



British Athletes  
Commission

# ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

2020/21

# INTRODUCTION AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The BAC exists to represent the interests of athletes by providing them with independent, confidential support and expert advice. Providing quality, expert advice, signposting and support in the areas of mediation, health & wellbeing and integrity issues the BAC could help athletes with, for example, issues they may have with their sport's selection process, a grievance with a team member, a disciplinary, a duty of care or welfare issue or concern over their mental health and wellbeing. The BAC is committed to 'A Code for Sports Governance' (the "Code") and the principles of good governance.

The Annual Governance Statement provides the organisation's athlete members, stakeholders and supporters with an annual report on the governance performance of the organisation.

This Statement is made in accordance with the Code for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 (the "Reporting Period").

The organisation is a company limited by guarantee. Its governing document, the articles of association are published on its website at [https://britishathletes.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/BAC\\_Articles\\_of\\_Association\\_September\\_2017.pdf](https://britishathletes.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/BAC_Articles_of_Association_September_2017.pdf)

# MISSION and PURPOSE

**That the BAC is renowned globally for leading the way in elite athlete welfare and wellbeing support.**

**We are a positive force in sport. We represent the athlete voice, providing impartial, confidential support, expert advice and active solutions for any issues affecting Britain's elite athletes.**

- **The BAC will provide independent, proactive support to all members in the areas of athlete welfare, wellbeing and development.**
- **The BAC will have a strong, effective relationship with all members, with them identifying us as their trusted representative body.**
- **The BAC are known for being a welcoming, trusted, confidential and independent champion for ethical sport.**
- **The BAC will We deliver demonstrable value to members and the wider high-performance system.**
- **We have a professional operating structure to comprehensively serve our members.**

# ROLE OF THE BOARD

**The Board is collectively responsible for the long-term success of the organisation and is exclusively vested with the power to lead it.**

The Board is the ultimate decision-making body and exercises all of the powers of the organisation other than those specifically allocated to other persons under either legislation or Articles of Association. It is responsible for setting the strategy of the organisation and providing oversight of executive action but maintains a clear division between its management and oversight role and the executive's operational role.

# BOARD COMPOSITION

- The Board is made up of 8 board members. The current Chair is Victoria Aggar. During the reporting period the Senior Independent Director was Dougie Dryburgh. All appointments to the Board are made on merit in line with the skills required by the Board.
- During the reporting period, all the Board members were Independent Directors.
- Board member independence is decided based on the definition within the Code for Sports governance for an Independent Director as follows:
  - Independent: a person is independent if they are free from any close connection to the organisation and if, from the perspective of an objective outsider, they would be viewed as independent.
- Taking the stated definition, we feel that all of our Board are independent (they are not employed as staff, nor do their close family have links to senior officers; all were appointed under open recruitment) and are free from any close connection to the organisation.
- By nature of seeking board members with understanding and expertise in our sector, some may be linked with partners whom we interact. However, as with all Boards, members declare any conflicts of interest at the start of the meeting and may exclude themselves from the room or at least refrain from joining in conversations which directly link them to their life outside of the BAC.
- As such, our interpretation would be that all other members do not have any close connection to the BAC, and are independent, as defined under the Code.

## The following people served as Board members during the reporting period:

Name	Role description	Date joined or left the Board (if applicable)	Board meetings attended	Committees	Committee meetings attended
<b>Victoria Aggar</b>	Chair	31 March 2017	4 of 4	Nominations and Remuneration	1 of 2
<b>Dougie Dryburgh</b>	Senior Independent Director and Non Executive Director	31 March 2017	4 of 4	Finance Audit and Risk Governance (Chair)	2 of 2
<b>Peter Crowther</b>	Non-Executive Director	25 September 2018	4 of 4	Nominations and Remuneration	2 of 2
<b>Chris Smith</b>	Non-Executive Director	1 January 2014	3 of 4	Finance Audit and Risk Governance	2 of 2
<b>Dr Rod Jaques</b>	Non-Executive Director	25 September 2018	4 of 4	Nominations and Remuneration (Chair)	2 of 2
<b>Lizzie Simmonds</b>	Non-Executive Director	2 January 2019	4 of 4		N/A
<b>Donna Fraser</b>	Non-Executive Director	2 January 2019	4 of 4		N/A
<b>Lee Murgatroyd</b>	Non-Executive Director	11 December 2018	4 of 4		N/A

# BOARD RECRUITMENT

- **Board and CEO**
- During the reporting period the process was continued to reappoint Victoria Aggar as Chair of the Board for a second term.
- The BAC have recruited two new Non-Executive Directors to the Board in March 2021. Milan Sud and Simon Freedman.
- The position of the BAC CEO was not renewed going forward for the Paris Cycle.

# BOARD EVALUATION

- **Board Skills Matrix**

An annual evaluation of the skills matrix was carried out in March 2021.

- **Performance Reviews**

The Board undertook a performance evaluation of individual directors in the reporting period. Performance Reviews were carried out for each Board member by the Chair of the Board using a standard performance review template.

- **Internal Board Evaluation**

An external Board Evaluation process was conducted by a third-party organisation in March 2020 and presented to Board in June 2020. A series of recommendations was developed from the process for further implementation.

Key areas of focus included:

- Develop a shared narrative about the BAC purpose and strategy
- Leverage NED skills and capabilities
- Make time for reflecting on what works well and where you need to refocus



# Committees reporting to the Board

The Board has established the following Committees, which report directly to the Board. Each Committee has clear Terms of Reference which identify its responsibilities and any powers delegated to it by the Board

## Audit and Risk Committee

**Composition:** Dougie Dryburgh (Chair), Chris Smith, Mahdi Choudhury (CEO)

### Purpose:

- To advise the Board of Directors on any action required to maintain the financial health of the company
- To make recommendations to the Board, concerning the final approval of the statutory accounts
- To advise the Board on the processes for overseeing risk management, control and related governance

### Delegated Authority

- And shall have delegated responsibilities for the following:
- Reviewing the organisation's policies, systems and procedures in so far as they relate to finance, audit and risk and ensuring that the controls, framework and governance are in place so that the company complies with all legal requirements and in accordance with the corporate governing document;
- Conducting a twice-yearly review of the organisation's Risk Register, risk management policy and procedures and internal control systems;
- The agreed financial strategy of the BAC;
- Ensuring the audited annual accounts are published on the organisation's website.

**Meetings in the reporting period:** The Committee was convened twice, during the reporting period.

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## Nominations and Remuneration Committee

**Composition:** Dr Rod Jaques (Chair), Peter Crowther, Victoria Aggar.

**Purpose:** To be the BAC's body for all remuneration and staff policy issues which are not delegated to the Chief Executive Officer

### Delegated Authority:

- The Committee shall have delegated authority from the BACg Board to:
- Decide on terms and conditions of service, including remuneration, pensions, allowances, gratuities, early retirement and redundancy, of Directors, Executive and of any other colleague(s) as agreed between the Chairman of the Committee and the Chief Executive. If the Chair of the the BAC is not present at a meeting when the Committee considers changes to the terms and conditions of service of the Chief Executive, any potential decision will be subject to the subsequent approval of the Chair of the BAC.
- Propose the remuneration for the Chair of the Board.
- Develop and agree a remuneration policy.
- Approve changes to policies and practices which are required for the delivery of the targets set in the Diversity Action Plan.

**Meetings in the Reporting Period:** The committee was convened twice times during the reporting period.

**The Board sets the strategy of the organisation. The current strategy for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 was published in 2018**

**The Board continually monitors progress against strategy and can report the following progress has been attained in the Reporting Period:**

1. By 2021 all world class performance athletes have access to effective independent, confidential advice and support
2. By 2021 the interests of the athlete sit at the heart of decision making across the high performance system
3. By 2021 build the BAC's reputation so that it is appreciated by athletes and (seen as) a trusted and respected partner of the high performance system, impacting positive change
4. By 2021, provide comprehensive membership package with value added partnership benefits to support broader athlete appeal/during their sporting and non-sporting careers

**To uphold strong governance and leadership delivering long term financial sustainability & success**

# SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The CEO, during the reporting period was responsible for the operational implementation of the strategy and managing the executive team.

- **Staff Survey**

The Board acknowledges its duties to employees both under the Companies Act and the Code for Sports Governance.

A staff satisfaction survey was carried out in November 2019. The next survey will be carried out in the reporting period 2021/22 due to staff changes.

- **Governance Framework**

The organisation is committed to the Code for Sports Governance, having achieved compliance with the Code in 2019/20 and has put in place an ongoing governance action plan to ensure that it continues to develop its governance practices and procedures.

- **Confirmation of ongoing compliance**

The organisation has communicated openly with UK Sport throughout the Reporting Period, and the Board has the view that the organisation has maintained its status of compliant with the Code for Sports Governance.

# REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

In compliance with the Code the following practices and procedures were reviewed and approved by the Board in the Reporting Period.

Practice/ procedure reviewed	Code requirement	Last reviewed
<b>Directors' Code</b>	Every 4 years	2018
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	Every 4 years	2018
<b>Policies</b>	Every 4 years	2019
<b>Financial policies and procedures</b>	Every 2 years	2020
<b>Financial Forecast</b>	4 year minimum	Reviewed at each Board meeting
<b>Risk management and internal control</b>	Every year	Reviewed at each Board meeting

## Complaints/whistleblowing

In the Reporting Period there were no complaints to the organisation. There were no reports of wrongdoing.

# DIVERSITY

The organisation is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and to creating a diverse environment. We work with our athlete members and partners to enable the BAC to be an accessible and inclusive organisation that provides opportunities for enjoyment and achievement for all. Donna Fraser is the Board lead for equality and diversity.

The organisation has undertaken the following activities in the Reporting Period to increase diversity:

We introduced accessible software to our website to widen our accessibility to our athlete members and stakeholders.

- Our target is to maintain a position where a minimum of 30% of Board members are from each gender whilst working towards gender parity. As of 31 March 2021, the gender balance was a 40/60 split of male and female.
- We are continually committed to increasing the diversity of staff, volunteers (including Board and committee members), and will carry out initiatives to encourage more women, people with disabilities and people from black and ethnic minorities to become more actively involved in all aspects of the organisation's activities.



The Equality Standard  
A Framework for Sport

INTERMEDIATE ◀

**Signed by**

**Victoria Aggar - Chair**