



Discussion Paper – Review of Board Gender Balance & Voting Structure
February 15, 2018



Discussion points

- Gender representation in governance
- Voting structure
- Next steps
- Appendix – Canadian Sports Voting Structures



Acknowledgement

- The Governance Committee wishes to thank Ashley LaBrie from AthletesCAN who generously shared the Canadian sport governance survey information upon which the analysis is based
- The survey examined governance practices in 59 federal government funded sports:
 - Voting structure - a subset of 15 sports was selected to examine key elements of interest to Rugby Canada
 - Gender representation on boards – all 59 sports were reviewed to understand current Canadian practices



Context

- It is timely for Rugby Canada (RC) to examine two important aspects of our governance: **gender balance**; and, **voting structure**
- On **gender balance** in governance we have an opportunity to become a leader in Canadian sport:
 - Growth in Canadian rugby has been fuelled in part by the significant increase of female registered participants
 - Many great rugby leaders at national, provincial and club levels are females
 - Other Unions and sports – including World Rugby – are leading the way in enshrining gender equity
 - Australia has just appointed the first ever female Chief Executive in rugby
 - The broader trend in Canada in the business, political and not for profit (NFP) sectors is towards gender equity in governance (50 percent targets)
 - Multiple research studies have shown that gender balanced boards produce better outcomes in both profit and NFP organizations
- Driven by a Member request, it is also necessary to review RC's **voting structure**
- Taken together, these governance initiatives will help us more effectively achieve our Mission: *to inspire, develop, promote, govern, and lead Rugby in Canada*



Gender representation in governance



Situation

- **Background**
 - RC foundational documents – silent on gender representation on Board, other than requirement for female player representative
 - Other sport bodies
 - Sports Canada, World Rugby and other Canadian sport funding bodies are increasingly active in ensuring appropriate gender representation on boards
 - World Rugby has established a target of 1/3 female directors
 - Registered participants – 35 percent female (2017 registration data – Minor 27%; Junior 36%; and Senior 38%)
 - Current female representation on board – 4 of 14 directors or 29 percent – represents top echelon of world unions
- **Objective**
 - Examine board gender representation policies in Canadian sport; identify potential options for consideration; and recommend changes to RC's Bylaws



Canadian sport policies on gender

- All 59 sports in the research sample were reviewed

Sport	Policy / Guideline
Athletics	Two athlete directors – one of each gender
Basketball	Two athlete directors – one of each gender
Curling	Board shall be constituted in a manner such that no gender accounts for more than 60% or less than 40% of the total number of Governors
Freestyle skiing	Board shall consist of not less than 40% of any gender
Ice Hockey	Councils of Hockey Canada shall include a Female Council (?)
Judo	Board shall include a Women's Leadership Representative. Must be a woman and shall represent women and promote the interest and participation of women in judo



Canadian sport policies on gender

- All 59 sports in the research sample were reviewed (continued)

Sport	Policy / Guideline
Ringette	Nine directors including the President. The Board must include a minimum of three (3) females
Rugby	Two athlete directors – one of each gender
Sailing	Nine directors in total and there shall be a minimum of two members of each gender on the board, not including the Athlete Directors. Should the number of members fall below two members of any gender, then only members of that gender would be eligible for candidacy until the two member rule was met
Soccer	14 directors in total and the Board shall include a minimum of three qualified Directors of each gender

The Research Survey suggests the remaining sports are silent on gender representation on boards



Analysis, options and recommendations – 1

- Analysis
 - In comparison to other Canadian sports, RC is advanced in female representation however this is circumstantial and has been driven by key individuals
 - Opportunity to get ahead and enshrine gender representation in Bylaws
 - Any minimum gender representation on board should be based on Sport Canada or World Rugby guidelines or in line with the broader trend in Canada (target of 50 percent?)
- Options
 - Adopt World Rugby's target of 1/3 female directors (e.g. five of 14)
 - Establish our own target (e.g. specify percentage of female representation on board)
 - Adopt a guideline similar to Curling and Judo – no gender can have less than a targeted percentage representation on the board



Analysis and recommendations – 2

- Recommendations
 - Adopt a policy similar to Curling and Judo – Board shall be constituted in a manner such that no gender accounts for more than 60% or less than 40% of the total number of Directors (e.g. 6 of 14)
 - Document in the Bylaws
 - Prepare a multi-year plan to achieve new target (e.g. move to the new target over the next couple of board recruiting cycles)
 - Begin discussion with members about a broad national approach
- Note
 - The contemporary definition of gender is changing (e.g. California)
 - In future we may need to reconsider Rugby Canada’s definition of gender and adjust our Bylaws accordingly