

Frequent Asked Questions About the Merger with STS

STS Carrying on the Good Work of the Associations

Q Will STS be responsible for matters currently handled by the Associations such as coaching, child protection and first aid and with that, the cost of training and processing applications?

A Yes, under the new proposed structure, a working group of STS called the Sports Development Group will be responsible for overseeing generic sports training and education for shooters on sports issues that are relevant across all disciplines and therefore not AMG specific. This removes responsibility and the burden of child protection and other generic issues such as anti-doping and equality regulations away from the AMGs. STS sees the training of volunteers serving within its own committees as well as the shooting community as crucial to the sport and will take on the responsibility of organising and (where possible) the cost of training coaches and officials as well as providing training for clubs such as first aid, child protection and learning how to be a treasurer etc.

Q Currently the Associations are independent, constituted organisations with their own governance responsibilities. Do the Associations under the proposed changes retain this status?

A Voluntary unincorporated associations such as the SPA are not recognised as legal entities, regardless of having a constitution. Therefore, should anything happen at an SPA event or as a result of an SPA Council decision, then any legal fees and payments would be the direct responsibility of the SPA Council members. Under the proposed new structure, the sport would be run by the AMG which would effectively be a working group of STS. STS would be a company with insurance to cover events and personnel on the board and in the working groups. This insurance cost would be met from the central STS budget so would no longer be the responsibility of the AMG.

Q Does the proposed STS format require that the Associations identity, merchandise and web site cease to function?

A In the long term, the various disciplines of target shooting would fall under the one brand of STS to unify the shooting community presenting a united brand, however various assurances have been agreed:

- Associations could continue to sell existing merchandise but once stock runs out then it would not be renewed and would be replaced by STS merchandise.
- Events would not change their name because people are familiar with the titles and many trophies have historical significance and could not have its engraving changed.
- The website would come under a single STS website but Associations would have their own section and could have whatever content they would like.

STS would ensure the history and heritage of each Association is not lost and would work with each Association to determine the best way possible of ensuring this.

Q Under the new STS, who will organise and have the responsibility for the Scottish Championships and all other events currently run by the Associations?

A The AMG will be responsible for agreeing the details of any events because they are the experts in the sport and know what members from their discipline want. STS staff will support in producing, sending out (by post and/or email) and registering entries as well as other support functions such as booking facilities, paying invoices and answering questions. The full extent to which staff support is required and can be made available will vary depending on the capability and needs of each AMG, as such it will take a while to fully understand the workload for staff and volunteers and how this can be best divided.

Q Will STS organise competitions in the same way that have been done by the various Associations?

A In the plans of the new body we do not envisage making changes to Competitions, Grand Prix's and other events currently run by the Associations. In the short term, the only difference we hope to make is to improve admin support by offering time and services from STS staff to reduce the work done by volunteers and providing access to STS IT systems to allow AMGs to promote and people to register and pay for competitions online (in addition to the standard ways of entering and paying for events). In the longer term we would envisage our membership growing at which point it may be necessary to review events individually and collectively to ensure they are meeting the needs of our members.

Q If an AMG loses money running a competition e.g. a championship, who will carry the loss?

A STS will work with each AMG to establish realistic budgets annually to ensure the chances of making a loss across the year are minimised. However, should an event make a loss then a discussion will need to be had with the STS Chief Operating Officer to determine how that cost is covered. For example, it may have been agreed between the STS Chief Operating Officer and the AMG at the start of the year that some events will run at a loss in an effort to grow participation but other events have been scheduled to make a profit to offset this. Alternatively, the STS Chief Operating Officer will work with the AMG to either use central STS funds (if available) or see how this loss could be balanced in the forthcoming membership year.

National Shooting Centre

Q Will the proposed Scottish Shooting Centre cater for shooting disciplines that do not generate Olympic or Commonwealth medals e.g. Gallery Rifle, Field Target, Pony Club and Tetrathlon competitions?

A Yes, it is recognised that often many Olympic and Commonwealth shooters begin their careers in other disciplines, therefore the importance of supporting non-Olympic disciplines and having them as part of the shooting centre is firmly recognised and they will play an integral part of the new centre. It is also acknowledged that the shooting centre needs to be sustainable and the non-Olympic and Commonwealth disciplines will be crucial in supporting the usage of the centre to make it viable.

Q If the National Shooting Centre falls into financial difficulty, will funds from STS be used to support it?

A No, STS finances will not be used to support any losses made by the National Shooting Centre. The bidding process was put in place because the National Shooting Centre will be run by a third party so the centre will be financially independent from STS. However, part of the criteria used to review each bid included an assessment of the long term viability of the bid and the willingness of the third party to work with STS. The winning bid will be one who presents a strong business case but also demonstrates an enthusiasm to work with STS and ensure the facility meets the needs of the wider shooting community.

Financial Matters

Q How will income be generated to support the activities and services of each Association (or what STS will call Association Management Groups or AMG's)?

A Income for each AMG will come directly from the membership fees. When joining annually, each member will specify their primary discipline. The AMG of that primary discipline will receive about 50% of that membership fee (the exact split differs for each membership category). Of the remaining 50%, about 20-25% will cover insurance and the remaining 25-30% will cover costs such as production of the newsletter, membership cards and postage etc.

Q Will each Association retain their own bank accounts for monies they generate through postal leagues, merchandise and competitions etc.?

A Each AMG will have their own bank account allocated by STS. As stated above, each AMG will receive about 50% of membership fees into that bank account. It is firmly stated in the Articles (to ensure this is adhered to) that any profits made from activities run by an AMG (e.g. competitions) will be retained by that AMG. STS will cover from the central funds money to pay for a bookkeeper to support the AMGs in managing the bank accounts but the money in those accounts is for use by that AMG only.

Q Will the share to each AMG be dependent on the number naming them as their primary discipline?

A Correct, the income of the AMG will be directly related to the number of members stating that AMG as its primary discipline. This means that as well as STS trying to grow the sport of target shooting generally, it is in the interest of each AMG to grow its membership as this will increase the income it receives enabling it to do more.

Q AMGs could start with a huge variation in their "ring-fenced" balance if current funds are transferred. Does this mean the "richer" disciplines will have to self-finance where relatively "poorer" ones will be subsidised?

A Money acquired by STS centrally for development work will be allocated on the basis of what each discipline needs, not on the financial reserves of a discipline. The STS Chief Operating Officer and Board will need to have a good relationship with each AMG to understand its needs so if an AMG has significant reserves, it is clear why these are being built up (e.g. to pay for expensive equipment, hold a major competition or send a representative team for international competition). This is because STS will need to justify to its funding partners (such as sportscotland and any sponsors) and its members why it is requesting further investment or, in the case of its members not lowering its membership fees, if there are significant reserves in the governing body's bank accounts.

Q **What will happen if an AMG loses money?**

A The control of finances is clearly an important matter and under the new structure controls be put in place to ensure this does not happen. Each year the AMG will work with the staff and Finance Director to outline a budget for the year. Through close working between AMG and staff, regular finance reports to the STS Board and monitoring of budgets and bank accounts it will be possible to determine at early stage if an AMG is likely to overspend and suitable adjustments can be agreed with the AMG to prevent this from happening.

A Governing Body for All

Q **The general view is that the proposed setup is purely for the elite end of shooting sports but a high proportion of Scottish shooters are not within this group. What is on offer for them to promote their sport?**

A The elite end of the sport (at least for Commonwealth and Olympic disciplines) will be handled by the High Performance Group which will only be one working group of STS. All other groups (such as the Sports Development Group, Business Management Group and AMGs) will be working to support and increase target shooting at a grassroots level, helping clubs and volunteers. One such example of this is the Class of 2014 funding acquired to supplement the cost of Club Instructor courses. Under the new structure it is expected that many more initiatives like this will be possible.

Q **The perception is that this is being formed mainly for performance athletes. What are the risks of an AMG having to "fold" if they consistently have no/very few elite athletes achieving the aims of STS/Sport Scotland (i.e. medalling)?**

A sportscotland funding is divided into three categories - governance, development and performance. Only governance and development funding will be relevant to AMGs as performance athletes and funding will be handled by the High Performance Group therefore failure to achieve medal targets will impact on the performance funding but if the governing body can demonstrate it is growing numbers involved in the sport and is building a clear and supportive development pathway then it will not impact on the investment made to governance or development.

Q **Taking into consideration what the current associations do for their members of affiliated clubs, what will STS do with the affiliation and membership money and what services will it offer?**

A The best response to this question is summarised in the A4 sheet explaining the benefits and member services provided by STS. These will be in addition to the services already provided by each association as we would hope to continue these under the new structure.

Q **If I wish to shoot in Postal Leagues but my club is not an STS club, will I be able to take part as an individual?**

A This will be a decision for the AMG but there is nothing in the Articles of STS to prevent this from happening. However, based on feedback, a new 'Club' membership category has been added which provides all the club benefits of joining STS except without the insurance (this is still available through the new 'Club+' membership). This is reasonably priced and will ensure that club membership of STS is not a financial barrier should AMGs require clubs to members to compete in STS run Postal Leagues.

Q **Will there be a place for Gallery Rifle Shooting in STS?**

A Yes, STS is looking to be a governing body to represent and support all forms of target shooting in Scotland, not just Olympic and Commonwealth disciplines because we acknowledge that often disciplines such as Gallery Rifle serve as stepping stones for athletes who then go on and experience success in Olympic and Commonwealth

disciplines. Also, if STS is to truly represent the sport as a whole then it needs to embrace and support the full spectrum of disciplines.

Q Will there still be a voice for pistol shooting as a separate sport?

A Yes, the voice of each primary discipline (of which pistol is one) is protected by the Articles of STS. Only members stating pistol as their primary discipline can vote on matters pertaining to pistol, preventing larger disciplines voting on and influencing matters that are not of relevance to them. The Articles do not restrict the number of primary disciplines and therefore the Board of STS can propose to the membership the addition of new primary disciplines to allow the governing body to develop in line with the needs of the sport and interests of members.

Q Some Associations are smaller than others and therefore small numbers will name it as their primary discipline, will our voice be drowned by the larger disciplines in STS voting matters?

A No, the Articles have been specifically designed to protect small disciplines by ensuring that 'sport specific matters' can only be voted on by those who have stated that Association as their primary discipline. Only general matters relating to the governance of STS (such as annual membership fees) will be classified as 'general matters' to be voted on by the whole membership. A 'sport specific matter' can relate to the running of competitions, adopting amendments to competition rules, voting for the chair of that AMG etc.

Q As a small discipline will we have equal opportunities to access STS services such as the National Shooting Centre and development opportunities for coaches & officials and shooters?

A Yes, all disciplines, regardless of size will have the same opportunities. The STS Chief Operating Officer will work with each AMG to determine the needs of each discipline to see what support needs to be provided, how the AMG and central STS budgets could be used and what external funding could be applied for.

High Performance & Representing Scotland

Q At present, only the High Performance shooters receive any sort of funding from sportscotland. I believe there are plans to fund the training of development shooters also. Will this change if SPA stay out of STS?

A Only members of STS will be eligible for high performance funding from the sportscotland's institute of sport. Part of the role of the new STS will be to support athletes further down the development pathway and this is where development funding from sportscotland can be requested and utilised. Only members of STS will be eligible for support through any pathway programmes put in place.

Q I currently attend both development and HPS training sessions and wish to progress. What could it potentially mean for me if my club does not vote to be a part of the STS?

A STS will offer individual membership at three tiers to provide options that are affordable and ensure members only pay for what they need if they have memberships with other bodies such as the NRA and NSRA. Only individual members will be able to access STS development and high performance squad training, regardless of club membership.

Q I want to shoot for Scotland one day, will selection only be from STS members?

A STS is the only body recognised by Commonwealth Games Scotland and therefore anyone wanting to compete at the Commonwealth Games or Olympics will need to be a member of STS. STS will work with AMGs to provide training and selection of international representative teams for non-Olympic and Commonwealth disciplines for STS members.

Q Could I be selected to shoot for GB if I'm not a member of STS?

A It will depend on the competition but for the Olympics only members of STS will be eligible for selection as only STS athletes are eligible for sportscotland institute support and only institute supported athletes can progress to UK Sport programmes. For non-Olympic disciplines, GB selection will be dependent on the relationship between the relevant GB body and STS.