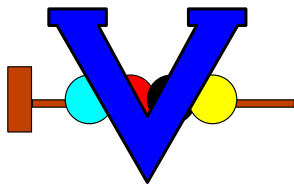


VCA COUNCIL MANUAL

April 2017

This Council Manual is distributed to new VCA Council Members and is available online for prospective Council members.



CROQUET VICTORIA

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Victorian Croquet Association Inc A0001560E ABN 91 903 271 264

Welcome to your role as a VCA Director.

On behalf of the Victorian Croquet Association Inc congratulations on being elected as Director of the Victorian Croquet Association.

We appreciate the commitment you have made to fulfilling your role.

A mentor can be made available to assist you to settle into the role.

Current VCA Directors are also a valuable reference source for a new Director.

If you have any queries do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly

Jim Clement
President
Victorian Croquet Association

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Further information is available as follows:

Croquet Victoria Address Book:

- Organisational Chart
- Sub-Committee Membership
- Appointed Coordinators

Croquet Victoria website croquetvic.asn.au:

- Council Member Profiles, contact information for Council Members and Appointed Officers at <http://croquetvic.asn.au/officers.php>
- Croquet Victoria Constitution, By-Laws, Strategic Plan and Annual Report at <http://croquetvic.asn.au/governance.php>

Additional Good Governance Guides can be found at:

<https://www.governanceinstitute.com.au/knowledge-resources/guidance-tools/good-governance-guides/>

Please take the time to review the information provided. We would appreciate your feedback.

Sarina Cevaal-Hewitt
Honorary Secretary

1. Overview of Victorian Croquet Association Inc.

Legislative Matters

The Victorian Croquet Association (VCA) is incorporated under Victorian legislation (currently *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*) and has been since June 1984, with Incorporation Number A0001560E.

The association registered the business name of “Croquet Victoria” with the Office of Fair Trading & Business Affairs, Victoria on 26th October 2004, with Registration Number B1793759T. The name Croquet Victoria is used in documents and publications intended for the general public.

The association has an Australian Business Number 91 903 271 264.

The association’s financial year is 1st April – 31st March.

Structure

VCA is a federation of Regional Croquet Associations, currently thirteen, which in turn are associations of croquet clubs or of individual members.

The VCA Constitution requires, as a condition of membership, that Regional Croquet Associations be incorporated, and that their constitutions generally conform with the VCA Constitution.

Clubs must be affiliated with their local regional association in order to become affiliated clubs and to sign up their members.

Clubs are not required to be incorporated, though this is recommended (incorporation protects club committee members and enables the club to apply for grants in its own right).

Membership

The Regional Associations are the voting members of VCA and are each entitled to appoint a delegate to vote, in person, on its behalf at general meetings of the VCA.

Clubs associated with a regional croquet association and their members are all non-voting members of VCA.

Governance

General Meetings. The Annual General Meeting of the VCA must be held within five months of the end of its financial year and is normally held in June each year. At the AGM, the Regional Associations’ delegates receive the minutes of the previous AGM and of any General Meetings held since that previous AGM, receive the Annual Report and the Annual Financial Report, elect Life Members, elect members of the Committee and transact any Special Business (such as amendment of the Constitution, which requires a 75% majority, or By Laws, which requires a 66% majority).

Committee. The Committee consists of the President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer and four ordinary members, all elected for two year terms, with half retiring each year (the procedure for this is detailed in the Constitution, Rule 24). Committee members may only serve a maximum of six years in any one position and may not renominate for that position for twelve months. The Immediate Past President is limited to a maximum term of two years. The Committee meets as required, but normally in the months in which there is not a Council meeting. The Committee is empowered to transact all business of the association between Council meetings and General Meetings. In practice, the Committee resolves only matters that relate to previously approved budget items and matters that cannot wait for discussion/decision at the next Council meeting.

VCA office-bearers are listed in the Croquet Victoria address book, online at <http://croquetvic.asn.au/officers.php> and in *Malletsports*

Council. The Committee, together with 13 directors, one appointed by each Regional Croquet Association, form the Council. The Council is the governing body of VCA and is charged with controlling and managing the business and affairs of the association. Council is required to meet at least six times each year and normally meets bi-monthly in June, August, October, December, February and April.

The role and term of office of Directors are described in Section 3.

Delegation. Council has the authority to delegate its powers, with some limitations, and does this by appointing sub-committee or officers. Terms of Reference for sub-committees and Position Descriptions for appointed Officers are published on the website at <http://croquetvic.asn.au/governance.php>

Appointees. Current appointments are listed in the Address Book and on the website at <http://croquetvic.asn.au/contact.php>.

Governance Documentation. All VCA governance documentation, including the Constitution and By Laws; Policies, Regulations & Procedures; Terms of Reference for sub-committees and Position Descriptions for appointees are available from the VCA website at www.croquetvic.asn.au/governance; minutes of Council and CoM meetings, Annual Reports etc. are available at www.croquetvic.asn.au/minutes.

Financial Matters

Signing/Authorising of Financial Transactions. The Administrator prepares all financial transactions which are then authorised by two members of Committee, as required by the Constitution. These are currently any two of the Treasurer, President and Secretary.

Audit. Although not required under legislation nor specifically by the Constitution which only requires the appointment of an Auditor, the association's accounts are audited prior to preparation of the Annual Financial Report, which includes the auditor's report.

GST. The association is registered for GST, which means that 1/11 of all receipts is collected for the government, against which it can claim GST paid out in purchases for which it have a tax invoice.

Affiliation Fees. Fees charged to members comprise three elements; ACA affiliation fees and levies, VCA affiliation fees which are set annually as part of the budget process, and the Public Liability premium for those clubs that participate in the group policy. The process by which these fees are invoiced is available from the website.

VCA Funding Sources. The main sources of income for the VCA are:

- a) Investment Income generated by the VCA's Investment Portfolio – this is the single largest source of income and is almost double the income received from VCA Affiliation fees. The portfolio is overseen by the VCA's Investment Advisory Group and professionally managed by JBWere. JBWere management fees are discounted 50% as part of their charity sector work, and the VCA only pays about \$25,000 per annum for the service.
- b) Affiliation Fees, see paragraph above – VCA Affiliation fees are the second largest source of income, set at \$36 per member for the 2017-2018 year, equating to approximately \$90,000.
- c) Relatively minor government grants which are usually special project related, i.e. do not help cover VCA running costs, and are available on an ad-hoc basis.
- d) Sales of croquet merchandise generates an immaterial amount of income.

- e) Tournament income is an immaterial amount in terms of total VCA income and in any event is used to cover direct tournament costs, i.e. tournaments break-even.
- f) Premises rental of the small upstairs flat to the Caretaker generates a modest \$11,000 per annum
- g) Premises rental for functions has varied markedly over the years, with the plain, practical décor not suited to upmarket functions but more suited to business meetings/training seminars. In the 2016-2017 year this generated a modest net \$21,000 including bar sales.

2. Council Induction Policy

Introduction

Joining the board of a sporting organisation, the Council in the case of Croquet Victoria, for the first time can be an exciting and sometimes an overwhelming experience. A comprehensive introduction to the organisation and Council operations allows new members to be properly informed, supported and welcomed to the Council from the time of their appointment.

The President is usually responsible for the delivery of the induction process and the Council may also wish to nominate a mentor to assist the newly appointed director. Newly appointed directors will undertake the induction process as outlined below and will be supplied with the necessary information, training and support to contribute appropriately to the Council.

Council Induction Procedure

Initial Contact

As soon as possible after the Council has confirmed the appointment of a new member the President shall:

- make contact with the new member,
- write a letter of congratulation and welcome,
- provide a Director's Role Description and (Director being Regional Director or CoM member)
- provide a copy of the Council Role Description and Council Code of Conduct

* The Council Role Description and Council Code of Conduct should be contained in the Council Manual however it is recommended that these are brought to the new Director's attention upon initial contact.

The President should advise the new Council member that they will be contacted soon to participate in the Council Induction Program.

Council Manual

The Secretary shall forward to the new member a copy of the Council Manual. The Manual will serve as an initial introduction to the Council as well as an ongoing reference. It should include:

- current Council member profiles;
- relevant organisational documents such as the Croquet Victoria Constitution, By-laws, strategic plan, current year-to-date budget, relevant sponsorship and funding agreements and the most recent annual report;
- organisational chart and contact information for Council members and senior staff;
- meeting schedule and event calendar;
- Council Charter including information about the Council and Council members' roles and responsibilities;
- any necessary background information.

Give the new Council member sufficient time to review the documents and invite them to ask questions.

Introductions

The President shall introduce the new member to other members of the Council (and senior staff, if appropriate) as soon as possible after their appointment and seek to involve the member socially in Council activities.

The President shall nominate a member of the Council to act as mentor to the new member and arrange a time for the new Council member to meet the Administrator, if necessary.

Inclusion

Involve all Council members in the induction process and ensure the Council gets to know the new Council member as well as the new Council member getting to know the rest of the Council.

Roles and Responsibilities

The mentor should:

- draw the new Council members attention to the roles and responsibilities of the Council and the expectations of them as an individual;
- explain the process of decision making;
- outline the Council performance and evaluation process;
- discuss any questions/concerns the new Director may have.

Briefing

The assigned mentor shall take the new member through the minutes of recent meetings (last 6 months) and brief them on the issues the Council is currently dealing with, or will be looking at in the future.

Tour

The Administrator shall invite the new Council member to take a tour of the Victorian Croquet Centre and introduce them to staff.

Feedback

Once the new Council member has settled in they should provide feedback on the induction process to the Secretary so that the process can be improved in the future.

Authorisation



Jim Clement
Honorary Secretary
17 June 2014

3. Director Position Description

Currently, the role of the Victorian Croquet Association Inc (VCA) Director is defined across four or five approved VCA documents, including the VCA Constitution. This Position Description aims to utilise the current definitions, as they are, and to combine them into one position description that is clearly understood by the VCA Councils' Directors.

From the VCA Constitution:

"Director" means a member of the Council and includes the Regional Directors and Committee Members.

"Regional Director" means a member of the Council appointed by the Regional Association in accordance with Rule 23.3.

23.3 Regional Directors

- (a) Each Regional Association shall appoint one Regional Director.
- (b) A Regional Director shall be appointed for a term of two years, which shall commence from the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting. The Regional Directors shall be appointed in alternate years with half the Regional Directors being appointed in odd years and half of the Regional Directors appointed in even years. The Council shall determine which Regional Associations shall appoint the Regional Directors in odd years and which Regional Associations shall appoint the Regional Directors in even years.
- (c) Each Regional Association shall advise the Secretary of its appointed Regional Director within twenty one days prior to each Annual General Meeting.
- (d) A Regional Director must be an Individual Member.
- (e) A Regional Director may be a Delegate.
- (f) In the event of a casual vacancy in the office of any Regional Director, the Regional Association may appoint an Individual Member to the vacant office until the expiration of the Regional Director's term in office.

"Alternate Regional Director" means a person appointed by the Regional Association in accordance with Rule 23.4.

23.4 Alternate Regional Directors

- (a) Each Regional Association shall appoint one Alternate Regional Director.
- (b) Rule 23.3, with any necessary or incidental amendments, shall apply to the Alternate Regional Directors.

- 1. POSITION TITLE** **VICTORIAN CROQUET ASSOCIATION INC DIRECTOR**
- 2. REPORTS TO** VCA Annual General Meeting.
- 3. STATUS** Appointment of Directors elected by the VCA Annual General Meeting is for a term of two years, which shall commence from the conclusion of the VCA Annual General Meeting.
The President, Treasurer and two ordinary Committee Members shall be elected in each year of odd number and the Vice President, Secretary and two Committee Members shall be elected in each year of even number. The position of the Immediate Past President is limited to a maximum of two years.
(Rule 24.4 Terms of Appointment)
- The Regional Directors are appointed in alternate years with approximately half the Regional Directors being appointed in odd years and half of the Regional Directors appointed in even years. *(See Annex A - Appointment Schedule)*
- 4. CONTEXT**
- A.** VCA is the peak body responsible for the development of croquet across member clubs and regions in Victoria and southern NSW.
 - B.** VCA is governed by a Council, which consists of the Committee of Management members and the Regional Directors, all of whom are Directors of VCA. The Council shall meet as required, but shall meet on at least six occasions, controls and manages VCA's business and affairs.
 - C.** All Directors attend Council meetings, which are held bi-monthly, currently (2017) on the third Monday of the month (February, April, June, August, October and December).
The Committee of Management transacts all business of the Association between Council Meetings and General Meetings. Members attend bi-monthly Committee of Management Meetings, currently (2017) held on the third Tuesday of the month (January, March, May, July, September and November). The Powers of the Committee are set down in Rule 24.1 of the VCA Constitution.
- 5. VCA VALUES** VCA is committed to the values of the Australian Croquet Association Inc, including:
- A.** Respect for the rights, dignity and worth of others.
 - B.** Being fair, considerate and honest in all dealing with others.
 - C.** Being professional in, and accept responsibility for, your actions.
 - D.** Making a commitment to providing quality service.
 - E.** Being aware of, and maintaining an uncompromising adhesion to, croquet's standards, rules, regulations and policies.
- (ACA Member Protection Policy Part D – Role Specific Codes of Conduct)*

- 6. VCA's DIRECTORS' VALUES, exercised through Council**
- A. The Council recognises the importance and value of Council diversity.
 - B. The Council and its members are expected to promote and encourage equity and inclusiveness throughout the organisation and consider age, gender, cultural background and people with a disability in decision making.
 - C. Directors are expected to act honestly and in the best interests of the members as a whole and not to represent individual constituents.
 - D. Directors are expected to contribute to a positive Council behaviour and culture by showing respect for other Council members' opinions and allowing each member a fair and equal opportunity to contribute to discussion / decision making.
 - E. Directors are expected to disclose actual/potential conflicts of interest and to stand aside during discussion & resolution.
 - F. Directors are expected to behave responsibly particularly regarding confidential information. *(VCA Code of Conduct)*
- 7. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE VCA DIRECTOR POSITION**
- PURPOSE:**
- A. To work with other Directors to assist the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer in the execution of their roles and responsibilities. *(VCA By-Laws 7.6)*
 - B. To ensure and actively promote ethical behaviour and decision making. Council members are expected to act with integrity to ensure that the reputation of Croquet Victoria is managed, protected and enhanced. *(VCA Code of Conduct)*
- OBJECTIVES:**
- C. To work with other Directors to achieve the current Strategic Plan, and to monitor and support progress towards the objectives of the Plan.
 - D. To work with other Directors to generate new or increased income streams
 - E. To participate in the development and implementation of a VCA Business Plan that supports and guides the Council and CoM in their work
 - F. To work with Regional clubs to assess how they are aligning themselves with the current VCA Strategy, and ensure that the clubs have access to required resources
 - G. To further develop the 3-way communication channels between the CoM, Council and Regional Clubs.
- 8. DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES**
- A. Directors are required to comply with the following legal duties including to :
 - i act in good faith and for a proper purpose
 - ii exercise due care and diligence
 - iii ensure the organisation does not continue to carry on its business whilst insolvent
 - iv meet the requirement of various federal and state laws that directly impact on the organisation
 - B. Directors are expected to review Council papers before Council meetings and acquaint themselves with the issues confronting the Council, and to use the information to make informed decisions on behalf of Croquet Victoria.
 - C. Directors are expected to be able to use electronic devices to produce Regional Reports and access electronic information when required to do so. (Assistance/training will be provided by the VCA, if requested).
 - D. Regional Directors are specifically responsible for reporting to Council on achievements, issues and concerns in their Region, so that Council decisions are informed by knowledge of the state of croquet across the regions.
 - E. Provide Curriculum Vitae to the VCA website.

9. SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- A.** Preferably relevant experience and proven ability in committee work, especially in Executive, Senior or working group roles.
- B.** Ability to use social media as a way of promoting croquet and clubs
- C.** Effective written and verbal communication skills, including the preparation of electronic reports (training will be made available if required)
- D.** Organisational and planning skills, including the ability to work under pressure and to deadlines
- E.** Ability to become a 2 or 3-way communication channel for the Region
- F.** Enthusiasm and willingness to co-operate.
- G.** Understanding of croquet as a sport (even if not a current croquet player)

10. VOTING RIGHTS

Each Director present at a meeting of the Council is entitled to one vote and in the event of an equality of votes on any question, the chair may exercise a casting vote.

Where an appointed Regional Director is also a Committee Member, that Director has only one vote at Council Meetings.

(VCA Constitution Rule 26.3 (c))

Years of appointment of Regional Directors

Region	Even Year	Odd Year
Ballarat & District		X
Bayside	X	
EMCA		X
Geelong	X	
Goulburn Valley		X
Gippsland	X	
MVCA	X	
NDCA	X	
NEDCA		X
SEMCA		X
SWCA		X
WMCMA	X	
Wimmera	X	

4. Overview of croquet in Victoria

Structure

The VCA is an association of regional associations which in turn are associations of clubs. There are currently 13 regions and 90 clubs. The four metro regions have a total of 21 clubs between them, the nine country regions have 69 clubs.

A list of regions and clubs with links to their webpages is available on the VCA website at croquetvic.asn.au/clubs.php.

The VCA Constitution and Bylaws are available at croquetvic.asn.au/governance.php.

VCA office-bearers are listed in the Croquet Victoria address book, online at croquetvic.asn.au/officers.php, and in *Malletsports*.

Membership

Membership numbers total 2858 (4 March 2017); one third of the members belong to clubs in metro regions and two thirds belong to clubs in country regions. Club numbers range from 5 in the smallest clubs to 89 at the biggest club (Mornington). Three quarters of all clubs have fewer than 40 members and a quarter have fewer than 17. More than half the clubs in country regions have fewer than 27 members.

Up to date membership figures and an indication of online activity are available at croquetvic.asn.au/membersbyclub.php.

According to data collected from clubs in 2009, about three quarters of the members are over 65, and about three quarters of the members are women.

Recruitment and Publicity

The current VCA Strategic Plan aims to recruit significantly more members over the next five years, particularly in the 30-60 age group.

The VCA Marketing and Publicity Subcommittee has developed a resource pack "Growing Croquet in Victoria" which includes materials to help regions and clubs with recruitment and development. The pack has been distributed to regions via attendance at regional association meetings and are also available online at croquetvic.asn.au/GrowingCroquet.

Other publicity resources include bookmarks and a trifold leaflet, available from Sandra Kastanaras at the VCA office (administration@croquetvic.asn.au).

Capability

The current VCA Strategic Plan aims to develop more active coaches, referees and tournament managers over the next five years.

There is a list of accredited coaches and referees in the Croquet Victoria address book, and an up to date list is available at croquetvic.asn.au/refscaches.php. This webpage also includes information on arrangements for organising training for coaches and referees.

The coach training system was recently been reviewed at national level, and the new system has begun rolling out.

Coaching

Just over half the clubs in Victoria have at least one coach who was accredited under the old system. However the availability of coaches is quite uneven. Currently Murray Valley CA and Wimmera CA have no accredited coaches, and most small clubs do not have an accredited coach.

Referees

Most regions have a number of accredited referees in both GC and AC. Smaller clubs are less likely to have members who are referees.

Tournament managers

There is currently no accredited training for tournament managers. Informal training is arranged via the Tournaments and Fixtures Committee. A handout on tournament management was distributed to clubs in 2013 via the VCA officers' regional roadshow.

Playing Croquet

Currently around 900 members compete in Golf Croquet and 260 compete in Association Croquet. Ricochet is played by 200 members at about 20 clubs. Gateball is also played at a small number of clubs. The vast majority of recent recruits to croquet play Golf Croquet. Across the state, rather less than half of all registered members are involved in competition.

Other members presumably play socially – though some are former players who have retained their membership.

Coordinators of AC, GC and Gateball are listed among the VCA Officers and are happy to advise if clubs would like to develop their play in a particular code.

Club Resources

In the 2015 survey of clubs, it appeared that 72% had access to at least two A courts. About half the clubs responding said they had at least some help with maintaining their clubhouse, but 57% said they were solely responsible for maintaining their courts. Country clubs were more likely than metro clubs to be dissatisfied with their playing surface and to want advice on improving their lawns.

Fourteen clubs had lights at that time.

5. Council Code of Conduct

The Council should ensure and actively promote ethical behaviour and decision making as set out in the Code of Conduct. Council members are expected to act with integrity to ensure that the reputation of Croquet Victoria is managed, protected and enhanced.

- The Council recognises the importance and value of Council diversity. The Council and its members are expected to promote and encourage equity and inclusiveness throughout the organisation and consider age, gender, cultural background and people with a disability in decision making.
- Directors are expected to act honestly and in the best interests of the members as a whole and not to represent individual constituents.
- Directors are expected to contribute to a positive Council behaviour and culture by showing respect for other Council members' opinions and allowing each member a fair and equal opportunity to contribute to discussion / decision making.
- Directors are required to comply with the following legal duties including:
 - *act in good faith and for a proper purpose*
 - *exercise due care and diligence*
 - *ensure the organisation does not continue to carry on its business whilst insolvent*
 - *meet the requirement of various federal and state laws that directly impact on the organisation*
- Directors are expected to disclose actual/potential conflicts of interest and to stand aside during discussion & resolution.
- Directors are expected to behave responsibly particularly regarding confidential information.
- Directors are expected to review Council papers before Council meetings and acquaint themselves with the issues confronting the Council.

6. Streamlined Strategic Plan for 2015 – 2020

1. Background

June 2015 - at its meeting in June 2015 Council agreed to a process for updating and streamlining the VCA Strategic Plan. A key feature of this process is grassroots consultation – if the Strategic Plan is to be useful in directing the development of croquet in Victoria, it needs to be owned and implemented across our organisation.

August 2015 - in further preparation for determining objectives for the future, the August 2015 Council meeting discussed the key issues facing croquet at the moment.

The issues Council most strongly identified were:

1. the ageing membership of VCA
2. the public image of croquet as a game for elderly people
3. public ignorance about croquet.

Other issues raised included low membership numbers; lack of resources for club development; vulnerability to attrition as a result of relying on long-standing AC players to take responsibility; lack of commitment among social members; rigidity and resistance to change; shortage of coaches; difficulties in recruiting young members. These are issues of capability – they will also need to be tackled if croquet is to develop.

October 2015 - A draft of the revised Strategic Plan was presented to Council, setting out the priorities agreed at the August meeting and listing possible goals and activities against each priority. Council discussed this document informally in small groups. Notes were taken of each discussion and the outcomes reported back to the meeting.

The major agreed change was to set only one priority for increasing membership, focused on recruiting working age adults.

2. Updated Plan

The plan now includes:

- A vision for Croquet Victoria in 2020
- A small number of priorities: governance, membership, image, and capability, as per the Council discussions in August and October.
- A summary of current status for each of these priorities
- Goals relevant to each priority, amended in line with the Council discussion in October
- Strategies for achieving the goals, also amended in line with the Council discussion in October
- Measures of achievement against each goal

3. Way Forward

Council adopted the Strategic Plan at its meeting on 14th December 2015 and is progressing action under the various priorities.

A detailed Implementation Plan is in development.