



BFACT Council Meeting

5 pm Sunday 1 February 2026 – Teams

Minutes

Attendees: Wendy Boxall (President), Cathy Nichols (Vice President), Stephen Fischer (CBC), Tamara Cutcliffe (Secretary), Edie Grumley (Monaro), Niek Van Vucht (Tournament Secretary), John Donovan (Masterpoint Secretary)

Apologies: Roger Brake (Treasurer), Angela McGill (Bungendore), Keith Huggan (Capital)
David Clarkson (South Canberra), Toni Adams (Gungahlin), Judy Hillam (Cootamundra)

Confirmation of minutes of previous Council meeting of 15 November 2025. Moved SF, seconded NVV
CARRIED

Notification of Out of Session Decisions

BFACT and the ABF met separately in December to discuss the proposed ABF Constitutional changes. Addressing legal issues: Updates required for a company limited by guarantee, e.g., the Board of Directors must act in the best interest of the ABF and cannot represent states, therefore having no vote on the council. And a new chapter on General Meetings. Modernization of council: States and Territory associations are the members of the ABF and have one representative each on the council.

Support for the ABF Constitutional changes was ultimately agreed by email exchanges in December 2025 and updated 1 January on the ABF website.

Wendy Boxall was approved as ABF Councillor for BFACT.

Business arising from prior minutes:

Standing Reports

1. Vice-President's Report

Cathy Nichols, Vice President BFACT

I attended the ABF Presidents (of all the States & Territories) meeting at the SFOB (Summer Festival of Bridge) 2026. This was the last meeting for Allison Stralow, stepping down as ABF president - she has reached the term limit as allowed by the ABF constitution. Allison has been in various positions at the ABF and BFACT is grateful to her for the support and promotion of bridge nationwide. BFACT presented her with a present of some Capital region wine and biscuits, and Allison passed on her thanks.

Notes from the meeting:

Allison endorsed Stephen Fischer as the next ABF president (to be determined at ABF Council AGM in April 2026).



BFACT has had a few requests for a modified event in one of the ACT congresses - to cater for those that cannot play a whole day - in the open section. It was suggested that the format of the all-rounders event may be suitable - a work in progress.

BFACT discussed the Country Teams and Pairs for the ANC - noted that the team can be a combined Club, for example Bega & Sapphire Coast.

The Tasmanian Festival of Bridge numbers are exceeding those of last year
Barrier Reef Congress is full

The replacement of the Gold Coast Congress will be in Brisbane
Victoria has a new Gold Point Congress (to be in or near Bendigo)
Victoria is finalising the split of the governing body and the Club.

Allan Morris was present, just retired from being the Chair of New Zealand Bridge after 9 years and held previous positions before that. Similar things there to here, great to be part of the same international zone, appreciates the skill and expertise that Matt McManus brings.

Ben Thompson - the area representative on the World Bridge Federation (WBF) - was also there. WBF is a member of ARISF (Association of IOC recognised International sports federations), a member of IMSA (International Mind Sports Association) and a member of FISU (International University Sports Federation). Ben is Vice President and also part of the Management Committee. He talked about bridge development in the Netherlands where a modified version is taught in schools, and that it flowing on to an increase in interest from adults (parents mainly). There has been attempts to include bridge as a sport in Australia.

The Summer Festival of Bridge was very well attended this year - this may be due in part to the cancellation of the Gold Coast Congress. The large rooms were at their limit and the venue had some issues with air conditioning. The replacement of the tram with buses didn't deter people.... Allison was recognised for her contribution to bridge and given a lifetime award - free entry to one of the events in the SFOB.

The contract for the board dealing for the ANC is nearly finalised.

2. Treasurer's Report

Financial reports circulated to Council are attached. Very few transactions since last meeting.

3. Tournament Secretary's Report

A flyer to publicize the ANC selection events was sent on Thursday to BFACT councillors and CBC manager to be added to club notice boards etc. Regulations and MyABF entry have been available since late 2025. Another flyer will be sent out in a couple of weeks.

Youth ANC selection will be on the same weekend as seniors selection event. The calendar is



available online.

4. Club Reports

Canberra Stephen Fischer

1. Promotion of Women's trials (with relevance for other trials later in the year) – entries are currently at 4 pairs. Stephen noted that any announcements in the CBC newsletter need to be sent to the manager by Wed lunchtime.
2. Youth budget – Stephen suggested CBC and BFACT could coordinate support for youth events. The Committee considered Youth proposals put together by Suz Wilkinson. There was agreement to retrospectively approve a contribution to the Youth night on 21 January 2025. It was noted that seeking funding via prior approval for events of this nature would be preferable in future. The second option regarding subsidised travel to facilitate youth participation in congressed required further examination. A Youth Triathlon has also been mooted. Wendy to request further particulars from Laura Ginnan who is coordinating youth now.
3. ANC dealing contract – a contract is in the process of being signed.
4. ANC boards - will the boards be available for dealing when expected. BFACT will liaise with the ABF on this point.

South Canberra Cathy Nichols – morning sessions well attended. Evening sessions low on numbers. RB around 7 table.

Monaro Edie Grumley – rookies did well in the SFOB. Conditions at the venue very hot. Playing group separated into 2 rooms. A single Director shared across the 2 rooms.

Monaro is losing players. Aging and passing away - 7 people farewelled already this year. 50 members left. 5-7 tables during the day, 2 tables at night. Last beginners' lessons post COVID – 13 attended and only 1 remains playing. Senior players in the club have other priorities and don't want to teach.

Juniors want to try and introduce lessons in schools.

Cathy suggested encouraging participation through online lessons.

Wendy said this issue warranted further consideration by all. BFACT may be able to facilitate a set of lessons.

Monaro Congress - Sat 31 October and Sun 1 November 2026.

Capital John Donovan – Daytime bridge has better numbers. Old people generally don't like driving at night.

Gungahlin na

Bungendore na

5. Masterpoint Secretary Report – BFACT reports completed in October last year.

6. ANC Report Cathy Nichols ANC preparations chugging along. Dealing machine needs a service. Malcolm Carter and Cathy being trained and becoming additional dealers.



7. ABF Report

1. Allison to step down at the AGM in April. Stephen Fischer has been proposed as the new president.
2. Stephen to start the board's strategic planning process by talking directly to all States and Territories over the next couple of months in a directed discussion, to identify priorities, concerns and other thoughts for States and Territories. This information will lead to a Council discussion after the AGM and then a Board discussion on the topic. The plan is to present a strategic plan to Council at the mid-year meeting.
3. The Finance, Audit and Risk committee is in desperate need for 1-2 additional qualified members to advise the Executive Director. All States and Territories have been asked to actively consider who might be suitable.

There is a possibility for greater areas to cooperate between Bridge NSW and BFACT. Catherine Chaffey (President) and Jake Andrews (Executive Director). Stephen suggested he and Wendy try to coordinate a meeting.

8. General Business

Suspension Order from Victoria – Victor Zhang has been suspended until June 2026. Although we have no obligation to extend the ban, our constitution allows us to without further enquiry. Council notes the suspension and asks all Presidents to be aware.

9. Next Meeting

Wendy proposed that Council should aim to meet every 6 weeks this year. Suggested that an occasional face-to-face only meeting is also beneficial for Council.

The meeting resolved that:

Next meeting is meeting **face to face** only at CBC on **13 March 2026 @ 4.30pm**. NB No Teams link on that date.

The following meeting for diaries is on **Teams at 5pm 24 April 2026 (tbc)**.

Meeting closed 6.16 pm.