

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT TO THE SHOOTING COUNCIL

20th NOVEMBER 2010



It is with great regret that I report the recent deaths of Mr Frank Balcombe and Dr Irene Daw.

Mr Balcombe died of pneumonia on Thursday of this week, having recently been re-admitted to hospital. He was Secretary of the English Small-bore Shooting Union and an Administrative Member of the Shooting Council until the time of his death and in the past had been a member of the Rifle Committee and Captain of Great Britain teams in the Roberts, Pershing and Dewar Matches. The details of the funeral have yet to be announced, but will be published on the NSRA website when they are

available.

Dr Daw, who died in late October, served for a number of years on the Airgun Committee in the 1990s. She had a distinguished career as an international rifle and match crossbow shooter, including competing in the 1984 Olympics. Subsequently she was involved in elite coaching, including with the Welsh and NSRA Junior Squads.



SHOOTING MATTERS

National Meetings

Attendance at the Bisley Rifle Meeting fell only marginally, from 879 last year to 869. After taking account of the number of shooters from the USA who came for the 2009 Roberts Match, this suggests that domestic participants had stabilised somewhat since the significant reduction in 2009. Michelle Smith's second win of the British Prone Rifle Championship means that the Roberts has now been won by women in three of the last four years.

The entry for the Pistol Championships rose by 14 to 89 competitors. As a result five competitions were re-instated in the programme, having been cancelled in 2009 because of lack of competitors.

The total number of competitors entering the five principal National Meetings was 1626, five lower than in 2009. The Scottish entry was unchanged and there were small increases at the 50 metre Championships and the Pistol Meeting. The reduction at the Bisley Rifle Meeting (-14) can be attributed to fewer overseas entries (as referred to above) and at the Airgun Championships (-12) reflects the number of shooters who were taking part in the Commonwealth Shooting Championships in Delhi.

Meeting Dates for 2011

The full programme of dates for next year is:

18 – 20 February	British Airgun Championships
10 – 12 June	British International 50 metres Rifle Championships
2 – 8 July	Scottish Rifle Meeting, Castletown
12 – 13 August	Sporter Air Rifle Championships
13 – 21 August	Bisley Rifle Meeting
9 – 11 September	Bisley Pistol Championships

It has also been agreed by the Rifle Committee that the 2012 Bisley Rifle Meeting should take place on its normal timing of 12 to 20 August. The first day therefore coincides with the Closing Ceremony of the Olympic Games.

International Matches

The World Championships were held in Munich in late July and early August. The highlights were the Individual Bronze Medal in the Junior Women's Prone Rifle for Jen McIntosh, the only individual medal won by the British team. Shooting in the Elimination stage of the Junior Men's Prone Rifle, Dan Rivers scored 598, to add two points to the British Record. Three members of the NSRA, Tony Lincoln, Simon Aldhouse and Harry Creevy, won the only Gold Medal, shooting in the Men's 300 metre Prone Rifle.

Despite the fact that there was a slight decrease in the number of shooting medals available at the Commonwealth Games in Delhi, the total number won by the Home Countries increased slightly from 27 in Melbourne 2006 to 31. This was due in large measure to the success of the Scottish Team, including their clean sweep of four gold medals in the 50 metre Prone Rifle events.

Disability Target Shooting Great Britain had considerable success at the IPC Shooting World Cup which it hosted at Stoke Mandeville on 30 September to 3 October. British team members won six of the ten individual Gold Medals available. The event was limited to airgun competitions, but the possibility of holding a full IPC Shooting World Cup at Bisley in 2011, also including cartridge rifle and pistol competitions, is being investigated.

Postal Internationals

Full details of the 2010 Postal International Match results will be published in *The Rifleman* in due course, but it is already known that Great Britain won the Dewar, Randle and Wakefield Matches.

Match Officials

The Rifle Committee has appointed Ms Sheena Sharp as Captain of the Randle team for 2011 and 2012. Mrs Yvette Edwards has been appointed Adjutant for the same years.

Gerry Weir of Jersey has been appointed as Captain of the Mayleigh team for 2011, when the event will be shot during the Jersey Open.

Targets

The NSRA needs to obtain some 50 and 100 yard decimal targets for the Randle Match in future years and the plan is to purchase them from one of the suppliers licensed by the NRA of America. A number of other organisations are known to use these targets for competitions. If any of them would like to obtain supplies from the same source at the same time, the NSRA can arrange a combined order. Enquiries should be made to Brian Woodall.

External Events

The NSRA will again have a presence at **The British Shooting & Countryman Show**, to be held on 26 and 27 February at the Newark Showground in Nottinghamshire. The show is being further expanded within a 150,000 sq.ft. indoor arena. Copies of the Show leaflet are available today and will be circulated in *The Rifleman*.

The date of BSSC's **National Shooting Week** has now been announced as 28 May to 5 June.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Staffing

Mr Ken Nash, Vice Chairman, paid tribute to **Mr Geoff Doe** in the Autumn 2010 issue of NSRA News, but as Mr Doe retired from the Association since my last report to the Shooting Council I would like to take this opportunity to record my personal thanks to him for all his work during my time with NSRA. As you all know Mr Doe's knowledge and experience was very valuable to the Association and its members and I was pleased to have had the opportunity to work with him for a while.

However I am equally pleased that at the start of this year we were able to find in **Mr Alistair Aitken**, a replacement who also brings great knowledge and experience which will benefit the Association and its members. Our intention was to have a transition period where Mr Aitken and Mr Doe worked together, and whilst this did take place, with his background and experience it didn't take long for Mr Aitken to familiarise himself with NSRA's needs and operate independently as our Shooting Manager.

Mr Mark Cook held the role of Operations Manager for the Lord Roberts Centre (LRC) from December 2009 until October 2010. Rather than replace Mr Cook with another Operations Manager, the NSRA Limited Company Directors have now decided in the first instance to seek to appoint a Sales Manager to boost the revenue from the LRC in 2011.

As reported to you in my July 2010 report, Sport England, who have a hold on the LRC until it is fully depreciated, have agreed that whilst some sporting elements need to be kept at LRC, the focus should be on commercial activities to assist the NSRA to improve its financial situation. Finding a Sales Manager should help achieve this objective.

Mrs Jen Sumner who works in our Competitions Department began maternity leave at the end of October, and I am happy to report that she has already given birth to a daughter in the last week. Congratulations and best wishes for the future go to Jen, her husband and baby daughter.

Membership

Fees for 2011

The fees for 2011 have been agreed by the Board of Management as:

Clubs

30 members or fewer	£130
Over 30 members	£180
County Associations	£390 (no change)
Cat. B, D & E organisations	£150

Individuals

Annual	£78
Junior and FTE	£40 (£1 reduction)
Associate	£55

Club and Association Affiliations in 2010

There was expected to be some increase in the number of affiliated organisations in 2010. This followed the decision of the British Field Target Association to discontinue its insurance scheme for its clubs and that many of the approximately 55 field target clubs and associations not already affiliated to the NSRA would join to benefit from our insurance package. Virtually every one did, and as a result the number of NSRA-affiliated organisations rose from 1036 in 2009 to 1086 this year.

Individual insurance

Agreement has been reached for an important change to the NSRA's individual members' insurance package. The £10m civil liability cover is being extended to cover rough, game and vermin shooting. It will therefore provide an alternative source, at no extra cost, for those members who currently have to obtain cover for these activities through BASC or elsewhere. Unlike BASC's insurance arrangements, the NSRA's scheme will also cover shooters' equipment to the usual levels of £5,000 for NSRA Annual Members and £2,000 for Associate Members.

In order to provide this service at no extra cost, it is only available to those who are members of NSRA-affiliated clubs and are therefore used to shooting within the safety regimes that apply at target shooting clubs.

2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Legacy

There are two ongoing matters relating to London 2012.

Firstly in regards to the electronic targetry equipment, as previously advised, following a meeting that was held with LOCOG and the Government Olympic Executive (GOE) in late May to discuss the Legacy Plan submitted in January, it was clear that LOCOG intended to hire/lease the 'electronic targetry equipment' rather than purchase it, and that the equipment would be secured via an IOC sponsor, Swiss Timing (Omega).

However, Mr David Parish has met with LOCOG and Sius Ascor (the company that supplies the electronic targetry equipment) in order to assist with procurement negotiations in the hope that an agreement with Sius Ascor can be secured that is sufficiently attractive to enable the electronic targetry equipment to be purchased and left as a legacy to the sport.

Sius Ascor are considering the matter and hopefully they will go back to Mr Parish and LOCOG soon with their final quote, and as a consequence a decision on whether to hire/lease or purchase will be made by LOCOG. We await the outcome of this matter.

Secondly, with the assistance of Mr Edward Kendall, and discussions with the GOE, a communication has been forwarded to GOE confirming interest in the sport of Shooting receiving the re-locatable structural assets from Woolwich, subject to costs, design etc so long as we are also provided with the electronic targetry equipment, also at no cost.

We have reiterated to GOE that we all still look forward to receiving a tangible physical legacy for the sport of Shooting from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, at no cost to the Shooting organizations.

Sport England

The NSRA Coaching and Development Manager, Mr Dave Froggett, continues to be seconded to GBTSF Ltd to fulfil the role of National Development Manager to oversee the implementation of the interventions agreed upon in the funding application made to Sport England in 2008 to develop the sport of Shooting in terms of its key result areas of 'Sustain' and 'Excel'.

Mr Froggett is admirably suited to the GBTSF NDM role, and there are many projects in the Sport England programme that overlap with projects he had in progress as the NSRA Coaching and Development Manager. He continues to ensure that our Coaching and Development programmes are administered and do not fall by the wayside.

Mr Froggett has prepared an article for the next issue of *The Rifleman*, and the Shooting Council members will be interested to see this. A copy is attached to this report.

News by Email

Two tests have recently been undertaken on a system for issuing news from the Charity, and separately special offers from the Shop, to individual members and affiliated organisations by email. Further information about the intentions and the trial were included in a letter circulated with the last issue of *The Rifleman*.

The trials of the new system were successful, in that the information reached a significant proportion of the Association's membership.

The first live run of the system is planned for the end of next week.

Disabled Shooting Project

Approaches to certain members of the Royal Family to seek their involvement in the Disabled Shooting Project and Disabled Shooting Year did not prove successful. However I am pleased to report that the Chairman has subsequently received a letter of support for the project from the Association's Patron, H.M. The Queen.

Following a successful Regional Disabled Championship held last month at Blackburn, it is proposed to hold a series of Regional Championships next year, leading up to a national final. Work is ongoing on identifying suitable venues for these events.

Some elements of the project fall within the areas covered by the Sport England Project, and it will be able to benefit from some financial support in moving forward. However the Project team is also investigating other sources of external grants to help in forwarding the work.

Work is ongoing on two fronts in connection with raising standards within the coaching and training field. Modules are being prepared for inclusion in courses within the NSRA coaching scheme covering the

techniques for dealing with the differing needs of shooters with disabilities. Details are also being collated on external courses which can provide useful information on disability awareness in general.

Annual Membership number 60,000 has been passed earlier this year and this number has been held back. It will be available for purchase by a new or existing member by auction, the proceeds being added to the fund supporting the project. Further details of this will be issued very shortly.

At the end of August a group of stroke victims visited Lord Roberts Centre and were able to try a number of styles of shooting including both cartridge and air. They greatly enjoyed the experience and the organisation they came with hopes to arrange further visits. However the event emphasised the opportunities for similar taster days for groups from a wide range of organisations catering for the needs of individuals suffering from specific conditions or disabilities.

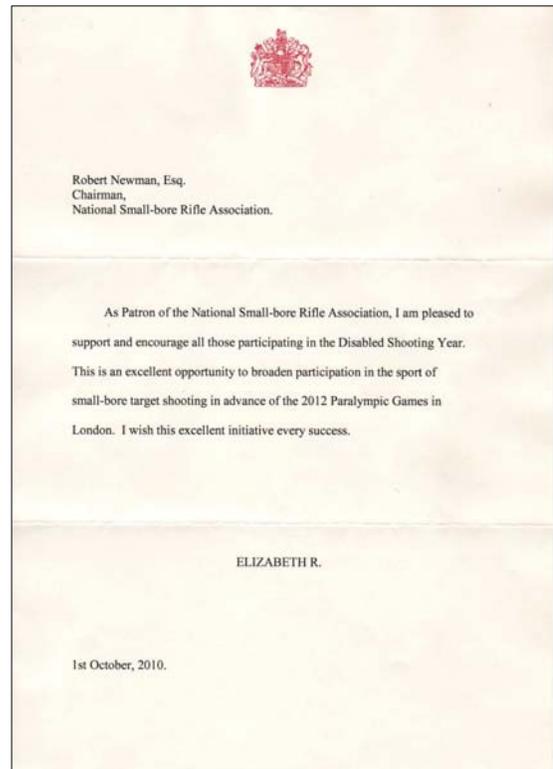
Value Added Tax and Christmas/New Year Break

V.A.T. increases to 20% on 1 January 2010. Any orders received and paid for before this date will be processed at the current, lower rate. However the Showroom (and offices) will close for the Christmas/New Year break at midday on 23 December.

The Centre and offices reopen on Tuesday 4 January 2011.

Shooting Council Meeting Dates

Council meetings in 2011 are scheduled for 19 March, 30 July (plus the Annual General Meeting) and 19 November.



Transport of Firearms by Rail

The Office of Rail Regulation is considering a complete ban on the carriage of unloaded firearms by rail. The BSSC has asked for a meeting to discuss this and has received the response that neither the ORR nor the Department for Transportation has any plans for a public consultation. It has therefore passed BSSC's letter to Passenger Focus for consideration and further comment is awaited.

Anyone who feels they will be affected by such a regulation may wish to contact Passenger Focus to complain about the ORR's intentions. Either email info@passengerfocus.org.uk or write to: Passenger Focus, FREEPOST (RRRE-ETTC-LEET), PO Box 4257, Manchester M60 3AR.

Sport England Whole Sport Plan

Background

The majority of funding brought into sport over the recent past has been geared towards elite development. However to underpin the elite section of sport and to fulfil other government objectives Sport England was actioned to start to work with sports on grass roots development.

Strategic Outcomes

The strategic outcomes were developed by SE with an overall remit to develop a World leading community sport system.

- **Grow** – to increase the number of people taking part in sport. The outcome is to have one million people taking part in sport by 2012/13 and more young people to access to five hours sport per week
- **Sustain** – to help keep people taking part in sport. The outcome is to have more people satisfied with their sport and less 16 to 18 year olds dropping out.
- **Excel** – to nurture talent and help people to reach their potential in sport. The outcome is to have well defined and appropriate support systems so that more talented performers move onto elite programmes

How the plan was developed

Sports were encouraged to produce Whole Sport Plans which mapped out the sports long term aims and objectives for development. In shooting terms this meant that Fullbore, Smallbore and Clay Target Shooting associations coming together to prepare a development plan. This coincided with the NATSS project and was initially taken up under that banner. This plan was then submitted to SE and they decided which parts of that plan they would fund to meet joint overall outcomes.

As a result of this submission shooting sport has received £750,000 of funding to develop the sport, to be used over the period to 2013.

The plan was based around main interventions which include:

- Governance and delivery of the sport
- Associated development work
- Improving satisfaction
- Developing talent

It was felt that these outcomes could be best achieved by focussing on:

- National Organisation and Communications
- Benchmarking
- Regional development
- Coaching development
- Showcase events
- Pathway Development

A National Development Manager has also been appointed to implement the project.

Progress So Far

Regional Development

At the core of the initial SE bid was the plan to develop shooting across the nine English regions.

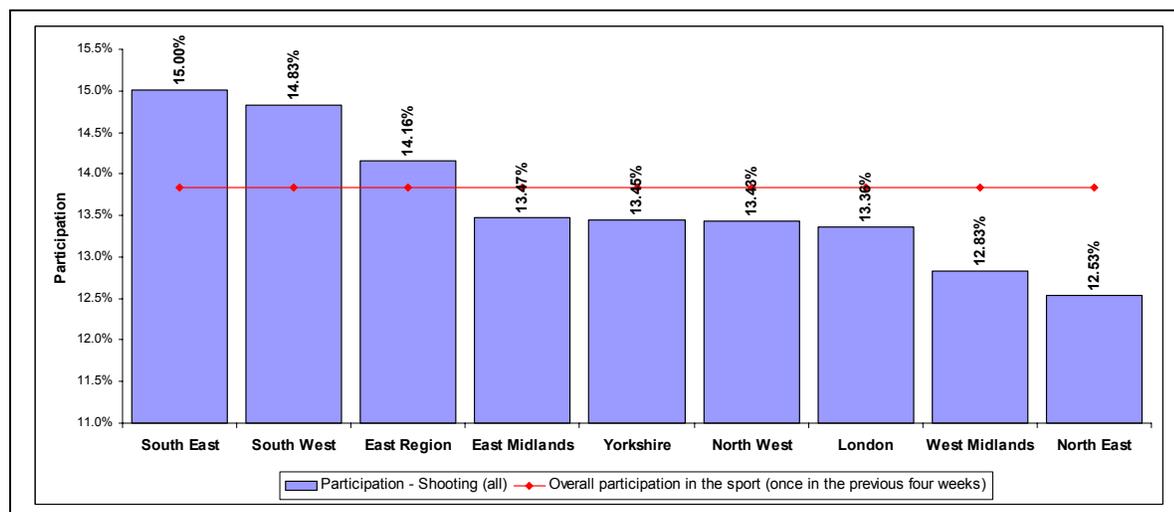
The regions are key to the implementation of the plan. Regional development provides the best opportunity to enhance the provision of coaching, facilities and access to shooting based around a sufficiently large enough population group to be viable from a target shooting perspective.

However the funding eventually given meant that a reduction in the scope of the development was necessary and so three focus regions were chosen – namely North East, West Midlands and South East regions. These were selected from the government commissioned Ipsos Mori Sport Satisfaction Survey data as being areas where development was necessary together with other associated factors from within the sport (such as provision of facilities, coaching provision etc.)

Identification of Pilot Region

To start the process of regional development it was been necessary to identify a pilot region. This region will form the template for future development.

The active people survey shows that Yorkshire and the North East (which form one region in the context of shooting) are below the average line for participation and so could show the effectiveness of the interventions.



The region also has a well established regional squad for smallbore disciplines and talent ID. There are also some facilities available. Edward Kendall has been appointed as the Regional Development Manager for this region.

Regional Hubs

One of the first tasks for the RDM was to set up a focus or “hub” for the regional development. Ideally, a development hub for shooting in a region would consist of an office situated on a site which could cater for all shooting disciplines. That way as well as communications and other services the hub could showcase all the shooting disciplines physically in one place. However, in reality this is only possible in a very few locations and so a “virtual hub” which provides a focus of communication with strong links to other facilities is a more likely solution.

It was decided that this would be situated at Easingwold Rifle and Pistol Club which is geographically central to the region was chosen. IT equipment and connections have been installed at the site and links are being formed to other organisations from this.

Communications

The first stage of development was to establish a communication network within the region. A list of contacts for smallbore clubs has been put together from local data. Contacts for the Cadets have been established and a list of Area District Commissioners (Activities) for the Scout organisation formed. Meetings with representatives from clay target shooting and fullbore shooting have taken place to map out what can be achieved for each of the disciplines.

Coaching Provision

One of the key areas of development is to ensure we have enough coaches in the region. A workforce audit within the region has commenced. NSRA staff have produced a list of smallbore Club Instructors and Coaches for the region. This will help better organise courses for future workforce development.

The NRA and Clay Target have been asked for similar information to construct an overlay for fullbore and clay target disciplines to give an overview of their coaching provision across the disciplines. From this a plan for coach development will be put together for the next 2 years.

Other Areas of Development

Disabled Shooting Project

The Disabled Shooting Project started by the NSRA is ideal for inclusion in the SE planned development. This will require broadening the scope of the initiative to Clay Target and Fullbore shooting disciplines. The inclusion of the project will also allow the use of the Australian Disability Inclusion Spectrum which is a useful tool to analyse the provision for disabled people within a sport.

Website

When people want to find information the first point of call is generally the internet. With this in mind the development of a GBTSF website is under discussion. This is not meant to provide the same service as the NGB sites but rather act as a “front end” or entry point for shooting contacts. The site will provide a general overview of shooting and provide links to NGB sites.

Coaching Development

Meetings have taken place between Sports Coach UK and the representatives of NSRA, NRA and CPSA. Each NGB presented their qualification structures and discussed the pathway into coaching. The next stage is to look at the alignment of shooting coaching qualifications between the bodies. Also under discussion is how courses and training can be further developed within the NGB schemes.

Participant Development

Analysis of the participant base for shooting and how we provide for it is being assessed. The main feeders for shooting sport have been highlighted and prioritised. The next stage is to start to draw up a participant development model which will help guide future development. This is a

particularly powerful tool in that it can be used to shape many areas of development for the future.

Active Club Survey

Sports Active have developed an on line questionnaire which will help gather information about the workforce in clubs and what support they need. The questionnaire will be advertised in all the NGB Journals and websites to gather information for a three-month period to December. This will be analysed by Skills Active and the findings distributed to NGBs. This will help identify skills gaps and allow planning to assist clubs in their development.

CSP National Engagement

The National engagement agreement with County Sports Partnerships has been completed. Shooting is now included on the on-line "tracker" so that all CSPs can begin to work with shooting clubs and associations. The tracker lets the CSPs know what support has been agreed by NGBs and what they are asked to provide.

Since the National engagement agreement with County Sports Partnerships has been completed several CSPs have been in contact to ask for more details about how they can help implement the SE plan and in doing so help shooting development.

An example of this is the Active Kent CSP. Since the introduction of shooting on the tracker, website information has been requested for inclusion on the Kent CSP website. All sports working with CSPs are invited to have a sports specific page which links to NGB sites and services. The content has been provided by the NGBs and pictures and logos requested to complete the pages. This information will be used to service requests for other CSPs wishing to engage with shooting.

Regional Squads

Within NSRA the regional squads are key feeders for the elite squads bridging the gap between counties and national structures. Several regional squads are under development principally the South West, Mercian and North East Regions.

Pathway

An initial pathway meeting with British Shooting's Performance Director took place and discussions led to a more formal meeting being held in late October 2010. Development of the pathway for sub elite shooters will involve bridging the gap between Regional Squads, Home Country Squads and the World Class programme.

Gold Challenge

This organisation is planning a multi-sport charity challenge launching in November 2010. The challenge is to complete sessions in several sports over the period up to the Olympic Games and raise money for charities. The greater the number of sports you participate in the higher the level of the award.

Gold Challenge Ltd is a not for profit organisation and no costs are incurred by the participating NGBs. The Tier 1 Charities it supports are Cancer Research UK, Oxfam, Scope, NSPCC and Right to Play.

Apart from the benefit to charity it will attempt increase participation in sport by encouraging as many people as possible of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to try some or all of the Olympic sports in the lead up to 2012. In doing so it provides a high profile showcase for shooting sport.

Memory for Teachers

The Memory for Teachers project was developed from similar government backed projects in America and France where teachers were provided with computer memory sticks to carry and transfer data more efficiently.

In the UK version of the project it is proposed to pre-load the sticks with useful data – and for sports teachers this can include information about different kinds of sport. This can include showcase type presentations, facts, association contacts, coaching or any other data deemed relevant by the NGB. The memory sticks are distributed to 35,000 sports teachers and 12,000 teachers in further education with upgrades available via web based links.

The project provides another opportunity to showcase the sport in an environment to which access has been difficult in the past. It is hoped that more sports teachers and others having access to the information may seek to find out more about the sport and wish to include it in their provision.

Conclusion

The SE Whole Sport Plan provides a real opportunity to develop shooting sport. However, the days of funding being handed out globally to NGBs have long since disappeared. Any public funds received are set against plans for which we have to be fully accountable. In addition, these plans have to reflect national strategies and fit into the overall development of activity - not just the developments perceived to be necessary within a particular sport.

The planning and interventions reflect this and it is vitally important that these funds are used to set up self-sustaining systems which do not rely on continued external funding to maintain them. In that way the structures put in place can benefit the sport long after funding has been redirected.

NSRA SHOOTING COUNCIL

NSRA MEMBERSHIP DISCUSSIONS UPDATE (20 November 2010)

Statement read to the Council by the Assistant Secretary

As you will recall, at the last two Council meetings there have been group sessions to discuss NSRA membership for individuals. Amongst the subjects covered were what the benefits of membership should be, how the service to members can be improved and how more small-bore and airgun shooters in our affiliated clubs can be encouraged to join and support their National Governing Body.

The purpose of this statement is to bring you up to date with current thinking on this important subject, and how the Board of Management and its Membership Committee are planning to proceed over the next 12 months.

There is no need to dwell on past history, except to say that a major review of the NSRA Membership scheme has been on our minds for several years. However radical changes can have a major impact and need some time to settle in. For this reason it was not sensible to decide and introduce a new scheme whilst we were in discussion with other NGBs about the potential for merger. Although the NATSS discussions got further down the road than any previous attempt, they finally ended in failure, with the NSRA the last organisation left at the table who were prepared to see themselves merged into a single governing body for shooting.

Many clubs and individuals take part in both NRA and NSRA disciplines. But even a subsequent approach to the NRA about the possibility of some form of joint membership scheme for full-bore, small-bore and airgun shooters has recently been turned down by them. However there has been some initial interest about the possibilities that this offers in unofficial discussions with the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association. But in the shorter term we are now on our own as an organisation, and we must plan our new strategy to take account of this reality.

The Board has formed a small committee, involving four members of the Board and five senior staff members, to look at the information we have and to come up with a proposal. The Committee has been requested to do this with the intention of a new scheme being introduced at the start of 2012. To meet this the intention is for it to be presented to the Shooting Council in July 2011 and, subject to comments raised at that time, be considered by the Board for final approval next September.

Inevitably the Committee needs to have a good understanding of the market – on the one hand the small-bore and airgun shooters in this country and on the other the membership of our affiliated clubs. It must be recognised that these are not the same. We have over 800 affiliated clubs (excluding schools and other youth organisations). They tell us that in total they have in the region of 30,000 members. However this figure is not the number of small-bore and airgun shooters in this country for a variety of reasons, such as individuals being members of more than one club, honorary, social or other members who are not current shooters, and so on. Half of the 30,000 belong to clubs that shoot full-bore as well as NSRA disciplines – how many of this 15,000 shoot only full-bore?

Our understanding of the make-up of our clubs is growing, but is by no means complete. Over the last few years we have added questions to our club affiliation forms to improve our knowledge on the statistics. The regional forums during the NATSS process highlighted other information, as did the hundreds of responses to the NSRA questionnaire sent out five years ago.

For any new scheme to work, it must offer benefits that people want and for which they are prepared to pay an appropriate fee. A long-held view of many is that there should be compulsory membership and/or a single level of membership. However the diverse nature of the shooting interests of our clubs' members make this difficult to achieve. The possibility of optional add-ons for a supplementary fee is one way to increase the number of people who can find a package of benefits that fits their needs at an acceptable price. However personal packages will inevitably raise the costs of administration when compared with a one-size-fits-all approach.

These are just some of the difficulties that the Membership Committee are dealing with at the moment. The required outcome is much simpler to define - a scheme that increases NSRA membership, increases gross income and increases net income. The magnitude of the danger of getting it wrong can be illustrated by the fact that 40% of the charity's income comes from the fees of individual members.

The benefits of individual membership, both now and in the future, have been a particular area of discussion in the Council meeting groups earlier this year, and lie at the core of getting together a scheme that is workable. The current direct benefits can be divided into various groups.

There are some required under our constitution, but which of themselves do not appear to be of significant "value" in the minds of most members, judging by the number making use of them:

To receive a copy of the annual report.

To attend and vote, or vote by proxy, at NSRA General Meetings.

The number of people who attend the AGM, or vote by proxy, after excluding those who are attending other meetings the same day, amount to less than 0.3% of the membership.

To be eligible to stand for election to the Board and other NSRA Committees.

The number of people joining the NSRA Board and other committees for the first time is, on average, less than three a year.

Others may be of greater value, to those who are sufficiently interested to make use of them:

To receive a copy of The Rifleman.

To take part in postal competitions.

We do not know how many of our individual members enter NSRA Individual Competitions, but less than 25% of affiliated clubs enter NSRA Club Team Competitions.

To take part in National Meetings.

We have over 5,500 individual members, and only about one-quarter of this number enter national meetings, even before taking account of those who take part in more than one meeting a year.

To take part in courses to become a licensed Instructor or Coach.

The number of current coaching licences issued probably equates to little more than one per affiliated club.

To be eligible for selection to NSRA representative teams.

To hire NSRA ranges without paying an insurance supplement.

A few are of benefit to everyone, even if in some cases members do not realise that they are a beneficiary.

To benefit from the NSRA Insurance cover.

To receive support and advice on firearms and other technical matters, such as range design and safety.

This last item is particularly relevant to the type of unseen or silent benefits which shooters can enjoy as a result of the NSRA's activities, even if they are not members. The NSRA does get to hear of problems being faced by individual members in relation to their dealings with the police and other statutory bodies in relation to firearms, health & safety and other issues. Not infrequently this is the result of those with some authority in the public sector seeking to go further in regulating our members and clubs than their actual authority permits them. The experience of your staff at Headquarters, particularly of Geoff Doe and now Ali Aitken, has meant that many of these problems have been resolved in favour of the member who has brought it to our attention. However it also benefited everyone else who might have suffered the same restrictions had it not been resolved. And most of these beneficiaries will be completely unaware that the NSRA has rescued them from a potential problem, or indeed that the problem had ever reared its head.

Also, of course, individual shooters will derive benefits from the work the NSRA does at national level on behalf of the whole sport. Representing shooters needs to the Home Office, police and other external agencies, for example. Responding to detrimental publicity and attacks on the sport after events, such as those most recently in Cumbria. In many of these situations we do not work alone, where we are a small voice. Instead we are able through our membership of the British Shooting Sports Council to be an integral part of a very much louder shooting "voice" – one where the voice is not only more likely to be heard, but in a group that is able to open doors in government, parliament and the like, which would not be open to us working alone.

The Committee is aware of other sports and NGBs that have gone down the path of seeking compulsory individual membership. Each will have had different problems, a different array of carrots and sticks, a different starting and ending point on the cost to the individual member of providing the package of services. They will have learned lessons from which we can benefit in putting together a way forward for small-bore and airgun shooting.

We also have the suggestions that have come out of the Council discussions and the information that some county representatives have sent in subsequently.

One thing that the Membership Committee recognises is the problem of how to present the proposals, whatever form they finally take, to those who we will be seeking to get to join the Association as individual members.

To "sell" a new scheme to our clubs and their members will take a lot of work and careful planning. Whilst some of the information can be produced through the medium of the printed word in brochures and magazines, and on posters, it can only be effective if it is actually read. Even more up to date methods, such as through the internet, in powerpoint presentations or at roadshows, can only be effective if they reach and are seen by the target market.

The NSRA is made up of over 1000 organisations, including our 47 County associations. There are only 15 members of the Board of Management, all of whom are volunteers. There are even fewer full-time staff in the charity. The assistance of County Associations and of individuals who believe that this is the right way forward, will be essential in spreading the word and explaining the purpose of the route being taken by the NSRA.

There will be a number of ways in which you can help us in this exercise over the next year.

The first of these is if you will go back to your colleagues within your county association and find out who is prepared to give some of their time to help in the introduction of the NSRA and its services to your clubs and their members.

Secondly, can you let us know of the events that you hold in your county where it would be possible to include a presentation about the NSRA to those attending.

Thirdly, there will no doubt be occasions where the Membership Committee and/or the Board may need help in obtaining more information about the structure of the sport. Obviously the logical channel of communication is to a County's representative on the Shooting Council. However it is likely that other officials in your County Association or your clubs will be the ones who can best answer the questions. We would therefore ask you to deal with such requests as quickly as you can. We appreciate that this could mean we are asking you to take action straight away, rather than waiting to raise it at your County's next Committee meeting.

Your help on these will be very much appreciated.

We have a path and outline timetable as has been already mentioned. It is important to recognise that whilst we seek to have everyone in the sport playing their part and paying their way, we also recognise that our existing supporters' position will need to be protected by continuing to offer the benefits they already have. The expansion of individual membership will have two outcomes that we want to see:

The reduction of the level of subscription necessary to provide the existing benefits and services;

The expansion of the services available to our members, particularly bearing in mind the growing pressures that our sport will come under in the years ahead - pressures which may not affect many of us in this room for too long, but which could be a life-long struggle for the young people who are being attracted to the sport now.