

SPORTS LIAISON: ANNUAL REPORT

2024

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INTRODUCTION

The Your Sport Review was introduced by the Sports Liaison Committee in 2019/20 to capture data from all recognised sports related to Isle of Man Sport's three Priorities and Objectives:

- Increase participation across all levels from grassroots to elite
- Improve and develop coaching, officiating and volunteering to enhance performance across all levels
- Improve governance of local Governing Bodies and sports clubs

Isle of Man Sport aim to achieve these Objectives in partnership with the Island's recognised Governing Bodies of Sport, with the vision of enabling our sporting community on the Isle of Man to thrive.

Since 2019, the Review has been tweaked and developed to provide more detailed data and analysis and despite some variation from the pandemic, we are now in position with sufficient data over the last 6 years to show the benefits of the Support for Sport Programme since its inception in 2019/20. We will continue to collect and monitor the data to establish any long-term trends with greater confidence and we also aim to introduce some qualitative measures over the coming years to supplement this quantitative data and provide a broad and well-rounded picture of the state of the sporting nation.

AIMS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The aims of the Review are three-fold:

- To enable Isle of Man Sport to measure success against our Priorities and Objectives (P&Os) across all sports and demonstrate value for money and the success of all Sports Liaison Funding programmes (including the Support for Sport programme and Sports-Specific Development Officer grants)
- To enable Isle of Man Sport to monitor and evaluate the success of any Isle of Man Sport or sports-specific initiatives or interventions, and/or inform and focus any future funding decisions
- To assist recognised sports with their Development Plans and annual P&Os to help best develop their sports

It is hoped that this annual report will celebrate the partnership between Isle of Man Sport and our recognised Governing Bodies of Sport on the Island, showcasing how the Sports Liaison Committee funding programmes are supporting the development of sport on the Island and contributing to inspiring, enriching and engaging our community through sport.

This report provides preliminary data over the last 6 years from 2019 where there were initially 26 recognised sports but also includes data from 2 newly recognised sports in 2021 and a further new sport in early 2025 that has provided their data from 2024. The addition of new sports has been controlled for when processing the data and reported in instances where it may have resulted in inflated figures, although in the majority of instances, this has not been the case.

Secondly, this data is only collected from the 29 sports that are recognised by Isle of Man Sport and therefore is not a complete picture of the full sporting community on the Island - the overall numbers of participants, coaches, officials and volunteers involved in sport on the Island will likely be higher than this as a result.

Finally, it should be noted that all data is self-reported by clubs and Governing Bodies of Sport and therefore the data should be interpreted with this in mind, along with the considerations noted throughout this report.

PARTICIPATION: OVERVIEW



32%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED MEMBERS OF SPORTS CLUBS

The number of registered members in sports clubs has increased from 15,708 in 2019 to 20,759 registered members in 2024.

39%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF FEMALE REGISTERED MEMBERS

The number of female registered members in sports clubs has increased from 4,658 to 6,459 over the last five years.

£290,000+

SPENT ON TALENT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

£159,025 has been spent on recognised talent development and pathway activity across 19 sports and £134,894 has been provided towards 16 sports for teams and individuals competing at International level competition over the last 5 years, through the Support for Sport funding programme.

OVER TRIPLE

THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED MEMBERS IDENTIFYING AS HAVING A DISABILITY

In 2019, there were 110 members of sports clubs who identified as having a disability. There are now 377 in 2024 (controlled data).

8%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN ON-ISLAND EVENTS SINCE 2020

In 2024, it was reported that there were 28,138 participants in sport on the Island, in comparison to 26,109 in 2020.

OVER £190K

TOWARDS INITIATIVES TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVE EXPERIENCE

£70,179 has been spent directly on providing opportunities for people to get involved in sport on the Island and £122,745 has contributed towards new or upgraded equipment and facility development to improve participant experience in sport across the Island over the last 5 years.

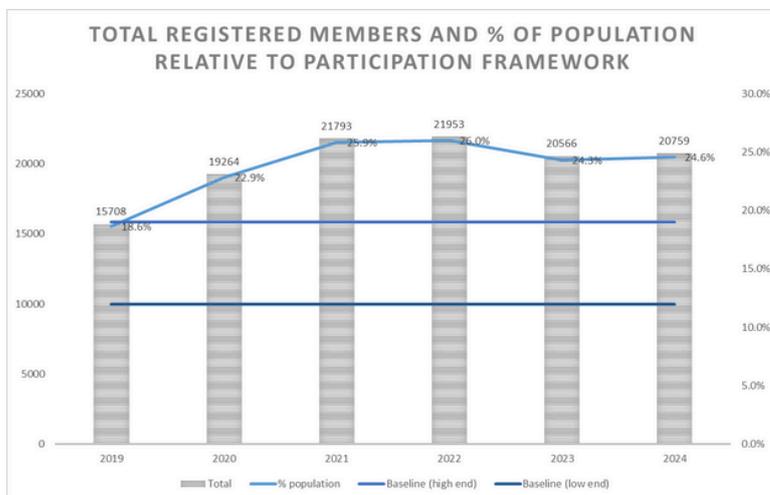
PARTICIPATION: TOTAL REGISTERED MEMBERS



The number of registered members has increased over the last 5 years by 32% from 15,708 registered members to 20,759 registered members across our 29 recognised sports.



Between 2022 and 2023, there was a 6% drop in registered members (1,387 members); however, this can largely be explained by a significant drop in the data received from one sport whose registered members dropped by 55% (1,774 members) which was due to an error in the way the information had been collected previously by the Governing Body. Excluding this sport completely from the data that year showed a 2% increase in registered members across the other 27 recognised sports and there has been a further gradual increase in 2024. Given the large increase in registered members over the first few years of data collection, we expect to see a plateau around the 20,000 mark and focus may shift to aim to maintain participation at these levels, given they are high when benchmarking against the participation framework (to the left).



The Participation Classification Framework states that Tier 2 participation levels are expected to be between 12-19% of the population (the high and low end baselines shown on the graph to the left). The graph shows the total registered members across all recognised sports over the last 6 years, as well

as the percentage of the population at this Tier 2 participation level, based on the annual census data collected for each of these years on the Isle of Man.

In 2019, the Isle of Man was just under the high end average for Tier 2 participation levels and over the last 5 years, the number of individuals classified as participating at Tier 2 on the Island has grown to around 24-25% of the population. Whilst these figures may not correlate directly to the actual number of individuals*, this provides a strong guide that the Isle of Man are likely to be over-performing in terms of the number of individuals involved in sport at Tier 2 level, for which the Governing Bodies of Sport on the Island are predominantly responsible, with support from Isle of Man Sport. This broad base has helped create an oversupply of talented athletes moving through to higher participation levels in recent years.

*The figure may be higher due to this data only being from the 29 currently recognised sports on the Island and not all sports, or it may be lower due to some individuals being registered members of more than one club or sport (e.g. a summer and winter sport).

PARTICIPATION CLASSIFICATION FRAMEWORK

The Participation Classification Framework (McKay et al., 2021) has been used by Isle of Man Sport to inform the criteria and standards for individual athletes seeking support through their various programmes, including the Isle of Man Sport Performance Development Programme (PDP) and by the IOM Sport Aid charity in relation to Performance Athlete Grants (PAG). In order to ensure a consistent approach, this same Framework has been utilised to contextualise the number of individuals expected to fall within each of the 'Tiers' relative to global benchmarks. The below image is a figure taken from the same paper which is a graphical representation of the Framework showing the typical proportions of the population that would fall into each of the Tiers of the Framework and the equivalent numbers that this would represent based on the current population of the Isle of Man.

On the following page, this figure has been adapted to give a guide of where athletes within the Isle of Man Sport system, and Governing Bodies (alongside other organisations) may typically fall within the Framework and Tiers, along with a reasonable estimate of the current participation levels at each of the Tiers from Tier 2-5, including the number of athletes involved in Academy, PDP, IOM Sport Aid PAG and IOM Sport (Pro) and their approximate participation levels at this point.

The data currently collected, whilst it may incorporate some individuals at Tier 1 levels is not sufficient to make any estimations of the proportion of the Isle of Man population that would be considered as Tier 0 or Tier 1, as they are unlikely to be involved as a registered member of the current recognised sports.

Individuals classified as Tier 2 are defined by the Framework as those that "identify with a given sport and are differentiated from Tier 1 because of their commitment to sports-specific 3 times per week and an intention to compete in local-level competitions" (McKay, et al., 2021, p.318) .

As a result, the 'registered members' data from the Your Sport Review has been used to represent the figures at Tier 2 participation level as this corresponds to individuals that have registered and identified with a specific sport, competing in local level competitions. The data that is collected in relation to participants within the sports from the Your Sport Review is higher and includes all registered members but also individuals participating within the sport that are not registered members, and therefore we have classified these remaining individuals as Tier 1 participants at this point, due to the fact that they are not registered members. We do not collect any data in relation to the number of hours individuals train and therefore this method has been chosen as the best possible differentiator between the two Tiers.

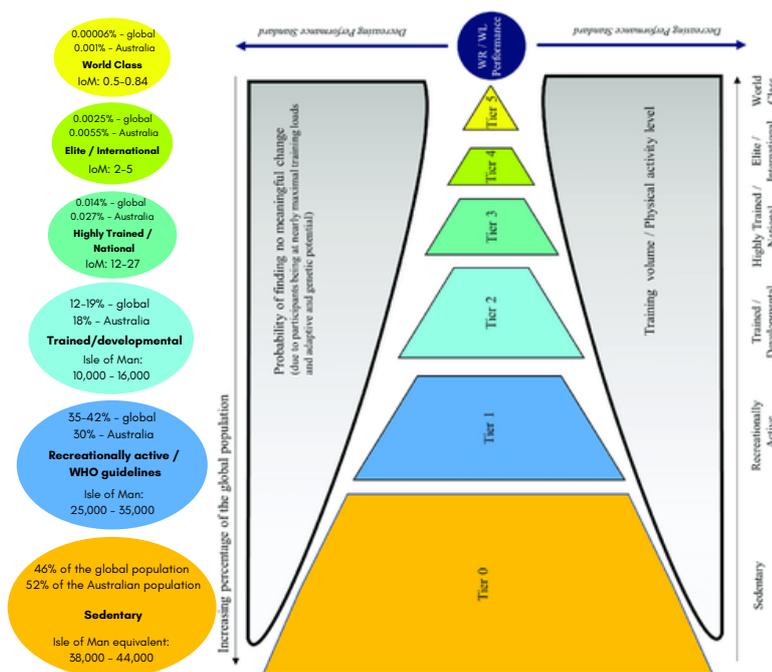


Figure 1. Graphical Representation of the Participation Classification Framework taken from McKay et al. (2021)

McKay, A., Stellingwerff, T., Smith, E., Martin, D., Mujika, I., Goosey-Tolfrey, V., Sheppard, J. and Burke, L. (2021) 'Defining Training and Performance Caliber: A Participant Classification Framework', International Journal of Sports Physiology and Performance, 17, pp. 317-331. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1123/ijsp.2021-0451>

The number of individuals involved in the IOM Sport PDP programme or with a National Governing Body or Governing Body of Sport on the Island (NGB/GBS) in Tier 3 and 4 have been subtracted from the overall Tier 2 registered members data, as it's likely that the majority (but not necessarily all) will still be involved with their Governing Body of Sport on the Isle of Man. The NGB/GBS individuals who would be classified as Tier 3 or above are not currently within the Isle of Man Sport 'system' for a variety of reasons but some of these individuals may have received IOM Sport Aid Sporting Ambassador grant funding. The number of NGB/GBS Tier 3 (and some Tier 4) athletes is predominantly based on those that we are aware of and have funded via the Support for Sport programme over the last 6 years. This incorporates individuals competing in open-age national/international competition across 14 different sports (e.g. snooker, lawn bowls, netball, cricket, shooting, archery, cycling, table tennis, squash, athletics, equestrian, sailing, motorcycling and special olympics).

It should be noted that the data reported from Governing Bodies of Sport is around the number of registered members, not specific individuals and therefore it will not take into consideration the number of individuals that may be a registered member of more than one sport. However, as mentioned previously, the data also only captures information from sports recognised by Isle of Man Sport and there are a number of other sports on-Island that would likely add to these numbers (e.g. basketball, weightlifting, motorsport, cheerleading, dance, paddle sports). For this reason, the figures should be interpreted cautiously but, as a guide, this would provide an initial indication that the Isle of Man is over-achieving at all levels from Tier 2 and above, in terms of the proportion of the population typically expected to fall within the different Tiers.

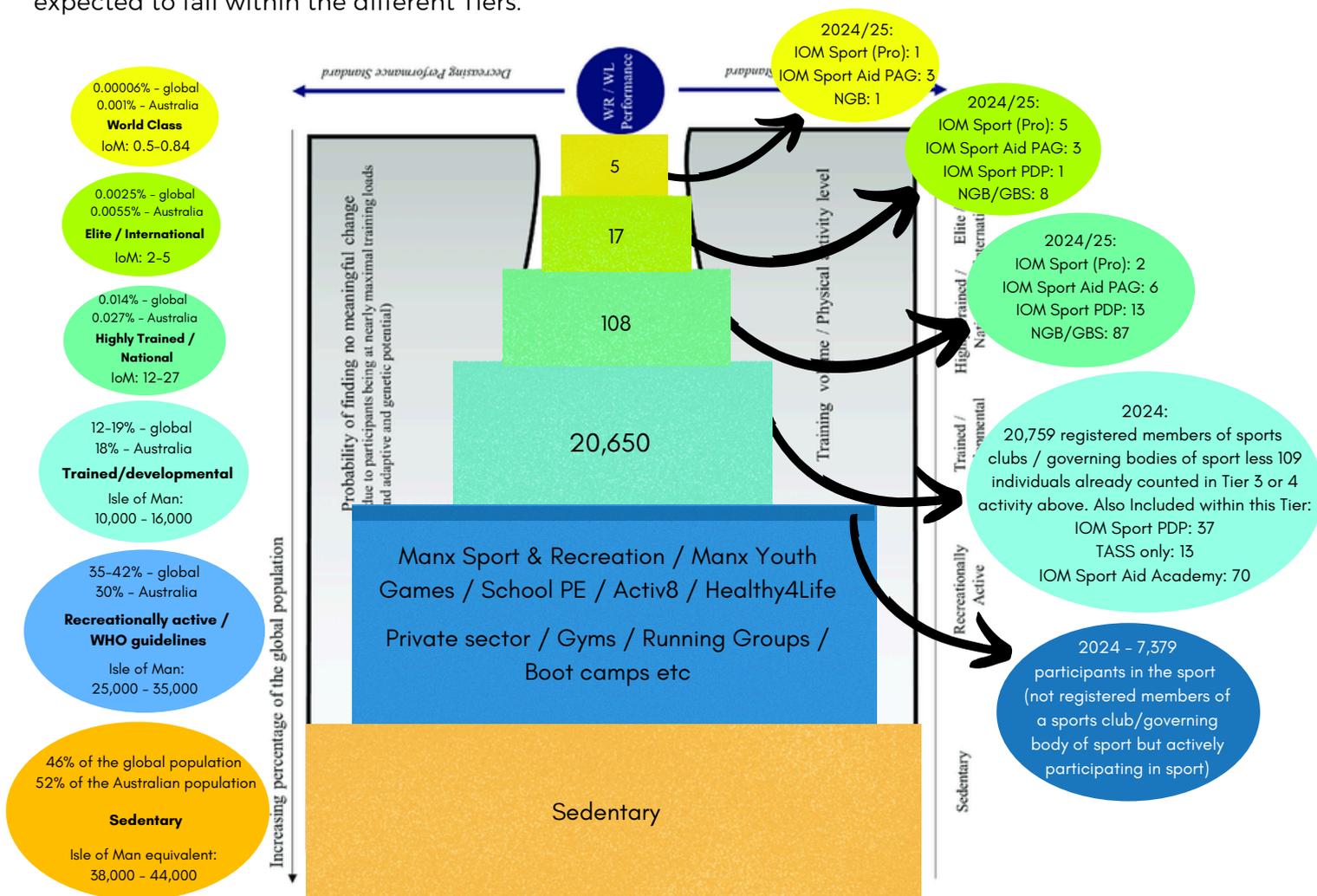


Figure 2. Application of the Participation Classification Framework to the Isle of Man, including where athletes within the Isle of Man Sport system, IOM Sport Aid charity programmes (PAG) and members of recognised Governing Bodies of Sport would typically fall, with approximate number of individuals at each level

NGB = National Governing Body

GBS = Governing Body of Sport

Pro= Professional Athlete

PAG = Performance Athlete Grant

PDP = Performance Development Programme



COACHING, OFFICIATING AND VOLUNTEERING: OVERVIEW

66%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF ACTIVE OFFICIALS

The number of active officials has more than doubled from 691 in 2019 to 1,502 in 2024.

89%

MORE ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS

There was a decline in volunteers in 2023 and this has bounced back in 2024 to 2,824.

OVER QUADRUPLE

THE NUMBER OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED OFFICIALS

In 2020, there were 18 Level 2 qualified officials and only 2 officials qualified as Level 3 or higher. In 2024, there are now 94 Level 2 officials and 59 Level 3 (or higher) officials.

OVER 30%

MORE LEVEL 1, 2 AND 3+ QUALIFIED COACHES

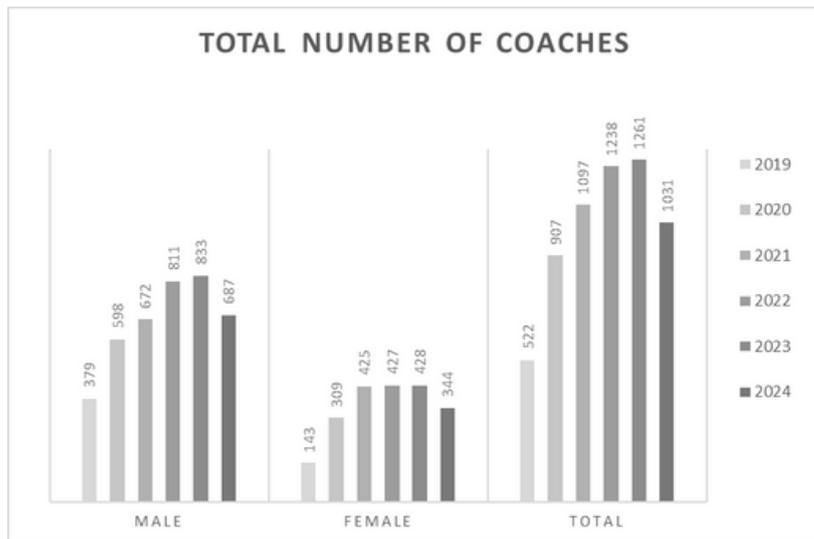
There were 298 Level 1 qualified coaches, 158 Level 2 qualified coaches and 66 Level 3 or above qualified coaches in 2019. This has increased over the last 5 years to 394, 208 and 99, respectively, in 2024.

£104,992.48

SPENT BY THE SPORTS LIAISON COMMITTEE THROUGH THE SUPPORT FOR SPORT PROGRAMME OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS TO IMPROVE COACHING, OFFICIATING AND VOLUNTEERING

Isle of Man Sport, via the Sports Liaison Committee and the Support for Sport funding programme, have directly contributed to these increases by provided funding towards recognised National and International Governing Body coaching and officiating qualifications for 688 individuals across 27 sports, in addition to other equipment, CPD, training and development opportunities for coaches, officials and volunteers over the last 5 years

COACHING: OVERVIEW



The total number of coaches involved in sport has shown consistent increases up to 2023 and there has been a drop off in the last 12 months across the majority of levels. Overall, there is still a 98% increase in the total number of active coaches since 2019.



It's important to note that the initial Review in 2019 didn't include unqualified coaches/helpers, so it is perhaps wise to consider the change in qualified coaches only (rather than all coaches) from 2019-2024 which shows a 34% increase during this time, equating to 179 more qualified coaches in 2024 than 2019:

- 96 more Level 1 qualified coaches (32% increase)
- 50 more Level 2 qualified coaches (32% increase)
- 33 more Level 3 or above qualified coaches (50% increase)

Looking at unqualified coaches in isolation, this has increased by 90% with 156 more unqualified coaches in 2024 than in 2020.

As expected, there are fewer higher qualified coaches on the Island due to the significant amount of time, money and off-Island travel required to achieve these qualifications and it is important to note that due to these factors, it will take time to grow the number of coaches on the Island that are qualified at the highest levels possible.

The gender split shows the significant divide in the number of female and male coaches, mirrored in participation levels; however, there has been greater growth in the number of female coaches during the last 5 years, with an increase of 141% versus an 81% growth in the number of male coaches. The recent drop in coaches in the last year was evenly split across both genders.

During this time, Isle of Man Sport (through the Sports Liaison Committee) have directly contributed to this increase by investing £77,551.52 through the Support for Sport programme specifically towards maintaining and upskilling coaches with recognised Governing Body qualifications and CPD at all qualification levels. This funding has benefitted 494 coaches across 25 different sports in the last 5 years,

OFFICIATING: OVERVIEW

There has been a relatively steady increase in the number of officials across all sports from 2019 to 2024, which has now stabilised. The large increase in the last 12 months, is due to a change in reporting in one particular sport who reported an additional 600 unqualified officials in 2024. Accounting for this change would show 902 officials in 2024, another small increase on the previous year and showing the level of officials has generally increased and stabilised over the last 6 years.

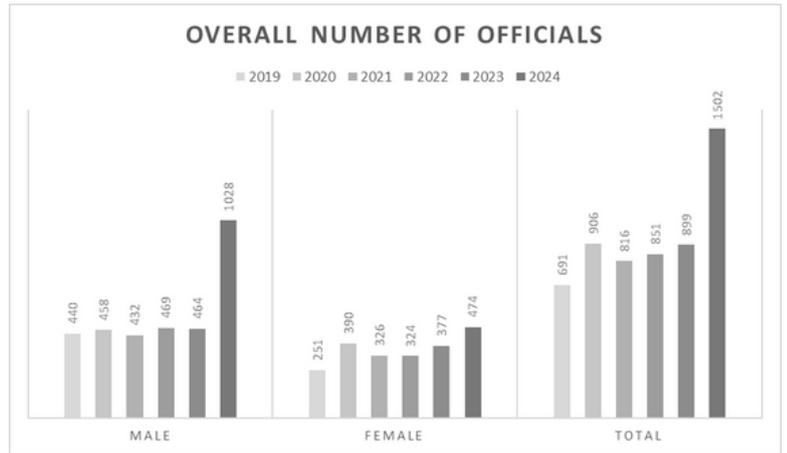
More importantly, when looking at the number of qualified officials only, this has increased by 32% since 2020 when this data started to be collected, with 419 qualified officials in 2024, in comparison to 318 in 2020.

The number of male officials has remained very stable over this period (excluding the large increase in 2024 due to the change in reporting from one sport), whilst female officiating has climbed 89% over the last 5 years.

The data collected in 2019 only included a male and female split, not the split of officials at different qualification levels, so there is currently only five years worth of data for comparison of the number of officials at each level. Having said that, the largest weighting is towards unqualified and Level 1 which is to be expected and the general trend over the last 4 years points towards more officials progressing through to a higher level of qualification, with levels of unqualified officials reducing and numbers of qualified Level 1, 2, 3 or higher officials increasing significantly over the last 4 years. For example, there has been:

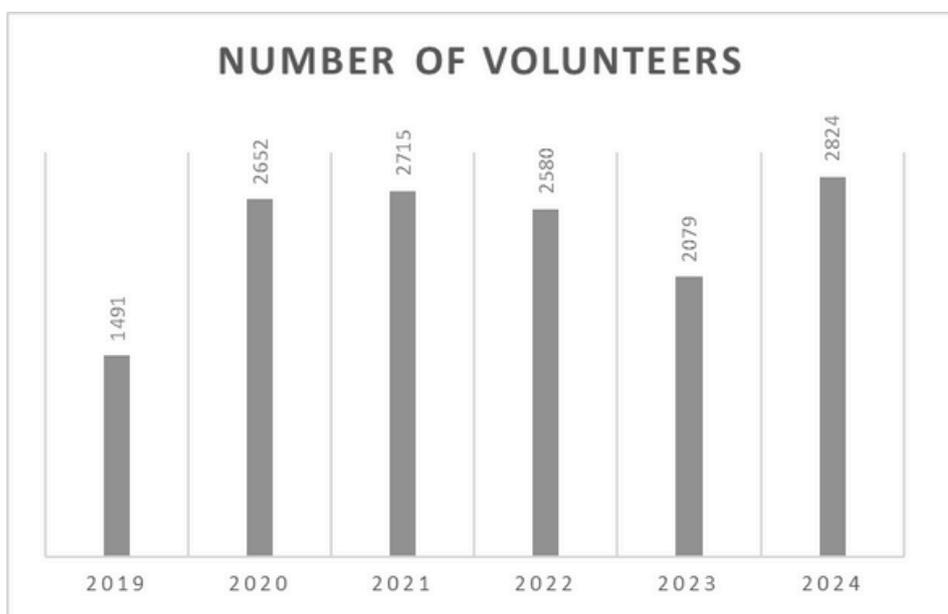
- an 11% decrease in Level 1 qualified officials (equivalent to a decrease of 32 individuals, although accounting for the below increases at Level 2 and 3 or above, there will have been an actual increase of 101 Level 1 qualified individuals over this time period (a 34% increase))
- a 422% increase in Level 2 qualified officials (equivalent to an increase of 76 individuals) and
- a 2850% increase in Level 3+ officials (equivalent to 57 new individuals qualified at this level or above)

Since 2020, Isle of Man Sport have invested £24,564.86 through the Support for Sport programme specifically towards supporting 194 officials to achieve and maintain recognised International or National Governing Body officiating qualifications, helping to improve the standard of officiating on the Island and contributing to the increases at all levels shown above.

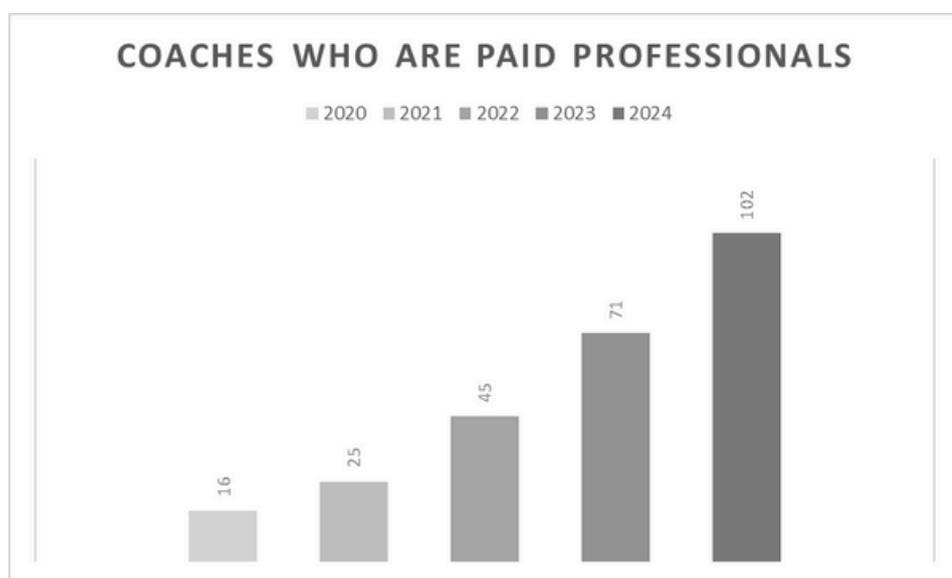


VOLUNTEERING: OVERVIEW

The number of volunteers involved in sport across the Island, be that within clubs or Governing Bodies is substantial. There was a 78% increase in the number of volunteers between 2019 and 2020 and this looks to have stabilised somewhat since the pandemic, albeit with a 19% drop between 2022 and 2023, which recovered in 2024. Whilst there are a large number of volunteers in sport, there are currently 209 sports clubs and 29 recognised Governing Bodies of Sport that are required to be supported across the Island, meaning there is currently an average of 12 volunteers (excluding volunteer coaches and officials who are captured separately) that are supporting the running of each of these organisations.



Many sports have raised concerns regarding volunteer recruitment and retention. What the data doesn't capture is the age profile and length of involvement in the sport of many of these volunteers which, from anecdotal and subjective feedback, is often significant with many sports struggling to find new volunteers for succession planning. There has recently started to be a small sea change in this area with some new volunteers stepping forward to be involved in a few sports, which contributes to an ongoing change and education cycle.



Another important trend that has emerged is the continued rise of paying coaches, demonstrated by the exponential increase since 2020 when just 16 coaches were paid within a sporting capacity. This has grown to 102 in 2024 and highlights a shift in expectations and across sports towards more paid work for coaches.



GOVERNANCE: OVERVIEW

90%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF WELFARE OFFICERS

There were 114 welfare officers across sports clubs and Governing Bodies in 2019 which has increased to 217 in 2024.

67%

MORE VOLUNTEERS THAT ARE SAFEGUARDING TRAINED

632 volunteers had completed safeguarding training in 2020 and this now stands at 1,056 volunteers in 2024.

18%

MORE VOLUNTEERS THAT ARE FIRST AID QUALIFIED

752 volunteers were First Aid qualified in 2020 and following a fall in 2021, this has now increased to 887 in 2024.

5%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS THAT HAVE A DBS

Preliminary data shows an overall increase in the number of volunteers with a DBS from 1,088 in 2021 to 1,139 in 2024.

£32,825.08

TOTAL SPORTS LIAISON SPEND ON GOVERNANCE OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS THROUGH THE SUPPORT FOR SPORT FUNDING PROGRAMME AND COACH EDUCATION PROGRAMME FUNDING

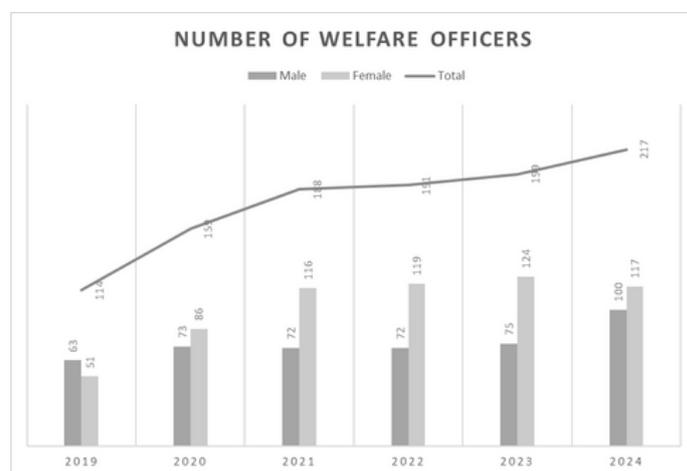
Isle of Man Sport (via the Sports Liaison Committee) have provided funding for 197 individuals to complete First Aid training, 217 individuals to complete Safeguarding courses, DBS checks for 598 people and Welfare Officer training for 13 individuals over the last 5 years. This is in addition to other governance-related funding in areas such as software, website development, education, health and safety and specific equipment.

GOVERNANCE: SAFEGUARDING, FIRST AID, DBS AND WELFARE OFFICERS

There has been a steady increase in the number of welfare officers across all sports clubs and Governing Bodies in the last six years, with the number of female individuals holding a welfare officer position more than doubling during this time. Given there are currently 29 recognised Governing Bodies of Sport reporting a total of 209 active clubs between them, it would be expected that there would be a minimum of 238 welfare officers (one per organisation); however, there may be a reasonable explanation as a result of a few sports who have categorised teams as 'clubs' (namely, squash and table tennis).

Factoring in the latter information, the actual number of fully constituted clubs and Governing Bodies of Sport on the Island is more likely to be in the region of 180 and over the last 5 years, sports have been encouraged to ensure they have a minimum of one appropriately qualified welfare officer in place (ideally two and different genders where possible) along with clear reporting lines for safeguarding concerns. During this time, we have seen a 90% increase in the number of welfare officers across our recognised sports and the gender split has returned closer to even over the last 12 months.

There has also been a significant increase in the number of volunteers holding safeguarding qualifications over the last five to six years and a steady increase in the number of individuals that are first aid qualified or have a DBS check. These increases align with the growth in the number of officials and coaches involved in sport over the same time period. As at 2024, there was a total of 2,533 officials and coaches (1,120 of whom were qualified) and not all coaches and officials will require all of the above qualifications to fulfil their roles. It should be noted that there are many variables which may affect this data, including the availability of relevant courses and changing volunteer roles where certain qualifications may not be a requirement. The former was a particular influence on the data due to the delivery of First Aid courses being significantly affected through the Covid period with many individuals qualifications lapsing in 2021 following the expiry of the typical 2-3 year validity period. Over the last 12 months, there have been decreases in both the number of individuals that have attended a safeguarding course as well as those holding a DBS check and this is worth monitoring over the coming year but is expected to align with the drop in active coaches in the last 12 months as well.



SPORTS-SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

OVER £360K

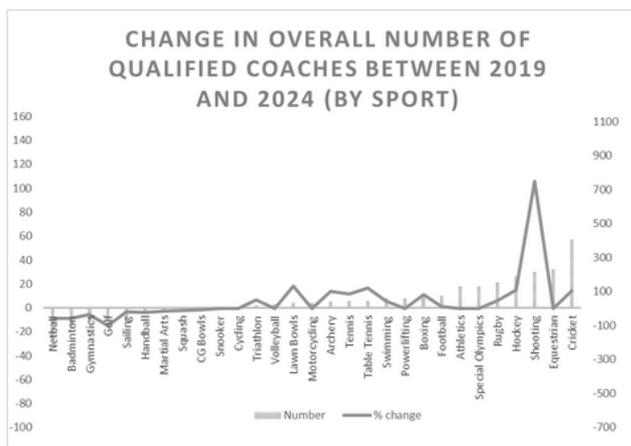
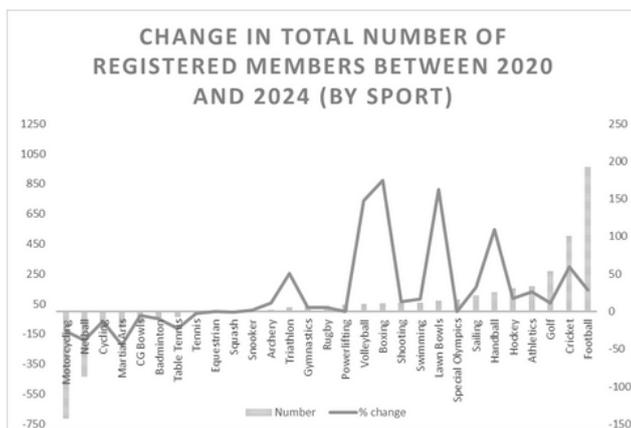
SPENT ON SPORTS-SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER GRANTS FOR 9 SPORTS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS

Isle of Man Sport (via the Sports Liaison Committee) have provided £361,486.69 in match-funded Sports-Specific Development Officer grants over the last 5 years. This has supported the appointment of paid Development Officers for 9 sports, including Athletics, Cricket, Cycling, Football, Hockey, Netball, Rugby, Swimming and Tennis.

Sports-Specific Development Officer grants are a match-funded scheme in partnership with recognised Governing Bodies of Sport, where Isle of Man Sport contribute a 50% grant towards salary costs, up to a maximum of £15,000 per annum for a full-time role.

Isle of Man Sport's Priorities and Objectives are included within all Sports-Specific Development Officer job descriptions and these are reported on quarterly to Isle of Man Sport. Currently, there are 5 Development Officers in the following sports: Athletics, Cricket, Football, Netball and Rugby.

It is difficult to measure the success of Development Officer grant funding; however, the graphs above to the right show the change in overall registered members and overall number of coaches between 2019/2020 and 2024 by sport, which helps to provide one possible measure of success and monitoring for Development Officers, albeit acknowledging that there will be many factors outside of their control. Having said this, the above graphs show that 4 of the top 5 sports with the highest increase in registered members over the last 5 years are sports that have had Development Officers during this time. Similarly, 5 of the top 10 sports with the highest increases in qualified coaches during this time are also sports that have had Development Officers and a further 2 sports that have had Development Officers during this period sit just outside the top 10 on the actual increase in numbers but have 42% and 86% increases in qualified coaches within their sport (among the highest across all sports). It's important to remember that correlation doesn't equal causation but this data can provide a guide and benchmark to monitor as one possible measure of success for Sports-Specific Development Officer grant funding, alongside other qualitative measures.



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