Exploring governance design options for new and emerging sports:
The case of Stand Up Paddling in New Zealand.

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Stand Up Paddling (SUP)…commonly referred to as ‘The World’s Fastest Growing Water Sport’
SUP...it’s a lot of different things to different people.
Sport governance is the responsibility for the functioning and direction of sport organisations such as clubs, regional and national bodies, sport service organisations and professional teams (Ferkins and Shilbury, 2010).

A slightly broader view looks at governance as the process by which an organisation, network of organisations or society steers itself, allocates resources and exercises control and co-ordination (Rhodes, 1997; Rosenau, 1995).
Despite the growing body of knowledge, research and theoretical attention to this topic is still developing and has not yet moved to fully grasp the complexities of governance within the sport context (Hoye & Doherty, 2011, Shilbury, Ferkins & Smythe, 2013).

Such complexities are due to the multi-layered federated network of organisations (clubs, RSOs, NSOs and IGBs) common to many traditional sporting codes particularly in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Europe and the UK (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007; Dickson, Arnold & Chalip, 2005; Soares, Correia & Rosado, 2010; Taylor & O’Sullivan, 2009).
Organisational vs. systemic governance

Broadly speaking, scholars with an interest in sport governance may focus on the governance of the specific ‘organisation’ itself (club, RSO, NSO or IGB)...

...or take a wider ‘systemic’ approach and look at the wider network, federation or organisational field in which the sport operates.

This latter approach often examines the governance ‘between’ key stakeholder organisations within the sport and the unique relationships among them...that inevitably influence the ‘direction, allocation of resources, co-ordination and control of the sport’...i.e. the governance of that sport (Shilbury, Ferkins & Smythe, 2013; Provan and Kenis, 2008).
Organisational vs. systemic governance

Hoye and Doherty (2011) highlight that the majority of sport governance research to date is at the organisation level. Example areas include the role of the board, board performance and strategic capability of the board (Ferkins et al., 2009; Hoye & Doherty, 2011; Inglis, 1997; Shilbury and Ferkins, 2011).

Acknowledging a growing increase in attention to the wider system in the sport governance landscape, (Shilbury et al, 2013; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015; O’Boyle and Shilbury, 2016) there is still a paucity of research in this domain.
Organisational vs. Systemic Governance

**THE WHY**

**CONFIDENCE AND SECURITY**
Reputations and legal risks are valid concerns for any director in any organisation. Working within an agreed framework provides comfort for directors operating on a largely voluntary basis in a complex sector.

**BETTER RESULTS**
Better outcomes from efficient utilisation of scarce resources. A disciplined strategic framework promotes good decision making based on relevant information. Resources are aligned with the desired outcomes.

**STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE**
Prudent application of others’ money and resources. Confidence for stakeholders that resources are being managed in an ethical, efficient and transparent manner.

**IT’S ACTUALLY EASIER AND MORE ENJOYABLE**
A good governance framework makes it simpler and ultimately more satisfying – increasing the chances of attracting and retaining good people. Nobody volunteers for stress and grief, so why not do everything to minimise it?

**THE EVIDENCE**
The need for good governance is widely accepted and actively promoted by a range of professional and government organisations.

**CLARITY & COHESION**
Clear organisational purpose. Outcomes-based strategic framework. Agreed and ongoing process of strategy development, evaluation and refinement. Board operates with a consistently future-focused and inclusive/involved culture that feeds good governance.

**PEOPLE**
Meetings are based on dialogue and constructive inquiry. Board papers are set in a strategic context and relevant to the governance conversation. Clear and agreed processes for making significant decisions. Relationship with Chief Executive is explicit, documented and understood. The Chief Executive is an essential advisor to the board.

**INSIDE THE BOARDROOM**
**KEY FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS**
- Duties and obligations of directors understood
- Director’s interests not addressed or conflicts addressed in a transparent manner
- All directors adhere to ethical guidelines
- Primary accountability to the organisation
- Board performance and organisational achievement are provided to stakeholders

**DOCUMENTED ELEMENTS**
- Statement of strategic direction
- Good practice strategic plan
- Organisational purpose
- Operational plan for management
- Clear linkages between strategy and objective setting
- Composition of board
- Board charter

**ADDITIONAL GOOD PRACTICE**
Agreements as required across the wider structure – whole-of-sport plans, service level agreements or memoranda of understanding. Governance level statements – strategic intent plans, audit, strategic committees independently facilitated.

**INTTEGRITY & ACCOUNTABILITY**
- Obligations and duties laid out in the board charter
- Governance section in the annual report
- Stakeholder communications plan
- Financial reporting is provided as requested
- Policies covering areas of ethics, whistleblowing, match fixing, etc.
- Documented commitment to board evaluation

**EXPERT PANEL**
- Jan Dawson, Peter Filie, Elizabeth Maw, Elizabeth Pettit, Sue Cox, John Wells

**FIND FULL TEXT OF THE FRAMEWORK AND RESOURCES LINKS AT [WWW.SPORTNZ.ORG.NZ/GOVERNANCE](http://WWW.SPORTNZ.ORG.NZ/GOVERNANCE)**
Research also highlights the challenge of multiple legal entities within a federation working against each other (O’Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Shilbury et al., 2013).

STRUCTURE WIDE COHESION

Where there are multiple parties involved in the achievement of strategic outcomes, formal agreement is required. This applies to any structure or grouping of interests but particularly where organisations are a federation of member bodies – generally National Sports Organisations (NSOs) are federations.

Each body will have a specific focus and role. Mutual understanding and how co-operation is to occur can be documented in a number of ways: constitutional alignment, whole of sport plans, memoranda of understanding, service level agreements or through joint ventures. Each group needs the other to deliver effective outcomes for members and participants as a whole. Cross sport agreements are not strictly core governance but nonetheless strategically important.

CHECKLIST

1. Evidence of alignment between the national strategic plan and members’ [regions, districts, centres etc.] plans together with common reporting frameworks.

2. Documented co-operation and collaboration between members and the national body.

3. Evidence of constitutional alignment.
In the not for profit context, Cornforth (2011) suggests that governance research has focussed too narrowly on boards of unitary organisations and ignored the wider governance system and multifaceted governance structures that many organisations have become.

He further emphasises that research has not kept up with the changing context that many non-profit organisations operate and the complicated nature of the governance arrangements that are common in this sector.
The sport sector is experiencing substantial change and government agencies for sport in both New Zealand and Australia are cognisant of this.

- Growth in the offering of sport from both the not for profit and for profit sectors.
- Move away from traditional sporting communities offered by clubs to new less formal communities such as those established ‘online’.
- Rise of lifestyle and alternative sports.
Relevant research on new and emerging sports.

Kellet and Russell (2009) highlighted the sport of skateboarding which has grown and evolved in an organic and somewhat chaotic manner.

Entrepreneurs such as skate park designers and media companies have taken advantage of an open system, unlike traditional sports with institutionalised boundaries, to gain easy entry for profit maximisation.

They observed that this field is fragmented, lacking in formal structures and contains overlapping roles of suppliers, participants and program developers, quite different to traditional sporting structures.
Relevant research on new and emerging sports.

Phillips and Newland (2014) illustrated emerging models of sport development in the sport of Triathlon in Australia and the US highlighting third party operators (TPOs) such as event managers and have infiltrated the sport.

Such TPOs and are taking on sport development practices normally assumed by the sport’s governing body to the point of potentially rendering the governing body irrelevant.

Kellet and Russell (2009) state there is a still dearth of understanding as to how new and emerging sports are structured and governed and that this lack of knowledge compared to mainstream sports seems remiss given the growth of this sector.
Lastly there has also been a shortage of governance research of grass roots organisations that employ few or no staff. This has also been referred to as ‘dark matter’ as the go largely unobserved yet make up a significant portion of the non-profit industry (Smith, 1997; Cornforth, 2012).

Many new and emerging sports fall into this category.
This research seeks to address a number of key issues highlighted and in broad terms...

Investigate the governance of new and emerging sports.

It intends to take systemic governance perspective with a view to capture the mosaic of current and potential stakeholders involved.

- Who they are.
- Their motives and goals.
- How they contribute to carrying out different governance functions.
- The relationships and collaborations among them.
- Key challenges, issues and tensions.
- Questions of influence and legitimacy.

...and the implications and applications for the governance/governance design of new and emerging sports.

The board itself won’t be ignored in this research and issues such as role, capacity, processes, challenges, issues, tensions, relationships and leadership will be examined.
Research design

This research will adopt a qualitative research strategy that will be primarily concerned with the perceptions of key individuals within the research context being examined (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

It will most likely adopt an Action Research methodology that will seek to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice in participation with others, to develop practical solutions to issues of pressing concern for the governance of new and emerging sports (Reason & Bradbury, 2001).

This methodology may lead to the revised research question...

How can new and emerging sports be governed?
In Depth Single Case Study

New Zealand Stand Up Paddling (NZSUP). The not for profit governing body established in 2013 to promote, organise, administer and represent the sport of Stand Up Paddling in New Zealand. No staff with a voluntary board.

Other new and emerging sports may be part of this research to assist with issue identification and learned experiences however the depth of inquiry, analysis and interventions will be through NZSUP.
Currently affiliated to surfing nationally and internationally.
Surfing in Tokyo 2020 Olympics, SUP a potential future Olympic Sport... Other international federations show interest in SUP... interesting times ahead.

Germany’s “Lost Mills” Becomes First SUP Race to Be Sanctioned by the International Canoe Federation (ICF)

posted March 28th, 2015 by Christopher Parker, Boss Man
Theoretical perspectives

Answering calls for increased use of multiple theoretical approaches to study sport governance (Cornforth, 2003; Pye and Pettigrew, 2005; Hoye & Doherty, 2011; Shilbury et al., 2013) a multi theoretical framework will be adopted.

Key issues highlighted in the research will determine theories utilised.
## Potential research participants (purposive sampling)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Stakeholders</th>
<th>External (potential stakeholders or sports with the ability to offer governance design insight based on experience).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NZSUP board members</td>
<td>Sport New Zealand</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUP event managers</td>
<td>Targeted established water sports in NZ.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Surfed NZ                              | **Surf Life Saving NZ**  
**Canoe racing NZ**  
**Waka Ama NZ**                                                                                                                                 |
| Surfed NZ                              | **Snow Sports NZ**  
**Cycling NZ**  
**Yachting NZ**                                                                                                                                 |
| National Surfing Association           | Other new and emerging sports.                                                                                                                                 |
| Retailers and major SUP Brands         | **Skateboard NZ**                                                                                                                                 |
| SUP Sponsors                           | A relatively new sport                                                                                                                                 |
| SUP clubs                              | Auckland Secondary Schools Heads Association                                                                 |
| SUP participants                       | Auckland Secondary Schools Heads Association                                                                 |
| SUP Media                              | NZIOC                                                                                                                                                           |
| Private SUP operators (board hire, coaching, tours) |                                                                                                                                                                  |
Thankyou