

# Victorian Congress Calendar Policy – January 2024

Each Victorian Affiliated Club shall be entitled to hold one (1) Red point (Grade B4) Congress per year. The congress should be of either one or (preferably) two consecutive weekend-days duration.

The State Association will attempt to meet all of the needs of its constituent clubs. However, where more than one club wishes to hold a congress on the same weekend the following criteria will be applied:

1. Precedence will be given to the club that previously held their congress on that date.
2. Two-day congresses will be given preference over one-day congresses.
3. Where two affiliated clubs apply for the same date, providing their geographical locations are diverse, both may be considered for the same weekend.
4. An application for an affiliated club's primary congress will have precedence over another club's application for a secondary or tertiary congress. (Each club applying for two or more congresses will be required to designate which is its primary congress.)
5. Where an affiliated club runs its congress over two separate weekends these will be counted as two separate congresses.
6. Affiliated clubs that run regular playing sessions will have priority over clubs that do not, even if the affiliated club with regular playing sessions' application is for a second (but not third or more) congress.

When applying for a congress date, clubs are encouraged to provide alternative time slots in order of their preference. Affiliated Clubs that fail to submit their applications in a timely manner lose precedence for their historical congress date(s), and will be processed after all timely applications have been allocated a timeslot.

Some clubs demand a particular date on submission on the grounds that they have already booked a venue. No venue should be booked until all allocated dates have been confirmed and the Victorian Congress Calendar has been published. The State Association does not consider premature venue bookings in allocating congress dates.

## **Congresses vs GNOT Heats**

Preference will be given to an affiliated club's congress application over another club's application for GNOT scheduling. Affiliated clubs are encouraged to hold GNOT heats during normal club sessions rather than on weekends.

## **Congress scheduling during Regional Championships**

The State Association will attempt to avoid allocating a congress date to an affiliated club where it clashes with a regional championship being held within the same geographic area.

**Congress scheduling during State Championships**

The State Association will attempt to avoid allocating a congress date to an affiliated club where it clashes with a state championship final, particularly for the larger finals that attract a number of regular congress players. Affiliated clubs may feel that their congress will not be affected by such a clash and may wish to request such a date anyway.

**Bridge Festivals**

Congresses that are run over multiple days (>2) are classed as Bridge Festivals. During Bridge Festivals red points are allocated, however, the grading of the red points is reduced for a number of the sessions. The scheduling of Bridge Festivals will be limited to holiday periods, long weekends and other periods of (traditionally) low bridge activity.

**Affiliated Clubs applying for more than one Congress**

The State Association will ensure that each affiliated club has the opportunity to conduct one congress per year, should they wish to do so. A club may apply to hold more than one congress, and should then indicate exactly one of these congresses as its primary congress. The State Association will treat the primary congress in the same manner as a single congress application in the allocation process. Applications for additional congress slots will only be considered if unallocated dates remain after all other applications have been processed. Even if a club has historically held several congresses per year, it may only nominate one of them as its primary congress, and has no precedence for the other ones.

**Bridge groups with multiple affiliated clubs**

Bridge groups with multiple affiliated clubs operating from the same venue will be treated as one affiliated club for the purpose of allocating congress dates (each of the affiliated clubs operating from the same venue is welcome to run its congress on the common date allocated by the State Association). Bridge groups with multiple separately affiliated venues that each operate a masterpointed session at least once every week will be considered for multiple congresses but the smaller affiliated venues in the group will be prioritised behind single venue / single affiliation clubs.

**Regional schedule co-ordination**

Sometimes several clubs within one geographic area request congress dates with little separation for the following year. In order to provide a more even distribution of congresses across the year, and to provide a more varied calendar for all bridge players, the State Association may ask some clubs to consider alternate congress dates even though their requested date would otherwise be available.

**Other date clashes**

When the criteria listed above do not determine which club should be allocated a date subject to multiple requests, the State Association will endeavour to negotiate an alternate date which is mutually agreeable to the parties involved. If no agreement is reached between these clubs within a timeframe determined at the State Association's sole discretion, the State Association will select and employ a random method (e.g. coin toss) to determine which club is allocated the date.

**Congress date alterations**

Once the Victorian Congress Calendar has been published for the following year, applications by affiliated clubs to move or reschedule congress dates will only be granted if the proposed date is available and does not clash with another affiliated club's congress.