

NZIHA Governance Review Report

February
2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Zealand Inline Hockey Association was incorporated in 1995 and is affiliated to national [Skate NZ] and international bodies [International Ice Hockey Federation [IIHF] /Federation Internationale du Roller Sports [FIRS] governing the sport. The association provides national and inter regional competition on an annual basis and competes internationally. The sport of inline is a very exciting sport loved by many families within the inline community.

At the meeting of members in October 2012 it was agreed to set up an independent review to examine the structure and governance of Inline Hockey in New Zealand to ascertain whether improvements could be made. The period December 9 to January 20 was set for stage one of the project [effectively 5 business weeks] so any initial recommendations could be considered for the April 2013 Annual General Meeting and implemented for the 2013-14 year.

I have listened to a wide range of views on the current strengths and weaknesses of the governance model and the way it operates, and on the wider issues of the game.

I would like to place on record my thanks to over 70 internal stakeholders who contributed to this review in a candid and constructive manner. There was much acknowledgement of the contributions of the existing Executive and recognition everyone involved are volunteers. The sport is fortunate to have such committed and passionate people involved.

It was apparent from the consultation process that there are issues in terms of trust and patch protection in some areas. There is confusion about where decisions are made and by whom. There is a perception that the governing body is not open, members have a lack of understanding as to the value provided by NZIHA, and that the governance arrangements were unworkable and there needed to be an investment in the sport in order to be sustainable.

During the process the following key issues were identified:-

- There's no / little visibility of the value NZIHA adds for its members
- There is no clear expectation of what the NZIHA does
- There is no leadership or assistance coming from NZIHA on how to attract and retain players
- There is an imbalance with the NZIHA between financial sustainability of the sport vs. investment in growing the sport
- There is a perceived inactivity by the NZIHA on ideas given / promoted to it
- There is no accountability or consequences in the current governance of the NZIHA
- There is no succession planning for key roles in the NZIHA

In order to 'To Build the Game' the following governance recommendations have been made:-

- Future Structure – The Executive Board for 2013-2014 should be appointed through an Independent Appointments Committee moving from an elected 'club based' Executive with members providing a range of skills 'To Build The Game'.
- Board Composition – A seven person Executive Board including two independent members led by a Chair and Deputy with the Executive Officer reporting to the Board - having no voting rights.

- Strategic Plan –A new Strategic Plan is required as soon as possible to guide the sport forward with Annual Plans coordinated in a timely manner linked to the Strategic Plan. Both plans require regular monitoring against realistic KPIs.
- Financial Matters – More robust Financial Planning is required including three yearly and annual budgeting. A clear strategy is required for funding held with consideration made to invest ‘To Build The Game’.
- External Stakeholders –The Executive needs to develop its relationships with outside entities to assist the growth and positioning of the sport. Too much working in isolation hinders opportunities in a very competitive and changing environment.
- Communications – Communications both internally and externally require planned, well adhered to strategies. Current internal communication lines are blurred creating frustration and unease within the passionate Inline Hockey family. With improved governance and operating structure the sport will be better placed for attracting increased funding support.

Whilst this report is first and foremost a Governance Review, it has also been quite clear from the consultation process that the new Board needs to consider in detail the direction, vision and strategy for the sport and this work should quickly follow.

In ‘Building The Game’ with the volunteer structure a careful allocation of role/duties is required not overloading personnel making sure there is a balance covering strategic and operational work.

The future is not without challenges, but this independent review provides a unique opportunity for all stakeholders to embrace and propel the sport into the future for the players. The sport will prosper when it is visibly unified and everyone with the same goals operating in the same direction meeting the needs of the Inline community.

Good luck moving forward.

TEAM – *Together Everyone Achieves More*

Paul Cameron

Independent Reviewer &

Chair Governance Working Group

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