



### **New to the Team**

It was a privilege to join the Regional Management Team (RMT) in May 2023. The region is fortunate to have so much experience around the table. The last 12 months have been spent getting to know the team, understanding the ways of working and completing organisational tasks. In addition, there has been opportunity to contribute to particular aspects of RMT work alongside other team members.

### **Louisville Kentucky – RMT opportunity**

I was fortunate to be able to attend various Regional Management Team sessions in Louisville Kentucky in November 2023 whilst in the USA competing with the Waikato Rivertones (alongside Leanne Wheeler and Mary Cave-Palmer). The meetings were facilitated by Sharon Cartwright, Kelli Hinton, Elaine Hamilton and Jean Schoenlank and attended by 88 RMT members (from a total of 192). Topics covered included; leadership, events, membership engagement and conventions. The details and information from each workshop have been shared with your RMT and will inform some of our thinking going forward.

Key takeaways which resonated included:

- strong regional management teams are critical – they *serve* the community and they are *part of* the community
- support, leadership and trust underpin a great organisation
- follow through, honesty, kindness, collaboration, gratitude are fundamental
- SAI are increasing the range of opportunities to engage with choruses
- 'elevate' and build on the positive to be our best (SAI strategic plan due soon)
- conventions are key – connect, learn, dance, sing
- support for choruses from faculty is critical
- ongoing consideration of costs – how can we do things differently and retain the great things we have? grants? sponsorship?
- let's read, see and hear about and from our choruses (Addaline is outstanding in our region)
- one way: emails, newsletters, video announcements, reports, member only portal or website
- two way: survey, polls, chorus visits, social media, rehearsal announcements, webinars, workshops and focus groups
- three way: involved co-create, contribute, working groups, build agenda, create content together, we have skin in the game.
- engagement: relevant, compelling value proposition, what is our 'why?'
- face to face part of the conversation – opportunities to contribute ideas
- members must be at the heart of the message
- education class suggestions at convention: first timers, judges, quartet/chorus education, leadership forum, speed dating – 8 minutes, round table discussion, think about CAL involvement!
- membership ideas: emails, newsletters, forums, zoom, social media, direct communication, video teasers, membership recognition, new member welcome, reshare posts, scholarships, posters, performances, chorus business cards.

### **Activities through the year**

Day to day business for the Events Coordinator included;

- working closely with the Education Coordinator to facilitate the arrangements for coaches when choruses have chosen to take advantage of the internationally funded visits (IFVs) for 'within region' coaching

- sourcing suitable accommodation options for members attending workshops, sourcing quotes and making bookings
- designing the feedback survey to evaluate the Directors Workshop with Anne Downton in Wellington (members shared very positive feedback)
- facilitated the transition of the event management software Teamwork.com from Katrina Te Punga (a huge thanks to Katrina for managing this for seven years!) to a new resource team member Kirsty Walsh
- various contributions to the Addaline to ensure our members are well informed.

#### Other responsibilities/tasks have included;

- a review of the implications of the new **Incorporated Societies legislation**. The changes will impact many of our choruses. We are beginning to develop some guidance for our choruses. Team coordinators have been contacted and post our AGMs we can, if needed, work together to make the changes required to our standing rules and apply to re-register our choruses as Incorporated Societies. Any questions please feel free to make contact. There is an April 2026 deadline for these changes, however it will take time to work through so we recommend a start to the process in 2025 or earlier.
- The **Strategic Plan** is due for review and update by 2025. Your RMT has already done some initial thinking about the shape of the strategic plan and the process. We are very keen to ensure the plan reflects the voice of our members and provides a simple, effective yet flexible and responsive 'road map' for the next 3 to 4 years. We look forward to engaging with many of you in the second half of 2024 to hear your thoughts and ideas to inform our strategic direction. What are the priorities for SANZ? How can we fulfil our aspiration to be a thriving organisation, promote barbershop and a cappella for women in Aotearoa New Zealand, respond and meet the needs of our members and choruses for education, performance, competition and community.
- **Convention Sponsorship** - communication with the UK family-owned company who make Vocalzone pastilles (loved by many singers) resulted in a generous contribution of Vocalzone product to on-sell at our convention. This fundraiser will support RMT to support choruses around Aotearoa New Zealand. Please support us all by purchasing your Vocalzone supplies at prices well below recommended retail rates. Post a photo of yourself with your purchases on social media and SynergyNZ may support us at future conventions. Purchase by bank transfer at convention.

**Julie Earl**  
**Events Coordinator**