

Rugby Europe: united and focused

Balanced growth of rugby in Europe

7. Implementation of the Governance

The Board of Directors is the governing body of Rugby Europe, reporting to member unions at the Annual General Meeting.

The Board makes the strategic decisions and controls the quality of the operations, The Rugby Europe CEO and staff are responsible for the implementation and execution of the plans and to run an efficient and responsive operation.

Over the last number of years, the decision-making and responsibility structure of the governance was not always followed. The Board did not always receive the agenda and information in time to discuss the subject at the meeting and make a proper decision. This resulted in a too strong positions of the CEO in the decision-making process. The Board was also confronted with decisions already taken that fall within their authority.

⇒ *The responsibility of the President is to lead this process of cooperation in and between the governing bodies, unions and partners. This is not a political job, but requires experience and knowledge of international organizations, cultural differences, and the “European” way of working. He/she should be a connector, motivator, communicator and a decisive force to get things done.*

8. Board: Responsibilities and Competencies

The bylaws define how the Board members are elected and what their areas of competence should be to be eligible.

The Board has a shared responsibility to make well considered decisions, taking into account input from the various Committees/Subcommittees and Rugby Europe staff. However, to improve the information level of the Board and to tackle the urgent issues more pro-actively, it is to be consider electing a number of Board members with proven skills in particular areas of responsibility, such as finance, commerce/sponsorship, education, youth retention, women’s development, etc.

The Board should also preferably be made up of a balanced representation from the various categories of unions and the geographical regions.

To improve the effectivity of the Board and its interaction with the Committees and the staff the frequency of the meetings should be reviewed.

9. Committees: responsibilities and competencies

The Committees are the advisory bodies to the Board. They should monitor subjects and provide input (solicited and unsolicited) to the Board for decisions to be made.

The Rugby (sub) Committees are the “eyes and ears” of the unions and regions, concerning competition, formats and development topics. The members should represent the right balance of expertise and regional knowledge.

The other Committees advise the Board, and carry out specific tasks, on subjects like business topics, legal / regulations, audit / risk, disciplinary topics. In these Committees the relevant expertise is key.

In the last years a few (sub) Committees and the Business Committee have been understaffed and not able to fulfill their role, resulting in lack of information and suggestions from unions and Committees to the Board. This should be addressed as quickly as possible, giving the Committees a more clearly defined role, more positive feedback and involving them more directly in the decision-making process.

The Business Committee should comprise people with expertise in sponsorship, fundraising, international business and institutional contacts. They should work closely with World Rugby and the 6 Nations countries to learn from their expertise and contacts / sponsors and other opportunities for raising money.

10. Communication and visibility to unions

It is the main responsibility of the President and Board to establish, maintain, monitor and initiate transparent and open communication channels with the unions.

During the General Meeting, less time should be spent on reporting and presentation. Information should be sent well before the meeting, so sufficient time can be spent on genuine and open discussion on relevant / urgent subjects.

Contact and understanding between the President / Board members and the unions should be intensified and improved by regular meetings.