance education, accreditation and pathways for coaches and officials.

4. CONSULTATION

In 2022, the National Equestrian Strategy and Structure Working Group (**Working Group**) was formed to lead the stakeholder consultation process and to make recommendations for structural reform to the EA Board. The Terms of Reference for the Working Group are provided in Appendix 2. It also was asked to provide input into the finalised National Strategy.

4.1 ALIGNMENT WITH THE NATIONAL STRATEGY

The development of the Equestrian National Aligned Strategy process undertook extensive consultation with key stakeholders, industry partners and the equestrian community. A range of forums, surveys, interviews, and workshops were held that identified priorities, insights, and outcomes to achieve a strategy.

Notably, the strategy forum in November 2021 defined the objectives and outcomes for development of a National Strategy which included:

- o A high-level strategic plan for the whole of equestrian in Australia;
- o Local delivery plans aligned to the whole of sport plan and allow flexibility for local delivery and prioritisation;
- o Realistic alignment of resources against strategic priorities translated into annual operating plans and targets;
- o Consistent monitoring and accountability defined by clear measures;
- o A structure that best positions the sport to deliver the strategy and achieve outcomes; and
- o Clear agreed roles and responsibilities to achieve the agreed strategic plan.

The Working Group and stakeholders provided input into the foundations of the National Strategy and in particular: purpose, vision, mission, values, and the strategic pillars.

The strategy process involved an extensive consultation and communication process with input and review from the Working Group that included:

- Considered insights and feedback received from various strategic planning forums to ensure the structural considerations remain cognisant of emerging strategic directions.
- Member survey undertaken with 3000 responses providing valuable data on demographics and insights from members as well as identifying opportunities and priorities for equestrian sport.
- Over 20 interviews were undertaken with key stakeholders and members of the equestrian community and industry seeking insights, opportunities and perspectives for the future of equestrian sport.

The National Strategy was released in August 2022 to guide the sport from grassroots to podium through to 2032. It identified the following three over-arching objectives:

1. **Strong Foundations:** Work harmoniously to build relationships, improve safety, integrity, efficiency and governance. Improve the welfare and experiences of our horses and people.

2. **Sustainable Growth:** Secure our future by increasing reach, awareness and revenues with innovation. Sustain and grow our community through increased participation, robust education and quality events.
3. **Excellence:** Provide pathways opportunities and prepare Australian athletes, coaches, officials and horses to be world's best – practices, processes and performances.

A copy of the National Strategy is provided in Appendix 1. The CEO Update on the strategy is provided in Appendix 3.

4.2 DEFINED STRUCTURAL MODEL CRITERIA

The Working Group utilised an earlier developed criteria for the evaluation of various structural models (Evaluation Criteria). The Evaluation Criteria set that the optimal structural model should:

1. *Maximise efficiency and minimise duplication by reducing the number of administrative entities via a reasoned whole of sport decision making and consultation process.*
2. *Ensure an effective and fit for purpose service delivery of the nationally aligned Equestrian strategy to and for all Members and affiliates.*
3. *Maximise engagement with members, volunteers, and clubs.*
4. *Maximise the growth potential of the sport, including enabling value-add and innovative projects.*
5. *Maximise the management of stakeholder and government relationships.*

This Evaluation Criteria provided the basis for the Comparative Analysis of other sporting organisation structures and operating models. The Evaluation Criteria helped to also guide our future state ambitions for structural reform.

4.3 WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Working Group sought feedback and undertook some analysis on the various structural models. As a result of this work, it found that:

- Three of the models were deemed unsuitable for Australian Equestrian and did not warrant further consideration.
- None of the potential models alone provided the optimal structure for Australian Equestrian.
- This notwithstanding, three models contained:
 - **Positive elements** which were suitable for Australian Equestrian and warranted further consideration
 - **Negative elements** which should be mitigated in any further consideration.

The results of this analysis are summarised in Appendix 8.

(Note: The EA Board acknowledges the work of the Working Group on the analysis and the positive and negative points of each model, as referenced. However, the Board has a different view on these models and the effectiveness for Equestrian sport in Australia).

Based on this analysis, the Working Group developed what it called a member centric 'hybrid model' (**Member-Centric Model**). This model was broadly outlined as part of Recommendation 1 of the NESSWG Recommendations Report 15 March 2023 (**Working Group Report**). A full copy of this report is provided as Appendix 4.

The characteristics of the Member-Centric Model, explained in the Working Group Report were that:

- The focus for delivery of the sport is the member: customer service and solutions.
- The structure is designed to support and deliver the National Strategy as agreed.
- All parts of the organisation work to provide the best experience and long-term sustainable benefit for our members and our sport.
- The purpose of the model is to improve members' satisfaction, experience and enjoyment to retain them as life-long members with a passion for equestrian.

- The focus is paramount in decision-making and delivery so as to ensure that members now remain members for life.
- The notion of members is intended to embrace all who enjoy equestrian sports; not just paid members at any time.
- The Member Centric Model's focus will take advantage of the many skills, experiences and capabilities of the many members.
- The intention is, by putting members at the centre, that the top-down administration will be recast in a support role.

In order to give effect to this objective the National Sporting Organisation, Discipline Committees and Local Deliverers (the Primary Deliverers), will work together and have a joint and shared responsibilities for the following in addition to their specific responsibilities which are explained in more detail below:

1. Whole of sport strategic plan and structure
2. Advocacy for sport growth and strategic priorities
3. Financial sustainability
4. National sport operations
5. Shared services in common functional areas including but not necessarily limited to IT, Member Services, Marketing & Communication, Finance Systems & Reporting, Safety, Integrity & Compliance, Risk Management, Policies and HR

The Working Group Report made a total of 6, largely principle and approach-based, recommendations to the EA Board.

- Recommendation 1: *Member centricity to enable delivery of the nationally agreed strategy*
- Recommendation 2: *The principles to guide decision-making and behaviours in effecting structure change*
- Recommendation 3: *Roles and Responsibilities*
- Recommendation 4: *Shared Services – one central team when it is more efficient than multiple local teams*
- Recommendation 5: *Three key enablers for the effective implementation include: financial modelling analytics; an integrated annual planning system; and a national digital transformation*
- Recommendation 6: *A clear project plan and timeline for the transition and implementation of changes*

4.4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OTHER SPORTS AND EQUESTRIAN ORGANISATIONS

A further Comparative Analysis has been undertaken of the structures and operating models for 10+ Australia Sports and 9 international equestrian entities. Comparative equestrian organisations were asked to complete a set of questions via a template or analysed independently as part of the overarching Working Group review. The detailed organisational responses are provided in Appendix 5.

The analysis was also completed for Australian equestrian sport. This is extracted in Appendix 6.

The summary table of comparative Australian sports is provided in Appendix 7.

The summarised findings of this review is provided in Table 5 below.

TABLE 5: SUMMARISED REVIEW FINDINGS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN SPORT AND INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN SPORT TEMPLATES PLACED AGAINST THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Structural Model Characteristics	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5
1. Overarching governing national body responsible for non-sport specific matters, safety, and integrity	√	√		√	√
2. Centralised administration function-focusing on education, support, IT, communications, safety, and risk management – functions that can be more efficiently delivered from a central position e.g., ASHS, Equestrian Canada	√	√		√	√
3. ESNZ Administration model where the office provides shared services across a number of functions including membership services, finance, IT, database, website, and high performance	√	√		√	√
4. Formalised committee structure with discipline and regional representatives providing advice or authorisation to Boards		√	√		
5. Discipline structure with autonomy responsible for sport specific matters, rules and competitions and budget control		√		√	
6. Branches /regions / Clubs- deliver event for members e.g. ASHS, EC, France, Dutch, USA- NSO only deliver National events (e.g., ASHS)			√		
7. Regional body to coordinate and manage delivery			√		
8. Regional areas that operate as a service model to the disciplines.			√		
9. Inclusion of a wide range of equestrian breed societies more than just Olympic disciplines – like ASHS, Dutch, Canada				√	
10. Unity of many different horse sport bodies, pony club and Olympic sports under one governing body				√	
11. Unity of many different horse sport bodies i.e., Pony Club, and Olympic Sports under one governing body meaning these sports are not competing for the same government funding. Similar principle to British Equestrian Federation, highly disciplined focus and AusCycling providing the one body to be supported by Sport Australia.					√
Other structural models noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equestrian Canada- Centralised national body focus Royal Dutch Equestrian Federation has a federation focus Swedish Equestrian Federation-explore revenue generation model 					

4.5 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION & ANALYSIS FINDINGS

The result of this Comparative Analysis coupled with the Working Group Recommendations suggest that the National Structure for equestrian in Australia, should be a model that incorporates four key characteristics. Namely, that:

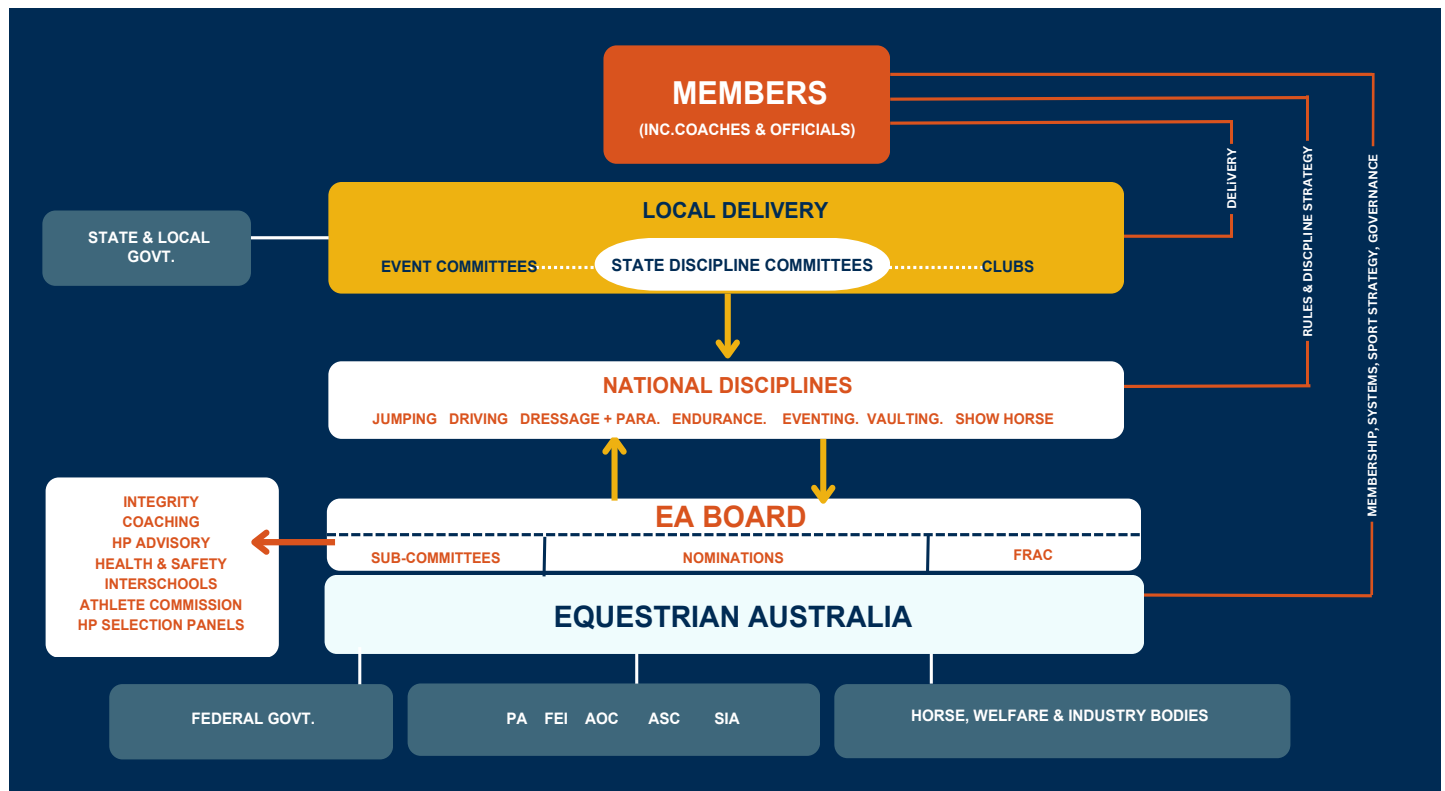
1. There should be one overarching governing body for the sport. It should be responsible for all non-sport specific matters such as integrity and safety.
2. Key business functions should be centralised or managed via a shared services model to maximise efficiency and bring down costs.
3. There should be a formalised committee structure which is organised around disciplines. This is supported by a tiered structure that includes regional representation. The over-arching model would be Discipline-centric with a level of autonomy* extending into Discipline-specific matters, rules, competition delivery as well as budget accountabilities.
4. The model should also ensure focused local delivery points.

* We define **autonomy** as “the capacity to make an informed, uncoerced decision with freedom inside the framework” as set out by the nationally aligned strategic direction. Essentially using the strategic plan and the north star of decision-making.

5. WHERE WE ARE GOING

Incorporating the summary finding detailed in 4.5 the EA Board has agreed to a new National Structure. This proposed National Structure is illustrated in Figure 3 and further explained in this section.

Figure 3: Summary New National Governance & Stakeholder Structure for the sport of equestrian in Australia.



Note: This is not a representation of workforce

5.1 THE PROPOSED NEW STRUCTURAL MODEL

Having considered:

- the various analyses;
- results of consultation;
- the approved National Strategy;
- Domestic and International best practice (where practical and relevant);
- the Working Group Report; and
- the key objectives of the structural reform.

The EA Board considers that the optimal National Structure model is to adopt a Discipline structure that is centrally led at National level.

Moreover, the EA Board believe that this structure is the structure of ‘best fit’ given the available operating funds across the sport, at this time. There isn’t enough money in the sport to operate the Hybrid Model as proposed by the Working Group. That is, it would be difficult for the sport to afford and maintain current State structures AND fund Disciplines AND achieve shared service efficiencies. Hence, the need to choose the structure of ‘best-fit’. It is the view of the EA Board that the Discipline model detailed in this report is the structure of ‘best-fit’.

This proposed National Structure has nuanced modifications, while remaining largely aligned to the principal recommendations of the Working Group around the structural reform which encompass:

1. A **Member-centric** model, member servicing top priority;
2. That disciplines should have **greater autonomy** over planning, development and growth;
3. **Execution of sport** should be managed via local delivery;
4. A **reduction of administrative duplication**;
5. That **shared services** be established across the sport for efficiency and consistency;
6. A Nationally consistent **member fee model**; and
7. More effective flow of funds.

OTHER KEY PRINCIPLES:

The intention of the new National Structure is to:

- Reconfigure rather than merely improve the existing structure and operating model of the sport of equestrian in Australia.
- No change will jeopardise any source of revenue that either the State Branches or EA currently derive.
- No change will impact the ability of members to enjoy the sport (e.g. Maintenance of facilities).

5.2 WHAT THIS MEANS

In practical terms, this change means that:

- EA will offer admin support to deliver the objectives and oversee strategic planning.
- National Discipline Committees (NDCs) have greater autonomy and a degree of control over the running of their discipline. They will have budgets, resources and develop the strategies for their discipline. The sport can then harness and enable the collective expertise.
- Disciplines will have more input and autonomy over how they run their sport. It is not a unitary model and not a Federated model.
- State Discipline Committees (SDCs) continue to be responsible for activity and delivery “on the ground”.
- SDCs to report to NDCs.

- State branch boards are dissolved over time, removing a layer of Governance.
- No loss of state government funding to states.
- No significant or noticeable changes to the way clubs operate. Clubs will continue to be serviced locally and see numerous benefits, in terms of communication, dedicated resources (as liaison), event support and funding.
- Staff remain in place to execute Discipline activity.
- Shared services are established nationally, across agreed-upon functions (see section 7). These services support EA, NDCs, SDCs and local delivery.
- There is one legal entity across the governance layers of the sport. There is a single Constitution, with the capacity to establish the structures required under it.
- Contracts will be held within the legal entity to ensure simplification and compliance obligations are met.
- There will be a national framework on strategy and key functions.
- Legal entities and other complex structures that result in increased compliance and inefficiency / cost, will be rationalized where possible. There will be no new entities.
- Regardless of the decisions and timing on the bigger changes, things like shared services and IT transformation will happen.

5.3 WHAT THIS ACHIEVES

The proposed National Structure attempts to address some of the challenges and limitations created or exacerbated by our current mode of operation. This includes:

- Removing or reducing duplication of effort across State Branches and EA, on member servicing matters.
- Optimising resources and an ability to have qualified resources operating against their area of expertise.
- Putting a 'full-stop' to our long history of governance issues, both at National and State level.
- The rationalisation of Constitutions, governance requirements, and compliance requirements as well as the costs necessary to support multiple legal entities.
- More flexible workforce to meet project requirements.
- Eliminating the requirement for hundreds of volunteers to serve on Committees and Boards overseeing complex Governance layers. These roles often entail significant risk, deterring potential candidates from participation.
- Remedying unacceptable levels of turnover of our Board and Committee members, and the associated loss of knowledge and experience from our sport.
- Creating national consistency in the member model, member fees and servicing with a retention of local delivery.
- Improving the mix and level of professional skills/experience in local Discipline delivery.

5.4 WHAT'S DIFFERENT

Key changes under the new model:

1. **Members are at the forefront** of all decision-making processes. How does it benefit them? Improved experience, consistency, greater value etc.
2. **Shared services** will be managed at a whole-of-sport level for resourcing efficiencies and consistency in delivery. Services examples can include finance, integrity, horse welfare, health & safety, marketing and digital.
3. There will be **greater authority and autonomy** for disciplines providing freedom within a framework and clear roles.
4. **Appropriate resources** will be assigned to nurture/support smaller disciplines.
5. **Strategic projects** will be undertaken by sport-wide project teams, comprising necessary experts and skillsets. These initiatives will foster industry collaboration and integration, exemplified by endeavors like digital transformation, encompassing new websites and digital assets.

6. We will better **harness the expertise** within the community to create **member-centric and streamlined, skills-based project teams**.
7. We will have clear roles for **NDCs to guide their disciplines**, supported by the capability of EA and local delivery.
8. Resources will be freed-up at local level, allowing for **local resources to focus** on local execution and local stakeholder engagement.

Within these structural changes, ultimately the EA Board remains accountable and the CEO responsible.

6. NEW STRUCTURE ELEMENTS: 'THE DETAIL'

6.1 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Clear definitions around roles and responsibilities, with functional responsibilities mapped against all layers of administration, help to anchor and provide clarity for stakeholders in operating environments.

To this end, a review of current roles, obligations and responsibilities was undertaken to understand the sport and its needs. Potential future functions and optimal role and responsibility divisions were then applied to the New Structural model. Consideration was also given to the administrative arm best positioned to deliver each function.

It is clear from that analysis that while some functions sit solely with one arm, a majority require a level of collaboration that is not currently in existence. There will be single points of accountability however, the co-dependencies that exist will require further alignment across the sport.

Tables 7, 8 & 9 outline the specific roles and responsibilities to be undertaken and detail the expectations of delivery across the shared responsibilities.

TABLE 6: Key roles proposed that each of the primary sport administrative arms will be responsible for under a new structural model.

National	Disciplines	Local Delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall fiscal responsibility for the sport. • Deliver the objects of Constitution • Nationally aligned whole of sport Strategy • International and National relationships • High Performance including pathways • Federal sport agency relationship • Strategic relationships • National policies, database, insurance program and risk management • National branding and marketing • Event and facility strategies • Program enablement • Education – coaches, officials, health and safety, etc. • Multi-discipline management • Base level participation growth • National Budget • Centralisation of commercial function management to support NDCs • Commercial and aggregated asset approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline Plan • Discipline Budget • National Rules • National Calendar • Selection of National Championships Host • Attract and develop new revenue streams • Oversight and flow of funds to SDCs • Coach and official learning content and curriculum • Participation growth within their discipline • Program delivery • Commercial growth 	<p>Local delivery includes the competition and programs that currently run at state or club level. Key responsibilities will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and other stakeholder relationships • Talent identification • State sport and recreation department relationships • Strategic relationships • Program and course delivery • Facility management and use • Event management and delivery • Local Rules • Local Calendar • Targeted and localised membership and participation growth • Facilitation/delivery of endorsed calendar events
Shared		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole of sport strategic plan and structure • Advocacy for sport growth and priorities • Financial Sustainability • National sport operations • Shared services in common functional areas such as IT, Member Services, Marketing & Communication, Finance systems & reporting, Safety, Integrity • Compliance, Risk Management, Policies and HR. 		

TABLE 7: Responsibilities that require collaboration and are shared across the sport.

Shared Responsibility	
Role	Responsibility
Member Servicing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring a positive member experience. • Creating value in our services and products to members, coaches, clubs and other stakeholders. • Finding ways to attract and retain people in our sport.
Whole-of-sport Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining the common vision, purpose and strategic objectives for Equestrian in Australia, comprising all members and stakeholders.
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining and developing excellent relationships with all levels of Government. • Establishing the strength of our brand so that our voice elicits counter-party confidence, trust and credibility with key government and regulatory bodies (e.g., through our actions, governance, relationships). • Influencing key political, economic and social institutions within our jurisdictions, on matters of sport importance or that impact the delivery of quality outcomes/services to our sport participants.
Financial Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate on the development of a whole of sport commercial plan to enhance commercial value to grow the sport. • EA Board Decision-making on the setting of national fees. • Establishing consistent financial reporting with EA templates, systems, and chart of accounts. • Work together to produce and analyse financial evidence for decision-making.
National Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate on the development and delivery of a whole of sport participation plan to increase members and participants (includes athletes, officials and coaches) to grow the sport. • Collaborate with and support Disciplines and Local Delivery to implement participation plan and pathway programs.
Shared Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared services in common functional areas such as IT, member services, marketing & communication, finance systems & reporting, safety, integrity & compliance, risk management, policies and HR.

TABLE 8: The specific role that each administrative role plays in the delivery of key functions.

	National	Disciplines	Local Delivery
Whole of Sport Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate whole of sport strategic plan Collaborate with Discipline committees on implementation of the plan Collaborate with those responsible for local delivery on implementation of the plan Review and consult with members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a discipline strategy that is aligned to whole of sport strategy Implement of the plan Lead development of growth initiatives aligned to national strategy Review and consult with members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align and adapt strategy for local delivery Implement local delivery strategy Collaborate, provide input and assist with National Strategy for local delivery
National organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver on objects of Equestrian Constitution Implement, strengthen and maintain Governance Framework of sport Facilitate shared service model Managing delegations Appoint Committees of the Board Develop national assets for the future of sustainable commercialisation of the sport Development of Objectives and KPIs and agree with disciplines including reporting templates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead education curriculum endorsed by National Coordinate and collaborate with those responsible for local delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively and in alignment with national disciplines
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall financial management including budgets Common banking Common chart of accounts Financial Reporting to Board Financial Reporting to Disciplines Management of funding and acquittal Implement the national fee model developed by NDCs National asset management Contract management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountability and management of Discipline budget to deliver discipline strategy Input towards a national fee model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Localised Budgets and financial management Asset and Facility Management Administration and acquittal of State and Local Government grant funding Local contract management Management of local commercial arrangements
National and International relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build and Support long-term and sustainable stakeholder relationships with the FEI, ASC, AOC, SIA, NST, Paralympics Australia and other national peak bodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build and Support long-term and sustainable relationships with competition organisers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for and support national disciplines when needed. State Government relationships
Competition and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bid to host international events and tournaments Multi Discipline National events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead National Calendar of events Review and decide on host of events Support multi discipline national events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate and publish event calendar for geographical locations Administer competitions including entries, organisations, governance and capacity building Develop consistent event delivery and management processes and protocols

	National	Disciplines	Local Delivery
National High Performance Strategy and National Talent Pathway framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the High Performance Strategy • Delivery of the High Performance strategy, including the athlete pathway • Collaborate with National Discipline Committees to develop the National Talent Pathway for athletes and officials • Manage the budget and acquit funding for High Performance Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the HP Program across the disciplines • Development of education and curriculum content to support athlete development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the HP Pathway Program across the local jurisdiction • Local delivery of talent squads
National Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate, communicate and promote the national rules (as informed by NDCs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead decision and approval process about national rules • Review, align and/or adapt FEI rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with the national rules • Adopt and implement rule changes • Advise Disciplines on matters of rules
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-of-Sport Participation Plan framework • Manage and acquit Participation Growth Funding • Develop, maintain and protect education intellectual property • Ensure consistency in delivery of education through framework • Promote education throughout the sport • Maintain a Learning Management System to deliver education and development programs across the sport • Development of national coach accreditation and delivery programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop discipline plan to align delivery of the Whole-of-Sport Participation Plan • Lead development of discipline specific growth initiatives aligned to national strategy • Lead development and maintenance of discipline specific education curriculum • Lead development of content for coach and officials curriculum being technical and tactical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Delivery of the programs aligned to Whole of Sport Participation Plan • Vetting of Coach educators. • Approval by geographical location • Deliver professional development programs to support whole of sport participation plan • Community outreach to provide club and member services
National Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and maintenance of a National Policy Register • Approve policies • Member Protection services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and implement national policies • Review policies and recommendation amendments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and implement national policies • Member Protection services

	National	Disciplines	Local Delivery
Strategic Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build and support long-term and sustainable stakeholder relationships with the ASC, AOC, Paralympics Australia, FEI, SIA, NST and other national peak bodies Ensure continuity and growth of funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build and support long-term and sustainable stakeholder relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage, maintain and support local clubs and members Advocate with and on behalf of clubs for facilities at all levels of government Maintain relationships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State sport department Government & state peak organisations Ensure continuity and growth of funding
National Database, & IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop IT strategy to collect, collate, report and empower sport with data that is high quality and easily accessible Implement database Manage database Develop funding model to support overall IT strategy including database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and use of the national database at all levels Promote the national database at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and use of the national database at all levels Promote the national database at all levels
National Insurance Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage National Insurance Program for all sport insurance requirements Provide insurance for all members, officers, directors, property and entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the national insurance program at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the national insurance program at all levels
National Risk Management Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a risk management framework to mitigate risk & incidents, strengthen controls and governance of sport. Embed risk management into all processes across the sport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and promote the national risk management framework at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and promote the national risk management framework at all levels
National Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop national commercial assets and branding Commercialise asset to build sustainable revenue streams and promote sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and promote the branding and messages. Support commercialisation initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and promote the branding and messages. Support commercialisation initiatives
Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance with all regulatory and legal obligations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance with all regulatory and legal obligations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance with all regulatory and legal obligations
National Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead and promote health and safety across the sport Development, delivery and communication of resources Embed risk framework Lead Horse Welfare across the sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support, promote and implement Health and Safety, processes and risk assessments to mitigate risk Provide feedback and reports to National Health and Safety Committee as required Implement, promote and report Horse Welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support, promote and implement Health and safety, processes and risk assessments to mitigate risk Provide feedback and report to National health and safety Committee as required Implement, promote and report Horse Welfare

6.2 KEY ROLES & IMPACT

EQUESTRIAN AUSTRALIA

Equestrian Australia (EA) is the peak body for the sport of Equestrian in Australia. This remit is defined in the EA Constitution. It oversees the Disciplines outlined by the FEI (Eventing, Jumping, Dressage, Vaulting, Driving and Endurance), plus Show Horse and Interschool. It is the member body to the FEI, Australian Olympic Committee, Paralympics Australia and the Australian Sports Commission. Its' roles are generally defined and the organisation has several responsibilities that it is required to fulfil. In the future state, EA plays a central role firstly to lead the sport, but also in supporting members, clubs and Disciplines in delivering sport outcomes.

EA's key responsibilities:

- **Governance** – ensure proper Board processes and following Constitution. Responsible for strategy, structure, governance and delegations for CEO. Risk management, financial oversight and reporting, Nationally-aligned strategic plan (providing the framework and over-arching principles that guides the NDCs in preparing their discipline-specific plans).
- **High Performance** – Managing the HP program, key milestone event campaigns, the AIS investment, National teams and international events. Develop pathways for athlete qualifications.
- **Integrity** – developing the policies and running the processes and dealing with SIA, NST and tribunals.
- **Insurance** – selecting providers and managing the insurance scheme.
- **IT** – manage the various platforms and providers and ensure member-centric functionality.
- **Relationships** – FEI, Federal Government, AIS, ASC, AOC, Paralympics Australia, other advocacy bodies, other National equine industry bodies.
- **Sport** – Development of Coaches and Officials, Health and Safety (in conjunction with H&S Committee and NDCs), Committee Management and support, National Championship oversight (with the relevant NDC), manage the Athlete Commission. Whole-of-sport participation plan. Strategy and input into events where relevant.
- **Member engagement** and servicing.

STATE BOARDS & STATE ENTITIES

The current State entities were formed many decades ago, when the sport was predominately run locally, with bespoke operations effective. With the evolution of sport, the needs have changed, and taking a holistic and National approach removes the siloed approach to running the sport. The additional layer of Governance and the inefficiencies caused, results in added cost and the reliance on hundreds of volunteers to allow the sport to operate.

The current issues we are trying to solve for:

- States (and some State Discipline Committees) are separate legal entities requiring significant oversight and governance including Boards of Directors. This legally mandated bureaucracy is all delivered through a volunteer network.
- It remains important to have 'hands in the field' to understand local issues and foster local connections (local government and council relationships, local sponsorship partners, local sports facilities administrators).
- Resource efficiency and duplication.

State branch board rationalisation / transformation process:

State branch boards will enter a phased transition towards dissolving. Some immediately, others within 3 years – depending on circumstances. We will look to pilot with one State (with agreement) sooner to test the process and take the learnings. As part of this, there will be a due diligence process to review Constitutions, contracts and other obligations / arrangements. A phased project plan will be drafted in conjunction with all States with ultimate end goal in mind.

State staff will remain on the current employment agreements through the transition phase and in the location, they are currently based, servicing some of the existing arrangements. State specific staff will have responsibility for:

- State Government relations
- Other local relations
- Club and member servicing
- State facility management
- Competition and event management where relevant
- Delivery of local programs
- Supporting coach and official pathways and education.

Other staff will migrate to Shared services or Discipline responsibility then ultimately will form one workforce.

State branch assets and funds:

All funds currently sitting in State branch bank accounts or on their balance sheet will NOT be transferred to EA or any other entity. They will remain for the use and benefit of members in that State. They may be allocated towards development or enhancement of a National database, IT or other products, only if agreed by the States. State Boards will elect investment committees to ensure the proper use of historical funds, until such time as those funds / assets are extinguished. Where a State has non-liquid assets, the preference is to work towards realising / liquidating. If there is a good investment or strategic purpose not to, we need a mechanism for decision-making.

STATE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES

The State Discipline Committees (SDCs) are a critical delivery arm of the sport. In conjunction with Clubs and Organising Committee's they drive a lot of the "grass roots" and "on the ground" activity. There may be opportunities to rationalise, however their role shouldn't be diminished. Funding should flow down from, and be in agreement with, the NDC. This is based on a clear strategy, with investment required to deliver the strategy.

The current structure, with a mix of Board sub-committees and separate legal entities is confusing for members. In addition, there is a different membership scheme and proposition depending on the disparate structure. As a result, there is a disaggregation of activity and inconsistencies in how they are funded and how they operate.

The proposal for SDCs:

SDCs still exist. Members of those committees are still elected the same way. There will be a gradual removal of SDC legal entities where possible. This is where there are separate entity structures. All SDCs will become sub-committees of the NDCs, essentially reporting to the NDC. They will be responsible for delivery of National strategy, programs and initiatives, state and local calendars. The SDC maintains the same oversight of local and State-based events (where that currently exists).

There are currently members, who are members of a State Discipline, where that Discipline is a separate legal entity. These members all become members of Equestrian Australia. Members still receive, at a minimum, the same services as they are currently receiving from the SDCs. There will be an extra layer of benefit / service provided through the NDC or shared services.

SDCs often receive funding through various sources, including event operations, entries and sponsorship. Any money currently earned by the SDCs will continue to be allocated to them for delivery of their events and programs. All funds will be managed through a GL account and budgets as per NDC funds. Like the NDC, they will prepare budget and be accountable for expenditure and delivery of services against that expenditure.

Other State Discipline elements of the model:

- Current resources in the States that support SDCs will continue to do so. There will be additional national resourcing allocated to member support.

- Talent identification and squads in conjunction with National Disciplines.
- Every State will have the 3 Olympic Disciplines. The smaller disciplines will be operated out of the NDC, with the relevant State representation, expertise and sub-committee where required.
- SDCs to have 5-7 members.

NATIONAL DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES

The National Discipline Committees are experts in their sport, appointed due to that expertise. In the future structure, they should play a key role in the strategic and planning elements of the sport, taking a national lens to delivery. It is important to ensure cohesion, collaboration and consistency in outcomes and the process around operations.

Current issues we are trying to solve include:

- Lack of structured input into strategic direction.
- Lack of admin support for NDCs.
- No allocated budget / funding to deliver programs/activities.
- No ability to deliver a commercial outcome.
- Lacking clear accountability to deliver discipline-specific strategies such as participation, policy, high performance etc.
- Confusion between national and state layers to deliver programs.
- Reliant on a volunteer framework with insufficient paid discipline-specific resources.

The key elements for NDCs under the future operating model include:

- Autonomy over the Discipline's strategic plan, growth and development, rules and other sport-specific issues.
- NDCs will have goals and KPI's around sport growth – membership and participation numbers.
- They will undertake a process to develop a plan every 2 years, with projects and initiatives. Support will be provided to enable development of the strategy.
- Dedicated budget to deliver on plan.
- Dedicated resources to manage. Disciplines will be involved in selecting their Sport Manager/GM and have oversight of their responsibilities. Similar to a Board / EO relationship. The Committee will ensure governance, provide direction and have visibility of KPI's for staff, who will then be responsible for execution.
- Potential resourcing, which equates to 8 people / 6 FTE (with several being part-time):
 - Jumping and Dressage – 2 resources each
 - Eventing – 1 resource
 - Vaulting, Driving, Show Horse, Endurance – 1 resource to cover all.
- NDCs will not operate in isolation or a silo. It becomes an ecosystem under a framework. Collaboration and engagement are key – as is planning, with accountability built in.
- Service level agreements outline staff job description, shared service response times and deliverables. The SLA's to be developed collaboratively by EA Sport Ops team and NDC chair. Approved by the EA Board.
- The budget will be allocated based on core funding and then member numbers / member growth (as defined in the funding section).
- Funds will be managed through the specific General Ledger account. There will not be separate bank accounts. However, all funds in the account are quarantined for Disciplines and specifically used to deliver their strategy.
- The Disciplines will receive detailed, monthly reporting, outlining all revenue earned and expenditure incurred. No money will be allowed to be spent without:
 - Purchase order, contract or proper process
 - Signature and sign off from NDC Chair (2 or more NDC members if above a certain level). EA or other bodies cannot spend funds out of NDC account, without approval from the NDC.
- Discipline Committees structure:
 - 7-9 members

- Predominately State representation, but with the appropriate skills incorporated such as discipline specific knowledge, officials education, affiliate engagement etc.
- All States to be represented, with 1-3 skills-based representatives. The skills-based members will include an athlete representative.
- Ideally, Committee members will be voted in by Members by an agreed nominations process. However initially (and maybe long term if too difficult), an EOI will go out and the EA Board or Noms Committee (possibly a specifically formed committee) selects the members.
- The Chair is selected by the Committee (and endorsed by EA Board).

6.3 THE FINANCIAL MODEL

Financially, the goal is to create a **sustainable and thriving sport**, that provides increased value and return to members.

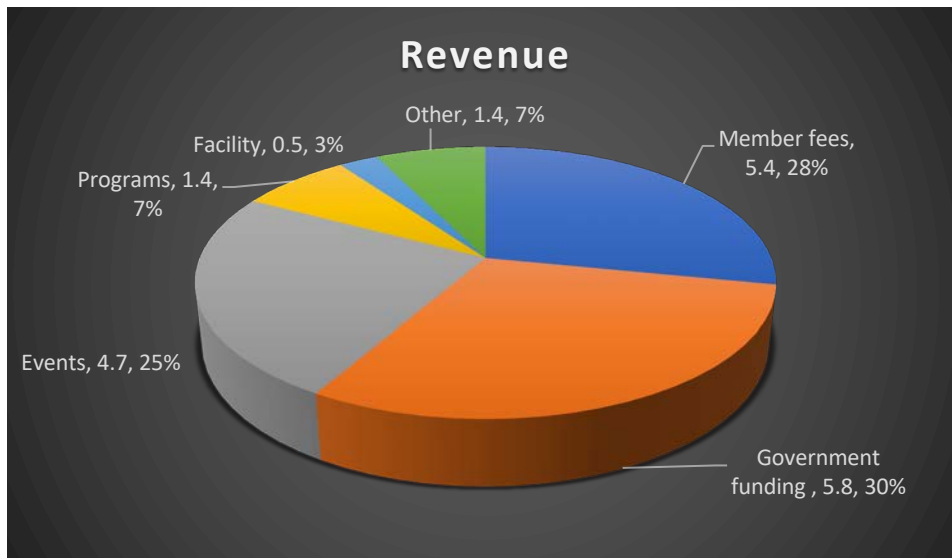
At a practical level, the new model will require short-term investment. This is mainly in the improvements and transformation process that is underway, just to ensure the sport has the foundations to succeed. However, long-term it needs to ensure a continually improving financial position.

There is approximately \$19.2 million of consolidated annual revenue across EA and its State branches. The sport, as a whole, operates on a slightly better than breakeven financial position.

The biggest buckets of revenue include:

- Member fees - \$5.4m
- Government funding (including HP) - \$5.8m
- Events - \$4.7m
- Programs - \$1.4m
- Facilities - \$500k

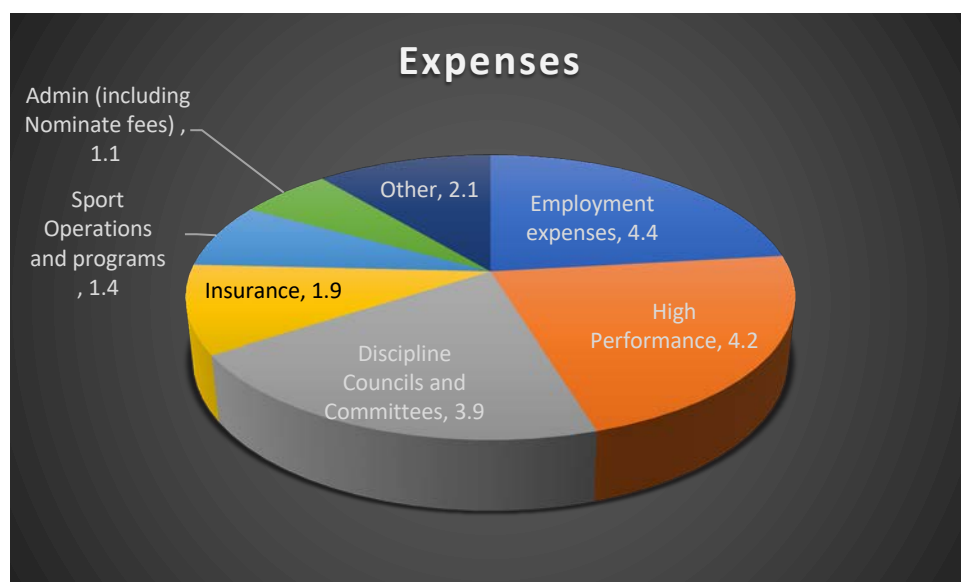
Figure 4: Revenue breakdown across EA and State branches



On the expense side, the largest consolidated expense items include:

- Employment expenses - \$4.4m
- High Performance - \$4.2m
- Discipline Councils and Committees (primarily for event operations) - \$3.9m
- Insurance - \$1.9m
- Sport Operations and programs - \$1.4m
- Admin (including Nominate fees) - \$1.1m

Figure 5: Expense breakdown across EA and State branches



Under the proposed operating model, there will be a change to flow of funds and to the way funds are allocated. High Performance and Insurance cost lines (and recovery) will not change. In terms of revenue allocation, funds will flow to:

- High Performance
- Acquitting other Government revenue and grants
- Insurance
- Non-discretionary costs (generally for the sport to function. E.g., WA facilities costs)
- Shared services, this includes both the resourcing and the database / IT infrastructure
- Disciplines.

Essentially, expenses and resources will be re-allocated out of lower value administrative tasks into more member and sport growth initiatives. The funding and resourcing previously invested in State Branches will be re-directed to Disciplines to manage their sport and fund local delivery (through State Discipline Committees, clubs and OC's). Resourcing will also be re-directed in the same way.

Additional ongoing operating expenditure and resources will be invested in:

1. Events
2. Coaching and Officials
3. Programs to grow participation

The operation of these areas, sit under the control of the National Discipline Committees, with State Discipline Committees executing on the strategy.

Short-term investments, during the transitional / transformation phase will be made to ensure the sport has the foundations to deliver. This will be predominately across:

- IT and other systems
- Process improvements
- Streamlined shared services

These will be funded out of reserves. There is also the potential to sell the building owned by EA in Homebush, NSW. We would propose funds would go towards infrastructure improvements (predominately IT).

There would be savings across various expense lines if we consolidate and aggregate service delivery.

These include:

- Administration
- Procurement efficiencies
- Audit fees
- Accounting fees
 - currently outsourced to different providers, contracted individually by each State.
- Legal fees
- State support
 - which would be reallocated to Discipline support
- Marketing and communications
 - Reducing touch points on digital platforms
 - One strategy across the sport
 - Content development efficiencies and consistent brand execution
- Focused resourcing
 - rather than one resource doing numerous tasks, there is a focus that will ensure increased expertise, focused outputs and process efficiency. It also reduces the need for consultants or vendors to come in, reducing touch points.

By finding the required efficiencies, more resource can be spread across discipline support.

There should be an uplift in revenue opportunities, however this won't be baked into the model at this stage.

- Commercial revenue – Disciplines believe there is untapped upside in luring significant sponsors into the sport.
- Membership – the premise of the Disciplines driving participation should produce growth in member / participant numbers and revenue (assuming overall yield is maintained).

Commercial revenue:

From a commercial perspective, any cross-sport sponsorship will go into consolidated revenue to be allocated against budgets. Any commercial sponsorship delivered by a Discipline, for that Discipline, will be directly allocated back into the Discipline's budget (less a Commission for account management / servicing). There will be a central sponsorship resource sitting under the Shared service function, responsible for sponsorship, Government funding and other funding sources across the sport. Ideally, any commercial partnership, at National level, runs through this resource / function.

For clarity, there is no impact on sponsorships for events at any level. The OC can still source sponsors and maintain 100% of the revenue in order to deliver their event. However, for bigger, national sponsors:

- If it is across disciplines, then the value will be allocated to each NDC budget (less commission and servicing costs).
- If it is for a specific discipline, that Discipline receives the incremental sponsorship as part of their budgeted revenue.
- Servicing costs (direct costs associated with delivering the benefits of the sponsorship) will come out first. All revenue will be net of these costs.
- The commission for selling expenses and ongoing management will be 30%, with the Discipline(s) receiving 70%.
- There will be a process around pipeline, relationship management and channel / category conflict that will be managed by a Commercial Manager in conjunction with the NDC.

By aggregating nationally, we are increasing the value of our saleable assets and also ensuring an easier path to delivering for sponsors. There is little doubt that this will provide additional opportunities that currently don't exist.

Government funding:

No State Government funding should be jeopardised as part of this process. Initial conversations with State Governments and other sports that have undertaken similar processes indicate this is the case. The State Governments fund for activity in their State, for the benefit of residents in their State. It is generally irrespective of Sport or governance / entity structures that apply for the funding.

The future model should also provide greater opportunity to source additional Government support. We will establish a process identifying grant opportunities and the appropriate resource to secure them where relevant.

6.4 FLOW OF FUNDS & MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP

Post the Voluntary Administration, all members are members of both EA and the State branches. Under the new model, members would become members of EA in the first instance. On registration, members would also indicate preferred Discipline(s).

There will be a committee of “Equestrian / sport-knowledgeable” people, working with each Discipline to establish the Nationally consistent member fee model. This committee will be established in Q4 of 2023. There is likely to be applicability to their work irrespective of other outcomes. The Committee will be comprised of a minimum of 3 State and 3 Discipline representatives, plus 1 EA representative. Key outcomes will include:

- Membership category refinement
- Fee structure
- The formula to allocate membership fees to Disciplines
- State considerations (e.g., WA facility costs or lower current fees in NT)
- Horse registrations / licenses

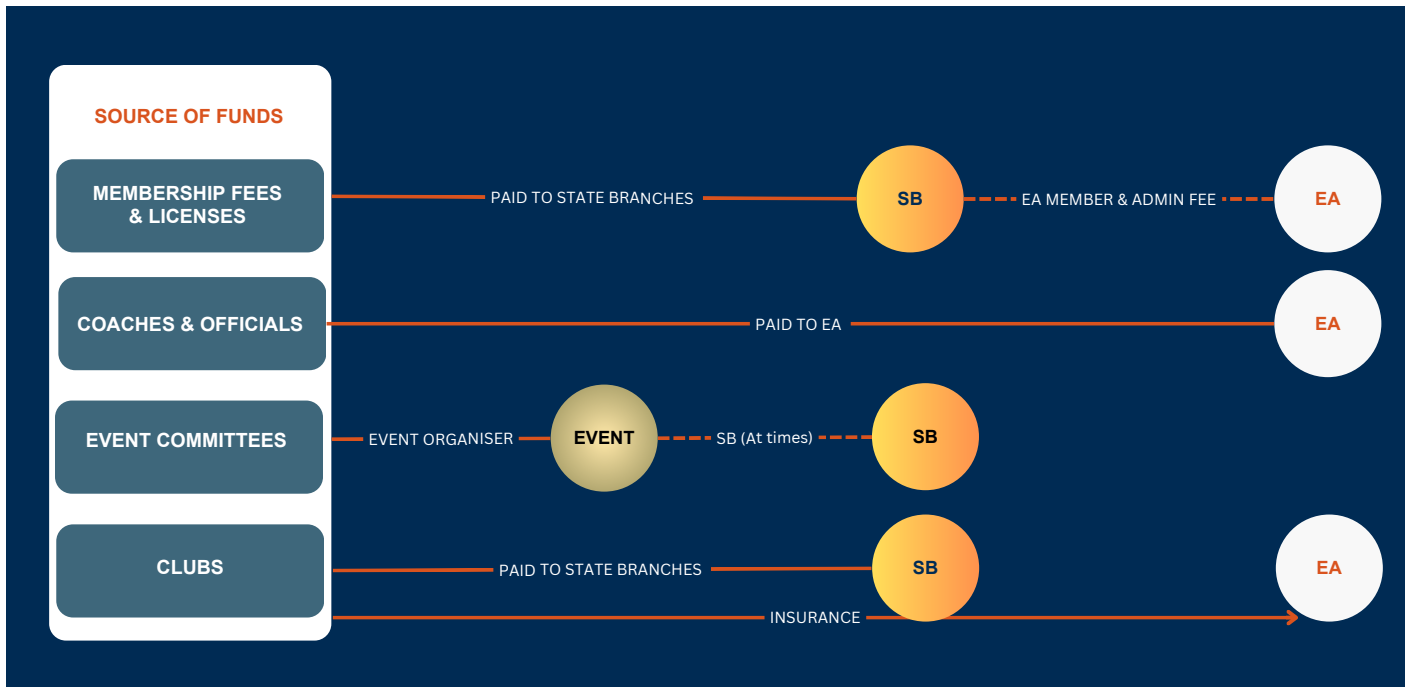
FLOW

CURRENT

1. **Member Fees:** Currently member fees are processed via the EA Online System and paid to State Branches by the vendor, Nominate (minus any transaction fees). State Branches retain the fee minus the applicable member & admin fee due for each new registration, which is collected by EA.
2. **Coach & Officials Registrations:** Coach registrations are processed via EA Online and paid to EA by Nominate.
3. **Club Registrations:** Club Registrations are processed through the EA Online System and paid to State Branches. Clubs currently cannot be members of EA however, may be members of the State Branch. EA manually processes club insurance through EA Online and retains the funds for cost cover.
4. **Events:** Event registrations are processed by event entry platform determined by the event committee/organiser. EA has limited visibility over any State Branch arrangements regarding funds received. This is an agreement between the State Branch and the event organiser. The EA touchpoint is limited to registered members and clubs.

This flow of funds is represented in Figure 6 over the page.

FIGURE 6: CURRENT FLOW OF MEMBER & EVENT REGISTRATION FUNDS



FUTURE

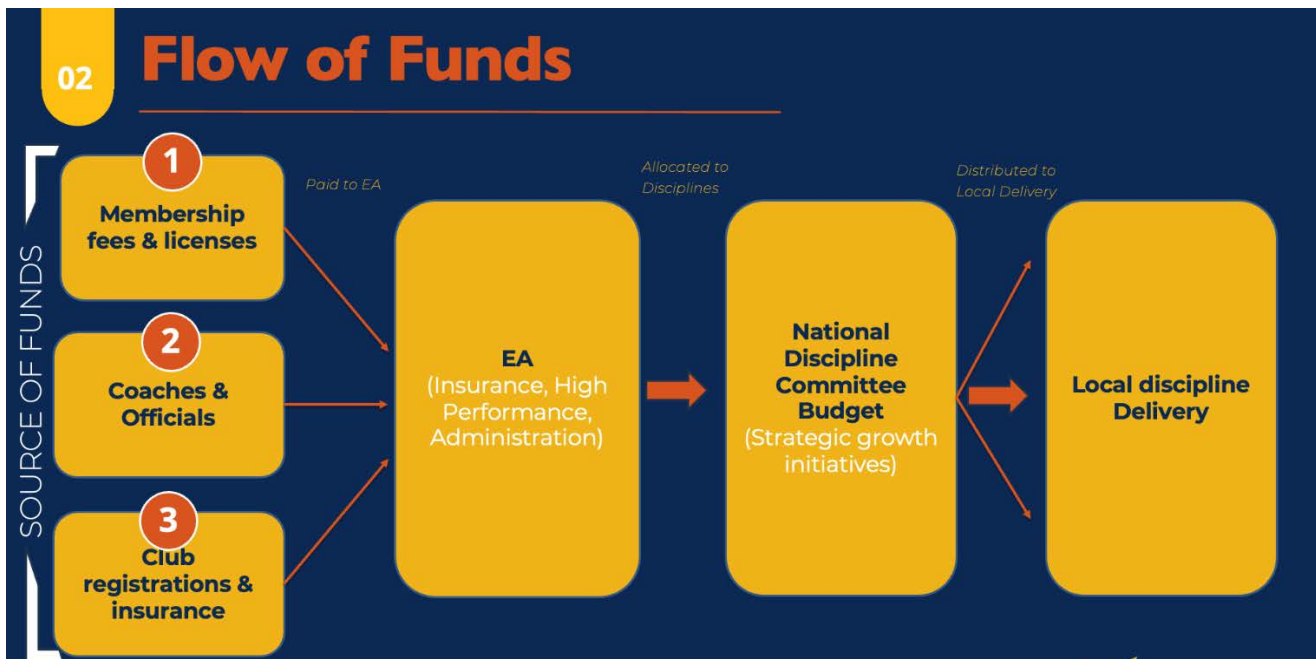
This flow will be simplified to provide increased financial visibility around the flow of membership and registration receivables nationally.

Under the new National Structure all registration and member fees will be processed and then paid directly to EA, in the first instance. There is only one bank account.

Budgets will be allocated to each NDC and these funds will be utilized for the local delivery, programs and other discipline operations.

The centralisation of registration and membership funds can be transitioned over time and will require some system and database changes. This will be a tension point, so it will need to be managed carefully.

FIGURE 7: PROPOSED FUTURE FLOW OF MEMBER FUNDS



Other points to note:

- We would seek to preserve member fee levels where possible and minimize fee increases. This notwithstanding, overall revenue levels will need to be preserved.
- Member fees will be set by EA in consultation with NDCs and SDCs. The goal is for consistency across the country.
- The member categories will be simplified, with a nationally consistent structure.
- A simplified and consistent member fee model will be developed. The flow of funds starts centrally and flows to NDCs, SDCs and clubs – all for the benefit of members.
- Budgets will not be based on EA "discretion". There will be agreed / contracted formulas to allocate member funds.

All revenue (Government, commercial, member fees and other) will be allocated against:

- Government funds acquitted against specific initiatives;
- Insurance, database and other fixed costs;
- Shared services;
- Other admin and member services; and
- National Disciplines.

National Disciplines will:

- Receive a baseline budget for every Discipline, to allow them to operate. There will be a minimum requirement determined for all Disciplines;
- Receive a % on top of the base membership, based on membership and fee revenue;
- Have budgeted allocations, with the purpose of funds to Disciplines aimed at driving programs, delivery, and growth. KPI's will be based on membership and participation numbers;
- Will have KPI's and accountability. Plans will need to be produced and budget allocated against those plans; and
- Collaborate with State Discipline Committees to ensure appropriate budget passed down and allocated to run local delivery.

Moreover, Discipline-specific sponsorship money be divided applying a ratio of 7: 3. 70% to be paid to the Discipline and 30% to be retained as commission for selling and management expenses. Any cross-Discipline sponsorship will need to be split based on agreed value.

All funding management will occur through the General Ledger, with approval required from the relevant parties to spend / transfer any money. **EA will have no right to use quarantined funds.**

It is intended that all investment principles will be baked into contracts where possible, or otherwise Constitutions or bylaws requiring member or Board / Committee approvals. This is to provide assurance and protections to members, NDCs and in the interim, State Branches that appropriate funds will be allocated to local delivery, programs and growth initiatives.

6.5 HUMAN RESOURCES

There will be a commitment made that current employment contracts will be honoured. It is expected that a number of current staff will transition into different roles in Shared services or Discipline support.

Across the country, we have approximately 57 FTE's. Given the range of responsibilities and comparing to sports of a similar size, it is a lean workforce. The workforce is supplemented by volunteers who conduct some of the essential tasks. The reallocation of resources enables focused attention to key priorities, provides dedicated staff to certain roles and creates the efficiency needed.

The model has 33 people (working as one team) focused on supporting our members, which has to provide a significantly improved level of service. The workforce principles include no re-locations or redundancies for existing team members.

TABLE 9: The current indicative headcount across EA and State branches and an example of the potential future state.

Current State		People	FTE
EA	HP	10	9.0
	Business	17	13.8
ENSW		7	5
EQ		7	5.4
EVIC		8	7.9
ESA		4	2.8
ENT		1	0.8
ETAS		1	0.6
EWA	Business	6	4.2
	Facility	6	5.0
TOTAL		67	54.5

Future State	People	FTE	Shared Services Corporate
Shared Services (corporate)	11	9.3	CEO (1)
High Performance	10	9.0	Admin (1)
Member Services (National)	20	15.8	Finance (3)
NDC Support	8	6.0	Integrity & Complaints (2)
NDC, Club & Member Support	13	9.0	Comms & Marketing (2)
Facility Support	6	5.0	Commercial & Sponsorship (1)
TOTAL	68	54.1	Strategy & Risk (1)
			TOTAL 11

Note: NSW has 2 part-time resources employed directly by SDCs

6.6 BUSINESS OPERATIONS & ADMINISTRATION – SHARED SERVICES, IT & SYSTEMS AND EDUCATION

The work being undertaken by EA in collaboration with the state branches to support the implementation of shared services, improving IT and systems and enhancing education, accreditation and pathways for coaches and officials has intentionally not been included in this discussion paper to clearly separate governance matters and operational matters.

Under the proposed new National Structure, there is an intention to centralise core frameworks, policies, strategy documents, risk management and key business administration functions, which would benefit from a level of rationalisation. While there may be single points of control, this control, delivery, or the related process ownership, may sit in local delivery, at state, or at national level. Shared services is not intended to result in a unitary model. It is also **not** intended to achieve national control of all the functions and end-to-end delivery.

6.7 SPORT DELIVERY & MEMBER SERVICING

CLUBS

Clubs will continue to operate as they do now. They will affiliate with EA, rather than a State branch. There should be no visible change for a club or no real change in the way they operate.

Clubs and Organising Committees will continue to work with SDCs on event operations. The way SDCs operate will not change. However, the direction, strategy and budget they receive will come from National Disciplines.

Benefits for clubs:

- Increased funding for events
- Targeted programs to drive participation
- Competition opportunities
- Clearer lines of communication
- Dedicated club liaison resources, with both national and local focus

EVENTS

EA and Disciplines will take a more active role in Event strategy. In order to oversee delivery and ensure compliance with requisite standards (e.g., Health and Safety, FEI qualification standards, etc), there will be a sanctioning function performed.

In addition, EA and the NDCs will have more direct oversight of National Championships. A joint (all discipline) National Championship will be scoped. If not viable, then a revamped National Championship format will be introduced. The objective would be to ensure Government funding, potential broadcast / streaming and a viable commercial proposition.

It is envisaged that the new National Championship format would be developed and operational by 2025.

COACHING

The National Coaching Committee will be re-established. It will be comprised of 6-7 members with specific coaching-related skillsets. National and State Discipline Committees will play a key role in directing the strategy and education

requirements of coaches, as experts in the Discipline. They will complement the skills-based resources on the Committee.

The primary objective of the new Coaching Committee is to develop a clear value proposition for coaches. Coaches currently see little value in EA membership. They can offer their services and receive income through alternative channels, without the cost and requirements imposed. The Committee will build a robust strategy to entice coaches into the established frameworks. The value proposition should foremost promote the credibility and reliability of EA coaches.

The focus will be primarily around education, learning and advancement of coaches. The committee is to develop a comprehensive and effective syllabus for equestrian education targeted at adult learners. The syllabus should cover various skill levels and disciplines within the equestrian field, providing a structured and progressive learning pathway for individuals interested in equestrian pursuits.

Key responsibilities in relation to education:

- Collaboratively develop a detailed syllabus that outlines the progressive learning pathway for adult learners in equestrian education.
- Identify and define the learning objectives, skills, and knowledge required at each level of the syllabus.
- Determine appropriate teaching methodologies, instructional resources, and assessment strategies.
- Ensure the syllabus integrates safety guidelines, equine welfare considerations, and ethical practices.
- Regularly review and update the syllabus to reflect advancements in the equestrian field and evolving educational practices.

MEMBER SERVICING

Under the national model, members will be serviced by a single team, working collaboratively across the sport. There will continue to be dedicated resources in each State that manage:

- Club support
- State discipline co-ordination and support
- Member engagement
- Event operations

They will work in conjunction with a team that has national responsibility for items such as:

- Membership and registration
- Database, results and other event-related or member-facing applications
- Health and Safety
- Coaching and officials – recruitment, reward, development, retention
- Volunteer management

The customer service support will have dedicated resources responding to queries, as they come in.

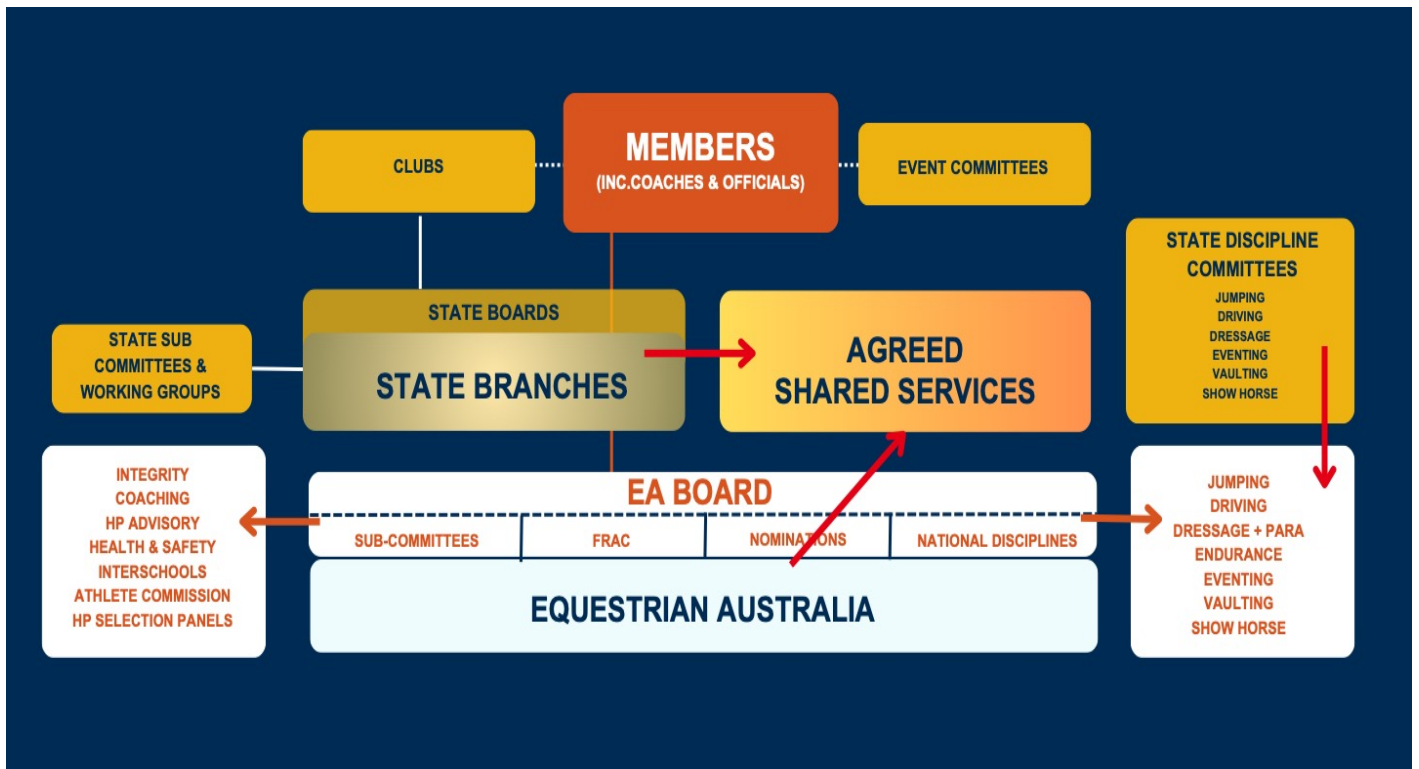
It should ensure a larger, more cohesive team to provide support when needed and improved response times. Part of the transformation will entail mapping of all current member processes, removing of paper where we can and eliminating unnecessary steps. Indicatively there will be 33 people focused on servicing members across the country.

MEMBER VALUE

Separate to the model, but as a sport we need to be clear on the value proposition to all members. We need to have a target of retaining members for more than just a competition licence. There needs to be membership inclusions above and beyond historical membership rights.

7. HOW WE GET THERE

FIGURE 8: WHAT THE STRUCTURE LOOKS LIKE IN TRANSITION



7.1 GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Any significant structural change will require changes to the EA Constitutions and likely changes to State Constitutions. This will require votes by members to take place. This is a complex process and the timing will need to be decided and mapped out by the EA Board, in consultation with the State Branch Boards. It will also require substantial legal resource and cost.

Process:

- State and EA Chair / Boards to agree in principle on the review of Constitutions and other relevant Governance documents. This will not be a commitment to change / implement by the States, but simply a commitment to review the process and Constitutional requirements and potential impacts.
- State and EA Constitution reviews to occur by June 2024, with recommendations of changes and voting required, to be outlined.
- Special resolutions to be drafted for both State and National Boards.
- A Special General Meeting of EA members to be called by November 2024, followed by SGM's for all State branches that have agreed to put the resolutions to their members.
- Actions to dissolve the State branches to commence from January 2025. This will include terminating contracts, paying all liabilities, transferring relevant rights and obligations.
- All State dissolutions to be complete by 2026.
- New Constitution to come into effect immediately following agreement by the members.

In parallel, there will also be a harmonisation of policies, bylaws and other State and National Governance requirements to ensure consistency.

7.2 SHARED SERVICE PHASED DELIVERY

The phasing, prioritization and scoping of Shared Service work streams is currently underway and a National Shared Services Steering Committee (NSSSC) which includes representatives from EA and all State Branches has been established. Initial discussions with the state representatives have indicated that improvements to member systems, database & IT is the primary and immediate focus. As such, the business case for IT and the national database is being developed now, irrespective of any other changes. A second stream to identify “short-term wins” is also now in process, working with the NSSSC.

An indicative phasing schedule for shared services (to be agreed by the NSSSC) is as follows:

- **Phase 1** – Nationally-aligned Strategic framework, IT & Database, Health & Safety, Integrity, National policies
- **Phase 2** – Legal, HR, Facility strategy, Risk Management, Communication and Marketing, Sponsorship, Officials management and education, as well as coach education.
- **Phase 3** – Event management and operations, Finance, pathways, member servicing, Government relations / grants.

Additionally, it is expected that any new outsourced shared services (as determined by the NSSSC) will go out for tender (the ones currently in contract won't need to unless we want to review / change). These outsourced services will likely include insurance, Websites, Member Database, other IT providers, Legal, Audit, possibly some aspects of finance and possibly sponsorship.

7.3 TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR FINANCIAL FLOWS

Transitional arrangements to be established where, over time, funds are used for the operation of the sport – Discipline operations and Shared Services.

All funds currently held by State branches are proposed to be placed into specially established Trust Funds. These funds can only be used for the benefit of members in that State. This may be State-specific projects, or National projects that have a significant benefit for members (e.g., National database).

- The funds will be managed by a small Board of Trustees – maximum 3 (elected from the current State Branch boards).
- Once established, no additional funds will be added to the Trust.
- Current non-liquid assets held on State Balance sheets should be sold where not business-critical.

7.4 DELIVERY TIMELINE

The transition into the future operating model and structure will be phased and sequenced over time.

PHASE 1 (JULY 2023 TO MARCH 2024)

- Project plan developed and project management / change management resources identified and secured.
- Continuation of scoping and detailed model build-out.
- Preliminary structure recommendation developed by the EA Board and communicated.
- Refinement of the financial model to provide clarity and surety of funding and sustainability. 3-year budgets to be developed.
- Consultation:
 - 2-3 additional State face-to-face consultations
 - 2-3 Discipline consultations
 - Town halls
 - Member surveys
- Shared service (early phase) implementation
 - Potentially - Member services, integrity, IT, Comms
- Virtual national workforce (where possible / relevant) – hybrid with State and National roles
 - Includes an EA organisation restructure
- IT and database improvements.
- Legal, Constitution and contract reviews.
- No changes to the member model or fee allocation at this stage, unless there is a discreet opportunity, that serves the benefits of the members.
- Process mapping of all key processes (note – ongoing).
- Meetings and presentations with all State Governments and the Federal Government (Offices for Sport and Rec, Federal and State Sport Ministers and ASC). Agreement reached on continued funding.
- Pilot the change in one State.

PHASE 2 (APRIL 2024 TO JULY 2024)

- Final recommendations after considering the stakeholder input and feedback.
- Detailed Constitution review, identifying key processes and changes required.
- Consultation process with Disciplines and States
- SGM scheduled with resolutions drafted. To be held in late 2024.
- Education / awareness campaign with membership.
- Further refinement of financial model, with detailed budgets built out, including NDC and SDC budget figures and cash flow.
- Membership model and fee structure developed (by Board sub-committee of Equestrian experts). Done in conjunction with key stakeholders and via consultation processes.
- Membership model and fee structure communicated to stakeholders and the membership.
- Identify NDC requirements, committee member structure.
- Draft Terms of Reference developed and socialised.
- Embedding and reviewing Shared services (as defined above) and scoping next phase.
- Virtual national workforce structure finalised and continued transition of roles (into member servicing, shared services and disciplines and away from State admin, where appropriate)
- Investment funding sources (to ensure sufficient funding for transformational changes) developed.
- No changes to funding flows at this point (at least until 1 January 2025)

PHASE 3 (JULY 2024 TO JULY 2025)

- Requirements under State Constitutions identified and actioned.
- Membership vote facilitated.
- Start the transition to new member model and fee structure.
- All members become members of EA (and identify their discipline, where possible). Membership fees continue to be collected by State branches.
- An additional levy collected from States (no extra cost to members) to start to fund Shared services and provide Disciplines with some preliminary budget, which will flow back as benefits to members.
- Further database changes to capture member information required to implement the structure.
- NDC committee members elected.
- New Terms of Reference drafted and agreed.
- SDCs to start reporting to NDCs. The budget and funding flow from NDC to SDC to local delivery to be built and agreed between NDCs and SDCs.
- EA to build and provide the strategic framework around participation and sport operations for the NDCs to leverage.
- NDCs to commence the process of building 3-year plans. Process to be further scoped.
- Other committees (e.g., FRAC) terms of reference revised.
- State assets and liabilities identified and quarantined.
- State asset trustees identified with consideration as to structure i.e. formal or a "pseudo-Trust", will be established, with rules of engagement outlined and agreed.
- State Constitutions reviewed, with a vote to dissolve planned and scheduled.
- State contracts and agreements reviewed, with plan developed on terminating, re-assigning or continuing, as required.
- Virtual national workforce in place and operational.
- NDC support resources sourced and in place. These resources to report to both NDC Chair and EA.
- Commercial assets and IP packaged. Go-to-market plan developed and resource contracted.

PHASE 4 (JULY 2025 ONWARDS)

- Revised whole-of sport strategic plan process.
- All NDC committees in place, with members elected and operational.
- NDC budgets finalised, with control, delegation and accountability mechanisms in place.
- All State dissolution votes to be taken by end of 2025. Transition to dissolution commenced (finalised by July 2026). States will be phased, with several States dissolved in early 2025.
- Membership fees moved into one central account. Distributed via agreed upon formulaic contracts/SLAs. These "contracts" will be formalised into long term (almost perpetual) agreements.
- Shared service structure (and final phases) implemented. Management and oversight functions identified and in place.
- Organisation restructure finalised, with new and redundant roles actioned, redistributed or reallocated.

8. WHAT WE EXPECT TO ACHIEVE

The model for sport generally has evolved. Equestrian sport will not progress and be sustainable long term without the transformational changes identified in this report. We haven't operated to our full capability for decades and the continual issues the sport faces will only be resolved through reform and structural change.

8.1 TANGIBLE BENEFITS FOR OUR MEMBERS

The new model proposed is designed to ensure members derive value from the sport. The thinking and development has been designed around that principle. At the heart of it, members should experience a tangible improvement in servicing. There will be more resources focused on dealing with member issues, working on admin delivery, registrations and membership and improved response times (phones, emails and query response). There will be people in each State working with members and clubs. They will understand local issues, be in the right timezone and provide more coverage across the week. The proposed new model indicatively has 33 staff nationally dedicated to providing services to members and clubs.

Other tangible benefits that members will experience:

- A Nationally consistent fee structure – the general principle is there will be consistency across the country. Where more servicing is required, it will be considered (user pays). There will be a committee of “Equestrian / sport-knowledgeable” people, working with each Discipline to establish the member fee model.
- Cost effective opportunities realised.
- IT platforms (including member database) that are up to date, easy to understand and have the functionality that members / clubs need.
- Quality and more regular communication. The tone and content of newsletters, social, website will change. Website to be kept up-to-date and have the information members and clubs need.
- More inclusions and value in membership.
- Opportunities will be sought to promote the sport and broadcast events.
- Seamless pathways – participants / coaches and officials know how to get through the various paths they may want to achieve in the sport. Those that want to participate at the highest levels know how to get there.
- A national calendar and continual improvement in event quality.
- A safe environment for all members.

8.2 TANGIBLE BENEFITS FOR OUR SPORT

Structural improvement outcomes for the sport as a whole:

- **Harmonisation** across states and disciplines to facilitate better servicing and commercial outcomes
- **One voice** for equestrian
- **National programs** to provide consistency in execution and experience
- **Strengthen the brand** to attract sustainable long-term commercial investment in our sport
- **Harness the expertise** in the community
- **National alignment** of strategy, values and industry focus to deliver impact
- **National education** program to support the development of our people (athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers)
- **Greater financial strength** to support developing the sport
- **Good governance**, risk frameworks and sustainability
- **Clearer decision-making** and clear roles, responsibilities & accountabilities
- **Consistent** fee structure.

APPENDICES

PLEASE USE LINKS TO ACCESS DOCUMENTS VIA SHAREPOINT

Appendix 1 – Nationally Aligned Strategy (strategy on a page)

[Nationally Aligned Strategy](#)

[Appendix 2.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendix 2 – National Strategy and Structure Working Group – Terms of Reference

[Appendix 1.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendix 3 – CEO update on the Strategic Plan

[CEO Update: A Strategy for Equestrian to 2032 | Equestrian Australia](#)

Appendix 4 – National Equestrian Strategy and Structure Working Group final report – dated 15 March 2023

[Appendix 4.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendix 5 – International Equestrian model comparative scoping document

[Appendix 5.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendix 6 – Australian Equestrian organisations model comparative scoping document

[Appendix 6.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendix 7 – Other Australian sports model comparative scoping document

[Appendix 7.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendix 8 – TABLE 10: Summary Analysis into Suitability of Structures by the Working Group.

[Appendix 8 – Table 10](#)

Appendix 9 –Summary of German Federation Benchmarking

[Appendix 9](#)

