



**Ski Racing New Zealand  
Strategic Planning Meeting  
Commodore Hotel, Christchurch, 18 – 19 October 2003**

**Present:**

- SRNZ Board – Roland Kuhn (acting Chair), Rowan Eves, David Howden, Brent Walton, Wayne Café, Peter Duff, Cyrus Berry and Murray Popenhagen.
- Invitees – Alan Harper (QAST), Janet McLeod (Independent), Mark Butcher (Team Turoa), Chris Griffin (WSR), Geoff McKeown (Ski Wholesaler), John Ross (WSC), Adi Bernasconi (Coach & WSRA), Grant Winsloe (WSC), Peter Gendall (WSR), Fiona Stevens (Team Hutt), Sue Bridgwater (CSA), Rob Greig (QAST) and John Armstrong – Sunday (Coach & WSR).
- Facilitator – Paul Highton

10.00 am, Saturday: Paul opened the meeting by asking what the meeting wished to achieve. Each of the Board members then advised as follows:

- Cyrus (CSA), advised that CSA wanted:
  - athlete focused SRNZ with clear goals
  - a Board free of regional and personal agendas.
  - accountability
  - transparency
  - a new constitution and structure for the above
  - process to action the above
  - time frame for the above
- Roland (NZSIF), also wanted vision included
- David (WSR), also wanted a clear athlete progression plan devised
- Murray (QAST), also wanted both national and international vision
- Brent (SAANZ) wanted the issue of the purpose of SRNZ to be discussed
- Fiona (Team Hutt) believed that a new structure was the first and most important priority. This needed to be decided before considering vision.
- Peter (WSC) also wanted discussed where SRNZ fitted in relation to SSC and FIS.

Everyone agreed that we would first discuss vision and then deal with the new constitution and structure of the Board.

**Vision**

There was extensive discussion from all those present on this subject. There was a unanimous view that SRNZ should not be dealing with the junior level as that was being dealt with by the regional programmes. SRNZ should instead be focusing on the top end.

After further discussion, the following components of a desirable vision for SRNZ were agreed:

- SRNZ should have ownership of the sport, being the national teams, the database and national events.
- there should be a framework for the advancement of the sport
- there needed to be a national (as opposed to a regional) focus

Ownership of the sport was critical, because without ownership, it was very difficult to get access to funding. Ownership involved having the naming rights for national events,

controlling the points list setting the criteria for national teams, maintaining proper standards and administering national and FIS registration.

The coaches were frustrated as they believed there was not enough national focus. The coaches were very supportive of the appointment of a programme director by SRNZ.

Regions & SRNZ - national points events are run by the regions but are owned by SRNZ. After discussion, everyone agreed that all athletes (J6 through to Senior) in a race-training programme should be registered with SRNZ.

**SRNZ needs to ensure that athletes aspire to reach the highest level and that SRNZ promotes and advances the sport and athletes to the top international level.**

It was agreed that that is our vision.

#### Summary of Objectives

1. Grow membership base - need to establish a portfolio of benefits for membership.
2. Athlete development path
3. Responsibility for national teams
4. Ownership of all compliance issues
5. Get ski racers to World Cup level.
6. Generate and maintain sport profile in New Zealand – branding

#### Management

- profile of sport
- branding
- membership
- compliance
- media/marketing.
- development framework.
- funding,
- define role of regions – liaison

#### Athlete Development

- athlete's pathway/framework
- national teams
- programme director/leadership
- selection

#### SRNZ Board

CSA proposed that there were four areas that we needed to focus upon:

1. Programme direction.
2. Finance - accounting/contracts/SPARC/sponsors/ski pool/fundraising.
3. Compliance - other organisations rules such as FIS, ski areas, etc,
4. Secretariat - administration/correspondence/cash book/minute taking/racing entries and results/media/communication with stakeholders/database

It is believed that programme of management is the main issue in the problem is that each area should be directly responsible to the Board.

There was then a general discussion about the makeup of the proposed new Board. Following further discussion, it was agreed that a CEO should be appointed to lead the new Board and liase with athletes. The CEO would oversee the board's operations in the above four areas

#### Secretariat

Sue advised that approximately 30/40 hours were involved during winter and approximately 20 hours during summer. Race entries will need to go through the central office.

It was noted that it was very difficult for one person to do both administration and fundraising as these involved different skill sets.

Fundraising and Sponsorship - a number of different sources of funding were discussed, including SPARC and other government agencies, lotteries board, industry sponsorship, trusts, FIS, equipment pool, suppliers, Olympic Committee, ski areas and ski industry, levies.

Wayne believed that there should be at least one full-time position as this was a large job. Preferably there should be a team on a volunteer basis. He suggested three/four on the team with one of those being on commission.

Compliance - it was agreed to leave this to one side, as we have no control over this area. This area can be dealt with by the new administration.

Programme Director - Sue suggested that the Canadian Alpine Integration Model be used as this covers athlete development from entry level up to senior elite. Adi advised that all coaches want to buy into this.

The programme director would have responsibility for national team coaches, liaising with regional team coaches, setting and maintaining race standards. The person would be someone who understands the sport, but would not have to be a coach. It would be preferable if the person were in New Zealand for most of the year. The person would have a role of being the coordinator between the board and coaches, but not telling coaches how to coach.

After further discussion, everyone felt that the programme director should "broadly" be full-time in New Zealand or at least be "accessible" 12 months of the year. The person would need to have a technical background to deal with equipment issues and sourcing.

#### Board Structure

CSA summarised the current structure, as being:

1. The current SRNZ board has 1 representative on the board of Snow Sports New Zealand (SSNZ), which is the umbrella organisation that liaises between all New Zealand snow sports (mostly competitive) organisations and FIS.
2. SSNZ has representatives on various FIS committees.
3. SRNZ also has 1 representative on the New Zealand Snow Sports Council (NZSSC), which is an organisation comprising most NZ snow sports organisations and is currently the only body that deals with government and SPARC.
4. In addition, there is the National Olympic Committee and SRNZ is represented on that committee through SSNZ.

The current SRNZ board of eight represents four race programmes, being QAST, Wanaka, Whakapapa, Turoa, one region – Canterbury, ski areas (SAANZ), ski industry (NZSIF) and a coaches representative.

There was a general feeling that the current board structure was not working and change was required.

QAST referred again to John Frampton's earlier 1998 report, which summarised the perceived then problems. The report proposes a more corporate and accountable structure. The report was again considered and there was then considerable discussion about the matters raised. The report stressed that the role of the board is governance and recommended that an appointments committee appoint the board members. That committee would comprise three/four prominent sporting/business people, but not members of the existing board.

It was noted that the current constitution would need to be changed in order to incorporate the above proposals.

There were a number of comments that there was considerable goodwill to SRNZ in the general ski industry, but that people were holding back until SRNZ became better organised. Geoff also expressed concern on behalf of NZSIF regarding the parallel importing of equipment by some coaches. The industry was prepared to again get involved in a ski pool but there would need to be better guidelines and discipline regarding the purchase of equipment by parents in order to make this work. It was noted that this would be the role of the new programme director.

Concerns were expressed about the current regional representative basis in that there were no tenure limits, there was not a necessary matching of required skills and there was a tendency for there be a regional rather than a national focus.

After discussion, it was felt that the following were the essential skills required of the new board structure:

- business/financial skills
- ability to accept responsibility .
- sponsorship/marketing skills
- knowledge of ski racing.
- sports law background.
- business contacts and community credibility
- communication skills
- board room skills and experience
- passion

Roland, Geoff and Brent advised that whilst the industry wants to keep involved as it has an investment in the ski racing industry, they did not think it was necessary to have a seat on the Board. They just wanted to see an effective organisation that operated on a national basis. If they had a seat on the board then they would be there as a watchdog and it would accordingly be likely to be a reactive position.

A letter from a number of athletes was tabled, which, amongst other matters, proposed an athletes' representative on the board. After discussion, it was felt that this would also be a watchdog position and the athletes concerns, could be received by way of liaison with the new programme director.

Further discussion then followed as to how the new board structure would work. There was concern from some regions that the board must remain accountable to the regions. After further discussion, it was eventually proposed that a corporate structure be adopted along the following lines:

- An independent appointments committee would select the first five board members. The stakeholders would make subsequent appointments of board members.
- The stakeholders or "shareholders" would comprise a member from each regional programme (five), plus industry representatives (if they wished to be involved), and a coaches' representative (if so required).

The following points were noted with regard to be proposed structure:

- As with a company, the stakeholders would have final control of SRNZ, by way of resolutions taken at an AGM or SGM.
- The board members would have a staggered re-election on the basis of 1 at the end of the first year, and then two in each subsequent two years.
- There would be the right of reappointment.
- There would be a 4/5 majority required for the stakeholders to amend the Constitution and to elect new Board members.

After further discussion, it was resolved that SRNZ adopt a new constitutional structure as set out above, would be required a mean that constitution to be tabled in 21 days time. Proposed Brent, seconded Murray. The proposal was carried unanimously.

The meeting then concluded for Saturday.