**March 2024 Zone 8 Regionalisation Pilot Update speaking notes**

**Slide 1**

*Introduction with country specific welcome*

This presentation will cover some key information on the Pilot’s current status, including some of the new Pilot roles you can apply for.

**Slide 2**

Today we’ll cover the following topics:

* An overview of the Rotary Community Leader role
* How Rotary Community Leaders and District Governors will work together
* An update on Rotary Specialist and Portfolio Committee Member applications
* The upcoming Pilot update presentation to the Rotary International Board
* An update on the Regional Council
* An overview of upcoming Pilot milestones
* And the next key actions for clubs to consider over the coming weeks and months

**Slide 3**

Last year, clubs throughout the Zone were asked to submit their preferences on how they’d like to be grouped with other clubs into Rotary Community Groups, also known as RCGs. These groups are designed to foster collaboration between and empower clubs to support each other so they can work more effectively and at a larger scale than they could on their own.

Each group of clubs will elect their own Community Leader, a volunteer facilitator who will support them to achieve their goals and make an even bigger impact in the world.

If you want to use your leadership and facilitation skills to make a difference, you should consider being a Rotary Community Leader, also known as an RCL.

Rotary Community Leaders or RCLs will support their Rotary Community Group to develop a growth plan that each club can implement to attract new members and increase their impact, and access the support they need to grow and thrive.

RCLs will not tell clubs what to do, force them to change, or even implement a growth plan on behalf of clubs. Clubs are and will remain autonomous, and can decide which strategies they will and will not implement on their path to success.

Rather, RCLs will primarily work with leaders from each club in their RCG, coaching and mentoring them to build their capacity to lead and strengthen their own clubs.

RCLs will also not be required to schedule club visits.

There are universal functions all RCLs will perform, as outlined in a general position description for the role on the *Creating Tomorrow* website. However, each Community Group will have different goals and needs, and will therefore have different expectations of a Leader.

The outcomes of each RCG’s establishment meeting have been uploaded in a Dropbox folder that is accessible via the *Creating Tomorrow* website. This will allow you to understand what your specific RCG is looking for in a Leader and evaluate if you are a good fit.

Only the clubs in a specific RCG will vote to elect their own Rotary Community Leader. Each club will submit one preferential vote, ranking candidates in their order of preference.

For more information on the Rotary Community Leader role, visit the *Creating Tomorrow* website. Through the website you can sign up to attend one of the two remaining briefing sessions for potential RCL candidates, which will be held over Zoom tomorrow and on Wednesday this week. These briefing sessions will help you decide if you’re a good fit for the RCL role, and give you an opportunity to ask any questions.

If you’d like to be a Rotary Community Leader, make sure to submit your expression of interest by 2 April 5pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time. Expressions of Interest must be submitted via your District’s leadership team, so if you have any questions about the process please reach out to them.

**Slide 4**

Once elected, Rotary Community Leaders will take part in a Learning and Development program designed especially to equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to guide their RCG on the path to success.

To begin, they will take part in an online induction session, which will cover the duties and expectations of RCLs, as well as the opportunities and challenges they are likely to face.

Each RCL will then complete relevant online self-paced learning modules through Rotary International’s Learning Centre.

Finally, each RCL will attend one of the listed in-person workshops, giving them a chance to meet with some of their fellow RCLs and develop a support network through which they can exchange knowledge and best practices. The workshops will cover:

* How to facilitate an RCG growth plan;
* How to foster communication, connections, creativity, growth and collaboration;
* And preparing for their RCG’s first meeting.

Now we’ll explore what the relationship between Rotary Community Leaders and District Governors will look like.

**Slide 5**

Throughout the Pilot when we think and talk about relationships, our focus is on respectful and positive partnership, collaboration, coordination and communication.

Currently our DGs and G-Trains have been coordinating the RCG establishment meetings and will be managing the RCL expressions of interest and election process.

Once RCLs are appointed and have taken part in their learning and development program, DGs will liaise with their RCLs to enable a smooth transition with a focus on unified support for clubs and members. So, what will this look and feel like?

* RCLs don’t report to, and are not directed by, District Governors – it is a key relationship, not a reporting line.
* The DG and RCLs will agree on how we will collaborate and communicate with each other, clubs, and members during the Pilot. This also includes how DGs support and liaise with RCLs. For instance, they may agree to establish regular catch up meetings with each other.
* The DG and RCL roles will work together through the transition from traditional DG club visits to a mix of the RCL working with their RCG on their growth plan(s) and both the RCL and DG being there to support clubs and members.
* The DG is still available to attend significant club and RCG events as the senior Rotarian in the District.
* The DG is available to visit clubs when invited by an RCL or club.
* Neither DGs or RCLs will assess or rate clubs during the Pilot.​
* As the senior Rotarian in the District, the DG will be a District-wide point of contact for the media, collaborating with the Regional Council to perform this function. This is because RCLs will focus on their RCG rather than the entire District.

**Slide 6**

Last month many talented Rotarians and Rotaractors applied for the Rotary Specialist and Portfolio Committee Member roles.

To ensure we’re getting a good mix of Rotarians and Rotaractors from across the Zone in these important roles, applications have been kept open. We always need passionate, talented Rotary members to provide their expertise, so please apply if you’re interested.

Rotary Specialists will act as volunteer consultants, providing expert advice in an area – or multiple areas – of specialty. When requested to do so, they will direct clubs and members to online resources and other specialists, give guidance, and support clubs with their projects, events and general functioning.

The Specialist role is designed to be flexible. It does not require a fixed time commitment, or for individuals to travel throughout the Zone to assist clubs. You can provide guidance to clubs using video conferencing tools like Zoom, over the phone, or via email, depending on what works best in each circumstance. Sometimes an in-person visit to a club might work best, but you can decide if this is feasible for you or not.

To be a Rotary Specialist, you may have gained your skills and experience in a variety of ways. For instance, you may have relevant educational or professional qualifications, such as a university degree or diploma. However, this is *not* compulsory for all areas of specialty. You might have relevant experience from your career or professional life, or from a volunteer role. Or maybe you have other types of practical experience. Perhaps you’ve become an expert in a specific area by pursuing it as a hobby over the years.

Essentially, if your area or areas of expertise are relevant to clubs, then you should consider applying to become a Rotary Specialist. For more information on the role and to apply, visit the *Creating Tomorrow* website.

In contrast to the Specialist role, Portfolio Committee Members will work as volunteers in a specific Portfolio on the Regional Council to help develop Zone-wide strategies, initiatives and best practices.

Guided by their Portfolio Lead, they will collaborate with their fellow Committee Members to help their Portfolio achieve its goals throughout the Zone, and thereby help Rotary thrive and grow in our region.

Each Portfolio requires different skills and experience from its Committee Members, with some Portfolios having specific eligibility requirements. If you’re considering applying, make sure you read the Terms of Reference on the *Creating Tomorrow* website and review the application form carefully to find out if you’re a good fit for a specific Portfolio.

You can apply to be a Member of, and be appointed to, more than one Portfolio.

Please note you can be a Portfolio Committee Member *and* a Rotary Specialist at the same time, so feel free to apply for both roles. Holding either or both roles will also not prevent you from becoming a Rotary Community Leader.

**Slide 7**

Twice a year, the Zone 8 Regionalisation Pilot must provide the Rotary International Board with a status update to keep them informed of the Pilot’s progress. The next status update will be presented to the Board in April.

In next month’s Board update, there will be a formal request for the Rotary International Board to approve funding for the Pilot for the next Rotary year, and agree in principle to fund the Pilot in 2025 – 26.

In accordance with Rotary International’s standard practices, the Board Paper can only be made public after the Board Meeting has taken place. This content will be made available on the *Creating Tomorrow* website in due course.

**Slide 8**

Since coming into place, the Regional Council has been busily preparing to serve you once it begins operating in full from 1 July 2024. Last month, the Regional Council held its first in-person Board Meeting in Sydney.

Each Portfolio Lead is currently reviewing applications for their Committee Members, and assessing if there are any gaps in skills or knowledge that will need to be filled by looking for additional candidates.

The Council is also in the process of appointing a Lead for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, who will be instrumental in ensuring DEI is an integral part of how they serve you.

Membership Director Andy Rajapakse is now ready to present to the Zone his team’s bold new strategy for growing membership in our region. To meet his team and learn more, sign up to attend their Membership webinar on Sunday 7 April 6pm Australian Eastern Standard Time via the *Creating Tomorrow* website.

**Slide 9**

To summarise what’s happening in the Pilot over the coming months, here’s a simplified timeline of the key milestones due to take place:

* Expressions of interest for the Rotary Community Leader role will close on 2 April.
* Over March and April RCGs will vote to elect their Leader, with the election results confirmed in May. District Governors are running the RCL elections for each RCG in their District, using whichever method suits their current bylaws or practice. If you have any questions about your specific RCG’s election, please contact your District’s leadership team.
* On 1 July, Community Leaders will begin supporting RCGs, which will start holding their first meetings. Rotary Specialists and the Regional Council will also begin supporting clubs.

**Slide 10**

Here’s a list of tasks for clubs to consider over the coming weeks:

* Consider if you or any of your club members would make a great Community Leader, and encourage them to submit an expression of interest;
* Think about applying for the Rotary Specialist or Portfolio Committee Member roles, and encourage your fellow club members to apply;
* Make sure your club submits a vote in your RCG’s upcoming election next month so you have a say in who will lead your group to success;
* And to ensure your club stays up to date with the latest Pilot news, consider appointing one of your club members to deliver regular club updates about the Pilot.

**Slide 11**

Thank you for listening.

For more information on the Specialist, Portfolio Committee and Community Leader roles, make sure you visit the *Creating Tomorrow* website.

If you have any further questions about the Pilot, please reach out to the Pilot team. You can email your queries to RotaryRegionalPilot@gmail.com.