



PRESIDENT'S EMAIL



DECEMBER 2018

Dear Members

On behalf of our new Committee I want to extend to you and your family the Club's very best wishes for the festive season ahead. Christmas and New Year is family time and I do hope you can enjoy catching up and relaxing with family and friends. Of course, this is also a great time to get out paddling and enjoy some on water adventure. I anticipate that many of you will be getting away for a break and perhaps exploring some new paddling destinations. We will look forward to hearing about your adventures in 2019.

The new Committee has now met and I would like to share with you some of our plans for the Club in 2019.

2018-19 Subscriptions

We are aware that a number of members have outstanding subscriptions which were due and payable by 30 November this year. Can I please ask all members with outstanding subs to pay these so we can consolidate the Club's finances.

2019 Committee

The new Committee has got cracking and I mention a few initiatives and plans we have agreed below. As advised in my last President's Newsletter, Kate Alberico kindly offered to join the Committee as Membership Coordinator.

I am now also very pleased to advise that **Andrew Mueller** has agreed to undertake the Trips Coordinator role. Welcome Andrew, who will work with Trip Leaders to ensure that we have an active trips program in place for 2019. This will dovetail with the Training & Grading program also planned for 2019.

This still means that we do not have a full committee for 2019 and we will have to cut back some planned initiatives for next year unless we can fill vacant positions, which are as follows:

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

This role is responsible for managing three inter-related member and public communications channels for the Club: social media, web and email. The role is responsible for publishing on-line material and liaison with designated technical

support to enable maintenance of the Club's principal communications asset – the website, as well as curating the Club's Facebook Group site. The Communications Officer will coordinate any on-going website development, utilising technical support as required. They will regularly publish new material to the website to service Club members and the broader public. The role will work with the Sea Trek Coordinator to ensure effective integration of all Club communications.

SEA TREK COORDINATOR

The primary responsibility of the Sea Trek Coordinator is the production of the Sea Trek magazine – the quarterly on-line journal of the VSKC. This requires desktop publishing, writing and editorial skills and a capacity to plan and manage a broad range of sea kayak-related topics. The role also requires strong networking skills and the capacity to encourage members to contribute. The Sea Trek Coordinator will therefore actively solicit articles, reports and digital photographs from all VSKC members. The role is responsible for the on-going refinement of the publication standards of Sea Trek to ensure contemporary presentation.

Sea Trek in 2019

In the absence of an active Editor for Sea Trek, we have decided to suspend publication of the Club magazine for the time being as we currently have no viable way of supporting publication.

We are looking at several models including guest editors on an issue by issue basis, paid editorial/publishing support and reduction in number of issues. But, our priority at this stage is to seek support from the membership to undertake this important role on behalf of the Club. We know there is an Editor out there!

2019 Paddle Festival and AGM

The Committee has decided to hold next year's event at Barwon Heads again. We have been very pleased with the overwhelmingly positive feedback this venue has attracted, so we are going back there again.

Trip Leaders in 2019

Further to the recent Trip Leader currency survey, there will be a smaller number of active Club Trip Leaders in 2019. Whilst numbers are still being finalised, there will be about half (~17) the number who were listed as Trip Leaders in 2018. We are training new Sea Leaders, and our 2019 Trip Leaders will work with Trips Convenor, Andrew Meuller to assemble a trips program in 2019 that best suits a range of paddling interests and capabilities.

Priority Initiatives in 2019

The Committee has agreed to the following priorities for 2019. These initiatives have been chosen to best balance enhancing member's experience:

- Substantive roll out of new grading model and associated training
- Enhance website to enhance member's experience
- Improve access to paddling related knowledge for members
- Increase proportion of younger members (< 35 yrs)

The **following table** provides further details, but key points to note include:

- Significant budget allocation to fund website upgrade
- Establishment of a Member User Group to guide website upgrade
- Member consultation on renewed Paddling Manual

Priority Actions 2019	Objectives
Substantive roll out of new grading model and associated training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete roll out of Sea Kayak Basics for existing members • Conduct at least two intakes/assessments for all new grades (Intro to Sea Skills, Sea Skills and Sea Leader – one intake, resources pending) • Complete assessment of new Sea Instructors
Enhance website to enhance member's experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fix member data base management to ensure one master copy with required access permissions (members and administration) • Enhance trip management through enabling an opt in trip booking system for members that populates an on line float plan and associated email trip management facility for Trip Leaders. Would also include ability for members to request trips from a catalogue (or suggest their own for Trip Leader attention)
Improve access to paddling related knowledge for members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and issue to all members the revised Club Paddling Protocol Manual (place online) • Complete searchable record of technical articles and trip reports featured in Sea Trek (place online)
Increase proportion of younger members (< 35 yrs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and introduce student membership • Proactively work with outdoor education providers to attract student members • Increase participation of existing younger members already connected via family memberships

Sea Kayak Basics Implementation and PFD Tag

As mentioned in my previous President's News, this new VSKC specific grade is replacing 'Grade 0'. It will be a mandatory requirement for all newly joining members, and will be awarded upon demonstration of some basic skills and knowledge. This will be available on regularly held Club training and induction paddles. The VSKC Trip Leader of the day will make the award once a paddler demonstrates the requirements. The Trip Leader will also help paddlers to understand and practice requirements, in some cases on dry land as appropriate.

In addition, we have decided to provide all Sea Kayak Basics holders with a small plastic tag that is to be affixed to PFD's. This will create a strong visual sense of coverage of this base skills and knowledge grade. Arrangements for recognition of Sea Kayak Basics skills and knowledge for existing members will be announced early in 2019, once decided by the Committee.

We will continue to offer this grading on all Club paddles subject to agreement with the Trip Leader of the day, but will concentrate on Canadian Bay paddles for ease of assessment.

Website Upgrade – Member User Group

A member's user group will be established to guide this important functionality upgrade. If you are interested in joining in this activity, please email Club Secretary, Maggie MacPherson. A follow up expression of interest will be undertaken closer to commencement of the project planned for the first part of 2019.

Increasing numbers of younger members

If you have a family membership, and/or younger family members who might enjoy checking out sea kayaking, we plan to run several events during 2019 aimed at younger paddlers. So please keep an eye out for these events that will be actively promoted nearer the time.

We will also investigate the practicality of a student membership in 2019, which may prove attractive to younger people wanting to get started in sea kayaking. Watch this space!

very best regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Rawling". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Richard Rawling, President, VSKC