



## INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

### 2024 Elections Report

#### **Election Committee**

In September 2023, Chris Galliers, President of the IRF reached out to me via WhatsApp to serve as the 2024 IRF Elections Committee Chair. I responded with agreement on the same day. In the following weeks, IRF Secretary Andy Davis, IRF Treasurer Mike Lynch and IRF Executive Officer Carlien Roodt, provided me with the required materials to begin the election committee process.

Consulting the approaches from previous years' I followed the previous Election Committee's approach in developing an appropriate Election Committee.

After a slightly delayed start, due to my Q1 and Q2 travel schedule in 2024, I followed the Procedure for Organising and Running IEC Elections (2021) as below:

*An Election Committee shall be established in each election year. The President shall, one (1) year in advance of any WCOMM, appoint a Chairperson; the Chairperson shall appoint at least four (4) other members. Election Committee appointments must be approved by the IEC before taking office. [S1302.00, SR1020-10, SR1350-10]*

In March 2024, I developed the Elections Committee, with a representative from each IRF region as provided by the IRF Regional Representatives, plus sought approval for an independent adjudicator, which was approved by the IRF on March 17th.

The Election Committee was approved by the IRF Board in June and the Committee emails went out in July.

The approved 2024 IEC Election Committee was as follows:

Member	Country	IRF Region
Peeranuch Dulkul Kappelle	Thailand	Asia
Benson Kanyembo*	Zambia	Africa
Adam Turner	UK/Sweden	Europe
Laura Pastorino Ladereche	Uruguay	Central America
Michael Treanor	Australia	Oceania
Ann Meneguzzi	USA	North America
Freire Rodolfo Eusebio	Peru	South America
Cristina Sganga	Kenya	N/A

\*On September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the IRF and Electoral Committee Chair received correspondence regarding an issue with the Africa Representative. The nominee was elected to the committee when instead it was thought they were being put forward as the GRAA's Regional Representative nomination for the IRF. I abstained from any further involvement in discussion due to my GRAA professional membership.



## **Changes to Voting Procedure**

In June 2024, I was informed by the IRF Secretary and Treasurer that a motion had passed to utilize an electronic voting system this year, Election Buddy (<https://electionbuddy.com>). This safe and secure system has been used for over 5 years successfully by the California State Park Ranger Association (CSPRA) and Park Rangers Association of California (PRAC). Candidates for positions of Office and Regional Representatives were given until a deadline of August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to provide photographs, statements and background information on themselves. Electronic voting was opened from October 1st to 12:00pm (Central European Time) on October 11th (10 days), with no ballot write-ins possible. Should there have been any vacancies (i.e. no nominations), the ability to fill this position(s) at the World Ranger Congress would have been made available, as stated in the Bylaws (Section 11.3). However, all positions had candidate submissions by the deadline.

Full IRF members eligible for voting received two electronic ballots to their designated email address, one for IRF Officers & a resolution to confirm deletion of the obsolete Australian Constitution, and a second for their Regional Representative. There were several emails which bounced initially, but these were quickly addressed.

## **Voting Process & Election Committee Duties**

The changes to the voting procedure (from a manual ballot to an electronic system) meant that there was a reduced duty of burden for the 2024 Electoral Committee Chair and other Committee members, as it eliminated the need for proxy voting and ballot counting. The Election Committee would therefore be kept in place if any emergency procedures had to be called in to action. The Electoral Committee Chair would have sole access to the result of the electronic voting system, which would be available for viewing only after 12:00pm (Central European Time) on October 11<sup>th</sup>. The results were reviewed at 12:15pm CET by the Electoral Committee Chair and the Independent Adjudicator together. The results were announced on stage in the Main Hall of the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual World Ranger Congress in Hyeres, France at 1:30pm.

The IRF President, Secretary, Executive Officer and the Election Committee Chair received several nominations and challenges for Ranger Associations that were not Full Members or claimed to not be full members, along with the issue presented from the GRAA. It was decided these issues would be brought up during the IRF Board meeting on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>.



## **Constitution Ballot Report**

Included with the Officers' electronic ballot, there was a constitutional resolution:  
*Resolution to confirm deletion of the obsolete Australian Constitution*

<b>Results of Constitution Ballot</b>	
75	Yes – I APPROVE (96.15%)
3	No – I REJECT (3.85%)
14	Abstentions
78	Total Votes

Therefore, the motion to delete the obsolete Australian Constitution was approved.

## **IRF Board Elections**

Following the August 20th deadline, candidates for all Officer and Regional Representative positions had been submitted. This included unopposed applications for Treasurer, and Regional Representatives for Africa (although this contested, more on this below) Asia, Central America, North America and Oceania. There were two (2) candidates for the Office of President, two (2) for Vice President, and two (2) for Secretary. For the Regional Representatives, Europe received two (2) candidates and South America received three (3).

The candidate for Africa was opposed by the GRAA and the IRF Board sought an internal resolution between the GRAA and the sole candidate or the latter would run unopposed. A resolution was not agreed in the end; therefore, the candidate ran unopposed.

On September 5<sup>th</sup>, the IRF publish a page on the IRF website and all IRF Members were notified by email of this posting. The page may be found here:

<https://www.internationalrangers.org/2024-irf-board-nominations-and-elections/>

Finally, I emailed all candidates informing them of the electronic voting process, the launch of the IRF page and a notification that each candidate has allowed one (1) hour on the morning of the last day of the World Ranger Congress for candidates to speak to the floor at the Congress. The email further requested that all candidates should indicate whether:

1. They are attending the IRF WRC in person
2. Would like to do a maximum 2 min presentation on the morning of Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October.

Of the four (4) Officer positions, five (5) of seven (7) candidates responded they would like to speak at the event, though one (1) was unable to attend the WRC in the end. There was no response from the two (2) Presidential candidates, so I reached out to them personally to confirm if they would like to speak on Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>. The Candidate Presentations had been advertised for the final day of the Congress on the agenda since it was released. There were still some complaints that candidates were not made aware that they had the opportunity to speak, and others felt that this should have been done prior to the Regional Meetings, held on Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>.



## 2024 IRF Election Results

Below are the results of the election process, including winners, highlighted in yellow. I have included the number of votes, percentage of votes and number of abstained votes. Results were presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual World Ranger Congress in Hyeres, France at 1:30pm,

Election Results – From Election Buddy		
<b>President</b>	Chris Galliers	55 votes (60.44%)
	Florin Halastauan	36 votes (39.56%)
		91 votes, 1 abstention
<b>Vice President</b>	Borja Diaz	42 votes (46.15%)
	Rohit Singh	49 votes (53.85%)
		91 votes, 1 abstention
<b>Secretary</b>	Andrew Davis	73 votes (82.95%)
	Jhon Brando Pereira Gomez	15 votes (17.05%)
		88 votes, 4 abstentions
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mike Lynch	Unopposed, 89 votes (100%)
		89 votes, 3 abstentions
<b>Africa Regional Rep</b>	Mohammed Dikko Bala	Unopposed, 2 votes (100%)
		2 votes, 2 abstentions
<b>Asia Regional Rep</b>	Hamera Aisha	Unopposed, 11 votes (100%)
		11 votes, 0 abstentions
<b>Europe Regional Rep</b>	Lars Scharfe	12 votes, (66.67%)
	Urs Reif	6 votes (33.33%)
		18 votes, 1 abstention
<b>Oceania Regional Rep</b>	Amanda Dudgeon	Unopposed, 9 votes (100%)
		9 votes, 0 abstentions
<b>Central America Regional Rep</b>	Christian Robles Puchi	Unopposed, 2 votes (100%)
		2 votes, 2 abstentions
<b>North America Regional Rep</b>	Mark Caughlan	8 votes (100%)
		8 votes, 0 abstentions
<b>South America Regional Rep</b>	Augusto Efraín Granda Guamán	6 (30%)
	Marcos Uzquiano	1 (5%)
	Werhner Atoche Montoya	13 (65%)
		20 votes, 0 abstentions

As per the Election Buddy results, here is a summary of the Full/ Regular Members who voted, spoiled and opened votes, ballots added after elections started and the emails sent to eligible members (including any of those queued or not received). It would be unconstitutional to share the data on which Members voted for whom, but this data has been backed up and saved for posterity.

### IRF Officer Elections & Resolution

92 ballots submitted of 112 eligible voters (2 spoiled, 1 opened) – 82%

5 ballots added after the election started.

114 emails sent - 0 notices queued 92 ballots submitted of 112 eligible voters (2 spoiled, 1 opened) – 82%

5 ballots added after the election started.

114 emails sent - 0 notices queued



### **Africa Regional Election**

**4 ballots submitted** of 8 eligible voters – **50%**  
8 emails sent - 0 notices queued

### **Asia Regional Election**

**11 ballots submitted** of 15 eligible voters – **73%**  
15 emails sent - 0 notices queued

### **Europe Regional Election**

**19 ballots submitted** of 26 eligible voters (2 spoiled, 1 opened) – **73%**  
**4 ballots added** after the election started.  
28 emails sent - 0 notices queued  
**1 notice undeliverable.**

### **Oceania Regional Election**

**9 ballots submitted** of 13 eligible voters (2 spoiled, 1 opened) – **69%**  
**2 ballots added** after the election started.  
15 emails sent - 0 notices queued

### **Central America Regional Election**

**4 ballots submitted** of 6 eligible voters (1 opened) – **67%**  
6 emails sent - 0 notices queued

### **North America Regional Election**

**8 ballots submitted** of 9 eligible voters – **89%**  
9 emails sent - 0 notices queued

### **South America Regional Election**

**20 ballots submitted** of 25 eligible voters – **80%**  
**1 ballot added** after the election started.  
25 emails sent - 0 notices queued

It was a pleasure to serve as the 2024 Election Committee Chair and I would like to thank the previous IRF Board for all their support leading up to and during the elections.

**James Slade**  
**2024 IRF Electoral Committee Chair**  
**1<sup>st</sup> November 2024**



## **Recommendations**

I have put together a few recommendations below, based on feedback from IRF Members, my experience with the process and a few general considerations for the IRF Board. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any further questions.

### **Election Committee Membership**

The IRF Regional Reps assisted in nominating representatives to the Election Committee this year, based on previous years' recommendations. There were representatives from all seven (7) regions. However, some of these members were unable to attend the WRC in the end, due to financial and visa obligations. With the new electronic voting process, the Electoral Committee could be made up of regional assistants, but I feel that the role of an independent adjudicator, not associated with any IRF Board member, regional associations or other IRF body is highly beneficial to ensure open and fair elections. In all honesty, with the introduction of the electronic voting system, there was very little for the EC to do, which confused some of the members.

### **IRF Voting Membership**

There still seems to be some confusion amongst members as to what constitutes a full and eligible voting member. Perhaps the process of ensuring all memberships and emails is up to date and those who have applied for membership are ratified within 6 months or so of the elections. Although we seemed to have tried to do this, there were still quite a few emails that were incorrect and last-minute scrambling from associations to correct address.

### **Campaigning**

Some members complained that while they had the ability to campaign regionally, they would like more of a chance to speak to the Congress as a whole; and that the speaker presentations should at the beginning of the Congress, before the regional meetings. I felt that it could be beneficial to look at the constitution and add a section on position campaigning, which offers fair opportunities to those attending the Congress, as well as those who aren't. A few ground rules in place could assist with some of the discontent felt by Candidates in which it was perceived that some had better opportunities to speak with voters than others.

### **Voting Results**

The main complaint made by some candidates following the election results, was not being able to see the results themselves. While I'm told that previously results have never been released, I personally don't see a problem with sharing these when requested. However, obviously sharing any sensitive data, such as who voted for whom, who chose to abstain or did not vote, would be unconstitutional and impedes on the right of the voter to anonymity.