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OCEANIA REPORT 2015/2016

MEMBERS

As of 1 September 2016 the OPF member nations are –

Australia
Kiribati
Nauru
New Zealand
Niue
New Caledonia
Papua New Guinea
Samoa
Solomon Islands
Tahiti
Tuvalu

Unfortunately Fiji has lapsed as an OPF member and the former administration advise that there is no current Powerlifting activity there. Hopefully Fiji can be revived before the 2019 Pacific Games. New Caledonia has resolved its internal difficulties and has passed from NOC administration to independence as a national federation. The Papua New Guinea Federation remains under the administration of its NOC.

ADMINISTRATION

The Annual General Meeting of the OPF was held in Melbourne on 29th April, with a strong attendance of nations. The office-bearers of the OPF were elected or affirmed as --

President & IPF Board Member	Robert Wilks
Vice President	Julian Perry
Secretary	Susan Maguire
Treasurer	Steve Lousich
Committee	Jason Wharton
Recordkeeper	John Myers
Webmaster	Vicki O'Brien
Referees Director	Steve Lousich





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Following this meeting there was a revamp of the OPF website, which is now sound and up-to-date in the information it provides. In 2017 there will be a further professional-level upgrade of the site.

EVENTS

In December 2015 the combined Asia/Oceania Championships were held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. This was a spirited event, with near 400 competitors across all age groups. Also in that month many Oceania nations took part in the Commonwealth Championships, in Vancouver, Canada, another event with competitors around the 400 mark.

In 2016 the Pacific Invitational series continued, in conjunction with the Australian Fitness & Health Expos. Melbourne was held in April and Perth in August, with Powerlifting achieving exposure to many thousands of fitness fans at the event and on-line. Nauru was a stalwart here, with their lifters achieving multiple World Records at each event, with Samoa, Kiribati and Tuvalu also strong participants, as well as host nation Australia.

Oceania also moved on to greater prominence at World Championships. Australia achieved a winner with Caleb Voice in the 83kg Bench Press and a medallist with Elizabeth Craven in the 52kg class; also Nauru had superstar Jeza Uepa threaten World Records and medals in the highly competitive 120+kg class.

THE FUTURE

As per the last two years, growth in at least the major OPF nations has continued apace, entirely due to the popularity of Raw lifting. As described above, this has translated not only into greater participation, but greater quality, with Oceania lifters now achieving on the world stage as never before.

However distance and associated costs and limited resources in the very small Pacific Island nations has remained a challenge in the Oceania region. New Referees have been accredited but have remained concentrated in Australia and New Zealand. Similarly anti-doping programmes have been centred in those nations, although with ICT conducted on Island athletes at every opportunity. Notably, Australia has introduced a second tier of WADA standard testing, over and above the ASADA government system, that paid for by Powerlifting Australia and including testing of not only Australian but also other OPF nation athletes.

The logo for ELEIKO, featuring the brand name in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.





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From here Oceania looks forward to some very major events in the next few years. April 2017 will see one of the World's largest fitness shows with an expanded Pacific Invitational at the renovated Sydney Convention Centre. In 2018 Nauru will be seeking to hold its first international event. Further ahead, the next Pacific Games are set for Tonga in 2019, with Powerlifting facing the challenge again of securing its place in the Region's major sporting event.

Robert Wilks
OPF President

