



## **ABF MARKETING COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT RYDGES LAKESIDE HOTEL, CANBERRA**

**Friday 24 January 2014 – 5.30 pm**

**Attendees:** Allison Stralow, ABF Management Committee Member, Chair  
Joan Butts, ABF National Teaching Coordinator  
Sandra Mulcahy, ABF National Marketing Officer, Secretariat  
Hugh Grosvenor, Marketing Committee Member

**Apologies:** Tim O'Loughlin, Marketing Committee Member  
Brian Morgan, Marketing Committee Member

#### **AGENDA ITEM 1 – ABF WEBSITE**

Committee members discussed ad hoc feedback received from a variety of sources in regard to the *newish* ABF website. A consistent theme is difficulty with navigation around the site. Whilst this is a normal consequence of introducing a new website, it was acknowledged that the time may now be right to capture feedback from users to ensure that the site is continually improved to meet the needs of **all** its users.

#### **Action Item:**

On behalf of the ABF Marketing Committee, Allison Stralow is to recommend to the ABF Technology Committee that:

1. a '*user tip*' be placed on the ABF home page under 'Latest News' advising people to utilise the *site map* to aid in navigation;
2. a structured feedback process be designed and implemented to capture specific issues from site users;
3. an article be placed in the ABF Newsletter regarding the feedback process – inviting users to provide feedback; and
4. a moderated feedback forum be provided on the website.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 2 – ABF TEACHERS' ACCREDITATION PROGRAM**

Joan Butts advised that the new ABF Teachers' Accreditation Program was officially *launched* at the SFOB on Saturday 18 January. It was attended by approximately 20 teachers from around Australia. The first component of the program, namely the accreditation of teachers who have attended an ABF TTP, is now under way and incorporates teachers in both city and country areas around Australia.

It is intended that a celebratory dinner be held once people start to attain the required **50** accreditation points. As this is expected to be in approximately 12 months a dinner may be scheduled for the 2015 SFOB to celebrate their achievement.

The second component of the program, involving an accreditation process for existing teachers, who have not attended a TTP, will be rolled out in 2015. This is expected to involve a workshop for experienced teachers. Once again, the States/Territories can use their marketing grant funding to assist teachers to attend this workshop.

It was agreed that two essential elements need to be maintained in regard to this program. Firstly, the process for accreditation must be transparent and secondly, the integrity of the program must be guarded. The ABF seeks to have accredited teachers who provide professional sessions for prospective members of ABF affiliated clubs, using up-to-date techniques and materials.

Joan Butts advised that Alana Mowbray has been appointed as an Administrative Assistant to assist with the implementation and upkeep of this program (*see Strategic Plan Item 5.3 – ie allocation of \$5,000 for this purpose*).

### **AGENDA ITEM 3 – ABF TEACHERS’ TRAINING PROGRAM**

Joan Butts advised that the schedule for 2014 has been set. Once again, it is anticipated that States and Territories will utilise their marketing grant funds to subsidise the cost of attendance for their teachers. Allocation of these funds is expected to be used *60% training/ 40% marketing*.

Attendance at one of the workshops will enable attendees to commence the ABF Teachers’ Accreditation Program process.

These workshops are gaining in popularity around Australia as demand is increasing.

#### **Action Item:**

Joan Butts to design and develop a process to meet the demand for these workshops from 2015 onwards.

### **AGENDA ITEM 4 – ABF STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-17 (PROGRESS ON MARKETING ISSUES)**

The ABF Marketing Committee considered progress against relevant issues from the ABF Strategic Plan 2013-17. These issues are outlined below.

No	Strategy	Update
1.1	Host the World Bridge Federation Women’s Jamboree in 2015.	This issue is still under consideration by the ABF Management Committee.
1.3	Assess the feasibility of hosting the 2017 World Bridge Federation Championship	A project officer has not been appointed.
1.4	Host the 2018 Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championship	This issue is still under consideration by the ABF Management Committee.
1.5	Undertake targeted, National campaigns ( <i>to coincide with scheduled lesson times</i> ) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• retirees (including self-funded retirees)</li><li>• professional groups (<i>ie law, accounting, medical etc</i>)</li></ul>	Action Items will be developed at the ABF National Marketing Workshop in 2014.

No	Strategy	Update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ethnic groups</li> <li>• other sporting groups</li> <li>• city and community clubs</li> <li>• financial planning forums</li> </ul>	
	Design, develop and implement a process to better understand how people heard of beginner classes. Seek cooperation of States and Territories in sharing this information to help inform approaches.	Completed - This information will be collected as part of the Teachers' Accreditation Program implementation.
1.6	<p>Promote the health benefits of bridge to the Australian community by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• placing articles in publications at major professional group conferences and events</li> <li>• information/interviews on radio programs coinciding with 'themes' etc</li> <li>• information about health benefits placed on web site (<i>relevant target group</i>)</li> </ul>	Allison Stralow to establish the status of this item.
1.7	Change the perception youth have of bridge as it being a sport for older people – strategy to be developed and submitted to the ABF Management Committee for endorsement.	Allison Stralow to establish the status of this item ( <i>responsibility rests with the Youth Committee</i> ).
1.8	<p>Enable our existing players to become bridge ambassadors by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using 'Vistoprint' to produce 'bbq' cards – State and Territory based; and</li> <li>• develop a plan recommending a distribution process for consideration by the ABF Management Committee.</li> </ul>	Allison Stralow to establish the status of this item.
2.5	<p>Undertake continuous and incremental improvements to the new ABF website by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Channel Strategy for 'pushing the ABF National Newsletter to being predominantly electronic to be submitted to the ABF Management Committee for consideration</li> <li>• Align the international, National and State calendars of events</li> <li>• A comments/suggestions/feedback facility to be provided on the new ABF website</li> <li>• Proposal to be submitted to the ABF Management Committee in regard to a National on-line payment facility for events</li> <li>• Align 'branding' of National and State websites</li> </ul>	<p>See comments under Agenda Item 1 – <i>in regard to continuous and incremental improvements</i>.</p> <p>Allison Stralow to check with the Technology Committee and Andrew Richman in regard to other activities requiring action.</p>
3.2	Endeavour to have our Patron attend the SFOB in 2014	Completed. Sandra Mulcahy to draft a letter to issue from the ABF President asking Senator Lundy to continue in the role ( <i>whilst she is the Senator for the ACT</i> ).
3.3	Develop a National database of possible avenues for grants, land, buildings etc	Sandra Mulcahy commented that she advises States/Territories of any available grants through the ABF Marketing Updates which issue regularly.
3.4	Assist States in developing a plan to have a bridge club in every community with a population in excess of 50,000	Allison Stralow will raise this issue at an upcoming ABF Management Committee meeting
3.5	Ensure that ABF sponsors attain a good return on their	Allison Stralow mentioned the focus should be

No	Strategy	Update
	investment	<p>on membership benefits. Sandra Mulcahy advised that :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBIB are soon to expand their insurance offer to cover discounted house and contents insurance;</li> <li>• TOGA Hospital are to be approached in regard to discounted accommodation for the ANC; and</li> <li>• discussions currently under way with a discounted wine outlet regarding National sponsorship.</li> </ul>
4.1	<p>Publicise and continually reinforce the ABF values by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ongoing, regular communication through all ABF communication channels (eg web, Newsletters, Bulletins etc)</li> <li>• update the New Members' Information Kit by including the ABF Values and Vision</li> <li>• guidelines developed and distributed to all Club Managers to assist them in maintaining an enjoyable environment for all levels of players</li> <li>• guidelines developed and distributed to all Tournament Directors to assist them in dealing with difficult situations/people</li> <li>• design, develop and implement a survey to establish a baseline Australia-wide; and</li> <li>• conduct annual surveys to assess and monitor Australian bridge playing culture.</li> </ul>	<p>This is still to be considered by the ABF Management Committee. Marketing Committee members were informed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all score books at the SFOB this year had behaviour standards printed on the back; and</li> <li>• the ABF Marketing website now contains a 'behaviour' poster which can be downloaded for use by clubs.</li> </ul> <p>Sandra Mulcahy undertook to update the ABF New Members' Kit during 2014.</p>
4.2	<p>Organise opportunities for social networking between players at the SFOB by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• approaching high-profile players and see if they would network with emerging talent (<i>of all levels</i>) to foster goodwill and excitement in the sport – funded by the ABF.</li> </ul>	<p>Sandra Mulcahy advised that this will be considered at the ABF National Marketing Workshop in 2014.</p>
5.2	<p>Acknowledge and recognise our wonderful volunteers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• submitting a strategy to the ABF Management Committee in regard to having a specific day of recognition; and</li> <li>• arrange to have the date inserted into the Calendar of Events.</li> </ul>	<p>Sandra Mulcahy will submit a proposal for a <i>Day of Recognition</i> to the ABF Management Committee for consideration during 2014. This will also be discussed at the upcoming National Marketing workshop.</p>
5.3	<p>Ensure that bridge teachers are highly skilled and possess the necessary interpersonal and communication skills by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing a National curriculum and format for an accreditation program for bridge teachers.</li> </ul>	<p>A Teachers' Accreditation Program proposal from Joan Butts was endorsed by the ABF Management Committee in 2013.</p> <p>See comments under Agenda Item 2</p>

## **AGENDA ITEM 5 – NATIONAL MARKETING WORKSHOP 2014**

An ABF National Marketing Workshop is to be held in 2014 for the purpose of developing a National ABF Marketing Plan (*aligned to the ABF Strategic Plan 2013-17*). Possible timing for the workshop is

May – depending on when time is available to undertake the necessary planning and preparation work.

Costings for this workshop have been included in the ABF Marketing Budget for 2014 – ie for **one** representative from each Region. Each State/Territory may choose to send any number of attendees with expenses associated with additional representatives being their responsibility.

**Action Item:**

Once a date has been determined, the ABF National Marketing Officer is to extend an invitation to all States and Territories to nominate a representative/s. The invitation to advise that the airfares, accommodation and taxi fares for one representative from each Region will be reimbursed from the National Marketing budget.

The invitation is to specify that only people with a responsibility for marketing in their Region should attend as they will be expected to actively participate in both the development and implementation of an ABF National Marketing Plan for 2014/15.

**AGENDA ITEM 6 – MARKETING SPECIAL PROJECTS GRANT – AN UPDATE**

Sandra Mulcahy advised that she has made contact with all successful grant applicants and advised that she will be monitoring the implementation of their initiatives through 2014-15. Many of the recipients have already commenced detailed planning of their activities for 2014 with some under way already.

All 'learnings' from this program, both positive and negative, will be shared with State Secretaries via Marketing Updates.

**AGENDA ITEM 7 – ABF OCEANIC CLUB**

Sandra Mulcahy highlighted the increasing number of people participating in bridge lessons at sea and the resultant possibility for capturing them into the Australian bridge playing community. Key issues for consideration include the quality of teachers/directors conducting these sessions, support for these people, masterpoints allocation, promotional material, session notes and hand-outs and membership options.

**Action Item:**

The ABF National Marketing Officer to develop a set of recommendations for how best to capture these people to the ABF Management Committee. A draft is to be circulated to ABF Marketing Committee members for approval as a first step.

**AGENDA ITEM 8 – GENERAL BUSINESS**

**a) Summer Festival of Bridge 2014**

Sandra Mulcahy reported that:

- numbers for the festival appear to be on the rise
- Senator Lundy officially opened the event as its Patron on Wednesday morning, 15 January

- Media coverage
    - Sean Mullamphy interviewed on ABC Radio on Tuesday 14 January
    - A ½ page article (*with photograph of competitors*) appeared in The Canberra Times on Thursday 16 January
    - Local TV Stations PRIME and WIN did not respond to media releases from the ABF Marketing Officer
    - Senator Lundy did article on her twitter account following her official launch.
  - Message from ABF President welcoming participants appeared on the front page of The Daily Bulletin on Wednesday 15 January
  - TBIB attended the festival for 2 ½ days and mentioned they were happy with the number of queries from members of ABF affiliated clubs. They brought with them a new perpetual trophy for their event (*a Royal Doulton vase*) and information about the upcoming offer for discounted house and contents coverage.
  - Approximately 53 marketing questionnaires were completed by participants (*the information will be collated and reported on to ABF Marketing Committee members asap*).
  - Four super-novice players were interviewed and photographed – the ABF Marketing Officer to do an article for the March issue of the ABF Newsletter. Overall, they were very happy with their first experience of a gold point event.
  - The ABF National Teaching Officer successfully *launched* the ABF Teachers' Accreditation Program – with approximately 20 attendees. They all appeared enthusiastic about the program.
  - The ABF National Teaching Officer provided three free workshops for novice players at the event – all of which were well attended.
  - The trial of a tea/coffee service by caddies to the bridge table was successful. Sean Mullamphy has subsequently advised that this will be done again at future tournaments.
  - Therapy Masters exercise sessions seemed to gain in popularity during the event – amongst the majority of players. Participation rates in the main play area appeared to be around **90%**. Positive feedback was received from a number of players (*and on feedback forms*). This organisation interested in continuing its relationship with the event in 2015.
- Note: Hugh Grosvenor voiced strong disapproval of exercises being conducted before play at any future event. He found them to be both insulting and unnecessary.

#### **Action Items:**

1. Sandra Mulcahy to craft a letter from the ABF President to Senator Lundy asking her to be the ongoing Patron for the event (*whilst she maintains the position of Senator for the ACT*).
2. Sandra Mulcahy to liaise with Sean Mullamphy in regard to any ongoing relationship with Therapy Masters.

#### **b) ABF expectations of time commitment - ABF National Marketing Officer role**

Sandra Mulcahy highlighted that the time required to undertake the ABF National Marketing Officer role is increasing significantly as new initiatives are implemented, ad hoc projects are assigned to her by the ABF Management Committee (*eg a uniform policy, the grant process, the bushfire appeal*) and as an increasing number of clubs seek advice and assistance with their marketing activities.

Main duties for the position include:

- Reports on marketing grants and their application (*both annual and special grants*)
- General emails/advice to clubs
- Project work (*as highlighted above*)
- Crafting proposals (*eg Information pack for presentations/ campaign for non-affiliated clubs*)
- Input to the Summer Festival of Bridge
- Relationship Management – sponsors
- Media releases
- Articles for the ABF Newsletter
- Responsibilities assigned to the role in the ABF Strategic Plan 2013-17
- Monthly issues of the ABF Marketing Update for affiliated clubs; and
- Regular issues of the ABF Marketing Update for State Secretaries.

**Action Item:**

Sandra Mulcahy to provide the ABF Management Committee with suggestions for a way forward on this issue.