

Introduction

Looking back at last year's President's report, it's clear that many of the same challenges persist. There aren't enough people willing to do what's necessary to keep our sport thriving within the Centres. Many members have participated for several years, yet succession planning remains difficult unless others are prepared to step in, bring relevant skills, or show eagerness to learn.

The Board has consistently prioritised ensuring meaningful competitions for masters. We strive to uphold good governance, and I am confident that we succeed most of the time.

What did the NZMA organisation accomplish over the past financial year?

Successful Event Delivery:

During the past year we have successfully held our four main Championship Track & Field Championship Meetings.

1. North Island Track & Field Championships – Whangarei
2. South Island Track & Field Championships - Christchurch
3. NZMA Track & Field Championships – Auckland (280 entries)
4. NZMA Indoor Track & Field Championships – Hastings

Mark Harris has improved event management by introducing AthleticNET for entries and AthleticLIVE for live results, investing in technology that upgrades each meeting. AthleticNET is now used by 10 of 11 Centres across New Zealand and NZMA also uses it to manage entries and prepare events for the LOC. Our championship programme is adapted based on venue configuration and growing numbers of throwers, ensuring all events fit within available time. Athletics NZ promotes all our Championships, and we're pleased to see more officials attending, some traveling long distances. Thanks to all LOCs, partners, and friends for their valuable contributions.

New Constitution:

Following a thorough process that included comparing the previous constitution with an Athletics New Zealand Centres template and consulting the Incorporated Societies website, we developed the new NZMA Constitution. Members were invited to review the draft and suggest changes during an online Team meeting. The revised constitution was then approved at a special general meeting held in October 2025 and has now been uploaded to the Incorporated Societies website.

MOU between Athletics New Zealand (ANZ) and New Zealand Masters Athletics:

Since I became President of Athletics NZ, I have continued discussing the MOU with Cam Mitchell (Athletics NZ CEO). At present, Athletics NZ is undergoing a comprehensive revision of their Constitution and Regulations, which will take considerable time. This is

not the appropriate moment to transfer responsibility for our events to Athletics NZ, as Mark Harris and I possess the necessary skills to organise these events ourselves.

Athletics NZ, NZMA & Centre Member Registers:

Under the new constitution, all non-club NZMA members must register with NZMA via GameDay starting 1 September 2026. This is to comply with the Incorporated Societies' requirement for a membership register. Athletics NZ recently noted that athlete data collection processes may need adjustment; once we have more details, we'll update our method accordingly.

Oceania Masters Athletics (OMA) update:

The OMA Championships in Brisbane had 730 entries. The next OMA event will be in Christchurch in January 2027, with a draft programme on the booklet's back cover. The 2029 OMA event is planned for the islands.

NZMA Athlete of Year Awards:

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to **Ian, Heather Carter, and Dale McMillan** for dedicating significant time and effort toward selecting this year's finalists. Their commitment in compiling the relevant information is greatly appreciated.

Last year, we hosted an informal afternoon gathering at Mt Smart Stadium and celebrated the Awards in the Sir John Walker Lounge. This year, we will be holding a similar event in Inglewood.

Fourth Veteran World Games Trust:

The Trust has existed since 1983 and primarily supports Master's Centres across New Zealand, especially by funding equipment purchases. It provides donations to the SI, NI, and NZMA host Centres, and NZMA can also apply for operational costs, such as help with printing Vetline. Some Trust positions are filled based on roles within NZMA (like the President and Treasurer) and Canterbury Masters (President), while other Trustees are elected for specific terms.

Recently, the Trust decided to increase its donations to Centres hosting championship meetings: \$2,000 each for the Indoor, South Island, and North Island meetings, and \$4,000 for hosting the NZMA Championships.

Currently, the Trustees include two NZMA Life Members, **Rob McGregor** and **Stewart Foster**, as well as **Andrew Stark** (President of NZMA & CMA) and **Hayden Robinson** (NZMA Treasurer). It appears that Rob, and possibly Stewart, will be stepping down soon.

To keep access to Trust assets efficient, the Trust should develop a stronger succession plan by regularly adding new members. If you're interested in being part of this process, please let me know.

NZMA Board Going Future:

The NZMA Board no longer operates independently as it may have done two to three decades ago. To successfully manage the four events under our jurisdiction, we rely on collaboration with multiple groups, including Athletics NZ, local Athletics NZ Centres, Masters Centres, and our members. Further opportunities for cooperation will be explored moving forward.

Currently, all Board meetings are conducted via Teams, resulting in a greater frequency of meetings compared to previous face-to-face gatherings. Meeting minutes are published on our website once they have been uploaded.

The Board members for this year are listed below:

Derek Shaw consistently provides guidance and ensures tasks are completed within designated timeframes. He is responsible for pursuing and editing material for Vetline, contributing reports, and overseeing the constitutional changes we have enacted.

Brayden Grant and **Hayden Robinson** joined the NZMA Board in December 2022. Brayden maintains records and manages the majority of Facebook communications. Hayden supports the treasurer's functions, participates in the 4thWVGT, updates the website, and is able to assist with Facebook postings as needed.

Dale McMillan became a Board member in February 2024. In collaboration with Ian Carter, she has worked on compiling the shortlist for Athlete of the Year, a significant undertaking for all involved.

Liz Mitchell joined the Board last year, assuming the role of Secretary. It is anticipated that she will take on additional responsibilities moving forward.

Board members balance multiple obligations; upon reviewing our achievements over recent years, I believe we have done okay.

Anna Lynch, an accountant who is not formally on the Board, continues to support the finalisation and formatting of annual accounts. Her contribution is greatly appreciated.

All year, I've spoken regularly with **Stewart Foster** (former NZMA Secretary / Treasurer), who keeps me informed about current events. Occasionally, I seek his 'fatherly' advice when challenges arise, and he serves on the OMA Council as well.

Meanwhile, **Joan Merrilees** is part of the OAA Masters Commission, but I receive very little feedback from that group.

The way forward for NZMA

Our main challenge is attracting volunteers for the Master's Centre, Athletics NZ Centre committees, or the NZMA Board. The MoU specifies two ways masters athletes can join NZMA, but more club-based members should consider committee roles to support the

sport. Many only participate when competing; otherwise, they stay away. If I had done the same, I would have left ten years ago, as that was my last period of active competition.

Areas for improvement:

Greater Involvement from Athletics NZ: As discussed earlier, the NZMA Board faces obstacles with some members lacking time and others serving too long. Eventually, new volunteers will be needed. If not, we may need Athletics NZ to oversee summer events, similar to their role with Colgate Games, where they create MOUs and share surpluses. Currently, Mark Harris and I handle event preparation, with Mark introducing AthleticNET/AthleticLIVE and enhancing events through technology.

NZMA, NI & SI Championship Roster & Timing: The 2026-2027 roster is in place:

1. NZMA Indoor Championships – Venue TBC
2. NI Championships – Venue TBC (possibly Hamilton)
3. SI Championships – Invercargill (27th – 29th November 2026)
4. Combined OMA & NZMA Championships – Christchurch (27th – 31st January 2027)

NZMA's Role: Our main responsibility has been coordinating masters track & field championships in New Zealand and liaising with OMA and WMA as required. World Masters requires each country to have a national masters body, which will remain unchanged. Board members handle significant behind-the-scenes work that can go unnoticed. Going forward, the future Board members will decide whether to continue independently or increase Athletics NZ's involvement.

New Board Members: Serving on the Board goes beyond having enthusiasm for Masters athletics. Effective succession planning requires the Board to identify and seek out necessary skills. Right now, we are looking for someone with accounting expertise, familiarity with Xero software, and secretarial experience. If you fit these criteria, please contact me. Although nominations for this year have closed, the Board can co-opt members as needed.

The future of the Local Masters' Centre: Last year, I raised the question—should Masters' Centres operate as committees connected to their local Athletics NZ Centre or perhaps merge with the ANZ Centre's Track & Field Committee? Some Centres have already made this change. What are your thoughts on this idea?

Vetline: Derek Shaw and I have been organizing this publication. There are no set dates for each issue, which may be frustrating to some. We release each edition throughout the year based on our championship schedule. Thank you to all contributors. If anyone is interested in taking over this role, please let us know; compensation will be provided.

This list may not cover everything. If you have any suggestions for us to consider, please email me (Andrew Stark – aws@xtra.co.nz)

To all Master's Centre Committee members who, like myself, have served for many years, your commitment has greatly benefited the sport. The work happening behind the scenes is truly valued, certainly by me. While we may not always get things perfect, we do our best with the skills at our disposal.

Thank you in advance for your engagement at our championship events and this AGM.

Andrew Stark
NZMA President