



WORLD RUGBY *Putting players first*

World Rugby Research Strategy Overview

World Rugby has established a **World Rugby Research Strategy** to provide structure and support to the identification and implementation of World Rugby research priorities. The strategy involves the input of four groups:

- The Medicine, Science and Research Group (MSRG)
- World Rugby Scientific Committee (SciCom)
- World Rugby Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC)
- The World Rugby Research Unit (WRRU)

The **Medicine, Science and Research Group** was established by World Rugby to investigate and recommend areas of research considered to be important from a World Rugby and the sport of Rugby perspective. The Group contains members who represent World Rugby, Unions and Players and provide external expertise in the area of research. The Group meet regularly to discuss issues pertaining to World Rugby Research Strategy and to identify research priorities for World Rugby.

Members of the MSRG, at 1 January 2015, and their involvement in the group are (alphabetically):

- Dr Filippo Bottiglia – FIR – Subject expert
- Dr Mike England – RFU – Community Rugby and Academic research experience
- Dr Colin Fuller – World Rugby Risk Management Consultant – Rugby, Non-Rugby and Academic research experience
- Mark Harrington – World Rugby Head of Technical Services
- Dr Simon Kemp – RFU – Northern Hemisphere representative
- Rob Nichol – IRPA – Player representative - CMO appointee
- Dr Ken Quarrie – NZRU – Southern Hemisphere representative
- Dr Martin Raftery – World Rugby Chief Medical Officer – Chair
- Clint Readhead – SARU – CMO appointee
- Dr Preston Wiley – Rugby Canada – Tier 2 Rugby and Academic research experience
- Dr Mutsuo Yamada – JRU – High Performance Tier 2 representative

The MSRG submit their research priorities to World Rugby **Internal Risk Management Group (IRMG)** who approve and rank the priorities. The IRMG may also identify alternate business risk priorities for research and inform the MSRG of these.

The **Scientific Committee** was established by World Rugby to assess and recommend research submissions for funding or further action and also to encourage research institutes to perform projects that have been identified as priorities by the MSRG.



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Members of the SciCom, at 1 January 2015, are:

- Marc Douglas – World Rugby Research Coordinator
- Dr Colin Fuller – World Rugby Risk Management Consultant
- Dr Ken Quarrie – NZRU
- Dr Preston Wiley – Rugby Canada
- Ross Tucker – World Rugby Science and Research Consultant
- A subject expert, who will be recruited depending on the research topics being assessed.

The World Rugby **Institutional Ethics Committee** was established to provide ethical oversight of research being undertaken by and on behalf of World Rugby. Its aim is to protect and maintain the health, safety and rights of all participants in Rugby-related research, which World Rugby is involved in, through the promotion of proper standards of research involving human participants.

Where appropriate, projects agreed for action by the SciCom must be approved by the IEC before receiving any support, financial or otherwise, by World Rugby.

Once a research proposal has been accepted (in the case of externally driven research) or developed (for World Rugby driven research) a submission will be made to the IEC. This submission, which should be made on the standard form included below, will be emailed to all members of the IEC. Members will be given a time frame within which to review the submission and to provide a decision to the Committee Chair on the proposal: the decision will be one of the following options:

- Accept without changes;
- Accept with minor revisions;
- Accept with major revisions; or
- Reject.

Each Committee member is required to provide a response to each submission. Acceptances with revisions must provide suggestions as to the changes that should be made, while rejections should provide a full explanation of the reasons for the rejection.

If a Committee member feels that they are not qualified to comment on particular aspects of the proposal then they may choose to only provide a decision on those aspects they feel they have the necessary expertise in.

At any time during this consultation process, any member can request a meeting of the Committee to discuss collectively the submission. This meeting should take place within 10 working days of the request. For proposals to be accepted there must be a consensus agreement by the Committee members. In instances where the decision of the Committee is to accept the proposal with revisions, the applicant may resubmit the application with whatever changes they deem appropriate.



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The members of World Rugby Institutional Ethics Committee, at 1 January 2015, are (alphabetically):

- Susan Ahern – World Rugby Head of Legal – World Rugby function representative
- Robert Brophy – World Rugby Head of Finance – World Rugby function representative
- Dr Mike England – RFU – Community Rugby representative
- Dr Colin Fuller – World Rugby Risk Management Consultant – External scientist
- Mark Harrington – World Rugby Head of Technical Services – Chair
- Simon Keogh – IRPA – Professional Rugby representative
- Dr Martin Raftery – World Rugby Chief Medical Officer – Deputy Chair
- TBD – external academic/researcher
- Marc Douglas – World Rugby Research Coordinator – Committee Secretary (ex-officio, non-voting)

In some instances, currently only applicable to ongoing Injury Surveillance Studies, proposed projects which constitute a new iteration of a project from one time period (e.g. a season or calendar year) to another, can short-cut the process. In such instances, as defined by the MSRG, the project can go straight to the ethical approval stage. This is dependent on no material changes being made to the focus or methodology of the project from its previously approved iteration.

The **World Rugby Research Unit** was established by World Rugby to coordinate and manage both internal and external World Rugby Research Projects. The responsibilities of this Unit will depend on whether the research is being undertaken internally or externally.

If internal research is being undertaken the WRRU will be responsible for:

- Development of a project plan (Research Project Coordinator, World Rugby Research Consultant and if applicable external expert medical or research consultants)
- Application for ethics approval
- Undertaking all administrative activities required to complete the research
- Provision of data analysis
- Development of scientific report

If external research is undertaken the Research Project Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring the institution or identified researchers from a performance delivery and financial control perspective.

Each specific project will have a specific project group assigned, the members of this group will include (as at July 1st 2014):

- Marc Douglas – World Rugby Research Coordinator
- Dr Martin Raftery – World Rugby Chief Medical Officer
- Dr Colin Fuller – World Rugby Research Advisor
- Ross Tucker – World Rugby Science and Research Coordinator
- Subject expert(s) as required for each project – minimum of two

The Research Project Coordinator will also be responsible for providing progress reports to the Medicine, Science and Research Group covering both internal and external research.

Membership of all the groups which contribute to World Rugby Research Strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure that the most relevant people are involved in all stages of the project. Those holding membership as a direct result of their role within World Rugby, who leave these roles will be replaced by the person replacing them in their role or by a suitably qualified person if the role is discontinued.



Figure 1 - Data flow for World Rugby Research Strategy