



## Congress 2021

# MANAGEMENT REPORT

Secretary General - Sue Liell-Cock

The IRF progressed forward in giant steps over the past two years since our last Congress. In late 2019, we received GAISF Observer Status; and despite not being able to hold our World Rafting Championships in 2020 and 2021, we were accepted as a signatory of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Code in October this year.

Many efforts went into improvements in most sectors of the IRF including defining Para Raft Racing with highly respected and accredited para authorities in preparation to hold legitimate and respected para competitions. Additionally, we reviewed and published a series of sustainability guidance documents and worked on several high profile sustainability projects. Taking opportunity during the pandemic, we completely revamped our website; reviewed and improved our Guide Training & Education (GTE) suite of guidance and policies; and launched our accreditation of recreational rafting operators.

### Key achievements:

- **GAISF Observer Status and becoming a WADA Code Signatory**  
We received GAISF Observer Status in October 2019, and have had it renewed in 2021. Coupled with being accepted as a WADA Code Signatory, these are two of our major highlights since the last Congress. With these important steps comes recognition amongst top sporting organisations, as well as invitations to join or participate in many high profile movements and organisations. With all this also comes extra responsibilities, expectations, costs and workloads.
- **Para Raft Racing**  
Launching the IRF's Para Raft Racing's comprehensive policies and procedures has been on the priority list for a while and so is an excellent milestone to have achieved. The suite of documentation assists member nations and organisations in setting up and running Para Rafting events as well as guiding them and athletes through the necessary classification procedures.

[www.internationalrafting.com](http://www.internationalrafting.com) | #RaftersAreAwesome



Comprehensive thanks must go to Jezza Williams, who provided far more than just guidance, stepping in and bringing the initial drafts to their final far more comprehensive and practical depth. We thank him deeply and look forward to seeing him competing at one of our Para Rafting events in the near future and enjoying the fruits of his hard labour.

- **Recreational Operators Accreditation**

The ROA Committee delved into this project with enthusiasm, and thanks must go to Gabriel Cote-Valiquette for his dedication and thoroughness to the development of this system, particularly in the Interview Report which provided essential information for development of the system. The project slowed as a result of the pandemic and it is only very recently that it has been able to start up again and start moving forward with the first ROA certificate being issued in October.

- **Sustainability**

Since our last Congress our Sustainability sector has ramped up considerably with tasks being taken on by numerous people to ensure there is sustainability across all sectors of the IRF and rafting. These sectors range from gender equality, creating sustainable partnerships, greening rafting events and recreational rafting, and persuading people to take responsibility to protect rivers.

Next to these great achievements was the devastating loss of Rafael Gallo, founding member of the IRF, Honorary President, organiser of the first ever carbon neutral world championship (our 2011 WRC in Costa Rica) but most importantly of all, a man who put his words into actions when it came to sustainability. Having worked closely with him for over 23 years I sorely miss him.

- **New website**

Since last Congress the IRF's website received a much needed and long overdue rebuild, one of the few advantages of the pandemic. This project was driven by Sean Clarke as have so many of our other communications and media projects. It was also his energy through extremely trying times that kept our followers engaged on our social media.

## Financial Summary

The IRF financial year runs from 1st January to 31st December. The 2020 Financial Report and 2021 Budget will therefore be presented at Congress. As this financial year is still in progress only a projected summary of this year so far can be given.

In the face of the unknowns brought on by the pandemic the expenses for 2021 have been paired down to the minimum in the Budget. As far as expenses, at this point in time it is looking very likely we will keep very close to those budgeted expenses, even possibly below some of the expected costs. As far as expected income we are a little below in some areas at this point in time, however, we have a few projects that are still to bring in some income this year. The GTE sector has brought in more than expected already as this sector is fast getting back to its pre pandemic activity.

Therefore the 2021 year, although financially very restricted, is looking to come in on budget.

Budgeting for 2022 is extremely challenging at this point in time as things are literally changing from day to day. The increased costs incurred through becoming a GAISF Observer and a WADA Code signatory have

put severe challenges on us and our budgeting. To deal with this, many new projects are being brought on board to increase the IRF's income so as to cover these growing costs.

In closing, I'd like to say that not being able to get together at our World or European Championships in the last two years has been hard for us all. One of the key reasons so many people enjoy the racing aspect of rafting is that it brings people from all over the world together, the greater rafting family. This lack of seeing our rafting family has affected everyone and we are all missing it and hungering to compete and enjoy time together once again. Here's hoping that 2022 is a "normal" year and we can gather and enjoy good times again.

**Report by Sue Liell-Cock (IRF Secretary General), October 2021**