

Chairman's Report – 2016 Season



Gavin Harris (Chairman SAHPA)

This year has been one of the most significant in the last 20 years for the association. The SAHPA Management Committee has restructured how the SAHPA running costs are funded to a model which will help sustain us for the future. We have invested over a quarter million dollars on a state of the art transporter.

The Management Committee analysed the costs of running the association and increased the membership subscriptions and purchase price of rings to cover the fixed costs and then introduced a cheaper prepaid system for pigeon race teams to cover the transport and racing costs. Previously the association finances were dictated by the total number of birds raced for the season as to whether we made a surplus or loss, so some years when the nominations were down, it caused significant losses. The new funding model means we can avoid the fluctuations.

We are all very proud of the new transporter, a new \$110,000 Hino FD 500 truck and the German custom built Geraldty Units that were shipped by sea from Hamburg port to Adelaide. The main unit has the largest Liberator quarters ever built by Geraldty and includes bunks, sink and stove to make sure we look after our driver and liberator. The capacity of the main unit is 108 crates the trailer has 48 crates, which allows for a total of 5,460 birds for races where they are transported overnight and 4,680 birds for races where birds are loaded for two or more nights on the transporter. The new transporter has four thermostatically operated fans which pump air through to each of the 108 crate bays. The new trailer also has three thermostatically operated fans which pump air through to the 48 crate bays. The release mechanism is an electronic switch on both units which rolls up the roller doors on both sides of the units and releases each row starting at the bottom to avoid birds on higher levels possibly contacting the birds on the lower levels which was the case when they were all released at the same time. The loading of the Units is much faster, does not unsettle the birds and involves less labour.



We must thank Paul Springett for the many hundreds of hours he has devoted to this project and continues to devote, without Paul's vision and commitment we would not have the new transporter. I also thank Geoff Clare who made the phone calls to the Geraldine foreman, Hugo Kipp and Tony Perkins for driving the truck back and forwards to Aldons, the local company that did much of the battery and electrical fit out and made sure the vehicles passed as Australian compliant.

Animal welfare is of prime importance and our investment in this new unit with sophisticated ventilation systems, feeding and watering troughs further complements the initiatives which the SAHPA is constantly demonstrating. Over the last decade we have introduced the code of practice, elected release panels who monitor weather conditions and change race days or release points where appropriate, we have compulsory vaccinations of our birds, provide pigeon fancier education through seminars with leading pigeon fanciers and veterinarians, we provide two vehicles for training so that pigeons can be well prepared for racing and maintaining their fitness.

Last year saw the formation of the Australian National Racing Pigeon Board ANRPB which was established in response to the Australian Federal Government's decision to update animal welfare codes and convert them into the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines. It was very important that the racing pigeon fraternity had a voice on this committee which meet in Canberra. Stephen Nuske was instrumental in getting the ANRPB off the ground and spent many hours assembling representatives in each state, another ex SA flyer, who is also on our Wall of Fame, Grant Paterson played a very important role attending the Committee meetings in Canberra and was appointed Treasurer. Our state has been well represented by initially Mr. David Buxton and for the last year Mr. Greg Kakoschke has been a very integral part of the ANRPB Board taking on many of the boards responsibilities and also working on the national code of practice.

Other SAHPA Committee initiatives have been to introduce a Social Media Policy and also demonstrate greater action to encourage respect and reduce conflict between members.

Tim Fawcett has generously run two on-line pigeon auctions for the SAHPA to help raise funds and most of our members that finished in the Top 30 in the Aggregate Points have provided top quality birds. We really must thank these members and the members who bought birds.

One of our major aims is to keep the cost of racing down and the new transporter will make a big impact over the coming years as compared to the previous semi trailer unit where we needed to subcontract a prime mover. At the AGM we will present a spreadsheet showing the cost of running the new transporter compared to the prime mover and semi trailer. In summary we saved over \$22,000 this season on our transport costs. For example, comparison for the Marla race using our new truck, fuel, driver (\$1,101) whereas the subcontractor standard rate of \$2.20 plus GST (\$5,029), resulting in a saving of \$3,928 for this one race. For the 13 races we used the new units for in 2016, we saved \$29,009 (registration \$1450, insurance \$4506, service and repairs \$830), total saving - \$22,653.

We have new challenges to tackle in 2017 with the outbreak of the Rotavirus and the fact that a new vaccine will need to be developed over the next 12 months. When times are tough we need the greatest support from our members, we have fixed costs of over \$60,000 to run the association, which does not include racing costs, I call on members to still pay up their membership fee to support the SAHPA even if they choose not to race next year due to the vaccine not being available for the virus. We still need to pay Honorariums, Council rates, insurances, SA Water, electricity, security, Emergency Service Levy, waste removal, telephones, audit fees, etc We have made a \$5,000 donation to the ANRPB Disease Management Fund on behalf of the members to help fund the vaccine trials. The SAHPA

Management Committee will do their best to reduce costs but if only half (100 of our 200) members pay we would forecast a \$16,000 loss.

In my opinion, our website administrated by Alan Agar is the best in Australia and I know we have the best headquarters of any pigeon racing body in Australia and now the best transporter, please be proud of your association.

We have many great members that give up their time to take on important roles in the SAHPA and every club has good people that are willing to take on various club responsibilities to make sure we can all enjoy our sport. I would like to wish members all the best for the new season and call on your continued support.

**Yours in Sport, Gavin Harris –
SAHPA – Chairperson**

The new SAHPA Geraldty truck first used in 2016

