

COMPETITION, TALENT PATHWAY AND NATIONAL TEAM ACTIVITIES



Introduction

There has been a proposal and much discussion in the community regarding the future of GB Climbing ahead of the BMC 2024 AGM which will take place on the 12th of June 2024.

This has been in the form of a proposed resolution that states:

'The Board is required to set up GB Climbing as a financially independent body that is no longer subsidised by the BMC. It would also be desirable if the Board made any subsidy, loan, or bailout to this new body subject to a reserved matter that is included in the articles GBC Subsidiary.'

The purpose of this document is to provide members with key information to give a clearer understanding as to what this means.

1. Implications for the competition activities

There are substantial implications for the competition activities themselves as follows:

1.1. Funding

- ▶ Withdrawal of all in kind BMC support to competition activities worth of the order £200k / annum including:
 - The work of the CEO within competition activities
 - Safeguarding and Anti-Doping
 - Governance Requirements associated with being a competition sport (Complying with the "Code of Sports Governance")
 - Office Costs
 - HR
 - Financial Management
 - Marketing and Commercial

- ▶ Withdrawal of direct funding of £186k / annum, the level agreed by the BMC Board in October 2020. In 2024 this funding is being used to support:
 - British Lead and Bouldering Championships at both junior and senior level
 - Competition Manager
 - 0.5 FTE Junior Coach
 - International level Ice Climbing event held in UK
 - All competitive Para Climbing, Ice Climbing and Ski Mountaineering

- ▶ Withdrawal of all registration fees to the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC)

- ▶ It is likely that the new organisation will need to generate income through membership and sponsorship. This is likely to take funding and members away from the BMC and thus weaken the BMC.

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1.2. Inability to retain Public Funding and International Accreditation

- ▶ Current public body funding is as follows and expires at end 1Q 2025.
 - £1.24 million over 4 years from UK Sport for progression funding
 - £0.60 million over 3 years from Sport England for funding of next generation talent
 - Podium Funding from UK Sport for climbers reaching a top eight place at world championships – currently worth £0.25 million
- ▶ In order to retain public funding, the subsidiary will need to be compliant with the “Code of sports governance” in order to retain any funding from UK Sport and Sport England. *(Based on experience within the BMC over the past 3 years this is a substantial regulatory burden)*
- ▶ The CEO of the BMC is the accountable officer for both UK Sport and Sport England Grants and associated delivery. The new organisation will need to appoint an accountable officer who has credibility and must be formally approved by both UK Sport and Sport England. *(Based on experience within the BMC over the past 6 months it is not easy for an individual to meet the requirements of being an accountable officer)*
- ▶ There is no guarantee that a new organisation with no support from the BMC would receive any public funding going into the next funding round – it will have no track record with UK Sport and Sport England
- ▶ The new organisation must run National Competitions in order to be considered as a National Governing Body with the International Federation for Sport Climbing (IFSC). British climbers will not be able to compete internationally if there is no National Governing Body

1.3. The new organisation will be inefficient

- ▶ Setting up the new organisation to be fully legally and financially compliant and meeting all governance and contractual requirements will require substantial legal resources, which the BMC is unlikely to fund. A timeline for delivering this new organisation would be of the order 2 years.
- ▶ The new organisation will need to put in place the following:
 - A Board of Directors
 - CEO
 - A performance organisation focussed on elite climbers
 - An organisation supporting all those competing below National and International Level
 - All of the support services which the BMC currently provides – as specified above:
 - Safeguarding and Anti-Doping
 - Governance requirements associated with being a competition sport
 - Office costs
 - HR
 - Financial management
 - Communications
- ▶ Based on track record within the BMC, high quality delivery will only be achieved with high quality people who are rewarded at an appropriate level.
- ▶ The new organisation may face challenges with insuring their activities if it is completely separate from the BMC

2. Implications for the core of the BMC

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After all competitions are separated from the BMC, there are substantial implications for the core of the BMC as follows:

2.1. Reputational damage and implications for relationships and funding

- ▶ The relationship with UK Sport and Sport England relating to future investment could be at risk. The BMC may be seen to be unreliable and unwilling to meet the requirements for receiving and effectively managing public funds.
- ▶ In such circumstances, the BMC could no longer be seen to be the sector leader with key partners including Mountain Training, ABC and NICAS

2.2. Splintering off the mountain activity set and implications for participants

- ▶ The wide activity set that the BMC currently represents for everything from Hill Walking, through to indoor and outdoor climbing, mountaineering including ski mountaineering and all of the associated competition sports would splinter into separate and disparate pieces with no organisation bringing all of the components together.
- ▶ Those participating in competition activities – sports will be disenfranchised from the wider activity set. It will take a concerted effort by the individuals, be they athletes, coaches or other competition staff and volunteers, to bridge the gap and participate in the wider activity set.

2.3. Organisational disruption within the remaining BMC

- ▶ The BMC as an organisation, needs a period in which to stabilise, put in place rigorous financial processes, systems and good people and improve its relationships with funding bodies like UK Sport and Sport England and with its partners. This is expected to take all of 2024.
- ▶ Separating out all competition activities into a separate organisation is likely to have the following implications with a substantial risk of organisational melt down and inability to continue as a *“Going Concern”*:
 - if the Board is required to implement the split it is likely that:
 - There will be some resignations from the Board,
 - There will be some resignations from the staff and an expectation that redundancies within the Core BMC will be required
 - Loss of grant funding – almost all of which will potentially be lost by end 2024
 - Large and potentially unmanageable legal bills