

## 2. ADVOCATE AND LEAD

The NZOC was proud to support and lead the sporting sector both at home and abroad during 2024, growing connections and delivering valuable leadership across New Zealand, Oceania and global sport.

### Elections and Honours

The election of two IOC Members will strengthen New Zealand’s voice at the top table of sport. Together, London 2012 silver medallist Sarah Walker (BMX) and Tokyo 2020 bronze medallist Marcus Daniell (tennis) will help shape the future of the Olympic Movement. Sarah was elected as an independent IOC Member following the conclusion of her term as an IOC Athletes’ Commission representative, while Marcus will represent athletes on the IOC Athletes’ Commission for the next eight years.

In 2024, Sarah sat on the ONOC Executive Board and a number of IOC Commissions: Athletes’ Commission (until Paris 2024), Future Hosts, Digital and Engagement, Technology and Technical Innovation, Human Rights Advisory, and the Esports Steering Committee.

Marcus Daniell also sat on the ONOC Executive Board in 2024 as an IOC Member.

Olympian and three-time Commonwealth Games medallist Julia Ratcliffe (hammer throw) earned an international position also, elected to the Commonwealth Games Federation’s (CGF) Athletes’ Advisory Commission (AAC) as the Oceania representative. She was also appointed to the CGF Audit and Risk Committee and the Investment subcommittee as the AAC representative.

In 2024, NZOC Olympians’ Committee Chair, Chantal Brunner, sat on the Executive Boards of the World Olympians Association and the International Testing Agency. She is also a member of the IOC Entourage Commission (Co-Chair of the Health and Wellbeing working group) and the IOC Athlete Charter Steering Committee.

Triple Olympic medallist Barbara Kendall (sailing) was named an Olympian for Life by the World Olympians Association, one of only five international recipients in 2024.

Kereyn Smith, former CEO of the NZOC, was appointed Honorary Vice President of the CGF.

We thank our international representatives for their integrity, commitment and dedication to Olympic and Commonwealth sport.

### Te Urunga Tū

Te Urunga Tū – the NZOC Māori Advisory Committee – achieved full membership in 2024, with the addition of Dallas Seymour (Commonwealth Games, rugby sevens), Jenny-May Clarkson (Commonwealth Games, netball) and Joseph Royal (Māori All Blacks, Moana Pasifika).

These three new members join Tā Derek Lardelli (NZOC Team Matua) and Ranui Ngarimu (NZOC Order Holder), and bring important athlete insight and experience, governance expertise, extensive networks among iwi and sport, and a strong desire to develop Te Whare o Pou Tangata further.

New Terms of Reference were adopted by the Board, which made way for the co-option of the Te Urunga Tū Chairperson to the Board as the inaugural Pou Tikanga. Dallas Seymour was elected Chair in April and his role as Pou Tikanga was formally announced at the NZOC General Assembly in May.

Te Urunga Tū contributed greatly to the NZOC this year, providing critical support around the blessing of the second Olympic kākahu, Te Hono ki Matariki, and during the funeral of the late Māori King, Kiingi Tuheitia.

The privilege as Chair of Te Urunga Tū and Pou Tikanga is also one of great responsibility. Especially looking back and following in the footsteps of those who are no longer with us and set strong foundations for where we are today. E koutou mā e iri rā ki te rangi, e piataata iho mai nei, tēnā koutou.

Te Whare o Pou Tangata provides the space for our teams to be inspired by our collective heritage to gain the ‘edge’, be our best selves and thrive. Drawing on our culture to step up and utilising our collective strengths from the Board to our teams representing Aotearoa on the world stage.

Whether it be to lift the spirits, to calm the waters, or to inspire ourselves to greater heights. Being deeply connected to who we are, no matter where we are in the world, we need look no further for the sustenance that feeds our aspirations.

We have come a long way on the journey since Athens 2004 and are well placed to continue adorning Te Whare o Pou Tangata for the next 20 years and beyond.

‘Kia hora te marino, kia whakapapa pounamu te moana, kia tere te kārohirohi’

**Dallas Seymour**  
**Pou Tikanga NZOC Board and Chair, Te Urunga Tū**

### Wāhine Toa Leadership Programme 2024

A group of female Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games athletes graduated from an NZOC-run programme working to develop female leadership within sport.

The Wāhine Toa Leadership Programme was launched in New Zealand in 2017 (previously referred to as Women’s Sport Leadership Academy) and has helped around 50 female Olympians transition from sport performance to leadership roles including coaching, governance and change management.

The programme provided a unique learning environment and saw the athletes attend three residential workshops where they developed their leadership competencies and were linked into a global network of female leaders in sport.

### Iwi Engagement

The relationship between the NZOC and the Kiingitanga was reaffirmed in April, when both houses joined for the first time at Tūrangawaewae Marae – the home of the reigning Māori monarch. This was the first of two visits the NZOC leadership team made to Tūrangawaewae Marae in 2024, solidifying our 20-year long-standing relationship. Both visits were extraordinary experiences and demonstrated the importance of maintaining strong connections with Māori, particularly the Māori monarchy.

This renewed relationship with the Kiingitanga also led to the Māori King’s attendance in Paris, which was very special for both the Kiingitanga and the New Zealand Team.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the NZOC and Ngāi Tahu was renewed. This year also saw this relationship take a step forward with the addition of a commercial agreement that enabled Ngāi Tahu to have a Paris Olympic athlete promote the Paris pounamu online. Planning is underway to build opportunities with Ngāi Tahu for upcoming Games including Milano Cortina 2026.

The NZOC strengthened our engagement with Māori across the sporting sector as well, including sport media. We partnered with the Māori Language Commission and Sky’s Māori team, Te Hau o Rangiaata, to achieve some of our cultural commitments together. We were also engaged in the development of sector-wide cultural capability planning run by the Regional Sports Trust Network with support from Ihi Aotearoa Sport NZ.

We were proud to support Cycling NZ and Yachting NZ to start their Māori cultural journey, by teaching te ao Māori concepts through Te Whare o Pou Tangata – our Pou Tangata framework – and the team haka. The success of these engagements was clear in Paris when both teams arrived ready, engaged, deeply respectful and more confident in their performance. Athletes noted that the haka is what brought their teams together outside of their training regimes – something they say was key to fostering team unity.





## International Relations

Through the delivery of our International Relations strategy, we aim to grow influence to add value for New Zealand athletes, sports and our wider nation. In 2024, areas of focus included increasing our engagement and contribution, winning elections, hosting and advocating for what matters to us.

The NZOC attended the general assemblies of the Oceania National Olympic Committees (ONOC) and, the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC). We contributed to Commission meetings, debriefs and workshops on a range of topics – from gender equality in sports media, safeguarding, rights to moving footage, accreditation and village services, the evolving Olympic Games programmes and more.

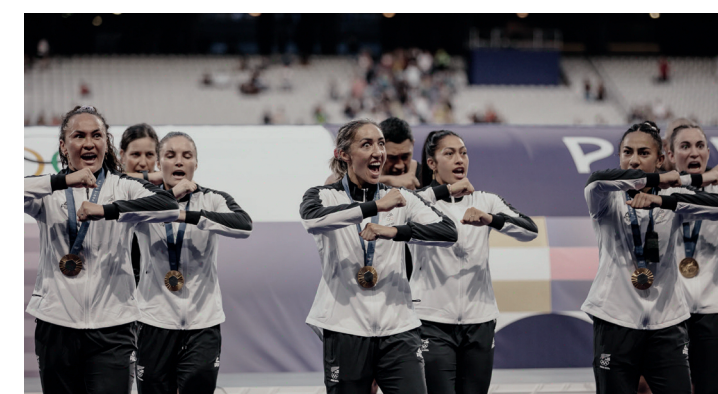
The NZOC advocated for the successful election and appointment of key international positions, which helps ensure New Zealand values and the interests of New Zealand sports and athletes are represented at the top tables of global sport. Appointments in 2024 included: President Liz Dawson to the IOC's Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Committee as well as the IOC Safe Sport Steering Committee; CEO Nicki Nicol to the ONOC Finance and Audit Commission and IOC Revenue and Partnerships Commission (observer); Team Services Director Ryan Archibald to the CGA Reference Group for the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games; and Chief Operations Officer Tara Pryor to the Olympic Movement Unit on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions Legal Working Group.

At the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, New Zealand House provided an excellent platform to deepen international sporting relationships and reinforce the credibility of New Zealand leaders in global sport movements. Numerous meetings between NZOC's senior leadership and delegations from the IOC, CGF, ONOC and International Federations took place, progressing areas of mutual interest. The New Zealand culture of manaaki shared at New Zealand House was a real highlight and point of difference.

The NZOC hosted a significant event for the ONOC International Relations Commission during Paris 2024. Pacific government leaders (including presidents and prime ministers) and Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) stakeholders and their European counterparts came together to highlight the important role sport can play in the Pacific. This was very well received by our National Olympic Committee (NOC) partners and reinforced the elevated role NZOC is playing in the Pacific with increased support for programmes and aligned United Nations' Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) aspirations.

We were delighted to work with the New Zealand Embassy in Paris, MFAT, Ministry of Culture and Heritage, and Ihi Aotearoa Sport NZ's Sport Diplomacy team to ensure New Zealand Inc was able to unlock value through the promotion of New Zealand's values and reputation around Paris 2024. New Zealand House and activations of the Māori cultural group, Whāngārā Mai Tawhiti, helped build New Zealand's brand and reputation and we were able to provide hosting opportunities for government representatives to build positive relationships and connections. We warmly thank Her Excellency Caroline Bilkey, Ambassador to France, and her team for their support, along with Her Excellency the Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro, Governor-General of New Zealand, and the Honourable Chris Bishop, Minister for Sport and Recreation, for joining us at the Paris Olympic Games. It was a great honour to host the late Kiingi Tūheitia and his whānau at the Games as well.

In 2024, the IOC President, Dr Thomas Bach, confirmed the conclusion of his term and seven candidates announced their intention to stand for this highly influential role. Although the NZOC does not have a vote, we can advocate for a candidate who will support athletes' voice and integrity, while ensuring the Olympic Games and its sports programme remain relevant to our member sports, athletes and nation. The IOC presidential elections take place in March 2025.





Oceania Impact Network

The NZOC obtained funding, as part of its role on the network and appointed a project manager (Dr Michele Cox) to lead the Oceania Impact Network in its establishment phase.

This network aims to collaborate in delivering sport-based programmes and initiatives that will promote gender equity, inclusion and prevention of violence against women, girls and vulnerable people in the Pacific.

Empowering Young Female Leaders: Oceania National Olympic Committees (ONOC) Equity Workshop in Oceania

The ONOC Equity Commission was supported by the NZOC to host a workshop for young female leaders from 10 countries across Oceania.

The three-day workshop was held in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland and focused on improving equity across the region, with the main goals being to connect young female leaders, raise awareness and equip them with actionable steps to advance equity in their respective communities.

Each leader left the workshop with a personalised action plan on how they can promote equity in their home countries.

Also in attendance were representatives from the Oceania Equity Commission, who participated in the workshop and undertook further work to determine their future strategy.

A cultural immersion experience with Ngāti Whātua, at Ōrākei Marae, was included in the programme, where participants learnt from Ngāti Whātua about their history and gaining authentic insights into te ao Māori. The opportunity was supported by Māori staff and Te Urunga Tū.

ONOC Shared Communications Services

As part of ongoing efforts to enhance knowledge sharing across Oceania, the NZOC Communications Team supported ONOC to establish a Shared Communications Services project. This initiative aimed to increase media coverage and visibility of Pacific athletes competing at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

The project saw the NZOC collaborate with ONOC to appoint three press attachés, two photographers and two journalists to travel to Paris and work across Oceania NOCs.

At the Games the project came together successfully. A skilled team produced high-quality photographs and competition summaries, which were distributed to media outlets across the Pacific. This effort significantly boosted reporting on Pacific athletes throughout Oceania and contributed to a stronger media presence for the region globally. Ultimately, this added to the wider efforts of the Olympic Movement throughout Oceania to promote success, pride and Olympic values.

Commonwealth Sport Indigenous Declaration

The NZOC is helping to progress the Commonwealth Sport Indigenous Declaration, despite not yet signing the declaration. In July, our Pouwhiringa was invited to join the CGF’s Indigenous Declaration Working Group, co-chaired by CGF President Chris Jenkins and Canada’s Six Nations leader Ava Hill.

The position enables a strong Māori voice and NZOC representation at the table, to help steer discussions and inform better decisions as advised by Te Urunga Tū and NZOC leadership, in alignment with the NZOC Constitution.

The group meets quarterly online to progress the implementation, promotion, monitoring and evaluation of the declaration across the world. Much work is still to be done, but there has been strong support among other nations since the declaration was approved at the CGF General Assembly in 2023.

Technical Coaching Workshops

The NZOC was pleased to offer Olympic Solidarity grants to support the delivery of technical coaching workshops in New Zealand for World Rowing, International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), International Skating Union (ISU) and International Hockey Federation (FIH).

World Rowing partnered with Rowing New Zealand to deliver three courses in New Zealand, catering to ocean rowing coaches and officials from across Oceania ahead of the debut of the discipline at Los Angeles 2028.

Hockey New Zealand held workshops in conjunction with FIH to deliver an international coaching course. These workshops were open to participants from New Zealand and Oceania, helping to grow the depth of performance coaches across the region.

Ice Speed Skating New Zealand worked with the ISU to hold two camps which saw global technical experts brought in to develop the skills of local coaches, together with online learning opportunities.

New Zealand Ice Hockey has seen rapid growth over the past five years, leading to a significant increase in the number of registered players. In 2024, it worked closely with Hockey USA and IIHF to develop New Zealand coaches, particularly in the youth space, within a more formalised structure.

