



RSC Support for Clubs

On behalf of Special Olympics New Zealand (SONZ), each Regional Sports Co-Ordinator (RSC) is responsible for being the key point of contact and support for identified clubs across their region.

While clubs are autonomous entities and ultimately responsible for their own operations and events, the role of the RSC is to proactively support clubs to function effectively, ensure understanding and application of SONZ or SOI requirements, and be as successful and sustainable as possible.

It is acknowledged that clubs and their respective needs and priorities will vary, and the nature of the RSC's support role will therefore vary across clubs to reflect that. However, to help ensure some shared understanding and aligned expectations, this document outlines the core ways in which RSCs work with clubs. It is not an exhaustive overview of the RSC role, of which the SONZ Schools Programme is also a significant component.

Area	Description
Relationship with Club Chair and/or key committee members	RSCs should aim to build a positive, constructive working relationship with the Chairs (and key committee member/s) of their clubs. These relationships are at the heart of a strong understanding of the club, the ability to provide tailored support and navigate challenges. Together, the RSC and Chair should determine an effective forum and frequency to stay well connected and informed.
Club committee meetings	<p>RSC attendance at committee meetings will be somewhat influenced by geography and individual club needs/frequency. Where it is feasible and desired by clubs, RSCs should prioritise attendance at every second committee meeting – either in person or online. For some clubs/Chairs, a specific meeting with their RSC, separate from a committee meeting, may be deemed more valuable and constructive.</p> <p>To best utilise time, RSCs won't regularly stay for the full duration of a committee meeting; rather, they should work with the Chair to schedule relevant agenda items to form an 'RSC section' nearer the beginning.</p> <p>Where RSCs do not attend a meeting, they should actively consider any updates that can be provided to the club in advance and email these through, and likewise, work to understand any needs or follow-up actions that arise from the meeting that they can assist with.</p>

<p>Communications</p>	<p>RSCs play an important two-way communications role in a) ensuring updates, messaging and guidance are provided to clubs in a timely and tailored way and b) working to convey any feedback or needs from a club perspective to other SONZ staff as appropriate.</p> <p>RSCs should understand preferred methods of communication for each club to ensure information gets to the right people most efficiently, and support clubs to ensure their own communication channels through the club structure are clear and functioning.</p>
<p>SONZ processes and compliance</p>	<p>RSCs will support clubs to grow their understanding of relevant SOI/SONZ policies and processes, particularly the operational ones that impact the regular functioning of the club. Proactively investing time to ensure clubs have a clear understanding of what's required is key to preventing issues further down the track (e.g. athlete eligibility).</p> <p>RSCs should provide ongoing support to clubs to grow their capability to manage SONZ systems as required (e.g. GMS, online registrations, accessing webinars etc), but are not responsible for the actual 'doing' of these tasks. For clarity's sake, RSCs can provide some coaching and support around the use of SONZ systems, including registrations and GMS – and can arrange for more in-depth, targeted training as required – but are not responsible for directly managing registrations or GMS at club events.</p> <p><u>Expiring registrations</u> On the first Monday of each month, RSCs will send clubs a list of expiry dates for athlete medicals and volunteer registrations, bringing particular attention to those who are expiring in the upcoming three months. RSCs and clubs need to work together to ensure information is shared and communications are effective so that these registrations can be renewed in a timely manner.</p>
<p>Club Events</p>	<p>The <i>Club Event Management Timeline</i> outlines the actions, responsibilities and timeframes that need to be met to support the administrative, communications and programming preparations for an event. RSCs will also support the Event Manager with their operational planning as required.</p> <p>As a general rule of thumb, RSCs are not expected to regularly attend Tier 1 events but will attend Tier 2s to support the event. Note - this attendance will be influenced by the qualifying cycle for NSG or where a clear need is identified for a specific event.</p> <p>As the calendar of events is confirmed for the following year, RSCs will work with their clubs to understand their delivery capability and needs and confirm their event attendance. RSCs should not be relied on to fulfill a specific role for the full duration of an event (e.g. GMS or MC), but rather provide general guidance and support.</p> <p><u>Annual Events Calendar</u> RSCs will co-ordinate with clubs and their region as a whole, to collate the annual calendar of events for the year ahead, in line with a centralised timeline and process.</p>

Club capability	<p>RSCs should proactively work with clubs to understand and help identify areas where the club needs support to strengthen or grow. They are in the unique position of observing a range of clubs and other RSCs in action and should be able to share strategies and learnings from different environments. A strong working relationship with the Chair and understanding the club’s priorities is fundamental to providing valuable, targeted support, including linking in with other SONZ staff who can provide this.</p> <p>RSCs can also play a helpful conduit role to other organisations who provide more specific expertise or opportunities, e.g. their Regional Sports Trust, community funding organisations, volunteer organisations, schools etc. RSCs are not expected to be “experts” in club capability and development but do play an important connecting and sharing role.</p>
Volunteer recruitment	<p>Volunteer recruitment and retention is a significant piece of work for clubs. While not responsible for the direct recruitment of volunteers for specific roles, RSCs should be proactive and helpful in utilising their contacts and networks to support clubs. They can also support clubs to be effective with their volunteer recruitment efforts by working with the club on having a recruitment plan in place; guiding on the use of various recruitment channels and contacts; considering induction plans to support incoming volunteers, and having strategies in place to retain and recognise volunteers.</p>
School > Club Athlete Transition	<p>A core part of the RSC role is to deliver regular sport and physical activity sessions and events for neurodiverse students in secondary schools within their region. Regular engagement with schools and ongoing, personal connection with students and teachers is invaluable in growing awareness of Special Olympics. As such, RSCs will share their termly school engagement schedules with their respective clubs, highlighting opportunities for clubs/Athlete Leaders to utilise these in their promotion efforts.</p>
Internal club issues or conflict	<p>Where practical, RSCs will provide guidance and support to clubs on these matters, including escalating through the appropriate SONZ channels as required, or raising awareness of relevant policy – e.g. the SONZ Complaints, Member Discipline & Appeals Policy. To a certain degree clubs are responsible for their own internal affairs, but RSCs and other SONZ staff can play an important support and guiding role to assist them in working through challenges efficiently.</p>
Athlete Leaders	<p>RSCs should support clubs to find opportunities for their Athlete Leaders and will proactively share ones that come up through SONZ or their own networks. Where possible, RSCs will help to provide opportunities for Athlete Leaders through the regular work they do e.g. having them support at school events or deliveries.</p>