

**Are you interested running for one of the four annually elected two-year term positions to the MSC board ?
The role of the board member is described below**

The Role of the Board Member

Masters Swimming Canada

Mission statement: MSC will provide national initiatives with strong partnerships that enhance the swimming experience for adults of all abilities.

Vision for 2011: MSC is a world leading adult swimming organization, influential, recognized and valued by Canadian swimmers , clubs and partners.

MSC Values: Health and Wellness; Fun and Friendship; Participation and Achievement

Running an organization like Masters Swimming Canada is a team sport. It is very important that all members of the team understand their role in the governance of the organization and what constitutes effective governance.

Role of a Board Member

As a board member you are in a position of trust ... you are entrusted with the role of ensuring the organization is governed effectively. In other words, you are elected by the membership of MSC to make certain that the organization and its board have the necessary structures and processes in place to effectively manage day-to-day operations.

In order to successfully carry out your role as a board member, you must fulfill some basic responsibilities, such as:

- * Understanding and demonstrating a commitment to the mission and programs of MSC.
- * Contributing your skills, knowledge, influence, and other assets.
- * Informing yourself of the issues and trends that affect MSC.
- * Preparing for monthly telephone conference meetings by reading agendas, minutes and other reports.

- * Attending all meetings including an annual face to face meeting.
- * Actively participating in all meetings, by both listening and sharing your views
- * Getting to know other board members and building a collegial working relationship that contributes to consensus.
- * Being an active participant in the boards' ongoing evaluation and strategic planning efforts.
- * Asking questions when you need more information
- * Participating in board development activities
- * Understanding and monitoring MSC's financial affairs
- * Ensuring MSC is complying with all legal and regulatory requirements
- * Avoiding any potential conflicts of interest
- * Understanding and maintaining confidentiality
- * Upholding the board's decisions

To effectively fulfill your role as an individual board member, it is not only important that you carry out these responsibilities, but also that you demonstrate qualities that are essential to the board's success, such as:

- * Commitment
- * Integrity
- * Teamwork skills
- * Respect for others' contributions
- * Creativity and innovation
- * A positive attitude
- * Constructive problem-solving skills
- * A willingness to contribute your skills, knowledge, ideas and influence
- * Enthusiasm.

When each board member demonstrates these qualities, and takes the necessary steps to fulfill his or her individual role, then the role of the board as a whole is easily accomplished! Chances are, each board member also learns new skills and develops feelings of pride and accomplishment.

Recent board accomplishments:

At the 2008 board Strategic Planning meeting, facilitated by Rachel Corbett and Steve Indig of the Canadian Centre for Sport and Law, the mission, vision and values statements (appearing at the head of this document) were determined in concert with seven specific strategic directions. These were: Governance, Partnerships, Club Development, Coach Development, Web Leverage, Facility Advocacy, and Competition.

MSC operates with a policy-governance board which employs a number of professional staff including an Executive Director. The process of developing new draft By-Laws, Policies and Committee Terms of Reference is now well underway and clear lines of communication, accountability and authority are being established.

A joint MSC – Swimming Canada Advisory Committee has been established with open lines of communication at both CEO-ED and Presidential levels. Provincial Masters organizations are represented on the board by two members elected from amongst the members of the Council of Representatives. MSC has established its own online registration system.

The production of MSC program-specific brochures describing the Million Metre Challenge, One Kilometre Challenge, Check-Off Challenge and the multi-level Pentathlon Challenges have been developed and are in the process of translation prior to distribution to clubs and availability on the MSC website at www.mymisc.ca. A number of Swimmer, Coach and Long Term Service Recognition Awards have been developed and are described both in brochures and on the MSC website. Other club resources introduced include a DVD library and model club by-laws and policies document template.

In Coach Development agreement from the Coaching Association of Canada for MSC to move forward with a swimming specific version of the *Coaching Adult Athletes* resource has been obtained and the desired additions are in progress. The groundbreaking production of three coaching videos has taken place the first of which on incorporating sprint work into coached practices is now available on our website in both French and English. The development of stroke evaluation tools is also underway.

In regard to leveraging the web we do now have the capacity to accommodate online payments and more development in this strategic direction has yet to evolve. What can be said is that MSC has a world-class website with great interactivity capacity for all members.

Whilst we welcome the prospect of major new facilities associated with the Pan-American Games to be hosted in Ontario in 2015 and the associated possibilities for hosting major Masters Competitions, facility advocacy is an area yet to receive real attention by MSC. It should be noted that an important resource in this area is to be found at: www.aquaticsport.ca

Competition has been a longstanding element of MSC. Rules for both swimming and open water competition have been updated and published. We have been fortunate to have perpetual hosts for our National Championship and are in the process of determining the successful bidder for the 2011 Championship meet one of whom is contemplating a bid for the FINA World Masters Championships in 2014.

With much of the governance infrastructure either in, or moving into, place increasing emphasis upon effective ways of enhancing the swimmer experience, in particular at the club level, will be the focus of the board in the immediate future.

NK 01/27/10