



STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028

Approved by the Board of Directors on February 26, 2024

Funded by the
Government
of Canada

Canada

Preface by the Chairperson of the Board

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (the “Centre”), I am proud to present this strategic plan that outlines our goals, objectives and priorities through to 2028.

This plan was prepared with invaluable input from Canadian sport stakeholders and clients, including athletes, coaches, officials and administrators. They are the reason for the Centre’s existence and they must contribute to defining its purpose, what services are needed and what standards must be met. The Centre is committed to taking its sport dispute resolution mandate to the next level, leveraging new opportunities and expanding its sphere of influence for a fairer and healthier sport system from grassroots to international.

On December 11, 2023, the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity announced her intention to remove Abuse-Free Sport from the Centre. Given that the strategic planning process was well underway and that, as of this plan’s publication, there remains a great deal of uncertainty on all aspects of this future move, the Board has resolved to present a strategic plan that does not take into account the eventual transition. The leadership of the transitioned program will be welcome to adopt, borrow from or vary the proposed plan as it deems relevant. The Centre will continue to deliver and improve the Abuse-Free Sport program until then and fully cooperate with the transition.

My fellow Board members deserve a special thanks for their unwavering commitment to the betterment of the Centre. They have been engaged in shaping today’s Centre by enacting the vision of their predecessors, and each of them has meaningfully contributed to the principles and priorities identified in this plan. They wholeheartedly endorse it in support of the growth and constant improvement of the Centre.

In addition, one cannot underestimate the amount of volunteer hours invested by the five members of the Maltreatment in Sport Sanctions Council in establishing sound policies for the function of the Director of Sanctions and Outcomes. Beyond the call of duty, they have been allies to the Centre’s Board and Chief Executive Officer in laying the foundations of the Abuse-Free Sport program and we cannot thank them enough.

The timing of this strategic plan aligns with the 20th anniversary of the Centre and is a testament to the need for and appreciation of its services. For this, we must recognize the dedication and professionalism of the Centre’s employees, who we know routinely go above and beyond to offer best-in-class client services.

As Chairperson, I am inspired and motivated by the collaboration and devotion of the Centre’s Board, employees and other volunteers, along with that of the Canadian sport community, as we continue to work together in prioritizing a safe, respectful, fair and welcoming place for all in sport.

Brad Kielmann
Chairperson

About the Centre

The Centre was established to offer the Canadian sport community the necessary tools to prevent conflicts and, when they are inevitable, to resolve them. Following extensive consultations in the sport community and collaboration between several key sport organizations in Canada, the interim predecessor of the Centre, the ADRsportRED Program, was launched in January 2002 to offer dispute resolution services to the sport community at the national level.

When the Physical Activity and Sport Act received Royal Assent in March 2003, the Centre was officially established as an independent organization. It has for mission to provide to the sport community a national alternative dispute resolution (ADR) service for sports-related disputes, as well as expertise and assistance regarding ADR. The Centre officially began its operations in April 2004 and it assumed responsibility for hearing all doping cases in Canada starting in June 2004. Over the last decade, its Dispute Resolution Secretariat has handled an average of 70 cases per year, of which about one third are doping-related cases. In addition to the activities of the Secretariat, the Resource Centre provides members of the Canadian sport community with tools and education to help prevent and reduce the occurrence or severity of sports related disputes.

On July 6, 2021, the Government of Canada also mandated the Centre to deliver an independent safe sport mechanism to oversee the implementation of the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (the “UCCMS”) for federally-funded sport organizations. The Centre launched the Abuse-Free Sport program on June 20, 2022. After 18 months of operations, in addition to the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (the “OSIC”), the Director of Sanctions and Outcomes, and the Safeguarding Tribunal, the program also includes various prevention, education and support services, including mental health and legal aid programs, research grants, policy support, and a popular webinar series.

We respectfully acknowledge that the Centre’s office is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Kanien’keha:ka (Mohawk) people. The Centre is committed to continuing its understanding of and respect for the presence, values, teachings, and the immense contribution by the Indigenous peoples to shaping what is now called *Canada*.

An Engaging Strategic Planning Process

The Centre's strategic planning process included the engagement and participation of its employees, its Board of Directors, as well as the Centre's external stakeholders. The firm LBB Strategies was retained to lead the engagement process with all stakeholders and assist in the development of this new strategic plan.

The process followed to develop this plan consisted of four phases:

- Phase 1:** Documentary review of the Centre's plans and documents - Summer 2023
- Phase 2:** Employee and board strategic retreats - Summer/Fall 2023
- Phase 3:** Consultation of athletes at the AthletesCAN Forum and through athlete committees, and of national sport organizations and multisport services organizations at the Centre's annual public meeting and through a national survey - Fall 2023
- Phase 4:** Drafting and approval of strategic plan - Winter 2024

Acknowledgements

In addition to the groups named above, the Centre wishes to thank the Maltreatment in Sport Sanctions Council, the Director of Sanctions and Outcomes and Deputy Director of Sanctions and Outcomes and all individuals who participated in the various consultations, whether as part of focus groups or through surveys. The Centre exists to serve the sport community and its members' input into this strategic plan is paramount to make it relevant.

The Centre also wishes to express its gratitude to Sport Canada for its continued financial support.

Our Strategic Foundation

OUR VISION

The Centre constantly pursues the following ideal state:

“A culture of fairness, integrity and respect is embraced in Canadian sport and beyond.”

OUR MISSION

In accordance with Section 10 of the Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport, which created the Centre, and to respond to the needs of sport community, our mission is:

“To provide to the sport community a) a national alternative dispute resolution service for sport disputes; and b) expertise and assistance regarding alternative dispute resolution.”

OUR VALUES

These foundational values guide and inspire our actions and decisions.

- **Collaboration** - We actively foster collaboration within and outside our organization to leverage diverse perspectives and achieve collective goals.
- **Integrity** - We constantly strive to earn our clients' and partners' trust through transparency, competence and high standards of ethical conduct.
- **Fairness** - We are independent, impartial and respectful of all parties so our clients and partners can count on us to be fair.
- **Excellence** - We achieve our mission by being efficient, accessible, professional and compassionate.
- **Human Rights** - People are at the centre of what we do. As such we are committed to upholding and promoting human rights, ensuring that our actions and decisions contribute to a just and equitable society.

2024-2028 Strategic Priorities

To truly pursue our vision and fulfil our mission, we will focus on three strategic priorities for 2024-2028:

- 1. Strategic Priority 1: Offering Meaningful Dispute Resolution Services**

Deploy best-in-class dispute resolution services addressing current and evolving sports-related disputes.

- 2. Strategic Priority 2: Building a Safer and Fairer Sport System**

Foster fairness, safety, equity, and inclusion by enhancing the capacity of sport organizations and their people by promoting ethically-driven behaviours in Canadian sport.

- 3. Strategic Priority 3: Ensuring Organizational Excellence and Sustainability**

Strengthen the capacity of the Centre to ensure organizational agility and sustainability, and the delivery of value-added services.

Overview of Strategic Priorities and Success Outcomes by 2028

<p>Strategic Priorities</p>	<p>Strategic Priority 1: Offering Meaningful Dispute Resolution Services</p> <p>Deploy best-in-class dispute resolution services addressing current and evolving sports-related disputes.</p>	<p>Strategic Priority 2: Building a Safer and Fairer Sport System</p> <p>Foster fairness, safety, equity, and inclusion by enhancing the capacity of sport organizations and their members, and promoting ethically-driven behaviours in Canadian sport.</p>	<p>Strategic Priority 3: Ensuring Organizational Excellence and Sustainability</p> <p>Strengthen the capacity of the Centre to ensure organizational agility and sustainability, and the delivery of value-added services.</p>
<p>Success Outcomes by 2028</p>	<p>1.1 Leading-edge ADR Services</p> <p>1.2 Specialization of Arbitrators and Mediators</p> <p>1.3 Experts in Sports and ADR</p> <p>1.4 Market Expansion</p>	<p>2.1 Impactful Education</p> <p>2.2 Engaged Stakeholders</p> <p>2.3 Advocacy and Leadership</p> <p>2.4 Safe Sport</p> <p>2.5 Anti-doping and Competition Manipulation</p> <p>2.6 Human Rights and Ethical Issues</p>	<p>3.1 Effective Management and Operational Systems</p> <p>3.2 People First</p> <p>3.3 Good Governance</p> <p>3.4 Financial Sustainability</p> <p>3.5 Communications and Marketing</p>

Strategic Priority 1: Offering Meaningful Dispute Resolution Services

Deploy best-in-class dispute resolution services addressing current and evolving sports-related disputes.

Desired Success Outcomes by 2028 <i>Defining Success</i>	Enabling Strategies <i>Making Success Happen</i>
<p>1.1 - Leading-edge ADR Services As we constantly improve our ADR services and programs, sport leaders and users perceive our services as people-centred, adapted to sport, expert driven, professional, effective and timely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to modernize and streamline our ADR services and develop our internal expertise in sports law, dispute resolution and case management.
<p>1.2 - Specialization of Arbitrators and Mediators Our arbitrators and mediators continually strengthen their expertise in safe sport, anti-doping, competition manipulation, selection, governance, human rights and emerging sport law issues, as well as their ADR knowledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and partner with other organizations to offer a continuing educational program for our arbitrators and mediators, including mandatory education.
<p>1.3 - Experts in Sport and ADR We are known nationally and internationally for our expertise in ADR and sports law, and for conducting research and studies in this field.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and launch a research and study program on ADR in sport. Develop and deploy leadership and advocacy initiatives at the national and international levels.
<p>1.4 - Market Expansion We expand our market and offer our ADR services in new sport markets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform a market study and assess sport organizations' needs for ADR services. Develop customized services for new targeted sport markets and organizations.

Strategic Priority 2: Building a Safer and Fairer Sport System

Foster fairness, safety, equity and inclusion by enhancing the capacity of sport organizations and their members, and promoting ethically-driven behaviours in Canadian sport.

Desired Success Outcomes by 2028 Defining Success	Enabling Strategies Making Success Happen
<p>2.1 - Impactful Education Our prevention and education initiatives and tools addressing the key sport law issues are practical, adapted to the reality of sport and highly appreciated and used.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perform an assessment of sport organizations' education and prevention needs. ▪ Partner with other organizations to develop tailored educational initiatives and tools.
<p>2.2 - Engaged Stakeholders We encourage and inspire Canadian N/MSOs and other sport organizations to be truly engaged in preventing and mitigating sports-related disputes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead a Canadian sport stakeholders' engagement strategy.
<p>2.3 - Advocacy and Leadership We are a key influencer and advocate to advance a culture of fairness in Canada and abroad.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and execute an advocacy strategy.
<p>2.4 - Safe Sport International and Canadian sport stakeholders highly regard Abuse-Free Sport as a best-in-class program and find it professionally managed, people-centred, impactful, effective and progressive. The Centre's dispute resolution services as they pertain to Abuse-Free Sport (Safeguarding and Appeal Tribunals, mediation services) are recognized by sport stakeholders as expert-driven, effective and timely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perform ongoing quality control and review of Abuse-Free Sport and Centre's related services to identify enhancement and modernization opportunities. ▪ Partner with other safeguarding organizations to share best practices. ▪ Deploy a national marketing campaign promoting Abuse-Free Sport. ▪ Collaborate with other organizations to develop a Canadian safe sport strategy. ▪ Ensure our neutrals are well trained in UCCMS-related issues.
<p>2.5 - Anti-Doping and Competition Manipulation International and Canadian sport stakeholders highly regard the Centre as an expert in resolving anti-doping and competition manipulation issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner with other organizations to develop our expertise in anti-doping and competition manipulation and prevent the occurrence of these behaviours in sport.
<p>2.6 - Human Rights and Ethical Issues International and Canadian sport stakeholders highly regard the Centre as an expert in resolving human rights issues in sport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner with other organizations to develop our expertise and protect human rights in sport.

Strategic Priority 3: Ensuring Organizational Excellence and Sustainability

Strengthen the capacity of the Centre to ensure organizational agility and sustainability, and the delivery of value-added services.

Desired Success Outcomes by 2028 Defining Success	Enabling Strategies Making Success Happen
<p>3.1 - Effective Management and Operational Systems</p> <p>We modernize and improve our management and operational policies, processes, and systems to ensure responsible innovation, operational effectiveness, and performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perform an organizational effectiveness review and develop an enhancement plan. ▪ Adopt relevant technologies and systems to support operational effectiveness, data protection and enhanced client experience.
<p>3.2 - People First</p> <p>We are one of the best workplaces in Canadian sport, attracting and retaining great talent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perform a review of our employment practices. ▪ Ensure employment conditions are attractive and competitive. ▪ Enhance cohesion and shared vision among staff and volunteers. ▪ Ensure that human rights objectives guide our decisions.
<p>3.3 - Good Governance</p> <p>We adopt, as applicable and in compliance with the Act, best governance practices and structures as recommended in the Canadian Sport Governance Code (CSGC).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perform a governance review to ensure the implementation of exemplary governance practices and to comply with the CSGC. ▪ Develop and deploy a continuing board education and training plan.
<p>3.4 - Financial Sustainability</p> <p>We enhance our financial capacity and sustainability by increasing our public funding, selling our services to new markets, and generating new sources of revenue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a revenue generation strategy. ▪ Explore and enter new sport markets to leverage our expertise in ADR services, education and training, and system design. ▪ Deploy a strategy to secure new sources of private and public revenues.
<p>3.5 - Communications and Marketing</p> <p>Our brand value improves because of our marketing efforts.</p> <p>We are perceived by our stakeholders as effective communicators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and deploy a marketing and communication strategy. ▪ Enhance our human and financial resources capacity in this area. ▪ Partner with other organizations to enhance our visibility.