

# Australian Pipe Band Association Inc

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## THE ADJUDICATORS HANDBOOK FOR ENSEMBLE

Adopted on 23 July 2006 with immediate effect.

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## **FOREWORD**

Australia has been the last country to include adjudication of ensemble in pipe band contests. It was felt that there should be sufficient knowledge and information about ensemble available for adjudicators and bands to ensure validity of adjudication and understanding amongst bands and their players as to the effects in performance that they endeavour to achieve.

At the APBA Conference in 2003, Councillors from the Queensland Branch offered to develop an ensemble syllabus for the Association, with a view to the introduction of ensemble adjudication in Australia. The initial proposal to employ a professional writer was set aside as members of the College Branch took on the responsibility of applying their efforts to the task.

We are indebted to the members of the Queensland Branch and more particularly to Norman Hughes who did the writing and managed the consultative process for the materialisation of the accessible knowledge base required to underpin the introduction of ensemble adjudication in Australia.

It is hoped that adjudicators and players will find the information in this handbook enlightening and supportive as we move into the ensemble dimension of pipe band adjudication.

*Greg Gordon OAM JP*  
*President*  
*Australian Pipe Band Association Inc*

*23 July 2006*

## **PREFACE**

This handbook has been written for the development of Ensemble Adjudicators within the Australian Pipe Band Association. In July 2004, the Queensland Branch of the Australian Pipe Band College was commissioned to undertake this task by the National body on its behalf. The need had arisen from the determination of the Australian Pipe Band Association to include Ensemble Adjudication as one of the contest requirements from, and including, 2006. This would bring the Australian contest requirements into line with current overseas practice by related/affiliated organizations.

Originally the intention was to produce a training manual on the subject of Ensemble for both adjudicators and bands. After the initial review of knowledge requirements for competent understanding of ensemble, it was determined to produce the necessary training material in several parts due to time constraints of achieving a panel of Ensemble adjudicators for the 2006 contest season.

This handbook is initially aimed at the existing Branch piping and drumming adjudicator panels throughout Australia. By providing a set of common parameters of understanding, the current experienced adjudicators, who choose to move into the domain of Ensemble adjudication, can be fairly quickly assimilated. This will provide a nucleus of Ensemble adjudicators.

This same hand book will also provide the members of a pipe band with good basic information on the concept of Ensemble and what the adjudicator might be looking for in the contest arena. There is to be a player's guide book published, which will provide a focus on Ensemble for the piper and drummer as members of the team pipe band. It should be of benefit to the pipe major and lead drummer for their input into the band being ready for Ensemble evaluation.

For an effective training regime to provide a constant improvement process, a second manual will be produced by 2007 which will compliment information already contained in such training manuals as the "Structured Learning" series of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association. This will provide a sound musical constituents knowledge base for the future piping/drumming/ensemble judge. This is a facet of knowledge in the pipe band world that has a current low profile, often being overshadowed by intra-corps performance and technical achievement.

Over the past decade much has been written throughout the pipe band world about ensemble as it applies to the pipe band performance. Some articles have been reflective and some didactic. Some have been generated from workshops and others some from the musings of individuals. All have had some value in achieving the mind of the movement. This handbook will reflect many ideas expressed in these foregoing documents. It is hoped that the reader will feel at liberty to submit constructive comments for the improvement of this handbook and also to submit any questions on statements not understood.

Norman Hughes

APBC Queensland Branch

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

For the establishment of Ensemble Adjudication in Australia, the authors have leant heavily on the experience gained by others in their own separate endeavours to establish Ensemble Adjudication into the Pipe Band Movements in the UK (through Bob Shepherd, Richard Parkes, Alan Chatto & others), Canada (through Robert Worrall) and NZ (through Allan Cameron).

In compiling this handbook the following additional resources were found to be most informative and helpful:

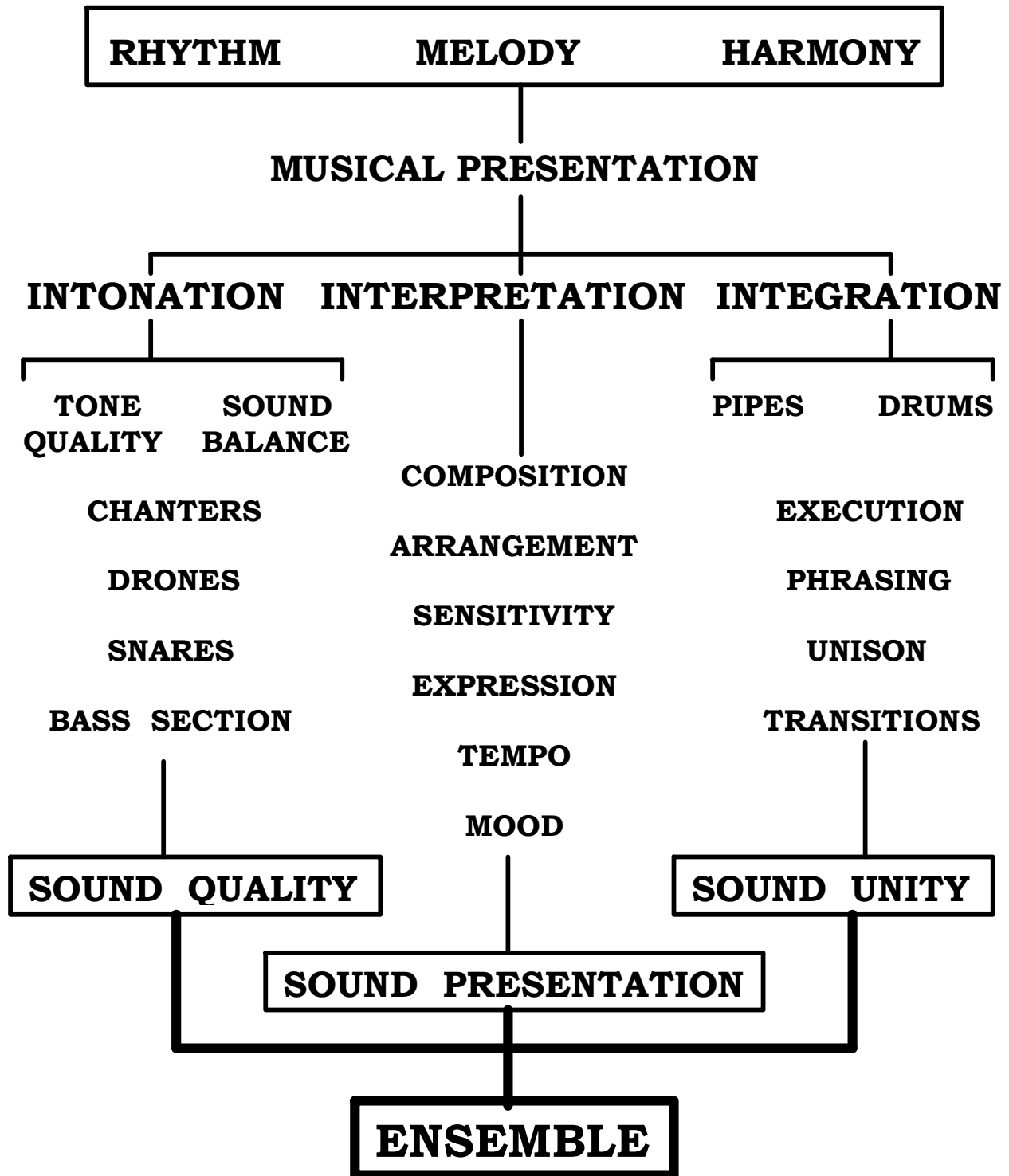
RNZPBA 1997 Report on Ensemble Judges Panel Workshop  
RSPBA Structured Learning Books 2 — Intermediate Certificate  
RSPBA Structured Learning Books 3 — Advanced Certificate  
Field Marshall Montgomery P.B. Presentation on Ensemble  
APBC draft Adjudicators Trg Course 1991 (A.K. Chatto)  
Pipe Band Ensemble by P/M R.T. Shepherd & D/M A.K. Chatto 1994  
Ensemble by P/M Doug Thoresen & L/D Doug Lawrie 1999  
The Adjudicators Handbook — G. Bassani/APBC 2001  
The Traditional and National Music of Scotland — Francis Collinson 1966  
Introductory Seminar on Ensemble — Robert Worrall, Canada

The authors are also indebted to Bronwyn Irvine B.Mus Ed.(Syd), A.K.C.M.E. and Robert Hughes B. Ed (Mus) in their capacity as music educators, and Catharina Pelster-Hughes Dip Mus (Perf.), Performer and Teacher (Instrumental), for time spent in reviewing the initial draft of this handbook, thus providing an independent evaluation with respect to music education practice in the development and understanding of ensemble.

# PIPE BAND ENSEMBLE

*Based on the Scottish and NZ model of Ensemble evaluation*

## INTRODUCTION

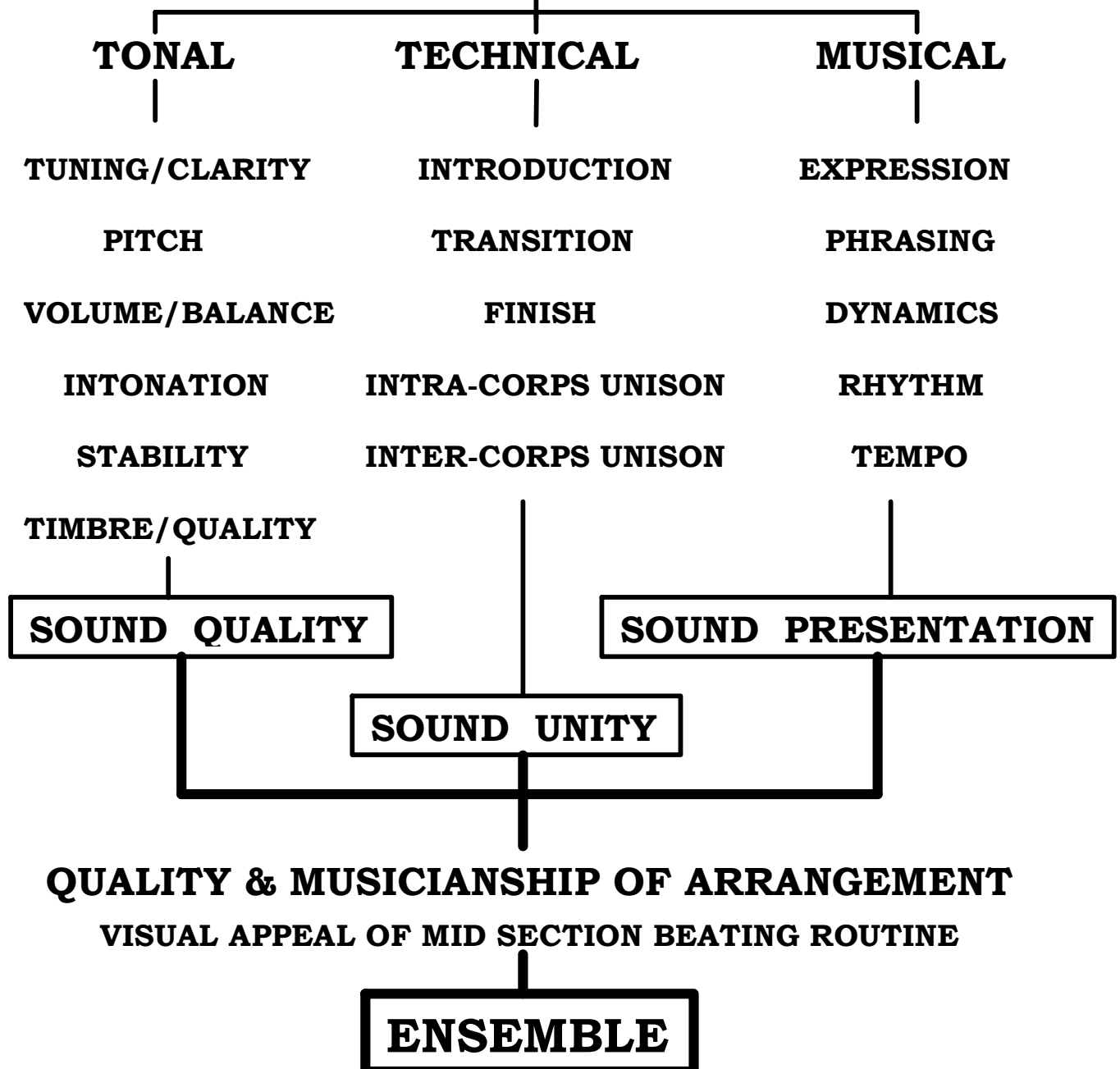


# PIPE BAND ENSEMBLE

*Based on the Canadian model for Ensemble Evaluation*

**ENSEMBLE = INTEGRATED EFFORT**

**DISCIPLINES OF INTEGRATION**





# **1. INTRODUCING ENSEMBLE**

## **1.1. What is Ensemble?**

- Ensemble is the artistic co-operation of all members of the musical group.  
From the Collins Dictionary of Music
- Ensemble is primarily concerned with musical standards, and secondarily with technical standards.
- It is the coming together of component parts to establish a complete entity.
- Good ensemble is a combination of well matched and balanced instruments, producing a pleasing or harmonious effect, and sounding like one grand instrument.
- The Pipe Band Ensemble may be defined as:  
*“the overall musical effect of a combination of bagpipes and drums. The instruments are all well pitched and tuned giving a nicely balanced result, playing in unison with rhythm, expression and harmony; the melody being effectively accompanied by tasteful percussion, reinforcing the rhythm and providing expression through subtle musical interpretation, phrasing and dynamics.”* Ch.6 APBA Adjudicators Handbook for Piping and Drumming (2001)

## **1.2. Why Ensemble?**

Ensemble adjudication is a relatively new discipline and it is almost universally held that the recognition and promotion of ensemble has led to the development of a truer musical pedigree for pipe band performance.

The purpose of ensemble adjudication in pipe band competitions is no different from adjudicating either of the other two musical elements. Simplistically the judgement involves picking the best band with the others ranked behind in order of merit.

Piping adjudicators concentrate on the relative merits of competing pipe corps and drumming adjudicators likewise for drum corps but the ensemble adjudicator has the wider challenge of making an assessment of the whole musical performance.

## **1.3. Background to Ensemble for the Pipe Band**

As a specifically identified musical concept in pipe bands, ensemble has a history going back to the late 1950's. Australia appears to be the last major pipe band jurisdiction to involve in ensemble.

Within Australia there have been significant papers prepared on the subject since the early 90's but no serious consideration has taken place until now. The RNZPBA have had ensemble as part of their contest assessment available since 1995 and typically for any radical innovation requiring a uniformity of understanding and a consensus of acceptance, they are just completing the documentation for adjudicators, almost a decade later, after a period of trials and workshops.

But despite the passage of time since the 1950's and the almost universal acknowledgement of ensemble's musical relevance there has been much heart-ache and soul-searching in the debate about the validity and value of adjudicating ensemble as a separate performance element. Indeed there are

still those who deny its validity and who would abandon ensemble adjudication, arguing that piping and drumming adjudicators should be capable of acknowledging the contribution of good or bad ensemble in their separate critiques. On the other side of the argument is the viewpoint that piping and drumming should be scrapped as adjudicated elements and ensemble stand alone.

Why this lingering angst?

We can learn the pipes and become pipers; likewise drums, but we can't learn an "ensemble" and become "ensemblers". Is that the root cause of any disquiet? How often do we hear bands people talk about a "drumming ensemble" adjudicator or a "piping ensemble" adjudicator depending on what instrument he/she played? To eliminate negative perceptions do we need an adjudication corps of "supermen" who have become equally proficient in pipes and drums? There is maybe a small handful of such around the world but it is not a realistic prospect at all.

If ensemble is capable of, and worthy of, definition and is regarded as a recognizable and worthy factor in the production of our music why should it not be accorded a place in the adjudication mix?

So with that background, as well as enjoying the fulfilment of making a critique of a whole musical performance, the ensemble adjudicator from time to time still labours with the unwelcome burden of justifying the value of the role.

#### **1.4. *The Adjudicator and Ensemble***

For an adjudicator, learning about ensemble adjudication is no different from piping or drumming – the end product is an amalgam of what you pick up from your own playing and performance experience; from your teachers; from your musical peers and from your own imagination and creativity.

In terms of a "whole" assessment of a band, how does the ensemble adjudicator structure the methodology of the task? This will always be a personal choice but, broadly, in two ways:

- The holistic approach, where at the completion of a performance the adjudicator decides how good (or bad) it was against his/her musical benchmarks and against the other bands in the contest.
- The compartmental approach, where an adjudicator devises his/her own system of allocating marks to different elements of the music and produces an aggregate overall score which forms the basis of the order of preference.

Whichever is adopted is entirely a matter for each individual and it is not the purpose of this manual to impose on the personal style and methods of adjudicators. Suffice to say that given the nature of "ensemble" it is logical that the holistic factor is not overlooked entirely.

Notwithstanding the simplistic notion of "pick the best band" there is a complex array of components in a band performance each of which to a greater or lesser extent, consciously or sub-consciously, will affect the adjudicator's assessment.

## **2. CONCENTRATION AND LISTENING SKILLS**

### **2.1. Concentration**

How many aspects of a performance can an adjudicator concentrate on at the same time? The adjudicator will hear all aspects of a contest performance; but does he/she really listen to all of them? Listening involves concentration. It also involves the bias of the adjudicator. Bias determines how the adjudicator prioritizes what he/she listens for in the performance. Thus the listening skill for each adjudicator is very subjective.

### **2.2. The need for Holistic Listening**

How many things can we think about or consider all at the same time? Let's summarize into only four compartments, the things to think about in adjudicating ensemble (apart from maybe writing notes on your sheet)

1. Sound Quality
2. Sound Unity
3. Sound Presentation
4. Quality & Musicianship of Arrangement

Are all these things going on in your head at the same time? Are you appraising them all at the same time!? Assuming just the four compartments, it may seem easy to think that we can get our head around them equally. It seems that way, but we probably cannot. The brain more than likely will create some sort of priority order. You will think more intently on one thing than the others. But in which order are they considered? What priority are they given? What should we consider first?

There are many permutations: 1-2-3-4 / 1-3-4-2 / 2-1-3-4 / 2-3-1-4 / 4-3-1-2 / 4-3-2-1 etc. Does it bear thinking about if we subdivided the compartments into the many headings we will cover?

However, should an ensemble adjudicator even think in terms of these kind of divisions and priorities. Should he not be listening holistically? The answer must be **yes**. So we must train ourselves HOW to listen and we must know what we are listening for.

### **2.3. The Aspects of Ensemble**

Apart from the foregoing generalities, where do we start? Perhaps by looking at what we are talking about when we say ensemble? To attempt to "define" it is probably a false concept because of its breadth and depth. An acceptable description amongst the many could be:

- *The overall musical effect of a combination of bagpipes and drums. The instruments are all well-pitched and tuned giving a nicely balanced result, playing in unison with rhythm, expression and harmony and the melody being effectively accompanied by tasteful percussion, reinforcing the rhythm and providing expression through subtle musical interpretation, phrasing and dynamics.*

This seems to be a succinct summing up but a closer look at practically every word will uncover the huge scope available to the ensemble adjudicator.

In a word-by-word examination of the definition and the musical components it comprises, it will become evident that certain aspects crop up under more than one heading. In other cases the same subject is traversed perhaps under the wrong heading. This is inevitable given the nature of the subject and the inextricably complex weave of its musical threads.

There is no doubt that in terms of this definition assessing the musical performance of a whole pipe band as a total entity DOES require a different approach from assessing individual piping or drumming performances. It was stated in an early RSPBA paper on ensemble:

- *Ensemble is about taking the global view of a musical performance, and not getting too bogged down in the technical details.*

Refer also to the dot points under clause 1.1.

However, whilst an adjudicator should not get bogged down with the detail of playing - it cannot simply be ignored. For example, can a judge be favourably impressed by idiomatically appropriate music, well chosen and arranged which is, at the same time, lacking in precision and clarity of sound and execution?

The two flow diagrams provided (refer pages 6, 7) give two approaches to Ensemble evaluation. Whilst they appear different they are in essence striving to reach the same goal of assessing or evaluating a competing pipe band from the aspect of Ensemble in performance. Perhaps a significant difference is that the Canadian model encourages more of a holistic approach through the manner of grouping the elements of a performance whereas the Scottish/N.Z. model tends to compartmentalize the facets of ensemble evaluation.

### **3. ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE**

#### ***3.1. What Ensemble Involves***

Ensemble is essentially an AURAL experience; however there is a current trend for the addition of a visual impact from mid section choreography in flourish. This visual ensemble performance can have a positive influence on the keeping of good tempo. There is also an unspoken influence on the ensemble adjudicator's assessment. If this trend for mid section visual performance continues, there may be a future need to provide specific consideration for it in ensemble performance evaluation.

The Pipe Band should strive to provide the listener with a performance that has excellence in both musical Interpretation and sound. Sound Quality and Sound Unity, together with Sound Presentation and Quality/Musicianship of Arrangement, these four, form the basic ingredients of the aural experience of Ensemble.

#### ***3.2. Sound Quality or Tonal Integration***

Sound Quality can only be achieved when all of the following are given due consideration:

- Tonal quality, or timbre, of the individual instruments

- Tuning in unison (Sounding as one grand instrument)
- Pipe chanters set to same pitch and harmonically accurate.
- Drones and chanter balance.
- Bass & Tenor drums tuned to appropriate pitch or pitches.
- Snare drum set to uniformly produce bright, sharp sound.
- Stability of sound produced in each section of the band.
- Volume and balance between pipes, snare drums and mid section drums.
- Intonation of sound produced by each player.

### **3.3. *Sound Unity or Technical Integration***

The essence of Sound Unity is individual competence and teamwork:

- Starting together
- Playing together as a corps (each group of instruments sounding as one)
- Playing together as a band (the total pipe band sounding as one)
- Transitions between melodies
- Finish crisp and complete

### **3.4. *Sound Presentation or Musical Integration***

Sound Presentation involves:

- Expression.
- Phrasing, effective and coordinated between all instrument groups.
- Effective and supportive dynamics.
- Appropriate rhythm
- Appropriate tempo.

### **3.5. *Quality and Musicianship of Arrangement***

The evaluation of Quality and Musicianship of an Arrangement is at best, subjective and such evaluation is very dependent on the competency of the adjudicator. Some aspects of consideration may be:

- Compatibility of the arrangements chosen
- Variations of mood and emotion
- Suitability of harmonies.
- Changes in Tempo and Rhythm from one melody to the next.
- Key changes from one melody to the next.
- Overall performance structure.
- Music appropriate to the idiom.
- Tasteful mix of new/familiar music.

## **4. THE FOUNDATION OF A MUSICAL PRESENTATION**

It is in the areas of Sound Presentation (or Musical Integration) and Quality and Musicianship of Arrangement, which most often have the greatest influence in determining the better ensemble performance. Collectively they have been described as the heart and soul of ensemble performance.

As an example, two pipe bands of equal grading, each with competent performers, would readily achieve equality in both sound quality and sound unity, however, the individualism of each pipe major will promote his/her perceptions in selection of

melodies, expressions conveyed in the performance, variations in tempo, time signature changes, selection of emotive themes, key changes musical transitions, etc. Added to this would be the individualism of each leading drummers scoring with different appreciations of appropriate dynamics, embellishments, etc. Thus any performance in the area of sound presentation is at best subjective. Sound Quality (Tonal Integration) and Sound Unity (Technical Integration) are relatively definitive and intrinsic to the performance and can be assessed more objectively.

Therefore, choice of tunes is a critical factor. There are abundant sources of acceptable music for a band to draw on to compile its competition repertoire. There are a wide range of compositions which arouse all sorts of emotions for all sorts of reasons however to achieve a top ensemble performance the selection and arrangement of melodies is often the big difference between many, otherwise well presented, performances.

The foundation of a musical presentation involves the effects of **Melody, Rhythm, Dynamics** and **Harmony** within the selection of arrangements forming the competition set, with due consideration being given to a complimentary variety of Tempo, mood, changes in keys, time signature, etc., together with effective transitions (breaks or bridges) between melodies.

#### **4.1. Melody**

Melody, in essence, is a series of sounds following each other, involving rise and fall in pitch, with a variety of sound duration. Whilst melody, in the physical sense, is nothing other than a succession of sounds with some rhythmical shape, it falls to the genius of man to produce the magic of good melody

##### **4.1.1. Time Signature**

A sign consisting of two figures, one above the other, placed at the beginning of a piece of music to indicate (upper figure) the number of beats or pulses in each bar and (lower figure) the value of each beat or pulse as a subdivision of a semibreve. Without a time signature we would have no overall means by which to define and convey the rhythmical shape and tempo of a melody. It regularises the pattern of beats. At the more advanced and sophisticated level, with reels and hornpipes for example, the distinction between  $2_2$ ;  $2_4$  and  $4_4$  or common time gives ground to subtle switches in rhythm and expression. A poor appreciation of time signature will give a melody the wrong feeling.

##### **4.1.2. Tempo**

Tempo is the speed at which a melody is played. A melody has a narrow range of "right" tempo. The performance of a melody must be somewhere within that range of "right" tempo for it to work. If the "right" tempo is beyond the capabilities of the players then execution suffers and the integration begins to disintegrate. Likewise if it is slowed to facilitate execution then expression or interpretation is jeopardised. If it is increased to a tasteless display of finger virtuosity, again the music suffers. Poor expression can give the impression of speed leading to a melody sounding if it is being played too fast. Conversely, pedantic expression can create a ponderous effect.

### **4.1.3. Embellishments**

Embellishments (or appoggiatura) are an integral part of pipe music and drum scores. They are essential for articulation in the former and essential for providing dynamics in the latter. Embellishments add character to a melody.

## **4.2. Rhythm**

Rhythm has been defined as *“the regular recurrence of the distinctive grouping of sounds and silence in time, based on duration of notes and strong and weak stresses.”* More simply it could be defined as *“the grouping of sounds according to their duration in time.”*

### **4.2.1. “Correct” Rhythm**

Every tune has its own “correct” rhythm based on its idiomatic style. A caution to be exercised is avoidance of an excess of “hang and cut” which leads to disturbance of the rhythm as well as disturbance of the band’s technical integration or sound unity.

### **4.2.2. Expression**

Within the rhythmical context, expression provides the musical colour and subtlety. A well expressed melody is less likely to produce a mechanical, repetitive feel to the listener. The expression of rhythm is where a band can put its own individual “stamp” on how a particular melody is shaped.

## **4.3. Dynamics**

Dynamics is the variation and contrast of sound intensity, (loudness and softness). For most wind instruments this is achieved by the player altering the force of blowing. This is not an available option for the bagpipe since tonal quality relies on steady even pressure on the reeds. However, within the context of a pipe band, it is readily achieved through the drum corps where the drummer has the ability to apply the increase or decrease of force into the striking action on the drum. The greater the force applied to start a sound source vibrating, in this case the striking of the drum head, the greater is its amplitude and the louder the sound, and vice versa.

## **4.4. Harmony**

### **4.4.1. What is Harmony?**

Harmony is the combination of simultaneous sounds producing chords, as opposed to Melody, which is a series of sounds following each other. Harmony can be both consonant and dissonant (agreeable and disagreeable, accord and discord). Most modern music attempts to produce harmonic accord for the various instrumental scores. With the modern design of the various musical instruments this is readily achievable since they are all suited to the equal temperament or system of tuning in which the octave is divided into twelve exactly equal

semitones, all of which are slightly out of tune acoustically with the natural scale but not so much as to offend the ear.

#### **4.4.2. Harmony for the Bagpipe**

Because the scale of the bagpipe is not of equal temperament, suitable chords are harder to achieve and yet retain the sense of a melody with multiple part playing. Two parts can be effective with little or no dissonance (known as seconds in the world of the bagpipe), three parts can also be achieved with some satisfaction to the hearer but beyond that the risk of cacophony is greater.

## **5. MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:**

To evaluate good ensemble performance within the pipe band, there are four main areas of concern, or four major elements of the performance. These are described as under:

- Tonal Integration leading to Sound Quality
- Technical Integration leading to Sound Unity,
- Musical Integration leading to Sound Presentation
- Quality and Musicianship of Arrangement.

Collectively, these elements represent the “MUSICAL PRESENTATION” of the pipe band to its audience, but more importantly for the competing pipe band, to the ensemble adjudicator.

Listed below are the elements and their components. Commentary on considerations of these elements and their components by the adjudicator will be dealt with in a subsequent section.

### **5.1. *Tonal Integration [leading to Sound Quality]***

- Pitch appropriate and consistent
- Tuning of instruments incl. bass/tenor section tuning to pipes
- Sound balance between individual instruments
- Consistent production of tonal quality — bright, rich, resonant, clear.
- Sound compatibility between pipes and drums
- Timbre or sound quality of the instruments
- Tone versus volume
- Good balance of volume between pipes and drums
- Tone and Volume stable throughout performance

### **5.2. *Technical Integration [leading to Sound Unity]***

- Putting it all together — together! Within the corps and between the corps.
- No shattering execution errors.
- Note values; beat notes; embellishments;
- Effective breaks; bridges, transitions.
- Starts and finishes
- Execution and accurate placement of short fortes by snare corps



- Adjudicator's assessment to be objective and founded on musical values, established through knowledge and experience.

### **5.3. *Musical Integration [leading to Sound Presentation]***

- Good expression/phrasing with fluent technique
- Appropriate tempo/rhythm
- Tempo consistent with, and maintained throughout melody.
- Well defined rhythmically
- Good dynamic control by snare and mid section drum corps utilizing a wide dynamic range.
- Drumming accompaniment enhancing melodies
- Drum scores appropriate.
- A unified approach

### **5.4. *Quality and Musicianship of Arrangement***

- Melodies selected are subjective (perhaps someone else's choice?).
- Melodies selected are appropriate to the idiom.
- Melodies, if both traditional and contemporary chosen, should have a balanced mix
- Melodies are balanced within the sets [e.g. 4 parts each for MSR (or 6/4/6)].
- Melodies selected are within capabilities of performers.
- Melodies selected provide contrasts in mood/emotion/impact [e.g. use of time signature changes and contrasts of melodies in major or minor keys].
- Melodies suffering from overuse of harmonies.
- Positioning of melodies within the musical selection set.
- Transitions creative and evoking interest.
- Role of tempo to create impact and dynamics in a slow to fast transition.
- Suitability of snare and mid section drum scores, musically and technically. Are they complimentary or in opposition?

## **6. ADJUDICATION IN THE DOMAIN OF THE MAJOR ELEMENTS:**

In the consideration of ensemble, there are a number of aspects that are peculiar to, and result from, the performance of the pipe band and many that are common to all musical groups.

### **6.1. *Discipline***

- Total concentration
- No extraneous instrument noises.
- Words of command to set the Tempo

### **6.2. *Introduction or Attack***

- Drummers start and finish introductory rolls in unison on the beat.
- Rolls have even consistency throughout
- Drones sound in unison on fifth beat (start of second roll)

- E's fully sounded in unison on seventh beat. Note that some pipe bands do not sound the E, but go straight into the melody on the eighth beat.
- Tempo maintained into tune.

### **6.3. *Tempo***

- Consistent from the words of command to the end of the first tune/melody.
- Consistent tempi within subsequent melodies
- Appropriate for the form of melody selected. Most melodies have a defined range of "right" tempo. The judge's experience should have equipped him with good bench marks for the optimum tempo range. The tempo of a melody is most important and in a performance it gives an enormous indication of how good a pipe major is in selecting tunes for competitions.
- Consistent and uniform between instrument sections.

### **6.4. *Phrasing and Expression***

- Phrasing, the emphasising of the rhythmic format or structure/shape of a melody, the subtle giving and taking of note values (Rubato).
- Phrasing to promote rhythm and good expression. It is very apparent when a melody is being performed aimlessly and without any appreciation of the correct phrasing. Picking right and wrong expression and phrasing must be a product of the adjudicator's musical experience; whilst there are innumerable guidelines and precedent there are no intrinsic rules.
- Expression, essential to reveal the emotion conveyed through the performers of the melody.

### **6.5. *Dynamics***

- The bagpipe sound relies on a constant steady pressure to maintain tonal quality thus any dynamics in the pipe band are dependant on the drum corps.
- Bass and Tenor (and Alto) drummers can contribute to the dynamic effect however the snare or side drum is the most effective in producing sound volume variations in its beatings.
- For best results in producing dynamics the drummers should know the tune being played. That is they should be able to sing (hum) the melody and not just know the beatings score.
- The dynamics produced should enhance the lilt of the tune being played and together with beatings that should be relatively simple and not overly complicated with complex embellishments

### **6.6. *Melody***

This area of consideration is perhaps the most difficult to "measure" in the sense of an adjudication assessment. It can draw the adjudicator into an assessment based on the adjudicator's own preference for a suitable medley set. Such subjectivity is to be avoided. For a reasonable objective assessment consider such aspects as:

- Selection of arrangements within the capability of the performers.
- Suitable contrasts in mood between consecutive arrangements.
- The use of modal change to promote mood change.
- Does the melody produce an appropriate sense of rhythm and emotion?

- Interesting variations in rhythm throughout.
- The use of breaks; bridges; reprise.

### **6.7. Rhythm**

The adjudicator should consider such aspects as:

- The regular maintenance and clarity of strong and weak accents.
- The use of syncopation and counterpoint to promote an uplifting and spirited edge to a performance.
- Variations in phrasing/motifs to promote mood change within a rhythm.
- Is there sufficient distinction in rhythm to match the change into the different melody types? For instance: Hornpipe to Jig; Strathspey to Reel.
- Is there sufficient variation in rhythm in the tunes forming the set? Has good use been made of time signature changes.
- Does the performance evoke a desire to “bop along with the music”?

### **6.8. Harmony**

Some considerations for the adjudicator are:

- Is it appropriate in the musical structure and/or arrangement?
- Within the melody it should be tasteful. Not complex and confused.
- It should not be excessive in application or in number of parts.
- Between the chanters and drones.
- Tonal between Bass, Tenor and Snare drums.
- Overall between pipes and drums.

### **6.9. Finish**

- The end of a performance should be concise. A “clean” finish. No further sounds from either corps.
- All players should be as one in executing the finish.
- The final note of the last tune should be given full musical value. Not clipped.

## **7. The Ensemble Adjudicator**

### **7.1. Outcomes and what is to be avoided.**

#### **7.1.1. Outcomes to be assessed:**

- a bands performance on the basis of **Tonality, Technicality, Musicality and, Quality and Musicianship of Arrangement.**
- a bands ability to have all of its performers working together as a unit to produce an integrated musical performance.
- a bands ability to set the component sound producers (Chanters, Drones, Drums) such that they are sounding as one, pitched correctly, with a good tone, volume and balance maintained throughout the performance.
- a bands ability to promote an appropriate rhythm with good expression and dynamics.

- To assess a bands ability to choose a selection of melodies that has good impact on the listener through both quality and tune compatibility. The ability of the band to select melodies that have variety of emotions and are within the capabilities of the performers.

### **7.1.2. Outcomes to be avoided:**

- ***It is not*** a technical critique of piping execution or drumming execution except where such execution may impede rhythm, expression, and sound unity.
- ***It is not*** an opportunity to suggest alternate melodies to those chosen by the band (i.e. an adjudicator expressing his/her own preferences).
- Comments should be limited to suitability of melodies played, within the scenario of Quality and Musicianship of Arrangement.

### **7.1.3. Outcomes of development/training of the adjudicator:**

- Be able to apply ability for making concise constructive comments, defining areas of the performance which are detractions and areas of the performance deserving of credit, on the appropriate adjudication form.
- Appendix A is a sample adjudication form adapted to the Scottish & NZ model. It, or similar format, is used in NZ.
- A suggested Adjudication Form based on the Canadian model is shown as Appendix B This form is a simplified aide memoire of the assessment criteria for Ensemble as assistance to the adjudicator. It provides an adequacy of space to make the appropriate comments to encourage and aide the competing band in addressing areas of the performance in need of improvement. This form is currently in use in Canada.

## **7.2. Positioning for the contest**

- Static position is best for consistency in aural reception by the adjudicator. However this is not always practical or possible due to the current requirement of contest formation for the competing band.
- If a static position is the adjudicator's choice, one recommended location for Ensemble Adjudication is 4 – 6 metres beyond the pipe corps, in the direction away from the start line (Flags AA), the distance being assessed from the outer circle.
- A more relevant approach under the current contest rules would be for the ensemble adjudicator to circle the competing band at least once during the performance, endeavouring to locate that "sweet spot" where the aural experience is at its peak and at which point he/she may choose to complete the ensemble evaluation.
- If competing bands maintain the circle formation for the Ensemble assessment a possible optimum position for the adjudicator on either side of the band is adjacent to the interface between the pipe corps and drum corps, (keeping in mind the prior dot point in regard to the "sweet spot").
- Notwithstanding, it is acknowledged that in no way could adjudicators be dictated to in terms of where they choose to stand, nor indeed what they choose to appraise or comment upon.

### **7.3. Commencement and Cessation of Adjudication**

**7.3.1. Commencement** occurs with the executive command of the Drum Major or Pipe Major for the band to begin the contest element under ensemble adjudication.

**7.3.2. Cessation** of ensemble adjudication occurs with the final sound from the band on completion of the contest element. This should coincide with the final note of the last melody to be performed.

### **7.4. Pipe Band presentation for Ensemble Adjudication**

- From an adjudication point of view it is imperative that bands present themselves in such a manner as to highlight their strengths in ensemble playing.
- The band should be aware of the ensemble adjudicator's position and the pipe major should present the band in a formation which is advantageous to the maximum musical presentation.
- No compulsion is being exercised here. More a recommendation to present to the audience and the adjudicator in a concert formation. Bands heeding this appeal will provide an opportunity to be heard far more favourably than in the conventional circle.

# **APPENDIX A:**

*Suggested Form for Ensemble Adjudication as based on the Scottish & NZ Model*

## **ENSEMBLE ADJUDICATORS REPORT**

**SET  
MEDLEY  
STREET MARCH**

CONTEST AT: ..... DATE: .... / .... / ....

BAND: .....GRADE: **1 2 3 4**

<b>ASSESSMENT</b> of combined performance between and within sections of the band				
Circle:	1 = Excellent	2 = Good		
	3 = Fair	4 = Poor		
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	1	2	3	4
<b>INTONATION:</b>				
Tone/Tuning	1	2	3	4
Volume	1	2	3	4
<b>INTEGRATION</b>	1	2	3	4
<b>BALANCE:</b>				
Between Instr. Gps	1	2	3	4
Within Instr. Gps	1	2	3	4
<b>INTERPRETATION:</b>				
<b>TEMPOS</b>				
Suitability	1	2	3	4
Consistency	1	2	3	4
<b>TRANSITIONS</b>	1	2	3	4
<b>RHYTHM &amp;     EXPRESSION</b>	1	2	3	4
<b>DYNAMICS</b>	1	2	3	4
<b>MUSIC</b> (Quality, Impact, Tune Compatibility)	1	2	3	4
<b>FINISH</b>	1	2	3	4

**No. of Performers:**

PIPERS .....  
SIDES .....  
TENORS .....

**COMMENTS:**

**POINTS AWARDED:**

**Max 100**

.....

**ADJUDICATOR:** .....

**Signed:** .....

## **APPENDIX B:**

*Suggested Form for Ensemble Adjudication as based on the Canadian Model*

# **Australian Pipe Band Association Inc Ensemble Adjudication**

[Draft format July 2006]

CONTEST:

DATE:

POINTS/PLACING

ADJUDICATOR:

SIGNATURE:

COMPETITOR:

ELEMENT:

GRADE:

<b>Tonal Integration:</b> *TUNING/CLARITY *PITCH *VOLUME *BALANCE INTER & INTRA CORPS *INTONATION *TIMBRE/QUALITY *STABILITY	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> VERY GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR <input type="checkbox"/> POOR	<b>Musicality:</b> *EXPRESSION *PHRASING *DYNAMICS *RHYTHM *TEMPO *INTERPRETATION	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> VERY GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR <input type="checkbox"/> POOR
<b>Technical Integration:</b> *INTRODUCTION *TRANSITIONS *FINISH *INTRACORPS UNISON *INTERCORPS UNISON	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> VERY GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR <input type="checkbox"/> POOR	<b>Quality/Musicianship of Arrangement:</b> *TUNE SELECTION *KEY CHANGES *TRANSITIONS *SCORES SNARE/MID SECTIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> VERY GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR <input type="checkbox"/> POOR

### **Overall Assessment:**

### **Detailed Comments:**