

Honorary Secretary's Report

Due to the ongoing pandemic, very little orienteering has taken place in the past year but so much work has been taking place behind the scenes in the meantime.

Governance

Having achieved compliance with the Governance Code, our work has only begun in this area. Going forward, we have to maintain this compliance and the Governance Sub-Committee (made up of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Controller of Technical Standards) over the last 12 months has been working hard in this regard. Sport Ireland carried out a routine governance audit early last year which flagged a few issues which needed attention – these have now been largely addressed. Sport Ireland has also been organising webinars in difference aspects of governance in recent months which various members of the Governance Sub-Committee have attended where relevant and these have proved very useful. As part of the Governance Code, we are regularly required to review all our policy documents. The constitution was up for review this year – more on this later.

Fixtures

There may have been few events in the past year but much work has been done on the transition to a new online event registration system. This is now up-and-running and paper event registrations are no longer being accepted. There will be some bedding in required to allow everyone get used to it and it will be refined, with more features added over time. I am very confident it will significantly seed up and streamline event management on orienteering.ie

IOA – Change of Name to Orienteering Ireland

The constitution was last reviewed and amended at the 2018 AGM and, under the Governance Code, we are required to review it every three years. The main issue that review flagged was outdated references to organisations we deal with who've changed their names and some Executive positions as well. It also seemed a suitable time to address the issue of the name of the association that has resurfaced on numerous occasions over the past twenty years.

Here's a brief summery of the reasoning behind the proposal and why we wish to make the change now.

'Orienteering Ireland' would mean that the name of the sport is immediately obvious on all branding, communications material and also when introducing officers. 'Irish Orienteering Association' is pretty cumbersome and generally gets abbreviated to 'IOA'. This acronym is pretty meaningless outside the Irish orienteering community so we believe the organisation currently has little/no brand awareness.

The suggested name is in line with the naming convention used by many other Irish NGBs already, e.g. Athletics Ireland, Cycling Ireland, Sport Ireland, etc. It is increasingly the case that organisations that we deal with and people in the wider sporting community refer to us as 'Orienteering Ireland' because they are so used to that naming convention.

On why do this now, there are two reasons.

It is likely that the association will change to a CLG (company limited by guarantee) in the next few years to satisfy ever-more-rigorous governance requirements and provide enhanced protection to its Executive Committee and membership. It makes sense to address any change in name in advance of this change in legal status.

Secondly, we are currently in the process of upgrading the website under the hood and will be following this up with a cosmetic revamp. Again, a change in name would be much more sensible in advance of this work.

In summary, we feel this is an overdue and beneficial name change and we don't envisage any significant costs directly arising as a result.

Fergal Buckley

IOA Honorary Secretary