

## Minutes IMMAF board meeting

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

Time: 2pm GMT

Location: Online Microsoft Teams Meeting.

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Roll Call</b>            Present: Wissam Abinader (WA), Bertrand Amoussou (BA), Denitza Batchvarova (DB), Kerrith Brown (KB), Vadim Finkelstein (VF), Viktor Frolov (VF), Han Jiuli (HJ), Tatiana Klimenko (TK), Tom Madsen (TM), Svetlana Odintsova (SO), Raymond Phillips (RP), George Sallfeldt (GS),</p> <p>In Attendance: Densign White (DW), Gosha Malik (GM), Nick Davies (ND), Isobel Carnwath (IC) Jas Sohal (JS).</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Apologies / Absent</b></p> <p>Apology: Victor Frolov</p> <p>Absentees: Stewart Brain (SB), Iskander Karim (IK), August Wallen (AW), Galimzhan Yessenov (GY).</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Declaration of Interests</b></p> <p>KB - Greenhill</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Presidents Opening remarks (KB)</b></p> <p>Welcome to all attendees and thank you for well wishes for his recovery from Covid</p> <p><b>Championships</b></p> <p>Currently finalising 30th July – 1st August 2021 Youth World Championship. Recommendation to be held in Istanbul during Q.2.</p> <p>World Cup Open to be held in Czech Republic 13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021. On-going negotiations. However KB making clear, IMMAF will not cover any cost as not planned. The funding is in the region of 120K Euros.</p> <p>Africa, Asia, Oceania and Pan-am will be postponed for 2022. Weekly meetings are currently being held with member federations each week on Wednesdays.</p>	

	<p>Mexico have a newly elected president.</p> <p><b>APPROVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Host 4 revised events within current budget for Q3 &amp; Q4 2021</li> <li>2) Exchange of contracts to move events from 2021 into 2022</li> </ol> <p>Note: All revised events remain unless any rule changes to covid protocols which govern further changes. There currently is no plan B.</p> <p><b>Funds</b></p> <p>Kazakhstan World championship Hosting Fees of \$100K received 10 days ago, \$150 are due this week. There are current challenges in keeping track of payments due which is also a concern with regards to being a risk. \$500K is due April.</p> <p>KB in regular on-going communication and pointed out the events team are working well. Currently no deep concerns to be aware of.</p> <p><b>UFC</b></p> <p>France - having issues as a federation. KB in negotiations to solve issues.</p> <p>Canada – now has a new pathway</p> <p>Ireland – Still working to gain recognition through IMAC</p> <p>KB has met with National Federations from Canada, Denmark, New Zealand, Russia, Australia and Panama on a one-to-one basis to allow the opportunity to highlight concerns.</p> <p><b>LA28</b></p> <p>Lobbying for MMA to be a demonstration sport.</p> <p><b>Anti-doping</b></p> <p>On-going</p> <p><b>Thought Leadership Program</b></p> <p>Coming onto our webinar in April. Paula Radcliffe involved in talking about weight management.</p> <p>Sponsorship - On-going talks with Greenhill.</p> <p><b>Board Information Packs</b></p> <p>This will be accessible on ‘Teams’. All files available in one place.</p>	
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5.	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b></p> <p><b>APPROVED:</b> Minutes of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020</p> <p>Proposed by WA and seconded RP</p>	
6.	<p><b>Actions from the previous meeting minutes</b></p> <p>Swedish Tax Authority court notice.</p> <p><b>APPROVED:</b> DW to be signatory and sign letter of authority to de-register IMMAF in Sweden.</p>	DW
7.	<p><b>CEO report (DW)</b></p> <p>Distributed to board.</p> <p>The following 3 reports, shared on-screen during the meeting: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) CEO Report March 2021</li> <li>2) 2021 IMMAF Technology - Activity Report</li> <li>3) Events Department Activity Report Q1 2021 (distributed with these minutes)</li> </ol> <p><b>WADA – update following CEO March report.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) WADA pleased with information submitted and stated, ‘very good’. 9 out of 11 federations were good. Malaysia fed details submitted to make up the 10 feds requested.</li> </ol> <p><b>GAISF - update</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) New general secretary covering on an interim basis.</li> <li>2) DW has communicated for an update on the observer application and when this will be considered next. DW believes GAISF council meet at least twice a year during or around Sportaccord convention which is now cancelled the May date, and the next possibility will be November during the International federations forum in Lausanne.</li> </ol>	
8.	<p><b>Governance Tracker Update (ND)</b></p> <p><b>IMMAF Governance Report Tracker 3rd March 2021 shared during meeting and presented by ND.</b></p> <p>The tracker is colour coded. Green equals completed items. Good progress has been made as evidenced in the report.</p>	

	<p>A lot of key policies are completed. In total 22 actions to-date.</p> <p>10 actions to be completed before the end of the year, indicated in red and amber boxes in the report. All on course to meet deadlines.</p> <p>There are 3 priorities: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) managing the process of managing the tracker, currently ND and DW doing, looking at an intern volunteer program to assist with managing the governance and strategic plan</li> <li>b) HR polices, issues around transparency and insurance liability</li> <li>c) Board information pack</li> </ul> <p><b>Summary of Transgender Policy document shared to meeting</b></p> <p>Final summary policy distributed to board.</p> <p>Report conclusion: - transgender athletes cannot compete in IMMAF sports due to injury that can be caused as evidenced in the World Rugby scientific Data report.</p> <p>The consultation will continue with federations, the policy will be issued as a guideline to federations and made clear its for athletes safety and welfare.</p> <p>A PR campaign will be initiated. Making it known that the transgender community will be welcomed to take part in coaching and other roles available.</p> <p>World boxing, athletics and rugby federations are quite happy to welcome us on future research projects. This would work in our favour.</p> <p>Discussions preventing approval of policy during meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The complex issues should be explored</li> <li>b) Some board members require time to review the policy and implications on IMMAF</li> <li>c) Setting up a regular review panel to feed information from other bodies</li> <li>d) A policy is required before competitions start. Norway have flagged an issue</li> </ul> <p>Transgender policy - ON HOLD.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Pending ND circulating document with bullet points as to an on-going review following the points raised during the meeting.</p>	<p><b>ND</b></p>
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	<p><b>Board information pack</b></p> <p>As part of the governance review is to have clear lines regarding what is expected from board members, for example, rights, obligations and what they are, what does it mean to be a director of the board.</p> <p>The document is a useful information pack of which will be issued to new board members when signed up and also acts as a ‘code of conduct’, in terms of a distinction between operations of executives (CEO and the staff) and the elected board whose job it is to supervise, set strategies and represent members.</p> <p>The communication section in the pack ND states is very important for all to understand. For example going forward all board members should be kept well informed and should express expectations.</p> <p>In relation to the communications/PR plan. All board members should take responsibility and will be given significant support with any public announcements. For example the ‘transgender policy’.</p> <p>Highlights of important elements included: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) accept the majority vote of the boards’ decisions</li> <li>b) helping the CEO and president getting things done e.g. if there is a request for action, respond within 48 hours</li> <li>c) The pack forms part of the Geoff Wilson evaluation, for example, it’s like a 360 system of making sure that if you are on the board that you take responsibility in being active for being part of meetings and activities. Looking to have a policy whereby if you do not attend for example 3 consecutive meetings, it triggers an investigation by the IMMAF president. Also looking at a performance review to be held with the president.</li> </ul>	
9.	<p><b>Finance report (DW).</b></p> <p><b>a) Management accounts Quarter.1 2021 (JS)</b></p> <p>Review of sponsorship funds for Jan, Feb 2021. Split into sponsorship and other operating income. Sponsorship is the \$1m portioned throughout the year.</p> <p>The other operating income is sponsorship from UFC for WMMAA/French project of \$200k divided by 12 equals \$16k.</p> <p>Additional income for a coaching course was received in January of \$1,332.</p>	

	<p>Contractor expenses are regular contracted cost. E.g. IT, branding, staff e.g. GM who is a contractor.</p> <p>Expenditure e.g. depreciation of fixtures and fitting, office furniture, training cost, membership, advertising, intangible assets (web-site cost spent in 2021).</p> <p>One off legal fee incurred of \$6,416.</p> <p>The balance of IMMAF is healthy.</p> <p>Operating loss in January of £21,984 and February of £24,015.</p> <p>Cash Flow chart (shared during meeting)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Opening Balance £1,514,379</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Cash Flow in £205,524</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Cash Flow in £330,562</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Closing balance £1,389,342</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Prepare forecast for next meeting</p>	<b>JS</b>
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>MarComs Update (IC)</b></p> <p><b>IMMAF communications Plan brief</b> (displayed on-screen during meeting): -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Media coverage was up by 9% on 2019 despite cancellation of events, IMMAF athletes moving to pro. IMMAF awards attracted increased attention also medallists/veterans gained credibility.</li> <li>b) Coming into 2021 with a new enhanced budget of £120K and £80K</li> <li>c) New expanded Comms team with Nick managing the web-site news, new content writers and PR assistant</li> <li>d) Targeting 3 types of audiences: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Corporate – Olympic world influences and decision makers; governments and sports authorities</li> <li>b. Community – IMMAF membership, MMA participants</li> <li>c. Consumer – MMA &amp; sports fans</li> </ul> </li> <li>e) Change flows includes: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. increasing awareness</li> <li>b. changing perception</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<p>c. increase audience growth</p> <p>Actions and tactics for increasing awareness; perception/appeal was highlighted from report information.</p> <p>With regards to engaging federations, tutorials are available, use of TikTok. Bahrain has a PR person and doing quite well with engagement. Looking for other federations to engage PR personnel.</p> <p>Small federations have a high turnover and rely mostly on volunteers, therefore difficult to lift off.</p> <p>Content writers will assist in awareness and writing different stories about the federations for the website. There has been a story about Australia, reports on the Brisbane News and coverage on a New Zealand website. With a PR assistant other stories can be targeted. There is interest with national teams, the nations and the athletes, there is plenty of scope to pitch especially around the world championships.</p> <p>KB stated we are looking to engage at every level from presidents, main representatives to supply us with content including work with the community. We should encourage staff to participate.</p> <p>KB - There is a clear strategy that we should push. There are good federations who supply good information however timing and priorities should be considered.</p>	
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Membership general and new applications (GM):</b></p> <p>Very strong interest in IMMAF membership coming from all continents. Last year it was mainly South America where we almost completed the continent and now Caribbean countries are onboard. Strong interest from the African continent, the applications are coming in, there are good skilled boards set up, good governance, the majority have female representative on the board, they are working together which is a positive move.</p> <p><b>a) Senegal</b></p> <p>President Pape Demba priority back in 2019 was engagement in private events, however, has submitted a good application as keen to get onboard. He's met with KB and DW to propose membership and what they are keen to do. They are concentrating on development.</p> <p>GM request for Observational membership for Senegal. They are already talking with the government, therefore ahead.</p> <p><b>APPROVED: Observational Membership</b></p> <p><b>b) Angola – President Armando Diogo.</b></p>	

	<p>They have a sports minister recognition and looking forward to IMMAF development. The president has taken part in EFC Africa.</p> <p><b>APPROVED:</b> Observation Membership</p> <p><b>c) Sierra Leone</b></p> <p>Quite small organisation. Looking to development and update fighting skills. They hold a yearly licence from the sports authority. Observational membership is perfect for them.</p> <p><b>APPROVED:</b> Observational Membership</p> <p><b>d) Cote d Ivoire</b></p> <p>Quite small. Have a strong understanding of good governance, application was well presented.</p> <p><b>APPROVED:</b> Observational Membership</p> <p><b>e) Malta</b></p> <p>Malta showed interest in 2016 and was awarded an observational membership for 6 months. There was a development programme which did not pick up despite GM's communication throughout the programme.</p> <p>President Karl Mifsud is interested in coaching progression in youth development and taking part in championships.</p> <p>There are 3 main influential clubs which are working together.</p> <p><b>APPROVED:</b> Observational Membership</p> <p><b>f) St Lucia and Guyana</b></p> <p>Both are outstanding. They joined the coaching programme and are vibrant and working together. Good communication with IMMAF, currently meeting monthly.</p> <p><b>APPROVED:</b> Observational Membership</p> <p>KB meets with federation presidents which works really well.</p> <p>Activity reports are due from federations by the end of March. Good information is being filtered.</p> <p>Anti-doping seminars were launched this month. Federations have appointed officers. Plus the Panama's president managed to organise seminars for Spanish speaking countries from central Americas to be held on 28<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>DW – As new members join, GASF will be updated.</p>	
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<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Risk register (DW).</b></p> <p>Last update was just over a week ago. Members should make aware to DW of any changes they feel are necessary.</p> <p><b>Index number 1 - UFC funding:</b> Biggest risk and has now changed to yellow, although funds for 2021 and 2022 have been received.</p> <p><b>Index number 2 – Income diversification:</b> Changed to yellow. Covid has impacted our ability to engage in physical activities. Looking to pick up the pace fully by 2022.</p> <p><b>Index number 3 – GASF recognition application fails:</b> No further forward. From a strategic point of view we are waiting for the outcome of WADA. If we become signatories’, it will put additional pressure on GASF. (RED)</p> <p><b>Index number 4 – Late payment by core funders:</b> Can impact on IMMAF finances. We will see the deficit each month. We need to be careful not to use next years’ funds. There is a reliance on funding from Kazakhstan2112  (Yellow)</p> <p><b>Index number 5 – WADA court case:</b> On hold. Can go forward on 31<sup>st</sup> May if we choose to do so. (Yellow)</p> <p><b>Index number 6 – Failure to get BAN on MMA in France:</b> No longer a risk. Green</p> <p><b>Index number 7 – IT interruption of operations:</b> On-going. (Yellow)</p> <p><b>Index number 8 – Office move:</b> Looking at office space in Switzerland. Should have an update by next meeting. (Yellow)</p> <p><b>Index number 9 – GDPR:</b> We have a policy in place which can be found on the website. (Yellow)</p> <p><b>Index number 10 – Actions against IMMAF - Safeguarding:</b> Currently reviewing the policies, especially as we look at the Youth World Championships. Looking to keep all athletes in a bubble in the same accommodation. (Yellow)</p> <p><b>Index number 11 – Insurance for incidents:</b> No cover at present. Nick communicating with a contact and researching a suitable insurer. (Red), however the risk is minimal due to none activity because of COVID.</p> <p><b>Index number 12 – Key staff members leaving:</b> We are well covered and little effect, however ensuring documents are not stored on staff personal computers. (Yellow)</p>	
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	<p><b>Index number 15 – Late audited accounts:</b> High legal charges arrived recently. No funds in reserve for this. However reliant on us putting in hosting rights fees from Kazakhstan and elsewhere. (Red)</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>	
13.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p><b>a) Remuneration Panel</b></p> <p>KB request a panel for internal purposes for staff and board appraisal. KB proposed SB, SO, WAN to sit on panel.</p> <p><b>b) India UFC Partnership</b></p> <p>KB Due for announced is the opening of UFC India. Publicity around this is currently being looked at. We need to take care to ensure correct approvals, communication and timing is adhered to.</p> <p><b>c) BBC live Coverage of Cage Fighting</b></p> <p>DW We have had a request to support the BBC who have an agreement to broadcast live coverage of Bellator MMA event. However there are parliamentary discussions and questions raised about the BBC putting on Cage Fighting. To further support concerns the Department of Culture, Media and Sport committee (DCMS) who recognise sports across the board, have concerns around the issues raised regarding concussion in combat sport and the impact on children.</p> <p>DW feels the discussion should be about the recognition of the MMA and recognition of the sport which is practiced 365 days of the year.</p> <p>A meeting will be held tomorrow with the BBC, sharing supporting information for the event to go ahead and also promote MMA. We will discuss support for MMA and how regulation of combat sport can protect participants .</p> <p><b>D) Competition - Dry Blood Testing</b></p> <p>KB Michelle proposing and looking into cost of dry blood testing. This would put us into a gold standard of operating compared to other international federations.</p> <p><b>Final note from KB:</b></p> <p>Thanked all for their time and efforts.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MEETING ENDS</b></p>	
14.	<p><b>Date of next meeting:</b></p> <p>Wednesday 23rd June 2021</p>	



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