

George Wittorff is a member of the Board of the NRAA, given the task of addressing membership issues facing the movement at a national level.

This is the eighth and final article aimed at achieving that goal

“The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual.”

Vince Lombardi

For the past 20 months I have produced 7 articles under the banner “ASAPS” – Advancing Shooting as A Positive Sport, including 4 articles in the ATR for 2017. Each of these articles have been published with the optimistic aim and genuine hope that the information presented would jog some members’ sense of responsibility to our sport to realize that a proactive approach is urgently needed to attract and retain new members.

Importantly, it was hoped that recognition would also translate to some leadership being shown and resultant action at the State and District Association levels, especially at the club level.

The first article, published in 2015 graphically illustrated the overall decline in membership, while the following six installments attempted to describe researched practices that have proven to be successful in improving membership for sporting organisations. In addition to those findings, real life examples of programs from around the NRAA that are working at the Association and club level were described. These articles can be revisited from past copies of the ATR, or from the NRAA website under the “Membership Toolbox” menu.

How Are We Doing?

While participating at the National Queens in June, I was heartened that approximately 12 people made a point of giving me positive feedback regarding the ASAPS articles. I took that to mean that at least some people had read them, and that at least the ones who spoke to me had found them relevant.

Only one of those people who approached me was able to tell me of a change in the way their club is operating that was designed to attract new members. Rather than be disappointed in that, I chose to take heart from the fact that 8.5% of respondents were doing something, and if that translated across the board then within the NRAA there was likely to be a vigorous State and club level drive on membership.

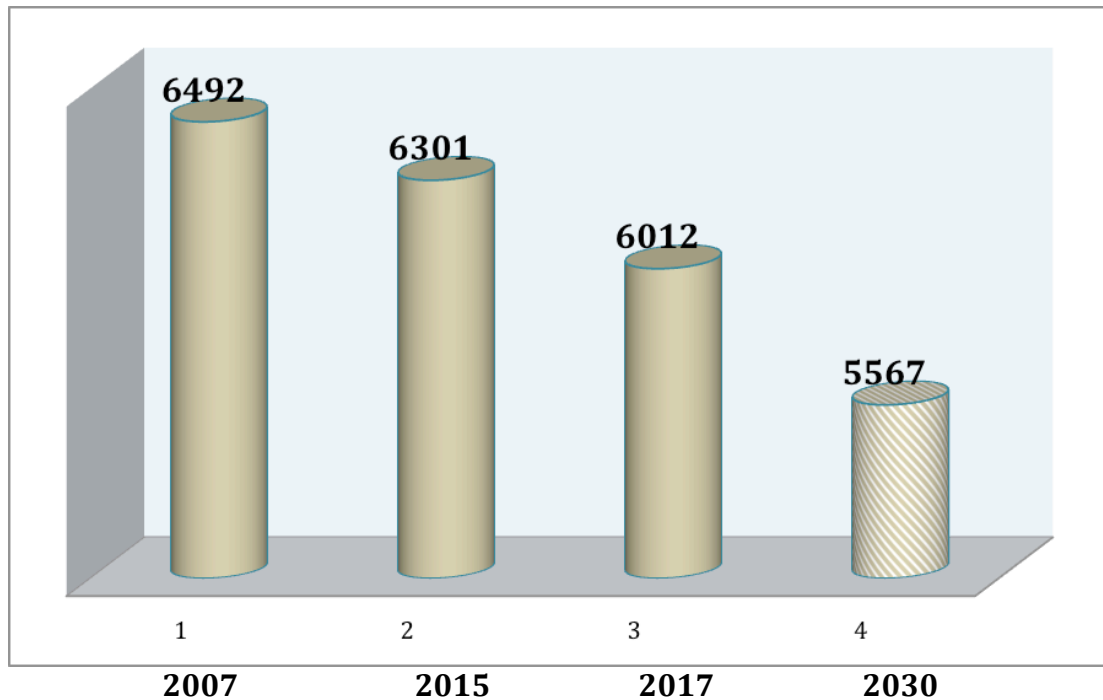
Wishful thinking, as it turns out in some cases; heartening in others.

The success or otherwise of any enterprise is to what extent it reaches its objectives. In the case of ASAPS, the objective was to raise awareness of membership issues; to inform members of programs and approaches that have been proven to work, and to motivate people at the State and club level to actually do something about membership in their own Association or club.

The practical and obvious way to evaluating the success of ASAPS is to measure and compare membership numbers before and after.

Here are the results. The data for each State or Territory Association was supplied to me at the end of September, 2017.

NRAA Membership: 2007 – 2017 and Extrapolated to 2030



The data shows:

For the period 2007 – 2015 overall membership fell by 2.9%

For the period 2007 – 2017 overall membership fell by 7.4% and

For the period 2015 – 2017 overall membership fell by 4.6%

Conclusion: NRAA membership continues to decline at an increasing rate.

Note that based on current figures and existing trends, NRAA membership will have declined to a total of 5567 (a decrease of 14.25%) by 2030.

Members were presented with up to date figures at the 2016 AGM and were challenged to show leadership within their own Associations in the hope of initiating programs both at the Association and club level in an effort to stem the evident decline in membership.

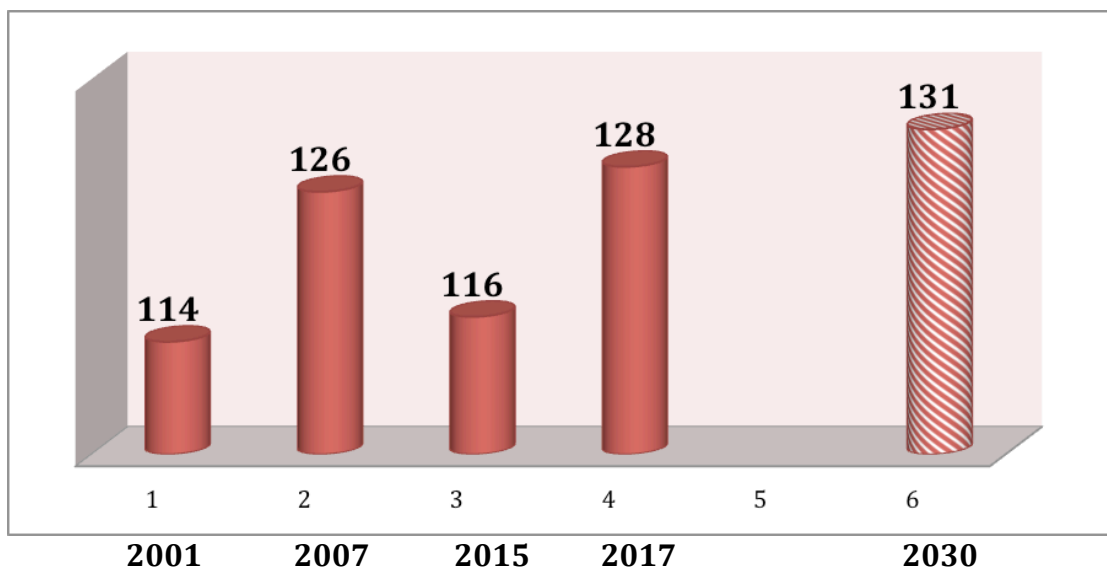
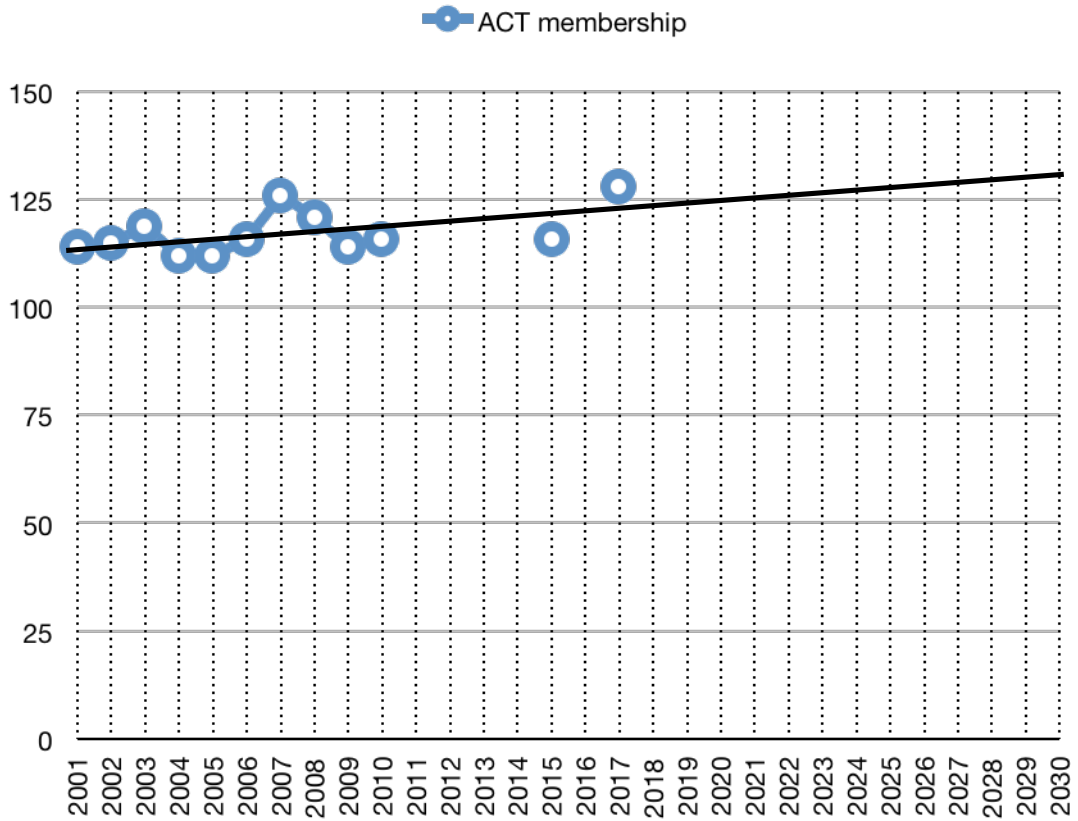
It would be pleasing if those states that continue to be in decline are able to report that any such programs have been put into place.

Based on the above figures, and extrapolating through until 2030, individual State and Territory Associations' membership figures are presented with the assumption that current trends will continue.

Whether or not the predicted 2030 figure eventuates will depend on the leadership and planning of each Association.

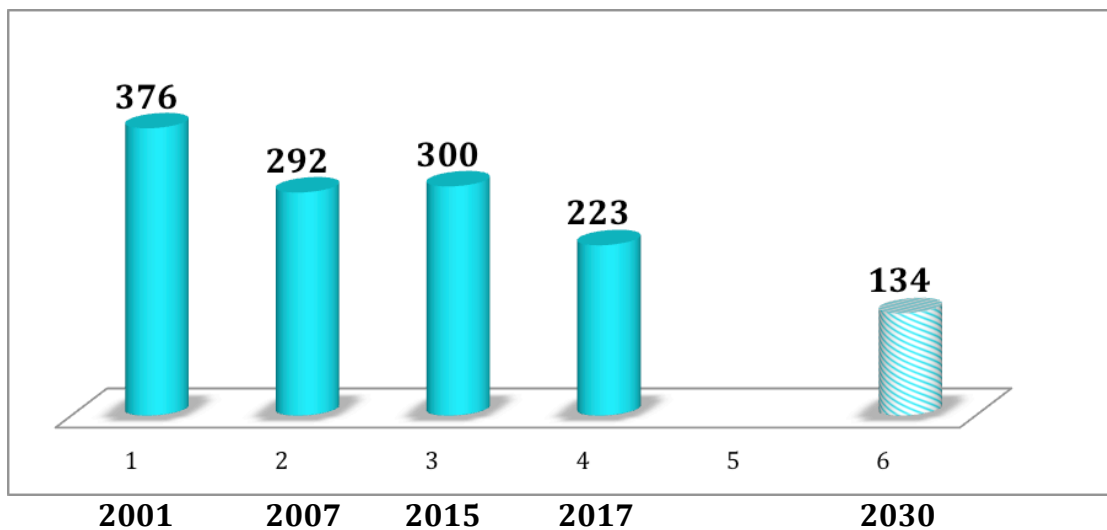
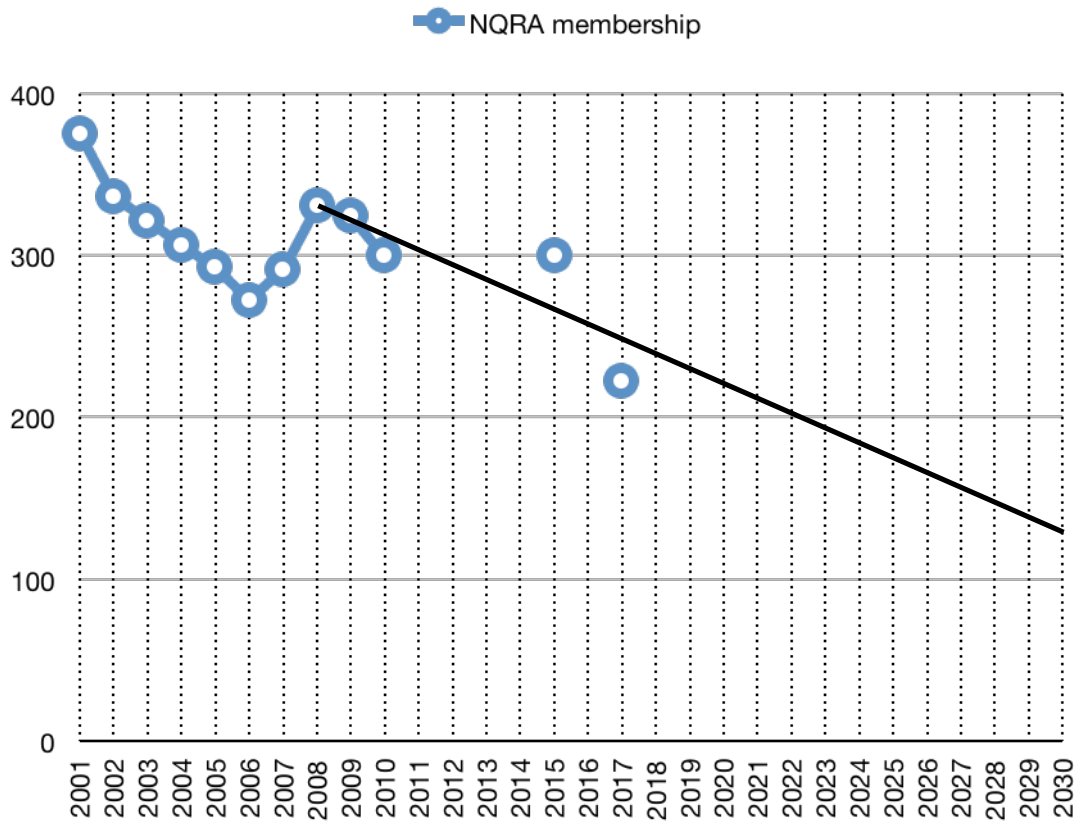
In my view, Membership should be the overwhelming emphasis in all planning by State/Territory Associations and clubs if our sport is to survive.

ACT



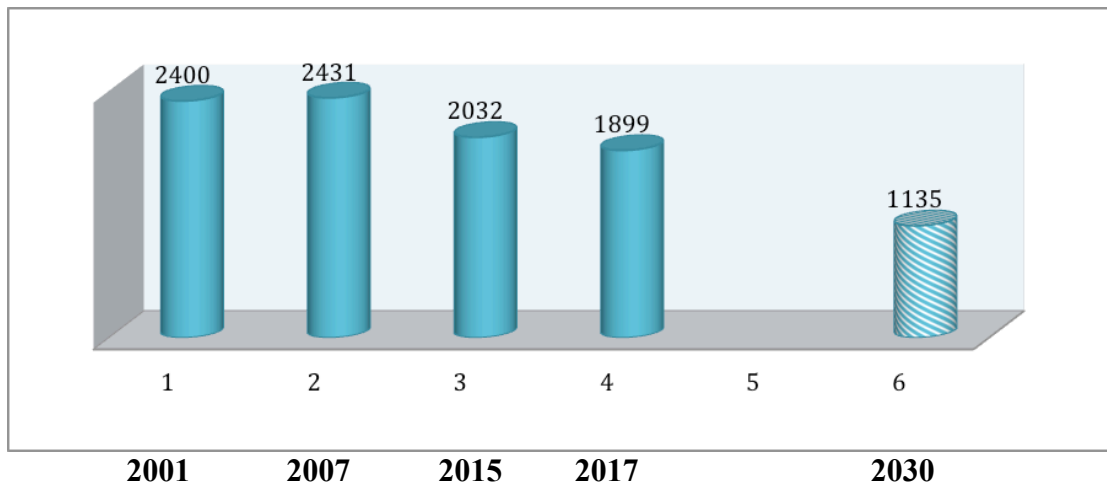
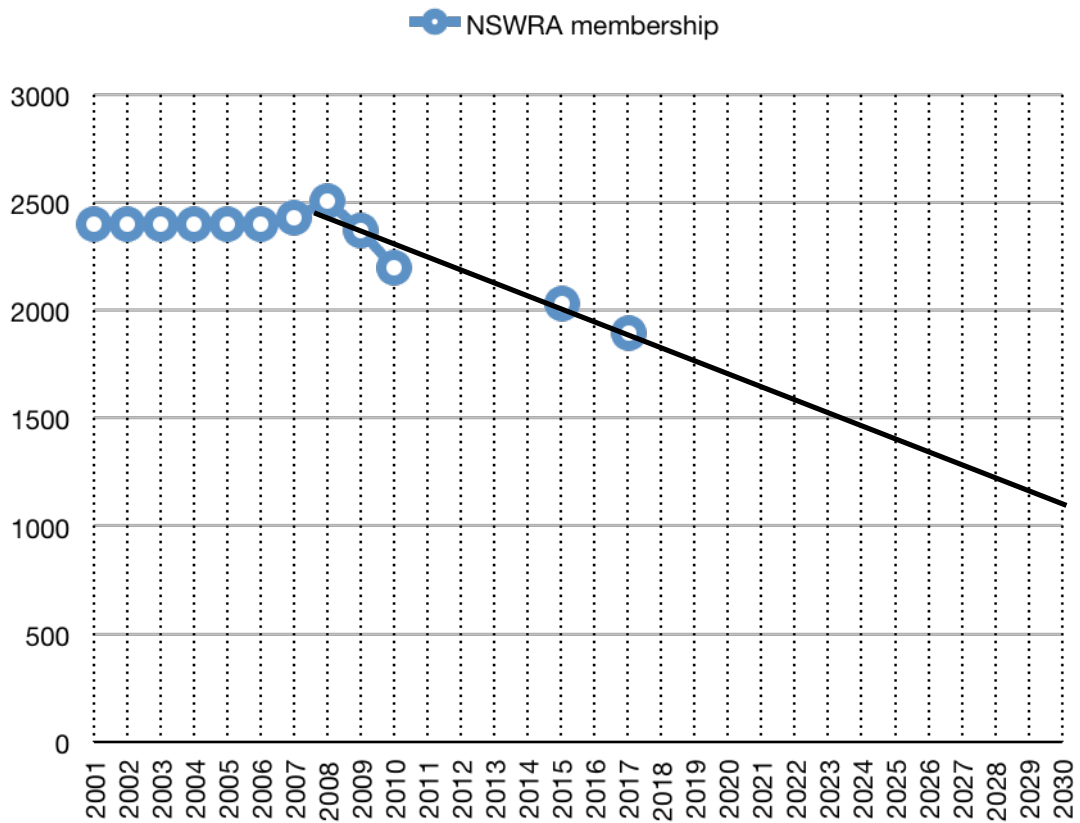
ACT 2001-17 (+)12.3% : 2015-17 (+)10.4%

NQRA



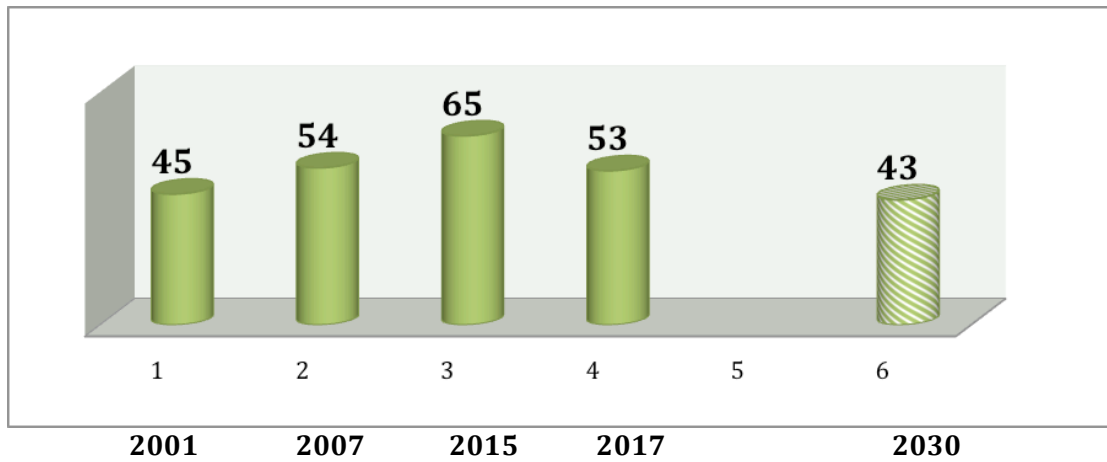
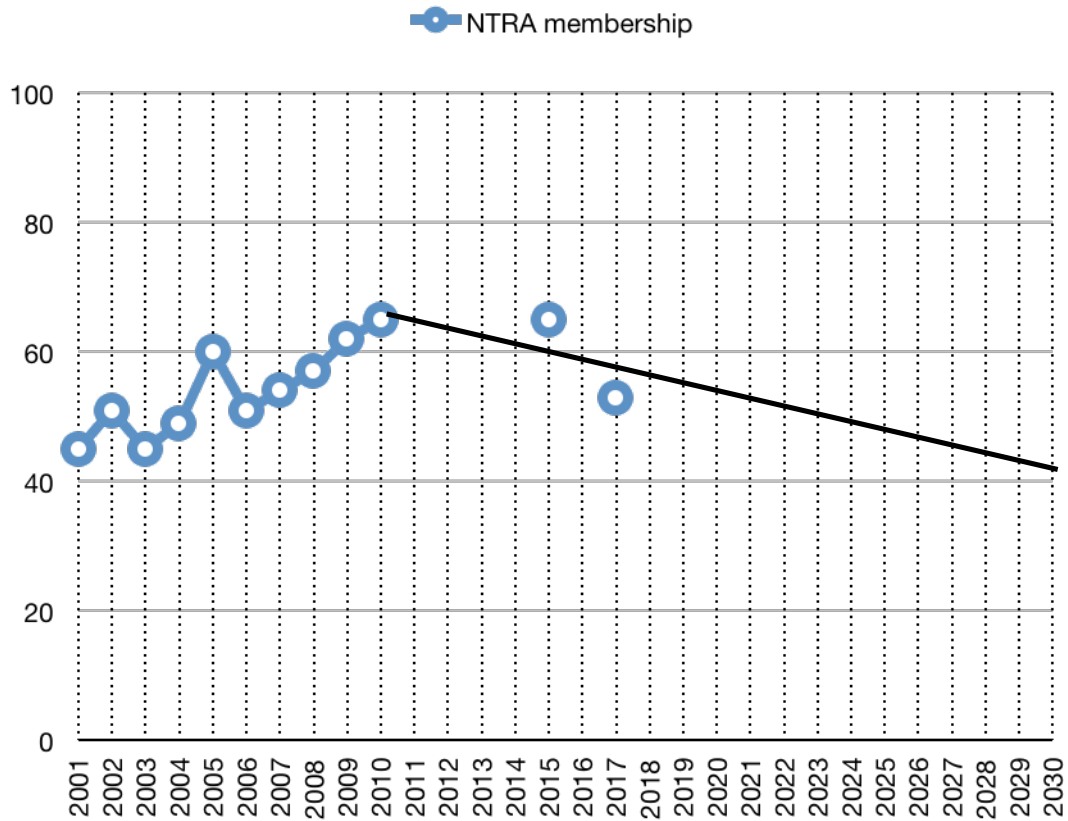
NQRA 2001 -17 (-)40.7% : 2015-17 (-)25.7%

NSWRA



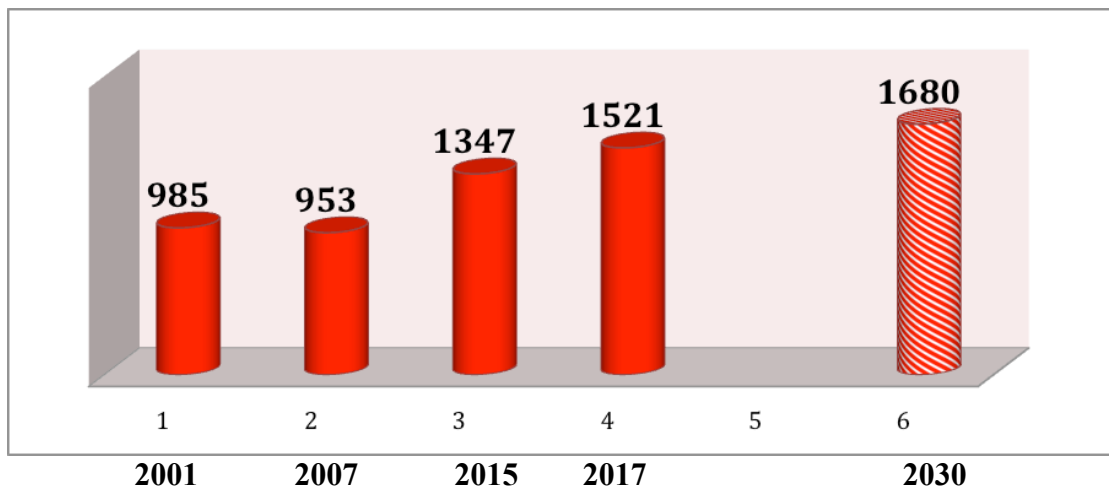
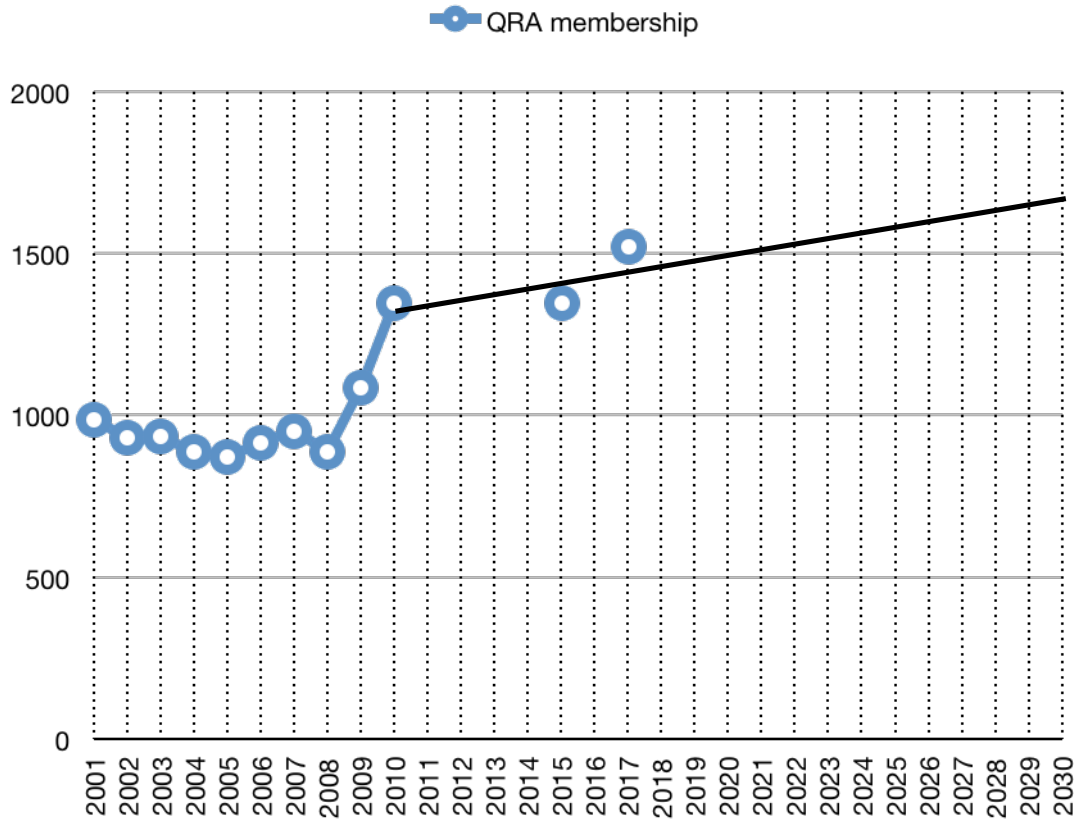
NSWRA: 2001 - 17: (-)20.9%: 2015-17: (-)6.5%

NTRA



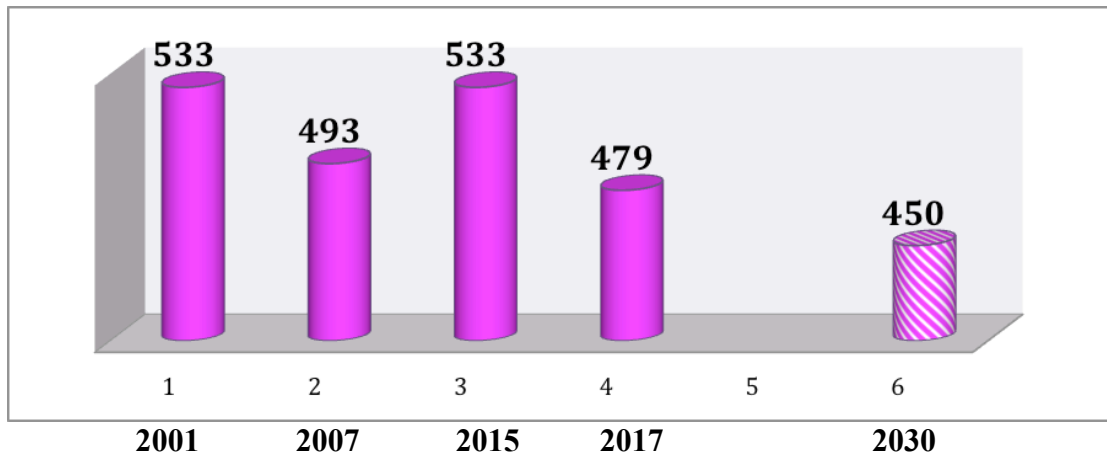
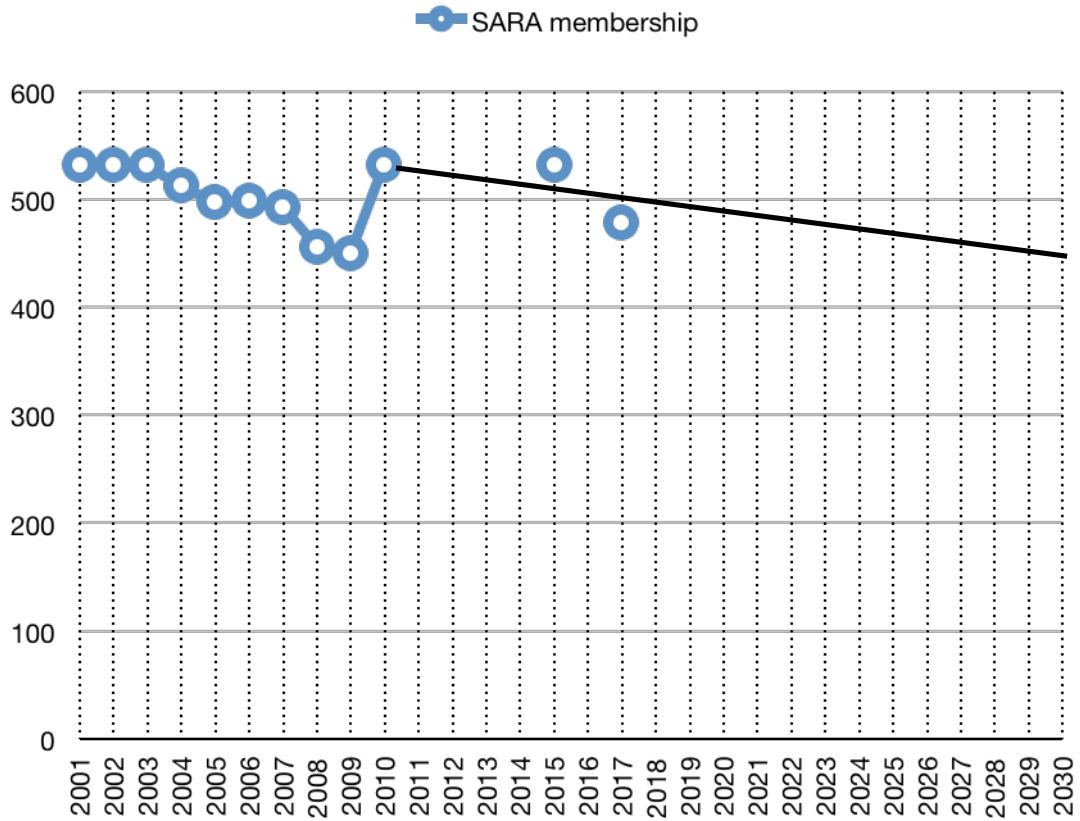
NTRA: 2001-2017: (+)11.7%: 2015-17: (-) 18.5%

QRA



QRA: 2001 -17: (+)54% : 2015 -17:(+) 13%

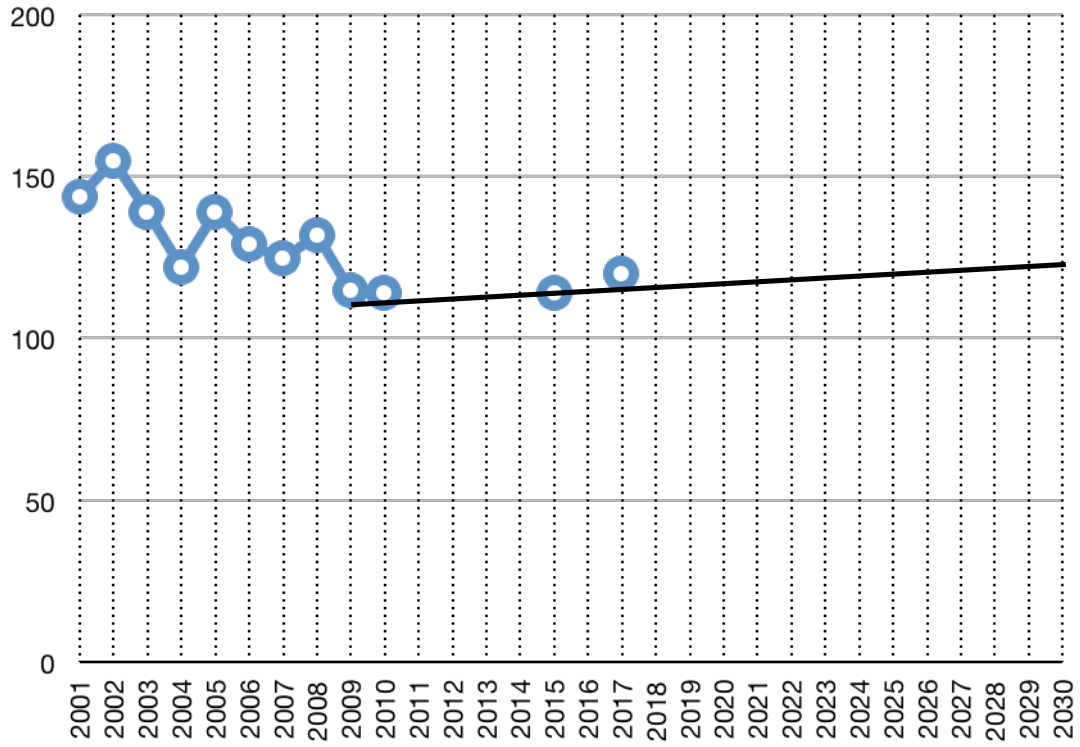
SARA



SARA: 2001-17: (-)10.2%: 2015-17: (-)10.2 %

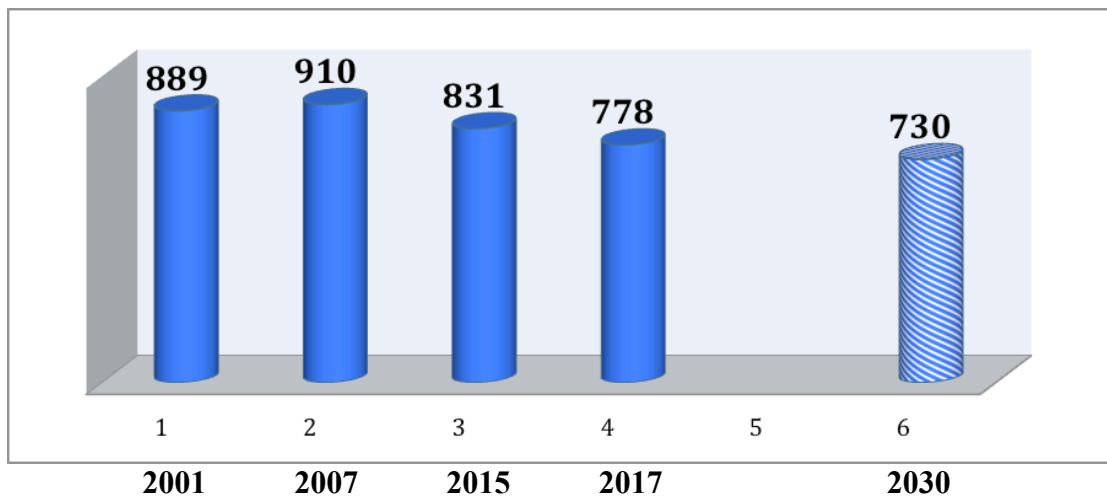
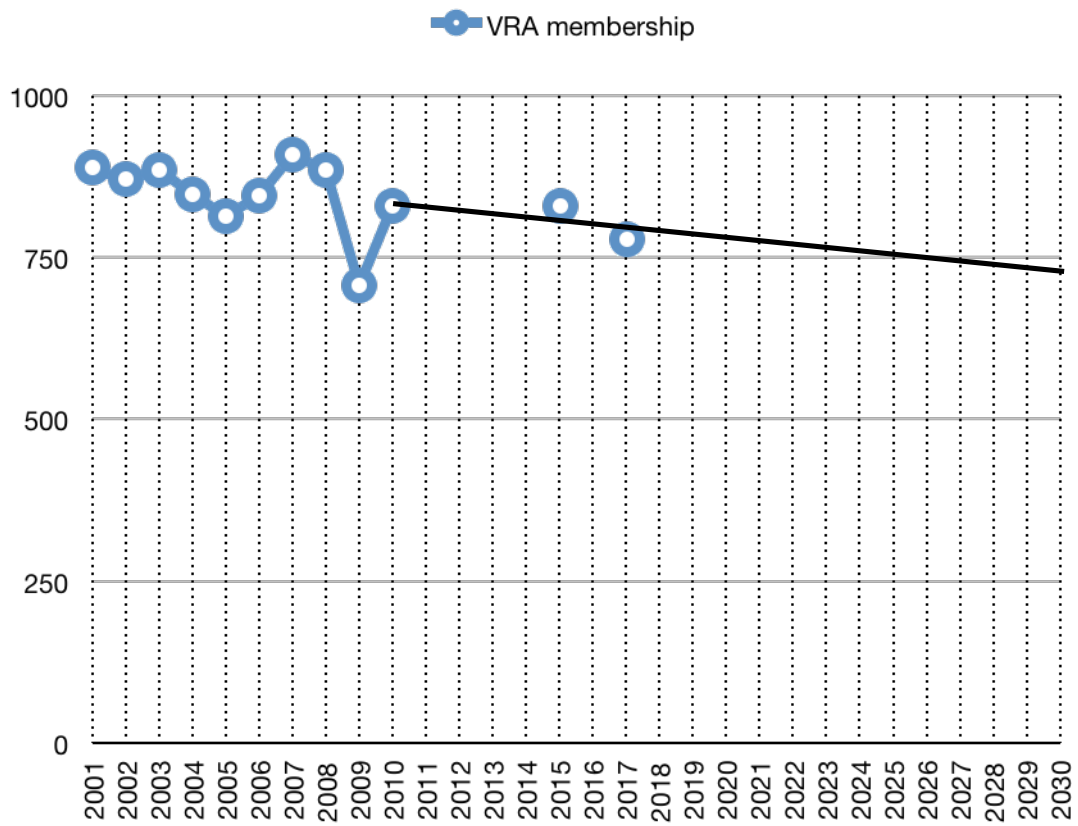
TRA

TRA membership



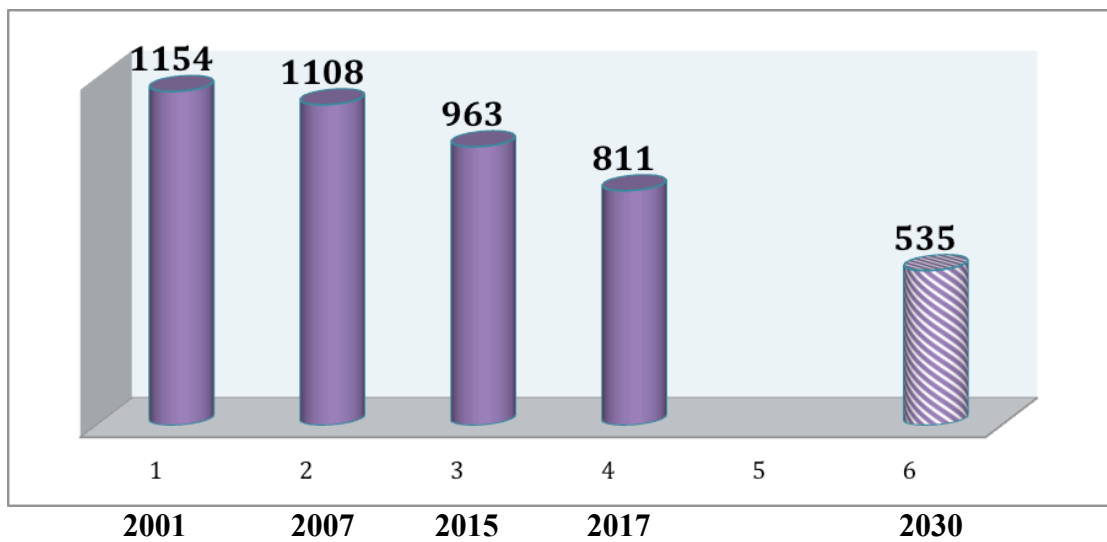
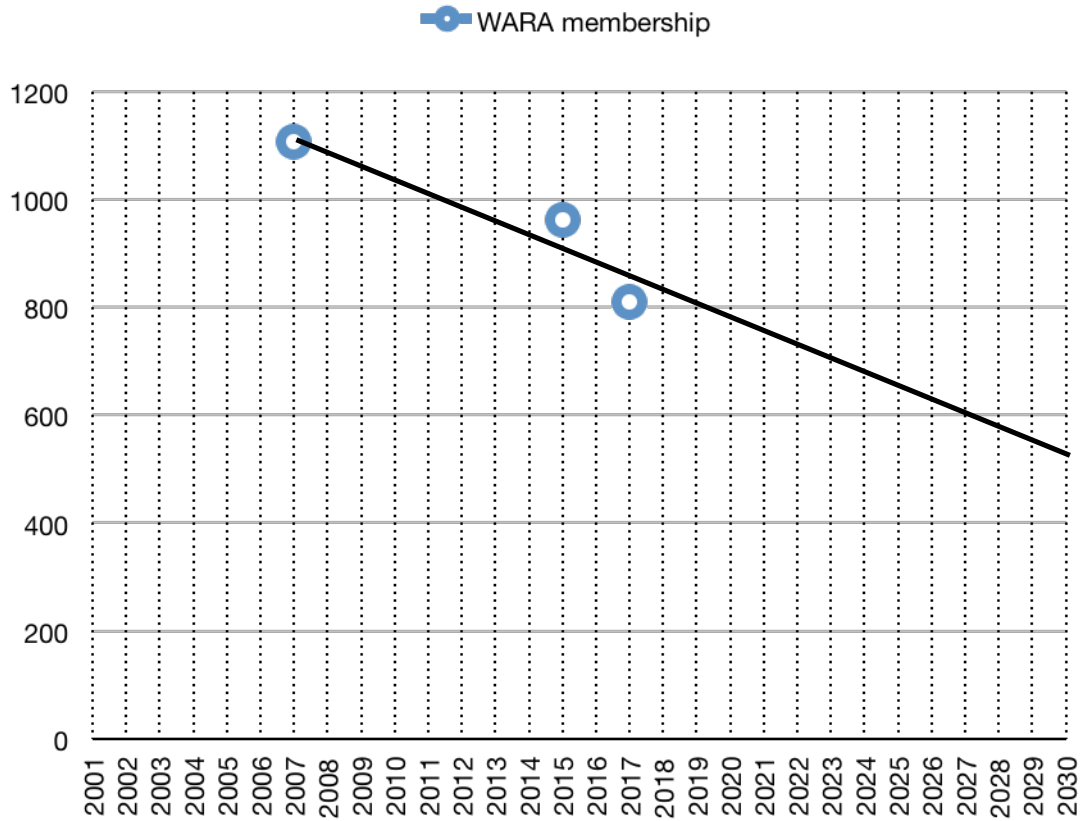
TRA: 2001-17: (-)16.7%: 2015-17: (+)5.3%

VRA



VRA: 2001-17: (-)12.5% : 2015-17: (-)6.4%

WARA



WARA: 2001-17: (-)29.7%: 2015-17: (-)15.8%

The statistics shown and the conclusions below are self-evident.

What is needed now is for ALL members to think positively about membership. This means each member needs to consider either putting their hand up to take an active role at the National, State or club level; encouraging capable, dare I say younger members to put themselves forward for leadership roles, or at least supporting those who are working hard to further our sport.

Each of us needs to take every opportunity to ‘talk up’ rifle shooting and advance shooting as a positive sport – *ASAPS*

Let’s reverse membership trends and pass on a growing sport to those coming on behind.

Conclusions:

- 1. Membership of the NRAA is decreasing at a steady and measurable rate.**
- 2. Of the individual S&T’s data,**
 - (i) six (6) show serious decline,**
 - (ii) two (2) show moderate or slight increase**
 - (iii) one (1) only, shows a steady increase.**
- 3. Unless each declining S&T takes responsibility for improving this situation by developing strategies and programs designed for both their Association, and individual clubs, the decline will continue until at some point in the future they will become unviable. This will occur first at the club level and finally for the Association itself.**
- 4. The NRAA, through its Membership Directorate has provided resource material and examples that are available to Associations and clubs who wish to avail themselves of assistance to address their membership.**
- 5. To continue to do nothing is not an option.**

Resources

The following resources are available on the NRAA website and found on the ‘Membership Toolbox’ Menu:

- Concept of *ASAPS* – Advancing Shooting as A Positive Sport
- What works: Example 1: CATTs Program
- What works: Example 2 Incorporating Field and Service into a club’s program
- 30 Activities to Use to Attract and Retain members
- Details of Strategies that Work
- Marketing Shooting as a Sport to the Public
- Looking to the Future – Developing a Positive Club Culture

- ‘Try Shooting’ – A flier that can be downloaded for use for Try Out club days

- Membership Plan Proforma for Club Use.