FIS Public Relations & Mass Media Committee Autumn Meeting – Minutes

Date: 2 October 2026
Time: 10:00-11:15 CET
Location: Geneva, Switzerland
Chair: Tomi Trbovc (SLO)

1. Attendance

Members present

- Tomi Trbovc, Chair (SLO)
- Caroline Van den Boogaard (NED)
- Elitza Popova (BUL)
- Espen Graff (NOR)
- Frippe Stenberg (SWE)
- Jernej Damjan (SLO)
- Joost Vandendries (BEL)
- Markus Aichner (AUT)
- Pierre Teyssot (AIJS)
- Bruno Sassi (FIS)
- Shinobu Ueshima (JPN), replacing Ken Odashima
- Marleena Valtasola (FIN), replacing Tatu Lehmuskallio

Excused

- Bena Melitini Tsoutrelis (GRE)

Guests

- Gunel Badalova (AZE)
- Carlos Pruneda (MEX)
- Hannes Kröss (ITA)
- Klara Kasko (HUN)

- Kirsten Eriksen (GER)
- Paul Stöckl (AUT)
- Sophie Hargesheimer (FIS)
- Mark Rowan (CAN)
- Nicolas Polychronidis (FIS)
- Yuki Shibata (JPN)
- Robert Norwood (IRL)
- Jennifer Grace (IRL)
- Stefan Brütsch (FIS)

2. Agenda

1. Opening and follow-up from Portorož
2. Approval of the agenda and previous meeting minutes
3. FIS Communications update
4. Media Rights update
5. Core Expert Group update:
    a. Crisis Communication Framework
    b. Media operations
    c. Award Ceremonies Rulebook
    d. Media and journalist relations
6. Any other business
7. Decisions, responsibilities and deadlines

3. Opening and Follow-up from Portorož

The Chair, Tomi Trbovc, opened the meeting at 10:00 CET.

He reported that the Core Expert Group had met following the previous meeting in Portorož and before the FIS elections in Belgrade. The group also met in Geneva on the day preceding the Committee meeting and requested an exchange with FIS Secretary General ad interim Urs Lehmann.

4. Approval of the Agenda and Previous Minutes

The agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting were approved without amendment.

5. FIS Communications Update

Bruno Sassi provided an update on the FIS Communications Department (presentation attached).

5.1 Organizational context

Following the FIS elections, the organization had entered a period of significant change. Several projects presented or initiated in Portorož could therefore not be continued according to the original schedule, and no substantive update was available on those projects at this meeting.

5.2 Media coordination structure

The role of FIS Media Coordinators had evolved organically over time. Coordinators had increasingly become an additional operational resource at events, leaving less capacity for media operations planning and strategic communications work.

A revised structure was presented under which Media Managers would lead and coordinate three principal discipline clusters. The proposed model would:

- Improve travel and resource planning;
- Strengthen coordination with the FIS Digital Team;
- Allow coordinators, except in Alpine Skiing, to work across disciplines within their respective clusters;
- Clarify roles and responsibilities;
- Maintain FIS support for LOCs and NSAs while delivering it more efficiently;

- Give Media Managers greater capacity to work strategically with the Communications Director;

- Support efforts to increase audiences and attract major media outlets to FIS disciplines and events.

The reorganization was not intended to reduce the support provided by FIS at events, but to deploy available resources more effectively.

5.3 Photography services

The partner for FIS photography services remained to be confirmed.

5.4 Relationship with media rights and production

The evolving media-rights landscape had changed FIS's role and its interactions with Infront. FIS Media Managers and Media Coordinators would become more involved in discussions concerning event production, editorial priorities and the stories highlighted through the world feed.

6. Media Rights Update

Nicolas Polychronidis provided an update on the international media-rights landscape, reserved rights and stakeholder content use.

6.1 Reserved rights

Irrespective of market-by-market broadcast agreements, FIS retains certain rights that may be exploited through FIS platforms and the platforms of eligible stakeholders.

Reserved rights may include:

- News access;

- Magazine and documentary content;

- Promotional content;

- Near-live clips for FIS social media channels;

- Content made available to FIS-related entities, including NSAs, athletes and selected NSA sponsors.

These rights may also allow FIS to license limited content to other media outlets in territories where an exclusive broadcaster is present, subject to the applicable contractual arrangements.

Content-use guidelines were under development. These would clarify what FIS, NSAs, athletes, selected NSA sponsors and other eligible stakeholders could publish on their platforms.

For LOCs, access requests fall under the responsibility of the relevant NSA. An LOC wishing to use content to promote its event should therefore coordinate with its NSA.

6.2 World-feed production

FIS now has greater scope to influence the world feed, although domestic rights remain with NSAs in most territories.

An updated product manual had been presented with the objective of standardizing and modernizing the television product across FIS events. The manual addresses elements including:

- Graphics;
- Trailers;
- Running orders;
- Interviews;
- World-feed duration and content;
- Consistency across events and NSAs.

Where changes to the world feed are required, the objective should be to provide broadcasters and event stakeholders with clear pre-season guidance rather than taking decisions exclusively on a case-by-case basis.

6.3 News access and non-rights-holding media

The Committee held an extensive discussion on access for news organizations and non-rights-holding media.

Members noted that:

- The number of journalists and television crews attending events had declined;

- Travel budgets available to media organizations had decreased;
- Charges and access restrictions could create additional barriers to attendance;
- Broader access could support storytelling, increase reach and ultimately create value for rights-holding broadcasters and commercial partners;
- Greater access to mixed zones, interviews and behind-the-scenes content could help attract outlets that do not currently cover snow sports.

Nicolas Polychronidis explained that news access was not a significant revenue driver for FIS and that he was not aware of requests having been rejected specifically because of license fees. However, free access should not automatically become the standard. Each request must be considered in the context of existing broadcast agreements and the expectations of rights holders.

The distinction between race footage and non-race content, such as interviews conducted in the mixed zone, was also highlighted.

Committee members supported examining whether limited revenue from access fees might, in some cases, be outweighed by the benefits of wider reach and stronger media attendance. Particular consideration could be given to major events and markets in which FIS wishes to expand its audience.

Stefan Brütsch acknowledged the importance of facilitating access, particularly given the reduced travel budgets available to news organizations.

Decision and follow-up

Nicolas Polychronidis agreed to raise the matter with Infront.

FIS and the Committee will review:

- The fees charged for different categories of media and content access;
- Whether those fees materially affect media attendance;
- Whether individual major events could adopt a more open approach;
- Whether a protocol or guidelines should be introduced for future seasons.

An update is expected at the 2027 Spring Meetings in Paris.

6.4 International media-rights partner

In response to a question, it was confirmed/reminded that Infront is FIS's exclusive sales agent for the international media-rights package. Infront supports FIS with sales, production and on-site coordination.

7. Core Expert Group Update

7.1 Crisis Communication Framework

Espen Graff delivered a draft Crisis Communication Framework to the Chair and FIS.

The next step will be for FIS to review and finalize the document before it is circulated more widely.

Espen Graff emphasized that the final framework should be short, concrete and easy to use, ideally supported by a concise one-page overview.

Bruno Sassi thanked Espen Graff for his work. For the upcoming FIS World Championships, FIS will update its existing crisis communications framework, consisting of a straightforward one-page document supported by a messaging guide. Once reviewed and finalized, the material prepared by Espen Graff could serve as best practice for FIS.

Actions

- Tomi Trbovc will invite the FIS Medical Committee to contribute to the review.
- Louise Seppey will connect Tomi Trbovc with Sarah Fussek, FIS Integrity Director, who is responsible for the FIS Medical Committee.
- FIS will review and finalize the Crisis Communication Framework.

7.2 Media Operations and Accreditation

The centralized FIS accreditation project had been delayed following the elections and subsequent staffing changes. It was not sufficiently advanced to be implemented during the 2026/27 season.

Markus Aichner raised a concern regarding the new FIS accreditation matrix. Information received from the Austrian accreditation provider indicated that 36 SRS personnel had been allocated FIS Marketing and Content Creator access despite not being FIS content creators.

This created operational issues, including:

- Unnecessary demand for press-room capacity;
- Access to restricted areas;
- A lack of clarity between FIS and SRS content-creator roles.

It was agreed that the accreditation matrix, particularly the definition and access rights of content creators, required clarification.

Action

Markus Aichner and Bruno Sassi will continue the discussion on media accreditation and review the relevant categories in the FIS accreditation matrix.

7.3 Award Ceremonies Rulebook

Tomi Trbovc reported that discussions with the FIS Marketing Team had not yet taken place.

Work will continue during the winter, taking into account experiences from the 2027 FIS World Championships. The objective is to develop guidelines for the 2027/28 season.

Bruno Sassi noted that a range of award-ceremony duties had gradually been assigned to Media Coordinators despite not forming part of their core media responsibilities. Clearly codified regulations would help establish ownership and clarify the roles of all parties involved.

7.4 Media and Journalist Relations

Pierre Teyssot provided an update on discussions with FIS IT concerning athlete information displayed on the FIS website.

Athletes can already add links to their social media accounts. The possibility of introducing fallback information was discussed, whereby the relevant NSA's social media account or website could be displayed when an athlete has not provided individual information.

It was also confirmed that start lists would be made available to photojournalists in CSV or Excel format from the following season, facilitating their work.

8. Digital Communications and Media Training

8.1 FIS digital channels

Bruno Sassi reported that FIS was:

- Consolidating its X accounts;
- Consolidating its YouTube channels;
- Exploring FAST channels, including a potential channel for the Snowboard and Freestyle disciplines.

As digital developments are highly relevant to journalists and media representatives, the FIS Digital Team should be invited to the next Committee meeting in Paris.

Action

FIS Communications will invite the FIS Digital Team to provide an update at the 2027 Spring Meetings.

8.2 Media training

A further update on the FIS media-training project will be provided in Paris. The project will be led by Sophie Hargesheimer, FIS Media Manager for the Nordic disciplines.

The initial focus will be on:

- Athletes participating in Junior World Championships;
- Athletes not yet competing regularly on the World Cup circuit;
- Athletes from smaller nations.

The project may be expanded to World Cup athletes at a later stage, but this is not currently within its initial scope.

A pilot project was delivered at the 2026 FIS Alpine Junior World Ski Championships in Narvik. The pilot also included digital and social media elements. Given the level of interest and the breadth of the topic, future social media training should be delivered as a separate, dedicated session.

The training will be provided as a FIS service without a participation fee for NSAs. Its objective is to strengthen capabilities across the FIS ecosystem.

Members were invited to send ideas and suggestions to the project team.

9. Any Other Business

9.1 Recognition of service

The Committee thanked Giulia Candiago for her work and dedication over the years and wished her well for the future.

9.2 FIS Communications contacts

Following the reorganization of the FIS Communications Department, the Committee requested that FIS distribute the contact details of the new Media Managers and Media Coordinators to all NSAs.

9.3 Athlete fan-club database

LOCs had expressed interest in gaining access to information about the fan clubs of leading athletes. These supporters regularly attend events, but no centralized resource currently exists through which LOCs can contact them.

The Committee discussed whether FIS Media Managers and Media Coordinators could work with NSAs to create a shared database.

Bruno Sassi suggested beginning with a targeted communication to the Core Expert Group members representing the countries most relevant to the initiative. The concept could then be developed and expanded during the winter.

9.4 Distribution of minutes

The minutes will be distributed before the FIS Alpine World Cup opening in Sölden. Committee members' email addresses should be visible in the distribution so that members can contact one another directly.

10. Summary of Decisions and Actions

Action	Responsible	Deadline/Timing
Review media and news-access fees, restrictions and their effect on attendance	Nicolas Polychronidis, FIS Media Rights and Infront	Update at the 2027 Spring Meetings
Consider possible guidelines for news and non-rights-holder access	FIS and Committee	Update at the 2027 Spring Meetings
Finalize the Crisis Communication Framework	FIS Communications	Before wider circulation
Involve the FIS Medical Committee in the crisis framework review	Tomi Trbovc	During the review process
Connect the Chair with Sarah Fussek	Louise Seppey	As soon as possible
Review media accreditation categories and the Content Creator designation	Markus Aichner and Bruno Sassi	Follow-up required
Continue work on award-ceremony guidelines	Chair, FIS Communications and FIS Marketing	Target: 2027/28 season
Invite the FIS Digital Team to present an update	FIS Communications	2027 Spring Meetings
Develop the media-training project	Sophie Hargesheimer and FIS Communications	Update at the 2027 Spring Meetings
Distribute contact details for the new Media Managers and Coordinators	FIS Communications	Following the meeting
Explore a centralized athlete fan-club database with selected NSAs	FIS Communications and Core Expert Group	During winter 2026/27
Distribute the minutes with Committee members' contact details	FIS Communications	Before Sölden

11. Closing

The Chair thanked all participants for their contributions.

The meeting closed at **11:15 CET**.