

21 June 2017

Mr Ben van Velthooven
fyi-request-5592-0f1cc4d9@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr van Velthooven

Official Information Act 1982 request – Cycling NZ Rio Olympics Campaign

Thank you for your email requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) in relation to the Cycling NZ Rio Olympic Campaign. You requested information on the following:

1. the results and findings of reports completed [in relation to the Cycling NZ's Rio Campaign], with a particular onus on the failings during the programme's build up; and
2. [copies of any] new policies implemented [following the results].

Attached is our response to your request for the results and findings of reports completed in relation to the Cycling NZ's Rio Campaign, with a particular onus on any failings during the programme's build up.

Sport NZ has withheld information in these documents under the following sections of the OIA:

- 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons,
- 9(2)(ba) – to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied, and
- 9(2)(g)(i) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expressions of opinions by or between members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty.

One other document has been withheld in its entirety under sections 9(2)(ba)(i), 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA.

The reason for withholding the document under section 9(2)(ba)(i) of the OIA is that Sport NZ owes an obligation of confidence to Cycling NZ in respect of this document. If

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the document were to be released, such release would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information from Cycling NZ and other similar bodies in the future. It is in the public interest that such information continues to be supplied.

The reason for withholding information under section 9(2)(a) of the Act is that the document identifies certain individuals and there is also a risk that the individuals to whom the information relates could be identified from the document. The withholding of the document is necessary to protect the privacy of such persons as the information could relate to matters that bear on their personal lives.

The reasons for withholding information under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA are that the document contains very free and frank expressions of opinion by Sport NZ Group staff, and disclosing that information could prejudice the expression of free and frank opinions in similar situations in the future thereby inhibiting the effective conduct of public affairs.

I consider that the above three grounds together provide grounds for withholding all of the document.

I am satisfied that the withholding of the above information is not outweighed by any other circumstances that render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

We do not hold any information that falls within part two of your above request. However, information in relation to High Performance Sport investment is available on High Performance Sport NZ's website at the following location:

<http://hpsnz.org.nz/news-events/new-investment-figures-announced-new-zealand-look-towards-tokyo-2020>

If you would like to discuss this response further please contact Alice Hume, Manager Policy by email at alice.hume@sportnz.org.nz.

Please note that if you are not satisfied with this response you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Miskimmin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Miskimmin
Chief Executive



2016 Rio Olympic Games Debrief Survey Summary

Cycling NZ – Track Team



Author: HPSNZ Knowledge for Rio (5 October 2016)









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INTRODUCTION

This document summarises the responses of the NZ Olympic Track Cycling team from the 2016 Rio Olympic Games debrief survey. The purpose of this document is to summarise patterns across collective responses to support further inquiry and planning for the next Olympic cycle. The Olympic Track Cycling group consisted of 27 people in total across athletes, coaches, and support-staff. 22 people provided survey information; a response rate of 81%.

Summary Themes

-  **Self-rated expectations** for the majority of the team pre-Olympic preparation met expectations, but Olympic performance did not meet expectations.
-  **Successful** aspects for the majority of the team were consistent and high quality training, healthy, injury-free athletes, strong innovation, quality equipment, and programme planning.
-  **Challenges** for the majority of the team were team culture and relationships, athlete resilience under pressure, staff collaboration-communication, and instability caused by the selection process.
-  **Surprises** for the majority of the team were the response/negative effect of the Olympic environment, ability to show resilience under pressure, negative behaviours affecting others in the team, and the improved performance of other nations.
-  **Keep-Start-Stop** responses indicated keeping clear planning informed by review, improving athlete experience, and quality/experienced staff. 'Starts' included mind-set development for athletes, more review and reflection, and improving selection clarity. 'Stops' included ineffective culture, ignoring athlete psychology, and inefficient use of staff.
-  **Comparing London 2012 to Rio 2016** consistent enablers across two cycles were the training environment and problem-free equipment and the consistent barriers were the selection issues at both Olympics. The most significant difference between the two Olympics was the psychological response to the Olympic environment from both athletes and staff. All roles reported referenced the ability to 'handle stress', 'nerves', or 'remain focussed' in the face of setbacks; although there were references to a stressful environment in 2012 the responses were effective.

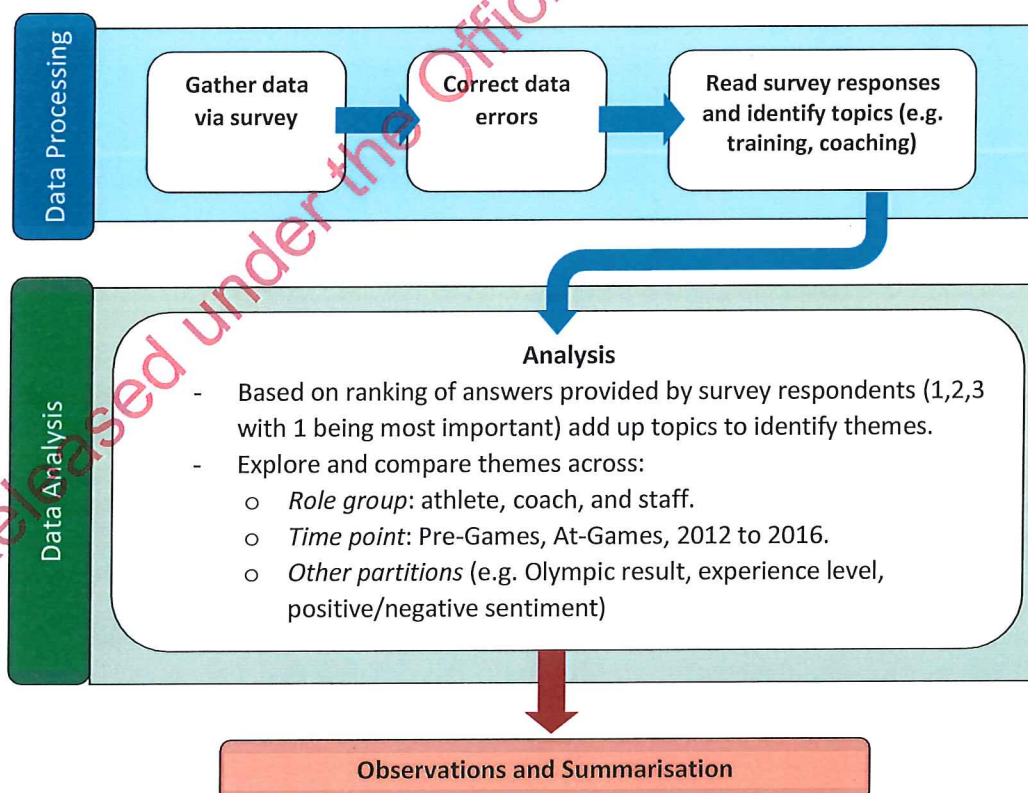
Response Rates

The table below shows survey response rates for each role group.

Role	Cycling NZ in Rio	Survey Responses	Response Rate
Athlete	16	13	69 %
MS	4	3	75%
WS	2	1	50%
ME	5	5	100%
WE	5	4	80%
Coach	5	4	80 %
Support-staff	5	4	80 %
Manager / Official	1	1	100 %
TOTAL	27	22	81 %

Methods

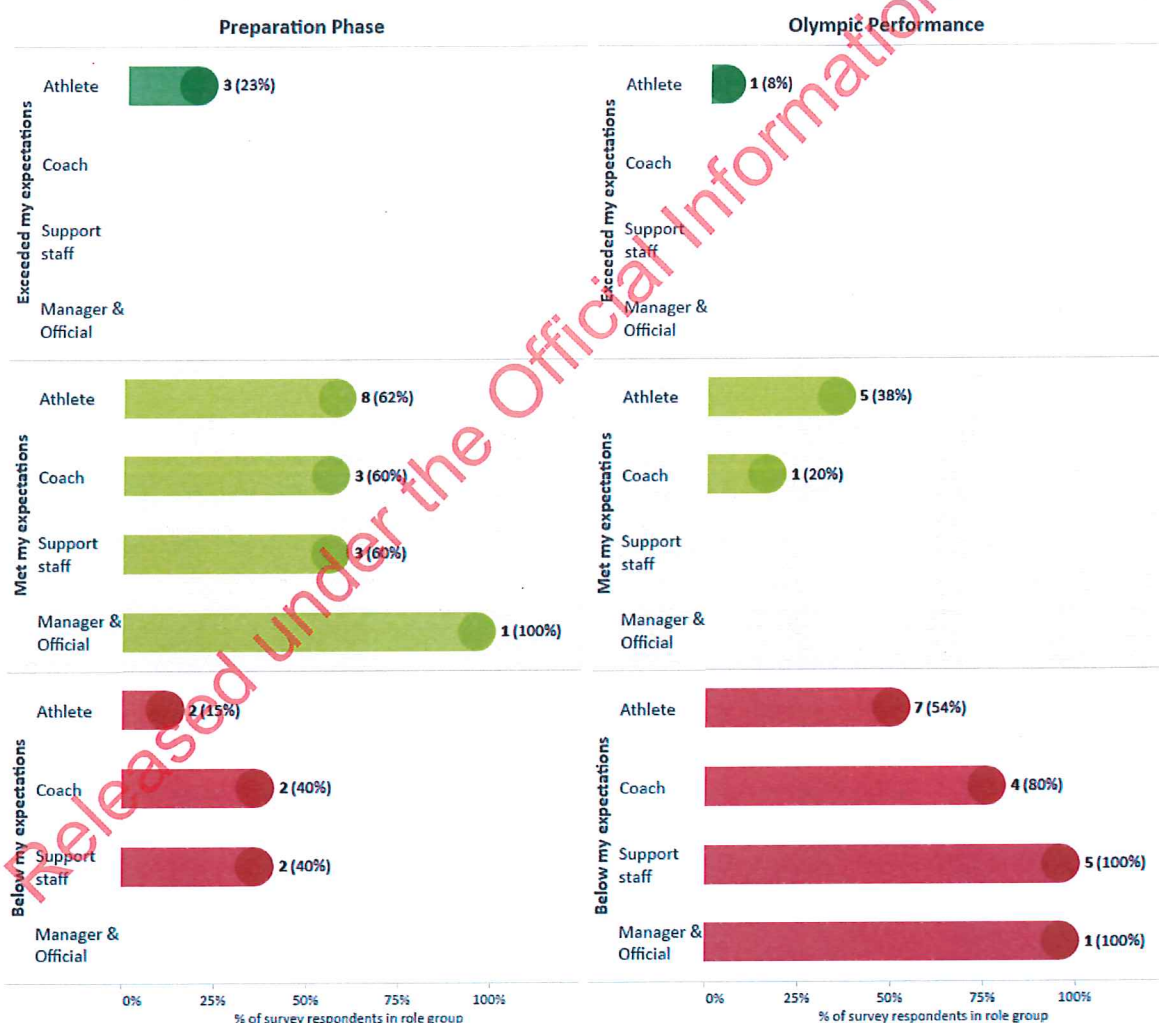
Survey responses were processed and analysed in the following manner:



EXPECTATIONS

Ratings of preparation and performance (exceeded own expectations, met own expectations, or below own expectations). Numbers in bold reflect raw counts of people, and percentages indicate the proportion of the role group.

- **Preparation met or below expectations** – With the exception of 3 athletes, (from 3 different squads), pre-Olympic preparation either met or was below expectations.
- **Performance rated as below expectations** – The majority of the group felt their Olympic performance didn't meet expectations.



ENABLERS & BARRIERS

What enhanced and what hindered performance before, and at, the Rio Olympic Games. Based on ranked answers as provided by survey respondents (1,2,3 with 1 being most important). Numbers in square brackets represent the number of people discussing the concept and the number of statements respectively ([#people/#statements]).

Enablers

Group	Rank	Pre-Olympics	At Olympics
Overall	1	Training: Consistent, high quality, minimal disruption. [10/12]	Quality village amenities and logistics. [8/11]
	2	Healthy, injury free athletes. [6/7]	Excellent equipment and innovation. [4/4]
	3	Well planned campaigns and training. [5/5]	Performance culture and programme. [4/4]
Athletes	1	Training: consistent, good volume and quality. [5/5]	Great accommodation: well sorted by NZOC, good relaxation space, easy access to track. [4/6]
	2	Quality planning allowing for 'peak performance' [2/2]	Belief and confidence in self and the programme [3/3] • Strong mental states. [3/3]
	3	Quality equipment and innovation [3/3] • positive team culture/dynamic. [2/2]	Sound organisation of logistics – race day and otherwise. [3/3]
Coaches	1	Well planned and periodised training delivered well-conditioned athletes. [3/4]	Quality support staff, accessible to athletes. [2/3]
	2	Sound leadership and experience of staff. [2/3]	Easy and well communicated village logistics. [2/2]
	3	Athletes healthy and injury free. [2/3]	*Excellent equipment. [1/1]
Support-staff	1	No Injury or illness to athletes thanks to effective health team, meant minimal to no missed training. [3/3]	Strong innovation programme with no bike problems. [2/2]
	2	Tech and innovation led well and effective off limited budget. [3/3]	*Proven performance culture. [1/1]
	3	*Strong logistical planning. [1/1]	*Consistent training in lead up [1/1] • *'Tight team' approach. [1/1]



Managers / Officials	1	Rider health [1/1]	Belief in staff. [1/1]
	2	Riders not overseas for too long. [1/1]	Confidence in equipment. [1/1]
	3	Confidence gained from previous World Champs. [1/1]	Well planned entry to Rio. [1/1]

Note: * denotes responses from 1 person

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Barriers

Group	Rank	Pre-Olympics	At Olympics
Overall	1	Issues with culture and relationships at all levels (athlete, coach, support staff, NSO). [9/11]	Disrupted mental state of athletes. [8/9]
	2	Athletes lacking experience on the international scene. [4/4]	Late delivery and last minute issues with equipment. [4/4]
	3	Selection issues. [6/7]	A lack of staff collaboration and professionalism. [4/5]
Athletes	1	Negative attitudes from self, other teammates, and NSO. [3/4]	Loss of composure and focus. [4/4]
	2	Training in Bordeaux on a different shaped track to Rio. [4/4]	Issues with technology and equipment – skinsuits not fitting, taping numbers to race suits, ‘still behind’ [3/3]
	3	Selection issues: ‘peaking to make selection’, appeals. [3/3]	Late issues in training – different track shapes, training crashes. [3/3]
Coaches	1	Selection decisions and late selection date. [3/5]	Fragile rider head space, disrupted by pressure of Olympics, officiating decisions, personal matters. [2/3]
	2	Lack of international competition and race experience in some events. [2/2]	*Late delivery of some equipment [1/1] • *Inexperience. [1/1]
	3	*Conversion of potential into result. [1/1]	*Rushed team meetings. [1/1]
Support-staff	1	Coach behaviour – mismatch between responsibility, accountability and the skills/knowledge of coaches. [2/2]	Athletes and Coaches distracted by other nations. [2/2] • Culture not robust or performance focused. [2/2]
	2	*Previously identified issues being ignored - ‘fingers were crossed’ [1/1]	*Staffing response to isolated incident. [1/1] • *Staff member involvement limiting athlete support. [1/1]
	3	*Late delivery of new equipment. [1/1]	*Lack of mental skills by riders. [1/1]
Managers / Officials	1	Underestimation of inexperienced athletes under pressure. [1/1]	Lack of understanding surrounding the pressure of the environment. [1/1]
	2	Physiology not psychology focus. [1/1]	Senior coaches not covering head coach role. [1/1]
	3	Length of campaign. [1/1]	Coaches operating as silos. [1/1]

Note: * denotes responses from 1 person

SURPRISES

Summary of top surprises encountered at the Olympic Games.

Group	Rank	Surprises Encountered
Athletes	1	Olympic atmosphere and magnitude. [2/2]
	2	Disruptive and volatile actions of teammates. [2/2]
	3	Decisions of race officials [1/1] • A lack of trust/belief from coach [1/1] • Crashing in training. [1/1]
Coaches	1	Progress and equipment of other nations. [2/2]
	2	Loss of rider confidence upon Olympic arrival. [1/1]
	3	Decisions of track officials and the implications of these for rider. [1/1]
Support-staff	1	Improvement of the GB team. [2/2]
	2	Impact of team selection [1/1] • Negative effects of individual athletes on team culture and behaviour [1/1]
	3	Actions of athlete after official's decision. [1/1]
Managers / Officials	1	'Psychology of performing under pressure'. [1/1]
	2	-
	3	-

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KEEP, START, STOP

What to keep, start, and stop to enhance performance at the next pinnacle event. Based on ranked answers as provided by survey respondents (1,2,3 with 1 being most important Numbers in square brackets represent the number of people discussing the concept and the number of statements respectively ([#people/#statements]).

Group	Rank	Keep	Start	Stop
Overall	1	Organised, clear planning developed from review/reflection. [9/14]	Mental skills training to improve mind set of athletes. [6/7]	Ineffective/poor culture. [5/7]
	2	Improving psychology and experience of athletes. [6/9]	Review and reflect on the cycle to guide future planning. [3/5]	Ignoring psychology and poor athlete mind-set. [7/8]
	3	Quality/experience of staff. [5/5]	Improving access to competition, refocusing of events. [3/4]	Ineffective use of staff. [4/6]
Athletes	1	Training – innovative, respect/trust of programme, high standards, hard. [5/6]	Improving mind set – resilience, positive attitude. [4/5]	Negative and disrupted head spaces. [5/6]
	2	Continuity of coaches [4/4]	Re-evaluation of position and equipment. [2/2]	Conflict within team. [2/2]
	3	Planning. [2/3]	Increased competition [2/2] • Clarity around selection/qualification. [1/1]	Poor health and nutrition. [1/2]
Coaches	1	Organised, clear, effective planning. [3/4]	Engaging in mental skills training – pressure and resilience. [3/4]	Accommodating disruptive/problematic athletes. [2/2]
	2	Review and reflection on strategy – Innovation, women. [3/4]	Planning for Tokyo on a 4-year cycle – individual events etc. [2/3]	Worrying about factors outside of athlete control. [2/2]
	3	Quality, experienced staff [2/2]	*Review selection timing [1/1] • Retain/recruit future medallists [1/1]	*Length of overseas campaign. [1/1]

Support-staff	1	Early selection, with high levels of internal competition. [2/2]	Moving from coach led programme – refocusing on athletes. [2/2]	Ineffective/poor culture. [3/4]
	2	Continue to learn while focusing on the basics. [2/2]	*Reflect and review the cycle. [1/2]	Ineffective involvement of staff/non transparent recruiting. [2/2]
	3	*Being confident. [1/2]	*Improve long term planning. [1/1]	*Late selection of riders. [1/1]
Managers / Officials	1	Generating exposure under pressure. [1/1]	Learning from past campaigns [1/1]	'Avoiding tough conversations' [1/1]
	2	Addressing psychology [1/1]	Review programmes. [1/1]	Avoiding psychology. [1/1]
	3	Clear coaching operating model. [1/1]	Ensure riders have psychological capacity [1/1]	Operating in silos. [1/1]

Note: * denotes responses from 1 person

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LONDON 2012 to RIO 2016

Comparing enablers and barriers from the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Olympic surveys.



Consistent Enablers

Training Environment – continuity and consistency of training, in focussed blocks (e.g. USA, Cambridge), as a team, and following a clear structured plan were consistent enablers to performance generally across the team in 2012 and 2016.

Equipment – high quality equipment, the absence of equipment issues at the Games and equipment innovation were enablers in both 2012 and 2016.



Consistent Barriers

Selection – in both 2012 and 2016 selection was raised as a barrier across all roles. Athletes identified the effect of appeals, being chosen over others, and having to peak for selection as difficulties. Coaches and staff referenced the stress of the selection period, athletes peaking for selection and trying to hold form to the Games.



Changes

Mental Skills / Stress – in 2016 all roles reported an inability to handle stress, nerves, or remain focussed in the face of setbacks, as a primary barrier to performance. 2012 a stressful environment was raised, but there was no reference that this had a negative influence on performance. In 2016 a stressful and negative environment as described as 'amplified' with staff displaying negative behaviours, people adopting negative attitudes, or losing focus on performance processes.



QUESTIONS & OBSERVATIONS

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APPENDIX: LONDON 2012

Replaying Enablers and Barriers for Cycling from the London 2012 Olympic Games debrief. Note that BMX and Road athletes were included in the creation of this table.

Enablers – London 2012 Olympics

	Rank	Pre-Olympics	At Olympics	
Cycling	1	Individualised training/race programmes, periodisation and stimuli.	Familiarity with Olympic environment (test events) and clarity of race-day plans/processes.	
	Overall	2	Access to right level of competition (national and international)	Support-staff supportive, familiar, and available.
		3	Clear expectations and quality input with pro-active learning approach.	Good access to tracks and venues.
Athletes	1	Competition – structured race programmes, access to overseas races, local racing opportunities.	Confidence in pre-race plans and from quality of preparation/taper.	
	2	Training – balancing travel blocks • monitored training with individual feedback • Together as team.	Quality, continuity, and availability of support staff.	
	3	Racing and training overseas in good climates / time-zones / altitudes.	Access to tracks pre-Games • Daily monitoring to assist peaking.	
Coaches	1	Training stimulus and periodisation, good venues, and technical sessions.	Clear vision of racing days and what village would be like (not distracted)	
	2	Increased self- / team-belief • Support-staff knowledge and support	Great support staff network	
	3	Able to ignore negative distractions	Self-belief and belief in team mates.	
Support-staff	1	Individualised race programmes and plans • Equipment planning early.	Ease of access to tracks • Test-events / pre-Olympic camps familiarisation.	
	2	Clear expectations between coaches - athletes, established relationships, and role clarity / delegation.	Good team cohesion and familiarity from prior campaigns.	
	3	Pro-active learning approach from riders and staff.	Knowing how to handle pinnacle event environment (experience from Comm. Games or Olympics)	
Managers / Officials	1	Right level of competition.	Compact Olympic villages and close to venues.	
	2	Funding to be full-time and compete internationally.	Efficient logistics (food, travel, recovery, accommodation).	
	3	Good coaching personnel.	-	

Barriers – London 2012 Olympics

	Rank	Pre-Olympics	At Olympics
Cycling	1	Lack of cohesion / culture in sprint squad between staff-coach.	Lack of team cohesion (sprint) and stressful environment.
	2	Communication challenges (coach to staff, NSO to athletes).	Rider capability (health, execution and experience).
	3	Fatigue (long season, heavy loading, high travel demands).	Some athletes distracted by Olympic 'circus' and team environment.
Athletes	1	Training - too-light/too-heavy training in final weeks • Lack of day-to-day training schedule • Too much time apart as team.	2 athletes not 100% or unwell entering village, or with sore/tired legs.
	2	Communication – lack of clarity from some coaches • lack of communication from NSO.	*Not able to train with team ahead of Games (reserve rider)
	3	Long seasons and too much racing for some • Big gaps between race events.	*Stressful environment and lack of support from key people.
Coaches	1	Coach-staff communication challenges (lack of agreement) •	Support staff distanced from coach (limited interaction)
	2	Decay in team culture due to selection issue • Staff doubting coach and not engaging.	Rider nerves, inexperience, and execution.
	3	Selection of Olympic team produced instability in team culture.	Preferred riders not named in team.
Support-staff	1	Sprint-squad staff-coach culture was tense and lacking cohesion.	Lack of team cohesion • Disgruntled support staff and coach 'inability' to lead group.
	2	High workloads impacting core role responsibilities • Sprint situation impacted people's fulfilment of roles.	Some athletes not 'there to win' or distracted by 'Olympic circus'.
	3	Fatigue and tiredness from staff and athletes – long season and possible over-training.	Distraction of 'P' reserve athlete status (accreditation) • Timing of village entry too late for BMX.
Managers / Officials	1	Demanding travel schedule.	-
	2	Split sprint squad campaigns (men/women) limited staff collaboration opportunities.	-
	3	-	-

Major Risks and opportunities

- While the sport underachieved in Rio it will remain a multi-medal contender in Tokyo.
- Team sprint group exceptionally strong and have the right age profile to continue on and be at their best in Tokyo.
- Quality group of high potential underpinning riders delivering world junior medals and quick times ahead of current elite riders at the same age or stage of development. These athletes will emerge quickly through the Tokyo cycle and will be pushing for Olympic selection and medals in Rio, in particularly in the track endurance events.
- Women's Track endurance programme well led by [REDACTED] who has been only on board for 18 months and has huge growth potential.
- The core ingredients of the HP programme are there but it does require better leadership, culture and communication right across the HP programme. CEO oversight will be fundamental and will require enhanced capacity and capability support to run the business at least in the medium term.
[REDACTED]
- HPAD programmes, complemented by elite rider individual campaign support is likely, for BMX, MTB and women's road towards Tokyo.
- Close dialogue has occurred with the CEO to scenario plan the possible reduction in HP investment to better understand implications and risks. Lower priority initiatives have been identified (i.e. campaign costs for elite groups overseas and coaching/management structure will be the first things requiring a review)

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