



COMMON VISION, COMMON VOICE

News on the NATSS Initiative from Performance Matters

The Steering Group of the three largest National Governing Bodies, (NGB's) of Target Shooting Sports in the United Kingdom, with a working title of National Association of Target Shooting Sports, (NATSS), are currently engaged in a modernisation process aimed at helping the sports to organise their resources more efficiently. Those NGBs currently involved in this project are:

- The Clay Pigeon Shooting Association (CPSA) – England;
- The National Rifle Association (NRA) – UK;
- The National Small-bore Rifle Association (NSRA) – UK.

The Central Council for Physical Recreation, (CCPR) and UK Sport have supplied finance to help investigate ways of operating more cohesively for the benefit of the sports and its members.

Funding has been deployed by the Steering Group, to identify and recruit an independent organisation, experienced in the provision of facilitator services for such initiatives. Performance Matters, led by Roger Moreland and employing a number of specialist consultants, was selected to assist NATSS navigate a smooth path towards a closer co-operation between the NGBs. It has been briefed to recommend a new governing structure to assist the sports to improve their future prospects, both at a competitive and especially at grass-roots level.

Performance Matters developed a communications strapline of 'COMMON VISION, COMMON VOICE' to reflect the process of modernising and updating that is currently in train.

The Target Shooting Project was initiated with a National Forum held in November 2007 at Bisley in Surrey. This was very well attended and helped to launch this 'modernisation process' and to signpost a route-map for its progression. The programme has gathered pace this month with a series of Regional Workshops held in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The initial Forum was swiftly followed by a wide-ranging online survey amongst the shooting fraternity that was posted on the websites of the three NGBs. Over 2,600 people interested in the target shooting sports responded to it and, in comparison with other such surveys, this was an exceptionally good response. The main findings from a representative sample covering the whole range of shooting disciplines were as follows:

- 84.3% of respondents thought modernisation was a good thing;
- 87.5% of respondents supported the concept of 'one brand new body governing and protecting all target shooting sports'.

The top five benefits of this work are seen to be:

1. Improved representation with legislators;
2. Improved public perception;
3. Improved media relations;
4. Improved relationships and representation with UK Sport and other national bodies;
5. Improved strategic vision and direction.

The key strategic priorities for target shooting were identified as being:

1. Protecting the sport;
2. Repositioning the sport in the media and improving public perception;
3. Education – target shooting in schools and in the National Curriculum;
4. Widening and increasing membership;
5. Protecting the heritage of the sport.

The Workshops started off in early March at a venue just outside Dorchester, and round the other English regions with events Suffolk, York, Brentwood, Bisley and Wolverhampton. The other Home Countries were covered with Workshops taking place in Belfast, Newport and Fife.

The Workshops, which have been very well attended, include full feedback from the online survey, and had many interactive elements for feeding back existing concerns and ideas to help the sports become more cohesive, responsive to market forces, members' expectations and to prepare for growth in membership.

The feedback from all nine Workshops is being collated and distilled into a report by Performance Matters and the report will form the basis of further discussions and deliberations by the Steering Group. The focus will be on how shooting can be enhanced through the development of better governance structures and models. This will assist the NATSS Steering Group in developing proposals on future direction and structure.

Another National Forum will be held in the autumn for UK-wide representatives as a prelude to proposing a new structure and developing a presentation to the Boards of the NGBs. It is well recognised that proposals will need finally to be put to and approved by the memberships.

It is not widely appreciated that there are over 40 different organisations across the Target Shooting Sports in the UK and all will be consulted and involved so far as practical in shaping the solution before the process culminates. It is only via this consultative process that we can give ourselves the best chance of finding a solution that works right across the sport.

Kevin Stephens, Communications, Performance Matters