

DanceSport Jurisdiction in New Zealand

This article attempts to explain sport governance and how it relates to dancesport. It also seeks to dispel some myths being circulated in the New Zealand on some social network sites.

Sport Governance

The concept of Sport Governance comes from the Olympic Charter and is applied to all sports. Any entity claiming to be a “sport” that does not conform with this structure is “sport” in name only. No sport can or would be taken seriously that falls outside of the Olympic family and does not adhere to the Olympic Charter and values.

The Olympic Charter recognizes three key governance structures:

1. International Federations (IFs) - one for each sport
2. National Olympic Committees (NOCs) - one for each country
3. National Sport Federation (NSFs) - one for each sport within each country

The NOCs form the general assembly of the International Olympic Committee. The IFs are generally recognised by the IOC and form the general Assembly of SportAccord. The NSFs form the general assembly of the IF for its sport; and the general assembly for the NOC for its country. This is summarised in the following diagram as it relates to New Zealand.

SportAccord	International Olympic Committee
International Federation <i>World DanceSport Federation</i>	National Olympic Committee <i>New Zealand Olympic Committee</i>
National Sport Federation <i>New Zealand DanceSport Association (DanceSport New Zealand)</i>	

Jurisdiction within New Zealand

The jurisdiction for the national governance of a sport within New Zealand lies with the NSF. For dancesport this is DanceSport New Zealand. There is a misconception that the WDSF Presidium has control over national dancesport governance. This is false.

WDSF must act within its own constitution where it clearly enacts this authority:

1. In the PREAMBLE:

The WDSF “is the international federation governing all aspects of DanceSport worldwide, either directly through its own organs, or through its national member bodies,...”. That is to say, the NSFs for dancesport are considered part of the WDSF governance structure.

2. The PREAMBLE goes on to assert:

“Each member of WDSF is the sole recognised representative of DanceSport in its country...”. In other words, there can only be one governing authority for each country.

3. In its OBJECTS: (Article 2)

“to advise and assist its member bodies with their work in their own countries”. This is the limit of control the WDSF Presidium has over an NSF. This allows each NSF to act freely and independently of the WDSF within its own country.

These three statements taken together allows one to conclude the NSFs are the national governing bodies for dancesport within the countries of the World and that they exercise this national authority freely and independently of the WDSF Presidium.

The national governance of dancesport within New Zealand therefore lies exclusively with DanceSport New Zealand and may not be overruled.

Relationship to the NZD&DC

DanceSport New Zealand has made it clear in numerous press releases that it has had, and continues to have serious concern with the governance, operation and direction of the NZD&DC and from 1 May 2011 severed any legal obligations to the NZD&DC.

DanceSport New Zealand does not wish to affect any dance athlete that may want to continue to participate within the NZD&DC system and has therefore given sufficient recognition to NZD&DC events to enable dancers to simultaneously hold NZD&DC registration and an athlete licence permitting participation abroad and in the WDSF international competition system.

DanceSport New Zealand has no plans to reverse this position although it continues to be concerned about antics by organisers within the NZD&DC system who deliberately schedule major championships over the top of other existing major championships forcing dancers who in the past have attended both to choose one over the other.

Clarification

In light of the constitutional relationship between DNZ and the WDSF the following often misinterpreted excerpt from the WDSF website can be correctly understood.

“A competition that is not listed and registered by either IDSF[sic] or an IDSF[sic] National Member Body is presumed to be unregistered, and therefore is presumed to be outside the IDSF[sic] system. The IDSF[sic] Presidium may take action against any person or group associated with IDSF[sic] or an IDSF[sic] Member Body who take part in unregistered competition in any whatever[sic] official capacity.”

The WDSF Presidium has no authority to determine a national dancesport matter and is thereby entirely reliant on the position of the WDSF Member Body for the country. The word “presumed” is not conclusive. What is intended by this excerpt is that the NSF will determine events that WDSF registered athletes may dance in at a national level and that

the WDSF will enforce this internationally. DanceSport New Zealand has made its national position on this abundantly clear.

International Situation

DanceSport New Zealand continues to be concerned by the international controversies which are beyond its control. DNZ prefers instead to make a real and positive difference, and is focused on matters that it can influence which includes the long overdue development of New Zealand dancesport.