



STRATEGIC PLAN

2011 to 2015

13 April 2011



VISION

The Bridge Association of Western Australia (BAWA) shares a vision of —

“A world in which the game of contract bridge flourishes.”

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

BAWA is the peak bridge body in WA. Its membership comprises associated bridge clubs that have applied for and been admitted to its membership.

BAWA itself is an affiliate member of the Australian Bridge Federation.

A ‘Situational Analysis’ which describes further the environment within which BAWA operates is provided in Appendices 1&2.

MISSION (This is BAWA’s reason for being)

“To promote, control and advance the game of contract bridge in the state of WA.”¹

The principal objectives for BAWA, as specified in its Constitution, would therefore be to ensure that the game is —

Promoted

Controlled

Advanced

Underpinning these objectives is a “Governance” objective whereby BAWA seeks to ensure that the organisation is governed and managed in accordance with good business practice.

¹ (Extract from the BAWA Constitution — Objects article 2.2.1)

In the context of the above objectives —

Promoted is taken to mean the benefits of bridge are advocated and marketed to

- a) the bridge playing community
- b) the wider community.

with a view to expanding and sustaining the number of bridge players in the state.

Controlled is taken to mean that all aspects of the game as played in its affiliated clubs, and in BAWA sponsored events and congresses, are managed in a professional and businesslike manner. This will ensure that bridge standards are maintained and are consistent with best practice in other bridge jurisdictions.

Advanced is taken to mean that an environment is created which ensures the quality of the game as played in bridge clubs in the state is developed and fostered. This will ensure skill level of WA bridge players continues to develop. The environment fostered by BAWA for its clubs will be one in which talented players aspire to bridge playing excellence.

The above three principal objectives are further elaborated on in the BAWA constitution's 'Objects' section as articulated in BAWA's Terms of Reference. The analysis below is comprehensive of the 8 other 'objects' articulated in BAWA's Constitution.

Promotion of Bridge

- Advocate with ABF on behalf of WA bridge (Objects 2.2.2)
- Collaborate with other bodies with similar objects (Objects 2.2.3)

Control of Bridge

- Interpret and administer the laws of contract bridge (Objects 2.2.5)
- Act as appellate body for WA (Objects 2.2.5)
- Train TDs (Objects 2.2.6)
- Administer the ABF ranking scheme (Objects 2.2.7)
- Ensure acceptable standard of behaviour for players(Objects 2.2.8)

Advancement of Bridge

- Organise, administer and supervise tournaments (Objects 2.2.4)
- Select WA representatives for National / International events. (Objects 2.2.4.2)

STRATEGIES & STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (to guide the organisation reach its principal objectives)

Strategic Objective 1 — Promotion of Bridge

Strategies to promote the game can be broken into the following two segments:

- ◆ Promoting the game to the bridge playing community (with a view to sustaining the current market)
- ◆ Promoting the game to the wider non bridge playing community (with a view to developing / expanding the market)

Priority areas:

1. Development of a Marketing Plan for BAWA based on the work done by the Murdoch marketing students. Including—
 - Preparation of a 'way forward' paper
 - Engage with the body of players who play bridge 'socially' and may not be registered members of a BAWA affiliated club.
 - Marketing bridge to the 45-60 demographic as this pre-retirement age group is potentially a high yield group of new bridge players.

In developing the BAWA Marketing Plan contact should be made with the ABF National Marketing Manager who could provide valuable input into the development of the State Marketing Plan.
2. Development of a state of the art / contemporary web presence for BAWA. This is the face of BAWA to the 'virtual' world of the internet customer. (Refer to End Note¹ – Appendix 3)
3. Raise awareness of bridge as a mind sport with government. (Specifically politicians, the Department for Sport and Recreation, the Department for Communities, the Department for Health and the Department for Education and Training).
 - With the increasing awareness and recognition of bridge by government agencies BAWA should identify special projects that could be funded by grants from government agencies listed above and from organisations with which BAWA has developed strategic partnerships.
4. Strategic partnerships with organisations such as the Office of Seniors Interests, the Health Department, The Education Department, Alzheimer's Australia etc.

5. The potential of volunteers to work for BAWA should be explored.
6. The viability of establishing a 'bequests program' for bridge in WA should be researched.
7. BAWA should foster programs which promote bridge with young people as this demographic will provide bridge players in the future and will be critical to the future of bridge in the longer term.

Ongoing promotional activities:

1. *Bridge Focus* Magazine — Published on a monthly basis.
2. Publish an Annual handbook of events for 2012 — this is a source of information for the WA bridge community.
3. Promotion of all BAWA endorsed events(advertising on websites, flyers etc.) ensuring it is consistent with the BAWA Marketing Plan.

Strategic Objective 2 — Control of Bridge

Strategies under this objective will fall into the following component parts:

- ◆ Ensuring that bridge standards in WA are consistent with best practice in other jurisdictions.
- ◆ Ensuring that bridge is managed by BAWA affiliated clubs, and in BAWA sponsored events and congresses, in a professional and businesslike manner.

Priority areas:

1. Ensuring that playing bridge is an enjoyable activity for participants irrespective of experience / status.
2. Educating and raising awareness in the bridge community of 'bridge etiquette'.
3. BAWA as a sponsoring organisation has a responsibility for reviewing and endorsing the terms and regulations for all events. This is a quality control measure.
4. Tournament Directors provide a valued service to both BAWA and the bridge playing community it is important that BAWA has a QA process

to ensure that we receive an acceptable level of service from TDs and provide them with ongoing professional development.

Ongoing activities:

- Review of regulations for BAWA events.
- Provision of training and development for the accreditation of Tournament Directors.
- Monitoring performance of Tournament Directors.
- Ensuring processes are in place to regulate acceptable standards of behaviour for players at BAWA sanctioned events.
- Maintenance of close links with the ABF.
- Maintenance of close links with BAWA affiliated clubs
- Providing advice and resource materials to affiliated clubs.
- Adjudicating on complaints of substandard player behaviour.
- Acting as an appellate body for bridge in WA.

Strategic Objective 3 — Advancement (and Development) of Bridge

Strategies under this objective will fall into the following component parts:

- ◆ Sponsorship and event management of tournaments and congresses presented, sponsored and endorsed by BAWA.
- ◆ Selection and development of WA representatives for National events.

Priority Areas to address:

1. An annual program of ‘master-classes’ and workshops presented by bridge experts for talented players.
2. With 88% of registered players in WA in the demographic of ‘Under Life Master’, there have been repeated requests that BAWA endorsed gold and red point events be scheduled for this demographic.

3. Establishment of a talented / Elite Player Development sub-committee to take a lead role in championing and creating an appropriate environment for this group of players and to ensure WA bridge is competitive at a national level.
4. BAWA to sponsor talented bridge players to compete at a national level.
5. Benchmark and Review the form of competitions offered to the bridge playing community in WA. The benchmarking could be done against what is offered in other bridge jurisdictions.
6. Development of Youth bridge in WA as this is an important seeding ground for bridge playing in the state.

On-going activities:

- Organisation of BAWA sponsored events.
- Monitoring attendances at BAWA sponsored events to ensure that table numbers are optimised.
- Selection of state representatives at a national level competitions.

Strategic Objective 4 — Governance & General Management of BAWA

Strategies under this section are designed to

- ◆ Ensure the Management Committee aspires to best practice in the management and governance of the association.

Priority Areas to address:

1. Finalise the development of a Strategic Plan for BAWA and ensure it is used as a strategic management tool in the governance of the organisation.
2. Ensure the Marketing Plan for BAWA is completed.
3. BAWA through its Management Committee engages with a range of sub-committees, individuals and other parties to undertake business on behalf of BAWA. Good management practice suggests that when these arrangements are entered into, there should be a clear brief

which articulates the expectations, deliverables, limits of authority etc. of all parties to the agreement. The Management Committee should undertake a 'gap analysis' of all important arrangements with a view to identifying / ensuring that a clear brief exists for all significant arrangements established by BAWA. Where there is no clear brief a 'Terms of Reference' should be drafted for the consideration and endorsement of the Management Committee.

4. Develop a 'Succession Plan' for BAWA to ensure that strategies are in place to ensure a smooth transition in the leadership and management of the organisation.

On-going activities:

- BAWA to ensure the governance of the Association, including the business of the Management Committee, is undertaken in a professional manner where management strives for best practice.
- Ensure that the organisation prepares an operating budget which aims for an operating result of a surplus for the year and that the association continues to be financially viable. The MC to monitor the actual operating result against budget during the course of the year.
- Ensure that the organisation manages its risks prudently. In regard to risk management a principal annual strategy is to ensure that BAWA affiliated clubs are covered by a 'head' insurance policy provided by the ABF. As the affiliated clubs rely on this insurance, confirm on an annual basis that the policy is in place, with the ABF, and obtain a copy of the policy for our records.
- Periodic review / evaluation of effectiveness of standing committees (including the TC and MC) and ensuring committee members make a valued contribution to the management of the organisation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Situational Analysis

- There are currently 4027 registered players in WA. There are 33 BAWA affiliated Bridge Clubs. The total number of registered bridge players in Australia is 32,876.² (See End Note in Appendix 3)
- There are estimated to be approximately 150,000 people who have played the game at some level who are unregistered players in WA.(Refer End Note ³and⁴)
- The game is perceived as an 'old peoples game'
- The demographic of bridge players is ageing

Bridge Players Classified by Experience

Classification	Masterpoints	Number	Per Cent
To Club Master	0 – 14	1652	41.0%
Local Masters	15 – 49	789	19.6%
State Masters	50 – 150	745	18.5%
National Masters	150 – 300	357	8.9%
Life Masters	300 – 999	365	9.1%
Grand Masters	1000+	119	3.0%

- Bridge players have generally attained a higher level of education than the median member of the state's population. Many bridge players have tertiary qualifications. (79% in the US).
- The bridge playing demographic is relatively affluent.
- The popularity of the game has declined significantly over the last fifty years.
- In 1995 the IOC considered the inclusion of 'mind sport' for inclusion in the official Olympic program. In 1999 the WBF is recognised by the IOC as an International Sports Federation.
- In America the two richest men (Gates and Buffett) realising the importance of getting young people engaged in the game if it is to prosper have spent \$1m financing a bridge program in public schools.
- Through its World Educational Foundation, the WBF has developed a teaching programme especially in schools supported by UNESCO. This programme is actively used in many countries (US, France, Italy, Germany, Netherland, Poland, China, Indonesia...).Note Australia's exclusion from this list.
- Bridge provides excellent mental training and exercise, involving the calculation of probabilities, analysis of data and the use of memory. A 2006 study concluded that children who learn to play bridge can increase academic performance because "bridge is a game that develops inferential reasoning skills which are very difficult to teach elementary students" ⁵
- In Bridge, the understanding created between partners is of great importance and consequently communication, harmony and solidarity come first.

Benefits of Bridge as a Mind Sport

Is bridge a sport?

It engenders the following attributes / values in common with other competitive sports: In order to excel bridge requires from its players

- ✓ Technique / technical ability
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Competitive Attitude
- ✓ Fair Play
- ✓ Discipline
- ✓ Stamina
- ✓ Physical fitness
- ✓ Quick Reflexes
- ✓ Fighting spirit
- ✓ Concentration

Bridge – Health Benefits

- If physical activity is a fundamental necessity for human beings, the same can be said for mental activity which is an indispensable complement.
- Bridge is an excellent gymnastic of the mind for men and women of all ages.
- Bridge enhances the immune system, according to a preliminary study by researchers at UC Berkeley.⁶
- Playing bridge significantly lowers the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia, according to the most comprehensive study to examine the benefits of challenging intellectual activity among the elderly. "playing chess, bridge, or a musical instrument, significantly reduces the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia"⁷
- The report bolsters a growing body of evidence that exercising the mind through board games, social activities and education offers powerful protection against mental deterioration and disease.

SWOT ANALYSIS

	STRENGTHS (to build on)	WEAKNESSES (to overcome)
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mind sport that is said to confer considerable health benefits on players. • A mind sport that has considerable benefits for very young players. • Found to improve academic performance in the young. • A game where you meet and socialise with people. • Cheap source of entertainment. • The commitment of bridge players to the game. • Decentralised clubs catering to and representing a local community • Bridge is recognised as a mind sport by the IOC. (Is this correct?) • It is challenging • It is fun and rewarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those who do not know how to play the game–⁸ <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) It is difficult to know how to get started b) It is difficult to know what happens next c) It is not a particularly friendly place (despite what the clubs say) • For those who do know how to play the game – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) It is daunting to simply join a regular session, particularly if they have never played 'duplicate' before. • For those already a member of a club it is upsetting when another player is unpleasant. • The game does not make it easy for potential adoptees of the game to take it up. i.e. how do you get started. • Complex rules and regulations for the game. • There is a steep learning curve for people wishing to take up the game. • Proliferation of complex systems is a turnoff to may inexperienced players. • Some people are prone to rudeness and grandstanding at the bridge table this is upsetting for people who have come to the club to have an enjoyable experience. • Reducing pool of qualified / accredited directors. • Bridge players 'huddle together' in groups. Elite players stick together and have little interaction with the novice.
	OPPORTUNITIES (to exploit)	THREATS (to manage)
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet bridge an access to a younger demographic. • Research supports the premise that it delays the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's in the elderly. • An aging population, with time on their hands, who could be attracted to the game which offers, the opportunity of social interaction, mental stimulation and health benefits and entertainment. • Computer bridge and bridge education being delivered by computer. • As a Not-for-profit organisation there is an opportunity for tax free status. • An aging demographic of committed bridge players provides opportunities for donations and bequests that could help advance the game in the State. • Approach State Government agencies for project grants. • The game has to date not been 'marketed' like other sports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other entertainment sources eg TV, Internet, Computer games etc. • Perception of the game as an 'old peoples game'. • An aging population with many current players introduced to the game when young could see an exponential decline in the number of players over a short period of time. • An aging population could mean numbers who are able to get to a bridge club will decline rapidly. • Bridge will never have the spectator appeal of games like poker.

END NOTES

¹ Developing a state of the art web site / presence for BAWA was regarded as a priority in the Murdoch Marketing plan.

² ABF Masterpoint data as at Aug 2010.

³ The American Contract Bridge League recently undertook a survey which indicated that 45.8 million people were familiar with the game of bridge and 25.1 million indicated that they knew how to play with 3.3 million playing at least once a week. Of the total number 41.3% only played rubber bridge. Translating these figures into a West Australian context the figures would be:

Total familiar / aware of the game:	286,000
Total who knew how to play	156,000
Total who played once a week	20,000
Number who played rubber bridge only	8,500

Source David Stern article in ABF newsletter. Also Sharon Osberg in the New York Times.

⁴ Based on the above the figure would be approximately 150,000.

⁵ Dr Christopher Shaw a researcher for Carlinville ILL.
http://www.cavendishinvitational.com/pdfbin/Bridge_Overview.pdf

⁶ http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2000/11/08_bridge.html

⁷ Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University.
<http://www.einstein.yu.edu/home/newsArchive.asp?id=41>

⁸ John and Pam Beddow Marketing Analysis 14 Apr 2010