



The Board of Directors held a productive meeting in Lausanne at the International Olympic Committee headquarters. The Board was pleased to welcome the President of the IOC, Thomas Bach, who spoke on matters such as governing body collaboration, athlete participation in the Olympic Games, integrity and safeguarding as well as the important work being done to encourage gender equality within the sport movement. Additionally ASOIF President Francesco Ricci Bitti presented an overview of ASOIF and the work being done on behalf of the Summer IFs. President Bach invited the ITF Board to return to Lausanne when the new offices are completed in 2019, part of the aim to further strengthen ITF relations with the IOC and Olympic Movement.

During the Board meeting a wide range of issues were discussed, including Davis Cup and Fed Cup reforms, financial accounts, integrity matters, governance review and General Data Protection Regulations.

Budget and Strategic Initiatives

The Board approved the audited 2017 accounts, which showed good performance compared to budget and forecast; the overall operating result showed a \$0.5 million surplus and overall result for the year including investment return was a surplus of \$5.3m and accumulated reserves have increased to \$57.8m. With the positive results the Board approved continued investment in key strategic priorities to be funded from reserves.

The Board reviewed the ITF2024 objectives and priorities and the direct links with the budget and key strategic initiatives. Initiatives for 2018 /2019 are Governance Reform, Revenue Generation, Existing and New Events, Player Pathway and Development Opportunities. KPIs will be identified and developed and strategic documentation communicated to nations.

Player Pathway / Transition Tour Update

The Board reviewed the ongoing work on the Player Pathway strategy, including the ITF transition tour which will be launched in 2019. They reviewed the changes required to transition from 2018 to 2019, ranking point conversions, tournament organisation logistics, IPIN changes and the extensive communication process with nations, players and all stakeholders to prepare them for these changes in advance of 2019. A branding exercise is being conducted across all circuits to ensure clear identification and understanding of the player pathway and, as part of ITF2024 communications strategy, to give greater clarity of ITF involvement.

Fed Cup

The Board received a detailed feasibility study on format revisions including expanding the competition in 2019 to 16 teams with a final four in the finals week for Fed Cup in line with the ITF 2024 aim to propel the competition to its full potential. The Board will continue discussions prior to making a decision going forward.

Davis Cup

The Board continued its strategic review of the Davis Cup World Cup of Tennis Finals with the aim to propose changes for 2019 to the AGM at its meeting in August 2018 in Orlando, Florida. The proposal is subject to successful completion of due diligence and a long form agreement and ITF Executives will continue to meet with nations at upcoming Regional Association Meetings to discuss this exciting Davis Cup World Cup of Tennis Finals.

The Board received positive feedback from the trials during the first week of Davis Cup in 2018. Trials included a two-day format and best-of-three-set matches in Zones Group I and Group II, and a dead rubber policy and ability to nominate five players per team in Zones Group I and II as well as the World Group. Feedback thus far has been overwhelmingly positive and further analysis will take place during the second week of ties. The Davis Cup Committee and the Board of Directors will review analysis again in May after the second round of Davis Cup and decide further steps at that time.

The Board were updated on the Player and Tour Relations Strategy and advised Andre Sa from Brazil and Rennae Stubbs from Australia are now in place as Player Relations consultants.

Governance Review

The Board approved recommendations from the recently conducted Governance Review. A resolution will be proposed to the AGM to vest the power to amend Davis Cup and Fed Cup Regulations in the Board. In conjunction with this recommendation the Board agreed the need to investigate the option of an explicit provision enabling the membership to petition against any such decision and this will be reviewed prior to the next Board meeting.

Additionally the Board agreed to the recommendation for the introduction of a Code of Ethics to apply to Board of Directors, including nominees for elections during the election period; all Committee, Taskforce and Commission members, all Regional Association officials and National Association officials.

The Board reviewed criteria for members to move from Class C to Class B membership and for when a nation applies to increase its share allocation. The Board will continue to further refine this work.

Full details of the Governance Review and recommendations will be presented to the AGM in August.

Integrity

The Board reaffirmed its commitment to ensure the ITF's compliance with the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) coming into effect on 25 May 2018. Changes to administrative and operating procedures within the ITF to ensure compliance will require an additional budget expenditure by reallocating some funds from the Strategic Initiatives but not increasing the budget. The GDPR rules require the appointment of a Data Protection Officer. Monitoring of compliance will continue throughout 2019 and beyond.

The Board were advised that the Independent Review Panel (IRP) Interim Report is expected to be released in late April.

Tennis Rules

The Board approved a recommendation from the Rules of Tennis Committee for a temporary variation to Rule 29(a) for the 2018 Grand Slams. The rule concerns continuous play and the application is to increase the maximum time between points from 20 seconds to 25 seconds.

Padel

The Board was apprised of the Tennis Europe initiative concerning the management of Padel events for its member nations.

Communication

The President advised that he, the COO, and several key ITF staff have attended the various ITF Regional Association meetings held so far in 2018 in order to update and engage member nations in all aspects of ITF work and discuss matters that will be brought to the 2018 Conference and AGM in Orlando.

International Tennis Rating

The Board reviewed and approved in principle a recommendation from the Development Advisors Committee to implement a new International Tennis Rating that can be used by all nations beginning in January 2019. The Board will be reviewing detailed budget breakdowns before implementation.

Staff Overview

The Board received an overview of the staff structure at ITF HQ in Roehampton. Headcount has increased as a reflection of strategic priority work and ongoing project work. Due to the GDPR and transition tour work a major overhaul is taking place in ICT with an emphasis on improving our ability to manage the needs of the ITF and successfully deliver the Strategic Initiatives through rigorous project management.

Dave Haggerty
President