

## **Rotary Down Under Editorial Policy Guidelines**

Rotary International ('RI') has provided a licence agreement to produce the regional magazine, *Rotary Down Under*, covering Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, American Samoa, Cook Islands, Norfolk Island, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Samoa, Timor Leste, French Polynesia, Kiribati and Nauru. This license agreement is due to expire in 2019.

*Rotary Down Under* fulfils a dual role - it provides assistance to Rotarians as well as engaging topics to non-Rotarians. Our feedback has shown this focus on including stories on Rotarians addressing for instance social issues, as well as a broad range of topical stories; is proving to be supportive.

### **Submission of stories**

*Rotary Down Under* encourages and welcomes submissions of stories or ideas for stories, especially on special and unique activities. *Rotary Down Under* has changed significantly, and it now prioritises features on predetermined topics. That allows for in-depth coverage of topics.

Taking a fresh approach to an issue is preferable, rather than simply reprinting a story that has appeared in other news media or Rotary publications. It is able to include more content than previously, by ensuring articles are short and concise. That means articles may be edited, however the editorial team will send any articles with significant changes back for review prior to publication.

There are approximately 1,400 clubs and 40,000 Rotarians within the region of coverage. *Rotary Down Under* needs to be fair to all and is focused on ensuring fairer representation in the magazine by all Districts. Priority is being given to districts with lower than average prior contributions or to clubs with minimal if any, submissions published, providing the story idea submitted is of high quality and other policies are met. This does not mean that stories of high quality and interest from more regular contributors will be eliminated. Good ideas and inspiration to stimulate and encourage other Rotarians to take action is important to the success of communication.

*Rotary Down Under* is grateful for all contributions and understands the effort many go to when crafting their story. The reality is, it is not possible to fit in all contributions. This may be disappointing. The *Rotary Down Under* Editorial team welcome the submission of Rotarians' ideas in the first instance so that they can work with submitters to determine if it is suitable.

There are two recent policy additions:

**Natural disasters:** Unfortunately our region is subject to countless natural disasters on a continuous basis, including earthquakes, cyclones, fires, floods, drought and more. In many cases, Rotarians quickly step in and raise funds for assistance they believe is necessary. In some cases they find that insurance or government support is available; in other cases it may be a district specific issue with a small number affected. Whilst with all disasters there are deserving recipients, *Rotary Down Under* cannot distinguish between the events and it gets criticized for supporting some events which then drains support away from what may be more deserving events. It has been asked by one district to support an emergency appeal which then disadvantages other districts raising funds for their communities affected by the same disaster. As a result, a policy has been introduced, that unless more than 50% of the District Governors of the day determine a certain event should be covered by *Rotary Down Under*, coverage of such events will not occur.

**The Celebration of milestones:** *Rotary Down Under* congratulates the many Rotarians and Rotary Clubs that are celebrating milestones – such as 50 years being a Rotarian or a Rotary Club celebrating 75 years. As a result of the volume of submissions being received by *Rotary Down Under*, they cannot all be published. It is suggested instead such stories be submitted to local

media and through the District Governor for publication in the DG's newsletter. There may be some exceptions around this which will be reviewed as appropriate by editorial staff.

Other editorial policy guidelines include the following:

- Unless exceptional circumstances exist, Rotarians and Clubs are limited to a maximum of two articles per year in *Rotary Down Under*;
- With the exception of mandatory content from RI, all articles can be edited, allowing for more articles to be included in the magazine. Article length, depending on placement, is normally a maximum of 300 words. Articles with significant edits are returned to Rotarians for approval prior to inclusion. Any requested changes are to be agreed to by the editorial team and if no agreement can be reached, the article will not be included in the magazine.
- High resolution photos to accompany stories should be submitted with captions of each photo.
- For non-writers, the *Rotary Down Under* editorial team will assist with the production of articles. It welcomes submission of a few points on a topic for consideration as a story, and if chosen, a member of the team will contact the submitter.
- Members of the *Rotary Down Under* Board can only submit articles to fulfil a gap identified by the editorial team if there are no other suitable contributions from Rotarians.

The license agreement with RI stipulates certain requirements of regional magazines including:

- Editorial content must be in harmony with RI policy.
- The magazine must include local and regional news as well as information provided by RI as requested.
- Regional magazines shall not endorse, recommend, or otherwise express an editorial opinion about any candidate for public office or Rotary office, or publish any letter, speech, or content supporting or otherwise commenting on any such candidate.
- Regional magazines shall not express an editorial opinion on international political affairs or publish any letter, speech, or other content on such affairs.

*Rotary Down Under* produces 11 editions per annum and these are available in print or online.

The content for *Rotary Down Under* is planned and prepared well in advance. As a guide, it requires stories or ideas for stories, especially for a pre-planned feature or segment, 3 months before the month of the magazine.

*Rotary Down Under* has a number of features and regular segments on pre-set topics which are announced in advance. Content is always sought for these sections, therefore if articles can be tailored to suit any of the topics it is suggested it is mentioned in the subject line of the email or letter.

Periodically, all inclusions in *Rotary Down Under* will be reviewed to ensure all districts have a fair balance of contributions to the magazine.

All contributions are to be sent to [editorial@rotarydownunder.com.au](mailto:editorial@rotarydownunder.com.au)

The *Rotary Down Under* Editorial team welcomes opinions and review. This is done by way of letters to the editor and surveys of readership for retention and change in the content of the magazine.