

QRA FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY REPORT

26 March 2026



This report summarises key insights from a Queensland Rifle Association (QRA) member focus group, with discussion topics drawn directly from issues raised by members through the survey. The purpose of the focus group was to create an open, member-led conversation that would help QRA prioritise practical improvements and consider potential additional services in response to what members said in the survey. As such, the feedback captured through the focus group relates specifically to these priority topics.

Members expressed strong passion for the sport and a clear appreciation of its community and social value. Across the survey-based discussion topics, participants identified a range of challenges and opportunities relating to training and onboarding, communication, volunteering, member support and longer-term participation.

OVERALL KEY THEMES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Strengthen volunteer capability and reduce pressure on core people

Invest in mentor development, clearer volunteer roles, recognition initiatives and practical support that helps clubs share the load.

Improve retention by supporting members earlier and more intentionally

Focus on stronger onboarding and fundamental training, with a clearer first 100-day journey and better integration into club life to turn initial interest into long-term participation.

Modernise communication and improve transparency

Use clearer, more engaging and more consistent communication, supported by better visibility of board activity and stronger feedback loops with members.

Support club revenue generation

Improve governance capability and financial understanding to help clubs explore appropriate revenue opportunities and reduce pressure on volunteers.



1. TRAINING AND CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

Training and coaching opportunities were the top improvement priority identified in the survey.

KEY ISSUES

1.1 LOW RETENTION OF NEW MEMBERS

While initial engagement is strong, there is a consistent drop-off due to limited support beyond entry-level experiences.

- » Approx. 20% retention from come-and-try programs, declining further over time
- » Limited structured follow-up after initial sessions
- » 'First 100 days' of the member journey not actively managed
- » Members not effectively transitioned from casual to committed participation

1.2 LACK OF STRUCTURED, CONSISTENT TRAINING

Training delivery varies significantly across clubs, with no consistent framework guiding progression.

- » Heavy reliance on informal, ad hoc mentoring
- » No standardised curriculum across clubs
- » Confusion between 'coaching', 'mentoring' and 'instruction' roles
- » Members plateau due to unclear development pathways

1.3 LIMITED MENTOR CAPACITY (VOLUNTEER CONSTRAINTS)

A small number of active members carry the majority of responsibility, reducing the ability to support others.

- » Limited availability of mentors at club level
- » Volunteer fatigue impacting quality and consistency
- » Experienced members often prioritise their own shooting over mentoring
- » Regional clubs are particularly affected due to smaller member bases

1.4 GAPS IN FOUNDATIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT

There is a gap in delivering core skills that apply across disciplines, impacting confidence and performance.

- » Fundamentals such as wind reading, elevation and etiquette are inconsistently taught
- » Returning members often need to relearn basics
- » Overexposure to advanced concepts too early for beginners
- » Lack of structured progression from basic to advanced skills

1.5 BARRIERS IN REGIONAL AND COUNTRY CLUBS

Clubs outside metropolitan areas have reduced capacity to deliver training and support their members.

- » Limited access to volunteers and mentors
- » Restricted shooting days and operating hours
- » Lower access to structured programs compared to city clubs
- » Reduced ability to run regular training initiatives

1.6 COST BARRIERS TO TRAINING PARTICIPATION

The financial burden of training, particularly ammunition costs, impacts both clubs and new members.

- » Approx. \$30 cost per training session (ammunition)
- » Clubs absorb onboarding costs without reimbursement
- » Cost can deter new members from continuing

OPPORTUNITIES

1.1 DEVELOP A STRUCTURED TRAINING PATHWAY

A clear and consistent framework would support progression and improve retention.

- » Tiered model (e.g. beginner → intermediate → advanced)
- » Clear curriculum and learning outcomes with a focus on the common fundamentals across the different disciplines
- » Consistency across clubs
- » Potential willingness to pay for advanced training

1.2 'TRAIN-THE-MENTOR' MODEL

Building internal capability would address capacity constraints and improve consistency.

- » Entry-level mentor accreditation (e.g. Level 1 program)
- » Potential to increase into greater levels (e.g. Level 2)
- » Clear guidance on what mentors should teach
- » Increased confidence and consistency across clubs
- » Provide advice in encouraging people, but just the skills

1.3 STRENGTHEN ONBOARDING EXPERIENCE

Improving the early member experience would increase retention.

- » 'Beginner pack' (digital + physical):
 - Videos with a focus on the basics
 - Pathways and next steps
- » Structured first 100-day journey

1.4 FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CLUBS

Reducing financial barriers would encourage clubs to invest in training.

- » Subsidies or reimbursement for training costs
- » Support for onboarding new members
- » Incentives for clubs to run structured programs

1.5 ENHANCE CLUB-LEVEL INTEGRATION

Creating a stronger sense of belonging early in the member journey can significantly increase ongoing participation and commitment.

- » Early inclusion in competitions and team-based shooting
- » Encouraging participation in club activities beyond training
- » Building social connections within the club from the outset
- » Reinforcing a sense of identity and belonging within teams

2. COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY

Communication and transparency were recurring concerns across the survey and discussion.

KEY ISSUES

2.1 LACK OF VISIBILITY OF BOARD ACTIVITY

Members feel they lack visibility into decision-making and organisational direction.

- » Members are unclear on:
 - What the board is doing
 - How decisions are made
- » Perceived disconnect between board and members

2.2 POOR RESPONSIVENESS AND INFORMATION FLOW

Delays or lack of response reduce confidence and create frustration.

- » Difficulty obtaining timely responses (e.g. insurance, training queries)
- » Communication gaps between QRA and clubs
- » Lack of clear contact points or accountability

2.3 INEFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Information is available but not always accessible or engaging.

- » Website contains useful content but is underutilised
- » Emails are often ignored or overlooked
- » No single, reliable 'source of truth'

2.4 INCONSISTENT MESSAGING

Members are unclear on what they receive for their membership fee.

- » Limited visibility of benefits and services
- » Disconnect between cost and perceived value
- » Inconsistent messaging across platforms

OPPORTUNITIES

2.1 MULTI-CHANNEL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

A coordinated approach would improve reach and engagement.

- » Use a mix of:
 - Email
 - Website
 - Social media
 - Video and audio content
- » Tailor communication to different member demographics

2.2 INCREASE TRANSPARENCY OF GOVERNANCE

Increasing visibility would build trust and engagement.

- » Regular updates on board activity
- » Clear summaries of key decisions
- » Stronger feedback loops with members

2.3 INTRODUCE ENGAGING CONTENT FORMATS

Modern formats would increase engagement and accessibility.

- » Short video updates from leadership
- » Video-style updates or 'digital newsletters'
- » Visual and storytelling-based content

2.4 ESTABLISH DEDICATED COMMUNICATIONS FUNCTION

Clear ownership would improve consistency and effectiveness.

- » Marketing and Membership/Communications Committee
- » Central coordination of messaging
- » Defined responsibility for member engagement

2.5 IMPROVE ONBOARDING COMMUNICATION

Clear early communication would improve understanding and engagement.

- » Welcome email/package outlining:
 - Member benefits
 - Available resources
 - Pathways and contacts

3. CLUB COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTEERING

“Club community and social/family connection” was the top value driver for members.

KEY ISSUES

3.1 VOLUNTEER BURNOUT AND SHORTAGE

A small number of individuals carry a significant workload, particularly in regional clubs.

- » Heavy reliance on core volunteers
- » Volunteer burnout and fatigue
- » Limited capacity to take on additional responsibilities

3.2 LACK OF RECOGNITION FOR VOLUNTEERS

A lack of recognition reduces motivation and willingness to contribute.

- » Minimal formal recognition of volunteer contributions
- » Limited visibility of volunteer efforts
- » Perception that contributions are undervalued

3.3 GENERATIONAL DIVIDE

Differences in expectations and engagement styles create barriers.

- » Resistance to change among some older members
- » Younger members are more comfortable with technology and innovation
- » Difficulty bridging generational gaps

3.4 BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Cost, time and accessibility reduce involvement for some members.

- » High costs for families
- » Time commitments for volunteering
- » Limited pathways for non-competitive members

OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Recognition would improve motivation and retention.

- » Public acknowledgement (website, social media, events)
- » Annual awards or recognition initiatives
- » Increased visibility of volunteer contributions

3.2 STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Building a stronger sense of belonging would enhance engagement.

- » Celebrate club history and legacy (e.g. honour boards)
- » Promote intergenerational connection
- » Reinforce social and family aspects of the sport

3.3 LEVERAGE YOUNGER MEMBERS

Younger members can play a key role in modernising clubs.

- » Involvement in technology and digital tools
- » Support for events and operations
- » Opportunities for leadership and contribution

3.4 SUPPORT VOLUNTEERING PATHWAYS

Reducing barriers would encourage greater participation.

- » Clear role definitions and expectations
- » Training and support for volunteers
- » Shared resources across clubs

3.5 ENCOURAGE FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Broadening participation would strengthen community connection.

- » Explore family-oriented participation models
- » Increased focus on social and recreational engagement
- » Pathways for non-competitive members

4. NEW IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES

KEY ISSUES

4.1 PERCEIVED VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP

Some members question whether the benefits justify the cost.

- » Concerns about value delivered relative to fees
- » Questions around national body contribution
- » Differences in value perception across member types

4.2 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES (CLUBS)

Limited revenue streams place pressure on clubs and volunteers.

- » Loss of previous income sources
- » Reliance on membership fees
- » Limited opportunities to generate additional revenue
- » Incorrect assumptions that not-for-profits cannot make a profit

4.3 CITY VS COUNTRY DIVIDE

Differences in access and support create tension across the network.

- » Perceived inequities in resources and opportunities
- » Cultural differences between clubs
- » Challenges in meeting diverse needs

4.4 LACK OF LONG-TERM STRATEGIC CONTINUITY

Frequent changes in direction reduce the impact of past initiatives.

- » Strategies not sustained over time
- » Loss of momentum with leadership changes
- » Repetition of past efforts without progression

OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 DEVELOP LONG-TERM STRATEGIC DIRECTION

A longer-term approach would provide consistency and direction.

- » 5–10 year planning horizon
- » Clear priorities and measurable outcomes
- » Reduced reliance on short-term initiatives

4.2 STRENGTHEN MEMBER-BOARD CONNECTION

Improved engagement would build trust and alignment.

- » Increased board visibility and presence
- » Direct engagement with clubs and members
- » Stronger two-way communication

4.3 SUPPORT CLUB REVENUE GENERATION

Improving financial capability would reduce pressure on volunteers.

- » Education on governance and revenue generation for not-for-profits
- » Exploration of new income streams
- » Support for club-level financial sustainability

4.4 CONSIDER DISCOUNTED MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

Targeted discounted options, such as family membership, may support accessibility and retention, but would require further investigation and member engagement.

- » Consider options such as family membership
- » Recognise differing views on discounted pricing
- » Undertake further investigation and consultation before any change

4.5 FOCUS ON FAMILY AND RETENTION

Encouraging family involvement would support retention and growth.

- » Promote family participation in the sport
- » Create pathways for younger members
- » Build long-term engagement across life stages

4.6 STRENGTHEN UNDERSTANDING ACROSS CITY AND COUNTRY CLUBS

A more intentional approach to knowledge sharing and collaboration would help break down barriers.

- » Greater transfer of knowledge, ideas and practical solutions across clubs
- » Improved understanding of the different operating environments, pressures and opportunities faced in regional and metropolitan areas
- » Stronger relationships and reduced perceptions of divide across the network



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