

CIRCULAR



No: C24/2023
Date: 7/12/2023
To: All Members
Re: Zone & District Unification Update

Dear Members, Zone and District Administrators and valued stakeholders,

This is a special announcement with an important update on the future Governance structures of the sport of Bowls across NSW.

1. Announcing 'Regions'

Sixteen (16) new Regional Bowling Associations are being created.

These Associations will take the place of current Zone and District administrations.

These new Associations will be called 'Regions.'

The word 'Region' fits with the geographical naming of these Associations. Please refer below:

2. Regions – Names

NEW Region name	Current Zone	Current District(s)	Notes
Northern Rivers Bowls	Zone 1	Clarence River Northern Rivers Tweed Byron +1 x 'Isolated Club'	
Greater Newcastle Bowls	Zone 2	Lake Macquarie Newcastle Hunter River*	*East Maitland only – remainder of Hunter River District is in Hunter Valley Region
North West Bowls	Zone 3	Central Northern East Gwydir Namoi New England +3 x 'Isolated Clubs'	
Mid West Bowls	Zone 4	Central Tablelands Central Western Mid West South Western* Southern Slopes** Western***	*Grenfell only (remainder of South Western District in Riverina Murray Region) **Condobolin only (remainder of Southern Slopes District in Riverina Murray Region) ***Except Hazelbrook & Lawson who are in Warragamba Nepean Region
Warragamba Nepean Bowls	Zone 5	Mitchell* Nepean Southern Tablelands Western**	*Blacktown Workers only (remainder of Mitchell District is in Metro North-West Region) **Hazelbrook and Lawson only (remainder of Western District is in Mid West Region)

Hunter Valley Bowls	Zone 6	Hunter River* Upper Hunter	*Except East Maitland who are in Greater Newcastle Region
South Coast Bowls	Zone 7	Bega Imlay Far South Coast Snowy Mountains South Coast*	*Except Bomaderry & Gerringong who are in Illawarra Region
Riverina Murray Bowls	Zone 8	Central Riverina Riverina South Western* Southern Slopes** Southern Highlands	*Except Grenfell which is in Mid West Region **Except Condobolin which is in Mid West Region
Metro North-East Bowls	Zone 9	Manly-Warringah North Shore	
Metro North-West Bowls	Zone 10	Macquarie Mitchell* Lansdowne**	*Except Blacktown Workers which is in Warragamba Nepean Region **Merrylands only (remainder of Lansdowne is in Metro South-West Region)
Barrington Coast Bowls	Zone 11	Lower North Coast	
Metro South-West Bowls	Zone 12	City West* Georges River** Lansdowne***	*Lidcombe only (remainder of City West is in Metro South-East Region) **Mount Lewis, Moxon Sports, Padstow, Picnic Point & Revesby Workers only (Remainder of Georges River in Metro South-East Region) ***Except Merrylands which is in Metro North-West Region
Metro South-East Bowls	Zone 13	City West* Eastern Suburbs Georges River** Sutherland Shire	*Except Lidcombe which is in Metro South-West **EBP Sports (Earlwood) and Olds Park Sports only (Remainder of Georges River is in Metro South-West Region)
Mid North Coast Bowls	Zone 14	Hastings Haven Mid North Coast	
Central Coast Bowls~	Zone 15	Central Coast	
Illawarra Bowls	Zone 16	Illawarra South Coast*	*Bomaderry & Gerringong only (remainder of South Coast District is in South Coast Region)

~This Association name is subject to approval and may change from the above listed format due to this name already being in use. All other names have been approved by NSW Fair Trading.

For a full listing of the clubs within each new Region, please follow the below link:

<https://www.zonedistrictunification.com.au/regions>

For information in relation to competition boundaries please refer to the previous circular from Bowls NSW Circular C22/2023 [Update on New Governance Structures](#)

3. Future Structures – Outlined

- There will be sixteen Bowls 'Regions' located across NSW.
- These Regions will be established as Incorporated Associations and governed by the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 and under the overarching umbrella of Bowls NSW.
- The Region Associations will be responsible for delivering Region and State events on behalf of Bowls NSW.
- As of 1 July 2024, male and female Bowlers across NSW will be required to be affiliated with their Region Association, through membership of their member club, to participate in Region and State events.
- Interim management committees to be formed from existing Zone and District administrators and will be tasked with establishing these Associations. These committees will be comprised of men and women and be equally proportionate in their composition.
- Following this interim management committee, the Region Associations will elect their Management Committees comprised of men and women and as outlined in their constitutions.
- The Region boundaries will be the same as current Zone boundaries (as previously announced).
- The Regions will have a constitution and a set of governing guidelines / principles.

This means that regardless of gender, individuals from men's and women's bowling clubs across NSW will be able to affiliate with the one Region, to compete in Bowls NSW events, Bowls Australia events and beyond.

4. Establishing New Regional Associations

Bowls NSW is in the process of establishing the sixteen (16) new Region Associations with NSW Fair Trading. We are taking the lead on this process in the interest of time and to ensure that uniform governance is implemented across the State including Association Constitutions and ensuring foundation Principles are implemented from the outset of these Associations.

A copy of the Region Associations Constitution will be published in due course. This will likely be into the New Year (mid-late January) for members to read through and familiarise themselves with the content. The Founding members of these sixteen Associations will be requested by Bowls NSW to come from our existing Zone and District administrators within these Region Boundaries. The process of earmarking these founding members will be further explained, however, we highly recommend that initial working parties are formed between current Zone and current District Administrators from now onward. Initially for the purposes of introductions, ice breakers and getting to know each other and then ultimately with the intention of working together into the future to select these founding members and assisting in establishing the new Associations.

Bowls NSW will appoint current CEO Tim Rowe as the initial public officer of each of the sixteen Associations as an 'interim Public Officer' and for the purposes of establishing these Associations. The Constitution of each Association will outline this as an interim solution, with Association Members to elect a new Public Officer in due course. We would encourage this to occur immediately after the Associations are established and management committee formed.

The above steps of appointment will be outlined in the legal framework provided.

5. Dissolving Current Zone and District Associations

Due to the introduction of these new Region Associations, current Zone and District Associations will be required by Bowls NSW to dissolve. This request will not be formally requested until these new Region Associations are established; founding members of each have been established; and asset transfers are underway/completed.

All Zones are currently Incorporated Associations and most Districts are unincorporated Associations, therefore, the process for dissolving will be different for each Zone or District Association.

Bowls NSW will be providing a legal/operational checklist for Zone and District Administrators before we break for Christmas to guide this process into the New Year.

This checklist will include a step-by-step guide for administrators to follow; the necessary motions to be proposed and approved by members (template wordings); and any further template deeds required for asset transfers etc.

6. Transfer of Assets – Overview for Zones and Districts

Part of this process will involve current Zone and District Associations being requested by Bowls NSW to transfer their current assets across to the new Region Associations. It is our intention to ensure that any historical funds raised in a specific area, by specific members, remains within this area for the purposes of delivering and advancing the sport of bowls into the future.

A template deed of transfer will be provided by Bowls NSW and will form part of the legal/operational checklist that will be provided in due course.

Motions will need to be presented to members in relation to this process and will be outlined in the legal/operational checklist.

There are some small differences to the transfer of assets across Districts as we have some clubs moving across previously set boundaries. In these instances, and for those impacted clubs and Districts (outlined in the above summary) a best practice guideline will be published outlining the split of assets to be allocated from District to Regions.

Zone and District records including finances, meeting minutes etc, will be legally collected within this Deed of transfer and merged across into the new Region Association.

7. Legal / Operational Checklist

As outlined, a legal/operational checklist will be provided to Zone and District Administrators and made available for all members before Christmas in 2023. We will make an announcement once this document becomes available.

8. Support from Bowls NSW

Communications

We are in the process of establishing centralised email accounts for specific roles to be used by the sixteen regions. It is likely we will establish centralised emails for:

- President, Secretary, Treasurer & Chair of Match

This is so Bowls NSW can communicate effectively into the future with each Region Association and when ultimately individuals move on from these positions, that there remains a centralised inbox for future administrators and a common point of contact for Bowls NSW to effectively communicate to these stakeholders. The establishment and ongoing maintenance of these sixty-four (64) accounts will be funded and supported by Bowls NSW.

Finance

Once the Region Associations are established, Bowls NSW will issue licenses to each Association to use the Xero accounting product. This is a cloud-based accounting system and it is a great platform for us as a sport to adopt into the future. Initial and ongoing training will be provided to Region Administrators in how to use this platform and these licenses and training will be funded by Bowls NSW.

Branding

We understand that the new Associations will require an identity. Bowls NSW would like to assist in supporting each Region in establishing their own identity by way of logo branding. Uniformity is critical across our Regions, and it is proposed that these logos will be created in a same format as the Bowls Australia; all other State Bowls Associations and the Bowls NSW logo. Colours and the feature image/mascot of each logo can be determined by each Region and Bowls NSW will provide the services of a creative agency in establishing these. Bowls NSW will cover these costs.

We also understand that many Zones and some Districts have existing uniforms for their representative teams/players and administrators. These uniforms will be permitted to be used and there will be a long period of grace for these to be used over the coming months and years as we transition into these new Region Associations.

Next Steps for Current Zone & District Associations

- Appoint a working party and schedule a time to meet with current Zone and District Reps from your Region – this meeting can occur into the New Year
- The purpose of this meeting is to:
 - o Connect with members of the Zone or District in your Region
 - Please contact Bowls NSW on enquiries@bowlsnsw.com.au or call our office on 02 9283 4555 if you require the contact information from the relevant individuals needed across Zones and Districts in your Region
 - o Discuss calendar matters such as sport scheduling and commence planning for the 2024-25 sport season now that Region Associations have been announced
 - Note: The Bowls NSW State Calendar is not yet published however we know of some Zones and Districts that have already started these conversations and we would encourage you to do the same
 - o Discuss any further updates as provided by Bowls NSW such as the release of the legal/operational checklist before Christmas
 - o Please inform your Zone or District Delegates of these details

Next Steps for Bowls NSW

- Communicate the legal/operational checklist for Zones and Districts before Christmas
- Schedule a series of online meetings before and/or after Christmas and into the New Year to address this legal/operational checklist

- Record a video update for Zone & District Administrators and general members to refer to if they require any further information or would like to share this with any other club members or stakeholders.
- Open up broader communications into the New Year with all Zone and District Secretaries to discuss matters arising from the circulation of the legal/operational checklist.
- Establish 2 x workshops to address Zone and District Unification in early February and late March 2024
- Continue to update the Zone and District unification website here:
<https://www.zonedistrictunification.com.au/>

Next Steps for Clubs

- It would be great if Clubs could promote this news to their bowls members on their club notice boards and/or websites.
- Into the New Year, Clubs will be requested to vote at Zone or District General Meetings via their representatives, regarding the establishment of these new Region Associations and the transfer across to these Associations. The timing of this would be into February and the months following.
- Further information will be provided by Bowls NSW in relation to these steps in due course.

Additional resources

If you would like to seek any source references, we would refer you to the following NSW Fair Trading websites. We would highly recommend waiting until the legal/operational checklist is shared by Bowls NSW to all Zone and Districts and published on the Zone and District unification website before commencing/planning any formal proceedings in relation to the processes outlined.

Closing an association:

<https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/associations-and-co-operatives/associations/closing-an-association>

Starting an association (Led by Bowls NSW):

<https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/associations-and-co-operatives/associations/starting-an-association>

Thank you and we look forward to continuing to shape the future of our sport in partnership with you.

Kind regards,



Tim Rowe
CEO | Bowls New South Wales Ltd