



INTERNATIONAL
NETBALL
FEDERATION

Member Update following the INF Board Meeting - 12th and 14th March 2021

The INF Board met on 12th and 14th March 2021 via videoconference. INF President, Liz Nicholl CBE chaired the meeting and acknowledged the varying challenges that all of our Member Countries continue to face through the COVID-19 pandemic, but particularly in regard to return to play across the five Regions.

Since the last full Board Meeting at the end of October 2020, the Board has also held additional Update Meetings on 5th December 2020 and 17th January 2021. These shorter meetings in between full Board meetings are enabling the INF to be much more agile and make faster progress towards achieving our ambitious plans for our sport.

A full list of the decisions made in 2020 along with a summary of decisions made from January to date in 2021, will follow on after an INF Board Update Webinar scheduled for Tuesday 30th March.

The meeting on 12th and 14th of March 2021 focused on the following areas of discussion and decision;

- The Board made the very difficult decision to cancel the **NWYC 2021** in Fiji in December 2021. This decision was made in the context of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and risks identified for the event and all its stakeholders. The Board concluded that these were simply too significant for the event to proceed as planned. The safety and wellbeing of our young athletes, the wider netball community and the Fijian population was central to this decision and the Board agreed there was no alternative but to cancel the event. The Board agreed a comprehensive communication plan to cover all key stakeholders in relation to this outcome. Members will have seen that the decision was announced on Friday 19th March and will have received a list of questions and answers.
- The Board also considered the **Annual Update of the INF World Rankings and timing of Commonwealth Games 2022 qualification**. More information on these will be sent to you shortly in a fuller communication.
- The Board received the external auditors audit report and **approved the International Netball Federation Ltd & INF Secretariat Ltd Financial Statements for the period ending 31st December 2020**. The Board also approved Beever and Struthers Ltd as the statutory auditors for 2021.
- The Board considered the benefits which are afforded to **Service Award recipients** and other major long-term contributors to our sport at an international level. The Board will be discussing recommendations with the NWC 2023 host organising committee (South Africa) to see how these may be accommodated.
- The Board received an update from the **Commercial Committee** Chair on the developing commercial strategy. The Board was particularly pleased to note the progress made on **sponsorship and broadcast strategy and sales planning** in preparation of NWC 2023.
- The Board approved a new part time role within the INF Secretariat Team to support **Netball Federation Development projects** effectively. Members will be advised on this role shortly and how to apply.
- The Board considered the INF's approach to **diversity and inclusion**, including a suggestion to undertake an audit of our Member Countries and their individual progress in this important area. The Board agreed to give this matter further consideration and hope to provide an update to Members later in the year.

- The Board noted the progress of plans for future INF events including NWC 2023 as well as the Commonwealth Games Birmingham 2022.
- The Board noted the status of awarding hosting rights for NWYC2025 and the NWC2027 and will make further announcements regarding the hosts for these events in due course.
- The Board noted the update from the INF Foundation Strategy Working Group including next stage decisions and actions required to take the foundation forward.
- A '**Voice of the Athlete**' proposal was approved by the Board, with an aim to help ensure that athletes voices and views are appropriately recognised and represented when key decisions are made by the INF Board. The Terms of reference of new Working Group to support this work were agreed and the Board will be seeking athlete representation from Member Countries to join this Group. The INF Board Directors for Europe and Asia were both approved as the members of this working group. An invitation to join an on-line briefing session on 20 April 2021 to promote opportunities and provide more information on this essential work will be circulated in due course.
- The Board noted that proposed new **INF Eligibility Regulations** for International events have been circulated to Member Countries for feedback. This vital feedback will be reviewed at the next INF Governance Committee meeting on 25th March 2021 to inform a future Board decision. I encourage any Member that has not already submitted their comments to do so as soon as possible so that your views may be taken into consideration.
- The Board reviewed the current **position statements on Olympic Games inclusion and male participation in netball**. An updated OG statement may be found in Appendix 2. The position statement on male participation requires a further short review but will be issued as soon as possible.
- The Board was pleased to note the progress made on the future **INF strategy** and a presentation document which will support its wider communication.
- The Board received an update on plans for the **INF Congress 2021**. The Board approved the role description and personal specification for the **Vice-President's** position which becomes vacant when Sue Taylor AM steps down from the Board this year. The Board noted the timescales in relation to the election for this role which will take place during Congress 2021. Details of the nomination process will be included with the **Official Congress 2021 Calling Notice**. Furthermore, **INF President Liz Nicholl will be hosting an on-line briefing session on 30th March** to provide Members with a greater understanding of the VP role and its responsibilities. There will be an opportunity for Members to ask questions about the role of Board Members to help demystify these positions and encourage nominations for the VP role.
- The Board approved the role description and personal specification for the new **Independent Director role** which replaces the current further Director on the INF Board (currently held by Shirley Hooper) Recruitment to this role will be led by the Nominations Committee, Chaired by Liz Nicholl as President, and will follow on after the appointment of the Vice President. Again, Liz will brief members on the recruitment process for this position at the Webinar on the 30th March and answer any questions that Members may have regarding the role.
- A comprehensive **webinar / education programme for Member Countries** will be delivered through 2021 to support Congress decision making. Further details on the full programme will be circulated; but this will kick-off with the 'Voice of the Athlete' Session, scheduled for 20 April 2021, as mentioned above.
- The Board noted the **deadlines and timescales for Service Award applications for 2021** (applications for this year's awards are to be received by **12 noon on 31 March 2021** at the latest). The Board will make any required decisions on any applications which have been received at the Board Update Meeting, scheduled for 17th April 2021. Plans for recognising the recipients of the Service Awards will be confirmed at this stage.

- The Board was pleased to hear **updates from the five Regional Directors** and noted the excellent progress and strides made by Member Countries.
- The Board noted recent progress made by its Committees and Working Groups.
- The Board requested the INF Audit and Risk Committee consider special cases / circumstances which have been formally presented by a small number of Member Countries who are currently suspended due to late payment of the 2021 membership affiliation fees.
- The Board considered other important reports presented including the Coaching Advisory Panel's Report and INF Executive's Board Reports including the progress on delivering the INF Operational plan.
- The Board noted a revised INF Debtor Policy which will need formal approval very shortly.
- The Board agreed the content of its work plan for 2021 and acknowledged the contents of all of the Committee Work Plans which supplement its work (Audit and Risk Committee, Commercial Committee, Nominations Committee and Governance Committee).
- The next **Board Update Meeting** is scheduled for **17 April 2021** the next full Board Meeting is scheduled for the weekend of the **28 – 30 May 2021**. At this stage, the Board will continue to hold their meetings by the Zoom video platform.

Clare Briegal
INF CEO
24th March 2021