

3

CHAPTER

THE NATIONAL ATHLETIC FEDERATION

PART ONE
*ROLES AND
OBLIGATIONS*

PART TWO
*CONSTITUTION AND
ORGANISATION*

PART THREE
OFFICE HOLDERS



- The Domestic Responsibilities of a National Athletic Federation
- The International Obligations and Expectations of a National Athletic Federation

PART ONE ROLES AND OBLIGATIONS

National athletic federations which are Members of the IAAF are the franchise holders of a thriving multinational business – a privilege which brings status and many types of support but which also includes important responsibilities and duties.

Domestically, a federation is responsible – by its legal status, its recognition from the IAAF and its own constitution – for sanctioning, promoting, expanding, and strengthening athletics in its country. Ultimately, the reason for a federation's existence is to serve the athletes of its country. As there can be only one national governing body for the sport, no organised activity related to athletics should be outside the federation's awareness and control.

The international obligations of an IAAF Member Federation include basic constitutional obligations which are conditions of membership as well as a long list of special obligations or expectations which are designed to ensure the fair and uniform operation of athletics in all parts of the world. There are also a number of other expectations which, whilst not strictly specified in the IAAF Constitution, should be regarded as such.

A

Basic Domestic Responsibilities

1 Governing

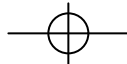
- To be responsible for all aspects of athletics within the boundaries of the country.
- To promote the sport of athletics and the development of an athletics culture.
- To provide an appropriate administrative structure and services for the functioning of the federation and the sport.
- To maintain an official list of national records (Senior/Junior/Indoor).
- To undertake proceedings against athletes who may have rendered themselves ineligible and to impose sanctions where appropriate.
- To undertake proceedings against any individual or group who may have violated the rules of the federation and to impose sanctions where appropriate.

2 Resources

- To obtain and manage the financial, human and technical resources required for the functioning of the federation and the sport.
- To set budgets and maintain financial records.
- To control expenses.
- To arrange for an audit of financial statements.

3 Communications

- To maintain good relations with and provide appropriate information to athletes and other members of the federation.



- To maintain good relations with governmental, sporting, business and other organisations which have an interest in athletics or may be of assistance to the federation.
- To maintain good relations with the media in order to ensure positive promotion of the sport and the federation's activities.

4 Competitions

- To promote the development of a programme of competitions – which includes staging national championships – to meet the needs of its athletes.
- To choose and organise teams to participate in international competitions.
- To maintain a national calendar of athletic events.
- To provide official sanctions for competitions including those organised by other agencies.

5 Facilities and equipment

- To ensure that competition venues and equipment meet technical specifications mandated by national and international rules.
- To guarantee the accuracy of road courses used for running and walking races.

6 Officials and coaches

- To oversee the recruitment, training, certification, deployment and control of the athletics officials and coaches required to carry out the programmes and activities of the sport.

7 Medical and scientific support

- To plan and co-ordinate the delivery of sports medicine services to athletes.
- To plan and co-ordinate the delivery of scientific services to coaches and athletes.
- To ensure that a doping control programme is implemented in accordance with the rules of the IAAF and relevant national regulations.

B International Obligations and Expectations

1 Basic constitutional obligations of an IAAF Member Federation

- To maintain a constitution and competition rules which are acceptable to the IAAF.
- To pay an annual fee to the IAAF of US\$ 200, in advance, by 1 January each year.
- To submit an annual report to both the IAAF and the relevant Area Association by 31 March each year.

“GOOD STANDING”

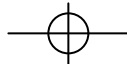
Member Federations which have met the basic constitutional obligations for a given year are considered to be in *good standing* with the IAAF. As such they are eligible to:

- Send representatives with voting rights to the IAAF Congress.
- Participate in the IAAF's various competitions and programmes.
- Receive the grants and other forms of support from the IAAF for which they are eligible.

Member Federations which are not in good standing are technically ineligible for these and other benefits of IAAF membership, and for the benefits of membership in their Area Association.

2 Special constitutional obligations and expectations of an IAAF Member Federation

- To sanction international meetings which take place in its country. (Rule 12.2)
- To guarantee the eligibility of athletes from its country and ensure the eligibility of foreign athletes who compete in its country. (Rule 12.4)
- To approve foreign scholarships accepted by athletes from its country. (Rule 12.8)
- To strictly control all financial transactions related to expenses paid to its athletes taking part in international competitions. (Rule 14.3)
- To oversee subventions paid to athletes. (Rule 16)
- To establish rules for Athletic Funds and to register them with the IAAF General Secretary. (Rule 17)
- To ensure that a clause allowing the review of advertising contracts entered by athletes or clubs is included in its constitution. (Rule 18.8)
- To submit to the IAAF details of sponsorship arrangements by the national team. (Rule 18.19)
- To maintain a register of approved club sponsorships. (Rule 18.19)
- To ensure that its constitution includes specific clauses covering contracts for Athletes'



Representatives. (Rule 19)

- To ensure that its constitution includes specific clauses covering submission of disputes to Arbitration. (Rule 21)
- To undertake disciplinary proceedings against athletes who may have rendered themselves ineligible and to impose sanctions where appropriate. (Rule 54)
- To ensure that its constitution includes specific clauses covering doping control and reporting of doping control activities to the IAAF. (Rule 57.1)
- To conduct doping control tests on athletes returning from a period of ineligibility. (Rule 57.4)
- To inform the IAAF General Secretary of any positive results from doping controls and to recognise positive results reported by other Member Federations, the IAAF and other organisations recognised by the IAAF. (Rule 61)
- To approve competition clothing for all international competitions. (Rule 139.1)
- To collect and submit to the IAAF the information required for the approval of any world record set in its country. (Rule 148.1)

Note: The obligations and the relevant IAAF Rules covered above were up to date when this manual went to press. If in doubt about any of these please consult the latest edition of the IAAF Handbook or contact the IAAF General Secretary.

3 Other expectations of an IAAF Member Federation in good standing

- To be represented at IAAF Congresses.
- To be represented at Area congresses and other similar meetings.
- To choose and organise teams to participate in IAAF competitions.
- To choose and organise teams to participate in Area competitions.
- To consider whether to:
 - Nominate candidates for IAAF elections
 - Nominate candidates for Area Association elections
 - Propose technical rule changes
 - Propose constitutional rule changes
 - Nominate candidates to take part in IAAF educational measures for coaches, technical officials, walking judges and other specialist positions.
 - To respond, as appropriate, to IAAF and Area Association communications.

- To participate in the IAAF Development Programme.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Most organisations are required by their constitution to produce an annual report to their members. Usually it describes the organisation's activities and includes audited financial accounts. In addition to informing their members, preparation of the annual report helps the organisation's leaders to focus on their most important tasks and better plan their activities.

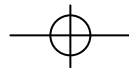
To be in good standing, Member Federations must also submit an annual report to the IAAF and their Area Association. This is a Member Federation's most important regular communication as it provides essential information for the operation of the sport and can help with the planning of programmes of assistance.

Both the IAAF and the Area Associations have provisions in their constitutions for sanctions against federations which fail to supply an annual report.

The information which must be provided in the Member Federation's annual report is:

- The Member Federation's current address, telephone, fax and or telex numbers.
- A list of the Member Federation's officers.
- A current copy of the Member Federation's Constitution and Bye-Laws.
- The active membership of the Member Federation (number of clubs, athletes, coaches, officials, etc.).
- The major championships and events held during the year (senior, junior, men, women, etc.).
- A list of the national records at the close of the year.
- A report on the Member Federation's out-of-competition doping control measures.

To simplify the work of the secretariats of its Member Federations the IAAF has produced a Concise Annual Report Form which meets all the above requirements. This form is sent to each Member Federation at the start of the calendar year. Member Federations are encouraged to use these forms to make their annual report.



- Elements of a Constitution
- Structure and Organisation
- Using the Constitution

PART TWO **CONSTITUTION AND ORGANISATION**

The foundation of a national athletics federation is its Constitution – often referred to as the Rules or Statutes. By and large, the Constitution prescribes how the membership of the federation wishes to be organised and function. It sets out the aims and objectives of the federation and lays down the manner in which it should conduct its business. The Constitution of a national athletics federation does not need to be overly long or complex. It only needs to contain the elements required to ensure the smooth function of the federation, meet any legal requirements for constitutions in the country and the requirements for membership in the IAAF.

A Elements of a Constitution

As a guide, 10 elements normally included in the constitutions of sports organisations and the key points covered in each element are presented below. In each case, these should be addressed in terms which are clear and appropriate to the circumstances and wishes of those involved. When drawing up or altering a constitution it may also be helpful to look at the constitutions of two or three other organisations for ideas and guidance on content and style.

1 Title or name

This section should state the official name of the federation.

2 Objects

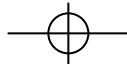
This section should list the main purposes of the federation. These could include:

- To affiliate with the IAAF
- To promote and regulate the sport of athletics.
- To stage national championships.
- To sanction and co-ordinate national and international competitions.
- To encourage the teaching of athletics.
- To maintain national records.

3 Membership

This section should answer the following questions:

- Who will comprise the membership of the federation (local federations, clubs, individuals)?
- What is the procedure for becoming a member?
- What conditions must be fulfilled to maintain membership?
- What are the procedures for dealing with members who do not meet the conditions for maintaining their membership or those who wish to resign?



4 Finance

This section should give the basis for the financial operation of the federation including:

- The financial year to be used.
- How the annual budget should be prepared and approved.
- The amount of the membership subscription.
- The due date for the payment of subscriptions.

5 Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings

This section should answer the following questions:

- When is the AGM held?
- Who is entitled to attend and vote at the AGM?
- What is the main business of the AGM?
- Who chairs the AGM?
- What is the procedure for calling an EGM.

6 Officers or Executive

This section should answer the following questions:

- What are the offices of the federation (President/Chairman, Vice President, etc.)
- When are the officers elected (every year, every 2 years, etc)?
- Can officers be re-elected?
- What is the procedure for filling a vacancy caused by resignation, illness or death?

7 Council or Board of Directors

This section should answer the following questions:

- Who is on the Council?
- What are the responsibilities of the Council (for example: the running of the federation between AGMs)?
- How often does the Council meet?
- Who chairs the Council?

8 Committees and Commissions

This section should:

- Give the Council or the AGM the right to set up committees and commissions when they are needed and delegate responsibilities as appropriate.

- Tell how members of committees and commissions are chosen.

9 Conduct of meetings

This section should cover AGMs, Council, Committee and Commission meetings. It should include:

- How are the date and place of meetings determined?
- What will be the quorum for each type of meeting?
- When must items for the agenda be received by the secretary?
- How long in advance must the agenda for the meeting be circulated?

Note: The agreed Standing Orders for meetings should be included as an Appendix to the Constitution.

Alteration of the Constitution

This section should answer the following questions:

- When can alterations to the Constitution be made? (Usually at the AGM or an Extraordinary General Meeting only.)
- What is the procedure for alterations to the Constitution? (Circulation of proposed changes in writing, minimum amount of notice, required majority, etc.)
- When do alterations come into effect?

INCORPORATION

In many countries sports organisations such as national athletic federations have incorporated themselves as a business, or what is sometimes called a Limited Company.

The main advantage which this status gives is that it "limits" the financial liability of the officers and Council members. Without this protection, it is possible that if an individual or group successfully sued the federation and it did not have the resources to meet the judgement, the individual leaders might have to pay from their personal resources. With this status each officer knows exactly how much they would be liable for if the federation could not meet its debts.

In addition to a change of the Constitution, this step will require applications and legal steps as required by the laws of the country.

Structure and

B Organisation

The successful management of any complex enterprise such as an athletic federation depends on the development of a soundly based structure and application of clear organisational principles. While most managers accept that effective organisation is crucial to success, opinions differ as to the exact nature and significance of organisation.

A structure based on committees and their work has proven successful for most sporting organisations around the world. However, each federation faces a unique situation which means this basic structure (and the Constitution) must be adjusted to suit the circumstances in terms of which committees are established, the exact role of each committee and the relationship between committees, professional staff and volunteers. As time goes by, organisational arrangements may need to be modified to meet changing requirements.

When considering the optimum structure for itself, a federation should first review the fundamental aims of a service organisation and the basic principles of organisation. Each federation should seek to ensure:

- Adherence to agreed aims and standards.
- Fulfilment of its obligations to the IAAF and other authorities.
- Consistency of the quality of its services.
- Cost effective ways to administer itself.

In order to achieve these it needs to:

- Avoid duplication of conflict of effort.
- Exercise control to ensure that various parts of the organisation stay within agreed boundaries (budgets, ranges of services) or seek approval before going outside.
- Maintain a good flow of information.

Therefore, good organisation should:

- Form a 'route map' through which the affairs of the federation can be planned, directed and controlled.

- Highlight and isolate key activities which need resources and control.
- Enable each member of the organisation to understand his/her role, duties and relationships.
- Help to identify and thus eliminate both duplication of effort and unnecessary activity.
- Provide a practical means for the allocation and controls of costs, budgets and human resources.
- Permit the objective measurement of results in terms of achievement against tasks and other agreed criteria.
- Facilitate the communication of data and instructions to the people required to effect action.
- Provide identity and a sense of belonging to a group which has a common objective, and thus supports the members' morale.

APPLICATION OF ORGANISATIONAL PRINCIPLES

A federation's leaders should seek and communicate clarity and simplicity. In doing so the following key principles are important:

1. The grouping of activities

- Separate organisational components should be established only when they comprise logically separable functions.
- Separate functions should, as far as possible, be related to a common objective.

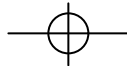
2. Authority and responsibility

- Responsibility should be defined and clearly assigned to one person.
- Responsibility should be matched with the appropriate authority.
- The number of levels of authority should be kept as low as possible.
- Clear lines of authority and accountability must run from the highest to the lowest levels.

3. Working relationships

- Working relationships must be clearly defined.
- Reporting relationships should be consistent with the nature of the responsibilities exercised.
- Higher authority should be accountable for the acts and duties of its subordinates and be responsible for their development.

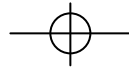
Using the Constitution

**C**

The Constitution of a federation does not need to remain static. Indeed, it should be a living document – regularly referred to and reviewed for weaknesses and possibilities to update it so that it reflects the current operation and needs of the federation. It is recommended that officers of the federation make it their task to read the entire Constitution at least two times per year and to discuss any points which arise with their colleagues. It is also recommended that the IAAF Handbook and the constitutions of the organisations affiliated to the federation be reviewed regularly. In some federations a constitutional group or committee has been set up to report to the Council on a regular basis.

Changes to the Constitution should be thought through carefully and all the possible benefits, drawbacks and other implications should be taken into account. If changes to the structure or the procedures set out in the Constitution are being considered, it should also be kept in mind that there is a possibility of resistance from those who will feel that their interests will be negatively affected. In such a situation, it is helpful if a strong case of the long-term benefits for the federation as a whole can be made.

Note: When changes to the Constitution of an IAAF Member Federation are made it is necessary to submit a copy of the new Constitution to the IAAF with the annual report.



- The President or Honorary Chairman
- The Honorary Secretary or General Secretary
- The Honorary Treasurer
- Council or Board of Directors
- Committee or Sub-Committee Members

PART THREE OFFICE HOLDERS

The key individuals in a national athletic federation are the office holders. Because of the variety of situations and circumstances faced by IAAF Member Federations around the world, the roles of the office holders can vary from federation to federation. It is, therefore, difficult to be prescriptive about exact duties or qualifications. Instead, guidelines which reflect common practice in sports organisations are presented. The study of these may prove useful for the preparation of those new to a position or as a review for a more experienced individual.

A

The President or Honorary Chairperson

Anyone who aspires to be President or Chairperson must always have the best interests of the whole federation at heart and be prepared to set the right example at all times. Moreover, in taking on the position a person assumes primary responsibility for the federation and to a certain extent becomes its "soul".

The main role of the President is to meet the organisation's fundamental need for ongoing leadership. Ideally, he/she should be a strategic thinker, able to communicate a "vision" of how the federation should be and operate. It is also valuable if he/she is capable of remaining neutral or uncommitted on issues so that he/she can act as a conciliator between opposing parties, or to allow discussions in meetings to take place with a neutral person in the chair.

1 Responsibilities

- Chairing meetings.
- Pursuing decisions made in meetings.
- Acting on behalf of the federation between meetings in co-operation with the other officers.
- Representing the federation's views to outside groups, individuals and the media.

2 Recommended qualifications

- Member in good standing of the federation.
- Prepared to make a regular time commitment.
- Strong knowledge of:
 - Athletics
 - The federation and its history
 - The constitution of the federation
 - Procedures at meetings.
- Personal qualities:
 - Impartiality
 - Courtesy

- Patience
- Enthusiasm
- Sympathy
- Fairness
- Loyalty
- Tact and discretion
- Perseverance.

Note: Further discussion of "leadership" is contained in Chapter 8.

B The Honorary Secretary or General Secretary

As the principle administrative officer and manager, the Secretary's role is to be at the forefront of all the federation's work, ensuring that it is co-ordinated and focused on the purposes and objectives of the organisation. The role will normally lead to public exposure and a high profile. Of course, there are also some duties of the Secretary which can be repetitive and low profile, but these too must be done properly otherwise the federation could cease to operate.

To fulfil the duties of the post it is vital that the Secretary has an understanding of the requirements and processes involved in each of the federation's activities. The Secretary must also be informed and up to date on any issue which could affect the federation, able to react to opportunities and able to make decisions. To maximise effectiveness, the Secretary must have the ability to delegate and to co-ordinate the work of staff and volunteers.

1 Responsibilities

- Organising the Secretariat, establishing basic administrative procedures and managing staff and volunteers.
- Dealing with correspondence.
- Maintaining files of annual reports, minutes of meetings, statements of accounts and other important records.
- Organising meetings.
- Reporting to meetings.

- Co-ordinating regular activities and special projects.
- Representing (in co-ordination with the President) the federation's views to outside groups and the media.

2 Recommended qualifications

- Member in good standing of the federation.
- Prepared to make a regular time commitment.
- Extensive knowledge of athletics.
- Able to work with people, particularly the office holders of the federation.
- Able to speak an official IAAF language (English or French).
- Personal qualities:
 - Energy
 - Enthusiasm for athletics
 - Tact, discretion and courtesy
 - Good organisational skills - methodical and reliable
 - Loyalty
 - Friendliness
 - Effective communicator.

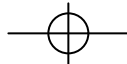
WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Good Secretaries are aware of the importance of their personal and working relationships with the other officers of the federation, particularly the President. They make every effort to develop these relationships and ensure that everyone is well informed on matters relating to the organisation.

C The Honorary Treasurer

All federations should keep accurate financial records and have someone who is ultimately accountable for financial procedures. It is the Treasurer who takes on these special duties. The Treasurer, therefore, must be highly responsible and have the ability to handle finances in accordance with the constitution and policy of the federation.

The post of Treasurer is usually a voluntary position, although in larger federations some of the Treasurer's work may be undertaken by a paid finance officer or



accountant. In that case the Treasurer will have a supervisory role but is ultimately responsible for seeing that all delegated work is done properly.

1 Responsibilities

- Financial planning including producing an annual budget.
- Keeping up-to-date records of all financial transactions.
- Collecting all money due to the federation and issuing receipts for all money received.
- Ensuring that money and cheques received are promptly deposited in the bank.
- Paying all bills of the federation.
- Ensuring that federation funds are spent properly.
- Presenting financial accounts and reports to appropriate meetings.
- Presenting year-end accounts (in draft) to the Committee of Management.
- Arranging for year-end accounts to be audited.
- Presenting audited year-end accounts to the Annual General Meeting.
- Preparation of any other documents required by law.

2 Recommended qualifications

- Member in good standing of the federation.
- Prepared to make a regular time commitment.
- Able to keep clear, accurate records and accounts.
- Able to work closely with the other officers of the federation.
- Personal qualities:
 - Scrupulous and manifest honesty
 - Good organisational skills
 - Enthusiasm
 - Numerate
 - Prudent - careful with money.

Note: Further discussion of financial management is contained in Chapter 6.

Council or Board of Directors

D

The Council is normally responsible for general policy and overseeing administration of the federation between Annual General Meetings. In most successful federations it includes the officers (President, General Secretary, Treasurer) plus a number of other members.

Ideally, it is the most experienced, committed and skilled individuals of the federation who fill the positions on the Council. It is valuable, however, to encourage candidates for positions from all sections of the sport. For all members of the Council the characteristics which are essential for the President, Secretary and Treasurer will also be valuable.

The specific roles of council members will vary according to the constitution and needs of each federation. Often, members have positions on one or more of the federation's committees. In any case, each council member must be constantly aware of the obligations and expectations of the federation and contribute towards meeting them.

Sub-Committee Members

E

Most federations find it necessary to set up sub-committees of the Council (these may be called committees, commissions, working groups, etc.) to deal with specific areas of work, although the number of sub-committees and their responsibilities vary greatly from federation to federation. Sub-committees generally report to the Council and their meetings are co-ordinated by the Secretary.

Sub-committees and their Chairpersons may be appointed by the Council or elected at the Annual General Meeting according to the constitution of the federation. Sub-committee members should be selected for their knowledge and experience in a specific area. A person who would chair a sub-committee should, in addition to high levels of knowledge and experience, also be capable of

