

Situation regarding Race Walking and Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games

First it should be noted that no decisions have been taken with respect to the programme of events at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

The IOC has asked all international federations for proposals to amend their competition program for Tokyo 2020. The deadline for this is May 2017.

In terms of Athletics the IOC has specifically asked that we review the race walk events which are seen as our weakest offering. Based on research and feedback gathered over a number of Olympic Games, the IOC believes race walking is in a vulnerable position citing decreased interest in events of long duration to a targeted younger audience and recent doping issues surrounding race walking. In addition the IOC, as part of its public Olympic Agenda 2020 is driving forward its plans for gender equality. Whilst the decision to allow women to compete in 50km together with men was approved by the IAAF Council last year, it has not yet been implemented into the Olympic Programme and requires IOC approval.

Our aim is always to support and evolve our sport so it remains relevant to our global fans and audiences. However we must look at the issues in our sport objectively otherwise we are in danger of having event organisers (such as the IOC) dictate what they would like to host in their event. This is currently not the case. The IOC has asked that we consider the feedback they have received but to be clear if we do not consider this then the IOC may well impose its own solution.

So where are we now? In line with our structures and processes we asked the Race Walking Committee in February to look at Race Walk and consider how we could innovate and evolve it so it had greater appeal to younger audiences. The Race Walking Committee, which includes [Race Walking athletes](#), have prepared some interesting ideas for Race Walk which will go to the IAAF Council next week.

The IAAF council will also be reviewing the competition program for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the council meeting next week. Some of the proposals for Race Walking may be included as part of that discussion.

Race Walking Committee

Chairman: Maurizio DAMILANO (ITA)

Members: Khaled AMARA (TUN)

Jean-Pierre DAHM (FRA)

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