



Open Letter from the ACC and the CEC to the Canadian Competition Climbing Community

February 3, 2014

Over the past six months, the organization of competition climbing at the national level has been in transition. As a result, there has been concern about how the sport would be governed in the future, and uncertainty among athletes and others involved in the sport about how they might be affected, both this season, and into the future.

The Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) and Climbing Escalade Canada (CEC) want to address this situation, and assure the Canadian competition climbing community that their sport has a strong national system. We offer this open letter to the community as a first step in that process.

Late last year, ACC and CEC representatives began a dialogue on how competition climbing can most effectively be governed at the national level. Our two organizations each bring a valuable perspective to this work.

The CEC, comprised of the four provincial competition climbing organizations, has a singular focus on competition climbing and the needs of athletes coming up through their programs to the national and international levels.

The ACC has nearly two decades of experience with competitive climbing, as the sport's governing authority in Canada. As a long-established national sports organization, the ACC also has considerable organizational experience and capacity.

In working together to find common ground, the ACC and CEC are mindful that we all serve the same membership – athletes committed to this great sport.

Across Canada, competition climbing is growing, as is recreational climbing, both indoors and outside. Growth in competitive climbing requires new approaches to managing the sport that are specific to its needs.

The ACC and CEC have agreed on a new national sports framework for competitive climbing, and are moving quickly to put this new framework into place. The key aspects of this are as follows:

- There will be a single National Sports Organization (NSO) for competition climbing in Canada. This will be a federally-incorporated, not-for-profit organization. This structure is consistent with the criteria of Sport Canada, opening the door to possible future funding support by various levels of government.
- The NSO will be made up of recognized Provincial Sports Organizations and the Alpine Club of Canada in order to provide governance specific to competition climbing, but still linked to the recreational spectrum of the sport.

- To work effectively, the NSO must be well structured and able to set out clear directions for how the sport will evolve and develop. This requires solid bylaws, policies, as well as strategic and business plans. These are being developed by the ACC and CEC together.
- The new NSO will operate in an open, accountable and transparent manner. It will earn and hold the confidence of athletes and others involved in the sport. It will welcome all those willing to volunteer their time and energy. It will be responsive to new ideas and perspectives.

Reflecting this framework, the ACC and CEC are taking the following steps:

- The bylaws, policy development and planning work underway will be vested in the CEC as soon as practical, as the CEC's existing corporate status meets the needs of the new NSO. In tandem, the CEC Board will expand to include membership from the four existing PSOs and the ACC.
- The ACC, as the current governing body recognized by the IFSC, will delegate this authority to the new CEC on February 14, 2014 for one year. During this time the new CEC will continue to develop needed policies and create the necessary committee structures to manage all aspects of competition climbing at the national and international levels.
- Since some work is still needed to put in place all the required structures, and since some engagements have already been put into place by the ACC for the coming season, it is expected that the permanent official transfer of IFSC membership from the ACC to CEC will take place in one year, in time for the 2015 IFSC Plenary Assembly.

During this period of transition, the ACC and CEC are committed to consulting with athletes and volunteers to learn how they want to see their national federation develop in the next few years.

The framework developed by the ACC and the CEC involves significant changes to national sport governance in Canada, changes that both organizations believe will build a stronger, more effective and accountable system – one with greater capacity to support our athletes.

This will take time, and involve a great deal of work by many volunteers. Things won't be perfect at the start, and as we work through these practical challenges, we ask for your support, your input and your encouragement.

Regards,

Alpine Club of Canada - Peter Muir, President.
Climbing Escalade Canada - Maria Izquierdo, Chair.