

13.03.20

To all Members

Selection of Acting President

Dear Members

Members of the Board and Secretariat, many delegates of WorldSkills Members from around the world, and hundreds of WorldSkills Netherland colleagues joined Jos' family and friends at his memorial service in The Hague on 29 February to say goodbye to, and celebrate the life of, a colleague and friend we all so admired. Messages of goodwill, admiration, and fond memories flowed in from around the world and contributed to a fitting farewell for a man whose love for, and contribution to, WorldSkills was immense.

As Jos himself would have insisted, the mission and work programme of WorldSkills continues, and so we now address succession and arrangements for the Presidency (and Chair of the Board).

Selection of Acting President

I have included key paragraphs from our Constitution and Standing Orders at the end of this communique for your easy reference. Standing Orders 9.5.1 was updated in 2014 to address casual vacancy. Constitution 3.4.3 and Standing Order 3.1.2 were ratified in 2018 as part of the new organization and governance model developed and adopted as part of our Vision 2025 work.

The Board met to determine how to proceed in accordance with these statutes and underpinned by a determination to do what they felt was best for the WorldSkills movement and organization. This includes the Board recognizing and fulfilling its obligation to provide experienced and continuous leadership and governance without rushing the recently implemented focus on succession planning and future leadership.

In making its decision and recommendation, the Board considered its duties and obligations under the statutes, the eligibility of Board members, and the prior experience of eligible Board members in terms of the duties and responsibilities of the President.

After discussion and consideration, the Board appointed Chris Humphries as Acting President and Chair of the Board until the next election of the President at GA2022.

The Board also noted that a new Treasurer was due to be elected at GA2020, and as Terry Cooke had completed his two terms as Treasurer, he was not eligible for re-election this year. The point raised here is that a deliberate part of the election cycle was not appointing a new President and Treasurer in the same year (noting that the Treasurer has the risk management portfolio).

Given that the appointment of Chris Humphries as Acting President would leave a casual vacancy for his Strategic Development position, the Board believes that the best solution for continuity of governance and experienced risk management would be for Terry Cooke to be appointed to serve in Chris's vacated Strategic Development position from GA2020 to GA2022. This is further supported by the current global uncertainty (COVID-19 and its effect) – Terry would provide continuity of experience and advice to Chris, and also mentor the new Treasurer elected at GA2020.

Whilst this proposal is aligned with the casual vacancy clause for the President (SO 9.5.1), it is not explicitly stated in the Standing Orders, and will therefore be a proposal to the General Assembly in 2020 for approval.

In conclusion

1. The Board selects Chris Humphries to be Acting President (and Chair of the Board)
2. The Board proposes the appointment of Terry Cooke to the vacated SDC position on the Board from GA2020 to GA2022.

By this decision and proposal, the Board fulfils its duties for providing quality and continuity of governance within the terms of the statutes, and also ensures that the mandated elections can take place at GA2020 as per our Constitution. The following GA2020 elections will still be held:

- one Board member for Competitions Committee,
- two Board members for Strategic Development Committee, and
- the Treasurer.

(Re)introducing Chris Humphries

In addition to his deep involvement as an Honorary Member in the creation of Vision 2025 and the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan, the Board noted that Chris's experience in related areas was strong, having undertaken these roles during his extensive career:

- Chair of University of West London (until 2018)
- Chair of UK Government Skills Task Force
- CEO of British Chambers of Commerce
- CEO of City and Guilds
- CEO UK Commission for Employment and Skills
- Chair of WorldSkills UK
- Chair of WorldSkills London 2011

Chris Humphries, in response to his appointment, said:

"This is an incredible honour and I want to sincerely thank the Board for their vote of confidence in me today, and for their willingness to support me as Acting President of WorldSkills. I was not elected as President by the General Assembly last August, Jos was, and he set out his aims and priorities in support of his agenda at that time.

"I still feel the pain of this terrible loss and I don't believe my appointment as Acting President gives me a remit to radically change his goals, ambitions or our direction of travel. Instead, I believe it is up to the Board and Members to work together in the most effective way possible to help deliver his goals and perhaps even, if we work incredibly well together, to exceed his expectations of us.

I look forward to working closely with all WorldSkills Members and Partners to ensure our continued success, and to deliver the legacy Jos intended."

On behalf of the Board



David Hoey
CEO

Attached statute references

References

Standing Orders

9.5 Deputies

9.5.1 *If the President of the Organization is temporarily incapacitated, the Board will nominate a Board member to temporarily act on the President's behalf. If the President is incapacitated for a period of longer than three months or a period anticipated to be longer than three months, then the Board shall appoint one of the Board members as (Acting) President to serve until the President is able to resume duty or to the end of the term, whichever occurs first.*

This standing order was updated at GA2014 to cover the spectrum of scenarios from short term incapacity through to casual vacancy. (A "casual vacancy" is said to have occurred in a Board when the office of a Board member is vacated before the expiry of their term. This could result from either not being able to do the job by their own decision e.g. a changing work or family situation or via other circumstances e.g. disqualification, health or death).

Constitution

3.4.3 *Board elections are held every two years. The election shall take place at the General Assembly in the even-numbered year between WorldSkills Competitions, with half the positions being elected each two-year cycle as follows:*

- A. *President and Chair of the Board, one Board member for Competitions Committee, and two Board members for Strategic Development Committee.*
- B. *one Board member for Competitions Committee, two Board members for Strategic Development Committee, and Treasurer.*

Elections for A positions will normally be held in 2022, 2026 and each four years after that; elections for B positions will be held in 2020, 2024 and each four years after that. Note: in order to transition to the new biennial elections and Board structure as defined in 3.4.1-3.4.3, the first election for "A" positions will be conducted in 2019 for a one-time three-year term.

Standing Orders

3.1.2 *All nominees for Board positions, except for the position of Treasurer and one of the Strategic Development Committee positions, must have served as a Delegate for at least two years and attended at least the two most recent General Assemblies in order to stand for election. In addition, the following criteria apply for specific positions:*

- *Candidates standing for the President and Chair of the Board position must be a current Official Delegate or a former Official Delegate.*
- *Candidates standing for the Competitions Committee position must be a current Technical Delegate and must have been a Technical Delegate for at least two WorldSkills Competitions.*
- *Candidates standing for three of the Strategic Development Committee positions must be a current Official Delegate.*

This constitutional update and this standing order update were ratified at GA2018 as part of the Vision 2025 objectives for the new organization structure and governance model.