



Frequently Asked Questions from the December information webinars.

Here we provide a selection of frequently asked questions and responses from the recently held information webinars.

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Responses

Pilot Proceeding

By what authority is the pilot proceeding given one district didn't achieve the required %?

- With 90% of all clubs in the Zone 8 supporting and 20 of the 21 districts achieving the required 67% of clubs, DGs agreed the matter should be discussed with the board of the one district.
- Despite not achieving 67%, most clubs in that district agreed with the need for the pilot and there were other extenuating circumstances.
- 9620 have submitted a request to the RI Board to be given the chance to participate and undertake a second vote.
- The RI Board approved the pilot proceeding on this basis.

How will District 9620 be involved?

- 9620 includes 128 clubs and a vast geographic area comprising multiple countries and hence communication was challenging. Peter Frueh and Tim Moore will be visiting clubs to present information to them to enable them to make a decision.
- If their second vote occurs before the end of the Rotary year, they will participate in the same way all other districts are.

Timeline and road map

What is the road map for how we are going to get from where we are now to the end of the pilot?

- There is a detailed timeline, with significant milestones indicated, which is being further developed in line with a detailed implementation plan.
- Based on initial feedback from Clubs, a lot of preliminary planning has been undertaken over the last three years. This planning is informing the initial focus of the pilot and we anticipate further planning and development to occur as we commence the pilot and receive feedback and evaluation data on progress.

The model

We are just implementing the SRF model

- Yes, there are elements of the starting point model that look like the SRF model. However, we had always considered there would be a regional council and have taken some of the ideas from the SRF model that seemed to make sense. The underlying thinking was developed independently by the organisational design working group and is not based around traditional hierarchy or geographical organisation but rather delivering service to clubs through portfolios and democratically elected leaders.
- We will be trialling different elements of the proposed model as we progress, e.g. we will test the deliverables, attractiveness and doability of community leader roles before finalising what these roles look like

Are we bringing in outside assistance to enable real and unbiased change?

- This has been considered both by us and RI but external assistance has not been engaged.
- There is a wealth of expertise within the organisation and this has been extensively used.
- These experts have the additional benefit of understanding Rotary.
- The thinking has been tested with outside experts through conversations to counterparts in other organisations.
- It is planned that these conversations will continue.

The Current Structure

Why are we looking at changing the current structure?

- It is noted that the current structure is more than 100 years old and hence due for a revamp.
- Our falling numbers and low public image would indicate our current structure and the way we operate are not addressing these challenges.
- The current structure does have positive aspects, which will be maintained such as the integrity of clubs.
- The aim of any changes which are implemented is to provide more timely support for clubs, access to better resources and financial savings.

Approval Process

Will clubs have an opportunity to vote on the model?

- Clubs were given the opportunity to vote on whether to take up this opportunity to explore, test and develop what is best for our region and now we have a starting point.
- The new structure is not set in stone.
- There will be regular consultation and the final model that evolves will be subject to further voting at the end of the pilot in 2026.
- The purpose of the vote will be to determine whether to make permanent the pilot arrangements that have been tested over the previous 12-24 months.

Is there long term thinking in relation to implementation of this model in other Zones in the Rotary world, if this is successful?

- There are only two Pilots in progress in the world, ours and one in Great Britain and Ireland.
- We represent only 3% of the Rotary world and were very fortunate to be given the opportunity to proceed. Other parts of the world are very interested in our Pilot as is the RI Board.
- If other parts of the Rotary world wish to proceed with a similar Pilot they will need to undergo the same approval process that we did.
- One of the premises of our Pilot is that we have committed to RI Board that our learnings will be shared with other parts of the world who have expressed interest in developing their own Pilot. Each Pilot will look different.
- There is considerable interest from other Regions around the world in what we are doing and in the possibility of them doing something similar.

Implementation Task Force

Who is on the Implementation Task Force?

- PDG and Past Coordinator Tim Moore is the Task Force Implementation leader.
- The team is currently being resourced based on appropriate skills in responses to calls for volunteers. It is expected the implementation team will be formed before Christmas.
- Please feel free to nominate for various teams via the website and provide a CV.
- The teams will be placed on the website along with the existing list of other people involved.
- The Implementation Task Force has been established to handle logistics of transferring role and function from the Districts to the Regional model. Their task will be complemented once the Regional Council is established.

Steering Group

There is no high level steering group to oversee the ITF

- The core team will continue to provide oversight of the Implementation Task Force.
- Once the first pilot regional council is in place it will be the governing body for the Pilot, overseeing the implementation and operation of the new model.

Current Leadership

What is the role of the DG going forward?

- DGs will remain throughout the Pilot and obviously the role will change as it proceeds as functions are taken up by the Regional Council and support committees.
- In 2023 there will not be a lot of change but more in 2024, 2025 and 2026 as the Pilot continues.
- The DG will need to be a change leader as well as carrying out important district duties.
- The Council will work in partnership with the DGs of the day throughout the Pilot.

Have you considered the people currently in District roles?

- These people have been considered in the process as there are a great many of them and they have huge expertise to offer.
- There is the opportunity for them to become involved in roles going forward such as the regional council, portfolio chairs, committee membership, specialist role, and community leader roles.
- Leadership roles should become more attractive with less administration and more direct involvement with clubs.
- The need to regionalise is not about poor district leadership. It's about recognising that the needs of our current and prospective members have changed and that we need to adapt Rotary in our zone to better meet those needs.

Leadership Going Forward

How are Community Leaders being selected? Do you have more information?

- The community leader will be chosen by and from each grouping of clubs.
- It will not be an administrative or authoritarian role, rather a coach, supporter and mentor
- Job descriptions are currently being developed.

What is the Rotary Specialist Network and what happens with existing Coordinators?

- We have many people in the region who are skilled in special areas whether it be Membership, Foundation, Public Image or various youth services and the aim is to make them accessible to all.
- Currently the Coordinator structure and roles work through the districts and as the Pilot proceeds many of the assistant coordinators may choose to take up specialist support roles.

Are Rotary Specialists volunteers or paid staff?

- They are volunteer roles, utilising the expertise of current Rotarians, to offer this knowledge and experience more widely.
- Clubs would be able to access relevant information when they need it.
- Specialists would be accredited and supported at an international level.

RI representation

How will people be selected for key roles like CoL (Council of Legislation) representatives?

- An appropriate new approach will need to be decided over time.
- For the moment we have districts with reps in place and districts will remain in place for the duration of the Pilot.
- It is important to remember this is a Pilot for the rest of the world and we will be exploring these sorts of issues and developing as we go.

Membership

How do you see this enhancing membership?

- Increased membership should be an outcome of changing the way we support clubs and assist them to provide engaging experiences for members and deliver service.
- The Community Leader will be encouraged to support clubs to enhance their environments and implement strategies that make them and Rotary more attractive to the modern volunteer.
- More coordinated projects and programs at a national level should create better experiences for members and hence make Rotary more attractive.
- It is hoped this will lead to better retention as well as reducing the financial and non financial costs of joining.

How will this address declining membership?

- The regionalisation pilot does not mean we stop or put on hold the things that are working. There are existing initiatives in place in districts and through coordinators and it is vital that these continue.
- There is a membership working group that is exploring ways to make Rotary membership more attractive. Those ways could include new models of participation as well as strategies that reduce the financial and non-financial costs of participation.
- The capacity to engage in truly national and co-ordinated promotion may also serve to raise awareness and understanding of Rotary around our countries which will likely be positive for membership.
- The community leaders will directly support clubs and can offer assistance to clubs who are struggling with membership. This could include looking at alternatives, connecting with peers, sharing ideas and collaboration.
- The Regional Support Teams which will be comprised of the best resource people from across all current Districts, and will also be available to work with and support clubs in specific areas like membership, grants etc
- There will be more capacity to cross boundaries, get clubs working together and new opportunities for more engagement.
- This should produce a more sustained approach to increasing membership.

- It is acknowledged that this will take time to implement.

Costs

Are you estimating there will be a cost savings for Clubs and Rotarians?

- Yes this is anticipated.
- Currently the costs are being developed for the Pilot and once these have been finalised, the cost savings for Rotarians will be developed as the model progresses.

Is it planned that members of the Regional Council will receive an allowance?

- It is planned that the structure will incorporate a cost recovery model.
- Rotarians give their expertise and time and it is not expected that they will be out-of-pocket for doing this.

Infrastructure

Will this proposed structure make Rotary top heavy?

- We don't believe so. It will have a strong focus on delivering better support to clubs
- There will be an opportunity to reduce duplication by 21 districts endeavouring to do the same thing taking up resources who can focus on external service and increasing our impact.
- With the "best of the best" district resources taking up portfolio support committee roles and utilising technology to overcome duplication there will be less administration work overall.

Have Jurisdictions been considered?

- It is acknowledged that all clubs operate under state and local laws, which vary from area to area.
- Most clubs are incorporated and will need to continue to meet these regulations.
- No difficulties with jurisdictions are anticipated throughout the Pilot.

How many Groupings might there be?

- The figure for how many clubs in a Grouping is not stipulated as Clubs will be forming their own Groupings hence the number of Groupings will be flexible.
- It is estimated at approximately 80, which is the figure used for the cost estimates.
- There will be support available to Clubs to assist them with the process for developing their Grouping.
- The planning team is developing approaches to establish the concept and clubs will be invited to consider where they fit best in terms of affinity, be it location or other common interest.
- The objective is to enhance collaboration and access resources that benefit the group.

Can clubs join more than one community of clubs?

- The clubs themselves will decide where their affinity lies and which community they would like to join.
- It has not been considered yet that clubs may like to join more than one community but the concept will be explored going forward.

- In the transition phase how will clubs choose where to seek support?
- The transition to the new structure will be gradual and so clubs will be able to gradually transition to seeking support from personnel within the new structure, as they are in place.
 - Districts will progress the transition at different rates and so it will depend on the District how quickly the new support structure will be in place.
- Will the global clubs in our Zone be included in the new structure?
- It is expected that they will be part of the new structure.
 - They will be able to connect with other clubs and have an expanded network of contacts.
- Will Districts disappear?
- When we started the regionalisation pilot the intent was not to get rid of districts but rather to remove or work around the existing constraints to focus more directly on providing support to clubs regionally.
 - We do not know whether districts will ultimately disappear or not – that will depend on the evaluation as we move through the Pilot.
- Where does Youth sit?
- It is envisaged Youth would sit within the Service and Strategic Programs portfolio.
 - However this is only a guideline and it is possible that Youth could have its own portfolio.
 - It is acknowledged that Youth Programs are vital and part of the fabric of Rotary.
 - It is clear that some programs are working well, such as Youth, and it is vital that these programs are not impacted negatively by any changes.
 - Ways to support them better will be explored.
- Where does Foundation sit?
- Foundation comes under the Major Fundraising and Grants portfolio.
 - A working group is being established to assess the best location for Foundation and to ensure the best support is offered and available.
- Regional Council**
- How will continuity be achieved on the Regional Council?
- It is expected these will be 2 or 3 year terms to provide consistent strategy.
 - Job descriptions and selection processes will state incumbents focus on the Zone’s strategic needs, not short-term local requirements.
 - The pilot will commence January 2024 going to end of June 2026, enabling evaluation of what’s best.
- Will the Regional Council be truly representative?
- There is a goal to ensure that the Regional Council is a diverse and inclusive group and open to anyone who applies.
 - It will be a skills based Council and hence there will be some requirements in relation to both Rotary and outside experience.
 - This will model the diverse approach going forward.
 - The Council comprises 10 positions across 16 countries in our Zone and hence there is scope for diversity.
 - One position on the Council will be for Rotaract representation.
 - Rotaract has been involved throughout the process so far and it is anticipated will continue their involvement going forward.

Who will provide administrative support to the Regional Council?

- Volunteers will provide support for the Portfolios as Support Committees.
- RISPPPO will work closely with the Council providing direct support.
- Cost effectiveness, evaluation and monitoring will occur and be reported regularly.

Will it be challenging to find a Chair for the Regional Council?

- It is anticipated that the role of Chair will be an attractive position and not as difficult to fill as the DG role has been in the current structure.
- The Chair position is a 2 year term which will provide continuity for strategy and direction.
- The Chair role will have a more focused role than the current DG role, which has become very complex and administratively focussed due to the current structure.

Will the Regional Council have a Constitution?

- Yes it will.
- This will establish its scope of operations and may change over time as the responsibilities for various functions become clearer.
- There will also be some legal entities for Australia and New Zealand.
- This governance work will be progressed by experienced Rotarians in the field.

Communication

What's the mechanism to allow involvement including Rotaractors and keep people informed?

- The planning group is currently developing a Communication Plan which will include the opportunity for clubs and members to have a say.
- We envisage a regular update to Club Presidents and Secretaries and information will be regularly posted to the website.

Openness and transparency

It is implied that there hasn't been transparency and openness

- Nothing is deliberately hidden, we have posted more detail on the website and will willingly answer questions.
- There will be multiple opportunities for club members and district leaders to have their say during the pilot as the model develops – feedback through the website, regular communications through club presidents, focus groups.

Uncertainty and confusion

I don't like what I am hearing, I don't understand what this means for me

- It is a normal response to change to focus first on what one is going to lose rather than what might be gained. In order to move forward regular communication and the opportunity to have a say is important and that is what we have consistently done and will continue to do.
- In one hour we are unable to present the totality of the work that has already been done, and our audience has different degrees of knowledge and wants different amounts of detail. We have and will continue to offer the opportunity to provide more.

Future Plans

What if it doesn't work. Can we go back?

- Yes we can but it's important to realise Rotary is evolving as we speak and many others are lining up to take the opportunity we have been given.
- The RI Board is committed to Rotary's strategic goals to increase our impact and reach and realises the need to adapt to ensure we remain relevant and sustainable.
- Council of Legislation occurs again in 2025 and we will try to optimise outcomes.

Is there a list of outcomes sought?

- The website sets out project objectives and outcomes sought and these are essentially club and member focused.
- Progress against these will be regularly monitored, evaluated and reported to members and clubs.

Evaluation

When will the evaluation start and what is planned?

- A Monitoring & Evaluation Team is currently being tasked to develop the approach.
- The group will operate objectively at arm's length first establishing a base line in 2023.
- They will regularly report to clubs and members.
- Key performance indicators (KPIs) will be developed against each of the key objectives and used to measure success.
- Specifically these KPIs will focus on measuring if the Pilot is:
 - Supporting Clubs to provide more relevant and engaging experiences for members to better serve their communities and grow Rotary
 - Creating new and more attractive leadership opportunities
 - Building a stronger unified Rotary brand and public image for Rotary
 - Encouraging clubs to engage in meaningful partnerships with Government, Corporates, other entities and with other clubs
 - Improving efficiencies and reducing duplication