

## **WACA Governance Review Member Forum Wrap-up**

### **Steven Cole**

A strong group of approximately 130 Members attended a forum on the WACA's Governance Review on Monday 15 February. Feedback received during the forum was largely consistent with the results of the recent Member survey on governance, with particular commentary on the following aspects:

#### **1. Overall governance**

There was strong support for the WACA to have a robust and accountable governance framework.

#### **2. WACA's objects**

The consensus of the forum was for the WACA to give primary focus to the promotion and development of the game of cricket, but also have the promotion and development of the WACA ground within its objects.

Commentary was also made that the promotion and development of the game of cricket should be at all levels i.e. elite, developmental and community-based participation (both active and passive).

#### **3. Regulatory structure**

Forum attendees, on behalf of all Members, requested more information be provided on the difference and pros and cons between the WACA being regulated under the Corporations Act compared with the Associations Incorporations Act as at present.

Forum attendees gained comfort from the presenters' explanations as prospective benefits to be gained and, provided Members' rights and obligations were not adversely impacted, support for the Board's initiative should be forthcoming. The forum also gained comfort that under the Corporations Act the subject of conflicts of interest was more rigorous than under the Associations Incorporation Act.

#### **4. Board composition**

Forum attendees reinforced the survey preferences for:

- the majority of Board Members to be elected by WACA Members
- the Board to have the right to appoint a limited minority number of Board Members to round out the skills and experience set
- more detailed information be provided to Members on the skills and experience of Members standing for election, as well as the skills and experience the Board would value from its Elected Members.

The forum invited the Board to provide more details of how the role of the Nomination Committee would play out. Members expressed a preference the Committee assist in the information flow to Members around election time, but not have an approval or veto determination as to who the Members may wish to propose for Board election.

In addition, the forum supported the concept of diversity – in its broadest form – of representation on the Board, including the desire for reasonable representation on the Board of those who are, or have been, active in the game of cricket, including players and/or administrators.

## 5. Office bearers

There was general consensus at the forum as to the following principles to be covered in the constitution:

- perceived value in Members of standing in the game of cricket being recognised and giving support to the WACA in largely a ceremonial capacity
- such persons should not have a functional leadership role in the governance or management of the WACA, which primarily should be vested in the Chair and CEO.

## 6. Members' rights

The forum's views again were generally reflective of the Member survey results, with flexibility desirable to meet the various needs and circumstances of the WACA's Members as a whole. There was an interesting discussion around the concept of non-voting Member packages, similar to that of some AFL clubs, with a variety of views expressed and no clear consensus forthcoming. At the same time, as is evidenced by WACA Scorchers packages, the commercial drivers of some forms of the modern game were recognised as needing to be accommodated.

Overall, the underlying theme from the forum Members was WACA Members wished to be engaged and informed by the Board of emerging material issues, and also wished to have the opportunity of expressing their voice on such matters so that in its deliberations, the Board could have the benefit of the Member's views.

## 7. Affiliated associations

The survey results were affirmed by Members at the forum and are reflected in the views expressed in item 2 above (WACA objects) that the promotion and development of the game of cricket should embrace all levels of the game i.e. elite, developmental and community-based participation. There was commentary as to the risks to the sport as a whole if sound governance did not prevail at all levels of the game, with AFL, NRL and FIFA examples mentioned.

## 8. Generally

Finally, forum attendees requested:

- the dates for future forums be set and communicated to assist Members in their calendar scheduling
- the WACA Governance Charter, as adopted in late 2015, have a more prominent link on the website, and for Members to be encouraged to read the principles and policies embraced in that document.

Following the success of this first forum, the WACA will begin planning for a second forum, currently planned for April, and provide Members with an agenda and further supporting information closer to the time.