

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY BOARD



RUGBY SEVENS PLAN

2011-2020



IRB RUGBY SEVENS PLAN 2011–2020



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1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

1.1 IRB STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Sevens is now an Olympic sport for men and women and will feature at the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games. The IRB currently has 117 Unions in Membership. Rugby is embarking on a new phase of growth with the potential for the Game to have a presence in the 205 countries that make up the Olympic movement. This Plan outlines how the IRB will work with its Member Unions to ensure that we realise the new opportunities for Rugby and the global Game. We have developed this Plan in consultation with our Member Unions, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and leaders in the playing, coaching and development of the Game.

This Plan focuses on how Sevens can be a catalyst for developing the Game as a whole and increasing participation in Rugby worldwide through inclusion in the 2016 Olympic Games, the continued growth and expansion of the HSBC Sevens World Series (SWS) and the establishment of sustainable Sevens competitions in each continent for men and women. The Plan provides a framework for how the IRB, the Regions and our Member Unions will develop Sevens globally over the next 10 years. The IRB Strategic Plan through to 2020 outlines our vision for the Game globally.

IRB Vision:

Rugby - A sport for all - True to its values

IRB Mission:

Growing the global Rugby family

IRB Strategic Goals

1. Protect and promote Rugby, its values, spirit and ethos
2. Increase global participation
3. Drive player welfare best practice
4. Maximise the value of all RWC/IRB properties
5. Increase sustainability and competitiveness of International Rugby
6. Optimise Olympic participation
7. Provide strong and effective leadership

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS



IRB VISION

RUGBY
A SPORT FOR ALL
TRUE TO ITS VALUES

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS



IRB MISSION

GROWING THE
GLOBAL RUGBY
FAMILY

1.2 DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN

The new IRB Sevens Plan has been produced following extensive consultation with a multitude of key stakeholders. An initial IRB Sevens Planning Project Group was established in May 2010 with the approval of the Rugby Committee. The Project Group had broad representation from within the IRB Membership and the members are listed in Appendix 1. As Sevens is now an Olympic sport for both men and women it was important that in preparing the Plan due consideration was given to the specific issues impacting on the Women's Game. To deal with these issues, a Women's High Performance sub-group was established to work alongside the main Project Group and its outputs were fed into the deliberations of the Sevens Project Group.

In October 2010, a draft Sevens Plan was presented to the Rugby Committee and subsequently to Council in November 2010. The draft Plan was based on data and research gathered through a number of sources, including but not limited to; a comprehensive Sevens survey of our Member Unions (93 per cent of Unions responded); official IOC information on the principles of Olympic qualification; research on other team sport Olympic qualification models; feedback from the HSBC Sevens World Series Host Unions and participating teams; views of commercial partners and broadcasters and input from IRB Regional staff. At the direction of Council, the Draft Plan was distributed to IRB Member Unions for comment and submissions were received from 34 Unions, the six Regional Associations and the International Rugby Players Association (IRPA).

A second Project Group was established and met in July 2011 to consider Union submissions and prepare the Final Draft of the Plan for submission to the Rugby Committee. In addition a Women's Strategic Planning Group was established in February 2011 to develop a new Plan for the Women's Game, was consulted and provided input to the elements of this Plan that relate specifically to the Women's Game.



1.3 RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPING SEVENS GLOBALLY

Sevens was established in Melrose, Scotland in 1883 when local butcher Ned Haig devised the variation in an attempt to raise money for the local Rugby club. This drove the growth of Sevens within the Scottish Borders. Sevens then developed principally as a club-based event at the beginning or end of the fifteen-a-side season. 1973 saw the first major Sevens event involving international teams take place, an event that was hosted by the Scottish Rugby Union to mark its Centenary celebration. Since then, there have been several important milestones:

- 1976 - The Hong Kong International Sevens tournament was established and became exceptionally successful from a playing, spectator and commercial perspective. The aim of establishing the Tournament was to promote and develop Rugby in Asia
- 1993 - Rugby World Cup (RWC) Sevens was first played (Scotland), and again in 1997 (Hong Kong), 2001 (Mar del Plata), 2005 (Hong Kong) and 2009 (Dubai), which for the first time included a Women's RWC Sevens. The Dubai tournament involved more than 90 Member Unions in the qualifying process, reflecting the significant growth of the Sevens Game throughout the globe since the establishment in 1976 of the Hong Kong international tournament
- 1998 - Sevens was included in the Commonwealth Games (in Kuala Lumpur) for the first time as an exhibition sport. So successful was the inaugural tournament that Sevens was retained for 2002 in Manchester and 2006 in Melbourne, generating the largest spectator and broadcast interest of any sport at the Games. In Delhi 2010, Sevens was widely regarded as the most competitive and best presented sports in the Games. Sevens is now considered a core marquee sport on the Commonwealth Games programme
- 1999 - There was significant interest in international Sevens tournaments during the 1990's, which culminated in the establishment in 1999 of what is now known as the HSBC Sevens World Series. After several iterations, the SWS settled on an annual eight-tournament format with five-year contractual arrangements, the current phase of which concluded after the 2010/2011 SWS. A new expanded Series for a four-year cycle will commence 2011 to 2015. Regional Sevens tournaments have also grown in the new millennium with each IRB Region now having its own Sevens tournaments for both men and women
- Sevens is now included in many Regional and pan-Regional multisport Games, including the Asian Games, Pan American Games, South Pacific Games, Central American and Caribbean Games, World Games, East Asian Games and World University Games
- 2004 - The development of Sevens was a key feature of the last IRB Strategic Plan with one of our goals to re-enter the Olympic Games. This was achieved in 2009
- 2006 - In preparation for the development of a first-ever IRB Sevens Plan, Deloitte was commissioned to undertake a strategic review of Sevens. The report indicated that *the IRB should continue to invest in Sevens as this version of the Game provides a unique and important role, particularly in relation to development, high performance and promotional goals for Rugby*. The Sevens Strategic Plan that was approved by the IRB Council at the Interim Meeting in 2006 had the following vision and mission:

Growth of Rugby through Sevens: Sevens to become an acknowledged and effective growth and development driver for Rugby throughout all Member Unions, underpinned by a financially viable and successful HSBC Sevens World Series

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

The Deloitte report and the IRB Sevens Plan 2006 clearly indicated that Sevens is an important element in the development of Rugby globally and should not be regarded as a separate or competing entity to Fifteens. Sevens can assist in bringing new players into the Game as participants and develop in them a lifelong interest in our sport. Sevens has also proven itself as an important element in the High Performance (HP) player development process, particularly for those countries that don't have access to regular high level international Fifteens competition. Sevens as an Olympic sport presents the Game with an unprecedented opportunity to expand our sport into new markets and make a significant contribution to achieving the IRB's overall strategic goals over the next 10 years

- 2009 – IOC overwhelmingly votes to include Rugby Sevens in the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games
- 2010 – HSBC appointed as the first ever IRB Sevens World Series title sponsor
- 2011 – IRB EXCO approves the expansion of the HSBC Sevens World Series to 10 tournaments

GLOBAL PROFILE OF SEVENS

The global profile of Sevens has grown exponentially over the past 10 years. Sevens is now recognised by players, spectators, broadcasters and commercial partners as an exciting and legitimate high performance form of Rugby. This is reflected in the following:

- Olympic inclusion has raised the status and profile of Sevens which is reflected in the increasing interest and support from National Olympic Committees, spectators, broadcasters and new and existing commercial partners
- The Sevens competition was the most successful event at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, Australia attracting 150,000 spectators
- There is now a very successful IRB Sevens World Series with a title sponsor (HSBC) in place that has a global commercial value of close to £30 million
- Spectator numbers in both attendances and television viewing for the HSBC SWS have increased dramatically over the last four years. Tickets sell quickly for most tournaments and the 2010/11 Series broke the 500,000 spectator mark for the first time, emphasising the increasing global popularity and profile of the Sevens Game
- Thirty-four broadcasters in 147 countries broadcast the HSBC SWS. 760 million people watched the 2010 /2011 Series compared with 530 million in the 2006/2007 season. Live coverage has grown from 911 hours in 2006/2007 to 3,657 hours in 2010/2011
- Ninety countries participated in the RWC Sevens 2009 qualification process. The tournament was shown by 141 broadcasters in 200 broadcast territories, with a global audience of close to 700 million which is remarkable for an individual Rugby event

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- RWC Sevens 2009 was the largest single tournament ever organised by IRB/RWCL with 40 participating teams in Dubai in a new purpose-built Sevens venue. The 2013 tournament will take place in Moscow, Russia
- Sevens is included in all major multisport Games including the Commonwealth Games, Pan American Games, Asian Games and most recently, World University Games

EXPANSION OF THE HSBC SEVENS WORLD SERIES

In March 2011, the IRB EXCO confirmed the expansion of the HSBC Sevens World Series from the existing eight-tournament format to a 10-tournament format. There is increasing interest from Member Unions to host a Series event and fans, broadcasters and sponsors want to see the Series expand. More importantly our Member Unions want more opportunities to participate in the Series and an expansion to 10 tournaments will accommodate this. One of the IRB's key strategic goals is to increase global participation in Rugby. Sevens, and in particular the HSBC Sevens World Series, provides the ideal vehicle through which we can increase the global profile of Rugby through presenting an exciting major international Rugby event to audiences in target markets with large populations and expanding economies.

When considering potential new tournament venues the opportunity to promote our sport to the widest audience possible should be a key priority as well as opening up new commercial and participation opportunities for the Game as a whole. There is enormous potential for our sport to grow in the rapidly expanding economic markets of Asia and South America and in recognition of this the HSBC SWS will include additional tournaments in Japan and Argentina from 2012. The HSBC SWS will be the key driver of growth in the profile and development of Sevens in the years ahead and its continued success from a commercial and playing perspective is central to achieving many of the key strategic goals of the IRB Sevens Plan.

1.4 KEY ISSUES IMPACTING ON THE GAME AND IMPLICATIONS

In developing this Plan, a number of challenges and issues impacting on Sevens were identified the Member Unions and key stakeholders. These included:

Issues	From Research and Consultation
Olympic Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The successful management and development of the Olympic qualification process leading to the staging of an <i>exciting and competitive Olympic Games tournament in 2016 for men and women</i>
High Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining, sustaining and growing the HSBC SWS and regional competitions • Need to review HSBC SWS model with regard to participation criteria • Dealing with the challenges and demands on Member Unions to successfully operate both Fifteens and Sevens
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnessing the opportunity to introduce many new participants, coaches and officials to the sport of Rugby through the Sevens Game • Providing the training, programmes, facilities and resources to cater for the increasing demand arising from the expansion of Sevens
Women's Sevens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for an accelerated HP programme to ensure women's teams will perform to the highest standards at the 2016 Olympic Games • The opportunity to implement new competition models for women globally as outlined in the new IRB Plan for Women's Rugby
Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management and development of a successful business and Rugby model to grow Sevens to its full potential • Ensuring that the sport of Rugby is sustainable and that Sevens aids the growth of Fifteens • Ensuring that the Laws, Regulations and values of Rugby are upheld as our Game grows

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

Issues	From Research and Consultation
Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing the potential threat to the Fifteens Game with Unions potentially diverting resources disproportionately and focus to the Sevens Game and the Olympic Games, either by choice or through their own sports system funding policies • Maintaining the values and ethics of Rugby as the Game grows • Implementation of strict anti-doping and education programmes to deter doping • Addressing potential for rival Sevens models with lucrative incentives for a limited pool of players • Dealing with gambling and betting and the potential risk to the integrity and reputation of Rugby Union • Reviewing and updating player movement and regulatory issues • Keeping the focus on player welfare, player burnout, injury management and scheduling of Games and tournaments • Minimising the financial risk and pressures associated with developing Sevens while continuing to sustain Fifteens • Ensuring the Women's Game develops and accelerates to the required standard by 2016
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising the promotional opportunities for Rugby globally
Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnessing the existing and new commercial opportunities presented by the global expansion of Sevens while ensuring the IRB, our Member Unions and Regional Associations are driving the realisation of these opportunities together in partnership

The implications for the IRB and Member Unions are:

- There is a need for strong and effective leadership, planning, communication and cohesion to deal with these challenges and maximise the opportunities between all key stakeholders
- There are fears that the Fifteens Game could be marginalised and diminished in value and importance. The IRB in collaboration with Member Unions must ensure that the focus on Fifteens is maintained and strengthened and that both parts of the Game are developed in an integrated and mutually beneficial way
- The business and financial model required to invest in the Sevens Game needs to be developed while continuing to invest in flagship programmes in key Unions
- We need to retain control and leadership in securing and managing the commercial opportunities associated with Sevens

1.5 SUMMARY INITIATIVES TO GROW THE GAME (FIFTEENS AND SEVENS)

There is considerable debate around the need to ensure a balanced approach to growing both the Fifteens and Sevens forms of the Game. The key points in this regard are:

- Sevens should be seen as an opportunity to grow the Game and not as a threat to existing Fifteens programmes
- Sevens will attract new players to Rugby and Member Unions will be required to implement strategies to retain these players in the Game for both Sevens and Fifteens
- It is recognised that potential new Member Unions of the IRB will be attracted to the Sevens version of our sport due to its Olympic status and that these countries should be encouraged to grow the Game through Sevens while at the same time developing medium to long term plans to implement sustainable Fifteens programmes
- Through our investment programmes the IRB will be able to influence and monitor how Member Unions invest our funding to ensure that there is an appropriate level of investment and resources applied to both Fifteens and Sevens. Member Unions will be required to produce fully costed four-year Rugby development plans which must include detailed strategies for both men's and women's, Fifteens and Sevens development programmes
- IRB and Regions will track and monitor Member Union performances at Age Grade and senior levels to ascertain whether any Member Unions are inappropriately shifting their investment focus too much towards Sevens to the detriment of their Fifteens programmes
- The IRB investment strategies will continue to recognise Fifteens as the primary form of our Game without hindering the growth of Sevens. We will continue to enhance our investment in Member Union and Regional competition programmes ensuring that there are sustainable and meaningful Fifteens competition models at international, Regional and Member Union level

1.6 SUCCESSFUL OLYMPIC GAMES AND QUALIFICATION PRINCIPLES

One of the key issues to be addressed in this Plan is ensuring that Sevens event is an outstanding success at the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games. This means an event organised to world-class standards, full stadia, a highly competitive competition model and a global broadcast reach with strong viewing audiences for Rugby. Our sport has to comply with the IOC requirement of universality therefore, we must ensure that every IRB Member Union has a fair opportunity to qualify and participate in the Olympic Games. The proposed qualification system will be thoroughly examined in accordance with the core principles and IOC guidelines for Olympic Qualification. The key criteria guiding the qualification process should be:

- The Olympic Games should feature the best athletes and teams. This is limited by the IOC to 12 men's and 12 women's teams for the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro
- The process for qualification should be fair and transparent
- Every Member Union should have the opportunity to participate in the qualification process and all six IRB Regions should have a representative at the Games
- Existing International and Regional tournaments should be used where possible in the qualification process
- There should be more than one opportunity for Member Unions to qualify

1.7 PROPOSED OLYMPIC GAMES QUALIFICATION MODEL

The proposed Olympic qualification model, which will require consultation with Member Unions and external discussion with the IOC and the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), involves:

- Direct qualification of teams through the HSBC Sevens World Series for men and an international IRB Sevens World Series for women
- Regional Olympic Qualification Tournaments (ROQTs) where at least one team will qualify directly to the Olympics from each IRB Region
- World Olympic Qualification Tournaments (WOQTs) where teams who do not qualify from their Region will have a further opportunity to qualify

The recommended qualification process is:

A. Men's Qualification Process

- The Men's Olympic qualification process will have three stages:
 - Stage 1 - HSBC Sevens World Series
 - Stage 2 - Regional Olympic Qualification Tournaments (ROQTs)
 - Stage 3 - World Olympic Qualification Tournament (WOQT)
- Four teams will qualify directly from the HSBC SWS into the Olympics based on Rankings achieved in the 2014/15 HSBC Sevens World Series
- England, Scotland and Wales will participate in the HSBC SWS as individual countries (should they qualify as core teams) with the highest ranked team in the top four of the 2014/15 HSBC SWS rankings qualifying Great Britain into the Olympics. Should one of the countries fail to get a top four ranking then the GB countries will attempt to qualify through the Regional FIRA-AER tournament and subsequently the World Olympic Qualification Tournament
- Six teams will qualify from Regional Olympic Qualification Tournaments to be held in 2015 with a quota of one team from each IRB Region securing direct qualification
- Two teams will qualify from a final World Olympic Qualification Tournament which will be the final stage in the Olympic Qualification process and can take place any time up until two weeks prior to the Rio 2016 Games. The tournament could be a 12 or 16 team format

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- Teams will qualify into the World Olympic Qualification Tournament based on rankings achieved in their respective Regional Olympic Qualifications Tournaments with an agreed quota of places from each Region to be determined by the IRB
- If the Host Country is given an automatic qualification place then only one team will qualify from the World Olympic Qualification Tournament

B. Women's Qualification Process:

The women's qualification process will follow the same key principles as the men's process except that the Host Country could be confirmed as an automatic qualifier at this stage

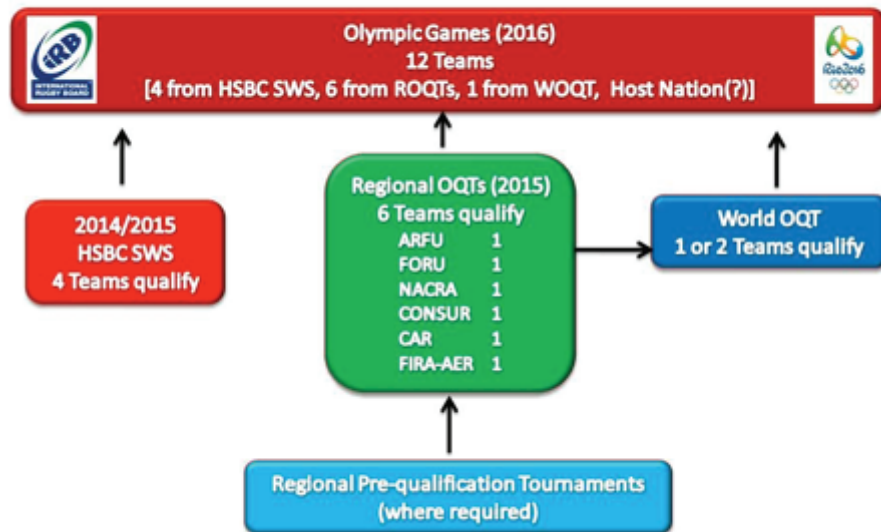
- Stage 1 - IRB Women's Sevens World Series
- Stage 2 - Regional Olympic Qualification Tournaments (ROQTs)
- Stage 3 - World Olympic Qualification Tournament (WOQT)
- The quota of teams to qualify from each stage of the qualification process will be determined following an analysis of performances and rankings from the Women's Rugby World Cup Sevens tournament in 2013
- A number of teams will qualify directly into the Olympics from an IRB Women's Sevens World Series which will commence in 2013. The rankings from the 2014/15 season will be used for Olympic qualification
- At least one team will qualify from each IRB Region through Regional Olympic Qualification Tournaments which will be held in 2015
- The process for Great Britain that applies to the men's qualification system will also apply to the women's qualification model
- A number of teams will qualify from a final World Olympic Qualification Tournament which will be the final stage in the Olympic qualification process and can take place any time up until two weeks prior to the Rio 2016 Games

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

The summary outline of the Olympic qualification models are:

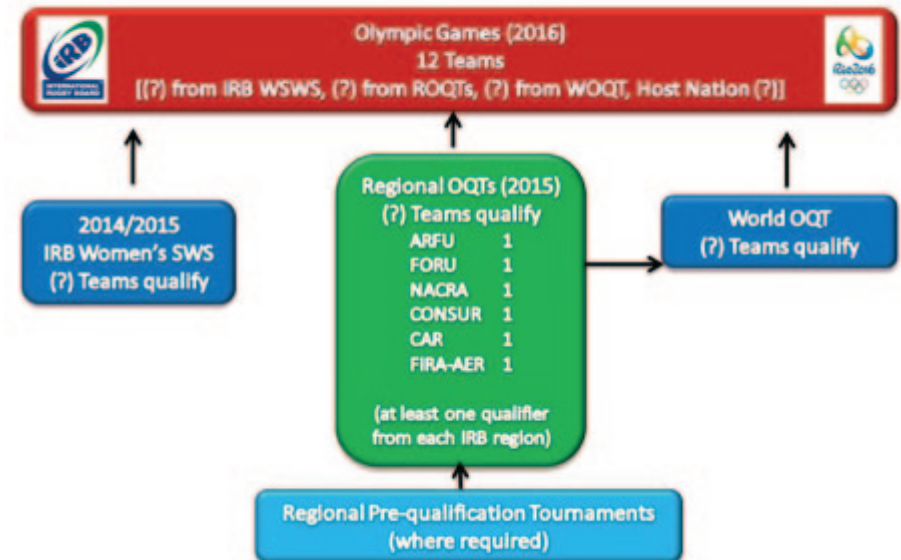
PROPOSED OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION MODEL (MEN)

(Subject to IOC approval)



PROPOSED OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION MODEL (WOMEN)

(Subject to IOC approval)



1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

The IRB will lead the discussions on the Olympic qualification process and will work in collaboration with the IOC and our stakeholders to finalise the model. Dealing with the uncertainty and the long lead in to a final approval on the qualification model by the IOC in 2014 will be a challenge for all stakeholders. The broad timeframe is:

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Olympic Games						Rio Olympic Games
HSBC Sevens World Series	Series expands to nine Tournaments	10-Tournament Series with qualification process from Regions	10-Tournament Series with qualification process from Regions	10-Tournament Series with qualification process from Regions	HSBC SWS used for Olympic qualification	
Olympic Qualification Process	Consultation	Consultation	Final Draft Model	Final IOC approval Start qualification process	Regional Qualification Tournaments	Complete qualification process

1.8 RUGBY WORLD CUP SEVENS

Rugby World Cup Sevens 2013 will be staged in Russia with 24 men's and 16 women's teams participating. It is difficult at this stage to determine where the RWC Sevens fits into the international competition model. There will be a need to review the RWC Sevens model after the 2013 event and assess the role and potential timing of any future tournaments.

1.9 ROLE OF THE HSBC SEVENS WORLD SERIES

The HSBC SWS is the premier annual international Sevens competition with an annual global commercial value of close to £30 million. The Series has been in existence for 12 years and its current commercial, broadcasting and Rugby success has been achieved due to the significant investments made by a multitude of stakeholders including the IRB, the core participating teams and the Host Unions themselves. Some of the key points to consider regarding the future development of the Series are:

- It needs to be recognised that the HSBC SWS will be the main driver of growth in the profile and commercial value of our sport over the next 10 years and therefore should be central to the global Sevens competition model including acting as a core element of the Olympic Qualification process
- The HSBC SWS should be used for Olympic Qualification provided that the participation criteria and qualification process into the HSBC SWS are both transparent and clear
- It is vital that the best teams in the world participate in the HSBC SWS on an annual basis and that if this can be achieved then it should be used for Olympic Qualification
- Excluding the HSBC SWS from the Olympic qualification process could have a serious detrimental impact on both the profile and commercial value of the competition thereby potentially undermining the massive investment that has been made by both the IRB and Member Unions in developing the product that is at the core of our sport
- There will be a need to confirm the qualification criteria for entry into the HSBC SWS which should be based on the following assumptions:
 - A transparent qualification process into the HSBC SWS will be implemented for the 2012/13 season onwards
 - Each HSBC SWS tournament will be a 16-team format
 - There will be 15 core teams in the Series each year who will participate in all 10 tournaments
 - There will be one wild card spot for each tournament which will be determined by the IRB

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- The top 12 teams from the Series rankings at the end of each season will automatically qualify as core teams for the following season
- An additional three teams will qualify as core teams from a HSBC SWS global qualification tournament which will take place in the appropriate window
- The teams ranked 13-15 in the HSBC SWS rankings will gain automatic qualification into the HSBC SWS global qualification tournament
- Additional teams will qualify to participate in the HSBC SWS global qualification tournament based on rankings obtained in regional tournaments
- The number of teams to qualify from each Region into the HSBC SWS global qualification tournament will be determined on a quota basis by the IRB

1.10 WOMEN'S SEVENS

Women's Rugby Sevens is a critical component of the IRB Sevens Planning process. The key gaps identified for Women's Sevens are as follows:

- The need for a high performance programme for Women's Sevens
- The requirement to increase knowledge among Member Unions and Regions with regard to the Women's Game
- Expansion of international competition and the need for more opportunities for girls and women to play Sevens

The women's international competition model will drive the investment in high performance programmes in individual countries and will determine global performance levels. This area requires urgent investment if we are to ensure that the competitiveness and performance levels of the women's Sevens competition in Rio 2016 is worthy of an Olympic sporting event. The key elements of the Women's international competition model that require prioritisation are as follows:

Stage 1: Commence IRB international invitational Sevens tournaments in 2011 and invest in Regional Tournament Structures

- There are a number of international women's Sevens invitational tournaments which take place at HSBC SWS men's events (Dubai, Las Vegas, Hong Kong)
- These events need to have a more formalised invitational process which the IRB should oversee and be organised to the same standards as the HSBC SWS

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- Three or four tournaments will be identified to form an invitational Series in 2011/12 with targeted Unions invited to participate
- Increased investment in regional tournaments in 2012 is required to ensure that as many Member Unions as possible can participate in RWC Sevens 2013 qualification

Stage 2: Implement IRB Women's Sevens World Series (IRB Women's SWS) for 2013/14 Season

- The IRB Series will consist of four or five legs with 12 teams participating in each tournament
- RWC 2013 rankings will be used to determine the core teams for the 2013/14 season
- In subsequent years there will be promotion and relegation between the IRB Women's SWS and an IRB Women's SWS qualification tournament
- Regional tournaments will continue to grow and provide qualifiers into the qualification tournament and ultimately into the Series.

Stage 3: The Olympic Games and the qualification process

- 2014/15 IRB Women's SWS will be used to qualify a number of teams directly to the Olympic Games
- Regional tournaments will act as Olympic qualifiers to qualify at least one team from each IRB Region directly to the Olympic Games
- A World Olympic Qualification tournament will be the final stage in the qualification process
- The 2015/16 IRB Women's SWS will provide the preparation platform for the teams that have qualified for the Olympic Games

Specific strategies are included in this Plan to address the gaps identified for growing the Women's Game. These include:

- Creating a pathway so that every girl has the opportunity to play this new Olympic sport
- Producing resources and programmes to facilitate the playing of the Game for young girls
- Developing a Sevens introductory programme for women and girls
- Taking an innovative approach to the development and marketing of the Women's Game

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- Establishing a High Performance Working Group for Women's Rugby to identify the specific HP coaching needs for women's Sevens
- Ensuring that the appropriate expertise is in place to facilitate, organise and coordinate Women's Rugby decisions and activities
- Developing an international competition model for women's Sevens tailored to meet the specific needs of Women's Rugby
- Developing and implementing a marketing campaign to promote Sevens for girls and women to Member Unions and the Regions

1.11 SEVENS BUSINESS & COMMERCIAL MODEL

The level of investment and the scale of the business model for Sevens has increased substantially over the past six years. The Deloitte report in 2006 indicated that the total value of Sevens Rugby was approximately £11 million with £10 million generated by the IRB Sevens World Series. The current (2011) value of annual investment in Sevens by the IRB and key stakeholders in the Regions and Unions is estimated to be at least £37 million per year, with £32 million now generated by the HSBC Sevens World Series (source IRB internal analysis).

An initial analysis of the potential cost of investment over the life of the Sevens Plan suggests that based on current values, current activities and suggested competitions and initiatives, the global value of Sevens is projected to increase to an average of close to £50 million per year over the next 10 years. The IRB currently invests almost £4 million per year in Sevens programmes consisting of £2.6 million in the HSBC SWS (financed by sponsorship revenues and Trust Grants) and another £1.4 million elsewhere through Regional Trust Grants, Multi-Sport Games and the Rugby World Cup Sevens (annualised). The IRB will need to work in partnership with Member Unions and Regional Associations to develop robust commercial programmes around the key international competition properties in order to generate incremental sources of funding to invest in the implementation of this Plan.

The likely sources of new revenue to invest in the Plan and competition models will be as follows:

- The IRB and the world of Rugby will benefit financially and commercially from participation in the Olympic Games. The full details of the extent of this will not be known until closer to 2016 and will be dependent on the extent of future IOC broadcast and commercial programmes. However, at a minimum, it is anticipated that the IRB will receive direct funding of US\$10 million (£6.2 million) in 2017 and 2021, which could be annualised in expenditure to £1.55 million per year in each four-year Olympic cycle
- Expansion of the HSBC SWS and the implementation of an IRB Women's SWS will open up sponsorship opportunities for the IRB, Host Unions and Participating Unions
- Enhanced regional competition models will create sponsorship opportunities for Regional Associations and Participating Unions

1. GROWING RUGBY GLOBALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

- Member Unions could potentially secure new investment from government agencies and NOCs to support their participation in Sevens. The IRB needs to work with its Members to maximise, track and monitor this investment. To date, significant new investment has already been allocated to some Member Unions from NOCs and government agencies for men's and women's Sevens high performance programmes e.g. Brazil, Canada, Netherlands, Spain, Chile & China.
- There will be access to Olympic Solidarity funding for investment in training, education and development initiatives

1.12 SUMMARY

We face new and exciting challenges and opportunities as Sevens expands globally. We need to maximise the benefits of our Olympic status while ensuring that Sevens enhances and supports our main Rugby programmes and Rugby World Cups. Our participation in the Rio 2016 Games provides Rugby with a unique and unprecedented opportunity. Working together, we can increase participation, take our Game into new markets, reach new audiences and become a truly global sport. We will work with our Regional Associations and Member Unions to meet the targets that we have set. We are ready, and prepared to achieve this. This Sevens Plan outlines the strategies that will be implemented in order to achieve our ambitious goals.

2. STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR SEVENS



2. STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR SEVENS

2. STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR SEVENS

IRB SEVENS

STRATEGIC

GOALS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The vision and strategic direction for this Plan is linked to the overall IRB Strategic Plan 2010-2020.

2.2 VISION AND MISSION

Vision:

Rugby - A sport for all - True to its values

Mission:

Growing the global Rugby family

2.3 STRATEGIC GOALS FOR SEVENS

Olympic Games

Implement a successful Olympic men's and women's programme in 2016 and 2020, involving every Member Union

High Performance

Support the acceleration of high performance Sevens programmes by 2016

Competitions

Establish a successful global competition model for Sevens

Development & Participation

Increase participation in Sevens at all levels for men and women while also ensuring the continued growth of Fifteens

Commercial & Marketing

Promote Sevens and maximise its commercial opportunities in conjunction with appropriate government agencies, media and commercial partners

Leadership

Continue to provide strong and effective leadership of the expansion of Rugby globally

2. STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR SEVENS

2.4 RUGBY'S CORE VALUES

integrity
passion
solidarity
respect
discipline

RUGBY'S VALUES



integrity

Integrity is central to the fabric of the Game and is generated through honesty and fair play.



respect

Respect for team mates, opponents, match officials and those involved in the Game is paramount.



solidarity

Rugby provides a unifying spirit that leads to lifelong friendships, camaraderie, teamwork and loyalty which transcends cultural, geographic, political and religious differences.



passion

Rugby people have a passionate enthusiasm for the Game. Rugby generates excitement, emotional attachment and a sense of belonging to the global Rugby Family.



discipline

Discipline is an integral part of the Game both on and off the field and is reflected through adherence to the Laws, the Regulations and Rugby's core values.



2.5 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) AND TARGETS

We will measure our progress in implementing this Plan in the following way:

Area	KPIs	Target
1. Olympic Games	2016 Olympic Rugby tournament considered to be a success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full stadia for men's and women's tournaments • Broadcast reach to meet IOC targets • Revenue streams from the event to meet IOC targets • At least one team from each IRB Region participating in the event • All teams competitive throughout the tournament • Rugby's core values are observable on and off the field
	2016 Olympic Qualifying tournaments considered to be a success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Regional qualifying process in place and completed in 2015 for each IRB Region • HSBC SWS to directly qualify teams • Each qualifying tournament is organised to a high standard and financially sustainable • Rugby's core values are observable on and off the field during the qualification process
2. Competition	HSBC SWS seen to grow in strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each tournament profitable by 2012/2013 • Spectator numbers to continue to grow • Broadcast reach to grow by 10 percent per annum • Clear evidence of increasing competitiveness of the teams over the period 2011 to 2016 • Transparent participation process for competing teams
	Regional Tournaments grow in strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well organised and competitive Regional tournaments including Women's events in place in the all IRB Regions by 2012 • Commercial model in place for each Regional tournament by 2012 • Evidence that teams promoted from Regional tournaments to the HSBC SWS are gaining in competitiveness
	Continued success of Sevens in multisport Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain position as a core sport in major multisport Games • Men's and women's competitions in all major multisport Games

2. STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR SEVENS

Area	KPIs	Target
3. Development	Development programmes in place for Sevens ensuring that there are strategies in place to link these programmes to delivering sustainable growth in Fifteens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men's and Women's Sevens programmes in all Member Unions • All Member Unions to be members of their NOC by 2012 • IRB Sevens match official development plan in place by 2011 • Clear pathways from Sevens to support Fifteens game • Increased level of new investment in Member Union Sevens and HP programmes
	Evidence of effective Sevens training and education programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two levels of IRB Sevens coaching programme by 2011 • Level 3 IRB Sevens coaching programme developed in 2012 • Two levels of Sevens match official programme by 2011
4. Leadership & Management	Rugby's core values are seen to be maintained and promoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core values included in all training and education materials • Core values included in all publications associated with Sevens
	Regulations are seen to be effective in protecting Member Unions and IRB rights to govern the Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation 8 – Sevens, reviewed in 2012 • Regulation 9 enforced • Regulation 11 reviewed • Regulation 16 enforced • Other Regulations reviewed and updated as required
	IRB considered to be a model International Federation by the IOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmarking showing effectiveness of IRB • Data on the contribution of Rugby to the Olympic Games and IRB participation in IOC programmes and Commissions
5. Marketing	Marketing and promotional plans implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing plans implemented by the IRB, Regions and Member Unions to promote Sevens
6. Commercial	Commercial plan in place for HSBC SWS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased growth in HSBC SWS central and Host Union commercial values
	Commercial plan in place to generate new revenue in the Game to finance the Regional tournaments and Olympic qualifiers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial plan for each Region in place by 2012 ensuring that tournaments operate at least to break even position • Commercial plan in place for the Olympic qualifying process ensuring at least a break even position • New investment in Unions from NOCs and relevant national agencies • IOC Olympic solidarity investment in IRB, Region and Unions training and development programmes

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES



3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
1. OLYMPIC GAMES		
1.1 Olympic Qualification Process	<p>1.1.1 Implement an Olympic qualification process which is fully integrated with the international competition model and which ensures that Member Unions can present teams (men and women) in peak condition to participate in the qualification process.</p> <p>1.1.2 Develop a qualification model which meets the IOC core principles and is approved by the IOC Executive Committee in 2014.</p>	IOC IRB
1.2 Olympic Games	<p>1.2.1 Implement exceptional 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games Sevens competitions for men and women.</p> <p>1.2.2 Work with IOC and other International Federations to prepare for the running of the Olympic Sevens tournament.</p> <p>1.2.3 Send delegation to London 2012 Olympic Games to learn about the running of Olympic events.</p> <p>1.2.4 Seek advice and input from other Olympic Federations on the running of an Olympic event.</p> <p>1.2.5 Maximise profile and marketing opportunities to world Rugby during the Olympic campaign.</p> <p>1.2.6 Implement training programme for Olympic match and technical officials.</p> <p>1.2.7 Provide briefings and information for the participating men's and women's teams in Rio 2016.</p> <p>1.2.8 Complete detailed review of the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro and lessons learned.</p> <p>1.2.9 Prepare for 2020 campaign and implement recommendations arising from Rio 2016.</p>	IOC IRB

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
<p>1.3 Maximising Olympic Opportunity</p>	<p>1.3.1 Work with Member Unions to build strong effective relations with Regional Olympic Associations and National Olympic Committees (NOCs).</p> <p>1.3.2 Produce a clear/fully detailed protocol about how to apply for Olympic funds & other Olympic resources.</p> <p>1.3.3 Support Member Unions to raise money from national governments and other sources.</p> <p>1.3.4 Track new investment in Member Unions for Olympic and Sevens programmes.</p> <p>1.3.5 Encourage Member Unions to assign a specific budget for Sevens development programmes.</p> <p>1.3.6 Produce resources and guidelines for working with Olympic associations.</p> <p>1.3.7 Adapt current tournaments to meet the expected needs and developments of Sevens.</p> <p>1.3.8 Take an innovative approach to the development and marketing of the Women’s Game.</p>	<p>IRB Unions</p>
<p>2. HIGH PERFORMANCE 2.1 HP Coaching</p>	<p>2.1.1 Develop a specific Sevens High Performance coaching module that will complement the IRB’s existing Sevens coaching resource provision but will be directed specifically at coaches who have been targeted by Member Unions as potential national team coaches.</p> <p>2.1.2 Establish a Sevens High Performance Coaching Working Group to identify best practice HP coaching modules for Sevens which can be disseminated to Member Unions.</p>	<p>IRB Regions Unions</p>

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
2.1 HP Coaching	<p>2.1.3 Establish a High Performance Working Group for Women's Rugby to identify the specific HP coaching needs for women's Sevens.</p> <p>2.1.4 Implement a Sevens-specific coaching Talent Optimisation Programme for men and women, targeted at Member Unions which have been identified as those with potential to achieve at least a Top 25 IRB Sevens Ranking.</p>	IRB Regions Unions
2.2 Sports Science Sports Medicine (SSSM)	<p>2.2.1 Establish a Sevens SSSM Working Group to develop SSSM strategies relevant to Sevens.</p> <p>2.2.2 Fund research in specific SSSM areas identified by the Working Group.</p> <p>2.2.3 Research and develop Sevens specific strength and conditioning best practice models for dissemination to Member Unions.</p> <p>2.2.4 Produce Training & Education (T&E) resources relevant to the recommendations of the SSSM Working Group and make them available to all Member Unions.</p>	IRB
2.3 Athlete Talent Transfer Strategies	<p>2.3.1 Implement research and collaboration with other Olympic sports, to develop strategies to assist Member Unions in implementing talent transfer programmes, whereby they will be equipped to identify and target athletes in other sports for transfer over to the Sevens national team programmes.</p> <p>2.3.2 Identify and collaborate with other Olympic sports which have implemented successful talent transfer programmes for men and women.</p> <p>2.3.3 Through the work of the SSSM and HP Coaching Working Groups, establish core benchmark psychological, physiological and skills-based criteria for identifying athletes in other sports for crossover to Rugby.</p> <p>2.3.4 Develop and disseminate resources for Member Unions to implement successful athlete talent transfer programmes.</p>	IRB

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
2.4 HP Planning and Infrastructure Development	<p>2.4.1 Provide resources to Member Unions to assist them in implementing best practice HP planning and organisational structures to improve international Sevens performance standards and assist Member Unions in securing NOC funding through demonstrating that they have Olympic standard HP planning and implementation strategies in place for Sevens.</p> <p>2.4.2 Develop Olympic standard Sevens HP planning and organisational templates for dissemination to Member Unions.</p> <p>2.4.3 Target specific Member Unions for investment and implementation of IRB-funded Sevens HP planning and infrastructure development programmes.</p> <p>2.4.4 Develop strategies which will assist Member Unions to implement player pathway models which ensure that Sevens players also have the opportunity to participate in elite Fifteens programmes as appropriate.</p>	IRB Unions
2.5 Match Officials	<p>2.5.1 Implement a specific Sevens HP programme for Match Officials which will ensure that a clearly defined pathway is in place which produces the best possible Match Officials for the HSBC SWS and the Olympic Games in 2016 and beyond.</p>	IRB
2.6 Women's Accelerated HP Programme	<p>2.6.1 Implement an accelerated HP programme to develop targeted teams to the required standard to ensure that the Olympic Games is a competitive high quality event.</p>	IRB

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
<p>3. COMPETITIONS</p> <p>3.1 International Competition Model</p>	<p>3.1.1 Implement an international competition model for Sevens which maximises athlete performance and supports Member Unions in providing a sustainable HP competition pathway for their elite Sevens players.</p> <p>3.1.2 Continue to organise the HSBC SWS on an annual basis between October and May each year.</p> <p>3.1.3 Ensure that the international competition model is commercially sustainable and meets the requirements of player welfare and player rest best-practice models.</p> <p>3.1.4 Work with Regional Associations to implement Regional Sevens competition structures which provide a qualification pathway into the HSBC SWS and compliments the Olympic qualification process.</p> <p>3.1.5 Develop an international competition model for Women’s Sevens tailored to meet the specific needs of Women’s Rugby.</p>	<p>IRB SWS Hosts Regions Unions</p>
<p>3.2 The Structured Season</p>	<p>3.2.1 Establish a structured Sevens season that accommodates the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olympic Games • Olympic Qualification • HSBC SWS and the Women’s Series • SWS Qualification • Regional and cross-Regional international competitions 	<p>IRB Regions Unions</p>

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
3.3 Regional Competitions	<p>3.3.1 Ensure that there is an ongoing sustainable international competition programme in all Regions.</p> <p>3.3.2 Create a framework to promote and develop regional competitions in line with the agreed international schedule.</p> <p>3.3.3 Ensure that the regional competition model enhances the development of coaching, playing and officiating.</p> <p>3.3.4 Investigate funding requirements and issues to implement the regional competition programme.</p> <p>3.3.5 Seek support to include Sevens in continental and relevant global multisport Games.</p>	IRB Regions
3.4 Member Union Competitions	<p>3.4.1 Support and encourage Member Unions to establish their own domestic Sevens competitions model.</p> <p>3.4.2 Support and encourage initiatives from Member Unions to establish Cross Border Sevens competition models at international, provincial or club level while complying with IRB Regulations.</p>	IRB Unions
3.5 Planning	<p>3.5.1 Ensure a structured approach to planning Regional competitions in line with main HSBC SWS.</p> <p>3.5.2 Provide training for Regional and Member Union staff on the planning and implementation of Regional competitions.</p>	IRB Regions

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
3.6 Event Management	<p>3.6.1 Regions/Member Unions elevate the level of organisation of Sevens event management.</p> <p>3.6.2 Minimum tournament standards operations manuals should be designed and implemented for all Regions.</p>	Regions Unions
<p>4. DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>4.1 Planning</p>	<p>4.1.1 Following completion of the IRB strategic planning process, all Regions and Member Unions engage in Sevens planning consistent with the IRB's outcomes and linked to a sustainable Fifteens programme.</p> <p>4.1.2 Develop focused Regional and Member Union specific plans from which the Game will grow globally.</p> <p>4.1.3 Assist Member Unions to develop strategic and technical plans for Sevens.</p> <p>4.1.4 Assist Member Unions with identifying Sevens strategies and relevant KPIs in their Strategic Plans incorporating Sevens as a core strategic area.</p> <p>4.1.5 Ensure that the appropriate expertise is in place to facilitate, organise and coordinate Women's Rugby decisions and activities.</p>	IRB Regions Unions
4.2 Fifteens and Sevens	<p>4.2.1 Ensure that Sevens programmes are incorporated into all Member Unions' overall Strategic Plans in a balanced and realistic way.</p> <p>4.2.2 Ensure that regional policies are implemented so that there is an appropriate balance between Sevens and Fifteens development in all Regions and that Sevens strategies assist the growth of Fifteens.</p>	IRB Regions Unions

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
4.3 Developing Sevens	<p>4.3.1 Develop resources and materials to promote the playing of Sevens in clubs, schools and communities.</p> <p>4.3.2 Train leaders, coaches and development officers on how to promote and develop Sevens.</p> <p>4.3.3 Provide advice to Member Unions on developing talent identification strategies.</p> <p>4.3.4 Develop a Sevens introductory programme for women and girls.</p> <p>4.3.5 Develop and implement a marketing campaign to promote Sevens for girls and women to Member Unions and the Regions.</p> <p>4.3.6 Encourage Sevens in universities and colleges on a targeted basis within Member Unions.</p> <p>4.3.7 Expand links with the World University Games governing body to increase the profile of Sevens within their structures.</p>	IRB Regions Unions
4.4 Training & Education	<p>4.4.1 Continue to develop high quality Sevens specific training and education resources.</p>	IRB
4.5 Coaching	<p>4.5.1 Promote the development of more Sevens coaches within our Member Unions.</p> <p>4.5.2 Ensure that IRB Sevens coaching resources remain relevant and are reviewed on a regular basis.</p> <p>4.5.3 Ensure that there is a pathway for coaches to become specialist Sevens coaches.</p>	IRB Unions

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
4.6 Tournament Officials	4.6.1 Develop and provide specific courses and continuous professional development for Member Union and Regional personnel that will be involved in coordinating and organising Sevens tournaments.	IRB
4.7 Funding	<p>4.7.1 Develop an investment model to support implementation and roll out of the Sevens development programme.</p> <p>4.7.2 Work with the IOC to identify funding and investment opportunities for Member Unions to access support from their regional and National Olympic Committees and Olympic Solidarity funding.</p> <p>4.7.3 Identify and track other sources of funding to invest in Sevens.</p>	IOC IRB Regions Unions
4.8 Laws	<p>4.8.1 Review Sevens Laws regularly to ensure that they are relevant and meet the needs of our rapidly growing Olympic sport.</p> <p>4.8.2 Produce simple and easily accessible Sevens Laws educational resources to meet the needs of new Member Unions.</p>	IRB
4.9 Women's Rugby	<p>4.9.1 Work to develop Women's Sevens globally.</p> <p>4.9.2 Create a pathway so that every girl has the opportunity to play this new Olympic sport.</p> <p>4.9.3 Produce resources and programmes to facilitate the playing of the Game for young girls.</p>	IRB Regions Unions

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
4.9 Women's Rugby	<p>4.9.4 Ensure every Member Union produces strategies to develop and promote Sevens for females.</p> <p>4.9.5 Ensure co-ordination across all stakeholders to develop the Women's Game.</p>	IRB Regions Unions
<p>5. MARKETING</p> <p>5.1 Marketing</p>	<p>5.1.1 Develop a marketing campaign to promote men's and Women's Sevens to Member Unions and targeted audiences.</p> <p>5.1.2 Create programmes around major events to promote Sevens.</p> <p>5.1.3 Plan an Olympic legacy programme to raise the profile of Rugby (both Fifteens and Sevens) and the opportunities to play the Game.</p>	IRB
5.2 Communications	<p>5.2.1 Investigate the use of social network models to promote Sevens competitions and events to participants, fans and Member Unions.</p>	IRB
<p>6. COMMERCIAL</p> <p>6.1 Business Model</p>	<p>6.1.1 Undertake a comprehensive analysis of the potential commercial global value of Sevens.</p> <p>6.1.2 Develop a 10-year financial model which shows the global cost of implementing the agreed international calendar, identifying costs for all stakeholders including IRB, Participating teams, Host Unions and Regional Associations.</p>	IRB

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
6.1 Business Model	<p>6.1.3 Complete financial analysis to identify where potential funding gaps are and develop commercial strategies to mitigate them.</p> <p>6.1.4 Conduct research on other professional sports models around the world that will assist us in establishing the best possible business model for Sevens.</p>	IRB
6.2 Maximise global commercial model	<p>6.2.1 Develop ideas to maximise the global commercial opportunities that will arise for Sevens now that we are an Olympic sport.</p> <p>6.2.2 Ensure that the IRB is resourced appropriately to develop the global Sevens business model in order to maximise revenues from the IRB, Regional and Olympic Qualification tournament properties.</p> <p>6.2.3 Develop commercial tools and strategies to assist Regions and Member Unions to maximise Sevens commercial opportunities in their territories.</p>	IRB
6.3 Commercial structures	<p>6.3.1 Ensure that the IRB and Regions are resourced appropriately to employ the required commercial and tournament delivery resources to develop and organise commercially successful world-class Sevens events for men and women.</p> <p>6.3.2 Develop commercial interest in the Sevens Game while ensuring that Member Unions retain rights to govern the Game within their territory.</p>	IRB Regions

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
7. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT		
7.1 Governance	<p>7.1.1 Ensure that Regulation 16 is communicated effectively and enforced ensuring that Member Unions retain control of international tournaments within their territory.</p> <p>7.1.2 Ensure that there is one set of Sevens Laws which are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are fit for purpose.</p> <p>7.1.3 Ensure that the Governance structures in Member Unions and Regions appropriately accommodate Fifteens and Sevens for both men and women.</p> <p>7.1.4 Continue to govern the HSBC SWS in partnership with key stakeholders.</p> <p>7.1.5 Continue to develop professional processes so that the IOC regards the IRB as a model federation within Association of Summer Olympic International Federations.</p> <p>7.1.6 Work with Associate and potential new Member Unions to establish approved governance models to become full Members of the IRB.</p> <p>7.1.7 Implement appropriate risk management policies and models.</p>	IRB
7.2 IRB Values	<p>7.2.1 Ensure that the values enshrined in the IRB Strategic Plan pervade all aspects of the Sevens Game, its infrastructure, its players, coaches, match officials, Member Unions, commercial partners and spectators.</p>	IRB Regions Unions
7.3 Regulatory Matters	<p>7.3.1 Ensure that the IRB Regulations as they apply to international Rugby are applicable for international Sevens tournaments including the Olympic qualifying events and Olympic Games.</p>	IRB

3. IRB SEVENS STRATEGIES

Area	Strategies	Lead
7.3 Regulatory Matters	<p>7.3.2 Ensure that the IRB takes a lead in resolving major issues and conflicts in accordance with the Bye-Laws and Regulations on issues that affect the integrity of the Game or the values of the IRB.</p> <p>7.3.3 Review eligibility criteria for Olympic events, in particular Regulation 8 (Eligibility) and Regulation 9 (Player Release).</p>	IRB
7.4 Player Welfare	<p>7.4.1 Lead the way in ensuring that player welfare policies are applicable to Sevens including injury surveillance, risk assessment, mitigating activities, trauma arrangements and therapeutic interventions.</p>	IRB
7.5 Disciplinary Processes	<p>7.5.1 Ensure that the disciplinary processes are fit for purpose and that the level of discipline displayed at international Sevens tournaments is of the highest order.</p> <p>7.5.2 Ensure that an appropriate judicial workforce is in place to service the growing international Sevens competition model.</p>	IRB
7.6 Organisation Structure	<p>7.6.1 Continue to develop an organisation structure that is capable of managing the strategic and operational requirements of the Sevens Game in a period of expansion and growing profile.</p>	IRB



4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

It is essential that it is clear who or what entity is responsible the implementation of key Sevens Plan Strategy.

4.2 ROLE OF THE IRB

The IRB is responsible for the development of the Sevens Plan following extensive consultation with all Member Unions who have had the opportunity to comment.

The IRB is responsible IOC relationship and agreeing:

- Olympic Qualifying processes and tournaments
- Format of the Olympic Rugby Sevens Tournament

The IRB owns the right to organise the HSBC SWS and is responsible for deciding the Host Unions, the core teams and the number of tournaments

The IRB is responsible for:

- Upholding Rugby's core values throughout any aspect of the Sevens programmes
- Ensuring that all IRB Regulations are adhered to, in particular Regulations 8, 9, 16 and 17
- The production of development programmes, training and education resources for Sevens
- Establishing a commercial framework that ensures Sevens is sustainable at international level
- Providing operational support and guidance in the organisation of successful competitions

4.3 ROLE OF THE IRB REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

IRB Regional Associations are responsible for:

- The planning and delivery of Regional international Sevens tournaments
- Ensuring that Rugby's core values are upheld throughout the Region in all aspects of the Game
- Ensuring that the growth of Sevens enhances the growth of Fifteens
- Ensuring that the IRB Regulations are complied with in their entirety
- Protecting the Game of Sevens in their Region from those who may threaten its integrity
- Protecting the Game of Sevens from commercial predators while working with commercial partners to support the growth of Sevens in their Regions

4.4 ROLE OF THE IRB MEMBER UNIONS

IRB Member Unions are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they have Sevens strategies within their Strategic Plan
- Ensuring that the growth of Sevens enhances the growth of Fifteens
- Developing domestic Sevens programmes
- The planning and delivery of domestic Sevens tournaments
- Ensuring that Rugby's core values are upheld in all aspects of the Game
- Ensuring that the IRB Regulations are complied with in their entirety
- Protecting the Game of Sevens from those who may threaten its integrity
- Protecting the Game of Sevens from commercial predators while working with commercial partners to support the growth of Sevens in their Union
- Participating in Regional tournaments and/or HSBC SWS in addition to Olympic qualification tournaments

4.5 ROLE OF COMMERCIAL PARTNERS

The IRB, Regional Associations and Member Unions will work closely with commercial partners to develop Sevens for the mutual benefit of all stakeholders so that the commercial partners consider that investment in Sevens is worthwhile and that the Game is able to flourish from the investment.

4.6 SHORT AND LONGER TERM PRIORITIES

Our priorities are:

Short Term (2011-2012)

- Confirm IRB Sevens Plan
- Develop global commercial plan for Sevens
- Develop Regional tournament structures
- Agree competition formats for the Olympic qualification process
- Develop Sevens HP programmes
- Develop Sevens training and education programmes

Medium Term (2013-2014)

- Implement commercial strategies
- Implement HP programmes
- Implement training and education programmes
- Establish the Regional tournaments
- Confirm and commence the Olympic qualifying process
- Develop Sevens match officials programmes
- Implement Women's competition models
- Expand the HSBC SWS

4.7 SUMMARY ACTION PLAN

The summary action plan we will use to guide progress in the implementation and monitoring of the IRB Sevens Plan will be as follows:

ACTION	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
1. Complete IRB Sevens Plan and communication strategy						
2. Present plan to IRB Rugby Committee, EXCO & IRB Council for debate and adoption						
3. Develop business plan, implementation plan and resources						
4. Design and implement HP acceleration programme						
5. Identify and establish appropriate structure and business model to implement Sevens strategy						
6. Develop a qualification process from options for IOC approval						
7. Hold RWC Sevens Qualifiers (starting 2012) and RWC Sevens 2013						
8. Implement Olympic qualification process						
9. Implement training programme for Olympic teams and match officials						
10. Hold Olympic tournament at 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro						
11. Review and evaluate first phase of Olympic programme						
12. Revise and update strategy for 2017-2020 cycle						



APPENDICES

The IRB recognises the contribution of the following people who were involved in the development of this Plan:

IRB Sevens Plan Project Group 1

External Project Team Members

Carol Isherwood	IRB Rugby Committee
Neil Sorensen	New Zealand Rugby Union - General Manager Professional Rugby
David Nucifora	Australian Rugby Union - High Performance Manager
Joe Lydon	Welsh Rugby Union - High Performance Manager
Graham Lowe	Scottish Rugby Union - High Performance Director
Paul Treu	South Africa Rugby Union - National Sevens Coach
Ben Ryan	Rugby Football Union - National Sevens Coach
Tomaz Morais	Federação Portuguesa de Rugby – Former National Fifteens and Sevens Coach
Fred Ollows	Kenya Rugby Football Union - Head of Development
Santiago Gomez Cora	Unión Argentina de Rugby - Player
Damian Hopley	International Rugby Players Association representative

IRB Staff

Mark Egan	Head of Development and Performance
Steve Griffiths	Head of Technical Services
Morgan Buckley	General Manager Development
Beth Coalter	IRB Sevens Manager
Susan Carty	Women's Development Manager
Jaime McKeown	Project Coordinator

Women's High Performance Subgroup Members

Carol Isherwood	IRB Rugby Committee
Pierre Villepreux	FIRA-AER (Association of European Rugby) - Women's Rugby Committee
John Long	Rugby Canada - National Women's team head coach
Mahlubi Puzi	South Africa Rugby Union - Development Manager
Farah Palmer	New Zealand - former captain of National Women's Team
Nicky Ponsford	Rugby Football Union Women - High Performance Manager

The IRB recognises the contribution of the following people who were involved in the development of this Plan:

IRB Sevens Plan Project Group 2

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Carol Isherwood	IRB - Rugby Committee
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Rob Andrew	Rugby Football Union - Rugby Operations Director
Nigel Melville	USA Rugby - CEO
Paul Treu	South Africa Rugby Union – National Sevens Coach
Tomaz Morais	Federação Portuguesa de Rugby - National Fifteens and Sevens Coach

IRB Staff

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Morgan Buckley	General Manager Development
Beth Coalter	IRB Sevens Manager
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