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OCEANIA SQUASH FEDERATION TENTH GENERAL MEETING RAROTONGA, COOK ISLANDS SEPTEMBER, 2009

PRESIDENT & OFFICERS' REPORT

I have much pleasure in presenting the Tenth report of the Oceania Squash Federation (OSF) covering the two year period from September 2007 when the Federation's last General Meeting was held in Apia, Samoa.

The report covers significant events, issues and major initiatives concerning the OSF.

1. The following Officers were elected in Apia to direct the Federation's affairs over the last two years:

President:	Col Clapper (Australia)
Vice Presidents:	Gary Robertson (Norfolk Island)
	Butch Gifford (New Zealand)
	Carol Kawaljenko (Australia)
	Mousie Skews (Cook Islands)
	Francoise Meira (New Caledonia)
Finance Director:	Michael Davis (Australia)
Executive Director:	Col Clapper (Australia)
Oceania Regional Vice President to the WSF:	John Holland (Australia)

2. Full membership of the OSF remained at 8, namely:

Australia	New Zealand
Cook Islands	Norfolk Island
Fiji	Papua New Guinea
New Caledonia	Samoa

The Federation is extremely grateful for the continuing support it receives from its full members particularly Squash Australia for the assistance they continue to provide.

3. While Australia and New Zealand maintain full membership status of the World Squash Federation (WSF), Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, PNG and Samoa are Associate Members of the world body. The OSF continued to meet the Associate Membership fees for these countries/territories.
4. The OSF continued its commitment to encourage new countries in the region to embrace Squash and join the Federation. Vanuatu continues to be an on-going project while the Solomon Islands has recently emerged as a future potential squash playing country. Both these countries have existing squash courts. Tahiti is displaying interest as a future country for squash; however, initially squash facilities

need to be constructed in the country. Without an injection of Government funding, it is difficult to see an expansion of the sport in those countries that do not currently have squash facilities.

5. A positive factor emerging from the South Pacific Games in Apia and the forthcoming Pacific Mini Games in Rarotonga has been the provision of new squash facilities. This should ensure the future stability and growth of the sport in these countries. The construction of 2 Doubles courts in Apia was also a big advancement for our sport in the region. Hopefully the trend will continue in New Caledonia in 2011.
6. The possibility of forming a special category of membership of players from certain Island countries now living in other countries, principally New Zealand and Australia, is being explored by the Federation.
7. General Meetings of the OSF continue to be held on a biennial basis and during the period and at the venue of the Pacific Games or Pacific Mini Games. General Meetings on an annual basis would be more preferable; however, cost implications are recognised and taken into account. It is an area that needs to be reviewed on a regular basis.
8. The OSF continues to be supported by a number of Standing Committees which contribute considerably to the Federation's operation. These committees also provide an effective conduit to equivalent WSF committees with advice, and provide representation from our region.

Sincere appreciation is extended to both the Convenors and Members who have served on the following OSF Standing Committees over the last two years:

- Development & Coaching
- Major Games
- Competitions
- Referees & Rules
- Disciplinary
- Technical
- Masters Squash

Appreciation is also extended to all those representatives from the Oceania Region who have served on the various WSF Standing Committees.

9. The Oceania Squash Championships continues to be a priority project for the OSF, as a stand alone event or under the umbrella of the Pacific Games or Pacific Mini Games. The event also consumes a large portion of OSF funding which will need to be reassessed with other priority activities. The Eighth Oceania Squash Championships took place in Apia in September 2007 under the umbrella of the XIII South Pacific Games. Six countries competed in the event which featured men's, ladies and mixed doubles for the first time, in addition to the traditional events – men's and ladies teams and singles.

Sincere appreciation is extended to Etuale Sefo and his band of dedicated workers for staging a wonderful event. Special thanks must also go to Sam Lolagi for his work as Competition Manager.

10. The VIII Pacific Mini Games enables Cook Islands to showcase their lovely country and will without doubt stage a magnificent event. Squash is again fortunate to be one of the 15 participant sports and we look forward to competition on the newly constructed courts.

The Ninth Oceania Squash Championships will take place under the umbrella of these Games.

It is very disappointing that Norfolk Island will not be represented at these Games, and hopefully the player eligibility dispute will be resolved in the near future. Appreciation is extended to Robert Skews, Heimata Karika and the small band of committed workers from Cook Islands Squash for all the organising work that has taken place so far. Well done.

Our special thanks must also go to the visiting referees (Karim Langer, Sandra Tinkler and Steve Murray) for being prepared to travel to Rarotonga at their own expense to officiate at the event.

11. Junior development continues to be a major challenge for the OSF and the region generally. The attraction and retention of young players to our sport is an area that is in urgent need of reassessing our short, mid and long term strategies, as it is our youth who will carry the sport through the coming decade.

Some countries, including Fiji and New Caledonia, are doing positive work in this area, however, there is a long way to go. Results from the recent Women's World Junior Championships highlight the need for greater investment in our next generation of players.

It is with great regret that the 4th Oceania Junior Age Squash Championships were not supported by member countries, and is an issue of concern if the event is to be part of the region's strategic framework for junior development and to create opportunities for our young players.

Fiji Squash is to be thanked for all the work undertaken in preparing for the Championships, and congratulated for proceeding to stage a very successful event which attracted a large number of local players.

12. Unfortunately, the Federation's coaching and development initiatives over the last two years were restricted due to a lack of funding. Programs initiated in the previous period with funding assistance from the WSF and AusAid were not available during the last 2 years to enable the OSF to facilitate programs in the developing countries.

13. Australia and New Zealand continue to invest significantly in elite player programmes, which are extremely important for the future development of our sport in the region. Our elite players have also performed creditably in the professional ranks.

14. Masters Squash is an important element of our sport in the region, and continues to attract large numbers to Masters tournaments held, particularly in Australia and New Zealand.

The 15th Oceania Masters was again held in Norfolk Island and enjoyed by all visitors to the Island.

Planning is well advanced for the 16th Oceania Masters Squash Championships in Whakatane, New Zealand while the 2010 Championships will take place in Apia, Samoa. It is very pleasing to see Samoa hosting the event for the first occasion as a joint venture between the Samoa Sports Facilities Authority and Samoa Squash, while it is planned to hold the event during the period of the Tevira Festival.

15. Universities are a potential area for Squash to further develop. Opportunities are being explored including the concept of introducing an Oceania Regional Universities Squash Championships. Considerable interest in the concept has been forthcoming from University sports organisations, and is a future project for the OSF over the next two years. This will also be opportune with the next World University Squash Championships which will be held in Melbourne, Australia in 2010.

16. The OSF has been striving for a number of years to establish its own Website to provide wider access to information. It is indeed pleasing to announce that a site is now operational (www.oceaniasquash.org). Sincere appreciation is extended to Sandie Davis and Jeff Wollstein for all the work they have done in making the site possible. We are very grateful for their assistance. Feedback and suggestions to improve the site are invited.
17. The Squash Ball Agreement between the OSF and Dunlop International was re-negotiated, with a significant financial benefit to the OSF being achieved through new shipping arrangements. Our appreciation is extended to Dunlop International for their continued support of Squash in Oceania.
18. The OSF continues to maintain an excellent working relationship with the WSF, including supporting and assisting with its initiatives. It was an immense disappointment to the entire squash community when the IOC rejected the bid for Squash to become a participant sport in the 2016 Olympics. With 7 sports competing for 2 vacant positions on the Olympic programme, Golf and Rugby 7's were the preferred sports. The WSF put a massive amount of resources and funding into presenting the best possible bid for our sport, and all those involved in the bidding process must be commended for their efforts. They gave it the best shot our sport could offer. It now becomes the responsibility of administrators, officials and players at all levels of our sport to learn from the experience and move on to greater achievements without the support of our "Olympic dream". The Region was well represented on the WSF by John Holland in his capacity as Oceania Regional Vice President. Gerard De Courcy, WSF Vice-President also hails from our region.
19. Following the success of the World Masters Squash Championships, Squash New Zealand is to be congratulated for their successful bid in gaining hosting rights of the World Deaf Squash Championships and World Women's Teams Championships in Palmerston North in October and November 2010. The World Masters Games to be staged in Sydney in October 2009 will be one of the largest participant events staged in this region of the world. Squash is included as one of the competing sports.
20. The Olympic Sports Federations of Oceania (OSFO) and the Oceania National Olympic Committee (ONOC) foster, promote, facilitate and coordinate the development of sport in our region. The OSF is a member of OSFO and represents the interests of Squash at both OSFO and ONOC meetings. I had the privilege of attending the ONOC/OSFO Assemblies and Workshops held in Queenstown, New Zealand in April. Most sports were represented at the Assemblies and Workshops, together with the IOC President, IOC Representatives, in addition to presenters and support staff from the 2016 bidding cities and 6 of the 7 bidding sports. My attendance proved to be extremely beneficial to the OSF and provided me with the opportunity to present Squash in a positive way and as a legitimate and progressive sport in the Oceania Region. I was also a presenter at the workshop. The OSF should continue to maintain close relations with the OSFO and ONOC together with other Oceania sporting organisations through communication and attendance at these assemblies and workshops to ensure our sport gains full benefit and maximum exposure in the region.
21. The OSF has maintained close communication with the Pacific Games Council (PGC) and following a period of negotiation signed a Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) with the PGC in April 2009. The MOU prescribes basic commitments by both parties in respect of participation in future Pacific Games and Pacific Mini Games.

22. The Federation's financial position continues to be sound, however, with only a small funding base and limited reserves it is financially vulnerable and extremely limited in undertaking initiatives in the region.

However, in recognition of the prevailing economic climate it is not proposed that an increase in members' fees take place over the coming two years.

Appreciation is extended to Michael Davis for his contribution as Finance Director.

23. Special appreciation is extended to Australia and New Zealand for their contribution to Squash in the region, particularly in the area of financial contribution and resources.

24. The financial accounts of the OSF for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2009 have been duly audited for presentation at the 2009 General Meeting.

Our sincere appreciation is extended to our honorary auditor, Peter Hurwood F.C.A. for again undertaking the audit.

25. My sincere thanks goes to all those who have supported and assisted me over the last two years, especially the Officers of the Federation and Convenors of Standing Committees. I must also record the enormous amount of support and assistance my wife Lorel has given to both myself and the Federation, and without which I could not have fulfilled my duties to the organisation to the extent required.

And finally, it is again a privilege to present this report to the Meeting on behalf of myself and the Officers.

Colin J. Clapper AM
President &
Executive Director