



TENNIS IRELAND STRATEGIC PLAN

2012 - 2014

Tennis Ireland

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***Tennis
Ireland***

Sport For Life

TENNIS IRELAND

Tennis Ireland is a Company limited by guarantee and without share capital. It functions as the National Governing Body for the sport for the whole of Ireland.

The Strategic Plan 2004-2006 required the organisation to undertake a review of the structures of the wider tennis community, together with issues relating to governance and administrative procedures. This wide ranging review brought forward a series of proposals which resulted in an EGM on 24th August 2007 approving the most radical Corporate restructuring of the governing body in its entire 100 year history.

The specific purpose in introducing this new structure was to ensure that Tennis Ireland would adopt the most modern principles of Corporate Governance together with provisions to ensure that accountability and responsibility underpinned the collective decisions of the Directors of Tennis Ireland and the operations of the newly formed and enlarged Board.

The critical changes in our Corporate structure can be summarised as follows:-

- The replacement of the Management Committee with a Board of 11 Directors, to include a Chairman, the President & the Chief Executive Officer
- The appointment of 4 Portfolio Directors with specific functional responsibilities
- The appointment of 4 Representative Directors, one from each of the four Provincial Branches
- The replacement of the General Council of Tennis Ireland with a Consultative Council

**See appendices for further details.*

TENNIS IRELAND – AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Tennis Ireland has six broad areas of responsibility as follows:

1. Administering and regulating the game at all levels.
2. The implementation of a series of initiatives specifically designed to grow the numbers playing the sport.
3. Organising competition at various levels, from Wheelchair Tennis through to the Davis Cup, the latter being the biggest annual international team event in sport.

4. Developing the sport through the provision of technical, coaching and financial support for a variety of National and Provincial Programmes which impact at both the elite and recreational levels of the game. Tennis Ireland also has responsibility for coaches' education.
5. The management and development of the National Tennis Academy at DCU together with the various National and Provincial development programmes which support this initiative.
6. Promoting the game in the widest possible sense and specifically to the various key constituencies such as Government and media.

Tennis is a truly global sport which can be played by people of all ages and levels of ability. The International Tennis Federation – the world governing body – lists 150 member countries. The Davis Cup, now in existence for in excess of 100 years is the major international team competition in Men's Tennis and close to 150 countries compete each year.

The rules of the sport are identical for both male and female competitors and the social and recreational dimensions of playing tennis has long been recognised.

Tennis is also an Olympic sport and an Irish man – John Pius Boland - won the first gold medal for tennis in the modern games (in Athens 1896).

Tennis is one of the leading participation sports in Ireland. Research indicates (ERSI) that 3% of the adults who play sport in Ireland play tennis. It is estimated that approximately 80,000 people make up the combined membership of the 200 tennis clubs in Ireland. A very high number of these clubs – 180 – are affiliated to Tennis Ireland.

A considerable number of affiliated and associated bodies make up the rest of the tennis community in Ireland. These organisations range from officiating (The Irish Tennis Umpires Association - ITUA) through to the organisation of the Dublin Inter-Club Leagues (Dublin Lawn Tennis Council). Approximately 7,000 people participate in summer Inter-Club league tennis in the greater Dublin area – league tennis is also very popular in the Munster area (organised by the Munster Branch of Tennis Ireland), while the organisation of league tennis in Belfast is the responsibility of the Belfast and District League organisation.

A particularly strong bond exists between Parks Tennis Ireland and the National Governing Body. Parks Tennis Ireland is responsible for the organisation of programmes in municipal and local authority parks venues and each year approximately 25,000 children participate in their summer programmes.

RESOURCES

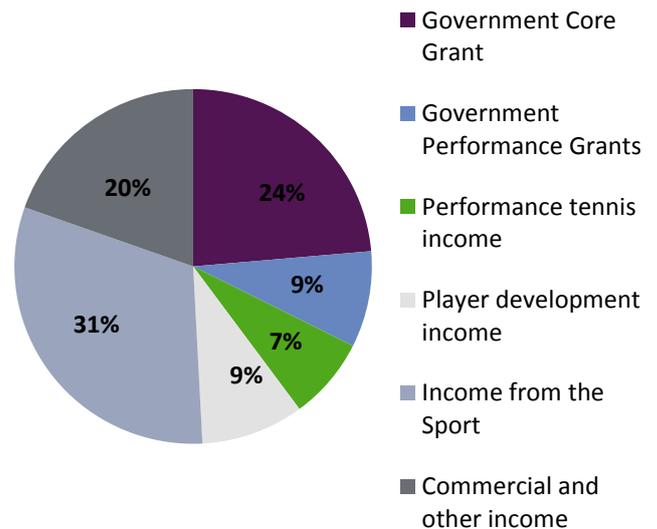
Tennis Ireland currently spends in the region of €2.1 million (2011) across its National and Provincial structures in the promotion and development of the sport in Ireland. Some 33% of income required to support these development programmes is provided in grant aid by the Irish Sports Council. The remaining 67% of the income of the Association is comprised mainly of capitation and affiliation fees from within the Irish tennis community together with commercial sponsorship.

The construction of the first Phase of a National Training Centre was completed in April 2005 and June 2008 saw the completion of the final phase of this development. This facility compares very well with National Federation training facilities right across Europe. It is comprised of ten courts, offering a range of 3 internationally recognised playing surfaces together with various ancillary facilities. The capital cost was approximately €2.35million, of which €1.55million was contributed by the sports capital programme operated by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. This facility is home to the BNP Paribas National Tennis Academy which provides training and development programmes for the most talented young players in Ireland, dedicated to assisting them reach the levels whereby they can compete effectively in International competition. The ultimate objective of these programmes is to enable Irish players to reach the top 100 in both the ATP and WTA World rankings.

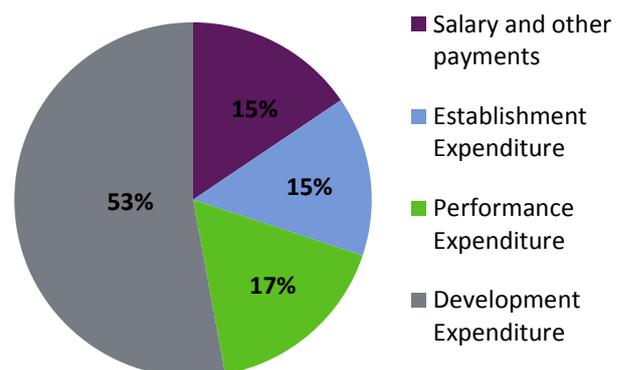
Our partners in this venture contributed in an invaluable way to its success. Dublin City Council generously provided the site for the training

facility (formerly the Albert College Park facility) while Dublin City University provides the vital sports science inputs and other supporting programmes.

Consolidated Income



Consolidated Expenditure



VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

GROWTH IN THE SPORT OF TENNIS AT LOCAL LEVEL IS OUR TOP PRIORITY AT THIS TIME

VISION

To create organisational and tennis infrastructures which allow for growth at club level, continued increases in participation, and the development of performance players.

MISSION STATEMENT

*More players,
better players,
better structures*

STRATEGIC THEMES FOR THE PERIOD 2012 – 2014

The Board of Tennis Ireland agreed to focus on the following four major strategic themes in drafting this Strategic Plan for Tennis 2012 – 2014.



PERFORMANCE TENNIS

The Board remains committed to the predominant objective of an Irish senior player reaching top 100 ATP or WTA during the duration of the plan. The operational plans which will be derived from this plan will focus on providing the infrastructure, facilities and resources to achieve this objective.

Consideration of the provision of financial resources for the National Tennis Academy has now evolved to the point where the 2012 allocation will in all likelihood focus on a small number of key players. The level of financial support available through the current Tennis Ireland funding model is viewed by all parties as totally inadequate. It follows therefore that very early consideration must be given to sourcing fresh sources of financial support if Tennis Ireland is to achieve this objective during the period 2012 -2014 with the emerging generation of young players.

Current budgetary proposals in relation to supporting key players in 2012 would envisage an upper limit of approximately €15,000 per annum per player. The norms across Western Europe in terms of spending by the most advanced nations are approximately €75,000 per player. Bridging this gap is the challenge.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Develop new sources of funding which will provide the financial resources required to allow the emerging senior players and all Academy members to participate in an appropriate international competition programme.
- Procure sufficient levels of funding to ensure that our players have access to the services of a travelling coach for a defined segment of this programme each year.
- Provide sufficient resources to host a programme of international events, at the core of which is participation in Davis Cup and Fed Cup.
- Employ a National Talent ID Officer in order to coordinate and streamline the talent ID process across all age groups at Provincial and National levels.
- Review the operation of all Provincial Junior Development Programmes to ensure full alignment with the Tennis Ireland Strategic objectives and Performance Tennis training systems and methodologies.
- Identify a number of clubs across the country (6 – 8 clubs) where specific and tailored performance training programmes can be introduced, particularly for younger age groups. This will require the development of a specific training programme for club coaches and also the requirement to provide opportunities for these coaches to work with performance players at the National Tennis Centre.
- The first phase of the development of the National Tennis Centre was completed in April 2005 while the second phase (the addition of the clay and outdoor hard courts) was completed in June 2008. There is a need to invest in the refurbishment of the National Tennis Centre at this time and the urgent priority is the resurfacing of the indoor hard courts (acrylic) which were first laid in 2005.
- The main source of ancillary revenue at the National Tennis Centre is court rentals. It has proven very difficult to implement public access programmes such as cardio tennis and beginner coaching programmes in recent years in an attempt to grow this source of income. The focus in 2013 and beyond should be on the staging of tournaments for certain of the younger junior age groups. The Board must ensure also that certain Leinster Development programmes as appropriate should be hosted at the National Tennis Centre.

DEVELOPMENT, RECREATIONAL AND GRASSROOTS TENNIS



The Board has agreed that all our efforts and resource allocation in this area must be dedicated to growing the numbers playing the sport for the duration of this plan.

One of the key operational plans under this heading will therefore focus on how we integrate the marketing of the sport at local level, and specifically the National Tennis Day concept into the routine operations of our affiliated clubs.

The schools tennis initiative is also vitally important in this regard and we now know that a great deal can be achieved in this area without significant expenditures.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- The Play and Stay programme introduced on a global basis by the ITF several year ago remains the most effective initiative available to Tennis Ireland in relation to the recruitment and retention of new participants in the sport of tennis.

A new series of initiatives entitled “Tennis Express” will be launched by the ITF in November 2012 and Tennis Ireland will introduce and promote these programmes across the Provinces and affiliated clubs during the course of 2013.

- The Marketing Toolkit for Tennis has been very well accepted within the Irish tennis community as an effective way to focus club committees on the scope and opportunities to market the game at local level. Tennis Ireland will continue to promote the Toolkit for the duration of this plan through a series of workshops at Provincial and club level.
- The first BNP Paribas National Tennis Day was held on 7th July 2012 and has been judged as a very successful initiative on the part of the 60 participating clubs in terms of attracting new members. It is estimated that approximately 2000 new members joined these participating clubs in the 6 – 8 week period following the National Tennis Day.

A survey of participating clubs confirms that the general approach and methodology with this initiative should be continued through 2013 and beyond and in that regard Tennis Ireland has set a target of 100 participating clubs for 2013. A comprehensive programme of promotional and support activities for participating clubs will continue to be provided each year.

- The National Player Database continues to be a priority for investment on the part of the Board of Tennis Ireland. The development phase is now largely complete as evidenced by the operation of the associated national junior ranking programme and the spring 2013 operation of the communications module. It appears likely that a new sponsor will be associated with this project from early 2013 onwards.

The National Player Database is now approaching a membership total of approximately 40,000 and a priority near term objective is the addition of a further 25 – 30,000 player records over the course of the next two years. It is envisaged that initiatives associated with the National Player Database will soon be available to the

organisers of inter-club leagues and also participating clubs to assist in the web based scheduling and operation of the various leagues across the country.

- There can be no doubt that the current economic circumstances and the restricted availability of sports capital funding has significantly delayed the investment in indoor tennis facilities on a national basis. The national stock of covered tennis courts continues to be among the lowest in Western Europe while the prevailing climate in Ireland would suggest the essential nature of indoor tennis. Nevertheless, Tennis Ireland will continue to assist affiliated clubs and other organisations with technical advice and access to demonstration sites in our continuing efforts to promote air hall technology as the efficient and least cost option in terms of providing covered facilities.
- “Fish where the fish are” is one of the most enduring marketing philosophies and is also at the heart of the Tennis Ireland schools tennis initiative. The continued growth in this initiative in terms of participating schools and coaches is a top priority for the duration of this plan.
- The International Tennis Federation (ITF) introduced a comprehensive programme in 2011 designed to advise and assist in the development and maintenance of a world class coaches education programme at National Association level. Tennis Ireland applied to be among the first group of National Associations to complete this accreditation process.

By mid-2013, Tennis Ireland’s technical staff plan to have complete the very comprehensive compliance process required by the ITF which will in turn lead to global recognition for the Tennis Ireland Coaches Education system as follows:

- Level 1 Qualification recognised as ITF Bronze level
- Level 2 Qualification recognised as ITF Silver level
- Level 3 Qualification recognised as ITF Gold level
- In August 2010, the Board of Tennis Ireland approved a proposal to introduce a licensing system for all tennis coaches working in Ireland. The required process was developed through the course of 2011 and the compliance requirements – a specified level of CPD points, child protection awareness training and Garda/Access NI vetting – were put in place. This licensing system comes into effect in January 2013 with the publication and promotion of the list of coaches who have achieved licensed status.
- A major review of the Tennis Ireland Player Development Pathway was undertaken during 2011. This work was completed mid-2012 and presented to the National Coaches Conference in September 2012. A further significant body of work is now underway in terms of integrating the new pathway into our Coaches Education programmes and this will be largely completed during the course of 2013.
- In the event of a ‘YES’ vote in the Children’s Referendum on 10th November 2012, it is anticipated that a significant body of Child Protection Legislation will be enacted during the course of 2013. The Board of Tennis Ireland must lead the Irish tennis community in the timely and appropriate implementation of this legislation within our sport. This requirement will give rise to a substantial degree of direction and guidance on the part of Tennis Ireland, together with educational and information programmes for all appropriate levels of the sport following the enactment of legislation.



SPONSORSHIP AND COMMERCIAL

It is the case that Irish tennis enjoyed its best ever media/public profile in 2011 and of course this coincided with the lowest point in the current recessionary cycle. The consequences in terms of our sponsorship portfolio is that we cannot hope for a better outcome in the short term than to retain existing sponsors. In addition, it is generally accepted that there will be no return to growth in the Irish economy before 2013 at the earliest.

One of the key issues to be addressed in the operational plan for this portfolio is the early acquisition of professional expertise to manage and grow the sponsorship portfolio, hopefully in line with a recovering national economy scenario.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Engage in contract negotiations with all existing sponsors with a view to achieving contract renewal as appropriate. In the current economic climate, it may be the case that short term renewals are the order of the day. The priority case is BNP Paribas as this contract expires at the end of 2012.
- The value of professional advice and input in this area is beyond debate. The Board should seek to ensure that we are well placed to take advantage of the projected return to growth in the Irish economy from 2013 and beyond. The options include the appointment of a Commercial Manager, possibly on a part-time basis or the employment of one of the leading agencies on a commission basis.
- The achievements of some of our players in Grand Slam tennis in 2011 allowed Tennis Ireland to engage with corporate Ireland at a much higher level than had been the case previously. It may be the case that relationships developed during the course of 2012 can be converted into sponsorship/partnership relationships going forward and appropriate resources should be deployed in this area.



FINANCE / BUDGETARY



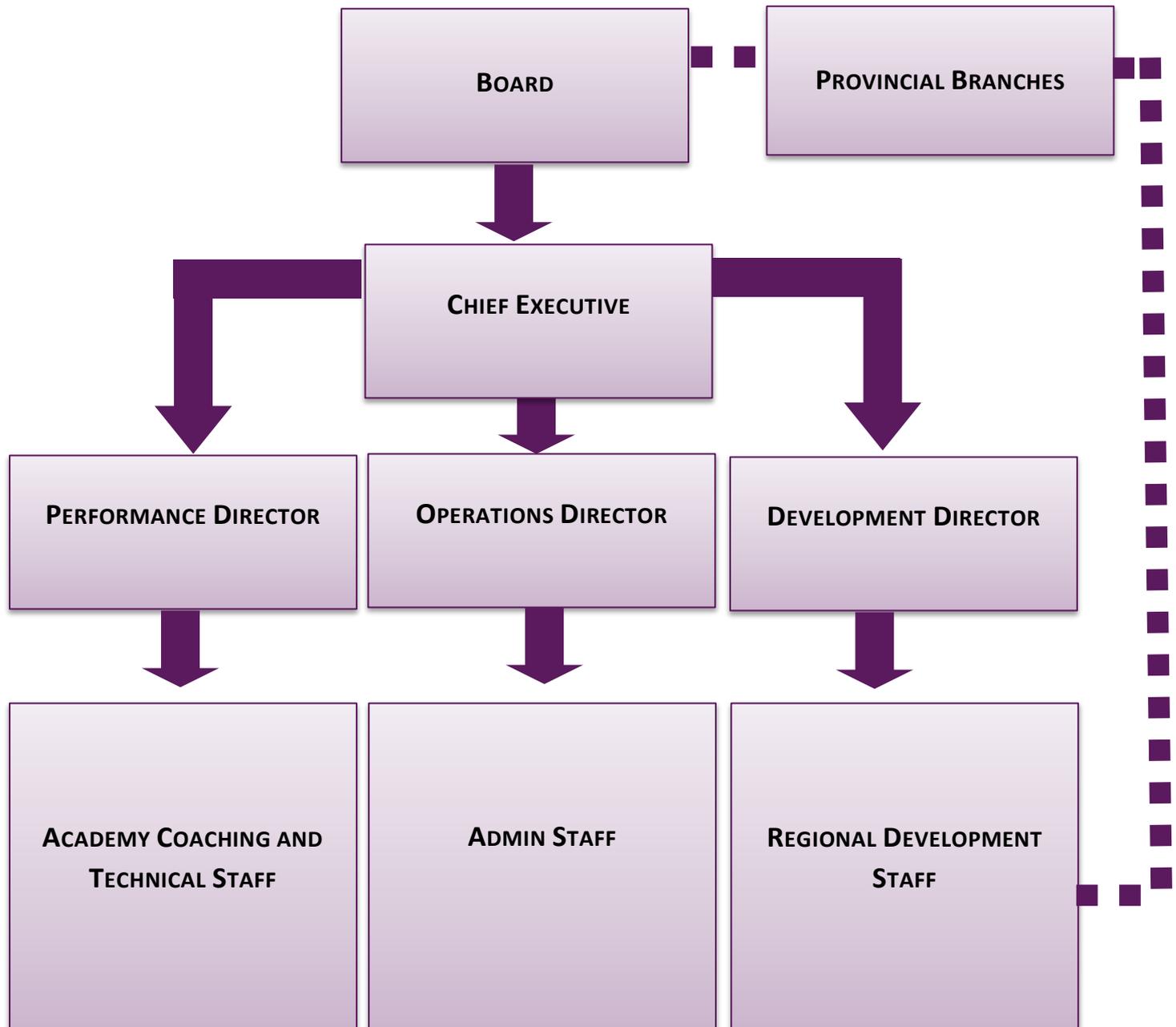
The company wide implementation of the Integrated Planning and Budgetary Process remains one of the essential elements of Tennis Ireland's strategy within this portfolio. The Board resolved to bring about early implementation of this approach in July 2011.

Implicit in this approach must be a reconsideration of historical / legacy sharing of financial resources, whatever the source of these resources. The concept of funding only those programmes and activities which support the achievement of the objectives outlined in the strategic plan has to be accepted across the entire organisation.

The appointment of the Financial Controller and the availability of professional expertise in this area is the vital first step in introducing an appropriate budgetary and management information process, with immediate and tangible benefits across all our operations.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- The fact that Company cash reserves lie primarily in Provincial bank accounts and outside the control of the Board has been highlighted in two successive sets of Performance Improvement Observations (2010 and 2011) by Company Auditors KPMG. This remains a matter of grave concern for the Board of Tennis Ireland. The failure thus far in negotiations with the Provincial Branches to implement the specific Board resolution (July 2011) to address this matter must be resolved in the short term and the Board must consider all its options to achieve appropriate levels of governance in relation to these Company assets.
- A significant element of the consolidated expenditure (up to 30%) of Tennis Ireland Limited is not subject to oversight on the part of the Directors of the Company. The Board sought to address this governance deficiency in passing a resolution to introduce an Integrated Planning and Budgetary Process in July 2011. Negotiations with the Provincial Branches have so far failed to bring about implementation of this essential measure and the parties to this dispute must redouble their efforts in the coming weeks and months to resolve this impasse.
- A situation has built up over time whereby varying levels of capitation fees are levied on players depending on geography or location as distinct from any modern rationale for this diversity. The Board should bring forward proposals during the lifetime of this plan to bring about the implementation of a universal level of capitation fee. It may be worth considering also how the application of certain technologies available through the National Player Database could be used to introduce the collection of capitation fees (or Tennis Ireland membership fees) at an individual level on the part of Tennis Ireland. It is worth noting that some of the NGBs with a smaller membership base have now achieved this objective.
- The level of capitation and affiliation fees (and other related fees) has not been increased for a period of at least ten years and this has been the appropriate strategy in the context of the economic downturn in recent years. The Board should now consider, during the term of this plan, the implementation of appropriate increases in capitation and affiliation fees with a corresponding review of the services offered by the NGB at the level of the affiliated club and the individual player.
- From 2013 onwards, the Board should put in place a programme of affiliated club audits on a planned basis so as to ensure that the under declaration of club memberships and capitation fees due to Tennis Ireland is eliminated during the term of this plan.

APPENDIX I**TENNIS IRELAND ORGANISATION CHART**

APPENDIX II

PORTFOLIO DIRECTORS

Finance Director

Performance Director

Development Director

Commercial Director

Chairman

Chief Executive

President

REPRESENTATIVE DIRECTORS

CORE COMMITTEES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Finance Committee
Facilities Development

Performance Tennis/National Tennis Academy
Junior/Senior Selection
International/Professional Tennis

Senior Development including Veterans Tennis
Junior Development
National Competitions
National Player Database
Coach Education and Licensing

Marketing the Sport
Sponsorship and Commercial Activities
Membership Services

Governance and Organisation Development

Policy development and implementation

Provincial Representation at Board Level
Nominations Committee
Audit Committee
Remuneration Committee