

**OCEANIA SQUASH FEDERATION
NINTH GENERAL MEETING
APIA, SAMOA
SEPTEMBER, 2007.**

OFFICERS' REPORT

I have pleasure in presenting this ninth report on behalf of the Officers of the Oceania Squash Federation covering the two year period from October 2005 when the Federation last held its General Meeting in Rarotonga, Cook Islands at the time of the Seventh Oceania Championships.

The following Officers of the Federation were elected at the Rarotonga meeting and held office for the two year period:

Col Clapper (Australia)	President & Executive Director
Gary Robertson (Norfolk Island)	Vice President
Butch Gifford (New Zealand)	Vice President
Carol Kawaljenko (Australia)	Vice President
Etuale Sefo (Samoa)	Vice President
Francoise Meira (New Caledonia)	Vice President
Michael Davis (Australia)	Finance Director

Significant events, initiatives and issues concerning the Federation over the two year period include the following:

1. The number of OSF member countries remained at eight, namely:

Australia	New Zealand
Cook Islands	Norfolk Island
Fiji	Papua New Guinea
New Caledonia	Samoa

The OSF continued to maintain Associate Membership of the WSF for Fiji, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Tahiti.

Efforts to attract new member countries to both the OSF and WSF is a priority of the Federation, however, the task is extremely difficult without the injection of Government funding, primarily to establish court facilities.

OSF member countries are to be commended for their commitment and support to furthering the development of Squash in the Oceania Region.

2. General Meetings of the Federation continue to be held on a biennial basis and during the period of the Oceania Championships/Pacific Games/Pacific Mini Games. The previous two meetings held in Suva (2003) and Rarotonga (2005) were very lengthy, and proposals were made in 2005 that a full day be set aside for future OSF General Meetings. This is extremely difficult when fitting into a Games program. However, the current arrangement is in need of review, including the legal requirement for annual general meetings with the possible change in status of the OSF Constitution.
3. The Federation continues to be supported by a number of standing committees which play a valuable role in the region. Sincere appreciation is extended to the Convenors and members of these various committees. The following Convenors were appointed in Rarotonga and served the two year period:

Butch Gifford (New Zealand)	Development & Coaching
Neven Barbour (New Zealand)	Major Games
Greg Hutchings (Australia)	Competitions
Chris Sinclair (Australia)	Referees & Rules
Barry Gardiner (New Zealand)	Disciplinary & Appeals
Mike Greig (New Zealand)	Technical
Peter Wright (Australia)	Masters Squash

The OSF Referees & Rules Committee has been particularly active both in supporting the WSF in its review process of refereeing structures etc. and in promoting the awareness of refereeing throughout the region, improving the knowledge of the game generally, and upskilling refereeing standards generally.

The Development & Coaching Committee has also been active, particularly with the development of resource material.

A warm thank you is extended to the Convenors and members of all our Standing Committees for their efforts during the last two years.

- The Federation also fulfilled its obligation to the World Squash Federation with the appointment of OSF representatives on various WSF Committees. The following were appointed to represent the OSF:

Greg Hutchings (Australia)	Competitions Committee
Butch Gifford (New Zealand)	Development & Coaching Committee
Ken Watson (Australia)	Development & Coaching Committee
Jeff Wollstein (Australia)	Development & Coaching Committee
Barry Gardiner (New Zealand)	Disciplinary & Appeals Committee
Sarah Fitz-Gerald (Australia)	Olympics & Major Games Committee - recently appointed
Chris Sinclair (Australia)	Referees & Rules Committee and Rules Sub-Committee
Neven Barbour (New Zealand)	Technical Committee

- The Oceania Squash Championships continue to be a priority activity for the OSF, whether as a stand alone event or as part of the Pacific Games or Pacific Mini Games.

The Seventh Oceania Squash Championships took place in October 2005 and were hosted in brilliant fashion by the Cook Islands Squash Association. Thank you to Grant Priest, Robert Skews and their wonderful team of hard working and dedicated supporters for presenting a well organised and super friendly event.

Six countries competed in the Championships, and in addition to the men's and ladies individuals, doubles squash was demonstrated to prepare players for the South Pacific Games in Samoa.

Due to the absence of squash facilities in Palau, it was not possible to hold the Seventh Championships under the umbrella of the 2005 South Pacific Mini Games.

The traditional Cook Islands Open Championships immediately followed the conclusion of the Oceania Championships.

6. The XIIIth South Pacific Games presents a magnificent venue for Squash in Apia, Samoa, with new squash courts at the multi-purpose Sports facility and at the University Campus. Significantly, each venue includes both singles and doubles courts to cater for a heavy squash program which includes medal competition in Men's and Ladies Teams, Men's and Ladies Singles, Men's, Ladies & Mixed Doubles.

The Eighth Oceania Squash Championships take place under the umbrella of these Games.

Appreciation is extended to Etuale Sefo, Sam Lolagi, Norman Wetzell and the other volunteer workers from Samoa Squash for all their work in preparing the Squash event for these Games. Also to the Games Organisers we extend extreme appreciation of the OSF.

And to the Australian and New Zealand Referees (Dawn Moggach, Karim Langer, Sandra Tinkler and Pauline Boyle) who have travelled to Apia at their own expense to officiate at the Games, the Squash community is extremely grateful.

Appreciation must also be extended to Butch Gifford (Tournament Director) and Chris Sinclair (Refereeing Director) for their role in ensuring the success of the Games event.

7. Planning for the Ninth and Tenth Oceania Championships is progressing, with great anticipation of returning once again to Rarotonga, Cook Islands in 2009 for the Pacific Mini Games and to Noumea, New Caledonia for the 2011 Pacific Games.

For both Games we are hopeful of having new Squash facilities which include Doubles Courts.

8. Junior development remains a major challenge for the OSF and the region, particularly in respect of opportunities for young developing players in the smaller countries and remote areas of Australia. There is a high demand for greater technology tools and resource material to counter the vast distances and expensive travel costs within the region.

The future of the Oceania Junior Age Squash Championships is a key issue to be addressed by the OSF and the incoming Officers as part of the region's strategic direction for junior development.

9. The OSF obtained funding from the WSF for nominated coaching development programmes in the region, with additional funding provided by the OSF.

Funding was allocated towards programmes in Cook Islands, Fiji and Norfolk Island. Further funding was obtained locally, and in the case of Fiji, funding was obtained from AUSAID. The OSF is extremely appreciative of the funding support received from the WSF for this positive initiative, which hopefully will be repeated in the future.

AUSaid funding was also obtained to assist in PNG's junior coaching and development programme.

10. Elite players from the Oceania region continue to perform well on the world scene, particularly sisters Natalie and Rachel Grinham, David Palmer and Stewart Boswell of Australia and Shelly Kitchen of New Zealand who have high rankings with PSA and WISPA.

Australia and New Zealand invest significantly in elite player programmes, which is extremely important for furthering the development of our sport in the region.

11. Masters Squash continues to play an important role in the Oceania region. In supporting Masters Squash, the Oceania Masters Championships are held each year. The 2006 Championships were an outstanding success and were hosted by Norfolk Island Squash with over 70 competitors enjoying keen competition and excellent hospitality of the Norfolk community. The 14th Oceania Masters were also hosted by Norfolk Island in July 2007, and a report on this will be delivered by Norfolk Island at the General Meeting.
12. The 2006 Commonwealth Games took place in Melbourne, Australia in March, 2006. Squash was one of the competition sports and featured prominently in the Games program. It attracted large spectator interest and achieved above average television ratings.

There was a representation of players from 28 Commonwealth countries contesting the various events, which included Men's and Ladies Singles and Men's, Ladies and Mixed Doubles. From the Oceania region, it was particularly pleasing to see a number of our smaller countries participating in the Squash competition. Other than Australia and New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Norfolk Island fielded players in the Squash events.

The Squash competition was extremely well conducted, and congratulations must go to all the organisers and volunteer workers, including Greg Hutchings and Chris Sinclair who played significant roles in the administration of the Games Squash event.

I had the privilege of attending the Games on behalf of the OSF, and meeting with officials of the WSF, Government Officials and those of other sports in addition to our Oceania players and their sponsors and coaches.

13. The Oceania region was also graced with another world squash event, when Squash New Zealand and the city of Palmerston North hosted the 14th World Junior Men's Individual and Teams Championships in July 2006. 19 countries were represented at the Championships.

This major event was well staged, and congratulations are extended to the organisers and supporters in New Zealand for hosting a magnificent championships.

It was the culmination of 2 years planning, organisation and facility development to host the event. An Educational resource was developed in conjunction with the event to link schools and clubs with Squash New Zealand's microcourt programme.

14. The World Doubles Championships were also hosted in our region prior to the Commonwealth Games at the Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre in Australia. Congratulations are extended to Squash Australia and the Victorian Squash Federation for hosting the Championships.
15. The 3rd World Deaf Games took place in Melbourne, Australia during the reporting period. The Deaf Games signifies that Squash can be played by a wide section of the community. The Australian Deaf Squash Association has now become an associate member of Squash Australia – something other members may look at fostering.
16. Unfortunately, PNG was unable to host the PNG Squash International in 2006. This prestige event was a success in 2004 and 2005 and attracted a high calibre of PSA players. The Oceania Men's Open Championship was linked to the International. The OSF continues to seek a member country or promoter to host the Oceania Open Men's and Ladies Championship events.
17. The five year Squash Ball agreement between the OSF & Dunlop International is providing developing countries with a valuable resource, particularly for use in their junior development programmes and major events. The Squash Balls are used exclusively in all OSF Championship events, including the South Pacific Games.

Appreciation is extended to Dunlop for their continuing support and sponsorship towards squash in the Oceania region.

The agreement is due for re-negotiation after 2007, and a less costly arrangement for shipment of the balls needs to be addressed in a new agreement.

18. The OSF continues to maintain a close working relationship with the WSF, including support and cooperation of its initiatives. The Federation has been very capably represented on the world body by Gerard DeCourcy as Oceania Regional Vice-President to the WSF until his recent election to a WSF Vice-President position.

Thank you Gerard for your contribution to Oceania Squash and we welcome John Holland who takes over Gerard's role.

19. The Olympic Sports Federations of Oceania (OSFO) and the Oceania National Olympic Committees (ONOC) are important organisations that foster, promote, facilitate and coordinate the development of sport in the Oceania region. The OSF is a member of these organisations, representing the sport of Squash and its member countries in all aspects of regional organisation and development. Arrangements were made in 2005 and 2006 for a representative of the OSF to attend the annual general meeting and conference of OSFO – Frank Chan, President of Squash Fiji in 2005 and Etuale Sefo, an OSF Vice President in 2006.
20. The continued support and involvement in both OSFO and ONOC is seen as an important and integral aspect of the OSF's administration.
21. The Federation's financial position is reasonably sound. However, with its small funding base and limited reserves, it continues to be financially vulnerable and is severely restricted in undertaking initiatives that further

develop Squash in the region. Additional financial pressure will be imposed on the Federation in the coming period with increased costs being levied, including those resulting from the newly adopted Charter for the Pacific Games and Pacific Mini Games. Increases in membership fees are proposed for a number of countries in the coming period.

22. Special recognition must be given to Australia and New Zealand for their contribution to Squash in the region, especially in the area of financial and resource support.
23. The financial accounts of the Federation for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2007 have been duly audited for presentation at the 2007 General Meeting. Sincere appreciation is once again extended to our Auditor, Peter Hurwood, F.C.A. for undertaking the audit. Peter has continued as the Federation's Auditor since 1992 without any form of remuneration.
24. My sincere thanks go to all those who have supported and assisted me over the last two years, especially the Officers of the Federation and Convenors of the Standing Committees. I must also record the enormous amount of assistance and support provided by my wife Lorel, who has continued to give her services willingly in helping the Federation, and without that support I could not have fulfilled the dual role to the extent required.

Finally, it is again a pleasure to present this report to the Meeting on behalf of the Officers, who are committed to working towards furthering the development of Squash in the Oceania region.

Colin J. Clapper
President & Executive Director
August 2007.