

Proposed Modernisation of the Federation

Update 2: Considering the Options

As the air chills, the days get shorter and Tesco stocks Christmas crackers, minds and bodies revert to natural winter pursuits, none greater for our membership than skiing and snowboarding.

However, just as the most dedicated of snowsports enthusiasts travel great distances and find new surfaces on which to hone their skills over the summer months, so work has continued on a new vision for UK snowsports, to enable our sports to flourish far beyond the end of this current winter season.

In our previous update, we guided you through a brief history of the Federation and the outline modernisation proposal, presented to Congress in May 2005. If you need to catch up on this information, all documents are available in the committee section of www.snowsportGB.com.

Until the Congress in May 2005, the development of ideas had been generated by a Modernisation Working Group, made up of volunteer and professional representatives from each of the current Federation member bodies, and this group continues to play a vital role in the project. However, in order to see the project through to a considered and viable proposal in time for the Congress in November, it was agreed that further expertise and opinions should be sought.

Congress considered that the project required:

- Objective input from our current leaders
- Professional change management expertise
- Detailed focus on key areas of the new organisation
- Feedback from the broad membership

The proposed structure of this was outlined in our previous update and we can now confirm that this has been developed and appointments made so that work is now in full swing.

Steering Group of Federation Chairs

While a representative group already existed in the form of the Modernisation Working Group, it was agreed that a further representative grouping was required to speak with fresh objectivity and with the elected mandate of their membership, so the Steering Group of Federation Chair was formed.

This group first met in July to oversee the development of consultant briefs, secure funding to meet costs and subsequently to approve the appointment of consultants.

Genesis Consulting was appointed from a list of five highly regarded sports management consultancies, which tendered for the Snowsports Modernisation project, based on a brief developed by the Modernisation Group and supported by the Steering Group of Federation Chairs. UK Sport was also asked to contribute to the tender process and support the appointment.

We are fortunate to have three highly qualified consultants from that company working with us – Brian Porteous, Alistair Gray and Sheila Gray – who between them have vast experience in the fields of sport, business and change management. Further information on the company and its consultants is available on www.genesisconsult.com.

Genesis began their work with face-to-face consultations with key representatives of all of the existing organisations and liaison on progress with the Modernisation Working Group.

The Steering Group held an initial feedback session with Genesis in September to confirm a clear vision for the project and help assemble the largest of the modernisation “building blocks” that would have to be considered in whatever structure was eventually agreed.

The consensus proposed vision for the new organisation is:

[BOB] is recognised and valued as a leading, innovative and effective National Governing Body for all snow sports throughout the United Kingdom:

- **Attracting and retaining increasing numbers of participants**
- **Providing the excellent services and benefits that its members want**
- **Achieving ever-improving standards of performance on the world stage through an excellent system of talent identification, pathways, coaching and support.**

This vision was confirmed by an important gathering of Federation Chairs and their key colleagues and representatives, held at Stansted on Friday 7th October 2005.

The meeting was led by the three Genesis consultants and concentrated on the presentation of a range of six relatively unique options designed to represent a range of possibilities for the overarching structure and culture of the new

organisation. Although it was thought unlikely that any of the options would be accepted in its entirety, consideration of each in turn helped the meeting to develop consensus around preferred elements and work towards the development of an agreed model that could be presented to the broader membership.

The six options presented provided a range of choices, including one that built on the status quo and an all-inclusive corporate model. In each case, the options were presented with a summary of the rationale, focus, priorities, structure, resources, people and implications to be measured against comprehensive success criteria.

As anticipated, no option was considered to be a perfect fit, but through the monitoring of instant individual responses and more detailed group discussion, a strong consensus of opinion was formed.

It was agreed that we should be one organisation, which must represent a significant step change from the status quo. We all have much to contribute and the phrase "joint venture" was highlighted, encapsulating the need to bring together what we have and retain engagement with important partners such as The Ski Club of Great Britain. The organisation must have a sharper commercial focus than in the past, while remaining mindful of its core governing body role and appropriately reflecting the democratic rights of its members.

The new organisation, owned by its clubs and stakeholders and ultimately accountable to them, will feature a strong board, overseeing a revised professional structure, technical committees and volunteer commissions, delivering central strategy and policy at a local level.

With the proposed broad vision, culture and structure agreed in outline, the next level of detail was considered and issues relating to membership, coaching and local delivery were discussed in their broadest terms. Over the next few weeks, the detailed proposals will be developed by Genesis, with support and input from the focus groups and the members e-forum.

The three **focus groups**, populated by nominated individuals from the membership, have already been looking at key areas of our activity in further detail:

- Membership and pathways
- Coaching and instruction
- Marketing and communications

After two meetings of each group, their output is now sufficiently developed to feed into the high level work being carried out by Genesis and will now also inform the questionnaires being posted for member feedback on the Email Forum. In particular, these groups have been assessing the feasibility of a UK coaching structure, a UK membership scheme, unified publications and websites, coordinated event management and sponsorship potential from grass roots through to international performers.

In short, we needed this time to work out what the important questions were, in order to ask you for answers.

Email Forum

An Online Forum has been set up in order to canvass the opinion of ordinary members and allow the modernisation project team to gather quantifiable data to inform and support their work.

The first questionnaire, based around the broad principles of modernisation, brought generally positive responses. The response data and analysis of this first questionnaire is also posted on www.snowsportGB.com. Questionnaires 2 and 3 seek opinion on membership and local delivery issues and are now on line.

It is not too late to register with the forum, if you wish your opinion – positive or negative – to be heard. Simply register your interest at snowsportfeedback@gmail.com, stating your name, email address and member group affiliation and you will be supplied with the appropriate URL, login and password details.

Next Steps

Over the next month, there will be a further meeting of the Modernisation Working Group and of the Steering Group of Federation Chairs, prior to the key Congress presentation on 7th November in Edinburgh.

Congress will seek the support of the leadership of each of the Federation's member groups. Assuming this is granted, Congress will task each leader to go back to his membership with the proposals for full consultation and, it is hoped, ultimate approval.

These are exciting times for Snowsports and, what has at times felt like a long and drawn out process is gathering pace and momentum. Together, we aim to follow the vision of success, which is now clearly emerging. Please assist us by channelling your thoughts on modernisation through the Online Forum, or any Modernisation Working Group representative.

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