

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Operations Board of Fencing New Zealand Incorporated**

DATE	02 November 2025
START/FINISH	7.09 – 10.15 pm
LOCATION	Teams
CHAIR	David Elder
ATTENDEES	David Elder (President FeNZ), Jules Congalton (Treasurer), Amanda Hopkins (Secretary), Hamish Clarke (President Fencing Mid-South), Grant Tweddle (Independent Board Member), Peter Butler (President Fencing North), Alex Dong (President Fencing South), Simone May (National Development Officer), Martin Brill (Coaching Commission), Heather Claydon (Officiating Commission), Stephen Peterson, Caroline Birdsall (National Fencing Administrator)
APOLOGIES	

	ITEM	INFORMATION AND RESOLUTIONS	OWNER	ACTION
1.	Quorum	Quorum of 5 required – 7 Voting members present - approved. Advised that meeting was being recorded for accuracy of Minutes	David	
2.	Conflicts of interest	No conflicts	David	
3.	Minutes of previous meeting	<p>Minutes of meeting 7th September 2025 –</p> <p>A correction was noted for item 7.2, confirming the correct name as Charlie Bioletti.</p> <p>taken as read. Moved David – Seconded Grant. Accepted and carried unanimously.</p> <p>Matters arising:</p> <p>7.5 The Board agreed to amend the referee contribution to up to \$1,000 per person, with the President to determine the final amounts based on actual costs.</p> <p>Outstanding Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board confirmed the Action Register remains a live document, with open actions carried forward until closed. • Actions closed: Selection Policy; Board Strategy Meeting; Veteran Data; India Trip (AFF); Oceania Championships; Referee Development. • Actions remaining open: Insurance cover (donated gear ownership); Officials Appointments & Remuneration Policy communication; Management & Coaching Support (to merge with Overseas Managed Tours review); Australian U15/U17 tour report; National & Regional Calendar; Overseas Managed Tours 2026; Commonwealth Championships 2026 (Nigeria); Welfare/Child Safety (Kidpower). • 7.2 Athletes Commission: Onboarding completed and listings updated; resignation of Head noted — original action closed and a new action to appoint a replacement will be raised. 	David	

4.	Financials	<p>4.1 Treasurers Report FeNZ is tracking to the forecast \$21,000 loss for the year.</p> <p>Insurance invoices have been received and will be issued to the four regions under the previously approved methodology.</p> <p>2026 fees require confirmation from each region; once confirmed (target end of November), a single December communication will go to members/clubs outlining all fee/subscription changes.</p> <p>An insurance Q&A has been circulated to clarify club coverage; Treasurer can resend if needed. Moved: Jules Congalton Seconded: Grant Monro Carried.</p> <p>4.3 Draft 2026 FeNZ Budget The Draft 2026 Budget was presented with the Treasurer’s Report and is intended for approval at the next meeting, subject to feedback and refinement under the financial management policy.</p> <p>The Board noted the budget is largely based on prior years and should be revisited once 2026 priorities are confirmed to better align resources and reduce ad hoc email voting.</p> <p>Many initiatives may rely on external funding; a coordinated national grants approach was supported to avoid duplication across regions.</p> <p>Cash reserves were confirmed as essential working capital to support international campaigns, with advanced participant payments noted as a future option to reduce debtor risk.</p> <p>Board members are asked to provide feedback on the draft budget before the next meeting and ahead of the AGM.</p>		
5.	Event & Operational Items	<p>5.1 FeNZ Organisational Structure Proposal</p> <p>The organisational structure proposal is still in development, with feedback yet to be fully incorporated.</p> <p>Further work will be done over the coming weeks to refine the document.</p> <p>Completion is required before the AGM.</p> <p>The proposal will be the top priority at the early December Governance Meeting.</p> <p>5.2 National & Regional 2026 Calendar</p> <p>The 2026 ranking calendar has been completed and circulated to Regional Presidents and will be published once final issues are resolved.</p> <p>Ongoing concerns include clashes with Australian Nationals, timing of Nationals, university exams, and major external events affecting accommodation and logistics.</p> <p>Strong concern was raised about holding NZ Nationals on the same weekend as Australian Nationals; moving Nationals back to Labour Weekend was discussed as a possible solution.</p>		

Hamish will investigate Labour Weekend venue availability and implications for other events and report back.

U15 and U17 events in Christchurch will likely remain as scheduled despite Super Rugby clashes, with early booking advised.

The Board agreed calendars should be released much earlier in future (target August).

Regional Presidents and Officiating will meet to finalise outstanding issues, with the 2026 calendar to be confirmed and published by Friday.

5.4 FeNZ Multi-level Complaint Management Framework

A draft multi-level complaint management framework was presented to meet Incorporated Societies Act requirements.

The framework enables complaints to be managed at club or regional level where appropriate, with escalation to national level for high-risk or serious matters.

It is intended to reduce compliance burden on clubs while ensuring robust national processes.

Formal implementation is expected in Q1 2026, with the framework needed in place before Incorporated Societies re-registration (early April 2026).

The framework is already proving useful at club level, and minor wording refinements were noted.

5.5 Olympic Solidarity Applications

Olympic Solidarity funding opportunities were discussed, with agreement that it was important to apply despite the absence of a full long-term plan.

Simone May prepared and submitted an application targeting the National Athlete Pathway, focusing on elite and emerging talent with a strong development and legacy emphasis.

The proposal includes camps for elite athletes, U15/U17 athletes, coaches, and referees, with flexibility in delivery.

Up to USD 100,000 is available under the submitted grant.

Other grants were not pursued due to time, eligibility, or approval constraints.

The Board acknowledged and thanked Simone, Jules, and the FeNZ President for progressing and submitting the application.

5.6 FeNZ Board / Stakeholder Feedback

Initial feedback has been received from 7 of 16 respondents, showing low to moderate satisfaction with FeNZ affiliation.

Key issues identified include unclear affiliation benefits, communication gaps, and a perceived disconnect between FeNZ and clubs/regions.

Positives noted were national competitions, selection pathways, and training opportunities.

Improvements suggested focus on clearer communication, greater

		<p>transparency, and stronger club support.</p> <p>Board members were asked to complete the feedback by Tuesday night, with a consolidated summary to be circulated on Wednesday.</p>		
6.	Regional Reports	No reports presented		
7.	Other Business	<p>7.1 World University Games Update</p> <p>The World University Games were a positive and valuable experience for athletes, comparable to major multi-sport events.</p> <p>Athletes benefited from international exposure and being part of the wider New Zealand team environment.</p> <p>Despite high costs and significant administration, the event is considered worthwhile and should continue to be supported.</p> <p>Improvements identified include earlier confirmation of participation, earlier coach selection, and clearer expectations around coach and athlete commitments.</p> <p>Athletes should arrive 2–3 days early for future events to allow proper preparation and team integration.</p> <p>The Board thanked Simone May for extensive team support and Amanda Hopkins for her contributions, including team apparel.</p> <p>7.2 Selection Policy Timing</p> <p>Simone raised an issue regarding the requirement for five-month nomination deadlines under the Selection Policy.</p> <p>Applying this rule to World Cup Satellite and European events may be impractical and could discourage participation.</p> <p>Clarification is needed on how the policy will be applied and communicated, following a parent query.</p> <p>The President advised against changing the policy without proper process.</p> <p>The matter was noted for further consideration, with no decision made at this meeting.</p> <p>7.3 World Cups & Selection Policy</p> <p>The Board identified issues with applying the Selection Policy to World Cups and related international entry events.</p> <p>These events are entry-based with short lead times, and the five-month nomination requirement was found to be impractical and discouraging participation.</p> <p>The Board agreed that FeNZ should encourage, not restrict, athlete participation in World Cups and satellite events.</p>		

		<p>Resolution: Application of the Selection Policy to World Cups, Junior and Cadet World Cups, and World Cup Satellite events is suspended until 30 June 2026, after which it will be reinstated unless amended.</p> <p>Moved: FeNZ President, Seconded: Amanda Hopkins Abstained: Grant Monro Carried</p> <p>Normal selection processes will still apply where team limits require it.</p> <p>7.4 Coaching Commission Direction and Support</p> <p>The Coaching Commission raised concerns about a lack of clear Board direction, authority, and resourcing to support sustainable coach development.</p> <p>The Board reaffirmed that coaches are critical to the growth of fencing and that strategic leadership is expected from Commissions, with Board endorsement and support.</p> <p>A need was identified for a clear coaching strategy, including priorities, resourcing, and succession planning.</p> <p>Alex Dong volunteered to work with Martin Brill, with support from Simone May, to develop a Coaching Commission proposal for Board consideration.</p> <p>Regional input on club support needs will be sought to inform the plan.</p>		
		<p>Meeting closed 10:15pm</p>		