

Minutes IMMAF board meeting

Date: 23rd June 2021

Time: 2pm GMT

Location: Online Microsoft Teams Meeting

Item No.	Item	Action
1.	<p>Roll Call</p> <p>Present: Wissam Abinader (WA), Bertrand Amoussou (BA), Denitza Batchvarova (DB), Kerrith Brown (KB), Vadim Finkelstein (VF), Han Jiuli (HJ), Tatiana Klimenko (TK), Tom Madsen (TM), Svetlana Odintsova (SO), Raymond Phillips (RP), George Sallfeldt (GS), Stewart Brain (SB).</p> <p>In Attendance: Densign White (DW), Gosha Malik (GM), Nick Davies (ND), Jas Sohal (JS), Alistair Pettitt (AP), Marc Goddard (MG)</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies / Absent</p> <p>Apology: Victor Frolov, August Wallen (AW), Han Jiuli</p> <p>Absentees: Iskander Karim (IK), Galimzhan Yessenov (GY),</p>	
3.	<p>Declaration of Interests</p> <p>KB - Greenhill</p>	
4.	<p>Presidents Opening remarks (KB)</p> <p>Covid</p> <p>Sad news – Greenhill sponsor and friend Jahangir Riaz passed away. The families have been contacted and condolences sent. A moment of silence observed for both.</p> <p>GAISF</p> <p>Communication following one year of none, was recieved via email. A meeting with DW & KB is set to discuss the application process for GAISF. We will then continue to review strategic plans.</p> <p>Youth Championships</p> <p>All going well with organisation for Turkey and Bulgaria.</p> <p>The Europeans in Russia</p>	

	<p>Katastan and Czech Republic going well. The European deadline will close on 5th July, however, may be extended due to concerns around funding, venues which are amongst the various issues for consideration.</p> <p>World Championships</p> <p>Negotiations continue regarding the 3rd installment. A meeting was held last week with Mr Khuman, the representative of the sponsors. Also KB met with Iskander Karim in Moscow to ensure we keep abreast of progress. Currently some areas are not open and are in the 'red' covid zone area. Concerns due to crowd participation and ensure the event takes place. No indication to move date. Negotiations with other countries continue, however challenging over video platforms.</p> <p>Russia Trip</p> <p>The Russia trip was good in terms of observing how the Russian Union have expanded under the leadership of president Radmir. KB attended an event in Kazan, where the national event is held, attended by over 7000 athletes. High level competition where some of our ex world champion athletes struggled. KB connected with various presidents from varying regions and also managed to connect in Moscow with the Vice President for the Ministry of Sport. Plus visited the UFC office. KB was impressed with what he saw and was a great PR exercise.</p> <p>LA 2028</p> <p>This has been discussed with the committee. Looking towards a demonstration sport in LA 2028. DB and LE have met with the LA 2028 board.</p> <p>National Federations</p> <p>GM keeping this in check. During the weekend of Saturday 19th June, 5 national federations held their national events for the selections for the Europeans and world championships. Mexico, Poland, Spain, Kazakhstan and Columbia were some on the same level as the Russian event. This demonstrates we are very active. Belgium personnel seems to be working well together. Africa and Caribbean are very receptive of which is an on-going process for development as they are keen to be part of the vision.</p> <p>IMMAF TV (OT platform in partnership with Sport Radar)</p> <p>We are building our own platform for live events. DW has been looking at the tendering processes. There were 3 companies involved. DG also involved.</p> <p>All other matters are on track. KB pleased with support and commitment from all. Looking forward to year end outcomes and Septembers' meeting.</p>	
5.	<p><i>Minutes of the previous meeting 17TH March 2021</i></p> <p>APPROVED: Minutes of 17th March 2021</p>	

	Proposed by WA and seconded RP.	
6.	<p>Actions from the previous meeting minutes (17th March 2021)</p> <p>Update on actions: -</p> <p>a) <i>Swedish Tax Authority court notice - ACTION: DW to be signatory and sign letter of authority to de-register IMMAF in Sweden.</i></p> <p>Update: - Waiting for confirmation closure of the Swedish bank account</p> <p>b) <i>Transgender policy - ON HOLD. ACTION: Pending ND circulating document with bullet points as to an on-going review following the points raised during the meeting.</i></p> <p>Update: Information below, item 8 - Governance Tracker by ND.</p> <p>c) <i>Finance report. ACTION: Prepare forecast for next meeting - JS</i></p> <p>Update: Forecast completed. Due to the current audit which has required time commitment from JS. The report was not sent in advance of today's meeting. Information below, item 9 – Finance Report by JS</p>	
7.	<p>CEO report June 2021 (DW) (Distributed to board and shared on-screen).</p> <p>a) IMMAF Governance Tracker</p> <p>Governance tracker is a live document and we are working hard to get through the outstanding items. A productive meeting was held with the Geoff Wilson consultancy, DW and ND. Geoff was pleased with the progress made. (see ND's update in point 8).</p> <p>b) WADA – signatory application</p> <p>WADA situation has improved and we are making good progress. We have had the approval letter from the expert signatory group, which was part of the process where potentially things could have not worked well for us. We have passed through this process.</p> <p>At the final phase of the process in which WADA are required to send us the compliance questionnaire. This will go to Michelle Verroken directly. We have offered additional support to her to complete this work in a timely way. Potentially we are only a few weeks away from us becoming signatories.</p> <p>The compliance document is an opportunity for us to demonstrate how we meet the 2020 WADA code. There has been many changes in the new code. If there are areas where we are not strong or do not meet compliance, we will be given time to rectify. We will not be refused signatory status on a few deficiencies identified. However we are confident we tick all the boxes based on information previously</p>	

	<p>submitted e.g. anti-doping, risk assessments, schedule of events, they are aware of the numbers of test carried out going back since 2015. Therefore in good shape.</p> <p>DW has been in communication with WADA lawyers in Switzerland and information has been exchanged between WADA and IMMAF. IMMAF lawyers state, 'given the new information they think it would be wise to stop the case'. DW & KB had discussed and concluded that we should park the case and not to abandon, in case events do not sway our way.</p> <p>APPROVED: Agreed by board to stay the case.</p> <p>ACTION: DW to report to lawyers on decision of the board.</p> <p>c) GAISF update</p> <p>(See update above point 2 Presidents opening remarks from KB)</p> <p>d) PwC Audit of accounts 2020</p> <p>It's taken several days to complete the job which is a good achievement. Good work and good experience from that of the past.</p> <p>(see full 'CEO report June 2021' – dated 16th June)</p> <p>e) EVENTS</p> <p>(see Alastair's update, section 10 below)</p> <p>f) IT Developments</p> <p>We are in the process of developing another storage system with another organisation, 'Sportrec'. There was a bidding process, they came out the most appropriate. IC is overseeing alongside DG. The storage system will bring our information in-house instead of storage on DG's system.</p> <p>Information going back from 2015 and new content will require uploading therefore we will require additional personnel as it's a large task.</p> <p>There will be practical use, for example, Andrew may want footage to help with his coaching development work and Mark may require content for his referee and judging work. The media and the press will have access, therefore very useful for the marketing and communication team.</p> <p>(see full 'CEO report June 2021' – dated 16th June)</p> <p>g) Marketing, Communication</p> <p>During the 'thought leadership' event we had some interesting contributors such as members from the UFC and various experts in different fields e.g. from track and field one of most famous marathon runners (Paula Radcliffe) also talking on the</p>	<p>DW</p>
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	<p>topic and the doctor from the international boxing federation as well as our own medical commissioned doctor such as Dr Randa Bascharon and Dr.David Wang.</p> <p>We are receiving regular news articles for ‘Inside The Games’, publication, the most read media outlet within the Olympic family, giving us good exposure.</p> <p>We were disappointed to hear that GAMMA had signed a contract with ‘Inside The Games’. When IMMAF signed up, it was thought IMMAF had exclusivity. However there are no activities currently from GAMMA.</p> <p><i>(see full ‘CEO report June 2021’ – dated 16th June)</i></p> <p>h) Membership</p> <p>Canada - Issues surrounding Canada, the UFC are keen to see then thrive and develop. A general meeting to be held at the end of June 2021. A good step forward.</p> <p>Arbitration case – the full report has now been circulated today.</p> <p>Netherlands – there are on-going issues with the Netherlands. The board may be asked to approve a new membership. The individual membership has expired or will shortly. The group have split and you may be asked to approve the group who have split away from the original.</p> <p>Ukraine and Greece – on-going issues persist.</p> <p>Quite a lot of time is consumed with challenging membership matters.</p> <p><i>(see full ‘CEO report June 2021’ – dated 16th June)</i></p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Governance Tracker Update (ND). <i>(Circulated – ‘ND Board Update to IMMAF Baord – June 2021’)</i></p> <p>Committees and Commissions update: -</p> <p>a) The IMMAF Coaching Commission</p> <p>Internal discussion by the coaching commission and youth development commission showed that a minimum recovery time of 15 minutes was the most favoured and this was supported by the IMMAF Medical Commission.</p> <p>APPROVED: Board agree regarding above policy.</p> <p>b) Women’s Commission request support to make safeguarding and inclusion policies a priority issue for national federations</p> <p>ND request to endorse on best practice policy for inclusion which is important to the women’s commission and want to encourage gender equality at national federation level.</p>	

	<p>APPROVED: Board agree regarding endorsement from ND as stated above.</p> <p>c) Transgender Policy and next steps</p> <p>The Board is requested to approve the new group and for it to conduct quarterly meetings commencing in July 2021. Amongst agenda points to cover are female to male transitioning, possibilities for research in MMA and cross sport, and ongoing review of existing policies (IOC and others).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Sallfeldt (Chair) • Densign White (CEO) • Nick Davies (CSO) • Will Lexton-Jones (Disciplinary) • Hayzia Bellem (Women's) • Julia Dorny (Athletes) • Rebecca Khoury (Ethics) • Randa Bascharon (Medical) • Hannah Constantine (legal) • Martin Dahl (MMA transgender athlete) • Tracy Sundlun (transgender sport expert). • Declan Ritchie (liaison) • Knowledge Experts (IMMAF and external) <p>APPROVED: Agreed new group as per above.</p> <p>d) USA and France Federations</p> <p>Discussions are ongoing with US representatives to bring the MMA community together. Feedback in July and September , business model is sound the whole community is behind the project potentially at least 5 states. We will have representation at the ABC congress;</p> <p>Priority is to ensure that US athletes must not be penalised and we already have around a 100 US delegation entered for the Youth world championships in Sofia.</p> <p>NOTE: ABC convention: KB & DW will not be travelling to the USA due to travel restriction imposed by the USA.</p>	
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	<p>France situation a support group is working on a pro bono basis, Covid has delayed progress but there should be pick up in September. Priority is to talk with FFB in the next few days to ensure the MMA com is well represented by the MMA community.</p> <p>We are trying strategically to get IMMAF connected into regional multi sport games.</p> <p>TM confirms everything is moving in the right direction for the US project.</p> <p><i>(see 'ND Board Update to IMMAF Baord – June 2021')</i></p> <p>e) IMMAF Governance Report Tracker, 15th June 2021</p> <p>The 35 governance items allocated under one year ago is almost complete. ND thanked everyone for their collaboration.</p> <p>Outstanding items are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance issue • IMMAF Staff Handbook to be finalised <p>Closing statements</p> <p>The focus will now go on the strategic plan. The tracker will be used to ensure we keep on track.</p> <p>ND opinion is that we are in the top tier of federations and IMMAF is being used as a model.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p><i>Finance report (JS).</i></p> <p><i>(Finance report 1st Jan 2021 to May 2021 shared on-screen)</i></p> <p>a) Turnover: -</p> <p>Other miscellaneous income - compensation from WMMAA merger and the French project. The only exceptional figure is \$26,546 which is income from the polynesian federation.</p> <p>Hosting rights income – funds have come in over the past 3 months from Kazakhstan.</p> <p>Championships Fees – are now been raised against the youth tournament. \$11, 000 received by May, and a total of \$140 in June.</p> <p>b) Expenditure: -</p> <p>Exception expenditure include:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events – minimal, included some TV and broadcasting, championship consumables such as medals coming to a figure of \$13,604. Also advance payments for accommodation for the Youth Championship paid out. • Advertising – we had a spike in PR cost, specific to 'Inside the Games' magazine. This figure will increase with more activity. • IT cost – during March • Equipment costs - \$30,291 is for 2 cages (came to 25, 000 Euro's). May be a case to include this as a fixed asset and capital expense, which will provide a better gross profit figure for the period. But depends if we end up keeping them, renting them or even selling will decide on how this expense is treated. <p>c) Finance cost:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank charges - remain minimal and consistent • NET (LOSS)/PROFIT – We were seeing net losses from January, increasing to \$40,474 in April due to the purchase of the cages. In May we see profit due to events, Polynesian cost and hosting. The profit figure should increase as events open up. <p>d) Cash Flow Forecast Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Balance - \$2,020,165.10 • Cash Flow In – \$738,531.10 • Cash Flow Out – \$1,134,175.89 • Closing Balance - \$1,624,520.32 <p>Future forecast will see an increase in cash flow in.</p> <p>e) Audit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are in the final stages of the audit with PWC for year ending December 2020. Waiting on a couple of sign off's. They were very happy with the information provided and the accounts in general. We are on target to complete in a few days. <p>JS is expecting and therefore will not be on the next meeting. JS was thanked for her hard work and congratulated with regards to her pregnancy.</p>	
10.	<p>Events & Regulatory Affairs (AP/MG).</p> <p>MG update: -</p>	

	<p>a) On-line training platform - Regulatory and officials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have committed to film and capture regulatory training for both referee's and judges. This is available on a 2nd and 3rd tier. Due to being a federation when we commit to train officials nothing can ever supersede or be first hand as live training, for obvious reasons. For example, we can fully access the individual both from a practical and content point of view. However this has become essential during the past year and a half and also assist with remote hard to reach member federations. • GM and MG are working on a news bulletin, where all can use to move forward and let their member federation aware there are alternative resources available to bring training to an on-line platform. • The link to the training also stresses where we stand as a federation in terms of ability to certify, however can do on an educational front and from a practical resource with referee's, where we need to see people live and working. They would be required to substantiate their body of work, which will be the secondary action. During the intermediary period/stop gap we can deliver the theoretical content. It's a thorough resource and important for us to get the message across. The full package and hyper-links will be released by GM. <p>b) Development of the electronic scoring system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UFC's electronic scoring system, introduced last year and on trial working very successfully mainly in Las Vegas and used to great effect in the fight Island events. • The creators have been approached to develop our own scoring system, with the initial brief for a scoring system only, however the judges in our respective fighting areas such as at the world championships, of which are busy floors e.g. we have hundreds of athletes, up to 100 matches in one day in 4 separate areas, to be able to collate that information electronically is attractive. • The stand alone scoring system developed expanded into other area and following consultation with partners a few of us began to work on it together. The platform is ready to go. • The plan and intention was to have a trial run at the upcoming Youth Tournament in Bulgaria. Upon consideration the youth format does not have cage side judges e.g. it's a reduced format. Now looking to trial in Europeans in Russia. • The full support of the UFC has been second to none with the co-operation of my next match. I'm excited to have this develop 'live'. It will make for ease of administration and during competition not only with the population of the matches and brackets but also with the incorporation of 	
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	<p>the scoring system and the officials. We will have first hand guided tour in Russia which will be exciting to see.</p> <p>c) IMMAF Certified Fighting Area (Released last year)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The uptake wasn't quite as was expected. The purpose of the resource educational video's is to give a full explanation and breakdown, which also was accompanied with a detailed specification sheet and pricing structure. Action from members - sign post federations and members towards this resource. Be-spoke requirements are also fully available. Any further queries GM & MG are available as the main point of contact. All information can be found on the web-site. <p>d) USA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The situation we find ourselves in with regards to ND earlier brief on this has now been handed over to the respective teams. I will continue to play my part. The meetings I have had bringing people together is part of my plan and is circulating around the right people. I'm happy to take part in the future if required and always available to all. <p>MG thanked for his contribution and good work.</p> <p>AP update:</p> <p><i>(2022 calendar of events circulated pre meeting and shared on-screen during meeting)</i></p> <p>e) Event Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bulgaria – Youth Championships Russia – European Junior and Senior Championships Czech Republic – Senior and Junior Grand Prixn Kazakhstan - Junior and Senior World Championship <p>f) Effects of Covid on Events - The usual planning process has been challenging for all involved e.g. Federations being able to send team members to events due to travel restrictions, additional visa requirements, Covid testing has added logistical and financial pressure to our federations.</p> <p>g) For the Youth World Championships - some teams have opted not to attend for obvious reasons. South Africa pulled out because Bulgaria added them to the their banned country list.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 300 athletes are registered to attend the Youth World Championships. The numbers are higher than the championships held in Rome 2019. <p>h) Staffing – this has remained pragmatic, however due to having a wide pool of contractors and skilled staff to pull from globally we have mitigated risk with regards to human resources required to stage the event.</p> <p>i) 2022 Calender – being worked on. Some of the events have been re-purposed from 2020. The logic behind the planning of these events is to have all the juniors and senior continentals complete before the end of June. This allows time to host the world championships and the team world championships within the same calendar year with enough space between the last continental and world championships.</p> <p>j) Youth events – this is the key strategic focus, where possible we will look to add youth continental to the schedule. Could be the same location and time schedule, perhaps the same time as the junior and senior events or could be stand alone.</p> <p>k) The Youth World Championships is planned for 2022 in Las Vegas, to coincide with the UFC fight week programme. There has been a request from the UFC and stakeholders to keep the event confidential until further notice/while details are being finalised.</p> <p>l) We have an event each month during 2022. There may also be other events to add as member federations start to indicate they would like to host grand prix style events as the Czech Republic have done this year. This demonstrates IMMAF and its membership is growing at an excellerated rate, not only for competing but for staging events.</p> <p>m) Risk Assessment – is routine within the events department. With the increase in events, human resource planning is critical to the expectation and standards of our members. AP states this is the biggest risk issue for event scheduling. AP working on a human resource proposal to be passed to CEO DW for consideration.</p> <p>n) Staff liaison for host city billing commission – chaired by KB and TK from IMMAF board. The commission have begun drafting a framework for federations and other entities to bid for IMMAF championship event. The overall aim is to have events from 2023 to go through a bidding process. Attracting bids for the flagship events is a high priority and the most realistic way for IMMAF to quickly build revenue streams, by owning funds through hosting rights, hence IMMAF would be able to invest in sustainable developments throughout the organisation.</p>	
11.	Membership general and new applications (GM):	

	<p>Not much activity on the federation side.</p> <p>a) United Arab Emirates very strong application coming from an applicant with a Jujitsu back ground. They have a good understanding of governance. Hopefully they will join us in the Youth Championships and meet the rest of the team. The board already voted and accepted membership.</p> <p>APPROVED: Observational Membership</p> <p>b) Pending application process – information pending from Croatia, Macedonia and Monte Negro. We are taking baby steps, however confident we will secure membership. Governments are well aware of the importance of MMA sports which works to our benefit.</p> <p>c) Final stage applications – Madagascar and Netherlands, hopefully should be able to present to the next board meeting in September.</p> <p>d) Africa – is very active in membership. Recently worked with Raymond Phillips who is actively searching for new members and has reported good news from Zimbabwe.</p> <p>e) Membership invoices have been sent, with payment due date of 22nd June. Some countries paid immediately.</p> <p>f) Governance – more and more countries are understanding the importance. Estonia struggled and had an emergency to get the message across to the Olympic committee on the importance to recognise MMA and the special activities around youth.</p> <p>g) Lebanon – received final recognition as MMA.</p> <p>h) Mauritius – it will be days, waiting to hear if they got recognition.</p> <p>i) Greece – done quite a lot of work in terms of conflict . The ministry of sport has a special relationship with IMMAF.</p> <p>j) Zambia – was built from the bottom and working their way up.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Risk register (DW)</p> <p><i>(Distributed pre-meeting & displayed on-screen during meeting)</i></p> <p>One change to the audited accounts since distribution to the board.</p> <p>Index number 15 – Late audited accounts: High legal charges arrived recently. No funds in reserve for this. However reliant on us putting in hosting rights fees from Kazakhstan and elsewhere. (Amber)</p> <p>Board members asked to indicate if there are any other risk factors to add or should the ratings change. Members asked to contact DW should anything arise.</p>	

	<p>Index number 10 – Actions against IMMAF - Safeguarding: DW mentioned one sport was fined £10 million in a safeguarding case where female athletes have been abused by coaches. Reports are becoming quite regular and happening across different sports and something we need to make our federation aware of. But we also need to protect ourselves as an international federation. (Red)</p> <p>There's work going on with the safeguarding policy which needs to be approved and developed on a continual basis.</p>	
<p>13.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>KB</p> <p>a) Wissam to be sent appraisal documents for DW to be reviewed and added to September's meeting agenda.</p> <p>b) GAISF – We should have the strategy mapped out by next meeting subject to us obtaining our signature from WADA. KB met with George yesterday to talk about the strategy of key personnel such as NL, SF, MV and TB. We looked at various items including political support in trying to get our recognition process. The core sports are monitoring virtually everything that we do, observing social media, discussion with 3rd parties who query the source of our funding and how aggressive we are on social media. Our achievement is having an affect on some core sports. This is a testament to DW and staff.</p> <p>We are looking to be a demonstration sport for LA 2028.</p> <p>Board members should look at their contacts and see who can assist us in moving forward.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MEETING END</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p><i>Date of next meeting:</i></p> <p>Date: September 8th 2021. Time: TBC</p> <p>Location: Prague. Venue: TBC</p> <p>Closing remarks from KB</p> <p>Looking to see all in person. Stay safe. On a personal note, I urge all to consider the vaccine which could become part of our travel protocol.</p>	