



2023 WBSC - Oceania Congress

Saturday 4th March 2023

Time: 9 am – 12 pm

GNOC Conference Room, Guam

DRAFT MINUTES

1. **Attendances / Roll Call Attendees** – Laurent Cassier, Rex Capil, Vaughan Wyber (BNZ) Inoke Niubalavu (FBSA), Tony Giles (SNZ), Bob Steffy (GBSF), Chet Gray, Glenn Williams (BA), Rosie Williams (SA), Carolyn Ngiraidis (PBSF), FJ Sokau (PBSF), Jake Scaliem (FSMBSA), Herman Kirtol (CNMIBSA), Mark Flores (CNMIBSA), Austen Jurelang (MIBSA), Joey Miranda III (GBSA)

Video - David Durand (NCBSA), Malakai Kaufu (TBSA), Sam Vea (TBSA), Louis Solaita (ASBA), Francis Deve (SIBSA)

Observers:, President Riccardo Fraccari WBSC, Aki Huang WBSC , Marco Ienna WBSC, Rick Blas GNOC/ONOC,

Total number of voting delegates attending for the Congress in Guam: 13

Video conference delegates attending: 5

2. **Apologies:** David Hynes (BA), Martin Rara (SIBSA), Johan Doiwale (SIBSA), Marcus Langkilde, (ABA), Harry Keket (PNGSF), Megan Crockett (Baseball New Zealand)
*joined 1:48:00 online
3. **Declare any conflict of interest**
4. **Welcome – WBSC – Oceania Congress** – Laurent and Rex provided a pray before starting the Congress. Chet confirmed there will be 16 voting members, the majority vote will be nine. Bob welcomed everyone to Guam and acknowledged the leaders of Oceania baseball and softball.
5. **Keynote Speaker: WBSC President Fraccari** – Riccardo acknowledged the second general assembly and discussed the progress of WBSC since the first congress in 2014, including the merger of Oceania baseball and softball in 2018 and the Tokyo Olympics in 2021. He discussed the recovery of sport in the region, with 11 international tournaments in 2023, and the need to adapt and ensure baseball and softball keep up with the demands of new generations. He discussed online academies, Baseball5 development,

and esports and encouraged members to continue looking at new opportunities to maintain a strong foundation of athletes and communities. Riccardo reflected on the inaugural Baseball5 World Cup in Mexico which exceeded expectations and welcomed new countries, and that they hope to see more representation from Oceania at the next event. He also discussed increasing social media presence and strengthening the WBSC brand ahead of the 2032 Olympic games in Brisbane.

In 2022, WBSC was the highest-ranking of all Olympic international federations. WBSC has supported Oceania with funding (2017 – \$134,000, 2018 - \$30,000, 2019 - \$50,000, 2020 – \$65,000, 2021 – \$6,000). All requests were supported as WBSC works hard to boost relations with IOC and national economies to help national federations receive Olympic Solidarity funds. During the last quadrennial, approval was given to three projects: two for the Development of a National Sport System in Micronesia (\$30,000 USD) and in Palau (\$22,350 USD) and one for Tokyo Team Support Grant for Australia for \$100,000 USD.

Due to increased collaboration between WBSC and IOC, a budget of \$140,000 USD has already been secured for National Sport System (\$40,000 USD) and Team Support Grant in Micronesia (\$100,000 USD). WBSC members can still benefit from Olympic Solidarity programs in 2021-24 cycle, as Baseball5 is one of the official sports in the Youth Olympic Games in Dakar in 2026. Oceania receives a very big portion of resources, with \$510,350 allocated since 2017 – an average allocation of approximately \$130,000 per year given two years of inactivity with the pandemic.

This year, the development system is changing. All national federations need to apply directly to the continental association to seek assistance with development programs.

6. **Previous Minutes WBSC Oceania Congress** – A motion to approve the previous WBSC Oceania minutes and WBSC Oceania minutes was moved by Laurent and seconded by Tony Giles. Approved

7. Reports

7.1 VP BB/SB Reports Mr. Laurent Cassier/ Rex Capil

Laurent provided an overview of the past 10 years in the region and discussed the events calendar for world competitions with the Oceania region receiving spots every year. WBSC Oceania has organised regional competitions to qualify for the World Cups (U12, U15, U18, U23, Open, Women, and Baseball5), offering equal opportunities for north and south countries to host. He mentioned the revival of the Australian Professional League raising the standard of players, the 2022 Pacific Mini Games in Saipan with the return of the Solomon Islands, and ranking points in 2023. He also discussed the benefits of Baseball5 - with the help of WBSC, Oceania sent two people to Cuba to learn about Baseball5 and support new programs in schools and communities.

WBSC Oceania held five to eight meetings each year to ensure transparency, democratic discussion, and voting on all issues. WBSC Oceania is the only continental organisation to draw up a strategic plan and is proud of the objectives and results achieved. The WBSC has directly helped the region with \$50,000, used for administrative expenses and to support members traveling to regional competitions. Direct support has been given to countries in the region, most notably \$30,000 given to American Samoa in 2014 to facilitate travel to Guam for regional competitions.

Laurent and Rex welcomed WBSC President Fraccari back to present a Baseball5 World Cup Snapshot. He discussed the history of Baseball5 and explained why it's important to attract new players and offer a faster, more accessible alternative to traditional baseball. He also clarified that Baseball5 will not replace baseball or softball but will reinforce diamond sports and show the IOC that WBSC is attracting and supporting the younger generation. Teacher toolkits and coaching clinic resources are available.

In his co-chair address, Rex reflected on softball's success in recent years, including a silver medal to Australia in the U19 World Cup hosted by New Zealand in March 2020 just before COVID shutdowns. Australia leads the way in terms of women's softball, representing at the 2020 Olympics held in 2021 and the World Games. Softball New Zealand stepped up and hosted the Men's World Cup last November and December with Australia winning gold.

He noted development, World Cup qualifiers, and accessibility as challenges in the region, which is why a strategic plan was prioritised to secure global development funding. A lot of funding and support has been channeled through to the Fiji development program, with this opportunity available to all Oceania countries. He urged WBSC Oceania members to stay united and work together to enhance baseball and softball.

7.2 Secretary General Report

Mr. Chet Gray

The Secretary General report was tabled, and Chet discussed challenges facing WBSC Oceania, including communication with the change of personnel and regional qualification events. When teams pull out of qualifiers last minute, the burden is put on the host and the region's credibility suffers. All confirmed participants are asked to do everything possible to meet their commitments and reach out to WBSC Oceania for assistance if needed. Chet acknowledged the passing of Ralph Tarasomo of Papua New Guinea Baseball and Softball Confederation and Wayne Durbidge who was involved in Australian and Oceania baseball for many years.

Motion to approve report Vaughn, seconded Louis – carried

7.3 Financial Reports 2020 - 22

Mr. Chet Gray

Chet discussed the year-end 2020, 2021, and 2022 reports, noting two \$50,000 investments from WBSC and the development officer grants offered to all countries. Fiji is a successful example of this program, which provides financial support for a development officer to run baseball and softball clinics.

Chet explained the financial governance, and how WBSC Oceania does not commit to projects if the funds will not be there in the future. Adjustments are made as needed to ensure stability and support. The continental grant program is promising and should provide greater stability moving forward.

Motion to approve report Vaughn, seconded Louis – carried

8. Election of Officers

Motion to approve Chet Gray and Aki Huang as election scrutineers. Moved by Rex and seconded by Tony – approved

8.1 President

Chet noted that Rex Capil (NZ) withdrew his nomination for president, so Robert Steffy (Guam) was uncontested for the presidency. Congratulations and thank you to Bob.

8.2 Vice President – Baseball

Glenn Williams (AUS) and Vaughn Wyber (NZ) up for election. Vaughn received majority votes and was elected Vice President – Baseball.

8.3 Vice President – Softball

Rex Capil (NZ) and Rosie Williams (AUS) up for election. Tony Giles withdrew his nomination. Rex received majority votes and was elected Vice President – Softball.

8.4 Secretary General / Treasurer

Sole nomination (Chet Gray) for Secretary General/Treasurer, so no election required. Thank you to Chet for his continued service.

8.5 Executive Committee members – four (4)

Inoke Niubalavu (FBSA), Tony Giles (SNZ), Carolyn Ngiraidis (PBSF), and Glenn Williams (BA) elected to the WBSC Oceania Executive Committee.

9. Amendments to the Articles of Association, Codes or Rules

Received no amendments to the Articles of Association, Codes or Rules. Delegates were encouraged to raise points during the workshop for the new executive board to consider prior to the next congress.

10. Any Other General Business – Committees

The executive board will consider committees with the Articles of Association moving forward.

Motion to destroy the voting papers, approved.

Motion for Palau to host WBSC Congress in June 2025, coinciding with the Pacific Games.

Feedback noted that in the future, it may be more feasible for countries that are hosting both baseball and softball events to hold Congress.

Moved by Carolyn and seconded by Bob. Approved

11. Closing Remarks.

WBSC President Riccardo Fracarri reiterated there is no competition between Baseball5 and baseball/softball, they are trying to grow the sport at all levels. Rex thanked Bob and Guam for hosting. Bob thanked everyone for coming and said it is a pleasure to welcome all our regional brothers and sisters to unify baseball and softball in Oceania.

Meeting closed – 12:45 pm