



Together, We Can Move the Organisation Forward

We are the A&P Showing Sector, we are proud of it and rightly so. We are unique as far as having a variety of livestock present at our A&P shows. Combine this with being a community event and the many opportunities this presents to the Sector, including opportunities in culture & heritage, education, social well-being plus many more – we know we have a real asset.

However, with every Sector, along with opportunities come challenges and we are not alone in that regard. Lack of volunteers to run the show; red tape; health & safety regulations; financial stability or lack of, they are all challenges that we face. While some Associations own their own grounds, providing them with some control and ability to create other revenue streams; others are not so fortunate therefore do not have the same opportunities.

Then COVID-19 came along and gave the world another set of problems and challenges to cope with.

It would be fair to say COVID-19 was a catalyst for us to act. While we could see the opportunities, we asked ourselves how could we overcome the challenges, including the fall-out from COVID-19 and ensure the A&P Showing Sector remained viable for future generations?

This has required a number of actions to be initiated.

Firstly, the RAS Executive reviewed the governance aspects of the Executive and re-formulated the portfolios with the view to bringing in external skill sets especially within the communication, financial and legal aspects. A number of external advisors have agreed to assist the organisation.

Secondly – and for a more hands-on, operational aspect – a group of six A&P Show Managers, the RAS CEO and President had a series of virtual meetings in an attempt to provide some clarity and insight in how to move forward, and what the next steps should be. The result led to a proposal that was put to government representatives, as well as the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI). A recommendation in the proposal was for a full independent strategic business review which has also been referred to as a “Better Business Case.”

Further discussions with MPI highlighted the need for that independent review and it was indicated there could be potential funding support for this initiative. We were advised to seek external advice and proceed with identifying an entity that could conduct the review for us. The external advisors included Gerard Dale, award-winning Solicitor from Lane Neave, and Matthew Yates, Director and Accountant from Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC). Two virtual meetings have been held with representatives from each District to ensure they were fully informed of the strategic direction. I am pleased to say we have received universal support from the Districts.

Following these meetings, we contracted Steve Bramley from SGL to undertake the review.

Steve is ready to undertake Stage 1 of the process and will be reaching out to a range of people across the Showing Sector to pose questions, hear their feedback and make some initial recommendations.

For more information on Steve Bramley, and SGL, please refer to the attached documents.

Brent Snelllex
RAS President