

May 2017

Chief Executive's Report – 2016

If a global view of the world taught us anything during the course of 2016, it was to never assume and always expect the unexpected. The implications of political machinations around the world were thought to be known by us all, but turned out to be known by very few. What might this have to do with gym sports in New Zealand you might say? Well, it is a reminder of the vigilance required in the uncertain times in which we live, but more importantly, that what needs to guide us during such times are the principles upon which we stand.

The exercise in affirming what these principles are, for GymSports NZ and its members, was the development of the new strategic plan during the course of 2016. The process of engagement was extensive and wide ranging, culminating in a succinct document that provides a clear vision. Put simply, to *'Grow great New Zealanders through Gymnastics'*. The supporting elements to deliver on this vision centre on what we are calling the five pillars of *'People, Participation, Performance, Places and Profile'*. While here is not the place to delve deep into the mechanics behind these 'pillars', it is pertinent to point out that in all we do, we must be able to reference them in the context of *'growing great New Zealanders'*.

Global events have also highlighted to me our propensity not to look at the good in things, but rather the shortcomings or failings. In gathering the GymSports NZ team towards the end of 2016, the question was put: 'If you were to write on the whiteboard what represented success for you this year, what would it be?' Two things interested me in the process, firstly, that the team were so distracted by what they felt they had not achieved during the year that the measures of success were not immediately obvious. Secondly, that once obvious, the measures of success were as varied as they were numerous and highlighted that it is not always the most obvious measure that means so much, or makes the biggest difference.

It may not surprise you to know we ran out of room on what is a very big whiteboard! We all want things to be better, and the buzz-phrase 'continuous improvement' is ever present. We should never lose sight however of what successes we do have, from the obvious one of our Olympians, to the personal bests posted in competitions, to finally mastering the skill or element you have been trying to achieve, to knowing as a volunteer that you have made that local point of difference in the lives of others. The strength of our community to tackle adversity and to continue to make a difference is clearly reflected in the continued growth in participation in our sport. You make that difference, and that for me is the true measure of success.

You can see throughout the pages of this document, the myriad of contributions that go into providing participation opportunities in our sport for the young people of New Zealand. Our Chair, Dr Denis Mowbray has illuminated and thanked organisations and individuals in his address, so I won't replicate these thoughts but rather to echo them. Whatever your contribution, from financial, to service, to employment, to volunteering, it does make a difference and our thanks cannot be long and loud enough in recognition.

Making movement matter

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Your organisation continues to function on a sound operational footing, meeting the challenges thrown down, as highlighted in last year's report. There is still, however, some way to go and the challenges ahead are many. The resources to meet them seem to be stretched, as they have never been stretched before. We are confronted with the prospect of balancing community need against the implications of over-stretching these resources. Our approach and advice to our membership is to be realistic, in our expectations of each other and to help ourselves towards a self-sufficiency, for those queuing up to help us are not thick on the ground. The climate dictates that we must prioritise at the risk of disappointment. However, we must never lose perspective and give up, thinking it is all too hard. Our sport is great, and we already know it grows great New Zealanders. So let's celebrate that, and make sure that we continue to work together in delivering on this most worthy of missions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Compier'.

Tony Compier
Chief Executive Officer