

GOVERNANCE 101:

BREAKING DOWN THE GOVERNING BODIES OF CHEER

For any sport to thrive, it's essential to include safety guidelines, rules, regulations, a competition structure, and an overall program that fosters betterment among participants. There was actually a time in cheer when a formal governance structure did not exist. Governing bodies brought growth and development, and provided an international competition forum, but sometimes it can be difficult to understand the role of each of these governing bodies. As cheerleading potentially heads toward a spot in the Olympic Games line-up in the coming years, governing bodies will play an important role in that path.

Here, we break down the four main bodies that look out for both the industry, as well as your athletes.



USA Cheer >> The USA Federation for Sport Cheering (USA Cheer) was established in 2007 to serve as the National Governing Body for Sport Cheering in the U.S. USA Cheer serves all disciplines of cheer, including All Star and traditional school based cheer programs, and the growing sport of STUNT. National Sport Organizations that govern and/or educate specific disciplines of cheer (including USASF, NFHSAA, AACCA and NCAA) are Delegate Members of USA Cheer.

USA Cheer has three primary objectives: help grow and develop interest and participation in cheer throughout the U.S.; promote safety and safety education for cheer in the U.S.; and represent the U.S. in international cheer competitions.

As the U.S. National Governing Body for Sport Cheering, USA Cheer is responsible for the selection of the national Cheer and Performance Cheer (dance) teams to represent the U.S. in the ICU World Cheerleading Championships.

>> **To learn more about USA Cheer, visit USACheer.org**



International Cheer Union (ICU) >> The International Cheer Union (ICU) was established in 2004 and was officially recognized by SportAccord in 2013 as the world governing body of Cheerleading. ICU is comprised of 110 member National Cheer Federations, representing more than 3.5 million athletes on all continents.

In 2016, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) granted the sport provisional Olympic status, laying the groundwork for application for inclusion in the Olympics, and enabling governments to fund the growth of cheer in countries where governments financially support sports going to the Olympics.

Its mission and purpose are to advance the sport globally, and it is a fully democratic International Sports Federation. A Governing Council of the ICU represents the various geographic areas around the world where cheerleading exists. National Cheer Federations, also known as National Governing Bodies for Sport Cheer, are welcome to apply for membership in ICU.

The ICU World Cheerleading Championships are held annually. Following the Olympic model, national teams, selected by National Cheer Federations to represent countries worldwide, compete in 15 Team Cheer and Team Performance Cheer divisions.

>> **To learn more about the ICU, visit CheerUnion.org**



U.S. All Star Federation (USASF) >> The USASF was founded in 2003 with the core principle of making All Star

a safer sport by establishing fair and consistent rules and competition standards. The organization credentials coaches, certifies Legality Officials, sanctions events and maintains safety guidelines, all with the goal of providing the safest possible environment for All Star cheer and dance athletes to train and compete.

All Star event producers, affiliate companies, cheer gyms, dance studios, program owners, coaches and athletes comprise the membership of the USASF. It is a not for profit corporation and is governed by Bylaws, officers, a Board of Directors, and 11 standing committees. The day-to-day operation of the USASF is managed by full-time, part-time and volunteer staff. The organization is a delegate member of USA Cheer.

Its mission is to support and enrich the lives of All Star athletes and members, provide consistent rules, strive for a safe environment for athletes, drive competitive excellence, and promote a positive image for the sport.

The USASF hosts The Cheerleading and Dance World Championship annually. More than 50 U.S. event producer members qualify teams at their national championships to compete at Worlds.

>> **To learn more about the USASF, visit USASF.net**



International All Star Federation (IASF) >> The IASF was formerly a part of the USASF. The two

organizations separated in 2016 so each could focus more directly on their constituents; USASF to focus domestically, and IASF to focus internationally.

The IASF helps provide common ground for countries involved in All Star outside of the U.S., and brings consistency, safety, education and growth opportunities to the global community of All Star. It oversees the qualification process for non-U.S. teams to compete at The Cheerleading and Dance Worlds, and is responsible for determining the Safety Guidelines and scoring system used in the International Divisions at the Championship.

>> **To learn more about the IASF, visit IASFWorlds.com**