

Status Report to the 2022 ISU Congress on the Four Year Plan 2018/19-2021/22

Committee/Commission: ISU Council/ISU Secretariat

Project/Function/Area of Activity: General Administration

The ISU Council and ISU Secretariat have performed activities according to plan and have achieved the results and benefits forecast in the 2018/19-2021/22 Four Year Plan.

Subsequent to the 2018 Congress the following areas required specific attention:

The Covid-19 pandemic had a huge effect on the general administration of the ISU from March 2020 onwards. Many ISU Events were cancelled with a subsequent temporary drop in activity and working hours for some members of staff. The ISU applied for and obtained from the Swiss government some support for the salaries of ISU employees who were not active for all of their usual contracted hours. On the other hand, especially for the sport, digital and ISU Event management related activities, the pandemic resulted in a substantial increase in the workload, the continued need for urgent problem solving and crisis management and the necessity to adapt to new ways of working and dealing with ongoing stress situations. The resulting threat to the well being of the concerned employees is reflected in the substantial increase in accumulated overtime and unused vacation days. Consideration is being given to further strengthen the ISU Secretariat staffing through additional reinforcements with the goal of maintaining a crisis-resistant team working in a healthy and safe environment.

The ISU Secretariat Staff highly appreciated the changes adopted in the 2021 Constitution providing opportunities for advancement and legitimacy in terms of job titles and official recognition within the operational areas of responsibility performed by the ISU Secretariat staff.

The redesigned version of the ISU website was maintained and enhanced and social media campaigns increased the interest and interaction of fans worldwide. From 2019/20 all ISU Events were streamed on YouTube. It was planned to hold the first ISU Figure Skating Awards show at the 2020 ISU World Figure Skating Championships, but as the Championships were cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the show was instead successfully held online. An abbreviated version of the show was also held online in 2021, with a reduced number of awards because of the cancellation of so many ISU Events during the 2020/21 season. In addition, the regular ongoing media activities were maintained and expanded. The new ISU Corporate identity, including an updated logo and new logos for all five sport disciplines, was fully launched in 2019. Two new members of staff, Ms. Chloé Burkhardt and Ms. Naomi Cadosch, joined the Media Team in November 2021 and January 2022 respectively.

The ISU Secretariat continued to cooperate in the issuing of the necessary Communications prepared by the Council, Technical Committees and other ISU bodies.

The Sports Directors and related staff continued to cooperate with the Technical Committees, and Sports Technical Directors in the administration of their activities. In the area of Event Management, the Secretariat continued its assistance in ensuring a proper coordination among all stakeholders, ensuring well-run ISU Events and the proper implementation and protection of the ISU's commercial agreements. Mr. David Broere joined the ISU in 2021 as Event Manager for Speed Skating and a new Marketing Manager (digital/data), Ian Treseder, joined the Marketing team in October 2021. The ISU Secretariat cooperated with the ISU President in the finalization of commercial and TV rights agreements covering almost all ISU disciplines world-wide.

The ISU Secretariat staff, in particular but not limited to the Development Program Director and the Internal Controller, cooperated with the Council and specific Working Groups established by the Council to address the areas of Good Governance, Sustainability and Athlete Safeguarding, which are all areas of increasing importance and activity.

The Anti-Doping administration continued to represent a significant workload. Anti-Doping administrative staff were involved in implementing 'Pure as Ice', the ISU's clean sport educational program, at ISU Events. From the season 2019/20, the ISU has taken on the arrangements for and funding of in-competition testing and, as ever, a number of doping cases required the daily and labor-intensive attention of the ISU Secretariat, in particular the ISU Anti-Doping Director the Legal Advisors and the Chair of the ISU Medical Commission. A new intern, Mr. Ashley Artinghal, joined the Anti-Doping staff in June 2019. The Anti-Doping Director also acts as the ISU Ombudsperson for complaints about harassment and abuse submitted in accordance with Article 7 of the ISU Code of Ethics.

In the area of travel services for ISU Office Holders and appointed ISU Officials, during 2018/19 and the start of 2020 the ISU in-house Travel Manager continued to deal with an ever-increasing number of travel arrangements. The Covid-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of many ISU Events with a consequently huge drop in the number of flight reservations, followed by a large amount of complex work to obtain reimbursements and postponements. Taking into account the savings on travel agent commissions and increased efficiency thanks to a proactive approach, this ISU Secretariat position continues to ensure overall cost savings in this area.

A new full-time Internal Controller Ms. Loraine Waeber, was hired from January 2020 to implement the ISU Internal Control Systems, subject to review by the External Auditors, deal with the budgeting processes and when necessary carry out checks on decentralized activities (e.g. Development Projects).

With the resumption of most ISU Events in 2021/22 and the continuously increasing workload, the staffing of the ISU Secretariat increased slightly. As of May 2022, the Secretariat includes 18 full-time employees and 6 part-time employees, plus the Director General (23.2 full-time equivalent). This remains a low head-count compared to other similar organizations. The limited turnover of staff, with the advantage of acquiring and maintaining valuable expertise in the specialized area of sports administration, will remain a key factor for the continued smooth running of the ISU administration.

May 2022