

Context for Members – Special General Meeting of AusCycling

Dear Club Presidents, Committees, and Members,

This letter is intended to provide further context regarding the Special General Meeting (SGM) that has been requisitioned by clubs across the country.

The SGM was first proposed by Midlands Cycling Club and subsequently submitted to AusCycling with supporting signatures representing more than **5% of the organisation's voting power**, as required under the **Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)** to require directors to call a meeting of members.

This threshold exists for an important reason. In any member-based organisation, the ability of members to call a meeting is a fundamental governance safeguard. It ensures that when confidence in the direction of the organisation is being questioned, members have the opportunity to discuss concerns openly and determine the path forward through a vote.

For most clubs, the consequences of national decisions are not theoretical. They affect the cost of membership, the viability of events, the workload placed on volunteers, the clarity of pathways for riders, and the confidence clubs have in the organisation representing them. When clubs begin to question whether the national strategy is delivering on its promises, the Special General Meeting process exists so those concerns can be addressed openly and collectively by the membership.

Horizon One – Strengthening the Foundations

Over the past five years AusCycling's strategy has been built around **Horizon One – Strengthen the Foundations**. Horizon One was intended to establish the foundations necessary for the sport to then move into the next phase of the strategy: **Horizon Two – Accelerating Growth**.

The strategic objectives for Horizon One were clearly articulated. They included:

- Engaging more riders through a refreshed value proposition and product portfolio
- Growing the number of coaches, officials and volunteer workforce
- Creating a sustainable economic engine
- Optimising the capability of our people and delivery network
- Reinvigorating the performance system - from clubs to the Australian Cycling Team
- Building credibility and trust in the AusCycling brand
- Enabling our athletes to perform at their best on the biggest stages
- Designing and embedding the organisation's inclusion and climate agenda

At the 2024 AusCycling AGM, the Executive declared that Horizon One had been successfully completed.

However, no measurable evidence has been provided to substantiate that conclusion. The organisation's own reporting does not provide system-wide evidence demonstrating that the foundational objectives have been achieved.

This matters because the sport cannot responsibly move into **Horizon Two – Accelerating Growth** if the foundations of Horizon One remain incomplete.

Several indicators raise legitimate questions about whether those foundations are in place.

First, **national membership participation has declined rather than grown**. The 2024 Annual Report records a **7.9% decline in membership participation nationally**. AusCycling also have not produced a refreshed value proposition or product portfolio.

Second, rather than demonstrating a sustainable economic engine, the organisation appears increasingly reliant on **higher fees from fewer members**. The 2024 Annual Report records a **7.9% decline in membership participation**, yet **membership revenue increased by approximately 8%**. This indicates revenue stability was achieved through price increases. Without that increase, it is unlikely the organisation would have reported a surplus in 2024.

Third, there is no published evidence demonstrating national growth in coaches, officials or volunteers, despite this being a core Horizon One objective. Conversations with representatives from more than 250 clubs across the country consistently indicate that this workforce has not materially increased since 2021, with many clubs reporting a decline.

Fourth, the domestic performance and competition environment remains unstable. The stated goal of reinvigorating the pathway from clubs to the Australian Cycling Team is difficult to reconcile with the reality experienced across the sport. Race structures remain fragile, barriers to hosting events have increased, and key domestic competition frameworks have collapsed, been privatised, and continue to face uncertainty.

Even AusCycling has implicitly acknowledged these structural challenges. In 2026 the organisation announced the creation of a Road Taskforce to review the state of road cycling in Australia. The creation of a Road Taskforce itself indicates that the objective of reinvigorating the performance system remains unresolved.

Public commentary from elite athletes has reinforced the issue. Australian professional cyclist Jay Vine has spoken publicly about the lack of clarity and strength in the domestic pathway and the difficulty riders face progressing from club racing to international competition.

Fifth, concerns relating to **governance transparency, fairness and trust** remain unresolved. The existence of multiple member-supported motions and growing club support for leadership accountability indicates that a significant portion of the membership does not believe this objective has been achieved.

Taken together, these indicators raise a reasonable question for members to consider:

Has Horizon One truly strengthened the foundations of the sport nation-wide, or should the organisation pause, reflect and adapt to the realities we are facing?

The Midlands Cycling Club motions

The SGM request originally submitted by Midlands Cycling Club contained two resolutions for members to consider.

Resolution 1 – Removal of the Chair

Members would vote on whether to remove the current Chair and Director, Craig Bingham, in accordance with the Corporations Act and the AusCycling Constitution.

Resolution 2 – Motion of No Confidence in the CEO

Members would vote on a motion of no confidence asking the Board to remove the current Chief Executive Officer, Marne Fechner, and commence an open and transparent recruitment process for a new CEO.

These motions were intended to allow the membership to determine whether the organisation's current leadership continues to hold the confidence of its members.

Support for these motions represents approximately 400 votes that can be cast at a General Meeting, demonstrating that the discussion reflects concerns shared broadly across the sport.

It is important to emphasise that this process should not be interpreted as an attack on AusCycling or on individuals. The clubs supporting these motions care deeply about the organisation and the future of cycling in Australia. The purpose of these resolutions is not to undermine the organisation, but to ensure that members are able to openly discuss concerns about strategy, governance and performance through the mechanisms that exist specifically to protect member accountability in a national sporting body.

Motions prevented from being considered by members

In addition to the Midlands Cycling Club resolutions, two further resolutions submitted by Canberra Cycling Club also received the required 5% of member voting support necessary to be considered at a General Meeting.

However, AusCycling chose to exercise its discretion to refuse three of the four resolutions submitted by member clubs, preventing them from being discussed or voted on by the membership. In practice, the only avenue available to challenge such decisions is through the courts - a step that most clubs are understandably reluctant to take, given their desire to avoid causing harm to the governing body of the sport.

The effect of this decision is that several legitimate, member-supported motions have been prevented from even being discussed at a Special General Meeting specifically called to allow members to raise concerns.

This is deeply concerning from a governance perspective.

The Special General Meeting mechanism exists precisely so members can raise issues and test confidence in leadership when sufficient support exists within the membership. When motions that have satisfied the required threshold are refused, the result is that members are effectively told which issues they are permitted to discuss and which they are not.

For many clubs, this is not an isolated concern.

There have been previous instances where governance mechanisms appear to have been used to limit member influence. One notable example relates to the Board nomination process, where the Nominations Committee used their discretion to prevent a qualified candidate, supported by numerous clubs, from standing for election to the Board.

The stated justification for those changes was to ensure “**Board and strategic continuity.**” However, the timing and selective application of those requirements raised legitimate questions among clubs about whether the process had been used to prevent grass-roots representation at the Board level.

When decisions of this nature occur repeatedly, they contribute to a growing perception among members that governance mechanisms are limiting, rather than enabling, meaningful member participation.

When member-supported motions are prevented from even being discussed, the very safeguard designed to protect members becomes ineffective.

Why this matters

The SGM process exists specifically so that members can raise concerns and test confidence in leadership.

Member-based organisations depend on transparency, accountability and the ability of members to hold leadership to account.

Yet in this case, rather than allowing the membership to openly debate these issues, AusCycling has used its discretion to limit, prevent and detract from that conversation.

By refusing motions supported by the required membership threshold, the Executive and the Board have effectively narrowed the issues that members are permitted to discuss.

Members should not be told which issues they are allowed to debate or vote on. Nor should AusCycling prolong or manage the conversation in ways that obscure the underlying governance questions.

What members should expect in the coming weeks

In the coming weeks leading into the SGM, members may notice increased communication from AusCycling.

This may include increased social media activity, new dialogue initiatives, and announcements designed to demonstrate that the organisation is listening.

Recent examples include the member survey, various partnership media releases, and the announcement of the Road Taskforce, all introduced after AusCycling became aware that an SGM was being prepared.

While engagement with members is always welcome, members should consider a simple question:

If the organisation genuinely wished to hear from its members, why were several valid member-supported resolutions prevented from being discussed at the meeting?

The most direct and transparent form of member feedback in any member-based organisation is a vote of its members.

Why participation in the SGM matters

The upcoming Special General Meeting represents an important moment for the governance of cycling in Australia.

It is more critical than ever that members attend, participate and reaffirm a fundamental principle:

Members cannot be silenced.

Members cannot be told which issues they are permitted to discuss.

Members cannot be prevented from discussing the organisation's performance.

The authority of any member-based organisation ultimately rests with its members.

This meeting is an opportunity for members to reaffirm that principle.

The outcome of the Special General Meeting will ultimately be determined by those who participate.

Clubs are encouraged to ensure that their committees and members are fully informed about the issues that have led to this Special General Meeting and the importance of participating in the process.