



RPH Australia Co-Operative Ltd (RPHA)

Strategic Directions 2017 – 2019

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About RPH Australia (RPHA)

RPH Australia is the national peak body for the RPH Radio Reading Network. We champion the right of all Australians to access published material.

The RPH Network provides a reading service of a diverse range of publications, throughout Australia, making available content of relevance and interest, otherwise not available to people with a print disability.

Our Members comprise 7 Community Radio broadcasters addressing the information needs of people with a print disability. This is accomplished through the delivery of 19 AM/FM radio stations nationally, and digital radio services in five capital cities. The RPH Radio Network broadcasts to 70% of the Australian population.

RPHA purpose

We are a Member focused organisation.

We advocate on behalf of and assist our Members to deliver community radio reading services nationally for people with a print disability, so as to facilitate access to printed published information, for their community of interest.

RPHA tag line

“The voice of print media across Australia” (2016)

RPHA Business planning context

Key challenges facing RPHA¹

The RPHA network operates within a dynamic and rapidly changing operating environment that continues to impact our Member’s services and operations. Dramatic changes to availability of digital technology and mass customisation of spoken work media; constant pressure to reduce reliance on government grants and increase sponsorships, new national public policy (NDIS) initiatives and local programming, volunteer communications and management pressures, all present daily operational challenges for the sector, and our Members.

Further operational challenges faced by RPHA are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 RPHA scan of key challenges

Legal	Skills and Resources	Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is our true role as a peak body?</i> • <i>We exist to serve the stations</i> • <i>Our constitution does not satisfy our legal requirements of the Co-Operative registrar and needs to be updated</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is the station manager the best person to be on the Board?</i> • <i>Need better commitment (from the stations) to do the job as a Board member.</i> • <i>There is a lack of organisational experience of being on a board</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There is no foundation to support this organisation – e.g. policies, processes</i> • <i>We are facing a “perfect storm” without policies and procedures</i> • <i>Board need to separate governance from operations</i> • <i>We have a lot of chiefs and not a lot of Indians to do the work</i>
Purpose and direction	Economic and financial	Technology and Customers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We have a loss of focus – is it about the blind or a passionate audience?</i> • <i>Wo are we really?</i> • <i>We have a relevance crisis – what is our relevant to our volunteers and to our audience?</i> • <i>A separation of powers is required – between the RPHA Board and stations</i> • <i>We need to protect our service by sharing our skills and successes</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We have a lack of resources – an operational budget of no more than \$200K pa. What would happen is we lost \$20K, \$50K – what would we do?</i> • <i>We have virtually no financial buffer in place</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We are susceptible to rapid changes to customer uptake of alternative technology – who are our real competitors?</i> • <i>We need to be aware of whether we are ‘entertainment’ vs being ‘entertaining’</i> • <i>Our core customers are aging; we don’t really know what they like or want</i>

RPHA aspirations²

We are known by others	We are active and constructive	We work well with purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We are visible to others</i> • <i>We have a national reputation</i> • <i>We are leaders in our field</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We are proactive</i> • <i>We are dynamic and active</i> • <i>We are trusted</i> • <i>We are pioneers</i> • <i>We are credible, respected, vital</i> • <i>We are relevant</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We are professional; accountable and useful</i> • <i>We are effective and focused</i> • <i>We provide steering and guidance</i> • <i>We advocate for others and our station members (e.g. copyright)</i> • <i>We are an effective peak body</i> • <i>We are affluent and financially free</i>

¹ RPHA Board Retreat discussion notes, July 2016

² RPHA Board Retreat discussion notes, July 2016

RPHA strategic directions 2017-2019

A refocus on Member's services

Informed by deliberations with our Member's during mid 2016 to early 2017, the RPHA Board has formed the view that a disconnect between Member's and their peak body has emerged. An earlier culture of collaboration, effective communication and resource sharing between RPH Members themselves, and with the RPHA, is at real risk of deteriorating beyond repair. The purpose and role of RPHA as a peak body therefore needs to be redefined and reimagined.

The RPHA Board has identified that significant changes are required for the RPH network to be sustained into the future, and Members need to be at the core of this change.

Increased and deeper Member engagement, as illustrated by their willing and eager participation within our wider network, will improve business performance, reduce their risks, increase operational efficiency and maximise positive impacts for listeners and assist in easier local decision making.

The RPHA Board is also of the view that over time, there has been a diminishing understanding of the strength of the RPHA co-operative structure and the unrealised benefits available from full participation in this model. A refresh of the co-operative model is required.

RPHA Board acknowledges that it must provide best practice governance in a manner expected of contemporary not-for-profit organisations, and in a manner that is designed to deliver on its agreed core business focus. This evolution will require continual improvements to governance and communications – a process which commenced in 2016 with the appointment of an independent executive officer.

In order to maximise efficiency in local service delivery by our Members and to maximise community impact and to sustain and grow each organisation in the RPH Network, RPHA will change its business and cultural focus.

The 2017-2019 period will see RPHA pivot from being a passive 'administrative necessity', to one of an active facilitator of positive change in the sector and our network; as providers of tools to assist our members be their best; deploying new process and system development to local streamline operations and maximise positive impact on national and local scale.

In short, RPHA and its Board will now singularly refocus to support Member's and their operations.

To drive this pivot towards increased support Member's business and operational needs, the RPHA will refocus its role as a high performing industry peak body and facilitator of change by delivering:

1. Support for each Member by providing high quality information, tools and communication services
2. The design and delivery of a coordinated industry and stakeholder advocacy program at a national level
3. Industry and national leadership and cross sector participation

Ongoing foundation priorities

To fully support RPH Australia in its endeavours and efforts to sustain the membership in years ahead a number of core business functions are mandatory, and will provide the foundation for the Strategic goals for the ensuing three years.

Discussions since mid 2016 have been maintained in order that focus has been kept on three key governance needs for the organisation:

1. Constitutional Review – a necessary task to update the Rules and bring RPHA and its membership into line with current legislative and co-operative requirements of the Co-Operative Registrar.

2. Board and operational Governance – significant work has been done to develop and adopt a number of core Policies and procedures. Further policy development has been identified and will be undertaken ongoing to ensure the organisation has the governance structure it requires.
3. Financial Management and Accountability – to maintain accountability with our funding partners and ensure our systems support our business.

Work continues on the core functional priorities of RPH Australia creating a strong foundation for the work ahead.

2017-2019 Strategic goals

This pivot of focus for RPHA will be delivered through the following strategic goals for 2017-2019:

1. To strengthen and enhance the RPHA current Co-operative model
2. To reaffirm our commitment to being a member centred organisation
3. To facilitate and lead a national conversation about the future of our sector
4. To ensure we remain relevant to our member's needs within our sector

Each Strategic Goal is supported by key actions, activities and KPI's and will be reviewed annually with full contribution by our Members. RPHA annual Operations Plan will implement the daily business of these Strategic Directions.

2017 – 2019 Strategic action plan

Table 2 Summary of Strategic Directions 2017-19

Strategic Goal	2017 Focus	Action	Lead	Date
<p>1. To strengthen and enhance the RPHA current Co-operative model</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more cohesive and engaged Membership <p>Measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of sharing, enquiries, access to RPHA data • Adoption of revised cooperative model, evidence of endorsement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Document and describe the current RPHA cooperative model 2. Communicate with members and Boards 3. Facilitate feedback and responses 4. Revise and Review new rules having regard to feedback / AGM team 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Document summary of key cooperative principles and new membership policy 2. Send from RPHA Board to Member Boards / Chairs for re-endorsement 3. RPHA Board members to follow up 4. Collate feedback with RPHA Exec to consider changes 5. AGM / SGM to endorse new membership policy 	Executive Board member with delegation	March 2017 > June 2017
<p>2. To reaffirm our commitment to being a member centred organisation</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members are engaged, they fully participate, are active and informed about their peak body and support and contribute to activities <p>Measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of Member’s contribution to RPHA initiatives e.g. correspondence received, participation and feedback 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase genuine, effective and impactful Member engagement 2. To be agile, nimble enough to change to suit our Member’s needs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design a Membership engagement plan and process > example: info sharing; a national conference; technical peer engagement; national campaign design 2. Develop a RPHA / Sector ‘white paper’ including a listener survey, big issues, big risks, trends to include Member’s survey (annually) 3. Board to acknowledge that change of governance may be required; RPHA Board is willing to demonstrate change as required 	EO and Executive Board member with delegation	April 17
<p>3. To facilitate and lead a national conversation about the future of our sector</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased shared Member awareness of common social, technological, business and listener trends • The delivery of a network wide strategic plan • National understanding of issues, consequences and impacts of national trends <p>Measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member feedback as to the key national issues • Delivery of plan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To describe and identify the key (new and existing) stakeholders required to participate in a national conversation about the sustainability of our sector 2. To <i>open doors</i> as national advocate of the sector and be seen to be fully engaged in wider sector engagement to identify opportunities and partnerships 3. To contribute to conversations and national debates on matters related to the vision impaired 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an engagement plan that targets national players using current contact list 2. To design a key stakeholder contact plan, with clear purpose, call to action and defined outcomes 3. To design a new narrative and compelling argument as to why partner with RPHA / Members 4. Participate nationally on related client campaigns e.g. National Disability Week 	EO and Executive Board member, with delegation	July 17>June 18
<p>4. To ensure we remain relevant to our member’s needs within our sector</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPHA remains relevant to member needs <p>Measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member feedback, overall awareness and access to new services 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To adopt a nimble, positive and growth focused mindset with a continual focus on Member’s needs 2. To actively monitor environment, Member’s relevance and broking 3. To publish opinions, views and campaign Member and listener interest 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrate national campaign into communication planning – e.g. “these are the issues, the trends, we invite you to work with us...” 2. National awareness, issues and ensuring Members are informed on a ‘no-surprises’ basis 	All	Ongoing 2017>2019