

Implementation of the digital edition of the Australian Orienteer

The digital edition of the Australian Orienteer was launched in March 2017. Decisions were made in 2016 that:

- Members would be given the opportunity to opt in to receiving a hard copy of the magazine
- The per-copy subscription fee to states would be replaced by dividing the total net annual cost of the magazine between the States on the same basis as the State Registration Fee (with a cap such that no State would pay more in 2017 than it did in 2016).

Because several states had already begun their membership renewal process before these decisions were finalised at the 2016 Conference, the implementation of the opt-in aspect is incomplete, with some states continuing to send a hard copy to all members in 2017. We expect that all states will implement the opt-in option for 2018.

Uptake of the digital edition and what this means for finances

The total order of printed magazines has decreased from 1854 in December 2016 to 1332 in June 2017 (a 28% decrease). However, a decrease of 100-150 is normal from December to June (June has historically been the smallest order of the year as non-renewals are removed from mailing list).

The states which have most fully implemented the opt-in process are NSW and SA. (Victoria has also done so, but its unusual membership structure means it is of limited utility as a guide to likely developments in other states). Based on numbers from NSW and SA, we expect that uptake of the hard-copy opt-in will be 30-40%, and therefore (incorporating direct subscriptions and other hard-copy orders) the likely size of the print run in 2018 will be 40-50% of its current level.

Whilst printing costs for the most recent edition are yet to be finalised, based on the numbers and scenarios above, we are anticipating savings on printing costs in the order of \$5,000 for 2017 and \$10,000 for 2018. Under current policy these savings will be passed on to States (thus partly offsetting proposed increases to the State Registration Fee). There will be further savings to States on postage, although the size of these savings will vary from state to state depending on how they currently distribute their magazines and whether they are bundled with any other mailouts.

Recommendation

- That the 2017 policy for charging the Australian Orienteer to States (that is, a division of the State Registration Fee) be continued for 2018.
- That final amounts payable by States for 2017 be calculated in December and the States be invoiced (or, if applicable, refunded) for the difference between that final amount and what they have already paid in March, June and September.
- That State contributions in 2018 be paid quarterly, with the March, June and September amounts being fixed contributions based on an estimate of the likely full-year liability, and the balance of the exact amount paid in December.
- That rates for direct subscriptions remain unchanged for 2018.

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