

It is a commitment but you get to choose how big!

Race club committees carry not only the hopes, dreams and expectations of the club members but also a great deal of responsibility. It is the role of the Committee to work as a team and run the club on behalf of the members to achieve the goals and objectives of the club.

It is not the role of the Committee to do the day-to-day work of the club, although this does occur, but it is about ensuring you have help with the right people, in the right roles at the right time.

The most successful clubs find the balance between being Committee Members responsible for delivering the club's strategic objectives and gathering a volunteer workforce to help with the day-to-day work. The key to running a successful race club is to focus your Committee on creating a culture of volunteering so you have the help you need to make your club to prosper.

Functions of a race club Committee

The role of the Committee

The race club Committee is a group of people elected according to the rules or Constitution of the club, that comes together to make the club run smoothly.

Responsibilities of the Committee

The Committee is the club's senior decision-making group and manages the club's affairs on behalf of the members.

When Committee Members are asked what their primary responsibility or objective is, the answer is often, 'to leave the club in a better position than when we took on the role of Committee Member'. While this is important, it implies that the only thing to be done is to improve the club when the responsibilities are much broader.

The Committee's major responsibilities are to:

- Ensure the club is run according to its rules (Constitution), purpose, policies and procedures. If you are on the Committee it is important you have a copy of the rules, understand them thoroughly and run your club according to these rules. In many cases, the club rules will also define additional responsibilities for the Committee and its office holders such as Chair/President or Secretary
- Oversee the financial affairs of the club, ensuring the club stays solvent. This means being able to pay your clubs bills when they become due
- Ensure the sustainability of the club. Most people link club sustainability simply to financial sustainability but it also relates to ensuring the club has a sustainable number of participants and volunteers, access to suitable facilities when you need them (both for social activities and sport participation) and, often overlooked but vitally important, is community support
- Creating and implementing a succession plan for all roles within the club
- Recruiting, empowering, recognising, rewarding and maintaining club volunteers
- Ensure that the next generation of volunteers are being identified, developed and trained
- Define and deliver the club's objectives and Strategic Plan
- Create and manage a Risk Management Plan that minimises risks associated with all club activities, not just the sporting risks

- Collect, protect, maintain and hand over critical club information from one year to the next
- Create your club culture and ensure the sporting, competitive and social needs of members are met
- Regularly communicate with club members

Racing Committee Structure

An effective racing club structure is important to be a successful club. A race club Committee, also known as a Management Committee, would have been established when the club was formed. The Committee consists of:

- Executive Committee – Chair/President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, and
- General Committee Members looking after other portfolios. These may include Sponsorship and Fundraising Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, Risk Management Officer and Media and Public Relations Coordinator.

What makes an effective Committee Member?

The club Committee should operate as a team and work towards common goals by drawing on each other's skills and talents. It needs the right group of people, with an appropriate mix of skills, knowledge and experience, that fit the club's objectives and strategic goals.

The size and structure of a Committee will vary according to the size of the club. A club's Constitution will indicate how many Committee Members are to be appointed by the Committee and how many are to be elected by voting members.

The Committee Members should have a mix of professional knowledge and experience. This may include knowledge of business, accounting, legal, strategic and marketing fields.

Racing Queensland also encourages club committees to be inclusive and diverse to best meet the needs of their members. Committee Members should consider gender, age, multicultural background and geographic location. The Committee should also seek to represent different sections of the club.

It is also important to recognise if the Committee has a skills gap and seek to recruit accordingly.

The key elements to pay attention to when recruiting Committee Members are:

- A commitment to your club
- Sufficient time to devote to your club
- An understanding of the role of the Committee
- They have the skills you need
- Enthusiastic and interested in the club
- Good communication skills
- Leadership and listening skills
- Honesty

Election of Committees

Most race club Committees are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Your club Constitution will outline the method to elect the Committee and its Executive positions. When holding an AGM to elect a Committee make sure you:

- Refer to your constitution to ensure you follow correct process
- Make members aware of the importance of the election well in advance
- Send out correspondence outlining the positions available and the responsibilities
- Target individuals that seem suitable for the position
- Invite members to attend committee meetings to gain an understanding.
- Allow members to nominate themselves (if applicable)
- Keep track of nominations in case you need to approach someone that hasn't nominated
- Allow candidates to talk at the AGM to cover what they might offer the club