

IRB Strategic Plan

November 2004

The IRB Strategic Plan in Context

Rugby has seen rapid growth in the past ten years. There are now more than 3 million active Rugby players worldwide. The number of International Rugby Board (IRB) Member Unions has grown from 59 to 113. The Rugby World Cup (RWC) has continued to grow in stature, audience reach and profitability and is now one of the top five sporting events in the world.

However, there are still many issues which must be tackled if Rugby is to continue that growth, if Rugby World Cup is to become more competitive, if Rugby is to consolidate its base and reach out to become a truly global sport.

This updated version of the IRB Strategic Plan spells out our vision and values, our goals and our strategies for achieving them and provides a roadmap leading up to Rugby World Cup 2007 and beyond. It refocuses our activities and will help us make important investment decisions based on strategic considerations.

The IRB Member Unions are categorised into six tiers according to playing strength and potential. This aids in the investment and development decision-making process. To achieve our goals we need to focus for the next four years on the Tier 1* and Tier 2** Unions, while still continuing the development of Unions in Tier 3 and below.

The Strategic Plan seeks to balance the needs of all Rugby stakeholders while ensuring that those Unions that are at the elite level can flourish and are able to provide a truly competitive global attraction that will, in the long term, benefit everyone in Rugby.

* The Tier 1 Unions are: Argentina; Australia; England; France; Ireland; Italy; New Zealand; Scotland; South Africa and Wales.

** The Tier 2 Unions are: Canada; Fiji; Japan; Romania; Samoa; Tonga and the USA.

IRB Vision, Mission And Values



IRB VISION

- There are more Unions with strong high profile and commercially sustainable teams competing in the Rugby World Cup
- Rugby is expanding worldwide
- Rugby is one the most enjoyable team sports in the world

IRB MISSION

The IRB will create an environment in which the IRB and all its Member Unions can flourish in developing and expanding the game globally

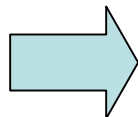
IRB VALUES

Vision
Leadership
Trust
Integrity
Respect
Transparency
Teamwork
Accountability

IRB Goals And Strategic Areas

IRB GOALS

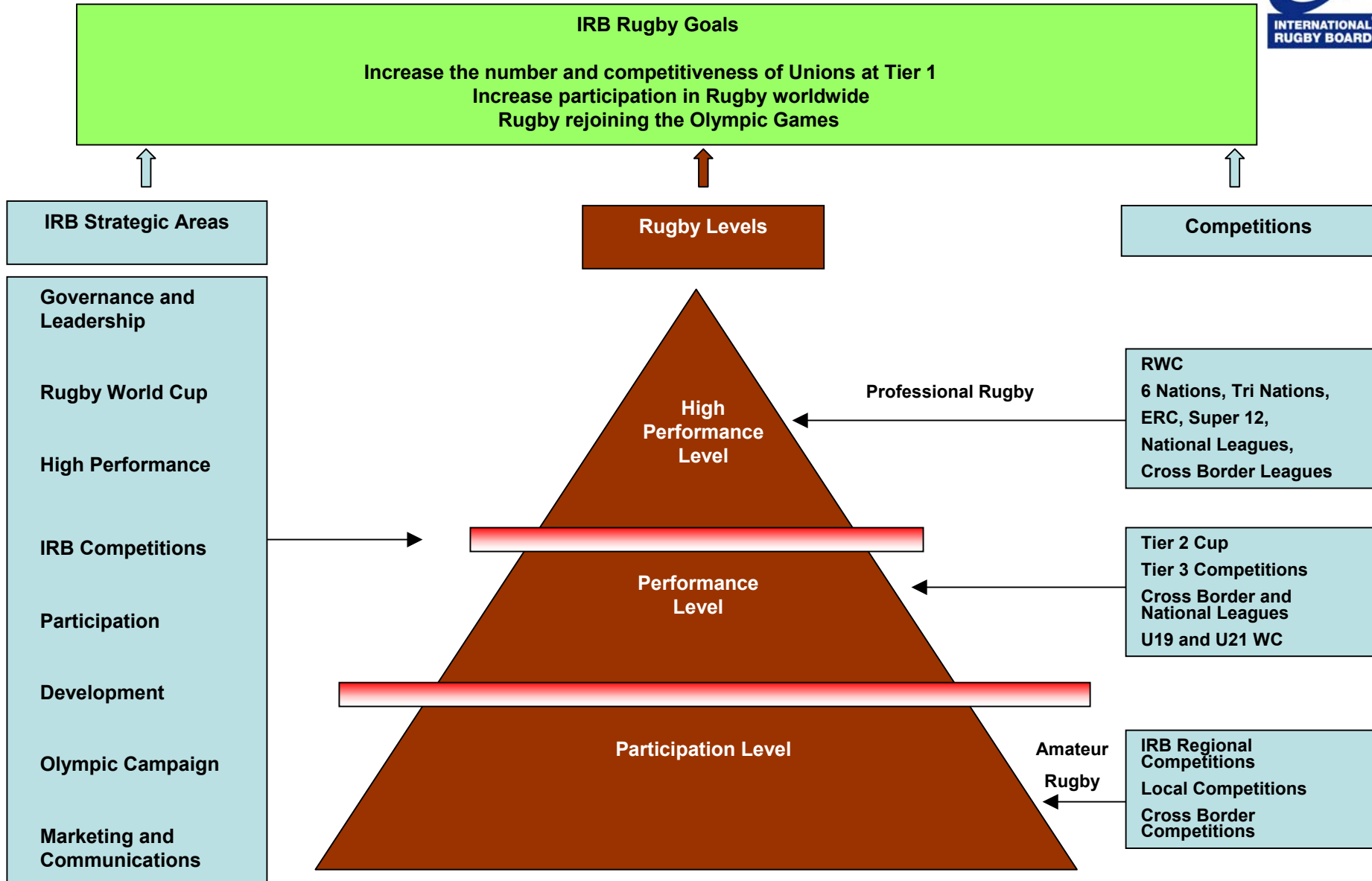
1. Strong and effective leadership by the IRB
2. Maximise the profile, profitability and value of Rugby World Cup
3. Increase the number and competitiveness of Unions at Tier 1
4. Increase participation in Rugby worldwide
5. Rugby rejoining the Olympic Games



IRB STRATEGIC AREAS

1. Governance and Leadership
2. Rugby World Cup
3. High Performance
4. IRB Competitions
5. Participation
6. Development
7. IRB Olympic Campaign
8. Marketing and Communications

IRB Rugby Model



IRB Strategic Plan Outcomes



The outcomes the IRB will be looking to achieve are:

Increase RWC Profit

Increase in competitiveness in Tier 1 Unions

10 Unions
Capable of reaching RWC final

RWC 2015

8 Unions
Capable of reaching RWC final

RWC 2011

6 Unions
Capable of reaching RWC final

RWC 2007

Development Of Tier 2 Unions

Growth in participation

Higher profile for Rugby

The key functions of the IRB are:

Leadership

- Leadership and coordination of policies
- Providing effective governance of the IRB
- Setting and monitoring strategic policy
- Ensuring the systems and processes are in place to set policy and monitor implementation
- Implementation of strategic plan and policies
- Distribution of funds in accordance with the strategic policy
- Employing and managing staff

Competition

- Scheduling matches and tours
- Setting the competition framework and determining how best this should be delivered
- Running RWC and other tournaments
- Regulating the Rugby and its players
- Setting and monitoring Laws and Regulations
- Arbitration between Unions

Education/Training/Development

- Overseeing development programmes – in partnership with lead Unions and Regions
- Promoting, fostering and developing Rugby

Commercial

- Managing and maximising the commercial value of all Rugby World Cups and IRB World Championships and the IRB Sevens
- Raising the profile of the Game

Representation

- International representation of Rugby
- Dealing with international matters (not done by Member Unions)
- Ensuring that the views of Members can be represented

IRB Strategies



The strategies which the IRB will pursue to achieve the vision and goals are:

1. Governance and Leadership

- 1.1 Provide world-class leadership and governance of the IRB
- 1.2 Ensure the IRB is one of the best run governing bodies in the world
- 1.3 Manage and maximise IRB finances
- 1.4 Deliver excellent services to the members of the IRB
- 1.5 Ensure the most effective regulatory system is in place for Rugby and the IRB
- 1.6 Implement a comprehensive anti-doping programme, in accordance with WADA guidelines, to protect the integrity and development of Rugby
- 1.7 Protect the integrity of Rugby and strive for the highest standards of welfare

2. Rugby World Cup

- 2.1 Deliver a highly competitive and sporting RWC
- 2.2 Be a world leader in the organisation and management of major sporting events
- 2.3 Maximise RWC profitability
- 2.4 Implement a risk management programme to identify and manage strategic, operational and financial risk
- 2.5 Maximise the promotion and marketing of RWC
- 2.6 Implement a comprehensive RWC communications programme
- 2.7 Build effective and open relationships with key stakeholders
- 2.8 Ensure RWC is governed and managed to the highest standards

IRB Strategies



The strategies which the IRB will pursue to achieve the vision and goals are:

3. High Performance Rugby

- 3.1 Invest in Tier 1 and Tier 2 High Performance Programmes
- 3.2 Provide high quality Rugby services to Tier 1 and Tier 2 Unions
- 3.3 Invest in raising the performance and standard of Rugby in Tier 2 Unions

4. IRB Competitions

- 4.1 Review the options for establishing a coordinated integrated season
- 4.2 Deliver a world class programme of competitive Rugby at Tier 2 level
- 4.3 Support a programme of Regional competitions for Tier 3 – Tier 6
- 4.4 Provide competitive opportunities to develop young world class players
- 4.5 Ensure effective management of IRB competitions
- 4.6 Increase the commercial value of IRB competitions

5. Participation

- 5.1. Implement sustainable rugby development and investment programmes to improve participation, performance, recruitment and retention in Tier 3 – Tier 6 Unions
- 5.2 Expand opportunities to participate in Rugby worldwide

IRB Strategies



The strategies which the IRB will pursue to achieve the vision and goals are:

6. Development

- 6.1 Produce and deliver a range of education, training and development programmes in conjunction with leading Member Unions
- 6.2 Strengthen the organisational capacity and effectiveness of Member Unions

7. IRB Olympic Campaign

- 7.1 Secure re-entry of Rugby to the 2012 Olympic Games

8. Marketing and Communications

- 8.1 Promote the game of Rugby and its core values
- 8.2 Develop the commercial value of IRB properties
- 8.3 Ensure the IRB communicates effectively with key partners and stakeholders

Appendix 1

Details of IRB Strategies:

Governance and Leadership



1.1 Provide world-class leadership and governance of the IRB

We will do this by:

- Implementing the new Governance model of the IRB to meet the modern requirements of Rugby
- Ensuring Council remains the ultimate legislative body of the IRB
- Extending the role of the Executive Committee to formulate and oversee the implementation of the IRB Strategic Plan, monitor performance and implement good corporate governance principles and practices
- Re-aligning IRB investment programmes with the new strategic plan
- Creating a clearer role and representation for the IRB Regions
- Representing the interests of Rugby with cross border governmental and NGO agencies
- Reviewing the criteria for membership of the IRB and classification process for Tier 1 – Tier 6 Unions on a 4 yearly basis

1.2. Ensure the IRB is one of the best run governing bodies in the world

We will do this by:

- Aligning the operational structures and process to implement the strategic plan
- Implementing best practice management structures and systems
- Reviewing internal organisational systems and implement required changes
- Undertaking appropriate bench marking against other sporting federations
- Publishing all official publications in the three official languages

1.3 Manage and maximise IRB financial resources

We will do this by:

- Refining and developing the internal control systems
- Refining and developing the budgeting and reporting system
- Setting appropriate financial targets in all major areas
- Developing treasury systems to minimise risk exposure of the IRB/RWC
- Ensuring comprehensive insurance programmes to minimise IRB's risk exposure
- Developing and maintaining mechanisms to ensure tax efficiency for the IRB/RWC on a global basis
- Maintaining an appropriate cost reduction and cost control programme
- Maintaining an appropriate reserves policy

Governance and Leadership



1.4 Deliver excellent services to the members of the IRB

We will do this by:

- Providing best practice service to Council and its Committees
- Providing a best practice information service to Council Members, Unions and Associations on all general Rugby matters
- Maintaining ongoing relationships with Member Unions and Associations to ensure IRB and Union/Association obligations are met
- Providing services that meet Union needs

1.5 Ensure the most effective regulatory system is in place for Rugby and the IRB

We will do this by:

- Reviewing the regulations of the Game on an ongoing basis in order to ensure that the game is regulated in a fair and equitable basis for all stakeholders
- Assessing Union comments on each regulation on an ongoing basis
- Amending Regulations as required taking account of stakeholder views and external legal and related developments to enhance administration and application
- Providing an advisory and dispute settlement service

1.6 Implement a comprehensive anti-doping programme, in accordance with WADA guidelines, to protect the integrity and development of the Game

We will do this by:

- Continuing In-Competition anti-doping testing programmes
- Continuing Out-of-Competition anti-doping testing programmes on Players in the IRB's Registered Testing Pool

1.7 Protect the integrity of Rugby and strive for the highest standards of welfare

We will do this by:

- Working to ensure that an integrated playing structure takes account of player welfare needs
- Undertaking research in best practice within Sporting Federations
- Holding regular Medical Welfare Conferences
- Providing guidance on medical and welfare matters for all Unions

Rugby World Cup



2.1 Deliver a highly competitive and sporting RWC

We will do this by:

- Ensuring RWC remains the premier Rugby competition in the world
- Examining the RWC qualifying structure and ensuring that it delivers the top teams in the world, subject to regional representation
- Maintaining the principle of a level playing field for all participating teams
- Building a match schedule that complies with the level playing field principle
- Ensuring that IRB Regulations and protocols are enforced, including those on eligibility and availability
- Maintaining playing and sporting values of Rugby within RWC
- Helping to create a positive spectator environment at RWC matches
- Ensuring that match officials deliver the required level of service

2.2 Ensure RWC is a benchmark sporting event

We will do this by:

- Ensuring systems, data and human resource legacies from each RWC are progressively developed
- Introducing new project management systems
- Reviewing and observing best practice event management practices with other major governing bodies and events (Olympics, soccer, cricket, athletics, etc.)
- Ensuring lessons from other major Rugby competitions are built into RWC planning and operations
- Building effective relationships and implementing best practice with RWC Host Unions from the time of awarding host status
- Implementing best practice event management models
- Undertaking customer and stakeholder research
- Attracting and retaining highest quality staff to the IRB
- Putting in place appropriate development programmes to retain and motivate staff
- Ensuring the IRB is sufficiently staffed and structured to fulfil its roles and responsibilities
- Ensuring other IRB tournaments benefit from RWC planning and operations
- Ensuring lessons from other IRB tournaments are built into RWC planning and operations
- Implementing a comprehensive and transparent tender process for RWC
- Establishing requirements for the Participation Agreement, Tournament Manual, Disciplinary Regulations, Eligibility and Disputes Rules, Media Rules and Commercial Rules in consultation with stakeholders

Rugby World Cup

2.3 Maximise RWC profitability

We will do this by:

- Achieving agreed revenue targets across each area of the RWC commercial programme
- Achieving agreed profit targets for RWCL
- Developing and managing the commercial programme
- Optimising the performance and value of commercial brokers and other advisors
- Getting the best deal in each category
- Building medium and long term partnerships with commercial partners
- Maintaining strict budget management in order to reach RWCL profit targets
- Working with Host Unions to maximise net Tournament revenue
- Utilising RWC to maximise opportunities for other IRB properties
- Creating a four year activation cycle for the commercial programme

2.4 Implement a risk management programme to reduce strategic, operational and financial risk

We will do this by:

- Undertaking strategic, financial and operational risk analyses
- Implementing procedures to reduce risks
- Implementing a comprehensive and transparent tender process for RWC
- Establishing regulatory requirements for match officials
- Developing policy for terms and conditions applying to accreditation and ticketing
- Recruiting and developing the best available people for Judicial and Disciplinary programmes
- Ensuring RWC is contested on a level playing field free from banned doping practices

2.5 Maximise the promotion and marketing of the RWC

We will do this by:

- Establishing potential global cumulative broadcast audiences
- Establishing targets for global broadcast audiences and broadcast targets for each key market
- Reaching global and specific target audience levels
- Negotiating broadcast contracts to reflect commercial and broadcast targets
- Developing a broadcast strategy for each Participating Union
- Establishing RWC as the recognised leader in Rugby broadcast production and presentation
- Increasing the brand value of the RWC mark
- Implementing the media relations plan
- Raising the profile of RWC during the 4 year cycle

Rugby World Cup



2.6 Implement a comprehensive RWC communications programme

We will do this by:

- Creating links between commercial partners and IRB promotional vehicles
- Delivering ceremonies that give a positive reflection on RWC and Rugby in general
- Providing a media services programme that allows the media to professionally cover the tournament
- Implementing a proactive and positive Tournament Promotional Programme
- Producing a Tournament Publications Programme
- Developing a Tournament Accreditation Programme

2.7 Build effective and open relationships with key stakeholders

We will do this by:

- Implementing communication programmes for all stakeholders, including:
 - Host Union, Participating Unions, Member Unions
 - Broadcasters and commercial partners
 - Media
 - VIPs

2.8 Ensure RWC is governed and managed to the highest standards

We will do this by:

- Implementing the most efficient RWCL Board and management governance process
- Establishing agreed staffing structures and responsibilities for the planning and operational phases in order to give maximum benefit to RWCL and the Host Union
- Obtaining an optimal RWCL structure for each Tournament for both RWCL and Host Union
- Reporting to the IRB Council on key policy matters

High Performance Rugby

3.1 Invest in Tier 1 High Performance programmes

We will do this by:

- Structuring the IRB to ensure that it is relevant to Tier 1 Unions and develops a clear understanding of their needs at this level
- Significantly increasing investment in sustaining Tier 1 High Performance Programmes and competitiveness
- Introducing new schemes to support Argentina which will focus on: supporting elite player development and retention; investigation of the establishment of cross border leagues with other teams and countries; increasing tours and matches with Tier 1 Unions; assessing playing and economic factors linked to participation in Tier 1 competitions

3.2 Provide high quality Rugby services to Tier 1 and Tier 2 Unions

We will do this by:

- Implementing the International Matches and Tours Schedule
- Facilitating debate on policies for revenue sharing
- Setting the framework for player availability and player eligibility
- Monitoring investment against agreed criteria
- Providing appropriate and relevant game analysis research
- Providing a Match Officials management process
- Providing best practice Train the Trainer programmes
- Holding a conference on the Playing of the Game every 4 years to assess the state of the Game at the High Performance level

3.3 Invest in raising the performance and standard of Rugby in Tier 2 Unions

We will do this by:

- Supporting each Tier 2 Union to develop customised Rugby and High Performance Plans
- Introducing new investment funding schemes to support the development of high performance and performance level Rugby in Tier 2 Unions and an appropriate infrastructure
- Engaging Tier 1 Unions and contracting appropriate expertise to advise and guide on Rugby development programmes, pathways, competitions and structures
- Ensuring player availability through enforcement of IRB Regulations for designated International Matches
- Encouraging appropriate level of Tests versus Tier 1 Unions
- Facilitating opportunities to play professional teams and selections from Tier 1 Unions
- Continuing to support participation by Tier 2 Unions in world and regional pathway competitions (Under 19s, Under 21s)

IRB Competitions

4.1 Review the options for establishing a coordinated integrated season

We will do this by:

- Debating and agreeing the principles and framework for creating an integrated season
- Scheduling matches and tours
- Enforcing player availability and eligibility regulations

4.2 Deliver a world-class programme of competitive Rugby at Tier 2 level

We will do this by:

- Investigating opportunities to establish a series of IRB cross border leagues
- Organising a new annual Tier 2 Cup Championship to provide competitive opportunities in preparation for RWC and playing Tier 1 Unions

4.3 Support a programme of Regional competitions for Tier 3 – Tier 6 Unions

We will do this by:

- Supporting Senior Men's Tournaments in each Region
- Investigating new opportunities for Tier 3 – Tier 6 competitions

4.4 Provide competitive opportunities to develop young world class players

We will do this by:

- Determining and investing in the optimum model for staging and hosting Age-Grade championships

4.5 Ensure effective management of IRB Competitions

We will do this by:

- Establishing criteria based priorities for investment in other competitions to include Under 20/21, Under 18/19, Sevens, Women's
- Providing IRB staff structures to support competitions
- Applying a quality control process to ensure that Regional tournaments meet IRB tournament Key Performance Indicators
- Creating a rolling four year investment programme to support Regional tournaments

4.6 Increase the commercial value of IRB competitions

We will do this by:

- Assessing commercial opportunities for each tournament
- Developing a commercial plan for the projects
- Integrating the planning process in the overall commercial programme
- Developing plans and proposals to increase the commercial performance of the IRB Sevens
- Working with Host Unions to increase the value of commercial opportunities

Participation

5.1 Implement sustainable Rugby development and investment programmes to improve participation, performance, recruitment and retention in Tier 3 – Tier 6 Unions

We will do this by:

- Facilitating the formulation of appropriate Rugby plans by Member Unions
- Monitoring the implementation of Rugby plans in each Union
- Increasing the use of the coaching assistance scheme in accordance with the priorities of Tier 2 Unions
- Identifying the most likely Unions to progress towards Tier 2
- Providing funding to Tier 3 – Tier 6 Unions to assist with development

5.2 Expand opportunities to participate in Rugby worldwide

We will do this by:

- Reviewing opportunities to integrate other forms of Rugby within IRB structures
- Providing access to Rugby participation programmes to introduce players to the Game (Tag, Touch, Mini, Sevens, Fifteens)
- Conducting on-going research and analysis of membership trends
- Investing in membership systems and templates
- Utilising the General Assembly and Regional Associations to increase participation in their Regions
- Assisting Unions in developing the different types of Rugby within their countries
- Reviewing and developing the different types of Rugby in conjunction with the organising bodies
- Reviewing and developing best practice Age-Grade Rugby Laws below Under 19
- Providing promotional resources to be used by Member Unions
- Rewarding Unions for achieving game promotion Key Performance Indicators
- Using appropriate methods and programmes to increase participation
- Training more coaches and referees worldwide
- Making education and training resources available to coaches, players, referees, teachers
- Linking IRB promotion campaigns with competition programmes

Development

6.1 Produce a range of education, training and development (ETD) programmes in conjunction with leading Member Unions

We will do this by:

- Ensuring Regional Development Managers create awareness in Unions of ETD
- Developing, producing and launching officiating accreditation courses
- Developing, producing and launching coaching accreditation courses
- Developing, producing and launching other ETD programmes
- Liaising with Unions on the development of products
- Implementing Train the Trainer programmes on a rolling and regional basis
- Utilising the services of leading Unions to develop and deliver IRB programmes
- Using available and relevant technology to provide and deliver ETD
- Developing interactive web based training tools

6.2 Strengthen the organisational capacity and effectiveness of selected Member Unions

We will do this by:

- Implementing the new IRB Union development programme incorporating the following stages:
 - A: Development Audits
 - B: Benchmarking and Gap Analysis
 - C: Selecting Unions for the Programme
 - D: Planning
 - E: Implementation,
 - F: Systems Monitoring and Evaluation
- Providing funding to Member Unions to assist with development
- Assessing how the commercial and marketing capacity of Member Unions can be developed and how the stronger Unions can support and assist in this regard

IRB Olympic Campaign



7.1 Secure re-entry of Rugby to the 2012 Olympic Games

We will do this by:

- Promoting Rugby Sevens with the IOC and IOC Members to achieve entry to the 2012 Olympic Games
- Promoting Rugby Sevens to governing bodies of Multi-Sport games to achieve inclusion of Sevens in major Multi-Sport games
- Encouraging Rugby Unions to improve relations with National Olympic Committees, national sports bodies and maximise funding opportunities available to them
- Increasing the worldwide media and TV profile of Rugby Union and Sevens
- Building on the successful profile and appeal of Rugby Sevens in the Commonwealth and Asian Games
- Lobbying for inclusion of Sevens in the Olympic Games
- Highlighting the value to Member Unions of the inclusion of Rugby in the Olympics and Multi-Sport Games

Marketing and Communications



8.1 Promote the game of Rugby and its core values

We will do this by:

- Integrating campaigns, development and investment programmes
- Implementing broadcasting and media programmes
- Aiming to substantially increase TV coverage of Rugby in key markets
- Creating and implementing a new Spirit of Rugby Campaign worldwide
- Expanding and developing the IRB website
- Establishing an IRB Hall of Fame alongside the existing Awards
- Promoting of the Game in key markets in line with flagship events
- Representing Rugby in key international groups and associations
- Working with leading Unions to promote the Game in key markets
- Creating an ambassadorial programme to promote the Game
- Ensuring the IRB Awards value the volunteers
- Developing a “value the volunteer” programme
- Demonstrating a corporate responsibility programme and “good citizen” philosophy by aligning the IRB to Rugby and non-Rugby charitable organisations

8.2 Develop the commercial value of IRB properties

We will do this by:

- Developing a sponsorship and partnership strategy for Game promotion
- Utilising all IRB branding at every opportunity
- Extending the scope of commercial partnerships so that partners become involved in IRB promotional initiatives
- Ensuring IRB ideals and values are reflected in commercial partner activation
- Exploring and developing commercial deals to develop the widest platform for the Game

Marketing and Communications

8.3 Ensure the IRB communicates effectively with key partners and stakeholders

We will do this by:

- Implementing a comprehensive media services programme
- Developing a proactive crisis management and public relations protocol
- Building a tournament (non-RWC) promotion programme that will include:
 - Enhanced liaison and communications with other IRB departments and Host Unions
 - Development and delivery of pre, post and during tournament promotional communications templates and a centralised tournament/event/activity calendar
- Developing an event (non-tournament) promotional programme
- Establishing a “special project” game promotion programme
- Developing a departmental administration protocol
- Producing communications IRB media protocols
- Developing an inter-departmental communications and relationship protocol
- Putting in place appropriate Member Union communications protocols
- Producing quality promotional publications
- Relaunching the World of Rugby programme
- Sourcing of additional broadcast opportunities