

## **Chair's Summary Report**

### **Year ended 31 December 2025**

The 2025 calendar year marked a period of consolidation, maturation and growing confidence for Curling Australia. Building on the transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee in 2024, the Board's focus throughout the year was on strengthening governance foundations, improving organisational resilience, and positioning curling more clearly within the Australian and international sporting landscape, while continuing to support athletes, volunteers and Member States.

#### **Governance and organisational foundations**

Throughout 2025, the Board prioritised the deliberate strengthening of Curling Australia's governance structures and operating rhythm. This work was intentional and necessary to ensure the organisation is equipped to operate sustainably as a national sporting organisation, while meeting the expectations of government, Olympic-system partners and international federations.

Key milestones during the year included the establishment of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Nominations Committee; the recruitment of a Finance Officer; and the introduction of regular Management Committee meetings distinct from Board meetings. Together, these changes reinforced the separation between strategic oversight and operational delivery, reduced reliance on a small number of volunteers, and improved clarity around roles, responsibilities and decision-making.

The Annual General Meeting held in August was the first since the transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee and marked the completion of this initial phase of governance reform. While held later than in previous years, it remained within the permitted timeframe and reflected the scale of work undertaken behind the scenes to put the right foundations in place.

Across the year, feedback from external stakeholders increasingly reflected a perception of Curling Australia as stable, organised and progressing deliberately. This external validation is important as the organisation deepens its engagement with the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC), Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and World Curling (WC).

#### **Skills-based recruitment and volunteer sustainability**

A further priority during the year was a shift toward skills-based recruitment, focused on filling capability gaps and improving sustainability. Appointments made during 2025 included two

Social Media Coordinators, Committee members with external expertise, and a dedicated Finance Officer. These changes have materially strengthened the organisation's capacity and reduced pressure on long-serving volunteers.

### **Balancing governance with delivery**

While governance reform was a major focus, it did not come at the expense of delivery. Curling Australia commenced the national rollout of its Coaching and Officiating Frameworks, completed the Athlete Categorisation Framework, and successfully delivered the Australian National Championships in both May and July.

The Board acknowledges the significant contribution of Perry Marshall in progressing athlete, coach and officiating frameworks during the year, alongside the many volunteers who support delivery across the sport.

### **Athlete and performance highlights**

The 2024–25 season was a landmark period for Australian curling.

In Mixed Doubles, Australia accepted the IOC's official invitation to Milano Cortina 2026 and achieved its first World Championship medal, winning bronze at the 2025 World Mixed Doubles Curling Championships. The team reached world ranking number two during the season and commenced the 2025–26 season ranked number one globally. At the Olympic Qualification Event, the team progressed to the playoffs and narrowly missed qualification in a campaign that resonated strongly across the Australian curling community.

Australia's women's and men's teams competed at both the Pre-Olympic Qualification Event in Scotland and the Pan Continental Curling Championships in the United States. The women's team successfully qualified from the Pre-OQE to the Olympic Qualification Event held in December.

At junior level, two Australian athletes competed at the inaugural World Junior Mixed Doubles Curling Championships in May 2025, representing an important early milestone in the development of an international junior pathway. In December, Australia had both junior men and junior women competing at the World Junior-B Curling Championships in Lohja, Finland.

### **International and Olympic engagement**

During the year, Curling Australia continued to strengthen its engagement with World Curling and the Australian Olympic system. The World Curling Congress held on the Gold Coast provided a valuable opportunity for international connection and insight, with strong Board representation and Curling Australia support.

Engagement with the Australian Olympic Committee deepened through regular dialogue with senior leadership and participation in sector forums and in particular, in person attendance at the AOC CEO Forum in December. These conversations have reinforced alignment around governance expectations, athlete pathways and the long-term positioning of curling within the Olympic movement.

### **Infrastructure and long-term focus**

Looking beyond immediate delivery, the Board signalled its intent to pursue a dedicated curling facility as a long-term strategic priority. This work remains exploratory and is being approached deliberately, with an emphasis on sustainability, partnership and alignment with Member State initiatives rather than prescriptive central solutions.

Post-AGM Board appointments, including portfolios focused on high performance projects and infrastructure and strategic partnerships, reflected a growing emphasis on long-term capability building.

### **Member State engagement**

In November, Curling Australia commenced its first planned series of regular Member State Forums. These forums are intended to become an ongoing mechanism to strengthen engagement, communication and trust as governance structures continue to mature, while respecting the autonomy and initiative of Member States.

### **Board Chair transition**

Following the August AGM, the outgoing Chair, Laurie Weeden, was formally acknowledged and the Board appointed Hamish Lorrain-Smith as Chair in September. The transition was designed to support continuity and to build on the foundations already laid. The remainder of the year focused on embedding governance rhythm, strengthening external relationships and preparing the organisation for the next phase of strategic development.

### **With thanks**

On behalf of the Board, I extend sincere thanks to the Member State Executive Committees and volunteers; coaches and umpires supporting national and international competition; and our key stakeholders, including the Australian Sports Commission, Sport Integrity Australia, the Office for Women in Sport, the Australian Olympic Committee, Paralympics Australia, the Victorian Institute of Sport and the Queensland Academy of Sport.

The Board also acknowledges the contribution of Curling Australia staff and contractors, the Board and Management Committee members, the New Zealand Curling Association for access



**Curling Australia Ltd**

ABN: 31 677 087 491

ACN: 677 087 491

[www.curling.org.au](http://www.curling.org.au)

[Facebook](#) [Curling Australia](#)

[Instagram](#) [curlingaustralia](#)

to equipment and facilities, and our partners, sponsors and supporters who continue to play an important role in the growth of the sport.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Lorrain-Smith".

Hamish Lorrain-Smith

CA Board Chair

18<sup>th</sup> January 2026