



Strategic Plan 2020-2024

Statement of Intent

› Drug Free Sport New Zealand

Strategic Plan 2020-2024

Statement of Intent



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BOARD STATEMENT

The Board of Drug Free Sport New Zealand certifies that the information contained in this Strategic plan and Statement of Intent reflects the operations and strategic direction of DFSNZ for the period 2020-2024.

This document should be read with our Statements of Performance Expectations which will be developed for each of the years covered by this document. It is produced in accordance with section 141 of the Crown Entities Act 2004.

We authorise this Strategic Plan/ Statement of Intent on behalf of the DFSNZ Board.

Hon. J. Warwick Gendall QC, CNZM
Chairperson

Sarah Ulmer ONZM
Board Member





WHO WE ARE

Drug Free Sport New Zealand (DFSNZ) is the organisation responsible for keeping sport clean in New Zealand, and free from doping. We work across New Zealand's sporting community to protect clean athletes and promote clean sport.

DFSNZ is an Independent Crown Entity (ICE) under the Crown Entities Act 2004, and was established initially under the NZ Sports Drug Agency Act 1994 and continued under the Sports Anti-Doping Act 2006. DFSNZ is not responsible for the implementation of Government policy and while the Chair must report to the Minister, day-to-day operations of DFSNZ are conducted independently from Government.

As New Zealand's National Anti-Doping Organisation we are a signatory to the World Anti-Doping Code which provides a common set of rules, requirements and sanctions which all anti-doping organisations must apply.

DFSNZ's primary task is implementing the World Anti-Doping Code, which we do through the Sports Anti-Doping Rules. These are made after consultation with the Sports sector, promulgated annually by DFSNZ and adopted by National Sport Organisations (NSOs).

New Zealanders greatly value success with integrity, and our work contributes strongly to our expression of what it means to be a New Zealander.

Furthermore, our work in protecting the integrity of sport and the health of active kiwis complements Sport New Zealand's work and contributes directly to the government's objectives of improving wellbeing, and having safer, healthier and more connected communities.

We contribute to the wider cultural sector's priorities by directly supporting the success of kiwi athletes and national sporting organisations. Our success and the way we compete is a key part of our distinct and inclusive identity, and our history and traditions.



The challenges in our environment

The threat environment for doping in New Zealand has grown, continues to grow, and is an increasingly significant risk to sports integrity in this country. The more important factors contributing to this increasing threat include:

› Financial Rewards

Pressures on athletes, players and coaches involved in financially lucrative sports can be significant, striving to build and sustain high levels of performance and success to initially secure, and later maintain and prolong their careers and incomes.

› Pressure to succeed

At the highest levels of NZ sport, success and funding go hand in hand. When this is combined with an athlete's strong personal desire to perform at their best, and a weight of expectation of maintaining a tradition of success, there can be considerable pressure on NSOs, coaches and support personnel, and athletes.

› Pressure starts earlier

The availability of professional pipeline programmes such as academies and youth teams, events such as the Youth Olympics, and the now global reach of high-profile professional sports and franchises seeking new talent around the world, represent extraordinary opportunities on the one hand, and significant temptations on the other.

› Pressure continues longer

The growth in Masters-level events has provided extended opportunities in meaningful events for motivated and competitive athletes. As such, there are temptations to dope, motivated by a desire to counter age-related reduction in performance.

› Doping risk is not limited to high performance athletes

Doping in recreational sport has been increasing due to a desire to improve sporting outcomes and/or physical appearance, and a correlation with increased use of prohibited substances across the general population.

› Supplement use is normalised

A significant portion of the population consumes supplements: the market is booming at all levels, with elite athletes promoting supplement brands. Without sound support and advice, and in an industry with weak regulation and labelling requirements, the doping risk is inevitably increasing.

› Greater accessibility

Athletes no longer need to rely on specialist support personnel to source prohibited substances. Athletes of any level can do their own research, using specialist blogs and chat rooms, and anonymously order substances online from anywhere in the world.

Due to its covert nature, it is extremely difficult to accurately quantify the incidence of doping, domestically or internationally. There is widespread recognition that the statistics for positive doping tests significantly underrepresent the real scale of the problem. This is well demonstrated by the alarming and growing number of positive test results from retrospective tests of athlete samples from the 2008 Beijing and 2012 London Olympic Games.

While the detection of doping has become more sophisticated over time, such as through the introduction of the Athlete Biological Passport Programme, it has been met with an equal increase in the sophistication of techniques adopted by athletes and doping facilitators to evade detection. Further, there is emerging evidence of athletes exploring the modification of their own gene profile to improve performance.

At an aggregate level, there are risks of institutional sabotage of doping detection efforts, with Russia attracting substantial recent attention. However, it would be a considerable leap of faith to conclude that all the remaining countries of the world and sporting international federations are innocent of schemes with similar objectives.



What our stakeholders are telling us

We have reached out widely to gather views on anti-doping from our key stakeholders, particularly high-performance athletes, support personnel and our priority sports NSOs. We have considered the findings of the 2018 NZ Sports Integrity Review, discussed anti-doping risks and concerns with athletes and NSOs, and reviewed the results of our annual survey of high-performance athletes over recent years. There are clear themes which are consistent with the rising threat environment discussed above, including:

➤ **New Zealanders are clear that preserving the value and integrity of sport in New Zealand is important, to ensure that:**

- Our reputation for being corruption-free is preserved
- Corruption does not undermine the commercial viability and advancement of sport
- Public interest in participating in sport is maintained
- The credibility and authenticity of sport in the public's mind is preserved
- Fundamental features of sport such as fair play are maintained

➤ **Increased resources for education about doping risks and values is essential, so that more information can be imparted, to more athletes and support personnel, with a particular emphasis on younger and emerging athletes**

➤ **Increased resources to support intelligence gathering and analysis**

➤ **Increased testing to deter athletes from cheating, especially at the pre-elite level**

A clear message from our stakeholders, especially athletes, is that they are quite sceptical about the integrity of their competitions, particularly internationally, but also domestically.

The erosion of athlete confidence is hardly surprising, given the widespread credibility damage following from the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)/ Russian issues, and the stream of positive retrospective tests of samples collected at the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games. It is encouraging to note that athletes clearly believe the domestic scene is cleaner than their international experience, although the NZ Clenbuterol investigation has undoubtedly had an impact on confidence domestically. Across the board, the results are hardly cause for reassurance, and in all cases express substantially more negative sentiments than similar surveys DFSNZ undertook as recently as four or five years ago.

The surveyed athletes are New Zealand's elite competitors, rubbing shoulders with the best in the world at events around the globe. Their unequivocal message is that they want us to do more.



How we are
positioned to
respond

We believe we have built high quality capability across our portfolio of responsibilities which have served us well to date. Notable in this context are our education programmes aimed at youths and delivered within schools by a team of educators who are all current or former world class athletes.

We have evolved the sophistication of our testing programme, with greater use of science, analysis, and modelling to inform our programme with an emphasis on high-quality out-of-competition testing to enhance deterrence and detection. Further, in the last few years we have developed our intelligence gathering capabilities and investigation experience.

We believe these foundations position us very well for future challenges. Building on these, three key themes are shaping our strategic directions, and those of the anti-doping community to this enhanced threat environment:

> Education as the first step to prevention

Prevention is the first and most important line of defence against doping in sport and is achieved through effective engagement with participants, deterrence through effective and visible detection and enforcement and, critically, effective anti-doping education. WADA has put ever-increasing focus on education by national anti-doping organisations, championing values-based education of our youths, through to required advice for elite athletes. Globally there are ever-increasing initiatives to develop a wider range of education, with consistent themes, accessible anywhere anytime, and appropriate for different levels and ages of athletes.

> On-going evolution of testing

The anti-doping community will continue to invest in new testing techniques as new threats emerge, to both deter and detect instances of doping. In particular, when techniques to evade detection are discovered, this can lead to retrospective testing using advancing analytical capability. Laboratory analysis is becoming increasingly sophisticated and sensitive, allowing detection of substances in very low concentrations.

> Intelligence and investigation, including whistle -blowing

While lab-based detection remains a critical tool in the arsenal of anti-doping agencies, these will most often trail doping methods, and so will remain reactive. Increasingly, anti-doping agencies are developing fresh and innovative approaches including intelligence and investigation capability, to support the deterrent effect of testing, enable more targeted testing, and more importantly to subvert supply chains of prohibited substances.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2020-2024

In light of this, we realigned our strategic direction and have taken a fresh look at priorities.

Our strategic plan places kiwi athletes at the very heart of our initiatives and our work. Our focus must be helping our clean athletes compete on a level playing field.

Our vision

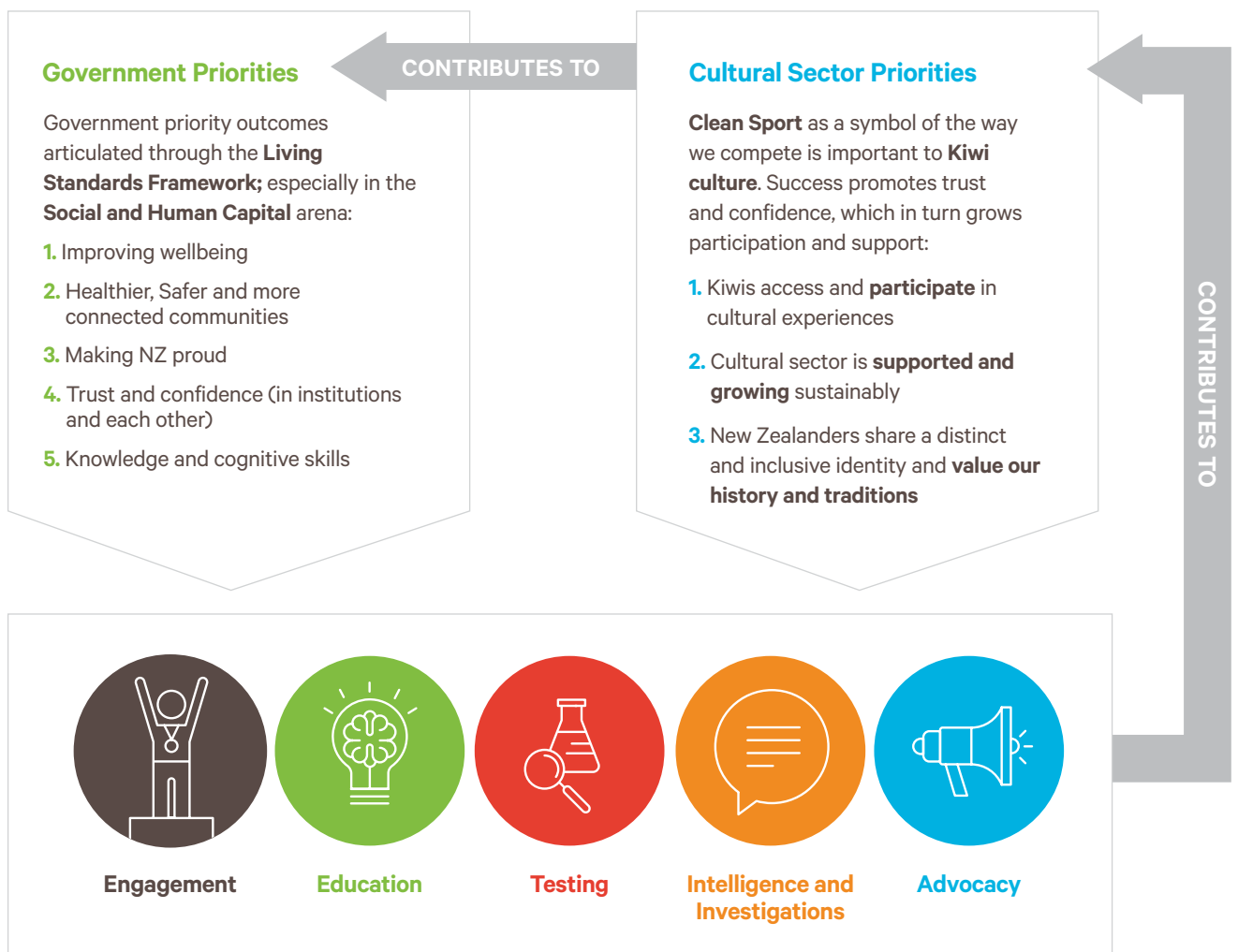
Clean athletes, clean sport

It is underpinned by our mission:

To help protect the integrity and reputation of sport, and the health of athletes, by:

- > educating, supporting and advocating for clean athletes;
- > deterring and detecting doping, holding dopers to account; and
- > engaging with our wider sporting communities.

We have built our strategic programme based on five new strategic focus areas, centred around the athletes. The five areas reinforce each other to build athlete trust and confidence in our work and together advance all aspects of our mission:





Our vision

Clean athletes. Clean sport.

Our mission

To help protect the integrity and reputation of sport, and the health of athletes by:

- › Educating, supporting and advocating for clean athletes;
- › Deterring and detecting doping, holding dopers to account; and
- › Engaging with our wider sporting communities.

Engagement

We will build relationships and engage with athletes so that they are leaders in a culture of clean sport in NZ

We will build strong partnerships with our priority stakeholders so they understand their doping risk, and actively want our support to protect their sport

Testing

Every national representative believes they might be tested at any time

Athletes have full confidence in the quality and integrity of our user-friendly, focussed testing programme and personnel in NZ



Education

We will engage with every athlete in the country, providing them with the information they need to support clean sport

Our education programme and team will be recognised internationally as amongst best-in-class

Intelligence and Investigations

We will develop a culture in sport where athletes and stakeholders are confident to raise concerns about doping and “Speaking Out” is normalised

We will disrupt the supply chain and protect athletes at risk of doping



Advocacy

We will serve clean kiwi athletes by relentlessly advocating for high and consistently applied standards in anti-doping world-wide



Our team values

Enjoy, Dream, Share, Support, Value and Be Valued, Walk-the-Talk



Supporting clean athletes and achieving clean sport



Engagement

Why is this important?

In a country with a strong tradition of integrity, our primary role is to prevent doping in sport from occurring. We strive to support our many clean athletes to help them continue to compete clean and against clean competitors.

Engagement with our ultimate customers – the athletes – is fundamental to what we do. They must be at the centre of our work given every decision and action affects an athlete somewhere.

We want athletes to become leaders in a culture of clean sport in NZ. We support athletes to set and maintain a benchmark culture of high integrity from this generation to the next.

To be most effective we must work across the whole sport sector and its systems. Hence our drive for engagement extends to those that work closely with the athletes, typically being the national sporting organisations and pinnacle¹ sporting bodies.

As a small agency our impact and outcomes will be maximised if we can collaborate with, and leverage resources of, other organisations that also want good clean competition and sports that are robust and strong.

How do we plan to assess performance?

We will recognise success by the growth in number of athletes publicly speaking up and supporting clean sport. We will also continue to survey athletes and stakeholders, annually or throughout the year, to assess their trust and confidence in DFSNZ.



Education

Why is this important?

Building on strong engagement and recognising the importance of education in the environment outlined previously, supporting clean athletes through education, equipping them with knowledge of their rights and responsibilities and how to avoid pitfalls and issues, is clearly an area of utmost importance for us. We regard this as a transgenerational strategy.

We have had success historically in educating our high-performance athletes, and more recently in delivering values-based education for our younger and emerging athletes, providing them with important tools to make good choices in maintaining the integrity of sport. Now we want to expand that so that we are providing information and education that is relevant to all athletes whatever their age or level. As well as protecting clean sport more widely, it will also protect the health of all kiwi athletes.

At the same time, we will continue to educate our high-performance athletes and want our content and delivery to be among the very best in the world.

How do we plan to assess performance?

We will recognise DFSNZ success by showing a long-term acceleration in the number of athletes educated across the time period and also showing that our coverage is wider across the number of sports and the range of target audiences in each sport (e.g. age, capability).

Feedback from the athletes themselves and our international peers will be strong. WADA will recognise us as education experts, seeking input on its programmes.

¹ Sport New Zealand, High Performance Sport NZ, NZ Olympic Committee and Paralympics NZ



Testing

Why is this important?

Testing has been the bedrock of anti-doping for a long time and will continue to be so. It remains our main method of detection and more importantly is a significant factor in the deterrence of doping. We will work with international peers in the development and use of new testing techniques.

To maintain our clean sport culture, we need to continue to operate a testing programme of the highest standards and moreover we need athletes to **believe** that our testing programme is effective and of high quality.

Our testing programme has historically prioritised emerging and high-performance athletes from a relatively small number of higher risk sports. As well as this, we now want to increase the deterrence factor of our work, bringing an increased “shadow” to our testing programme where all national level athletes believe they might be tested.

It is this belief that will deter a tempted athlete from making a poor decision through the fear that they will be caught, no matter what their sport or where they are based.

The continued respect of our high-quality testing programme is a fundamental pillar to our success. As a result, it must remain as a strategic priority.

How do we plan to assess performance?

We will recognise DFSNZ success in providing a quality testing programme across national level athletes, through our annual survey of athletes, showing ongoing strongly positive feedback on their experiences with DFSNZ staff and contractors, and our processes.



Investigations and Intelligence

Why is this important?

Testing as a means of detection has been shown over time to have limited success, but the increasing role intelligence and investigating plays in detecting doping has identified some of the biggest doping cases recently.

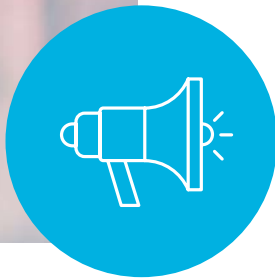
Clean athletes are part of the solution to doping in sport, as they often know if a competitor performs extraordinarily or if they see something in a changing room. We want them to feel empowered and safe to bring concerns to us, for us to consider and, if appropriate, to investigate.

But at the same time what is seen in the changing room may be indicative of a greater problem. Athletes also rarely enter sport with a plan to dope, and where we find evidence of deliberate doping we will endeavour to understand their path to doping and how and where they accessed the substances. This should lead to action from us or other agencies to address the supply of prohibited substances in New Zealand, rather than just sanctioning the athlete themselves.

How do we plan to assess performance?

We will recognise DFSNZ success through feedback from the New Zealand Police, NZ Customs Service and the Ministry of Health/ Medsafe of strong relationships with DFSNZ and collaboration on areas of mutual interest. Where appropriate we will also be involved in enforcement action to address suppliers of prohibited substances.

Our annual survey of athlete will reflect growing trust and confidence in our Speak Out programme as we receive more information from the sporting community.



Advocacy

Why is this important?

We hold our athletes to high standards and levels of integrity: standards that define us as kiwis. With these athletes at the heart of our work, we must then represent the interests of these athletes nationally and internationally in relation to anti-doping. We owe it to NZ athletes to demand accountability from other countries that kiwis are competing against, so that everyone is held to the same standard.

How do we plan to assess performance?

We will be actively involved on international boards and advisory committees and seen internationally as leaders in this area bringing a strong fiercely independent voice to international debate. Our survey of athletes will show that they are aware of the work we are doing.

We will recognise DFSNZ success through a summary of our contributions to boards and advisory committees internationally and from feedback from stakeholders that we are seen internationally as leaders in bringing a strong fiercely independent voice to international debate.



Organisational health and capability

The Sports Anti-Doping Act 2006 (and before it the New Zealand Sports Drug Agency Act 1994) constituted DFSNZ as an Independent Crown Entity, subject to the Crown Entities Act, and established the overarching parameters for our organisation, purpose and work. Our monitoring agency is the Ministry of Culture and Heritage.

Organisation

The Sports Anti-Doping Act 2006 (and before it the New Zealand Sports Drug Agency Act 1994) constituted DFSNZ as an Independent Crown Entity, subject to the Crown Entities Act, and established the overarching parameters for our organisation, purpose and work. Our monitoring agency is the Ministry of Culture and Heritage.

We are governed by an independent Board which must comprise no more than five members, with membership required to include knowledge and experience in law, sports medicine, and sports participation and administration. The Board is committed to carrying out its business with integrity and transparency, overseeing careful stewardship of public funds.

It is envisaged that this foundation will endure throughout the period of this Strategic Plan.

People

Our people are the key to the successful pursuit of the strategies in this Strategic Plan. In 2020, DFSNZ had a team of 14, two of whom are part-time, based in Auckland. Through this centralised team we work closely with contractors across New Zealand who perform the majority of our front-line work, being education and sample collection.

We are committed to providing a safe working environment for our team and contractors. Our policies and practices promote an environment which is free from bullying and harassment. We provide awareness, training and support to maintain a work environment which is safe for our people and contractors, and the athletes and support personnel who we work with.

We are committed to being a good and equal opportunity employer. We seek opportunities to provide the right environment, tools, support and leadership to enable our people to do their jobs effectively and grow our capability as an organisation. We are continuing to build a work environment that ensures all our people feel this is a good place to work, their voices are heard, they are respected, and their development aspirations are embraced. This includes promoting, growing and supporting our cultural capability, both within the organisation and when interacting with others. In particular, and in line with the Government's priority to support the Maihi Karauna, the introduction of te reo Māori within our operations and increased use within our team is a priority.

Technology

In recent years we have increased our investment in technology driving for improved quality, accuracy and efficiency for our education and testing services.

We have worked in collaboration with other National Anti-Doping Organisations to leverage advantages, both financial and functional, through identification of mutual objectives and co-operation over allocation of resources and prioritisation of requirements.

By continuing to jointly invest in these strategic technology assets, we will ensure our services continue to be supported by state-of-the-art systems that enable us to comfortably comply with World Anti-Doping Agency quality requirements. These systems advances are also expected to open opportunities in support of our strategic priorities.

Elite athletes subject themselves to the requirements of the world anti-doping regime to further the aspiration for clean sport around the world. In the process they accept that a significant amount of their personal information will be held on our systems. We have a critical responsibility to maintain the trust and confidence of athletes, and other stakeholders, by doing our utmost to protect the security and confidentiality of that information.

The turbulence in the international anti-doping world in recent years has seen a commensurate increase in the number and sophistication of attempts to penetrate and subvert the information databases held by national anti-doping organisations. A priority for us is to collaborate with our IT service providers and expert resources on security within New Zealand to achieve levels of security which ensure that attempts to breach our information security defences are unsuccessful.

Funding

DFSNZ receives the great majority of its funding through Government Appropriations through Vote Sport and Recreation. DFSNZ has a single reportable class of output which is Sports Anti-Doping, for which annual appropriations of \$3.239m have been allocated for the pursuit of our work.

The other principal source of revenue is from “user pays” testing, undertaken by our personnel in fulfilment of requests from NSOs or other National Anti-Doping Organisations.

We will pursue opportunities for increased funding from the Government to support and enable the advancement of our strategic priorities.

Financials

We fulfil our mission and responsibilities by establishing annual plans and targets which are informed by our knowledge of the cycle of major sporting events, and the ways in which athletes prepare for and participate in these. We use historical patterns, risk assessments, and an intelligence engine to plan and co-ordinate our activities. We prioritise our work towards the sports which are more important to New Zealanders, and sports at high risk of doping.

Our work planning, decisions and choices are guided by a longer-term set of financial principles:

- › We aim to return a modest financial surplus each year but with a position over the medium term of breakeven, allowing resources to be accumulated and then reinvested in a cycle of prudent expansion, consolidation and re-investment.
- › We aim to maintain working capital to ensure we are able to pay our debts as they fall due, even in the event of unexpected disruptions.
- › We aim to establish day-to-day certainty and stability for the funding of operations, whilst enabling continued investment in non-current assets which will keep us at the forefront of our work and be of benefit to DFSNZ into the future.

Quality and Risk Assurance

WADA has reviewed DFSNZ for Code Compliance and confirmed that they consider us to be compliant. Maintenance of this status is a high priority to ensure we remain highly trusted by the athletes we support and by our international peers.

We regularly assess strategic and corporate risks using a framework which is relevant to the work we undertake. Risks are managed to ensure that residual risk is as low as reasonably practical and are reported annually to the Board. The more significant risks are:

- › Inappropriate release (including as a result of hacking) of personal information. This is mitigated against by movement towards implementation of Government ‘Protective Security Requirements’ across our work, maintaining high levels of awareness amongst staff, and expert assessment of the security of DFSNZ systems and procedures.
- › Loss of support and confidence of key stakeholders, especially our athlete community, the organisations or people directly involved in supporting them, or government. This is mitigated in our new strategy with an increased focus on Engagement.





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