

Regional Information & Member Forum – Discussion Paper

Regional Elite Junior Player Pathway

The purpose of this document is to stimulate discussion with the Regional Hockey Community in relation to the Regional Elite Junior Player Pathway.

Hockey Victoria (HV) in conjunction with the Regional Steering Committee would like to table the following recommendations to streamline and improve the efficiencies and capability of junior regional player development.

Over the past 6 months HV Management have conducted an internal review of our High-Performance Programs and Events in which junior regional participants participate.

Broadly speaking the key areas identified as part of our review were;

- Duplication of resources and effort (same volunteers driving Zone and club activities) & Governance.
- Travel impact
- Cost on families
- Reduced number of teams participating in JCC
- Reduced number of athletes progressing through the JSC from the Regional Areas.
- Performance of the Regional JSC teams over an 8 year period.
- Regional Representation levels in State Teams in the past 8 years.

So in determining a way forward HV was keen to ensure that the future pathway removed duplication, in particular the layers of governance and at the same time introduced an improved standard of player development across Regional Victoria.

Outlined below is a recommended Regional Pathway for the future for children aged Under 13 through to Under 18.



The above diagram demonstrates that 60-80 athletes from Under 13-18 across Regional Victoria will be (as was in 2016-2017) identified into the Hockey Victoria State Junior Academy and up to 400-420 athletes will become Regional Development Academy members. This means that 20% of the regional athletes in the system will be involved in the highest level of HV's junior HP program run and delivered in Melbourne with state coaches.

The remaining 80% of athletes will be involved in Regional Development Academies administered and managed through the following Regional Associations and / or Regional Clubs with a direct link through to HV's High Performance coaches and programs.

- Hockey Albury Wodonga

- Hockey Central Victoria (North West Lightning)
- Hockey Geelong
- West Vic
- Gippsland Bulls

HV would note that player development programs already exist at Hockey Albury Wodonga and Hockey Geelong however it is HV's strong opinion these programs need to be closer aligned to HV's High Performance programs than they are today.

In all other regional areas, the player development programs have existed through the Zones and broadly speaking HV do not believe players are achieving the development outcomes as there is not enough time spent on the pitch with the athletes nor is the quality of coaching of a standard to get the best out of the regional players. Along with the player development pathway, HV wants to work with the regional stakeholders on improving the coach development pathway. This will lift the standards of coaching locally, as well as ensure local self-sustainability in terms of coach education and development.

Proposed Governance Structure & Framework

To achieve both the development of elite junior players in Regional Victoria and participation growth through the grass roots HV would like to recommend the following changes;

There are three Regional Hockey Clubs established across Regional Victoria with a mandate to develop junior regional players and field teams into the Hockey Victoria competition.

Regional Hockey Club	Changes required
West Vic	Direct Affiliate with Hockey Victoria, already established with the requirement of adding a representative from Glenelg Regional Hockey Association, Hockey Ballarat and Warrnambool District Hockey Association to the West Vic Committee.
Gippsland Bulls	Direct Affiliate with Hockey Victoria, already established with the requirement of adding a representative from West Gippsland Hockey Association, East Gippsland Hockey Association and Latrobe Valley Hockey Association to the Gippsland Bulls Committee.
North West Lightning	A new organisation to be set up which will include the merger between CV Blazers & the North-West Lightning. The entity will operate as a stand-alone club and directly Affiliate with Hockey Victoria. The entity will require representation from North Central Hockey Association, Sunraysia Hockey Association & Hockey Central Victoria.

Note 1: Hockey Victoria strongly recommend that Hockey Geelong & Hockey Albury Wodonga continue to run their representative teams and programs as part of their Association governance however monitor the impact this focus has on grassroots development and local competition in the coming years. Furthermore, we confirm that HV strongly encourage Hockey Geelong to field Under 16 Junior Boys and Girls teams into the HV Junior Competition on a Friday night and senior teams on the weekend into the HV Premier League / Vic League competition.

Note 2: Both the Wimmera and Goulburn Valley Association will need to be included in the above structure however HV will use the opportunity to discuss the proposed structure with both Associations to determine the best way forward over the next 12 months.

With the above entities focussed on the player development pathway and access to higher level competition this will provide Associations with the clear mandate to focus on grassroots and local competition management into the future.

Player Pathway Process

Players wishing to compete in the JSC into the future will need to enrol and participate in the Regional Development Academies in the local Zone.

- Players would participate in the Regional Development Academies from February – March each year.
- Players from each of the Associations would play in an 'Inter-Association' Carnival (within their Zone) in late March, early April to play games.
- Players would participate for their Association in the JCC in May
- Zone teams would be finalised at the conclusion of the JCC
- Zone teams play in the Victorian Junior State Championships in July

The Zone teams in the future will be;

Regional Zone Teams	Associations
West Vic	HB, GRHA & WDHA
Gippsland Bulls	WGHA, LVHA, EGHA
North West Lightning	HCV, NCHA, SHA, WHA*
North East Knights	HAW, GVHA*

Note 1: The most appropriate link and Zone for GVHA & WHA juniors to be discussed as part of the stakeholder engagement process.

Note 2: Hockey Geelong will remain in the Western Wildcats as per the current Zone structure however HV recommend that Hockey Geelong encourage players wishing to become eligible for selection in the Zone must participate in the Geelong Player Development Academy.

Role of the Regional Entities in terms of junior player development :

- Appointment of an administrator (coordinator) of the Regional Development Academy and the 6 Teams that will participate in the JSC into the future.
- Appointment of a Head Coach who will oversee the Regional Development Academy.
- Appointment of the 6 Zone team coaches who will coach in the JSC.
- Use the same coaches as the Zone teams to deliver the Regional Development Academy.
- Coordinate the training sessions for the Regional Development Academy.
- Select the six teams to compete in the JSC
- Enter Under 16 Boys & Girls teams into the HV Junior Competition on Friday nights. (Shield or Pennant)
- Enter Vic League Men's & Women's teams into the HV Senior Competition on weekends, with the path to becoming a Premier League Club

Role of the Hockey Victoria

- Assist in the appointment of an administrator (coordinator) of the Regional Development Academy and the 6 Teams that will participate in the JSC into the future. (on the selection committee)
- Assist in the appointment of a Head Coach who will oversee the Regional Development Academy. (on the selection committee)
- Delivery of 1 Regional Coaching Education Seminar with the Regional Development Academy coaches annually.

- Provide the Regional Development Academy program manual and coaching to the local coaches via 'coach the coach program' and regular online tuition to ensure all regional coaches are receiving the up to date coach education from Hockey Victoria's High-Performance Coaches.
- Provide the Junior Development Academy program and resources to the coaches and players.
- Deliver the JSC event for the players selected in the 6 Zone teams from each of the regions.

Finally, we hope the more direct and consistent relationship with the Regional Associations will result in stronger relationships with HV across all HV areas of the business.

Hockey Victoria (HV) understand with the information presented there are as many questions as there are answers. The paper is aimed at generating discussion and debate to improve experiences and the outcome of developing more talent in Regional Victoria. We look forward to presenting the information outlined above in more details and discussing the proposed model with all Regional areas in the coming months.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Skillern". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew Skillern
Chief Executive Officer
Hockey Victoria