

The FISA Council's Proposal to the Congress for the Attribution of the 2021 World Rowing Championships

2 September 2017

The 2021 World Rowing Championships bid process commenced in August 2016 when FISA invited expressions of interest in hosting the event. A number of National Federations expressed interest in hosting the event, however by the final bid deadline of 31 May, no bids had been received.

In accordance with Rule 6, in the case where no bids or no suitable bids are received by the bid deadline, the Council may identify a suitable candidate and directly attribute the event provided that it is satisfied that the bid meets the minimum standards for the regatta. There were no bids at the bid deadline on 31 May, but the Chinese Rowing Association (CRA) had indicated an interest in hosting the event in Shanghai. They were not however in a position to submit a bid by the published bid deadline. As indicated in Item 14b of the Agenda Papers, FISA then proceeded to enter into discussions with the CRA and Shanghai to modify the timelines in order to enable their bid team prepare and submit a bid.

To launch the bid preparation, the CRA was sent an explanation of the bidding process, the rules of conduct and a detailed bid questionnaire. FISA's bid inspection team visited Shanghai to conduct a bid seminar and to visit the proposed regatta venue. At the bid seminar, the technical requirements of the Championships were explained and bidders had an opportunity to ask questions. The Shanghai bid team submitted a preliminary bid in June, and on 10 July, the bid team presented their candidature (based on the preliminary bid) to the FISA Council in Lucerne, Switzerland. The standard of preparation and presentation by the bid team was very high and enabled the Council to form clear and informed opinions. The final bid was received on 31 August 2017.

Major factors in the Council's assessment

The major factors in the Council's assessment of the bid are as follows:

1. Racing conditions:

The Shanghai Water Sports Centre, located approximately 50km from downtown Shanghai, is a man-made course with warm-up and cool-down areas in a separate channel lying parallel to the course. The course has eight 13.5m wide lanes. An automatic start system will be used. Commentary and side-TV coverage will be made from a road running the length of the course, thus reducing the number of motor boats on the lake. Coaches will be able to follow the racing from a road running the length of the other side of the course.

The weather conditions in Shanghai at the end of August and beginning of September, the normal period for the World Rowing Championships, are very hot and humid with a high possibility of typhoons. The bidder therefore proposed that the Championships are held in the last week in September when the weather conditions are more favourable. At the end of September, maximum temperatures average 23°C with humidity averaging 58%.

Windspeeds average 3m/s and the prevailing wind is south east, which translates to a cross headwind on the course.

2. Course installations:

The venue has high quality existing installations. For the 2021 Championships, a new start tower will be built and the start bridge extended to cover eight lanes. A new finish tower will also be constructed. The intermediate timing huts will be renovated. The space and permanent facilities in the boat park are sufficient to accommodate all boat storage needs and facilities for athletes and officials. The venue will be fully accessible, and the bid indicates a plan to work closely with the Chinese Disability Organisation to ensure that the necessary facilities and expertise are available for para athletes.

3. Participant experience

The conditions for athletes, coaches and other participants should be good. Hotels are located within 10 - 40 minutes' drive of the venue. The price per person for a shared room in a three-star hotel is EUR 80. A four-star hotel will cost EUR 85 per person sharing. An extension to the subway system is being constructed which will allow fast and easy access to the venue from the airport and from the city for teams and spectators.

4. Financial support:

The Shanghai bid is underwritten by the Shanghai Administration of Sports, a municipal department of Shanghai city responsible for all local and international sporting events. This guarantee provides a high level of security for the financial viability of the event.

The bid confirms financial support for 100 participants of the FISA Development Programme for the duration of the competition as well as a 7-day training camp. In addition, some financial assistance for the transport of boats to Shanghai is promised.

5. Organisational experience:

The 2021 World Rowing Championships would be the first senior World Rowing Championships to be held in China. The Shanghai venue team has however hosted the Asian Qualification Regatta for the 2004 and 2008 Olympic Games, and in 2018, will host the FISU World University Rowing Championships. Shanghai Administration of Sports hosts many high-level international sports events, including the ATP 1000 Shanghai Masters and the FIA Formula 1. The CRA has, in its capacity as the national federation, been involved in the hosting of the 2008 Olympic Games regatta and the 2007 World Rowing Junior Championships in Beijing, and the 2014 Youth Olympic Games regatta in Nanjing. It would contribute its knowledge and expertise gained from these events to the Shanghai 2021 Organising Committee.

The Council's Proposal to Congress

Having examined the detailed aspects of the bid submitted, and taking all relevant factors into account, the Council is convinced that Shanghai City in partnership with the Chinese Rowing Association would be able to stage excellent Championships. The Council also appreciates the potential of the Championships to promote the sport of rowing within China and to support the development goals of both the Chinese Rowing Association and FISA.

The Council notes that the National Games of the People's Republic of China are held in the year after the Olympic Games, and that the National Games are a priority for all Chinese athletes. The China sports authorities have agreed to stage the 2021 National Games rowing regatta at a date in advance of the World Rowing Championships dates (once confirmed) to enable a strong participation from Chinese athletes.

On the basis that no bids were received by the published bid deadline, Rule 6 and Item 14b indicate the right of the Council to directly attribute the 2021 World Rowing Championships. However, given that the bidder was able to submit a suitable bid well in advance of the Congress, the FISA Council prefers to return the right of attribution to the Congress. The Council therefore proposes to the Congress that the right and responsibility of hosting the 2021 World Rowing Championships be attributed to the Chinese Rowing Association and the Shanghai Administration of Sports for the Shanghai Water Sports Centre in Shanghai, China. The Council would again like to express its sincere appreciation for the highly professional work of the Shanghai bid team and the excellent bid dossier that it submitted.