

**INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION (ICF)**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

---



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN LONDON, UK**

**05-06 April 2024**



**MINUTES OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
HELD IN LONDON, UK  
05-06 April 2024**

## **Overview**

This was the second meeting of the ICF Board of Directors in 2024, held on 05-06 April in London, UK, featuring a Hybrid access format. Quorum was formed in line with the ICF Statutes, with 29 board members present.

*All documents were provided via the online portal with login details to each Board Member.*

Minutes for the previous meeting held on 10 January 2024 were approved via email and are published at the following address: <https://www.canoeicf.com/icf-minutes>

## **Agenda**

1. President's introduction & report
2. Vice presidents' reports
3. Finance report (treasurer & finance commission)
4. Paris 2024 update
5. Secretary General's report
6. Continental reports
7. Reports of Standing Committees and Sports Commissions
8. Rule changes
9. Congress planning
10. Miscellaneous
11. Bidding and Allocation of ICF Events

## **Appendices:**

- Appendix 1: ITO lists of 2024 ICF events for approval
- Appendix 2: Jury applications
- Appendix 3: President's letter
- Appendix 4: Vice presidents' reports
- Appendix 5: Treasurer's report
- Appendix 6: Report and meeting minutes of the finance commission
- Appendix 7: Budget proposal outline 2025-2029
- Appendix 8: Secretary General report
- Appendix 9: Staff structure
- Appendix 10: Fit For Future Evolution
- Appendix 11: Rebrand proposal
- Appendix 12: Brisbane 2032
- Appendix 13: Continental reports
- Appendix 14: Reports of Standing Committees and Sports Commissions
- Appendix 15: Minutes of previous BOD and ExCo meetings
- Appendix 16: Event bid documents
- Appendix 17: Documents to be published for Congress
- Appendix 18: Rule changes for review

- Appendix 19: ICF court of arbitration
- Appendix 20: Specific letters to the Board from member federations
- Appendix 21: Resignation letter from Tim Brabants
- Appendix 22: Congress dinner celebration options
- Appendix 23: Mediterranean Games – acceptance of canoeing

**Participants on-site:**

Thomas Konietzko	TK	President	GER
Cecilia Farias	CF	Vice President	ARG
Lluis Rabaneda i Caselles	LRC	Vice President	ESP
Luciano Buonfiglio	LB	Acting Vice President and Treasurer	ITA
Richard Pettit	RP	Secretary General	GBR
Maree Burnett	MB	Oceania Canoe Association President	NZL
Chainarong Charoenruk	CC	Asian Canoe Confederation President	THA
Toshi Furuya	TF	Canoe Sprint Committee Chair	JPN
Jean-Michel Prono	JMP	Canoe Slalom Committee Chair	FRA
John Edwards	JE	Paracanoe Committee Chair	CAN
Branko Lovric	BL	Continental Representative - EUR	CRO
Andrej Jelenc	AJ	Continental Representative - EUR	SLO
Jovana Stanojevic	JS	Continental Representative - EUR	SRB
Victor G. Ruiz	VR	Continental Representative - PAM	PUR
Shao Yaping	SY	Continental Representative - ASI	CHN
Danielle Woodward	DW	Continental Representative - OCE	AUS
Olubunmi Ola Oluode	OO	Continental Representative - AFR	NGR
Ruud Heijselaar	RH	Canoe Marathon Committee Chair	NED
Manuela Gawehn	MG	Wildwater Canoeing Committee Chair	GER
Colin Simpkins	CS	Ocean Racing Committee Chair	RSA
Greg Smale	GS	Canoe Polo Committee Chair	GBR
Terry Best	TBE	Canoe Freestyle Committee Chair	GBR
Wai-hung Luk	WL	Dragon Boat Commission Chair	HKG
Noémi Horváth	NH	SUP Commission Chair	HUN

**Participants on-line:**

Sebastian Gomez	SG	Pan American Canoe Federation President	URG
Joao Manual Da Costa Alegre Afonso	JDC	Confederation of African Canoeing President	STP
Martha Hernandez Sanches	MHS	Continental Representative - PAM	MEX
Budiman Setiawan	BS	Continental Representative - ASI	INA
Ahmed Mahamoud Abdoukader	AMA	Continental Representative - AFR	DJI



**MINUTES OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
HELD IN LONDON, UK  
05-06 April 2024**

**Excused:**

Jean Zoungrana	JZ	European Canoe Association President	FRA
Tim Brabants	TBR	Medical and Anti-Doping Committee Chair	NZL
Bridgitte Hartley	BH	Athlete Committee Chair	RSA



**April 5th, London, UK**

### **Opening remarks**

1. The president opened the meeting by introducing Ashley Metcalfe, the CEO of Paddle UK, who gave a welcoming speech to the ICF Board members as the host federation. The support and contributions of Paddle UK were highly appreciated.
2. TK addressed housekeeping matters, including the decision to allow online participation due to visa and financial challenges faced by board members. He reminded everyone to declare conflicts of interest, particularly for event allocation, and proposed choosing future meeting venues to minimize visa restrictions and ensure all board members can attend in person.

### **Decisions:**

1. LRC declared a conflict of interest due to nationality regarding the Spanish Canoe Federation bid (RFEP). This was noted and LRC did not participate in the event bidding process for those contested by the Spanish federation.
2. Minutes Approved from board meeting held on the 10 January 2024.
3. New minutes process approved

### **President report**

1. TK reported the CAS case from Swiss Federation with updates from RP and LRC.
2. TK addressed a complaint from the Polish Federation about Oceania's qualification, with RP and TF confirming its validity according to the rules. The BoD agreed to respond, affirming the qualification and pledging future improvements with proposals from the Olympic Qualification System working group.
3. Updates on the progress of satellite offices were provided: the Hangzhou office has secured funding and will commence operations soon, while discussions with the Hungarian government regarding office are still ongoing.
4. TK informed the BoD about ongoing negotiations with BYD, a Chinese electric car manufacturer, for a partnership with the ICF to promote dragon. He also discussed plans for Dragon Boat demonstration at the Paris Olympic Games, similar to the activities held during the Tokyo Olympics.
5. Updates regarding the treatment of neutral athletes from Russia and Belarus in ICF competitions were provided.
6. The proposal of submission of two additional canoe sprint events for the 2028 LA program to underline the strength and diversity of canoeing sport was discussed.

### **Decisions:**

1. Agreed to send communication to key stakeholders (NFS, Event Organizers etc.) regarding the participation of AIN athletes and to publish the list of athlete on the ICF website ahead of competitions.

### **Report of Vice President Cecilia Farias**

CF presented a comprehensive report on ICF development programs, emphasizing the importance of coach education, with over 500 coaches trained and numerous seminars conducted. She highlighted the replication mission of coaches, Paracanoe education, economic initiatives, and gender equality in training camps. The report detailed long-term projects in Central America and Africa, particularly



Kenya, and discussed funding from Olympic solidarity, totaling over one million euros since 2019. CF stressed the importance of project-based funding, collaboration with continental associations, and aligning with the ICF's Fit for Future strategy.

### **Updates on Paris 2024**

Cyril Nivel, Canoe and Paracanoe sports manager for Paris 2024, updated on the Olympic and Paralympic preparations, focusing on delivering exceptional competitions. Key areas of progress include cost optimization, infrastructure development, and successful ticket sales, with near-full stadium attendance expected. Volunteers and technical officials have been recruited with a focus on gender balance. The presentation also highlighted innovative spectator experience projects and concluded with a video on the Games' emotional impact. TK praised the organizers' efficiency and urged BoD members to promote ticket sales for maximum attendance.

### **Report of Vice President Lluís Rabaneda**

1. LRC presented the TV strategy, highlighting positive initial results in revenue and distribution while optimizing costs. The use of the dedicated streaming platform ReCast yielded a new revenue stream but ended negatively due to ReCast's insolvency. Stuart Roach detailed the continuation with Hit The Roof for broadcast production and YouTube for streaming, along with ongoing negotiations with EBU for content inclusion.
2. LRC updated on the Sports Commission Meeting, highlighting rule discussions with the goal of presenting finalized rules for approval at the upcoming Congress. A major overhaul of statutes and rules is planned for the 2026 Congress.
3. LRC updated on the Olympic qualification criteria progress, involving creating a ranking system. There was extensive consultation with national federations, receiving feedback from 44 nations. Despite challenges in achieving a perfect system, the goal is to finalize the criteria by the Congress and implement it in January 2025.
4. LRC outlined efforts to refine the event awarding process to align with the IOC's approach, ensuring closer collaboration with organizers during bid preparation to meet expectations and reduce discrepancies. While bids for events until 2028 are already allocated, the focus is on improving the process for events from 2029 onward.

#### **Decisions:**

1. The Board approved to continue to move forward with YouTube as its streaming provider, reviewing the opportunity to utilize the pay-per-view option when possible.
2. The Board decided to continue negotiations with the EBU, wait for further clarity, and maintain the current arrangement with Hit The Roof for TV production for another year while exploring other potential suppliers.

### **Report of Acting Vice President and Treasurer Luciano Buonfiglio**

LB expressed pride in the ICF's unified philosophy, focusing on increased activity, cost reduction, revenue improvement, and transparency. He highlighted the ICF's positive financial situation, with reserves higher than previous periods, due to new initiatives and cost-cutting efforts. He detailed the ICF's financial performance, including currency distribution, investment strategies, cost reductions, and revenue growth from membership fees, TV rights, sponsorships, and partnerships.



## **Finance**

TK praised the professionalism and dedication of the Finance Commission members and highlighted the significant improvements in financial management over the past year, particularly in terms of internal controls and policies. He emphasized that the Finance Commission should be an important advisory body, particularly for the ICF's investment strategy. MB provided an overview of the Finance Commission's inaugural meeting, emphasizing the professionalism of its members and the productive discussions on financial management approaches. She also mentioned two recommendations regarding the adoption of terms of reference and the presentation of financial information to the membership. CF offered a recommendation to avoid duplication of efforts in policy development, particularly regarding conflict of interest and external auditing policies. RP explained the timeline and considerations for budget proposal outline 2025-2029, which was supported by the Board members and was approved by vote.

### **Decision:**

1. Board supported the budget proposal outline for 2025-2029

## **Secretary General report**

1. RP reported plan to recruit new staff in the office, such as an executive assistant, a global project manager and potentially an HR professional to support administrative functions.
2. RP discussed the "Fit for Future" strategy, emphasizing its eight pillars and the team's implementation efforts. He proposed renaming it to "Fit for Future Evolution" for 2025-2029, highlighting the need for strategy evolution. RP outlined a timeline for gathering feedback, analyzing responses, and refining the framework for the next phase.
3. RP shared the rebranding proposal to change ICF's name to Paddle Worldwide, citing strategic reasons for the change. He emphasized the need for a name that resonates with all disciplines and connects with athletes at various levels. The term "paddle" was chosen for its inclusivity and prominence in the sport.

### **Decision:**

1. Board voted in favor of implementing the new name 'Paddle Worldwide' and launching it at the 2024 ICF Congress

## **Continental Activities**

Updates and reports from various continental representatives regarding ongoing activities and upcoming events were shared. CC outlined plans for future competitions in Asia, and mentioned initiatives like education program and training camp within the continent, aimed at promoting and developing canoeing sports in Asia. MB provided insights into recent activities in Oceania, including Olympic qualification events and development programs. She mentioned the successful turnout of athletes and coaches from various Oceanian nations at training camps and workshops, emphasizing the region's progress despite its smaller number of NOCs. VR emphasized the upcoming milestone of Olympic qualification in Sarasota as the COPAC's primary focus. He underscored the need to allocate resources to ensure the event's professional execution. OO shared updates on African activities, including various competitions, meetings, and the implementation of a strategic plan supported by the ICF. She expressed gratitude for the ICF's assistance in advancing the sport in Africa, particularly in areas like coaching and technical support.

## **Reports of standing committees and sports commissions**

Chairs of standing committees and sports commissions shared activities of their respective disciplines.

1. GS updated on the upcoming World Championships in China and World Games, highlighting financial concerns for teams. Despite this, participation is high due to affordable accommodation. The new Super Cup event will feature expanded prize money and a unique format. Concerns were raised about surf wax usage and direct entry issues. Plans for a coaching course in Thailand were mentioned.
2. RH emphasized collaboration with regional technical directors and preparation for the World Games in Chengdu, focusing on optimizing the program for spectators. Challenges include sharing the course with other sports and the cancellation of a World Cup in Sarasota due to low entries. The need for professional commentators and fixed contracts for race management was stressed.
3. MG discussed challenges in organizing events like wildwater canoeing due to lack of support and budget constraints. LRC suggested addressing these issues at the congress. AJ and TK acknowledged the financial challenges and the importance of supporting organizers.
4. CS reported growth in the discipline, with oversubscribed bids and successful World Championships in Australia. This year's event will be in Madeira, Portugal.
5. NH highlighted the successful SUP World Championships in Thailand and announced the first ECA European Championship in SUP. JS added details on integrating SUP races with other disciplines. TK praised these developments.
6. WL discussed major events in China and the Philippines as qualifiers for the World Games, emphasizing global participation. He mentioned a coaching course in Hong Kong and the need for ITO candidates. Plans to cooperate with the IDBF without merging were noted.
7. TF addressed three main points: cooperation with the Olympic qualification system working group, achieving gender equity in ITO appointments with Erin Schaus as the first women's starter, and the appointment of 131 ITOs from 48 National Federations for seven ICF major events this year. He also expressed satisfaction with the new event bidding system, which allows for better communication, technical proposals, and discussions regarding accommodations and registration fees.
8. TB highlighted the success of the Canoe Freestyle World Championship in Columbus, noting positive participant feedback despite challenges. He mentioned a judging seminar, development panel, and an online satisfaction survey with positive responses. Upcoming World Cups in Scotland and Germany, along with plans for more development campaigns and ITO seminars, were discussed. TK acknowledged the growing interest in the sport, and RP mentioned ongoing discussions about establishing a high-performance hub in Columbus for freestyle, highlighting opportunities for a lasting legacy.
9. JE reported on paracanoe development, noting the completion of the African project after four years and expressing gratitude for support. Success was achieved in qualifying all continents at Duisburg. Positive developments included potential initiatives in Iraq and the Philippines. Ongoing efforts with the IPC aim to increase quotas and implement ranking systems. He also mentioned the universal boat project and IPC-funded media promotion videos.

## **Rule changes**

LRC provided an overview of the process, emphasizing that the Board would evaluate the common rules, principle rules, and Statutes, determining whether their endorsement or rejection in front of Congress, while sports rules would be decided by the Board, and would be implemented starting





January 1, 2025 if approved.

**Decisions:**

1. The Board voted in favor of the proposal with the Statutes 32.1 "The ICF Medical and anti-doping Advisory Committee shall be composed of five (5) members of which at least two (2) are doctors and at least two (2) are experts in any of the Allied Professions such as Sports Physiology, Sports Science, Sports Physiotherapy and Sports Psychology. At least one (1) should be of the other gender."
2. The Board voted not in favor of proposals with the Statutes 7.1 to reduce the official languages from 5 to 3, and suggested considering reducing the number of languages to English only.
3. The Board voted not in favor of proposal with the Statutes 22 to reduce the quorum of the congress from 50% to 30%.
4. The Board voted not in favor of the proposal with the Statutes 16.1 and 16.2, suggesting ICF cover travel and accommodation expenses for one delegate from each national federation to the Congress and cancel proxy. While efforts are underway to boost revenue or identify areas for budget cuts, the Board could not decide on allocating funds for such purposes.
5. The Board voted not in favor of the proposal with the Statutes 15.4, suggesting allowing the Congress to elect a chairperson rather than automatically having the ICF president chair the Congress.
6. The Board voted in favor of the proposal with the Statutes Byelaw to article 32.12, allowing the SUP Chair to be on the Board of directors.
7. The Board voted in favor of the proposal with the Statutes 11.3 & 11.4, aiming to avoid altering membership fees during active Olympic years.
8. The Board voted in favor of the reference correction in the Statutes 15.2.
9. The Board voted in favor of supporting the sports committees' positions regarding CR and PR rule changes, with the exception of those proposals related to name changes. It was agreed to decide on these matters after the Congress.
10. The Board voted and approved the proposals of sports rule changes, submitted by the sports committees.

**Congress planning**

**Decision:**

1. The board appointed RP, DW and JMP to conduct the congress delegate verification process.
2. Albert Woods OBE and JMP proposed as honorary ICF Members.
3. Updated Code of conduct approved.
4. Increase of ICF 2024 Congress Budget to 120,000k to allow for 100 year celebration.

**Action:**

1. Finalize and send for approval of the Board of Directors Code of Ethics and Nominations Committee Terms of Reference

**April 6th, London, UK**

**Miscellaneous discussion points**

1. TK announced the jury appointments for this year's ICF World Championships, highlighting a significant milestone: the appointment of an all-female jury for the SUP World Championships,



marking a historic first. Below are the details:

2024 ICF PARACANOE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS & PARALYMPIC QUALIFIER - Szeged, HUN (May 9-11)

- Jean Zoungrana
- Ola Olubunmi Oluode

2024 ICF junior and U23 canoe slalom World Championships - Liptovsky Mikulas, SVK (July 2-7)

- Andrej Jelenc
- Branko Lovric

2024 ICF JUNIOR AND U23 CANOE SPRINT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - Plovdiv, BUL (July 17-21)

- Greg Smale

2024 ICF WILDWATER WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS Sabero, ESP (August 14-18)

- Greg Smale
- Manuela Gawehn

2024 ICF CANOE SPRINT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - Samarkand, UZB (August 23-25)

- Chainarong Charoenruk
- Andrej Jelenc

2024 ICF CANOE MARATHON WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - Metkovic, CRO (September 19-22)

- Jovana Stanojevic
- Terry Best
- Andrej Jelenc

2024 ICF CANOE OCEAN RACING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - Madeira, POR (October 4-6)

- Ruud Heijselaar
- Jean Zoungrana

2024 ICF CANOE POLO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - Deqing, CHN (October 15-20)

- Jean Zoungrana
- Ruud Heijselaar
- Terry Best

2024 ICF DRAGON BOAT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - Puerto Princesa, PHI (October 31- November 3)

- Chainarong Charoenruk
- Budiman Setiawan

2024 ICF SUP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - Sarasota, USA (November 19-24)

- Cecilia Farias
- Martha Hernandez
- Ola Olubunmi Oluode

2. ICF Board of Directors approved the list of nine lawyers to the ICF Court of Arbitration retrospectively for 1 January 2024 .

- Mr. Mike Chambers (CAN)
- Mr. Adam Klevinas (CAN)
- Mr. Péter Pákay (HUN)
- Mr. Torres Septién Warren (MEX)
- Mr. Mario Santos (POR)
- Mr. Diego Ferrari (ARG)
- Ms. Brianna Quinn (AUS)
- Mr. Enric Ripoll (USA)
- Ms. Catherine Ordway (AUS)



3. Board approved ExCo recommendation to maintain the current membership fee for national federations
4. VR highlighted the difficulties faced by COPAC countries (Argentina, Cuba, and Venezuela) in transferring money to the ICF. MB proposed that all ICF invoices be paid by bank transfer or credit card, with exceptions for countries under international banking restrictions. The Finance Commission would keep a register of these countries and authorized cash collectors. The proposal was unanimously approved, emphasizing the need to minimize cash payments.
5. The Board approved the Ukrainian Canoe Federation's request for resolution regarding their debt to the ICF to maintain support for Ukraine. Legal implications for similar requests were discussed, emphasizing case-by-case reviews for consistent decision-making. The Board also noted many federations with outstanding debts, highlighting the need for a systematic approach. It was agreed that non-paying federations cannot vote but proposed a temporary compromise to avoid immediate expulsion of numerous members.
6. The Sierra Leone Canoe Federation's membership was questioned due to non-recognition by the NOC and submission of fake documents. Consequently, the Board approved the proposal to declare their membership invalid.
7. The Costa Rica Canoe Federation faced challenges following their president's passing. The NOC sought guidance on incorporating a new federation into the ICF. The Board decided to remove the former federation and have the new one start the process anew. Plans were made to meet with the NOC to expedite the process and ensure the new federation's attendance at the upcoming Congress.
8. Narelle Henderson introduced the use of Microsoft SharePoint to store meeting minutes and documents for easy access by board members, with the goal to streamline document management and ensure security. The board agreed to explore and provide feedback on the new system.
9. TK informed the Board about the ExCo's proposal to increase human and financial resources for developing Dragon Boat within the ICF's governance. While open to cooperation with IDBF, ICF will not give away the political responsibility entirely. Efforts are needed to convince national federations to support Dragon Boat within the ICF framework to prevent decline in participation. The proposal was supported by the board members.
10. CF provided an update on the progress of the transgender policy working group. The lead of the working group, Jane Gibson, was proposed as the acting chair of the medical commission, replacing Tim Brabant, who resigned. The Board unanimously approved her appointment.
11. Geoff Berkeley introduced the idea of a quarterly newsletter aimed at providing updates from ICF leadership, committees, and continental federations to national stakeholders. The newsletter, to be distributed via email and published on the website, aims to showcase the work of various entities within the ICF and increase visibility. The board expressed support for the initiative, emphasizing the need for transparency and broadening communication beyond specific disciplines.
12. RP updated the Board additional plans to celebrate the ICF's 100th anniversary. He highlighted



using the new French headquarters for celebrations and proposed three events during the Paris Olympic Games. A gala dinner is planned for the Congress in Turkey, along with entertainment and speeches. Progress on the 100-year book was also discussed, with efforts ongoing to collect historical photos and footage.

13. TK discussed the inclusion of canoe sprint in the Mediterranean Games and additional application of SUP. The organizers are supportive, and TK urged African federations around the Mediterranean Sea to participate, aiming for at least 15 out of 34 countries to compete, with a focus on nations like Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria.

14. The terms of reference for the Finance Commission were unanimously approved by the Board. These terms outlined the Commission's role as an advisory body aimed at aiding the Board in effective financial oversight, ensuring transparency, and providing recommendations.

### **Bidding and Allocation of ICF Events**

Following a series of impressive bid presentations, the Board proceeded to vote and officially confirmed the hosts for upcoming ICF events. TK announced the list of selected hosts, which is detailed below. And then he closed the meeting by thanking all Board members for their attendance and contributions.

- 2028 Canoe Marathon World Championships - Banyoles (ESP)
- 2028 Junior & U23 Canoe Sprint World Championships - Montemor-o-Velho (POR)
- 2025 Canoe Ocean Racing World Championships– Durban (RSA)
- 2026 Canoe Ocean Racing World Championships – Vila Joiosa (ESP)
- 2027 Canoe Ocean Racing World Championships – Teva I Uta (TAH)
- 2028 Canoe Ocean Racing World Championships – Cherbourg (FRA)
- 2026 Canoe Slalom World Cup – Augsburg (GER)
- 2026 Canoe Slalom World Cup – Vaires-sur-Marne (FRA)
- 2026 Canoe Slalom World Cup – La Seu (ESP)
- 2026 Canoe Slalom World Cup – Prague (CZE)
- 2026 Canoe Slalom World Cup – Tacen (SLO)
- 2028 Canoe Slalom Junior & U23 World Championships – Krakow (POL)
- 2025 Canoe Sprint Masters WCH-Montemor-o-Velho (POR)
- 2026 Canoe Sprint World Cup – Bratislava (SVK)
- 2026 Canoe Sprint and Paracanoe World Cup – Brandenburg (GER)
- 2026 Canoe Sprint World Cup – Szeged (HUN)
- 2025 SUP World Championships – Abu Dhabi (UAE)
- 2026 SUP World Championship – Sicily (ITA)
- 2025 Wildwater Canoeing Junior & U23 World Championships – Solkan (SLO)
- 2025 Wildwater Canoeing World Championships – Ceske Budejovice (CZE)
- 2028 Canoe Polo World Championships – (DEN)