



**MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
HELD ONLINE
21 May 2025**

INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION (ICF)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ONLINE

21 May 2025

Overview

This was the third meeting of the ICF Board of Directors in 2025, held online on 21 May. A quorum was formed in line with the ICF Statutes, with 30 Board members.

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. ICF President Activities & Information
3. ICF Office Administration
 - 3.1. Budapest Office
 - 3.2. Ongoing Recruitment Campaign
 - 3.3. TV Rights Strategy Updates
 - 3.4. ICF Finance Commission Meeting & Adoption of the Recommendations
 - 3.5. Debt management resolution
4. Organisational Review
5. Los Angeles 2028, Olympic & Paralympic Games
 - 5.1. Oklahoma City Announcement
 - 5.2. Olympic Competition Schedule draft (in discussion)
 - 5.3. LA28 Qualification systems Update
 - 5.4. IPC Open Days & Paralympic Programme
6. Brisbane 2032, Olympic & Paralympic Games
 - 6.1. 100 Day Review
 - 6.2. Canoe Venues Situation - Update
7. ICF Events Allocation
 - 7.1. 2026 ICF Wildwater World Championships
 - 7.2. 2026 ICF Events – Ongoing Targeted Dialogue
 - 7.3. Other ICF event information
8. Other Business
 - 8.1. 2032 Canoe Sprint Olympic Programme Working Group
 - 8.2. Multi-Sport Games
 - 8.3. 2025 ICF Jury Members
 - 8.4. Innovation Fund
9. Next Meetings
10. Closing Remarks

Participants:

Thomas Konietzko	TK	President	GER
Richard Pettit	RP	Secretary General	GBR
Cecilia Farias	CF	Vice President	ARG
Lluís Rabaneda i Caselles	LRC	Vice President	ESP
Luciano Buonfiglio	LB	Vice President	ITA
Jean Zoungrana	JZ	European Canoe Association President	FRA
Chainarong Charoenruk	CC	Asian Canoe Confederation President	THA
Toshi Furuya	TF	Canoe Sprint Committee Chair	JPN
Bridgitte Hartley	BH	Athlete Committee Chair	RSA
John Edwards	JE	Paracanoe Committee Chair	CAN
Budiman Setiawan	BS	Continental Representative - ASI	INA
Danielle Woodward	DW	Continental Representative - OCE	AUS
Ruud Heijsselaar	RH	Canoe Marathon Committee Chair	NED
Greg Smale	GS	Canoe Polo Committee Chair	GBR
Terry Best	TBE	Canoe Freestyle Committee Chair	GBR
Noémi Horváth	NH	SUP Committee Chair	HUN
Shao Yaping	SY	Continental Representative - ASI	CHN
Jane Gibson	JG	Medical and Anti-Doping Committee Chair	GBR
Li Xin	LX	Treasurer	CHN
Marian Sârbu	MS	Canoe Ocean Racing Committee Chair	BEL
Richard Fox	RF	Canoe Slalom Committee Chair	AUS
Olubunmi Ola Oluode	OO	Continental Representative - AFR	NGR
Dr. Luk Wai-Hung	LWH	Dragon Boat Commission Chair	HKG
Sebastian Gomez	SG	Pan American Canoe Federation President	URG
Victor G. Ruiz	VR	Continental Representative - PAM	PUR
Moirá Aston*	MA	Continental Representative - EUR	IRL
Peter Karai*	PK	Continental Representative - EUR	HUN
Andrej Jelenc	AJ	Continental Representative - EUR	SLO
Martha Hernandez Sanches	MHS	Continental Representative - PAM	MEX
Manuela Gawehn	MG	Wildwater Canoeing Committee Chair	GER

*New Board Members – First ICF Board Meeting

Excused:

João Manuel Da Costa Alegre Afonso	JDC	Confederation of African Canoeing President	STP
Maree Burnett	MB	Oceania Canoe Association President	NZL
Ahmed Mahamoud Abdoukader	AMA	Continental Representative - AFR	DJI

1. Introduction

- TK welcomed everyone and introduced new Board members Moira Aston (IRL) and Peter Karai (HUN).
- Apologies for absence sent by Maree Burnett in advance. Unfortunately, Joao Manual Da Costa Alegre was also unable to join due to travel commitment.
- Minutes of the 4 March BoD meeting were approved on 21 May 2025.
- No conflict of interest disclosed.
- Board members who are from nations for the event did not vote on their respective nation's event bid.

2. ICF President's Activities & Information

The President (TK) opened the meeting by providing an update on recent developments and key activities:

- The ICF continues to strengthen its position in China. The Hangzhou-based team has made tangible progress through targeted social media engagement. An example of this is the new partnership with Douyin (抖音) has been launched, ensuring that all ICF events will now be streamed live on the official ICF Douyin channel.
- The President (TK) and the Secretary General (RP) attended the IOC Session in Greece from 19 - 21 March, where Kirsty Coventry was elected as the first female President of the IOC. In addition, Tony Estanguet (FRA), triple Olympic gold medallist in canoe slalom, was approved as a new IOC Member.
- A key milestone was achieved with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ICF and UNITAR. The President expressed appreciation to LRC for playing a pivotal role in securing the partnership.
- The ICF is implementing a strategy to increase the presence of paddlesport disciplines in multi-sport events.
- Applications have been submitted for the inclusion of Canoe Polo and Paracanoe in the 2026 Asian Games and Asian Para Games.
- A MoU has been submitted to support the inclusion of Ocean Racing and Stand-up Paddling (SUP) in the next Lusophone Games, with the support of JDC. In addition, an MOU will be signed with the Association of Olympic Committees of Portuguese Official Language (ACOLOP).
- At the International World Games Association (IWGA) General Assembly in Madrid, the Mayor of Karlsruhe, Germany—host city for the 2029 World Games—confirmed the inclusion of a Dragon Boat proposal. During the Assembly, BH was also presented as a candidate for the IWGA Athlete Council, which will take place from 7-17 August in Chengdu, China.
- TK is preparing for an upcoming visit to Ukraine to attend the National Championships.
- The ICF has secured a new gold-level sponsor from China, Flying Eagle.
- The President proposed awarding the ICF Order of Merit to the outgoing IOC President, Dr Thomas Bach, in recognition of his exceptional service to the Olympic Movement, and his continued support for the role of paddlesport within it.

Decision: The Board approved awarding the Order of Merit to Thomas Bach.

3. ICF Office Administration

RP presented key points from the administration updates.

3.1. Budapest Office

RP provided an update on the new ICF headquarters in Budapest.

- Final documentation and tax number pending to activate bank account and sign lease.
- Office expected to open in July.

TK thanked the Hungarian political leadership for supporting the office setup.

3.2. Ongoing recruitment Campaign

RP shared updates on the current recruitment process.

- Manon Bocquet (FRA), Whitewater Discipline Manager, has been hired, previously involved with Paris 2024.
- David Bugar (HUN), Head of Sport, Balint Vekassy (HUN), Global Director of Sport & Budapest Headquarters, and Geoff Berkeley (GBR), Head of Communication & Public Relation, will be the first full time employees in the Hungarian office.
- Yingfei Huang (CHN), China Digital & Social Media Manager joins the team at the Hangzhou office.

The following positions are published on the ICF website from wave 1, wave 2 and 3 will follow.

Position	Location	Deadline to apply
<i>Wave 1</i>		
Head of Commercial & Sponsorship	Budapest (HUN)	1 June 2025
Head of Sport Information & Digital Innovation	Budapest (HUN)	1 June 2025
Office Administration Office	Budapest (HUN)	1 June 2025
Flatwater Discipline Manager	Budapest (HUN)	1 June 2025
Budapest Office Project Manager	Budapest (HUN)	1 June 2025
Africa & Europa Continental Manager	Budapest (HUN)	1 June 2025
<i>Wave 2 (To be published soon)</i>		
Digital Channel Manager	Budapest (HUN)	1 July 2025
Communication Coordinator	Budapest (HUN)	1 July 2025
Whitewater Coordinator	Budapest (HUN)	1 July 2025
Flatwater Coordinator	Budapest (HUN)	1 July 2025
Athlete & Entourage Manager	Budapest (HUN)	1 July 2025
<i>Wave 3 (To be published soon)</i>		
Licensing & partnership Coordinator	Budapest (HUN)	1 August 2025
Sport Information Coordinator	Budapest (HUN)	1 August 2025
Social Media Coordinator	Budapest (HUN)	1 August 2025

3.3. TV Rights Strategy Update

LRC provided updates on the partnership with Two Circles for TV rights and production:

- First event produced by Two Circles will be the upcoming ICF Canoe Sprint World Cup Poznan, Poland.
- New partnerships secured with Broadcasting RTP (Portugal) and ARD/ZDF (Germany).
- OTT platform launch planned by end of 2026 to be the main location for Paddlesport TV and digital content.

RP mentioned Two Circles was selected for their high-quality output and remote production capabilities, which reduce costs and ensure consistent delivery. A dedicated remote team based in Riga, Latvia will handle editing of all Paddlesport content to maintain quality and consistency.

TK congratulated RP, LRC, and Stuart Roach (GBR), TV & Broadcast Director, on securing this new partnership and the significant progress of the Broadcast and TV Rights Strategy.

3.4. ICF Finance Commission Meeting and Recommendations

RP reported on the Finance Commission (FC) meeting held on 3–4 April 2025 in Lausanne, Switzerland. Over the two days, meetings took place with BCU Bank and Deloitte. Maree Burnett (NZL), Chair and Farhad Aliyev (AZE), Nick Donald (GBR), Suzanne Britt (USA), are the members of the FC.

3.5. Debt management resolution

RP addressed the ongoing issue of unpaid membership fees, providing background on the current situation. He emphasised the importance of the ICF taking a firm and consistent approach in line with the Statutes, specifically Rule A.12.2.

Organisational Review

Cyril Nivel (CN), ICF Operations Director, presented updates on ICF's organisational review, including progress of the five working groups and their focus areas.

4. Los Angeles 2028, Olympic & Paralympic Games

TK announced that Hoichan Kwon (KOR) has been appointed Sport Manager by LA28. He is expected to move from his position as the ICF Events Team to LA 2028 in August 2025, pending visa approval.

4.1. Oklahoma City Announcement

TK confirmed Oklahoma City has been as the official venue for canoe slalom at LA 2028.

LRC noted that bi-weekly meetings are held with the Oklahoma organising committee and that LA28 and ICF have ongoing discussion on the competition schedule.

4.2. Competition Schedule Update

RP shared a draft schedule update for the LA 2028 Olympics.

4.3. Qualification systems Update (OQS)

LRC provides updates on Olympic Qualification System (OQS).

- Draft of the Canoe Sprint and Canoe Slalom OQS which will be completed by mid-June.
- Update to be shared with national and continental federations in July.
- Information exchange meetings will be planned during ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships in Milan and a selected Canoe Slalom event in August or early September to provide opportunity for feedback from NFs and key stakeholders.
- Final document in September will be presented for approval by the IOC.

IPC open Days & 2028 Paralympic Programme

JE reported on meetings he attended with CN, at the IPC Headquarters in Bonn, Germany, from 14–16 May.

- The Board was informed that Paracanoe remains a confirmed and valued part of the Paralympic Programme, with its athlete quota maintained for the Paralympic Games Los Angeles 2028.
- The ICF had submitted a request during the event programme review to include additional events, specifically the VL1 classification, for consideration.
- The IPC responded that no increase in the overall athlete quota would be permitted and instead proposed the option of replacing the existing KL1 event with the VL1 event.
- JC advised that replacing an existing event was not a viable solution and recommended that the ICF maintain the same event programme for LA 2028 as was successfully delivered at the Paralympic Games Paris 2024.

Decision: The Board approved the recommendation to retain the current Paracanoe event programme for the Paralympic Games Los Angeles 2028.

5. Olympic & Paralympic Games Brisbane 2032

5.1. 100 Day Review

TK introduced 100 Day Review Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure.

5.2. Canoe Venues Situation – Update

- The Redland Whitewater Centre was approved as part of the 100-Day Review.
- The initial proposal to host Canoe Sprint at the Rockhampton venue remains under discussion, with the technical review timeline currently being finalised.

- Additional venue options located closer to the Athlete Village, proposed during the 100-Day Review, must also be fully assessed and formally ruled out.

7. ICF Events Allocation

7.1. 2026 ICF Wildwater World Championships, Banja Luka

MG proposed the allocation of 2026 ICF Wildwater World Championships, Banja Luka.

Decision: The ICF BoD voted unanimously in favour of the allocation of 2026 ICF Wildwater World Championships, Banja Luka.

7.2. 2026 ICF events-Ongoing Targeted Dialogue

Event	City (NF)	Targeted Dialogue
2026 ICF Junior and U23 Canoe Sprint World Championships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halifax (CAN) • Mingachevir (AZE) 	Allocation pending: Online vote will be conducted
2026 ICF Canoe Sprint World Cups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montreal (CAN) 	Allocation pending: Online vote will be conducted
2026 ICF Canoe Marathon World Championships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argentina (ARG) • Mingachevir (AZE) 	Allocation pending: An online vote will be held once all technical visits have been conducted by mid-June.

8. Other Business

8.1. Working Group Canoe Sprint Programme Brisbane 32

TF presented the working group Canoe Sprint Programme Brisbane 32.

- First in-person meeting planned during the 2025 ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships, Milan, Italy.

8.2. Multi-Sports Games

TK presented Multi-Sport Games.

- ICF is actively working to increase the presence of canoeing disciplines in multi-sport events.
- Continental associations have been asked to complete a survey to provide an overview of multi-sport events and deadlines.
- This will support a joint strategy for broader inclusion of Paddlesport disciplines.

8.3. 2025 ICF Jury Members Nomination

CN presented the jury nominations for 2025 events.

- Emphasised the need for more jury members as some jury positions remain open.



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- A confirmation email will be sent next week to finalise availability and provide details.

8.4. Innovation Fund

RP presented the Innovation Fund updates.

- First meeting of the Innovation Fund is scheduled for 26 June.
- Proposals received from Oceania, Slovenia, Marathon Committee, and Italy.

Vice President Updates

LRC updated on partnership with UNITAR.

- ICF and UNITAR signed an MoU.
- UNITAR will support ICF in presenting projects related to education and environmental aspects.
- UNITAR will present their contributions to the ICF leadership team, President, Vice Presidents and Secretary General.

LRC mentioned ICF is exploring a second collaboration with the United Nations Habitat agency, which focuses on city planning.

- Goal is to integrate canoeing into city planning projects, ensuring new urban developments include accessible canoeing facilities.

CF introduced some updates on Development projects.

- Expressed concern about activities for the women's symposium and urged continents to confirm dates and details to ensure these important events take place
- Planned to deliver sustainability webinars.
- Stressed the need for fairness and consistent approach in require guarantees from all applicants for hosting events.

9. Next Meeting

- TK confirmed that the next BoD meeting will be communicate via email and the ExCo meeting will held on 21 August 2025.