

PROPOSED MODERNISATION OF THE “FEDERATION”

(This does concern everyone)

As many people will be aware, until 1964 the Ski Club of Great Britain (SCGB) was the governing body of British skiing but then government funding regulations required the National Ski Federation of Great Britain to be founded. In the ensuing forty years the “Federation” has undergone several changes in both name and structure. During this time and for various reasons the four Home Nation Governing Bodies have been formed. The independent alpine Clubs have become BARSC and the armed forces have come together to become CSWSA. These groups together with BASI (the instructors), the SCGB and more recently the British Snowboard Association are now the Member Groups and voting stakeholders of the present British Ski and Snowboard Federation, which trades as Snowsport GB.

In the spring of 2004, in response to a UK Sports Council initiative and with the support of BSSF Congress, a Modernisation Working Group (MWG) was set up. Its membership consists of one nominee from each of the nine Member Groups with Fiona McNeilly as Chairman, funded by Snowsport GB. The remit was to review the current activity and scope of all Member Groups and the Federation, assess their effectiveness and efficiency and identify broad areas of work where these could be improved. Alternatively to report back with sound reasons why modernisation is not appropriate at this time. It was implied that future Sports Council funding would be dependent upon this exercise being carried out efficiently.

It became clear almost immediately that the MWG felt the future of British snowsport would be best served by a British organisation that operates from the top down, serves the needs of the members and is organised with proper representation for all interest groups and disciplines. However, it was acknowledged that a great deal of work would need to be done to effect such a radical change. It is to be emphasised that this is a proposal to create a new nation-wide, multi-sport, fully inclusive and equitable organisation and is not merely an updating of the existing Federation structure. (To avoid confusion we are using the working title of "Bob".)

Much work has been done and is continuing in order to bring this proposal to fruition. The AGM of the Federation in May 2005 unanimously accepted the principle and authorised the work to continue, laying out an ambitious timetable for a completed proposal for membership consideration by November 2005 with a view, if approved, to final implementation in spring of 2006. This is the start of the next Olympic cycle, which has funding as well as planning implications for any sports governing body.

It is anticipated that, by creating the new organisation, the membership of British skiing and snowboarding will be better served than in the past. One organisation will be able to buy in and offer better services in areas such as information, insurance, publications, web-sites etc. and cut out much of the present duplication of time and effort. There will be more direct links between members both as individuals and as Clubs to the governing body who in turn will be answerable back to the membership. It will also be able to provide a seamless progression for competitors, officials and professionals from grass roots to elite level.

This is by no means a finished project and there is still a great deal of work, discussion and consultation to be completed by the MWG and it's various volunteer and professional steering groups before the proposal can be put to the membership. This article is intended to provide a brief outline of the work in progress.

More details will be available shortly on various web sites including www.snowsportgb.com

If you have any particular ideas or opinions on the subject, the MWG would be happy to receive them. Please make contact only via your own Member Group representative.