

President's Message

By John Share

For those who did not attend the information night held on Monday 21st December 2009, I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of the decisions of your executive over the last 12 months regarding the line of flight and associated transport arrangements. Hopefully this will dispel any false statements or claims.

At the close of the 2008 season, the WPF and GMPF formed a partnership to transport their birds together from the first Old Bird race in 2009. Later, Geelong clubs that had utilised the VPU for transport over the years also chose to transport with the WPF.

On the 5th January, 2009 a letter was forwarded to the WPF requesting confirmation that payment for transport with them would be on a pro rata basis and the VRPU liberator had an equal say regarding the liberation of the birds. The WPF replied on the 15th January, 2009 advising that they were unable to supply a costing for transport and refusal to allow our liberator any say in the birds once on the truck. A letter was forwarded to the WPF on 30th January, 2009 informing them that we would be failing our members if the VRPU was to relinquish total control of our birds over to the WPF and GMPF.

Arrangements were then finalised with the VHA to transport with them from Mt Hope onwards. This arrangement was most satisfactory and I believe our transport last year was of a very high standard. This arrangement was to continue into the 2010 season. However, there was a down side, the VHA were flying the NW track and we were due to fly the NE track. This dilemma was not treated lightly by your executive. We understood the concerns of flyers who wished to fly the NE; however it is incumbent on your executive to provide races for the coming season. As we could not afford to transport on our own, the VHA was our alternative.

A letter was then received from the WPF again offering to transport our birds in the 2010 season. Although they offered very competitive pricing and identical conditions as the VHA, they would still not allow us a say in the liberation of our birds. A letter dated 5th October, 2009 was forwarded to the WPF thanking them for their invitation to transport with them. However we advised them as the VPU had never relinquished total control of our birds to another organisation, the executive believed to do so would be detrimental to the members of the VPU. We again asked they reconsider their stance regarding our liberation request.

As we did not receive any further correspondence from the WPF, your executive continued negotiations with the VHA. I must point out, that I spoke to both the WPF Secretary and President regarding our liberation request. Both were adamant that the VPU were to have no say in the liberation would not be altered.

In early January this year I was invited to meet the two WPF liberators to discuss the transport situation. Both persons were most understandable to our liberation request and recognised my arguments were both genuine and sincere.

I am pleased to say that a letter dated 14th January, 2010 was received from the WPF. This letter advised that after careful consideration and in the interests of the sport, the WPF and GMPF were prepared to give the VPU full consultation and discussion rights regarding the liberation of the birds, movement of the truck (ie. Race point) etc.

At the February board meeting, this letter was tabled and fully discussed by each individual executive member. All board members unanimously agreed that the WPF transport offer were more than satisfactory and the VPU should transport with them from the 350 mile race point. (Condobolin).

As we are now going on the NE track, it was further decided that no vote or discussion was necessary at the AGM.

It would be amiss of me if I did not mention that I was extremely disappointed with the actions of a few members over the last few months. I believe their actions were in such a manner to question whether their motives were for the better of the Union (you the members) or for individual gains. Unlike the individual, who only has to worry about his own backyard, your executive is always accountable to all members, and must always take the necessary steps to ensure their actions are for the betterment of the VPU and members.

It is inconceivable that certain members believed they could dismiss the current executive and put in a body of persons personally selected to represent you the members. I would remind those persons that Rule 14 is explicit; persons are nominated by their respective clubs and duly elected by ballot by all affiliated VPU members.

I believe no person holds ownership to any position on the executive, including the President, and I encourage any member to nominate thru their respective clubs if they so wish.

Finally, to those members who believe they are responsible for the executive changing the transport arrangements by their actions, let me assure you that this could not be further from the truth. Until advice was received from the WPF granting us a say in the liberation, the executive was going to continue negotiations with the VHA.

Lastly, I would like to inform you that this will be my final year as President of the VPU. After 17 years at the helm, I believe the VPU is well overdue for a new President.

I trust that my successor is a member who has displayed over the years his loyalty to the Union. He should be a willing and trusting worker who has an intimate knowledge of the position and its responsibilities.

John Share