



## Constitution

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# World Runners Association Constitution

This document describes the internal rules and regulations which govern the World Runners Association (WRA). The WRA reserves the right to amend this Constitution from time to time as deemed necessary, by a vote of its Members according to the process subsequently outlined in this document.

### **Purpose and Structure:**

The purpose of the WRA is to act as the international governing body for the sport of multi-day solo running and walking, primarily in regard to the circumnavigation of the Earth on foot. The WRA reserves the right to extend its jurisdiction in future to similar events on foot at distances of 10,000 km or more, and to challenges such as the traversing of continents on foot.

The WRA consists of its General Members.

The WRA will preside over a subsidiary organization, the World Runners Club (WRC). The WRC itself does not entail any internal or management structure.

The WRA is presided over by a President, elected annually on October 1. The current President of the WRA is Mr Phil Essam, resident of Canberra, Australia.

At the beginning of his/her tenure on October 1 each year, the existing or incoming President will choose an Executive Committee from among the General Members of the WRA. The number of Members of the Executive Committee at any time will be at the discretion of the President.

As a non-legally binding governing body, the WRA has no legal or financial control over participants in the sport of multi-day solo running. The WRA exists solely to provide common

and consistent performance standards and rules, as well as official record keeping for the sport. The WRA at all times encourages participants in the sport to voluntarily adhere to these common rules and standards.

The WRA is a not-for-profit voluntary organization, receiving no fees or payments of any kind, nor providing salaries to its officers or payment for services to any other providers. Members of the WRA will themselves cover any personal costs incurred due to their involvement with the WRA, except where internally agreed among Members.

As no monies change hands as a consequence of the operation of the WRA, no accounts or records of transactions are required or kept.

The WRA will, however, keep meticulous records of all attempts at circumnavigating the Earth on foot, as well as a progressive list of category “best” records, outlined later in this document in more detail.

## **Membership:**

The process by which membership of the WRA is acquired may take two forms:

(a) A successful circumnavigation of the Earth on foot, or (b) A special invitation from the President of the WRA.

Achieving Membership of the WRA by path (a) involves the following process:

The WRA firstly encourages any person contemplating a circumnavigation of the Earth on foot to contact the WRA to discuss the rules, standards, and protocols required in order to qualify for Membership of the WRC.

The WRA encourages prospective Members who believe they have subsequently satisfied the criteria for Membership of the WRC to submit a claim for such membership.

Having reviewed an application for Membership, the WRA will issue an invitation for Membership of the WRC to that applicant if the applicant has, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, successfully completed a circumnavigation of the Earth on foot according to the rules defined by the WRA for doing so (see Section 5). Admittance as a Member of the WRC automatically confers General Membership of the WRA.

The WRA reserves the right to offer General, Honorary, Associate, or other forms of Membership of the WRC to individuals from time to time, at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Such occasional Membership may be for any reason, as decided by the Executive Committee.

Achieving Membership of the WRA by path (b) is at the discretion of the President and the Executive Committee.

## **Removal of Members:**

Any Member of the WRA may resign at any time by providing written confirmation to this effect to the President.

If, in the opinion of the President, a current General Member of the WRA has brought the WRA into disrepute, the President may initiate a vote to rescind that individual's General Membership of the WRA.

If, at some future time, new evidence comes to light about a current WRC Member which, had the Executive Committee been aware of such evidence at the time that individual was granted Membership, would have resulted in a disqualification of that applicant's claim for Membership, the President may initiate a vote to rescind the WRC Membership of that individual. If the individual's WRC Membership is successfully rescinded, so too will be rescinded the individuals' General Membership of the WRA.

### Meetings and Decision Making

Voting decisions will be by way of a simple majority. In the case of a tied vote, the President shall have a casting vote.

In general, meetings of General Members or meetings of the Executive Committee may be called at the President's discretion and take the form of a phone conference. In this case, three days prior notice is required.

However, the majority of dialogue between General Members and/or Executive Committee Members, as well as any decisions taken, is expected to be by way of circular email.

**Absent Voting Members:** When a communal decision or vote is required, not all eligible voting Members will necessarily be present to vote on such decisions. If so:

In the case of a conference call meeting, with three days of notice having been provided, an eligible voting Member unable to attend may provide his/her proxy vote to the President in advance. Otherwise, if any Member fails to attend the meeting by phone and has not provided a proxy vote, that Member will forfeit the right to vote on any decisions at that meeting.

In the case of decisions to be taken via circular email, each eligible voting Member must respond by email within three days of the President's request for replies in regard to that decision. Failure to respond within three days will result in the Member forfeiting their right to vote on that decision.

The term "in attendance" refers to an eligible voting Member either 'being present on the conference call' or 'having replied by circular email'.

## **Record Categories:**

The WRA will monitor five primary categories of record in regard to the circumnavigation of the Earth on foot. These are:

- Longest Circumnavigation of the Earth on Foot
- Fastest Circumnavigation of the Earth on Foot
- Most Number of Circumnavigations of the Earth on Foot
- Oldest to Circumnavigate the Earth on Foot
- Youngest to Circumnavigate the Earth on Foot (applicants must have attained their 16th birthday prior to beginning their attempt)

Each of these categories will entail subcategories for men and women, for supported and unsupported attempts, and for the following age groups, arranged by decade:

19 or under

20 – 29

30 – 39, etc.

For example, a 47 year old woman who completes a successful circumnavigation of the Earth on foot will potentially be eligible to claim the record for the subcategory “Fastest Circumnavigation of the Earth on Foot: Female 40-49 Years Age Category”.

Age Definition: Running or walking around the world almost certainly entails at least one birthday. For this reason, the official age of proponents is defined as their average age during the attempt, according to the following formula:

Average age =  $0.5 \times \{(\text{age on the final day of the attempt}) + (\text{age on the first day of the attempt})\}$

An “unsupported” run or walk is defined as the claimant having been unaccompanied for at least 95% of their entire journey. The WRA realizes the term “unaccompanied” is difficult to define accurately for the purpose of world runs and walks. For this reason, acceptance of any claim of an attempt as being “unsupported” is entirely at the discretion of the Executive Committee of the WRA and will rely heavily on the evidence provided.

Category Qualification: If an applicant wishes to apply for a record in one of the subcategories, the applicant must, in addition to the usual documentation, provide adequate proof of their sex and/or age and particularly, should it be applicable, the nature and extent of their lack of “support”.

## **Rules for Attempts:**

The rules for achieving a successful circumnavigation of the Earth on foot are as follows:

1- The runner must start and finish at the same place.

2- The runner must cover a total of at least 26,232 km on foot.

3- All lines of longitude must be crossed during the attempt, either on foot or in a plane, ship or other vehicle. The non running/walking components can not be added to the total distance covered, and must not result in the contravention of any other rules. The purpose of this rule is to ensure the runner/walker continues in the same general direction around the world when traveling between continents. Runners/walkers are strongly encouraged to make their routes as contiguous as possible.

4- The runner must cross at least four continents from “coast to coast”, covering a minimum of 3,000 km on each continent. The two “coasts” of any given continent must front different oceans #. A tolerance of 1 km from the waters of the ocean is allowed. The four “core” continents must be crossed contiguously (i.e. no gaps) and in the same general direction as the overall world run/walk attempt. In addition, a crossing of North America must entail either starting or finishing in either the US or Canada. In the case of an individual being unable to obtain a visa for both these countries, contact should be made with the WRA to discuss acceptable alternatives.

5- The only variation to Rule 3 is the case of a Northern Hemisphere world run. In this specific case, a runner may cross only three continents, those being Europe and Asia (i.e. the Eurasian landmass) and North America. Such a run, however, must entail running Eurasia from the North Atlantic Ocean to the North Pacific Ocean, finishing the Asian component no further west than the Russian town of Magadan (or commencing no further west than Magadan if a west to east world run direction is preferred by the runner), AND running North America from the North Pacific to the North Atlantic, commencing no further east than Anchorage, Alaska, and concluding no further west than Sydney, Nova Scotia (or the reverse if a west to east world run course is chosen). All other rules and guidelines shall remain the same, with the exception of Rule 6 (see below).

6- The order of the four continents (and any additional land masses) that the runner takes must be longitudinally consecutive. For example, an acceptable order would be Europe, Asia, Australia, North America, South America. An example of an unacceptable order would be Europe, Australia, South America, Asia, North America.

7- The runner must pass through antipodal points, within a tolerance of ten degrees of latitude and longitude.

The only exception to this rule is when the runner chooses the Northern Hemisphere option, as defined in Rule 4.

8- The runner must run more than 50% of the total distance. (i.e. walk less than 50%). \*

9- The runner may take as many breaks as desired. However, the total cumulative “time off” for a world run or walk must be limited to either six months (in the case of the total time being two years or less) or 25% of the total time (in the case of the total time being more

than two years). The definition of “time off” here refers to the accumulation of consecutive periods of four days or more during which no allowable distance is added to a runner’s total distance covered. Periods of three consecutive days or less during which no allowable distance is covered are permitted and will be considered as regulation “rest days” and not added to the runner’s cumulative “time off”. All time off, whether regulation or not, is included in the runner’s total time for the attempt.

10-The WRA very strongly recommends the use of a modern GPS device to facilitate documentation of a world run/walk attempt, particularly for those expecting to apply for a record.

^ Except where a runner starts at the edge of one continent and finishes at the edge of another. For example, starting the run in Europe at the Atlantic coast in Portugal and concluding the run at the South Atlantic coast in Argentina.

\* For world walkers, all the same rules apply except for Rule (8).

# In the case of the European east coast” and Asian “west coast”, this is defined as either the Bosphorus / Sea of Marmara/ Dardanelles waterway, OR the border between Russia and either Georgia, Azerbaijan, or Kazakhstan, OR the edge of the Caspian Sea between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, OR the ridge line along the Ural Mountains in Russia.

## **Record Keeping and Announcements:**

All documentation submitted to the WRA by prospective applicants must be in electronic format. Hard copies must be converted to electronic copies by the applicant before submission.

The President of the WRA will keep a copy of any submissions of electronic documentation, disbursing copies to each Member of the Executive Committee as “insurance” against unexpected loss of such documentation.

Upon a decision in favour of an applicant, and after informing that applicant, an announcement to that effect will be posted on the WRA web site. An on-going progressive list featuring past and current record holders in each category will be perpetually maintained on the WRA web site.

Special Circumstances: In the case of a ratification that entails a new record, if the current holder of the record in the category under consideration is a sitting Member of the Executive Committee, including the President, then, in order to avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest, that Member will not be entitled to a vote on that particular ratification decision.