



## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**March 10, 2010**

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## **VISION**

To develop a passion for the sport of freestyle skiing in Alberta.

## **MISSION**

To develop, provide governance, promote and coordinate the sport of Freestyle Skiing for people of all ages throughout the province of Alberta by providing programs and services that encourage participation at all levels.

## **ORGANIZATION MANDATES AND STAKEHOLDERS**

AFSA has an inherent responsibility to achieve its organizational mandate through careful consideration and relationship building with key stakeholders. These include:

- General membership
- Club athletes
- Provincial Team athletes
- “Potential” athletes
- Coaches and “potential” coaches
- CFSA
- FIS
- Volunteers
- Board members
- AFSA Employees
- Training Facilities
- Government agencies
- Sponsors
- NSS
- CODA
- Ski areas
- Freestyle clubs across the province

The defined mandates of AFSA shall be:

- To increase the number of active freestyle skiers in Alberta;
- To provide appropriate governance structure consistent with the standards of a provincial sport organization
- To place athletes on national development teams in all freestyle disciplines;
- To host freestyle events in a professional manner;
- To remove barriers to entry into freestyle programs at the grass roots; and
- To promote and develop the sport of freestyle skiing
- To provide an adequate succession plan to ensure the sport remains strong as our current leaders move on from the sport.

## **SWOT ANALYSIS**

The snapshot of AFSA in April of 2009 shows the following:

## **Strengths**

- Strong water ramp system
- COP as an accessible urban ski area
- Mountain terrain readily available
- Strong event operator
- Innovative Half Pipe Program has built tremendous talent
- CODA relationship
- Athlete Development Committee
- Multiple senior level officials
- Newly created discipline and athlete conduct agreements
- Strong world cup presence in aerials and moguls
- Good volunteer recognition (debriefing sessions)
- Passionate volunteers
- Ski areas which support freestyle
- Strong, independent clubs developing an appreciation of freestyle skiing in young skiers, volunteers, and ski areas.

## **Weaknesses**

- Small skilled coaching pool in some areas and programs
- Some weak ski facility relationships
- Teams spread out over a wide geographic area
- There isn't a freestyle club at every major ski area
- Lack of judges
- A rapidly changing sport creates a challenge for officials and judges in keeping up with the ongoing
- High coach turnover in some programs and locations
- Lack of female coaches and athletes
- Lack of public awareness about freestyle skiing
- More athletes are declining provincial team spots than in the past.
- Program costs are unaffordable to many potentially strong athletes

## **Opportunities**

- Encourage development of freestyle venues at all ski areas
- Events as a profit maker and means to educate the public and potential athletes about freestyle skiing
- Utilization of key Alberta athletes as a resource (Jen Heil, etc)
- Development of "regional" or "transitional" teams
- Stronger affiliations with ski manufacturers
- Contracting of professional fundraisers
- Creation of a better system for transitioning athletes into coaches
- Improve relations and develop mutual accountability between the AFSA and CFSA
- Improve the "fun" to be had in volunteering

## **Threats**

- Challenging economic times

- Direction of CFSA and FIS may differ from AFSA
- Baby Boomer kids getting older and population base will be smaller for newcomers into the sport
- Government cutbacks
- Insurance companies getting more nervous about freestyle
- Ski resorts challenged financially due to dwindling numbers and may lose motivation to develop freestyle venues if we do not improve our numbers
- It has become apparent that AFSA will have difficulty maintaining the current staff levels going forward.

## **AFSA VISION OF SUCCESS**

In order for an organization to have success, there must be a vision for what they would like to look like in the future. Our goal for the future is three years. The following are key elements that will be seen in an ideal Alberta program three years from now. They may not be realistic or even attainable, but we cannot argue that they make a great target to strive for.

- AFSA reaches a record number of 800 members.
- More coaches than positions are applying to Alberta due to a strong scholarship program and appropriate recognition of coaching as a profession.
- More former world cup Alberta athletes are in the coaching ranks.
- Alberta has a reputation for attracting the top coaches in the country.
- Every team has access to freestyle venues at their local ski area
- On hill recruitment marketing material is readily seen at every local ski area where there is a club.
- Alberta team fees are reduced from current levels to eliminate the financial constraints preventing qualified athletes from being part of Alberta Teams.
- Every event that AFSA runs is well planned from a sponsorship perspective and these events become the main fundraiser of AFSA.
- Four current Alberta skiers are on the National Team.
- The media has a keen interest in covering AFSA events.”
- Freestyle athletes are “hard to miss” at any local hill and these athletes, in themselves, become huge marketing tools for the sport.
- AFSA has a defined, predictable sport system well poised for the future.
- AFSA is almost as fun for volunteer parents as it is for athletes.
- Judging panels include previous athletes
- Corporate sponsors enjoy coming to AFSA events because of the recognition that they are given.
- Freestyle “DEMO” events with our top athletes attract local skiers to AFSA programs.
- Competitions take on more of a “pro” feel and become more like “events”.
- Calgary is a regular and favorite stop on the world cup circuit and this is one of the largest sources of funding for AFSA.
- Judging clinics are planned at a regular time on the calendar and each year clubs train two judges.

- Official training clinics are planned twice per calendar year to ensure a strong pool is available for different levels of competition.
- Board meetings are regular and scheduled with all reports and objectives clearly defined before meetings and complete minutes provided immediately after the meetings.
- An agenda is provided to the AFSA board in a timely manner before each board meeting allowing all board members to review and prepare for the meetings thus making for more efficient order of business.

These ideas represent the ideal world of Freestyle Skiing in Alberta and should always be considered in the development of opportunities. It does not hurt to dream!

## **STRATEGIC ISSUES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Membership and Recruitment**

Growth of AFSA membership needs to be ongoing and sustained. This applies to both the athlete and volunteer base of AFSA

AFSA will aid in the development of growth ideas and opportunities at the club level through sharing of best practices.

AFSA will continue to explore ideas and opportunities to increase membership in the sport and will coordinate these activities with the clubs, as this is a critical element for future success of Freestyle Skiing in Alberta.

### **Staffing**

Staffing is a critical element of any organization. There is a delicate balance between what volunteers can operate, and what should be in the hands of paid staff. There is a lack of accountability with volunteers that makes it difficult to delegate key activities. AFSA has an ongoing juggling act with the services expected from it by local clubs, provincial teams and governing bodies. Staff can be pulled in a multitude of directions and it can be difficult to define key or critical areas. It is often hard to reject requests that are outside the scope of the AFSA.

AFSA will always be challenged financially to find the proper coach to administrative personnel ratio and will strive to create maximum value creation for the sport and its membership.

As part of the strategic plan, AFSA staff will work with the Executive to define job descriptions. This guide will be bullet point and define roles and responsibilities of the AFSA office. This guide will be sent to clubs as a guide for defining what appropriate expectations of a provincial organization are. This may require pushing back responsibility to the clubs in a variety of areas.

It has become apparent that AFSA will have difficulty maintaining the current staff levels going forward. More will be delegated to volunteers and clubs to meet this financial

reality. Prioritization of the services provided by AFSA is needed and some tough decisions are ahead.

### **Coaching Recruitment, Review, and Development**

Coaching is one of the most critical elements of any AFSA Strategic Plan. All the dreams that we may have in program delivery are dependant on passionate, competent coaching. AFSA cannot administer its way into a successful sport system.

Coaching has been a challenge for AFSA for the following reasons:

- Lack of pay for coaches,
- Lack of prestige in this career choice,
- Lack of an early recruitment program or mandatory coaching clinics for provincial athletes,
- Lack of regular feedback on performance, and
- Lack of ongoing training.
- An assumption in freestyle skiing that only former high performance athletes make good coaches, whereas in other sports, talent ID for coaching occurs among youth athletes, creating talented athlete pools and talented coaching pools.

The single most important factors, we believe, are the first three bullet points. AFSA must find a way to make coaching more desirable. Scholarship programs have always been discussed but never implemented. AFSA will pursue this in the next two years. AFSA budgets will allow for greater salaries, perhaps, at the expense of other areas and even team fees, should other fund raising initiatives in this plan be unsuccessful. Alberta Team athletes will be required to take a Level 1 Coaching Program as well as a level one judging program.

Following the 2010 Olympics, there will be several previous athletes retiring from competition. AFSA will approach these athletes with the hope of attracting them to coaching. The key to future success in coaching recruitment must begin now.

Coaching development both at the provincial and club level should be an ongoing program. The high turnover rate of coaches at the provincial team level has given attempts at this in the past, low ROI. Increased coaching salaries may result in smaller teams with few coaches at the Alberta Team level.

Finally, AFSA will strive to provide regular feedback and recognition to its coaches in the hopes that their passion for the sport, combined with livable pay, and ongoing development, will create more coaches with a true system of progression. Budgets will always affect delivery of a program, but we believe this is the one area that can have no compromise.

Great coaching will grow the program. We must make the commitment to deliver.

## **High Performance Events**

AFSA, in a matter of a very few short years, has developed a reputation for its ability to successfully host a variety of high performance events. The 2010 world cup will be the pinnacle of the events hosted by our province. There is a desire to continue to host these events, but there are certain criterions that must be fulfilled:

- These events must be profitable.
- They must not reduce the quality of the experience and frequency of provincial events.
- There must be the volunteer capacity to pull these off as well as the other events AFSA is obliged to host.
- They should build the profile of the sport in local communities (eg World Cup)

These events create an opportunity for profitability, but they take much planning and diligence. AFSA will investigate the possibility of hiring a professional fundraiser (paid by a percentage of funds raised).

AFSA will closely monitor the financial success of these events and, if they cannot be successful in meeting the basic requirements above, a new strategy will be rapidly deployed.

## **Provincial and Club Events**

There seems to be an ongoing debate regarding the frequency of provincial and club events. This is often decided on a year-to-year basis. Clubs will often use these events as fundraisers and it is difficult to deny them. Some teams use the results of these events in their selection of their club teams competing at provincials.

Provincial events have to be held early enough in the year to provide opportunities for selection to Junior Nationals. This results in athletes not being at their end of season peak and can often cloud the true rankings. There has been much criticism for the demise of the year-end Alberta Championships, both from a competition and social perspective.

The debate on how much to train versus compete has been discussed and studied at many levels. Multiple documents have been produced in a variety of sports disciplines. There has been a large push to more of a training model versus a competition model. AFSA has undertaken to move to this model with mixed success. The difficulty is that competitions produce proper venues to train, as well as visibility to the public, social interaction between volunteers, and a spirit of fun for the athletes. AFSA in it's consideration of competitions will consider the "fun" elements of competition at club and local hill level in their consideration of competitions.

It will be a balancing act, but AFSA will strive to hold three provincial events per year. It will endeavor to support club events, but encourage a moderate approach and pre-season coordination of these events.

## **Judge and Official Development**

Judging development has been an area of challenge in the sport of Freestyle Skiing. The sport is ever evolving and most judges have never competed and have worked their way through the system as parents of athletes. To increase the knowledge base of the judging panel, it is recommended to recruit former athletes to become judges.

AFSA will require all Provincial Team (also invite some ex athletes) to take a level one course in September 2009. This will be an annual requirement as a member of the Alberta Team. Other levels will be provided on an as needed basis and could also be mandatory. By making judging a part of the requirement of being on a provincial team, we will build the judging pool at the grass roots level. The athletes will increase their understanding of the judging criteria and what the judges are looking for. Contacting ex-athletes will become the responsibility of AFSA as they have the contact information (taking into consideration FOIP).

Compensation for judging and officials is another area that AFSA will investigate. All sports organizations are seeing a drop in funding but finding imaginative ways to properly compensate judges will be part of any successful plan for AFSA with respect to judging going forward.

AFSA, by the 2011-2012 season, will require each club to have a minimum of three active judges and two level 2 officials. These can be parents, but again, it is preferable to utilize a mix of parents and former athletes and ensure ongoing competency and experience is achieved.

AFSA will have a more active role in the Judges Advisory Group (JAG) to ensure that the development at training of judges is suitable for the programs being offered in Alberta. This is critical to the future success of the sport. This is particularly important as Alberta programs have often been unique compared with programs in Eastern Canada. AFSA will investigate the current system for providing judging credentials and recommend to JAG ways to “open” the process while still ensuring ongoing competency and development.

Development of officials is critical to the success of the sport going forward. This has been a significant undertaking of the CFSA through the development of the “Officials Advisory Group” (OAG). AFSA will adopt the new programs developed by OAG and recruit and develop officials from entry level through to course facilitator.

The OAG is recommending a new approach to official development to increase the number of officials in the sport. Three levels are proposed with greater use of remote technology in the instruction phase.

AFSA will support the direction of the Officials Advisory Group through yearly promotion of all three proposed levels within AFSA. Mentoring programs during AFSA hosted events will create practical experience to go along with the academic portion of the programs.

Job shadowing for all key official and judging positions will be the norm in AFSA hosted events going forward.

### **Access to Government Funding**

Access to government funding has become an issue in 2010 and will continue for years to come due to the poor economy and government deficits. This will pose a challenge for all sport organizations. Understanding available grants and completing the process of application and reporting have become onerous on a volunteer based organization. Some grants have been applied for year after year, and AFSA will continue to be diligent in applying for these.

AFSA will develop a more effective lobby presence through cooperation with CFSA and local PSOs.

Other grants may be more elusive. AFSA proposes to hire a “Grant Consultant” to find funding outside the traditional funding regularly attained by AFSA. The consultant would be paid purely on successful application. They would have access to ASFA staff, but would be responsible for both finding and completing grant applications.

### **Development of Corporate Strategy**

AFSA, as well as many other organizations, has felt that there are large and untapped opportunities in corporate sponsorship. Development of these opportunities has been left to individuals and committees of volunteers with no expertise in this area. There is a general discomfort in asking for sponsorships and, invariably, the only successes are with those that are directly affiliated with the program.

### **Media Plan**

AFSA has recently had a great volunteer that has learned the art of media relations and press releases. This has been a huge tool in creating public awareness of the sport as well as recognizing the accomplishments of our athletes. AFSA will continue to apply these tools so that in the long run, our model for growth, development and sponsorship will be accomplished.

### **Facility Relationships**

Facilities are critical to the sport of freestyle skiing. Race teams simply need a groomed run while freestyle venues require significant staff time as well as dedicated space. This will become more of an issue in the future as skier visits diminish. If athlete levels continue to drop in Alberta, it will be more and more difficult to have venue based freestyle facilities and the sport will face further challenges in the future. AFSA will continue to attempt to raise corporate funds through direct contacts.

Facility relationships have been left to the local levels. This has inherent difficulties as local volunteers come and go as well as facility staff. Incoming volunteers will likely not understand the preparation and relationship building that is critical to the success of their programs.

The Executive Director of AFSA will annually coordinate a meeting with the local ski facility, the club executive, and AFSA. The agenda will be developed to discuss the needs of freestyle, marketing our programs, the opportunities for the facility (compare for other freestyle success stories), any challenges or issues in the past, and goals for the future. It should be a friendly and cooperative approach with the overall premise of mutual success and opportunities. Telephone follow up will occur on at least two occasions between the Executive Director and the facility with a brief report going to the local Executive and the AFSA Executive. This will put the direction in the hands of AFSA to be fostered and developed at the local level. AFSA will provide the guidance for the Club Executive of the day.

### **Athlete Development Committee**

The ADC is an opportunity for coaches to play an active role in the development of the sport and also act as a sounding board for new initiatives and programs developed by the AFSA staff and Board. The concept is excellent but the execution and process have been flawed in recent years.

The ideal process would be the pre-circulation of issues along with “recommendations” or specific proposals. The core of the meeting would be to deal with these issues followed by a brainstorming and round table session. Improvement in the efficiency of the meetings will create maximum value from the coaching staff for the benefit of the whole organization.

The Executive Director will ensure a complete agenda, along with recommendations, is circulated two weeks before the meeting. A “historian” will also be appointed that will provide feedback on issues that are recurrent. They will act as a “parliamentarian” in the meeting process and have the authority to redirect topics out of the scope of the ADC. This parliamentarian/historian will effectively act as the Chair of the meeting.

The Board will consider the required frequency of the ADC meeting process and will make recommendations in regards to the required frequency of these sessions.

### **Communications Plan**

AFSA underwent a communications audit in 2008. The goal was to strategize and implement internal and external communication strategies. The results of the audit were that AFSA should increase the utilization of the internal website and have a greater focus on communicating directly with its key stakeholders. The theme was “frequent and meaningful”. AFSA will make a concerted effort to improve communications with its stakeholders through the following:

- Regular updating of AFSA website,
- Ongoing email communication for timely issues,
- Circulation of meeting minutes and notes on a timely basis to the appropriate parties,
- Production of a regular newsletter,

- Coach meetings and clinics tied to competitions as needed, and
- Year-end banquet.

### **Alberta Team Strategy**

The Alberta program is the pinnacle for an athlete to reach within the Alberta System. Ideally, it represents a level of skill attained and has a constant high caliber source to feed it. It is the goal for the grass roots in Alberta to work toward.

**Mogul Program:** The Alberta Mogul Team has undergone some significant change in the last several years. There has been a lack of consistency with new coaches being hired near annually, as well as an exodus of top Alberta talent to other programs. Athletes have declined spots, which was a rare thing in the past. Theories such as inconsistent coaching, difficult venues and emergence of newschool disciplines have all been linked to the reduction in program participants. AFSA must strive to develop a model that is consistent and stable for the years to come. It will require development of the mogul program at the grass roots.

We are now faced with a rebuilding program and a development system within our sport. There will be some decisions made in the path of the Mogul Program for 2009 and beyond, which will produce a new model for Alberta athletes. The concept of a Western Canadian Team has been explored and will see its preliminary test in 2009. The goal will be to develop an Alberta Team and a BC team that will train together, and functionally act as one for all common events and training camps. It will be overseen by a head coach of the overall team co-funded by BC and Alberta. This Head Coach will take top athletes from each program to the NorAms. This pilot for 2009 could lead to the development of a high performance Western Canadian Team.

In the interim, AFSA will support a program to have a top-level mogul coach (club based) with an additional initiative to visit local clubs in the hopes of promoting their mogul programs. The affect of coaches developing the interests of young skiers is well documented over the years.

With stable influx of athletes competing in moguls, AFSA will not have to build programs on a yearly basis based on who is coming up, but rather will have a consistent program that will have an abundance of athletes to fill its ideal skill set and numbers.

**Half Pipe Program:** Alberta proved it was an innovative developer of the sport with the first provincial half pipe team. British Columbia was soon to follow. Alberta has had no problem attracting athletes to the program. The issue is where they go next. Many athletes have chosen the course of independence and the pro circuit. FIS events have been plagued by poor representation based on low prestige and what is perceived as flawed judging. Half pipe has not been identified as an Olympic Sport and it is a sport still trying to find itself.

Alberta has produced a number of top athletes in the half pipe world and will continue to see the program through as long as there is a hope for this event as an Olympic sport. The

program will again see athletes going independent and new athletes coming up. AFSA will continue to evolve, but a set plan for the team along with dedicated resources will continue in the Annual Plan. The long-term strategic plan is continued support with the flexibility to evolve as the world wide half-pipe program evolves.

### **Historic and Future Disciplines**

Freestyle skiing, by its very nature, is constantly evolving. This is one thing that makes it so exciting. These disciplines will be discussed on an individual basis.

**Big Air:** There is no apparent progression of “Big Air” into the Olympic model. AFSA will promote “slopes style” vents in favor of traditional “Big Air” events where possible and practical.

**Slope Style:** Pilot projects with slope style events have been hugely popular. AFSA has a strategic interest in supporting the evolution of this event even though there are no immediate plans for this to become an Olympic event. This will be a replacement event for “Big Air” and has been hugely popular with our athletes. The most recent information suggests the IOC has an interest in developing this event as a future Olympic event. AFSA will continue to support the development of disciplines that have large popularity at the grass roots level.

**Aerials:** Both CFSA and AFSA have undertaken several initiatives to revive interest in aerials over the last several years. They have been minimally successful. AFSA has a long history in aerials and will continue to support the discipline and run events. If there comes a time when we do not have athletes for these events, we will reassess the support for the aerials program.

**Skier Cross:** AFSA has had no active role in the development of skier cross. This has been primarily a FIS initiative. AFSA will continue to take a “wait and see” approach to this discipline as the political and practical issues of its role as a freestyle discipline are resolved.

### **Regional Cooperation**

AFSA faces similar challenges to many of the other provincial freestyle programs. The future may hold more cooperation for the provinces in the provision of high performance teams. AFSA will continue to participate in discussions that explore cooperation, efficiency and overall program development. Our numbers are too small to work in isolation and the concept of provincial organizations having more of a “Canadian” focus is beginning to take shape.

It was noted in the “Alberta Team” section that ASFA would participate in a pilot project with BC on the mogul team. This will serve as an introduction to the concept and may become a building block for future initiatives with BC and other provinces.

## **Athlete Progression**

One of the goals for AFSA is to resume placing athletes on the National Team. In order for that to occur, we must have a solid and effective system of athlete progression. This plan of progression should be well known by every coach in the program. It would also bridge the gap between club athletes and provincial athletes.

AFSA will launch a program where senior coaches identify athletes at the “next level”. These athletes will be invited to camps with Alberta Team athletes and coaches. The goal will be to develop both skills and interest in the Alberta Team Program.

Coaching development sessions will be booked at provincial events with the sole purpose of getting coaches on the same page with their training regimen and ultimate goals. A properly executed ADC process would also allow time to be spent at these events for a development session. The coordination and execution for these will be the responsibility of the Alberta Team coaches with the cooperation of the Executive Director of AFSA.

Common training philosophies will produce a true progression path. Defined efforts to blur the “team” borders by holding joint camps will also fill a large gap in the current progression process.

## **National Team Placement**

AFSA has had a storied history in the placement of athletes on the National Team. Currently, there are multiple athletes on the Aerials Team as well as an Olympic gold medalist in moguls. The success rate has severely dwindled in the last ten years with only two athletes being invited to move to D Team level at this time.

AFSA will renew its commitment in placing athletes on the National Team. This will require a strong grass roots program and a sport and progression system that will provide a pathway to the National Team. Alberta will place three mogul skiers on the National Team by the year 2012, and, depending on the progression of half pipe, will provide a significant contribution on any future National Team.

## **Organizational Partnerships**

AFSA has some very obvious strategic partnerships that are critical to the organization. CFSA and AFSA continue to evolve as true partners. Provincial organizations tend to operate in relative isolation. The Canadian Snowboard Association is an organization where cooperation could result in mutual benefit.

AFSA will develop strategic alliances with key organizations with a goal of developing efficiencies, shared wisdom and potential joint ventures. Organizations will need to become more imaginative in these trying times and those that can cultivate mutually beneficial relationships will have a strategic advantage.

## **Volunteer Recruitment**

Volunteer recruitment is a challenge for all organizations. Freestyle skiing, due to the complexity of the venues, has a demand higher than most. To further add to the

complexity, venues must be prepared days ahead of an event where volunteers could be taken out of their work.

AFSA will endeavor to utilize all resources in attracting volunteers. E-mails are often ineffective and telephone campaigns will be undertaken. Alberta Team parents will be asked to sign a "Parent Agreement" that defines the volunteer requirements.

People volunteer readily when they feel loyalty to an organization, have fun, and feel appreciated. AFSA will continue to provide "debriefing sessions" after every event as well as develop new initiatives to develop the spirit of fun in volunteering. These ideas will be passed on to clubs in an attempt to help develop their volunteer pools.

### **Athlete Ranking System and Selections**

The current RPA system provides an objective measure of ranking athletes for the purpose of selection to Alberta Team and Junior Nationals. It is a good system in that it is objective and removes the politics out of the selection process. Events are ranked in value and athletes must make decisions on what events they want to focus on in hopes of making the Alberta Team. The weakness of the system is that it is difficult to rank the caliber of events, especially in the half pipe program.

The other criticism is that it offers no discretion for the coaching staff in choosing a talented athlete who may have slipped through the RPA process. AFSA will seek the input of the ADC in assessing the future direction of the RPA system in 2009.

### **Governance**

The Governance Committee for AFSA has recently rewritten multiple governance protocols within AFSA including the bylaws. The Executive and staff of AFSA will strive to understand the governance model in its entirety.

The bigger challenge in AFSA may be the Board structure itself. It is difficult to find a common goal when the goals of the individual Board members may at times differ from the organization as a whole due to the nature of the club structure. We will be continually challenged to meet the needs of the individual clubs and find common goals as an organization. Development of a team approach will be strengthened in the coming years.

### **Reporting**

It is imperative that key Executives present a formal report to each and every Board meeting. The key people to report would be:

- Chairman
- Executive Director
- Treasurer
- Mogul Team Head Coach or Delegate
- Half Pipe Team Head Coach or Delegate

These reports would be circulated one week before the meeting to all members. Following the BOD Meetings, minutes will be circulated, by email, to all club presidents and board members within one week of the meeting.

### **Contracts**

AFSA enters a variety of contracts with coaches, employees, and in some cases, facilities and other organizations. Legal contracts can be costly and the tendency is to copy, modify, or write contracts without expert advice. These contracts can sometimes leave the AFSA open for legal action and can be one sided, without clear performance measures, which can reduce our ability to provide effective programs.

AFSA will not enter into future contracts without legal review. This will be done through relationships that exist in the organization so as not to incur costs. Contracts will be standardized and the Executive must approve each contract, along with any proposed modifications.

This standardization will protect the interests of AFSA on multiple fronts.

### **Annual Tactical Plan**

The Strategic Plan is a moving document. It will be changed as the times and situation changes. It is meant as a guide to management and the Board in achieving its overall mandate. The freestyle way has been to “wing it” and this plan will serve as the overall guide.

On a yearly basis and presented to the Board by November 1 of each year, the Executive Director, through a cooperative process with key stakeholders, will develop an annual tactical plan for the year. This plan will tie directly with the strategic plan and be focused on the how and when component for the upcoming year. This plan will be reviewed at Board and Executive meetings and be updated as needed. The plan will, in its entirety, serve as an ongoing report card of the success of the AFSA in achieving its objectives.

It will be shared with any key stakeholders the Board feels is appropriate. It will be a valuable tool in advising the general membership of the general direction of the organization.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed strategic plan does not include any significant changes in funding. It allows adjustment of financial resources to meet the realities of these uncertain economic times. Since the original writing of this plan, many financial realities have changed. This does not water down the goals of the plan but certainly will affect the tactical approach. Is the plan the responsibility of staff, volunteers or are there some things we simply cannot achieve? That will be the ongoing challenge in achieving our overall strategy.

The annual plan will directly deal with current funding and the tactical elements in creating workable budgets and allocation of resources and will be developed by the management team.

## **TIMELINES**

The Strategic Plan, on approval, will form the ongoing and immediate strategy of AFSA. The inclusion of yearly plans, as well as the continued amendment of the overall plan, will ensure an active, relevant direction for the organization on an ongoing basis. Although some initiatives will not be immediately achieved, the ongoing reporting that is part of the plan will allow the Board and Executive to discuss reasonable timing expectations with staff and allow the Board to assess the resources of the day.

An effective Strategic Plan is one that is followed, updated and remains relevant to changing situations that appear to be a reality in the coming years.

## **SUMMARY**

A Strategic Plan is fundamental to guiding an organization to its long-term goals and objectives. It serves as both a guide and a report card for the success of an organization. This plan is designed as a specific plan that is readable and workable for the AFSA. It will hopefully be a valuable resource in the progress of Freestyle Skiing in Alberta.

The strategic plan is a foundation. The critical element to follow is the tactical plan by management to implement the stated strategy. This will be the nuts and bolts of “how” and is the next stage of the process.