

**PROTECTING
HISTORY,
EMBRACING
CHANGE:
A UNIFIED,
COHERENT
GLOBAL FUTURE**

GLOBAL GAME STRUCTURE REPORT

WORLD CRICKETERS' ASSOCIATION,
SUPPORTED BY THE SPORTS CONSULTANCY

FOREWORD

WHY GLOBAL CRICKET NEEDS THIS REVIEW



Global cricket has reached a critical point in its evolution. With the inevitable rise of domestic short form competitions dominating both the schedule and attention of players across the globe, coupled with the rise of private ownership, the traditional international game is being challenged as never before.

Whilst many of the shifts are positive, these changes are happening in a largely unmanaged way, and it is clear that intervention is needed if we want a unified global sport, and for the international game to thrive into the future in more than just a few countries.

This report has been developed to provide the game with a coherent way forward at a time when it is desperately needed. 64 of the game's key stakeholders have provided their feedback to WCA in the development of this report. The consistency of the problems they have identified, but pleasingly, also the solutions they are recommending, have given us clear direction on the changes we believe cricket needs to make.

There is enormous opportunity for cricket to make the changes that will allow the international game to thrive and also maximise the benefits that domestic short form competitions are generating in a more modern global system.

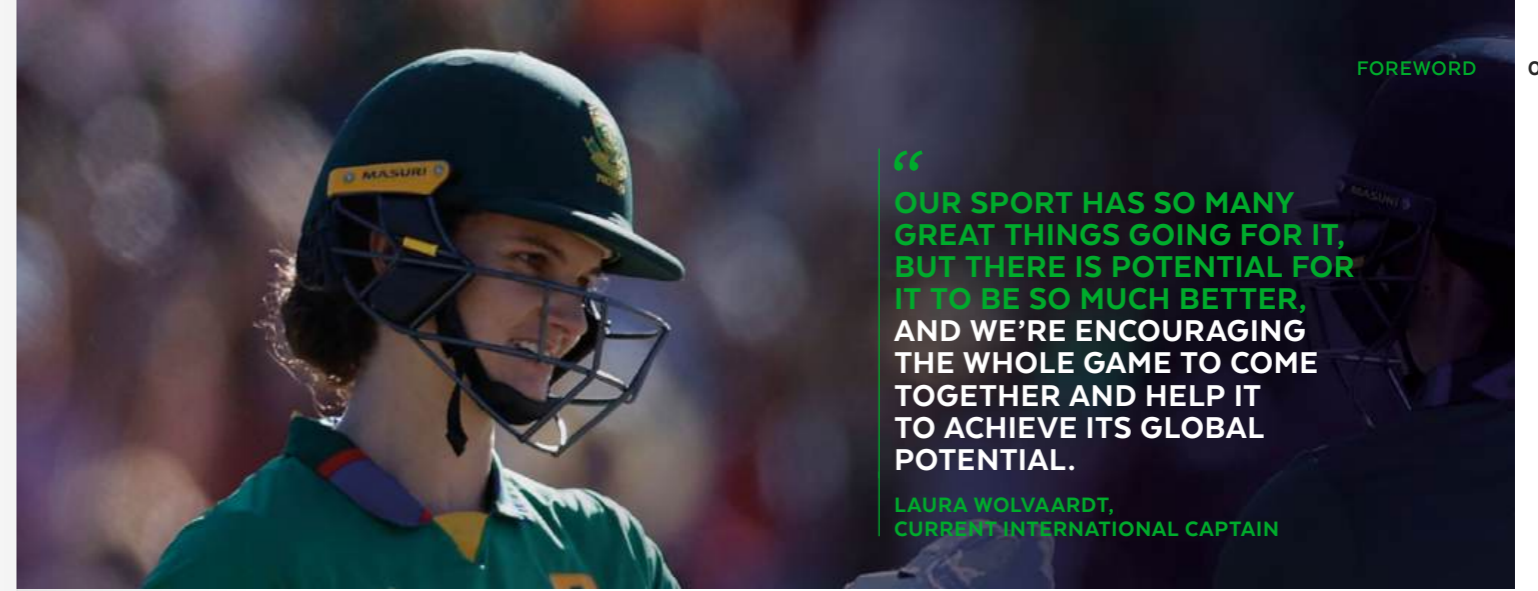
This report covers the top of both the men's and women's games and seeks to create a platform for robust and balanced debate around a game we all love and want to see continue to grow across the globe into the future. We look forward to working with the game's leadership to bring these recommendations to life..

Paul Marsh

Chair of WCA Global Game Structure
Sub-Committee

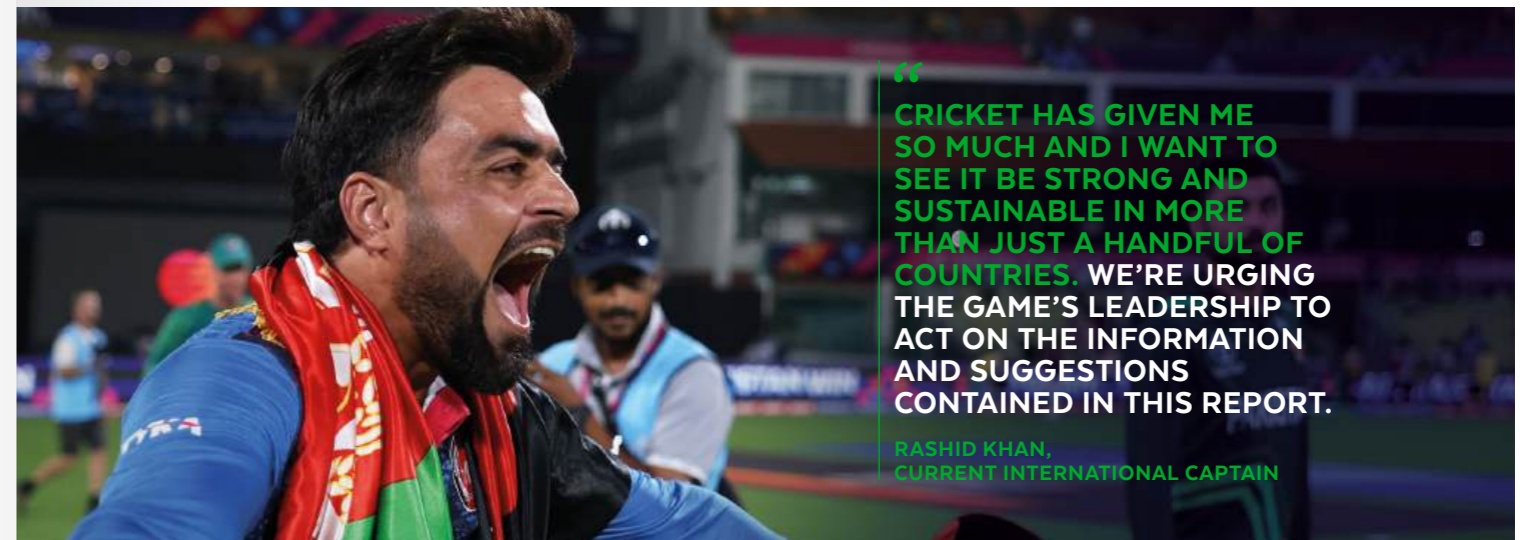
Sana Mir

WCA Board and Global Game Structure
Sub-Committee Member



“OUR SPORT HAS SO MANY GREAT THINGS GOING FOR IT, BUT THERE IS POTENTIAL FOR IT TO BE SO MUCH BETTER, AND WE’RE ENCOURAGING THE WHOLE GAME TO COME TOGETHER AND HELP IT TO ACHIEVE ITS GLOBAL POTENTIAL.

LAURA WOLVAARDT,
CURRENT INTERNATIONAL CAPTAIN



“CRICKET HAS GIVEN ME SO MUCH AND I WANT TO SEE IT BE STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE IN MORE THAN JUST A HANDFUL OF COUNTRIES. WE’RE URGING THE GAME’S LEADERSHIP TO ACT ON THE INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT.

RASHID KHAN,
CURRENT INTERNATIONAL CAPTAIN



“WE NEED TO STEP INTO OUR FUTURE AS A SPORT, BUT THERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT PARTS OF OUR HISTORY, AND IN PARTICULAR INTERNATIONAL CRICKET, THAT WE WANT TO SEE PROTECTED AND THRIVING INTO THE FUTURE.

PAT CUMMINS,
CURRENT INTERNATIONAL CAPTAIN



“AS PLAYERS WE UNDERSTAND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO THE GAME AS A WHOLE, AND WE HAVE AN INTEREST IN IT BEING SUCCESSFUL. A UNIFIED SPORT IS GOING TO ACHIEVE BETTER OUTCOMES THAN A FRAGMENTED ONE.

HEATHER KNIGHT,
FORMER INTERNATIONAL CAPTAIN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cricket has transformed drastically over the past decade.

It is fast moving from being a 'top down' sport – largely funded by and focused on international cricket – to being a club-based sport with increasing control and influence from domestic T20 (DT20) leagues and private franchises. This is an inevitable shift and one that will continue to dramatically alter the global cricket landscape. It is incumbent on the game to come together to define our preferred future and establish a set of parameters to guide the next phase of cricket's evolution – to protect its history while embracing the change that is essential to safeguard its future.

WCA has carried out a detailed review, led by an expert sub-committee and including interviews with a broad range of stakeholders representing organisations across the global game.

There is a clear consensus that whilst cricket has strong foundations, it is facing significant risk in a number of areas. Fragmentation, inconsistency, a lack of collaboration, limited context for most international cricket, and short-term regional thinking threaten the future growth and success

of the game, and in particular international cricket. Without holistic change, the game is heading towards a heavily imbalanced future on and off field.

A range of solutions and structural changes have been identified in four priority areas that would improve the game's future and drive sustainable growth for all involved in the sport.

Recommended solutions are built on the premise that cricket should have global growth and competitive balance objectives, and that every cricket country is part of a global ecosystem, reliant on other countries and their players for their own success.

This report takes a whole of game approach and covers both the men's and women's games for the first time. Problems identified are relevant and applicable to both, but are at different stages of coming to pass. Recommended solutions, equally, focus on the common global principles that should underpin both, notwithstanding that the men's and women's games can, and should, continue to evolve in their own way.

If recommendations are embraced, there are significant projected benefits across all stakeholders and for the sport.



SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED AND RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

THEME	MAJOR PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED	RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS
	The current global cricket schedule is chaotic, inconsistent and confusing for fans, and limits the overall quality of the product	<p>Cricket's global schedule should align international and domestic formats to drive growth, ensuring all matches have clear context and purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear purpose and vision for each format • Simpler, easy to follow international competition structures • Introduction of the concept of "Core International Cricket" • Global calendar and scheduling windows for Core International Cricket¹
	Global cricket's finances are not optimised, balanced or used effectively, resulting in the sport not reaching its global potential	<p>Cricket's financial structure should support global growth and competitive balance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum series length and frequency parameters • ICC revenue distribution parameters to drive global growth equitably and efficiently • Centralised 'Global Growth & Development Fund,' underpinned by pooled rights model, to fund Core International Cricket • Stronger regulation and accountability • Player revenue sharing parameters
	Cricket's global regulations are outdated for the current transnational era, with arbitrary restrictions, limited protections and security for players, and risks to game integrity	<p>Cricket's global regulatory frameworks need to reflect the new transnational reality to protect the game and people in it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Fit for purpose' global regulatory framework governing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Event sanctioning – Player movement – Global professional cricket standards
	There is a lack of overarching leadership in the game providing global direction, leading to regional self-interest, short-term thinking and an imbalance of power	<p>Global cricket needs to come together with clear leadership to reflect the sport's changing landscape and prevent fragmentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernising the ICC to ensure it is empowered to lead the game at a global level and built on shared ownership, independence, and fairer representation reflective of the whole sport

Projected Benefits of Adopting Recommendations:

- **Survival of international cricket** – in more than just a few countries
- **Increase in revenue** – estimated + USD 240M p.a. into global cricket economy
- **Easier to follow cricket calendar** – with greater consistency, context, jeopardy, and competition integrity
- **Enhanced global growth and competitive balance** – through investment in men's and women's depth
- **Greater ability for NGB's and DT20 leagues to plan and structure** – high performance, contracting and retention strategies
- **Enhanced player protections** – and reducing the need to choose between representing country and optimising career

1. Several recommendations are underpinned by the introduction of "Core International Cricket" – a minimum of 1 match per format against all other teams within consistent divisional championships, culminating in existing pinnacle ICC Events. This baseline to be protected in the calendar by 4 short scheduling windows annually, with certain costs subsidised centrally, and certain rights pooled and leveraged globally. The majority of the calendar would remain for the market to continue to evolve and innovate outside of this.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS IN PRACTICE

SCHEDULING

Clear purpose and vision for each format

- Defined and aligned for the modern era, with the three international formats and DT20 Leagues positioned on the same level rather than within a hierarchical pyramid

Simpler, easy to follow international competition structures

- The introduction of **Core International Cricket** – a mandated minimum of 1 match per format against all other teams within consistent divisional championships for each format
- Championship cycles over 2 years, with promotion and relegation, culminating in qualification for existing pinnacle ICC Events
- Changes to be implemented from the next Future Tours Program cycle onwards, in 2028 for men's, and 2029 for women's

Global calendar and scheduling windows for Core International Cricket

- **Core International Cricket** to be protected in the calendar by 4 short (e.g. 21 day) global scheduling windows annually, in addition to existing major ICC Event windows
- The majority of the calendar to remain free for the market to continue to evolve and innovate, including flexibility for both DT20 Leagues and longer international series where viable

ECONOMICS

Minimum series length and frequency parameters

- Minimum 1 series versus all other opponents per division per two year cycle
- Flexibility to play between 1 and 5 matches in a series in each format

ICC revenue distribution parameters to drive global growth equitably and efficiently

- For example, in line with international precedents, a minimum 2% and maximum 10% for the top 24 countries, and a minimum 10% distribution collectively for countries 25+

Centralised 'Global Growth & Development Fund,' to fund Core International Cricket and other initiatives

- To be funded by: certain pooled media rights for **Core International Cricket**, DT20 Leagues contribution of media rights or licensing fee, ICC Event revenue percentage

- To be utilised for: minimum player and official costs for **Core International Cricket**, central marketing and game promotion, targeted growth market funding, minimum divisional player payments, other global growth and player welfare initiatives, increased investment in the women's' game

Player revenue sharing parameters

- A minimum percentage of revenue generated to be shared with players in all sanctioned cricket across international cricket and DT20 leagues
- Payment enforcement mechanisms to be included within Professional Cricket Standards

Stronger regulation and accountability

- All distributions from the ICC to National Governing Bodies to be publicly accounted for and independently audited against clear KPIs and enforcement mechanisms (i.e. future reductions / clawback penalties for any malpractice)

REGULATIONS

'Fit for purpose' global regulatory framework governing:

Event Sanctioning

- All international matches / events with cross border implications to be sanctioned by the ICC
- Minimum standards for event sanctioning including relating to integrity measures
- Removal of arbitrary global rules with respect to the number of foreign players in DT20 Leagues and DT20 league solidarity payments linked to player movement / salary

Player Movement

- A global registration and tracking system for the international movement of players – enshrining freedom of movement, and rules with respect to management of player registration in overlapping competitions, and

disputes between clubs / teams affiliated to different National Governing Bodies

- A mandatory release mechanism between National Governing Bodies and domestic teams (and vice-versa). This mechanism to align with protected **Core International Cricket** windows only, and subject to the adoption of economic and other recommendations
- Safeguards for player welfare

Global Professional Cricket Standards

- Minimum professional player contract standards
- Rules safeguarding contractual stability and a fair dispute resolution mechanism protecting foreign players including on non-payment issues
- Safeguards for the protection of the international movement of minors
- Global licensing framework for player agents

LEADERSHIP

Modernising the ICC to ensure it is empowered to lead the game at a global level and built on shared ownership, independence, and fairer representation reflective of the whole sport

- Creation of an independently chaired **Global Game Leadership Committee** as an interim step – comprised of 25% National Boards, 25% Leagues / Franchises, 25% Players, 25% independents.
- Committee to make recommendations to modernise ICC leadership, ensuring it is fit for purpose to lead the global

game in line with global objectives (e.g.):

- Creation and management of an updated global scheduling calendar including **Core International Cricket** and Championship structures within it
- Development and enforcement of new transnational regulations for the professional game
- Revenue distribution and accountability of member boards
- Resource management including global cricket growth and development

WCA Next Steps

- WCA intends to engage with relevant stakeholders on the recommendations in this report, and will actively take steps to progress each of the recommendations over the coming months and years
- Whilst the scheduling changes are proposed to commence 2028 and 2029, many of the other recommendations can be implemented from 2026

CONTENTS

ABOUT WCA

The World Cricketers' Association (WCA) is the global players' body in cricket, collectively representing the majority of the world's best cricketers across 15 countries, through their domestic players' associations, and by direct affiliation.

We care about:

- **Players** – Advocating for, supporting, and providing world class services to players at global level
- **Players' Associations** – Enabling and empowering players' associations around the world
- **The Game** – Positively influencing the direction of the global game
- **Optimising Commercial Value** – For players and powering the player movement

ABOUT TSC

The Sports Consultancy (TSC) is a global management consultancy focused on the sport, entertainment and major events industries, with offices in London, Abu Dhabi, Riyadh and Singapore.

TSC is home to market leading consultants with expertise across:

- Strategy
- Events
- Commercial
- Legal
- Facilities



METHODOLOGY

This report focuses on the men's and women's professional cricket landscapes in which the best players in the world compete, and which generate the revenue that funds the entire sport underneath it. It does not focus on underpinning domestic structures unique to each country.

It focuses on:

- ICC Events
- Bilateral international cricket
- Major DT20 leagues²

The problems, and solutions, highlighted within the report, have come from extensive global research, and been analysed and interpreted by the expert Sub-Committee, The Sports Consultancy, and other experts. The process has been driven by, and incorporates, data gathered via the following means:

SUB-COMMITTEE

To guide this review and report, in 2024 WCA formed an expert Sub Committee, allowing representatives from key stakeholder groups across the game and industry leaders to advise on the future of global cricket. It included:

Paul Marsh

Chair – former ACA CEO and current AFLPA CEO

Sana Mir

Former Pakistan Captain, Broadcaster

Sanjog Gupta

Head of Jio-Star

Tom Harrison

Former ECB CEO and current Six Nations CEO

James Kitching

Former FIFA Director of Football Regulatory

Tony Irish

Former CEO SACA and Executive Chairman of WCA

Ex Officio

Tom Moffat

WCA CEO

Stephanie Bond

WCA Head of Legal

Cameron Borgas

WCA Head of Player & Member Operations

COMPREHENSIVE STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

64 senior stakeholder representatives (listed in appendix) from across all major cricket countries have been interviewed by the Sub Committee, including players and their associations, media, broadcasters, team owners, current and former administrators³.

INTERNATIONAL PLAYER SURVEY DATA

The WCA has surveyed players comprehensively since 2015. The most recent 2024 survey referenced in this report was completed by 328 current men's and women's pro players from across 16 countries, the majority of which are current international players.

STATISTICAL AND SCHEDULING DATA

Provided by Cricket Archive.

EMPLOYMENT MARKET, FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC DATA

Provided by The Sports Consultancy, players' associations, and various other sources referenced throughout the report.

IMPERFECT DATA AND TIME LAG ACKNOWLEDGMENT

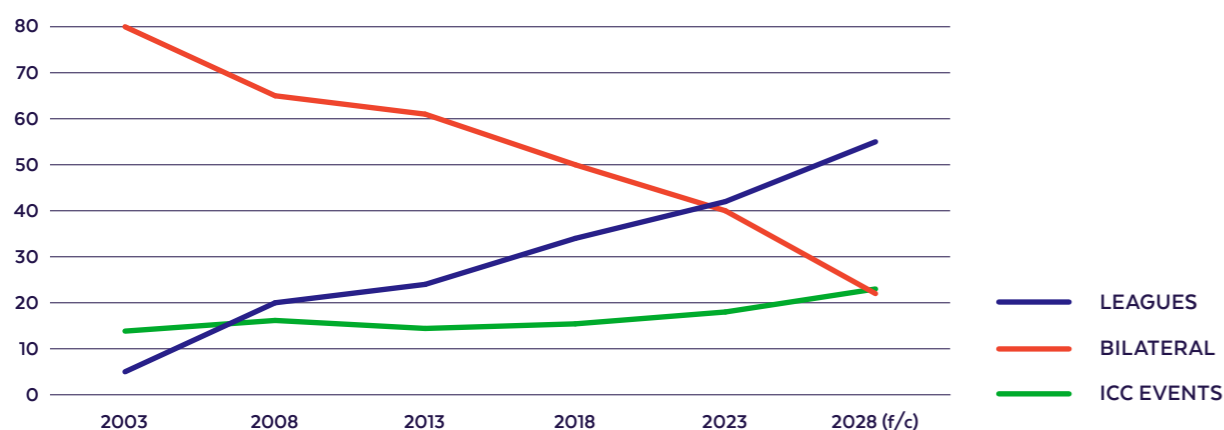
WCA acknowledges that it does not have access to full data sets from across the game, and that there is some time lag on some of the data contained within the report. Most quantitative data has been captured up until February 2024, with qualitative data captured up until February 2025.

2. For the purposes of this report, the defined term "DT20 leagues" includes T20, The Hundred, and other similar short form iterations of the game including major T10 tournaments.

3. Several interviewed stakeholders requested to remain anonymous, including where quoted throughout the report.

GLOBAL CRICKET - THE NEED FOR CHANGE

GLOBAL CRICKET REVENUE SOURCE (AS % OF OVERALL REVENUE)



DIRECTION AND TRENDS

Revenue moving to cricket with context

- Investment and higher rights values are increasingly driven by international cricket with context (ICC Events) and DT20 leagues, whilst bilateral international cricket is declining or plateauing comparatively

T20 increasingly the dominant format globally

- In terms of scheduling volume, revenue, player and fan sentiment

Private ownership is growing with the prevalence of the franchise model

- Whilst the majority of leagues themselves are still owned or controlled by the National Governing Bodies, some (e.g. CPL, MLC) are majority privately owned
- There is increasing common franchise ownership across DT20 leagues (e.g. GMR group own Dubai Capitals, Pretoria Capitals, Seattle Orcas, Southern Brave, Delhi Capitals)

- USD 700M+ in private investment into The Hundred franchises in 2025
- USD 500M+ private investment into Women's Premier League franchises in 2023

Shift in player employment toward private opportunities

- Whilst previously built on annual central contracts with National Governing Bodies, focused on international cricket, except for Indian players who are blanket restricted, most of the best players are now hybrid / multi-employer (e.g. home contract + overseas league(s) contracts), or free agents, with an increasing number rejecting central contracts or choosing formats
- Some countries have shifted to format specific (e.g. 'white ball') contracting
- There are now 627 men's and women's overseas DT20 leagues contracts available (an increase from 482 in 2021)

- Average player earnings are 2-4x higher in DT20 leagues than international cricket, for players in all bar the biggest three countries

De-regulation and fragmentation of the global cricket calendar

- Prior to 2014, the Future Tours Programme was centrally managed by the ICC, ensuring reciprocal touring obligations between nations. This system was de-regulated in 2014, meaning countries now schedule fixtures through individual agreements, removing any central oversight and consistency
- The ICC simultaneously repositioned itself from a global governing body to a 'members' organisation', giving greater power to individual boards—especially the biggest ones, to shape the international calendar based on their own priorities

STRONG FOUNDATIONS

Cricket has a strong foundation for growth driven by:

- A history** of strong international competition over almost 150 years, with iconic rivalries
- Diverse formats** that cater to fan preferences in different ways, from purists to casual viewers
- An enormous and growing fanbase** of 2.5 billion fans globally, including a major footprint in Asia – the most populous continent with rapidly growing economies
- Private investors** showing increased appetite for involvement in the sport, with new owners and multi-club ownership models expanding across both men's and women's DT20 franchises worldwide
- Significant increase** in global playing opportunities



CRICKET IS THE 3RD MOST POPULAR SPORT GLOBALLY IN TERMS OF FANS⁴



IPL IS THE SECOND MOST VALUABLE SPORTING LEAGUE IN THE WORLD ON A PER MATCH BASIS⁴

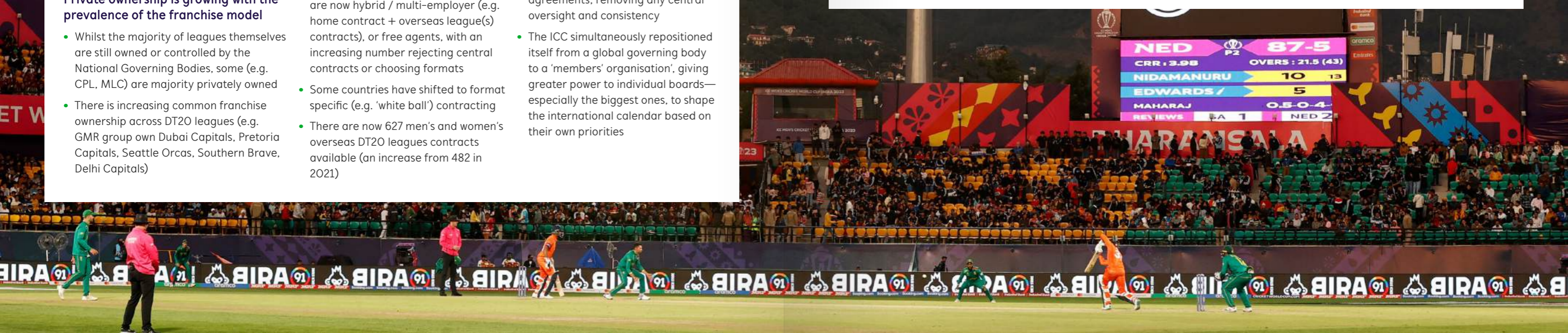
4. Sources: Nielsen, ICC, rights holders, TSC analysis.

MAJOR THREATS TO CRICKET'S FUTURE

The review has also identified several major threats to the future of the sport, across men's, women's, red ball and white ball cricket. These threats mean some aspects of international cricket, and some of the National Governing Bodies that rely on it, face an existential threat in a number of countries. They are fuelled by factors including:

- Limited and selective collaboration** between stakeholders with almost no unified strategy or long-term planning among key stakeholders
- Self-perpetuating global scheduling and economic models** designed to disproportionately benefit the biggest and strongest, and widening inequality as a result

- A structure in which the best players globally are increasingly required to choose** between representing their country and optimising their earning with clubs
- Over-reliance** on a limited number of markets and relative lack of investment in others
- Looming external threats**, including declining global media revenues, rising competition from other forms of entertainment, and innovation in other sports



RECOMMENDED WAY FORWARD

The broad range of interviews and surveys conducted have revealed consensus among all stakeholders that change is necessary.

Four consistent themes have emerged – shown right – along with the guiding principle for each that shows the direction that most stakeholders believe the game should take.

The following chapters explore each theme in detail, outlining:

- key problems identified
- proposed solutions; and
- practical implementation

all guided by these principles. The themes and principles apply across the whole game covering all formats and both genders, with specific nuances considered for each.

THEME 1: SCHEDULING

Cricket's global schedule should align international and domestic formats to drive growth, ensuring all matches have clear context and purpose.

THEME 2: ECONOMICS

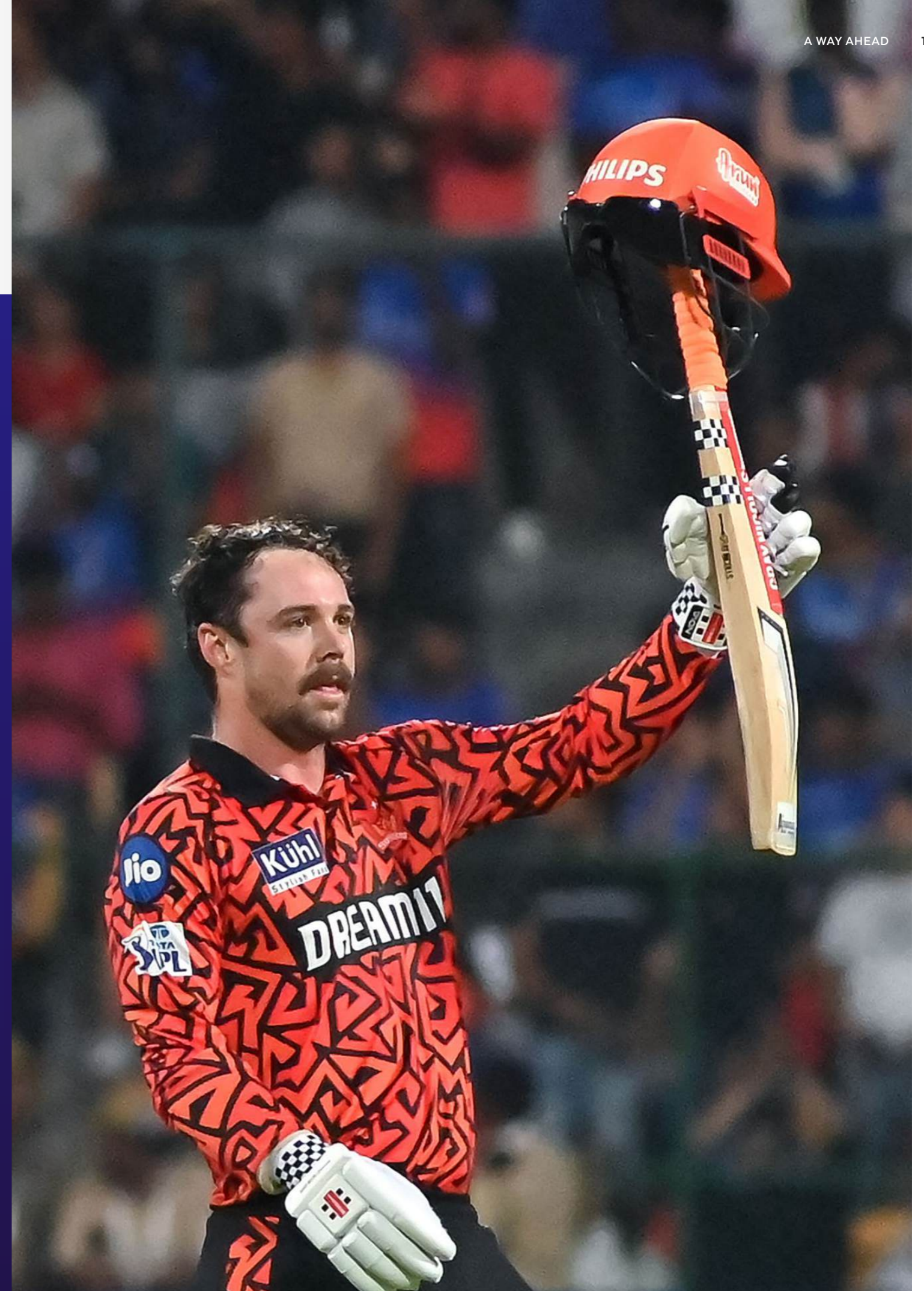
Cricket's financial structure should support global growth and competitive balance.

THEME 3: REGULATION

Cricket's global regulatory frameworks need to reflect the new transnational reality to protect the game and people in it.

THEME 4: LEADERSHIP

Global cricket needs to come together to address the sport's changing landscape and prevent fragmentation.



THEME 1: SCHEDULING

Principle 1

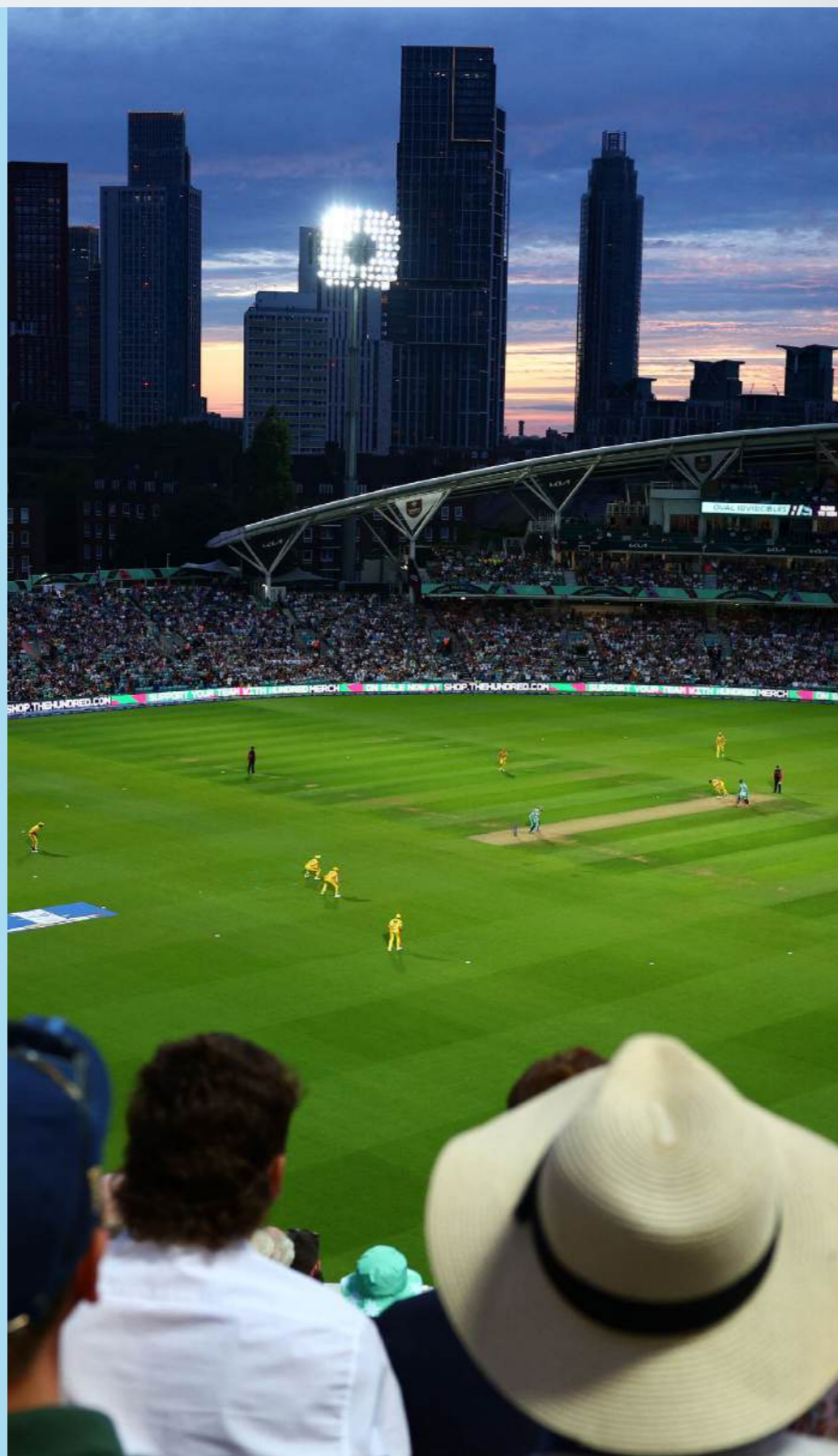
Cricket's global schedule should align international and domestic formats to drive growth, ensuring all matches have clear context and purpose.

Context

There are almost no enforceable rules or parameters with respect to scheduling professional cricket globally, or to fit matches within a coherent global calendar. This challenge is compounded by having three formats of the game. Whilst this enables choice, the largely 'free-for-all' nature of scheduling has created significant issues, including:

- confusion for fans
- pressures on player availability
- players having to decide between playing international cricket and optimising their career
- an overall impact on the quality and integrity of the cricket played and associated competition structures

There is major concern across the game at the increasingly negative impacts of the current global schedule. These challenges are most clear at the top of the men's game, but will also increasingly create issues in the women's game if they are not addressed.



PROBLEM: THERE IS NO CLEAR, COHERENT VISION FOR EACH FORMAT

Matches often have no clear purpose for players or fans, particularly in bilateral cricket, and different series have no real connecting thread that creates a narrative across the game. Without a clear and widely understood vision for each international format, as well as at the highest domestic level, it is challenging for fans to follow the game, limiting cricket's growth potential. Whilst there have been some attempts to define a vision for each format previously, they have lacked both substance and practical implementation and, critically, DT20 leagues have also not been formally considered alongside international cricket, as a fundamental and increasingly important part of the global calendar.

“
THERE ARE A LOT OF INCONSISTENCIES AND DISPARITIES IN FIXTURES, MAKING INTERNATIONAL CRICKET CONFUSING AND HARD TO FOLLOW.

TIM SOUTHEE,
FORMER INTERNATIONAL

PROBLEM: SCHEDULING IS UNBALANCED, UNEVEN AND UNFAIR, IMPACTING ON COMPETITION INTEGRITY AND COMPETITIVE BALANCE

In the international game, there is generally no consistency in the number of series played by different teams, the formats they focus on, or the frequency they play against other teams. This is a product of scheduling decisions for bilateral international cricket being made by National Governing Bodies, based on individual deals with each other, rather than being channelled centrally through an empowered ICC or global governing body working to create fair competition structures with enforceable minimum standards.

The current system benefits the bigger countries in the short term, who have the most leverage to 'trade' in revenue generating bilateral tours, at the expense of the overall sum of the parts. This has led to bigger countries on the men's side often having a problem with 'too much' cricket, whilst smaller countries and most women's teams generally have the opposite problem of lack of access to cricket.

“
THE RELATIVE LACK OF QUALITY COMPETITION STRUCTURE, MISSING CONTEXT AND LIMITED JEOPARDY AROUND MOST INTERNATIONAL MATCHES IS SEVERELY LIMITING THE QUALITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL GAME.

CURRENT ADMINISTRATOR

All of these factors have perpetuated inequalities in the international game, including economic imbalances, while also making it challenging for fans to understand the context of each match and series. In a system lacking clear rules or coherent fixturing, it becomes nearly impossible to establish a credible, cohesive, and easy-to-follow competition structure or narrative.

“
IT'S UTTERLY CONFUSING.

BEN STOKES ON THE WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP

The current system does not support competitive balance in international cricket, with fewer competitive nations and the ICC events being dominated by the three biggest countries (India, Australia and England).

“
THE SPORT HAS TO BE COMPETITIVE FOR PEOPLE TO ASPIRE TO PLAY IT OR WATCH IT.

COMMERCIAL STAKEHOLDER

INDIA, ENGLAND, AND AUSTRALIA SCHEDULE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE CRICKET AGAINST EACH OTHER THAN OTHER TOP-NINE COUNTRIES. BETWEEN 2021 AND 2023 THIS EQUATED TO 70-190% MORE DAYS IN MEN'S CRICKET AND 90-120% MORE DAYS IN WOMEN'S CRICKET⁵

COUNTRIES RANKED 10-20 AVERAGE 15 DAYS OF WOMEN'S AND 30 DAYS MEN'S SCHEDULED INTERNATIONAL CRICKET PER YEAR, LESS THAN HALF THE VOLUME OF COUNTRIES RANKED 1-9⁵

IN THE CURRENT MEN'S WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP CYCLE, NOT ALL COMPETING TEAMS PLAYED AGAINST EACH OTHER

SINCE 2018, THE THREE BIGGEST COUNTRIES HAVE WON 11 OF 13 MAJOR ICC EVENTS ACROSS THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S GAMES

5. Cricket Archive data.

PROBLEM:
SCHEDULING IS CHAOTIC AND CONFUSING, WITH ‘OVERLAP’ COMPROMISING FIXTURES AND DILUTING THE PRODUCT

Domestic T20 (DT20) leagues are currently being played on almost every day of the year in the men’s game, with the international schedule generally overlaid on top, and they are becoming increasingly prominent in the women’s game. Most of the best players in the world compete in both landscapes and this means they are increasingly faced with a decision between prioritising international or domestic cricket.

This has many positive implications, but has also led to a confusing, packed cricket calendar, with international series and DT20 leagues clashing and often lacking context and value, leading to confusion and apathy from players, fans and broadcasters.

These issues clearly impact on the quality of international cricket, but domestic leagues are also experiencing challenges with their place in the schedule and limited player availability. A lack of coordinated scheduling and regulation around it means that DT20 leagues are often disrupted by players leaving mid-tournament due to international duties or transitioning to another league. This can undermine the continuity and competitive integrity of these tournaments, leaving teams weakened and fans shortchanged.

Case Study 1: Scheduling Overlap and Product Dilution – Men’s
 In 2024 the South African men’s team toured New Zealand with a significantly understrength team including seven debutants in the squad, and missing almost all first choice players. This was a product of the prioritisation of their home T20 league, the SA20 which was scheduled at the same time. New Zealand won the two-match series 2-0.

Case Study 2: Scheduling Overlap and Product Dilution – Women’s
 In 2024 the England women’s team toured New Zealand at the same time as the Women’s Premier League was being played in India. Four England players were unavailable for a portion of the England tour due to WPL commitments, whilst two pulled out of the WPL to play in the New Zealand series.

60%
OF PLAYERS INDICATED THEY WOULD CONSIDER REJECTING A NATIONAL CONTRACT IF OFFERED HIGHER PAY AS A FREE AGENT – THIS NUMBER HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY GROWING SINCE 2015⁶

“
WOMEN’S LEAGUES ARE STARTING TO CLASH MORE WITH INTERNATIONAL CRICKET AND PLAYERS ARE NOW STARTING TO NEED TO CHOOSE. THE WOMEN’S SCHEDULE NEEDS TO AVOID THE BIG ISSUES WE SEE IN THE MEN’S GAME.
HAYLEY MATTHEWS, CURRENT INTERNATIONAL



RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:
EACH FORMAT NEEDS A CLEARLY STATED PURPOSE AND VISION, SUPPORTED BY SCHEDULING

Through the review process, a general consensus emerged that all formats of international cricket – Test, ODI, and T20I – are important and should be preserved. Whilst Test cricket and 50-over cricket were not generally viewed as growth formats, each plays an important role and there is still clearly sporting and commercial upside in an optimised game structure. T20I and DT20 were consistently identified as having significant growth and commercial potential, across both the men’s and women’s games.

To secure the future success of each format, there was broad agreement that each format needs a more clearly defined position and vision, with a greater percentage of matches having a clearer purpose in the calendar overall. Each vision should direct the changes and regulations required to drive success.

Recommended positioning of each form of the game



6. 2024 WCA Global Player Survey.
 7. Currently 5 day x 90 overs is the default length of a men’s Test matches, while 4 day x 96 over is the default in the women’s game. The idea of standardising 4 day Test cricket across both was raised by some stakeholders, however it is recommended that flexibility be retained for now. This was identified as a minor ‘delivery mechanic’ rather than a fundamental issue that requires addressing in the sport.
 8. Whilst a number of stakeholders suggested that the role of ODI should be reviewed after the 2031 ODI World Cup scheduled to be held in India, most stakeholders felt that it is not necessarily the format itself that’s the issue, but rather the current ‘randomness’ of plugging in bilateral ODI series with limited meaning into the calendar.

**RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:
SIMPLER, EASY TO FOLLOW COMPETITION STRUCTURES ACROSS ALL FORMATS TO ENSURE
CONSISTENCY, QUALITY AND CONTEXT**

Ensuring that international competition structures are simple and easy to follow across each format was identified as an important aspect of any reformed structure. This should be guided by some consistent underpinning principles applicable across all formats, rather than 'tinkering' with each format in isolation.

Suggested Underpinning Principles for International Cricket:

- **Access to Core International Cricket** – competition structures should provide a protected base level of access to the international game for more countries, with teams required to play at least the minimum amount of cricket against all other teams in their division in each format (1 match in each format) (“**Core International Cricket**”). Flexibility to be retained outside of that where it is viable to play more⁹
- **Each format features a simplified championship table, culminating in existing pinnacle ICC Events** – each ICC Event is the pinnacle of each format, with all series outcomes contributing to qualification for, and access to, these events¹⁰
- **Merit-based structures** – windows to protect pinnacle ICC Events and the minimum volume of Core International Cricket (1 match per format v all teams in division) required for enhanced, credible, championship structures
- **Context and jeopardy** – all international cricket has meaning and broader implications within the overall structure of the game across each format
- **Series equity and simple points systems** – the same amount of points should be available for any series, whether it is a 1 match or 5 match series. No competitive advantage or disadvantage for scheduling less or additional cricket
- **Best teams available** – for all Core International Cricket (see windows on page 21)
- **Incentivising scarcity** – by subsidising and protecting Core International Cricket (see economics section), the expectation would be that levels of unsustainable or meaningless cricket outside of that would ultimately reduce when left to the open market
- **Centrally managed and enforced** – to ensure its integrity, it is important that competition structures are managed and enforced centrally at global level, with penalties for non-compliance (e.g. sporting and economic sanctions)

In practice:

To deliver these principles, clear championships need to be implemented around each format of the international game from the next Future Tours Programme onwards, 2028 for the Men's and 2029 for the Women's.

These structures would incorporate all **Core International Cricket**, with teams playing one series against each other team in their division over 2-year cycles (a minimum of 1 match per format) – maintaining this level of frequency across formats, the opportunity for promotion and relegation, and a clear link to ICC Events as the pinnacle in each format. **Core International Cricket** to be protected in the calendar by 4 x scheduling windows, with potential for certain costs to be subsidised, and rights leveraged centrally (see below).

“**THE GAME'S FINANCES ARE NOT OPTIMISED BECAUSE COMPETITION STRUCTURES HAVE BECOME INCOHERENT IN THE SEARCH FOR MORE SHORT TERM VALUE. CRICKET OF CONSEQUENCE, RATHER THAN CRICKET FOR CRICKET'S SAKE IS THE KEY TO ADDRESSING THIS.**

TOM HARRISON, FORMER ADMINISTRATOR

9. In practice there is no reason why valued 5 match series could not continue under the recommended structure.
10. Although only the minimum one match per format would be centrally mandated, subsidised, and protected by windows as part of Core International Cricket, all matches in series would count towards consistent divisional championship tables

Example future Men's international Championship structures (2028 onwards)*

2 YEAR CYCLE	TEST 12 team qualification structure for the 4 team World Test Championship Finals	ODI 24 team qualification structure for the 14 team ICC World Cup and 8 team Champions Trophy	T20I 32 team qualification structure for the 20 team T20 World Cup
DIVISION 1	Green	Green	Green
	Green	Green	Green
	Green	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green
DIVISION 2	Blue	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green
DIVISION 3	Blue	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green
DIVISION 4	Blue	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green
	Blue	Green	Green

Bottom team in the lowest Division for ODI and T20I to compete in a play off against highest ranking team outside of the championship.

- Key**
- Green: Direct qualification for WTC finals or ICC tournament
 - Blue: Remain in the division
 - Red: Enter play off match to decide promotion/relegation for next cycle
 - Light Blue: Enter global qualifier for the ICC tournament

*Example model with consistent 8 team divisions throughout

Example future Women's international Championship structures (2029 onwards)*

2 YEAR CYCLE	TEST Tests to remain as part of multi-format series	ODI 16 team qualification structure for the 10 team ICC World Cup and 6 team Champions Trophy	T20I 24 team qualification structure for the 16 team T20 World Cup
DIVISION 1	Maintain and continue to explore further role, including through multi format series where viable. Recommended further review in 2029.	Green	Green
		Green	Green
		Green	Green
		Green	Green
		Green	Green
		Green	Green
		Red	Red
		Red	Red
DIVISION 2		Light Blue	Light Green
		Light Blue	Light Green
		Light Blue	Light Green
		Light Blue	Light Green
		Light Blue	Light Green
		Light Blue	Light Green
		Dark Blue	Light Blue
		Dark Blue	Light Blue
DIVISION 3	Bottom team in the lowest Division for ODI and T20I to compete in a play off against highest ranking team outside of the championship.	Red	Red
		Light Blue	Light Blue
		Light Blue	Light Blue
		Light Blue	Light Blue
		Light Blue	Light Blue
		Light Blue	Light Blue
		Dark Blue	Dark Blue
		Dark Blue	Dark Blue

*Example model with consistent 8 team divisions throughout

Key

- Direct qualification for WTC finals or ICC tournament
- Remain in the division
- Enter play off match to decide promotion/relegation for next cycle
- Enter global qualifier for the ICC tournament



**RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:
A GLOBAL CALENDAR AND SCHEDULING WINDOWS FOR CORE INTERNATIONAL CRICKET TO ENSURE IT CAN CO-EXIST WITH DOMESTIC LEAGUES AND BOTH CAN THRIVE**

The only viable option to provide more clarity, and ensure a balance between international cricket and DT20 leagues proposed by any stakeholder, is allocating designated, global game windows in the calendar to Core International Cricket matches. Whilst the importance of enabling markets to determine evolution is clear, ensuring some element of agreed protection for some enhanced international cricket, to ensure a balance alongside that, was acknowledged by most stakeholders.

Windows for certain international fixtures are predated in world sport, working successfully in football and basketball, and despite logistical challenges posed by climate, regional nuances, and governance issues, this approach remains the most credible and consistent way to enable a base level of Core International Cricket and DT20 leagues to co-exist.

The alternative, i.e. enabling a total free market, and an effectively un-regulated sport, was not viewed as desirable as it would likely lead to a totally split game and player employment market and the dilution of each landscape. Similarly, whilst a creating windows for both international cricket and DT20 leagues was considered, establishing windows in a way that is too artificial, or may unnecessarily stifle growth, was not generally supported.

Suggested Underpinning Principles:

- **A global calendar** – centrally managed at ICC level
- **Balance and co-existence** – fundamentally it is important for the entire sport to establish a system in which Core International Cricket and DT20 leagues can co-exist. They're both important for the future of the sport and its sustainability across all countries
- **Protect Core International Cricket only** – by protecting pinnacle ICC Events and the minimum volume of Core International Cricket (1 match per format v all teams in division) required for enhanced championship structures via scheduling windows. Core International Cricket should also be supported by economic subsidisation and rights pooling (see economics section)
- **Logical calendar placement** – windows to fit logically in the annual calendar with respect to regional climates and other practical considerations
- **Promote, don't stifle, growth** – safeguard a significant portion of the year for the market to continue to evolve, innovate and grow, including through new concepts and disruptions that are positive for the global game. For example, the majority of the calendar would be retained for the increasingly important DT20 leagues landscape, and additional bilateral international cricket (if viable), in a free market environment

“
IF YOU WANT TO HAVE A BETTER, FAIRER WORLD GAME, THE ICC OR ANOTHER CENTRAL BODY NEEDS TO TAKE CONTROL OF SCHEDULING AND THE CALENDAR AT A HIGH LEVEL. WORLD CRICKET'S LEADERSHIP WALKING AROUND WITH LAPTOPS AND SPREADSHEETS LEVERAGING INDIVIDUAL DEALS IS NEVER GOING TO OPTIMISE THE SPORT.

CURRENT ADMINISTRATOR

In practice:

To implement these principles, designated global game windows set aside for **Core International Cricket** need to be agreed on by leading stakeholders in the game from the next Future Tours Programme in both the men's and women's games.

Considering the current schedule and the windows that have naturally developed, climatic factors, and the amounts of international cricket proposed here, four windows per year each lasting approx. 21 days, where **Core International Cricket** will be protected, for example through a requirement that no official major DT20 leagues will take place, or through mandatory release mechanisms. International cricket played outside of these windows would be required to go head-to-head with DT20 leagues.

Men's example 2028 calendar with windows for Core International Cricket*

MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
WINDOW	FREE MARKET	INT	FREE MARKET	FREE MARKET	INT	FREE MARKET	LA28	FREE MARKET	INT	FREE MARKET	ICC T20 WC	INT	FREE
DAYS		21			21				21			21	
WEEKENDS		3			3				3			3	

Women's example 2029 calendar with windows for Core International Cricket*

MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
WINDOW	FREE MARKET	INT	FREE MARKET	FREE MARKET	INT	FREE MARKET	INT	FREE MARKET	ICC T20 WC	FREE MARKET	FREE MARKET	INT	FREE
DAYS		21			21		21					21	
WEEKENDS		3			3		3					3	

“
WE EITHER WATCH INTERNATIONAL CRICKET DIE IN MANY COUNTRIES, OR WE SET UP A BALANCE AND WINDOWS ARE THE KEY TO THAT. WINDOWS ARE THE BEST SOLUTION TO GIVE PLAYERS, FANS AND ADMINISTRATORS CLARITY ON HOW YOU CAN STRUCTURE A YEAR, PLAN AND REGULATE.

EOIN MORGAN, FORMER INTERNATIONAL

84%
OF PLAYERS BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE RING FENCED SCHEDULING WINDOWS TO ALLOW LEAGUE AND INTERNATIONAL CRICKET TO CO-EXIST¹¹

*Men's and women's windows could run concurrently, dovetail, or have standalone calendar placement.

11. 2024 WCA Global Player Survey.

THEME 2: ECONOMICS

Principle 2

The game's financial structure should support global growth and competitive balance.

Context

As a global sport, international cricket, and the overall growth of the game, is reliant on countries having the revenue to invest in underpinning structures, pathways and players. In DT20 leagues, every successful major league in the world is also reliant on foreign player participation to drive cricketing and commercial value. This means that each country, and player group, is a cog in a larger wheel, reliant on the rest of the wheel to be sustainably successful.

There is broad consensus across stakeholders that cricket's growth and commercial potential is not currently being optimised, and that enhanced equalisation measures also need to be built into the global cricket ecosystem to enable greater stability, and for the game to reach its potential.

Competitiveness is also key for any sport to survive and thrive. Improving the quality of players in smaller countries and moving to a more equitable payment structure for players will serve to bridge the gap between top and bottom teams, in turn improving the competitiveness and therefore value of international cricket. The alternative – continuing with totally self-perpetuating models conducive to the concentration of wealth in very few parts of the world – is not viewed as desirable, or the right thing for the sport overall.



PROBLEM: GLOBAL CRICKET'S REVENUE GENERATION IS NOT OPTIMISED

Cricket is not currently maximising its commercial potential relative to the enormous following the sport has. The global cricket economy currently generates approximately USD \$4 billion in revenue, ranking seventh among major international sports despite having the third largest total fanbase.

- **70% of global game revenues are generated during just 3 months of the year** – across the IPL and ICC major events where almost USD \$1 billion is made each month, demonstrating the value of cricket with context, meaning and clear calendar space¹²
- **The remaining nine months of the year are significantly less lucrative** – averaging ~USD \$140 million per month during this period, where a significant volume of overlapping international and DT20 is played, with limited context for players and fans, fragmented rights and viewing opportunities, and messy scheduling
- **Bilateral cricket revenues generated by countries 4-108 equate to less than 4% of global cricket revenue collectively** – the majority of this cricket is currently break even or loss making

Other successful major sports such as basketball and football, have clearer windows with consistent narratives, providing fans with a premium product that engages broad audiences for a greater part of the year. Cricket needs to improve its year-round offering to match and exceed its competitors to achieve full commercial success for all stakeholders.

“
CRICKET HAS SO MUCH SCOPE TO IMPROVE ITS PRODUCT AND GROW THE PIE FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

ROHAN SAJDEH, BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP

PROBLEM: INEFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES

Inefficient use of resources within the game, underpinned by insufficient accountability, transparency and cost centralisation, means most cricketing countries have an extremely limited ability to invest in the game and players.

There is broad stakeholder consensus that the game could be using its resources more efficiently with improved accountability mechanisms and increased centralisation, particularly around major costs such as travel and possibly certain aspects of player payments.

- **There is almost no centralised accountability on spend of global revenue distributions** – from the ICC to full members, or revenue generated through bilateral international cricket, and DT20 leagues
- **In some countries, where there is an effective players' association** – some transparency and accountability mechanisms have been built into a collective bargaining agreement, but it is clear that many countries still operate with almost no checks and balances, leaving participants vulnerable

“
THERE SHOULD BE MORE ACCOUNTABILITY ON HOW RECIPIENTS OF MONEY ARE SPENDING AND INVESTING FOR THE BETTERMENT OF CRICKET.

HARSHA BOGLE, MEDIA COMMENTATOR

**PROBLEM:
INEFFECTIVE GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION MODELS**

Global cricket's finances and distribution models are heavily imbalanced, self-perpetuating, and do not effectively support global growth or competitive balance. Existing models are likely to continue to lead to widening inequalities and decreasing competitiveness, further devaluing the international game which requires strong opponents to ensure jeopardy and good sporting and commercial products.

- **The ICC's distribution model is heavily skewed and not optimising global game growth** – the only tangible global revenue distribution platform within cricket is the ICC's funding system, where a portion of revenue generated by ICC Events is distributed to national governing bodies. Stakeholders interviewed consistently highlighted concerns that this system has been made less equitable for the new cycle, is limitless, and is not based on transparent metrics, or proportionate to global growth and competitive balance objectives which underpin the management of most sophisticated sports. While the value contributed by each national governing body should be considered, and a completely balanced distribution structure was not desired, almost all stakeholders highlighted that this system should be reviewed to ensure some parameters conducive to driving greater overall growth in the sport
- **Bilateral international cricket has no re-distribution mechanism and is not conducive to global game growth** – with smaller countries generally reliant on larger teams to visit, to fund their programmes
- **The only re-distribution mechanism in DT20 leagues is funded by the players** – the ICC and member boards mandated a DT20 leagues "solidarity payment" within their event sanctioning regulations in 2023 (see Regulations section below). This is essentially positioned as a player wage tax, shifting the responsibility of contributing to the sustainability and growth of the global game from leagues and governing bodies to players
- **Economic imbalance results in performance imbalance** – it is not difficult to draw a link in cricket between the countries who retain the most money, and on-field competitiveness and success. Whilst current models may suit the bigger countries in the short term, they ultimately limit the sport's growth potential. The logical outcome of a small number of countries retaining most of the money in the game is that all others do not have very much money, severely limiting their ability to invest in the game at grassroots and professional levels, reducing the sport's overall competitiveness, and ultimately devaluing the overall sporting and commercial product

“
INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION LACKS MANY OF THE COMPETITIVE BALANCE MECHANISMS AVAILABLE TO DOMESTIC LEAGUES, LEAVING FINANCES AS THE MAIN LEVER TO HELP LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD - GIVEN THE SPORT'S CURRENT HEAVY ECONOMIC IMBALANCE TOWARDS THREE COUNTRIES, THE GAME'S GLOBAL FUTURE FUNDAMENTALLY RELIES ON GETTING THIS RIGHT.

FORMER ADMINISTRATOR

“
CRICKET NEEDS TO BE DOING MUCH MORE TO PRIORITISE IMPROVING THE STRENGTH AND DEPTH OF COUNTRIES 10-24 IF 20 TEAM WORLD CUPS ARE GOING TO BE SUSTAINABLE - THERE HAVE BEEN UNSATISFACTORY LEVELS OF COMPETITION AND JEOPARDY AT RECENT EVENTS.

MEDIA RIGHTS EXPERT

“
THE ICC REVENUE DISTRIBUTION DEAL OVERLOOKS THE CHANCE TO GROW THE GAME IN FAVOUR OF ENRICHING THE RICHEST.

GEOFF LEMON,
MEDIA COMMENTATOR

>50%

OF ALL ICC REVENUE IS DISTRIBUTED TO THE LARGEST THREE COUNTRIES (38.5% TO BCCI)

87%

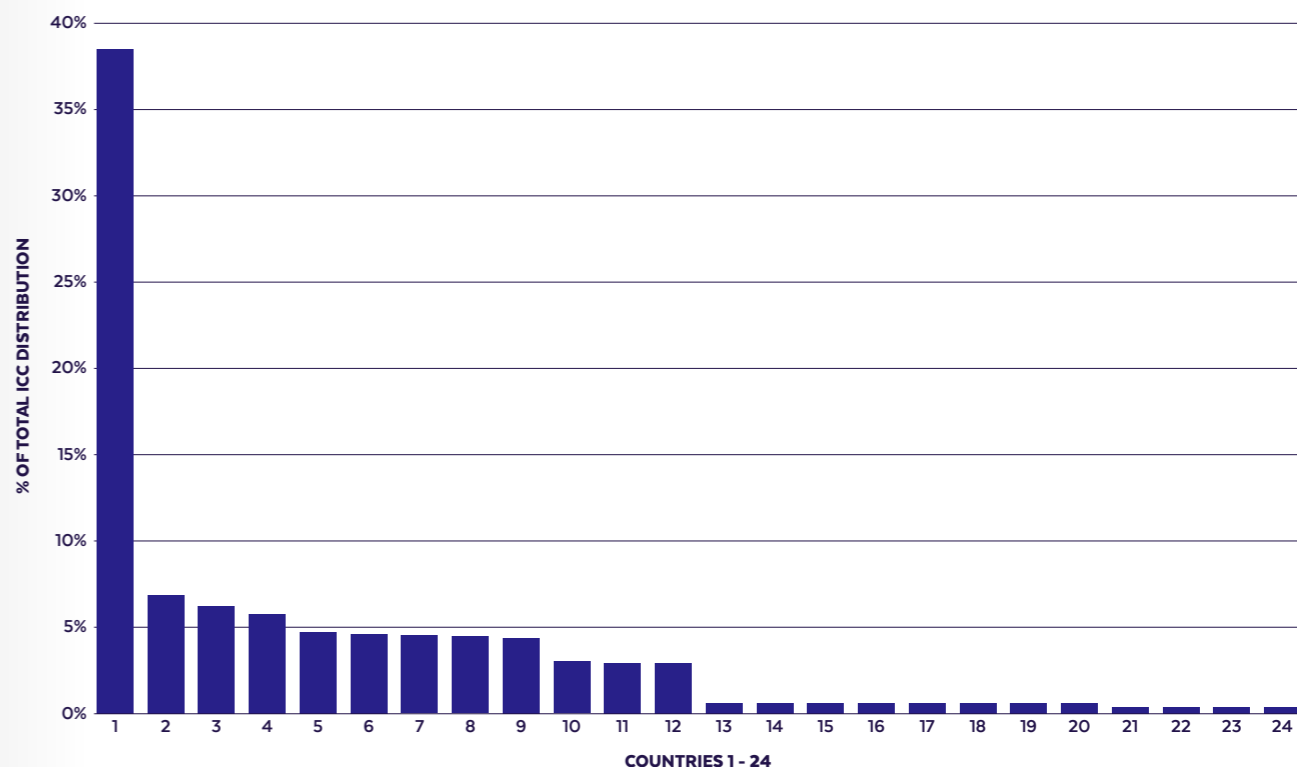
OF BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL CRICKET REVENUES ARE RETAINED BY THE LARGEST 3 COUNTRIES¹³

<2%

OF GLOBAL CRICKET REVENUE IS DISTRIBUTED TO COUNTRIES RANKED 13-108¹³

THE IPL ACCOUNTS FOR ALMOST HALF THE GLOBAL CRICKET ECONOMY BUT SHARES ONLY CIRCA 0.3% OF REVENUE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, AND LESS THAN 10% WITH PLAYERS¹³

Current % ICC event revenues distributed to each nation



13. Sources: Member Board financial reports; WCA / TSC analysis; Deloitte / ICC Economics of Cricket report.

PROBLEM:
A SCHEDULING FRAMEWORK THAT LIMITS LONG-TERM PLANNING AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

In international cricket teams have been able to set their own schedules since 2014, deciding on a case-by-case basis which teams to invite and which countries to visit on tour. Teams are not required to play all other teams.

In the current system there is no baseline of equity for the scheduling of bilateral international cricket, and therefore revenue generated by it. In addition to making the overall schedule confusing, and competition integrity for international cricket impossible, this also perpetuates economic imbalances and limits the ability for countries to plan. The current system has also enshrined the ability for bigger countries to use tours as leverage for other outcomes¹⁴.

“
PLAYERS AND FANS WILL DRIVE WHAT THE GAME WILL LOOK LIKE... QUALITY VS QUANTITY WILL ALWAYS BE A DETERMINANT. LIKE ANY OTHER BUSINESS, IF THE PRODUCTS DON'T WORK, IT WILL DIE A NATURAL DEATH.
IPL TEAM CEO

PROBLEM:
PLAYERS DO NOT RECEIVE A FAIR SHARE RELATIVE TO THE WEALTH THEY GENERATE

In cricket, players are both the labour and the product, and are central to the game's success. Their performances and commercial rights are central to attracting the fans, broadcasters and sponsors, and private investors, who ultimately fund the game.

Recognising their unique role, in most sophisticated team sports, players receive a share of revenue that is proportionate to their importance to the sport and its commercial outcomes.

TOTAL PLAYER PAYMENTS IN GLOBAL CRICKET REPRESENT C.10% OF THE GLOBAL CRICKET REVENUE¹⁵



14. Refer case study on page 37.
15. Refer to Global Cricket Player Payment Overview in Appendix.

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:
SIMPLIFY AND OPTIMISE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION STRUCTURES, INCLUDING MINIMUM SERIES LENGTH AND FREQUENCY PARAMETERS

In line with the recommendations in the scheduling section above, clearer, modernised scheduling and competition structures for each format, with specific parameters will create a fairer baseline for more countries in the international game. The improved consistency narrative and context this provides will drive greater commercial revenues (see modelling summary below).

AN OPTIMISED STRUCTURE WOULD ADD MORE VALUE FOR EVERYONE - EXTENSIVE INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL MODELLING INDICATES THE GAME COULD UNLOCK AT LEAST AN ADDITIONAL USD 246M P.A OF COMMERCIAL VALUE ANNUALLY, IN ADDITION TO SIGNIFICANT UNDERLYING COST SAVINGS UNDER AN OPTIMISED STRUCTURE¹⁶.

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:
ESTABLISH ICC REVENUE DISTRIBUTION PARAMETERS (MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM)

Revenue distribution parameters should be established to ensure global funds are more equitably and efficiently allocated. A recalibrated distribution model designed to fast-track global growth and optimise international cricket's value would be more conducive to increasing investment, talent depth and retention, and in turn, competitive balance across more countries. It would also reduce the significant burden on India to service the game by touring. Parameters to be implemented could include, for example and in line with international precedents, a minimum 2% and maximum 10% for the top 24 countries, and a minimum 10% distribution collectively for countries 25+¹⁷.

“
THERE IS SIGNIFICANT MONEY IN THE GAME - IT JUST ISN'T SHARED OR USED EFFICIENTLY, AND THERE IS NO ACCOUNTABILITY.
CURRENT ADMINISTRATOR

Case Study 1: Governing Body Versus Population Owner

Whilst it is reasonable for distribution models to recognise commercial value in some way, with respect to ICC Events, each national governing body is responsible for sending its team to ICC Events. It does not own the regional eye balls and businesses (global consumers) from which revenue stems from, nor is it required to share any of their distribution back with those consumers.

Case Study 2: Distribution Skew Does Not Reflect Player Rights Value

In 2022, WCA commissioned an independent report on the value of certain player commercial rights at global level and for ICC Events. The valuation reflected that the rights of the most valuable player group are no more than 50% more valuable than that of the next most valuable country. Based on this metric, there is no justification for any one country to receive the current premium.

16. Refer to TSC Economics figures in appendix.
17. This is similar to the UEFA model where the largest 5 countries (England, Spain, Germany, Italy and France are capped at a max 10% distribution each to ensure all countries receive a fair share.

**RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:
ESTABLISH A CENTRALISED ‘GLOBAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT FUND’**

A centralised ‘Global Growth & Development Fund’ would help to resource a base level of Core International Cricket for the top 24+ countries. This could be funded by a combination of:

- **ICC Events** – a percentage of ICC Event revenue
- **Pooled media rights from Core International Cricket**, or a proportion of revenue from each mandated series. This concept (i.e. pooling of certain overseas media rights), has previously been proposed in order to leverage the best outcome for the entire sport and underpinning competition structures
- **DT20 Leagues** – Replacing existing ‘Solidarity Payments’ paid for by players (see Regulations section), with a standard contribution of a % of the global media rights each sanctioned DT20 league generates, or global licensing / sanctioning fee linked to turnover or other metric
- **New concepts** – in the likely scenario that global cricket cannot come together to share revenue generated from existing lucrative cricket throughout the year more effectively in line with global objectives, then a new global cricket product may need to be created that achieves this

This fund would be used to implement initiatives to grow the global game, such as:

- **Central marketing and promotion of the game** – including the proposed competition structures and the narrative and results around these
- **Targeted growth markets funding** – for regions with high growth potential
- **Minimum player, umpire and support staff costs** – for one Test, ODI and T20I for Core International Cricket (all costs for optional matches above and beyond the minimum (i.e. matches 2-5) underwritten by participating countries)
- **Minimum player payments per division**
- **Other global growth, development and welfare initiatives**
- **Increased investment in the women’s game** – across more countries

**RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:
ESTABLISH PLAYER REVENUE SHARING PARAMETERS**

To ensure all sanctioned cricket contributes to the global growth of the game, enhances competitive balance and shares revenue fairly with players. A minimum % of revenue generated should be shared with players in all sanctioned cricket (across international cricket, DT20 leagues, ICC Events) to ensure players are fairly compensated, incentivised to stay in centralised competition structures for longer, and protected from exploitation. Currently there is significant variation in player arrangements between countries, leagues and teams, and greater consistency with clear parameters would improve fairness and competitiveness across the game.

**RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:
IMPLEMENT STRONGER REGULATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS ON ANY CENTRALISED DISTRIBUTIONS**

Stronger regulation and accountability mechanisms would enhance transparency, and ensure revenue is allocated fairly and efficiently to support global growth and competitive balance objectives.

- All distributions from the ICC to National Governing Bodies should be publicly accounted for and independently audited against clear KPIs and enforcement mechanisms (i.e. future reductions / clawback penalties for any malpractice)
- Payment integrity should be improved through enforcement mechanisms aligned with Professional Cricket Standards, (see Regulations section)

“
THERE NEEDS TO BE A CENTRALISED INTERNATIONAL CRICKET PLAYER PAYMENT POOL, FUNDED BY A MORE EVEN DISTRIBUTION MODEL.

**ED COWAN,
FORMER INTERNATIONAL**

“
INTERNATIONAL CRICKET IS IMPORTANT AND NEEDS TO BE PROTECTED AND INVESTED IN, SO IT’S STRONG IN MORE THAN JUST A FEW COUNTRIES.

**WASIM AKRAM,
FORMER INTERNATIONAL**

PROJECTED IMPACT:

TSC have modelled the potential financial impact of the recommendations in this report, including the proposed schedules, distribution models and contextual framework.

Two scenarios have been modelled for the 2028–31 cycle:

- Base scenario (no change)
- Proposed scenario

The full summary of the analysis can be found in the Appendix, but key overall findings include estimated:

- **USD 246M** p.a. higher total revenues in proposed future scenario vs base
- **USD 130M** p.a. higher international cricket revenues in proposed future scenario vs base, despite reduction in number of matches
- An average **20%** reduction in expenses for countries 4-24 through a more centralised international cricket model.

The financial analysis considers a range of factors, including:

BASE SCENARIO (NO CHANGE)	PROPOSED SCENARIO
Continued trends in number of games played per nation per format	Number of international games within proposed structures
Continued reduction in quality and context within international game	Improved context, narrative and quality within the international game
Continued reduction of player availability in international cricket	Clearer and more consistent player availability through enhanced scheduling and regulation
Single game WTC Final (no Semi-Finals) and no promotion / relegation playoffs between international bilateral divisions	Additional high-context valuable cricket through WTC Semi-Finals and promotion / relegation playoffs
Existing revenue distribution model	Enhanced revenue distribution model
Historic and projected growth trends in key markets	
Overall trends in the sports industry	

Significant additional revenue could also be unlocked for the global game, which have not been considered in the figures highlighted here. In particular:

- The reintroduction of India v Pakistan series as part of Core International Cricket, which would create significant further global interest and drive revenue growth
- The release of India men’s players to play in global DT20 leagues outside of the IPL, growing interest in and the earning potential of these leagues

THEME 3: REGULATION

Principle 3
Cricket's global regulatory frameworks need to reflect the new transnational reality to protect the game and people in it.

Context
Global cricket requires some regulation, and it was not the view of any stakeholder that an un-regulated sport exclusively led by market forces is desirable.

The main instrument for regulating both scheduling and player movement within global cricket is the current ICC Regulations on Sanctioning of Events and Player Release (ICC Regulations). They purport to provide an "objective, transparent and equitable match/event sanctioning system" that "produces clear and coherent fixture calendars that protect and advance" certain "fundamental imperatives".

For the reasons highlighted in the sections above and below, it is clear the existing Regulations do not achieve these aims, and that cricket's existing global regulatory frameworks are not fit for purpose for modern cricket. They have also never been agreed with the DT20 leagues and franchises, or players impacted by them, and therefore do not protect them or their rights in a manner consistent with international norms.



PROBLEM:
CRICKET'S GLOBAL REGULATIONS ARE OUTDATED AND NOT FIT FOR THE CURRENT TRANSNATIONAL ERA

Cricket is a multi-employer system, and both international cricket and DT20 leagues are important to the future of the game.

The ICC Regulations provide unfounded primacy to "international cricket" over "domestic events", rather than establishing a system based on establishing an appropriate balance between the two. This "fundamental imperative" is used to justify several improper regulatory tools which give rise to key issues of concern for the game and players, particularly in the following areas.

PROBLEM:
SANCTIONING OF MATCHES AND EVENTS

The ICC Regulations rightly identify that cricket follows the general "pyramid regulatory structure" prevalent in international sport¹⁹. However, matches and events are not "sanctioned" in accordance with international sporting norms, for example:

- **"International Matches"** (i.e. matches between national teams), the ICC Regulations unusually recognise the authority of National Cricket Federations to sanction such matches organised between themselves²⁰. Applying international sporting norms, the sanctioning of international matches would usually be a competence of the international sports federation, considering the cross-border nature of the match or event
- **"Special Domestic T20 Events"**²¹ the ICC unusually retains authority to sanction such events to protect the primacy of international cricket. This also has the impact of reducing the autonomy of national cricket federations to govern cricket within their own territory and has the potential to impact on the earning capacity and rights of professional cricketers

The conditions required for the ICC to sanction a "Special Domestic T20 Event" contain some significant issues of concern that are likely to restrict the global game from growth:

- the "minimum event staging standards" refer broadly to sports integrity matters and provide limited coverage on minimum standards for professional cricketers, yet not all events implement robust contracting, health, safety, and workplace standards
- a global foreign player limit of four (4) players per team who participate in a match in the event. This limitation clearly restricts earning opportunities for professional cricketers, potentially weakens the commercial value of such events, and is likely susceptible to legal challenge in multiple jurisdictions
- a "solidarity fee" is payable by the national cricket federation which organises the event on every foreign professional cricketer that participates. The fee places a hindrance on player participation in that it hinders the possibility that they will be engaged to participate unless they willingly give up some their earnings
- whilst national cricket federations are obliged to enforce employment contracts, this does not happen in practice, and there are no adequate protection and enforcement mechanisms for foreign professional cricketers including on widespread non payment issues, unlike other international team sports. There are also no global disciplinary enforcement mechanisms

OUTSIDE OF INDIAN PLAYERS, ALMOST ALL OF THE BEST PLAYERS IN THE WORLD CURRENTLY PLAY IN 2+ OVERSEAS DT20 LEAGUES, WITH SOME PLAYING IN UP TO 7 DT20 LEAGUES¹⁸

29%
OF PLAYERS HAVE EXPERIENCED NON-PAYMENT ISSUES IN SANCTIONED CRICKET²²

“EXISTING RESTRICTIONS ARE MAINLY PROTECTIONISM BY BIGGER COUNTRIES TO STOP COMPETITORS AND ENSURE THE BEST LEAGUES MUST BE IN THEIR CONTROL, AS THEY HAVE THE BEST LOCAL PLAYERS, AT THE EXPENSE OF PROGRESS AND GROWTH IN ALL OTHER COUNTRIES.

NEIL MAXWELL,
PLAYER AGENT

“THE HYPOCRISY OF REGULATING THE DOMESTIC LEAGUES LANDSCAPE WHEN IT'S CONVENIENT FOR THE BIG NATIONAL BOARDS, WHILST NOT BEING WILLING TO REGULATE IT TO PROTECT THE PLAYERS, IS SIGNIFICANT.

WAVELL HINDS,
WIPA CEO

18. Cricket Archive Data indicates 141 men's players, and 46 women's players, played in 2+ overseas DT20 leagues in 2023 (in addition to home league), up from 84 and 20 respectively in 2021.
19. Article 2.1.1 (explanatory note).
20. Article 2.1.1.
21. Article 2.1.4.2: Definitions.
22. WCA 2024 Global Player Survey.

PROBLEM: PLAYER RELEASE & 'NOCS'

The ICC Regulations provide a mechanism whereby professional cricketers must be "released" to participate in "international cricket", irrespective of their contractual status²³.

In this respect, they unusually do not treat all international cricket equally as it is compulsory for professional cricketers affiliated to a "full member" to be "released" whereas, it is only compulsory for a professional cricketer affiliated to an "associate member" to be "released" to participate for a national team for certain ICC events and certain international matches against "full member" national teams.

The most concerning element of the ICC Regulations is the "No-Objection Certificate" (NOC) required for a professional cricketer to participate in a "domestic match" played on the territory of a national cricket federation to which they are not affiliated²⁴. A national cricket federation can refuse to issue an NOC for any reason²⁵.

This tool is open to be exploited by administrators where there is a power imbalance between themselves and players, and clearly and significantly may restrict earning opportunities for professional cricketers, potentially weakens the commercial value and growth of professional cricket, and is very likely susceptible to legal challenge in multiple jurisdictions.

Case Study: NOC rejections

In 2024 three senior international players from an ICC full member country elected to not sign central contracts to allow greater freedom to play in DT20 cricket. They had become frustrated with having to withdraw from existing lucrative DT20 agreements due to last minute scheduling of comparatively low paying, low context international fixtures that clashed. The national governing body responded by threatening the players with not issuing the players with No Objection Certificates for the next two years, effectively blocking them from participating in approved DT20 cricket, and meaning they had no choice but to return to international cricket. The current system results in a situation where some players are essentially either threatened with, or actually treated as, being 'owned,' by their national governing body, irrespective of their contractual status. This runs contrary to the right to choose your employer which is a right enjoyed by workers all around the world.

“
THE NOC SYSTEM EFFECTIVELY TREATS PLAYERS AS CHATTEL OWNED BY THEIR AFFILIATED NATIONAL CRICKET FEDERATION, EVEN WHERE THE PLAYER IS NOT IN CONTENTION TO PLAY OR HAS NO DESIRE TO PLAY INTERNATIONAL CRICKET.

JAMES KITCHING, FORMER
FIFA DIRECTOR OF
FOOTBALL REGULATORY

“
CRICKET IS EDGING CLOSER TO ITS 'BOSMAN MOMENT' BY THE DAY.

CECELIA JOYCE,
ICA PRESIDENT

PROBLEM: DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The ICC Regulations fall significantly short in providing proper safeguards to parties seeking to challenge any decisions deriving from them. Any challenge to the legality of the ICC Regulations or decision made by the ICC under the ICC Regulations must be made by naming the ICC as a respondent before an arbitration body convened by the ICC (the "ICC Disputes Resolution Committee").

Similarly, any challenge to a decision made by a national cricket federation under the ICC Regulations (e.g. to not issue an NOC) must be made in accordance with the dispute resolution provisions in that same national cricket federation's rules.

Without questioning the integrity of the members of the relevant panels which would decide such disputes, it is simple to understand how a party might think they would not receive a fair and impartial review of their grievance in such circumstances.



23. Article 3.1.
24. Article 3.4.
25. Article 3.5 (explanatory note).

Recommended solutions include a 'fit for purpose' global regulatory framework governing professional cricket that includes three distinct categories:

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION: GLOBAL CALENDAR - EVENT SANCTIONING

In addition to addressing the issues highlighted in this report, a global calendar needs to balance the interests of the ICC, national cricket federations, DT20 leagues and club owners, and professional cricketers. Any event sanctioning regulations that control the global calendar should also reflect international sporting norms.

The policy matters that should be incorporated into a 'fit for purpose' regulatory framework governing event sanctioning include:

- all cricket matches or events which occur within the territory of a national cricket federation falls within the sanctioning authority of that body
- all international cricket or cricket matches or events with cross-border implications fall within the sanctioning authority of the ICC, requiring approvals from all impacted national cricket federations – the mechanism by which a coherent global calendar and any windows can be governed

- minimum standards for event sanctioning should include professional cricket safeguards and sports integrity measures
- different tiers of international cricket shall require different levels of approval and/or information

It should **not** include:

- an arbitrary global rule with respect to the number of foreign players in DT20 leagues – any such restriction should be decided upon by relevant leagues in their own jurisdiction and in line with the objectives of that league
- a solidarity mechanism tagged to player movement or salary. Any such mechanism should be de-linked from player movement or salary

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION: GLOBAL CALENDAR - PLAYER MOVEMENT

Some form of tracking and regulation of player movement and release within a global calendar is essential to ensuring a 'fit for purpose' regulatory model. Collective negotiation would be the best method to achieve this, and some of the key areas of that framework should include:

- a compulsory player release mechanism between national cricket federations and domestic cricket teams (and vice-versa), which provides for a validity period for requesting release. This mechanism should align to protected Core International Cricket windows only, and operate in combination with minimum pay levels, for example

- clarity on the scenarios where release may be refused (e.g. illness or injury)
- clear rules on player payment, travel costs, insurance costs, and other ancillary costs (including references to collective bargaining agreements, where applicable)
- built-in safeguards for player welfare: rest periods, maximum number of matches during specific windows, travel across international time zones
- enforcement mechanisms if a player is not released by a national cricket federation or if a player does not return to their releasing cricket organisation or returns late

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION: GLOBAL PROFESSIONAL CRICKET STANDARDS

The implementation of a modernised global cricket calendar and 'fit for purpose' event sanctioning rules would necessitate the need to introduce a regulatory framework governing a range of matters relevant to professional cricket. Collective negotiation would be the best method to achieve this, and some of the key areas include:

- minimum professional contract standards and/or standard contract template
- noting the short-term nature of professional cricket contracts, a global 'registration / tracking' system for the international movement of players between different franchise teams / clubs. Whilst the principle of freedom of movement / contracting should be respected and protected, in addition to the mechanics of registration, this may include:
 - rules considering the number of entities that a player may be registered with at the same time in overlapping competitions to protect competition integrity
 - global enforcement of outstanding disciplinary sanctions where a player moves between franchise teams / clubs affiliated to different national cricket federations

- specific rules for the maintenance of contractual stability (e.g. termination rights, consequences for inappropriate termination, maternity and pregnancy protections)
- a dispute resolution mechanism protecting foreign professional cricketers (and other foreign employees), which provides equal representation and fair proceedings e.g. on non payment issues
- a disciplinary enforcement system to complement the dispute resolution mechanism
- protections for the international movement of minors
- rules governing the licensing, practice, and obligations of player agents



THEME 4: LEADERSHIP

Principle 4

Global cricket needs to come together to address the sport's changing landscape, ensure clear global direction, and prevent fragmentation.

Context

At the start of the review process, the Sub Committee provided a direction not to make this a 'governance report.' The sensitivities associated with focussing on governance are well understood, and it was not seen as desirable to get politically sidetracked from focussing on scheduling and game structure issues that we set out to focus on.

However, what became clear through the almost unanimous feedback from all stakeholder groups, is that a root cause of many of the issues in the game stem from the lack of genuine global leadership mandate housed by any body in our sport. In short, no one is actually in charge of the sport as a genuine custodian of the global game as a whole, and the system is currently designed to be fragmented and to support regional interests. In that system, the biggest countries have the most leverage, and the most control.

What has also been clear is the level of 'disillusionment' at the inability for the sport to change itself and a general resignation that genuine meaningful change is unlikely to occur due to political and economic realities.



PROBLEM

LACK OF OVERARCHING LEADERSHIP IN THE GAME PROVIDING GLOBAL DIRECTION, LEADING TO REGIONAL SELF-INTEREST, SHORT-TERM THINKING AND AN IMBALANCE OF POWER LIMITING OVERALL COMMERCIAL AND GAME POTENTIAL

- **Lack of centralised global leadership** – due to the ICC's governance model and positioning as a 'members organisation', there is currently no independent or benevolent global leadership body setting global direction and providing clarity, and with an ability to effectively regulate the sport transnationally. This distinction is important, as a members organisation works for the benefit of its own members, whereas an international governing body works for the benefit of the whole sport
- **Regional self-interest** – within this system, short term decisions made focussed on regional self-interest are a significant issue, and perpetuate the inability for the game to come together globally and optimise the 'sum of its parts'
- **Lack of expertise and merit-based appointments** – within ICC governance structures. This is a product of the federated model whereby members can put forward their own Board candidates, and with only one independent Board position available
- **Imbalance of power and lack of representation** – the biggest national governing bodies currently control global cricket and will likely want to retain this control. This is a root cause, and effect, of scheduling and economic imbalances referenced in this report. Smaller member national governing bodies are beholden to those bigger countries, and there is no proportionate say or representation for leagues, clubs, players or women, for example, in any global forum that is commensurate with their contribution and importance to the sport

Case Study 1: Leveraging the imbalance of power

A number of stakeholders highlighted that bigger countries have previously threatened to withdraw bilateral tours or matches if the smaller countries did not support bigger countries on other issues relating to the management of the sport.

Case Study 2: Representivity skew

The ICC Board is comprised of representatives from 12 full member countries, 3 associate member countries, an independent Chair and scope for one additional independent. It does not include representation from any other stakeholder group, or appear to be underpinned by any gender equity aspirations.

“

THE ONLY REAL BARRIERS ARE THE MEMBER BOARDS THEMSELVES – A WALKING CONTRADICTION ON JUST ABOUT EVERY ISSUE, WITH NO ABILITY TO COME TOGETHER BEHIND A COMMON APPROACH AND STRATEGY BEYOND JUST SHORT-TERM FINANCIAL DECISIONS.

OSMAN SAMI UDDIN,
MEDIA COMMENTATOR

“

ONE COUNTRY HAVING THAT AMOUNT OF POWER AND INFLUENCE DOES DISTORT A WHOLE LOT OF OTHER OUTCOMES, WHICH IS NOT NECESSARILY HELPFUL IN TERMS OF THAT GLOBAL GROWTH.

GREG BARCLAY,
FORMER ICC CHAIR

**RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:
A REVISED GLOBAL GAME LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE, BUILT ON SHARED OWNERSHIP,
INDEPENDENCE, AND FAIRER REPRESENTATION REFLECTIVE OF THE WHOLE SPORT**

It is clear that without a body that can implement and enforce effective global scheduling and regulatory reform to protect and support the growth of the game as a whole, and people within it, the sport cannot optimise its overall global potential.

Almost every stakeholder provided similarly themed ideas when asked about how to overcome barriers to implementing positive changes in the global structure of the game. Notwithstanding the political and economic challenges, solutions focused on:

Modernising the ICC to ensure it:

- **Is a global governing body** – empowered to lead the global game at a macro level, with focus on what is best for global game rather than exclusively on regional interests
- **Is built on shared ownership, independence, and fairer representation reflective of the whole sport** – with democratic representation across all member nations and other key stakeholders
- **Has a global mandate** – empowered to be a global decision making body in particular with respect to global scheduling calendars, regulatory frameworks and revenue distribution
- **Fosters collective progress** – rather than control and leverage based leadership, safeguarded from disproportionate regional interests, whilst also recognising the importance of micro freedoms and regional preferences underneath
- **Is empowered and resourced** – to support global cricket growth and development

In practice, a first step towards achieving this would be the creation of an independently chaired **Global Game Leadership Committee** to make recommendations to the game and ICC Board. This would be comprised of 25% National Boards, 25% DT20 Leagues / Franchises, 25% Players, 25% independents. Establishing such a body would be an interim step – an enabler to finding a pathway for other recommendations in this report to be implemented.

We would expect this group to make recommendations to:

- Ensure the ICC is modernised and fit for purpose to lead the global game in line with global objectives and best practice. This would likely require leadership comprised of independents selected to meet a skills and experience matrix, and including a mixture of stakeholder backgrounds, diversity and expertise
- Facilitate the creation and management of an updated global scheduling calendar and of Core International Cricket and championship structures within it
- Develop and enforce new transnational regulations for the professional game
- Ensure revenue distribution to and accountability of member boards
- Facilitate resource management and global cricket growth and development

The idea of separating out governance models for international cricket and DT20 leagues was also discussed but not generally supported or recommended by most stakeholders, largely due to the likelihood it would split and fragment the game further. In reality, most DT20 are owned by the same governing bodies who 'own' and run international cricket in any event.

“
IRONICALLY, THE LONGER THAT FULL MEMBERS CLING TO THE SAME OLD BROKEN MODEL, THE SOONER THE RELEVANCE OF THE BOARDS THEMSELVES, AND BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL CRICKET, WILL EVAPORATE.

JAMES SUTHERLAND,
FORMER ADMINISTRATOR

“
FOR AS LONG AS THE NATIONAL GOVERNING BODIES CONTINUE TO REFUSE TO EMPOWER THE ICC TO ACT AS A GENUINE GLOBAL GOVERNING BODY, AND CONTINUE TO ACT IN THEIR OWN SELF INTEREST, THE STRUCTURE OF OUR GREAT SPORT WILL NEVER BE OPTIMISED.

HEATH MILLS,
WCA CHAIR



CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF CRICKET

The recommended solutions in this report are built on principles provided through comprehensive stakeholder feedback, guiding much-needed changes for the next phase of cricket globally. Notwithstanding this, history tells us that the likely response from some may be to:

- Protect the status quo and focus internally
- Look to tinker with one aspect or format of the game in isolation
- Look to regulate players as a means of solving structural issues
- Say it is all too hard, and that proposed solutions are not realistic given the complex state of the game's structure and as an international sport
- Focus on minor details that could easily be adjusted as a method of discreditation

Whilst resistance to change is natural and expected, our challenge to all stakeholders is to look at the game and recommendations in their entirety, and come together to make changes accordingly. It is essential to act now, rather than waiting for a full-blown crisis to be the catalyst for change. Our proposed solutions are designed to strengthen and improve the game for all. Challenge the underpinning principles, and let's debate them. If some of the minutiae and detail cannot work, they can be adjusted. Ultimately, we want cricket to be a stronger, more successful, and more popular game for everyone involved.

By implementing holistic changes in line with this report's recommendations, all stakeholders will benefit:

FANS / ALL

- An easier to follow global calendar, with clearer understanding of where and why matches fit within it
- An increase in consistency, cricket with context and meaning, and reduction in short term 'gap filler' cricket
- Enhanced competitive balance and jeopardy in international cricket, more conducive to global growth
- A structure that protects the history of the sport, and international cricket, whilst also embracing the future, and leaving significant room for where it is going
- Enhanced DT20 leagues that cultivate passion from fans and secure player commitment for full tournaments

ICC

- More centralised control of key aspects of the global calendar, befitting of a global governing body
- Enhanced revenue generation through extrapolation of ICC Event qualification structures into Core International Cricket, and further embedding of ICC Events as the pinnacle of each format
- More consistent access to the best players, commercial opportunities around Core International Cricket
- A central role in a unified global game, and proactively preventing a number of foreseeable splits, legal challenges, and existential threats

NATIONAL GOVERNING BODIES

- An enhanced annual backbone of Core International Cricket around which high performance programs, and player contracting and retention strategies, can be planned and structured
- An uplift in top line revenue and a decrease in cost base due to enhanced competition structures, optimised economic models, and some centralised cost subsidisation
- Fully meritocratic opportunities to qualify for pinnacle ICC Events across formats
- Guaranteed fixtures against teams of similar standard with jeopardy, meaning and context
- Greater ability for more countries to invest in the women's game due to more equitable revenue distribution

DOMESTIC LEAGUES / CLUBS

- A significant portion of the year available to continue to evolve, grow, and access the best players
- A more formal say on global calendar, game and regulatory issues
- Greater calendar certainty and clarity on player release back to NGBs and vice versa
- Raising the profile of global players in leagues through greater exposure in Core International Cricket

PLAYERS (+ PLAYERS' ASSOCIATIONS, AGENTS)

- Greater certainty and clarity over the calendar for planning purposes
- A structure in which players can compete in both leagues and Core International Cricket without having to choose between representing their country and optimising their career
- More consistent, year-round international cricket opportunities with meaning, context and jeopardy
- Enhanced protections including minimum payments for Core International Cricket and greater contract stability through enforceable minimum standards, including on non-payment issues in all sanctioned cricket

BROADCAST / COMMERCIAL

- Larger fan base and increased fan avidity through greater context and narrative across the game
- Enhanced year-round Core International Cricket offering with context
- More competitive, compelling international cricket in all divisions, leading into pinnacle ICC Events
- Greater calendar consistency enabling appointment-to-view, longer-term planning and back-to-back commercialisation
- A step towards simplification and de-fragmentation in the global cricket rights landscape, with rights pooling and centralised sale possible for a greater proportion of the international cricket calendar



APPENDIX



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW LIST*

The following stakeholders were interviewed by Sub-Committee members between September 2024 and March 2025. All of their views have been analysed and considered in developing the contents of this report. A number of additional stakeholders were interviewed who did not wish to be named.

CURRENT PLAYERS	ADMINISTRATORS	COMMERCIAL/MEDIA/OTHER	PLAYERS' ASSOCIATIONS
Pat Cummins	James Sutherland (Ex CA)	Gideon Haigh	Todd Greenberg (ACA)
Jos Buttler	IPL Team CEO (IPL)	Neil Manthorp	Greg Dyer (ACA)
Jason Holder	Graeme Smith (SA20)	Sanjog Gupta (Jio Star)	Daryl Mitchell (PCA)
Tim Southee	ICC Executive (ICC)	Ali Martin	Andrew Breetzke (SACA)
Corey Anderson	Pete Russell (CPL)	Nick Hault	Heath Mills (NZCPA)
Aiden Markram	Johnny Grave (CWI / MLC)	Rohan Sajdeh (BCG)	Lisa Sthalekar (WCA)
Matthew Cross	Nick Hockley (CA)	Osman Sommadian	Cecelia Joyce (ICA)
Alyssa Healy	Pholets Moseki (CSA)	Colin Benjamin	Katie Magill (SCA)
Heather Knight	Trudy Lindblade (CS)	Harsha Bogle	Kenny Godsmen (SCA)
Jahanara Alam	Greg Barclay (Ex ICC)	Kumar Sangakkara	Paul Van Meekeren (DCA)
Laura Woolvaardt	Mark Nicholas (MCC)	Dan Vettori	Debabrata Paul (CWAB)
Sophie Devine	Tom Harrison (Ex ECB)	Eoin Morgan	Wavell Hinds (WIPA)
Hayley Matthews	Andrew Strauss (Ex ECB)	Jhulan Goswami	Richard Bevan (TEPP / LMA)
Laura Delany	Jimmy Adams (Ex CWI)	Conrad Smith (Rugby)	Sana Mir (WCA)
Craig Ervine		FIBA (Basketball)	
Rashid Khan		FIFA (Football)	
Gerhard Erasmus		Wasim Akram	
Priyanaz Chatterji			
Meg Lanning			

*The recommendations in the report are not necessarily endorsed by each individual or the organisation they work for. Three people declined to be interviewed.

STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONS**SCHEDULING / GAME STRUCTURE**

1. What is your view of the current structure of the game / schedule / In your own words can you outline what you believe the current problems are?
2. If you were pulling this report together, what would be the 3 top recommendations you would make relating to the future structure of cricket?
3. What do you think the barriers would be to implementing these recommendations?
4. What does the game look like in 10 years time with no leadership or intervention at global level?
5. In a perfect world with no limits, what does the game look like in 10 years time?
6. Does it matter if bilateral cricket is not best versus best?
7. Does it matter if some formats shrink in volume or no. of countries playing? Which ones?
8. Do you have any suggestions to ensure both international cricket / domestic leagues co-exist?
9. What percentage of the calendar should be allocated to leagues versus international cricket?
10. Is there a need for more 'best on best' cricket with democratic access to all players?

GAME ECONOMICS

11. Should there be more equalisation measures between Boards? If so, what?
12. What more can the game do to optimise it's overall commercial potential globally?

PLAYER EMPLOYMENT, CONTRACTING, REGULATION

13. Is a split game / parallel player employment markets as between international cricket and DT20 good or bad? Why?
14. Would it matter if there was no overseas player limits on domestic leagues?

LEADERSHIP

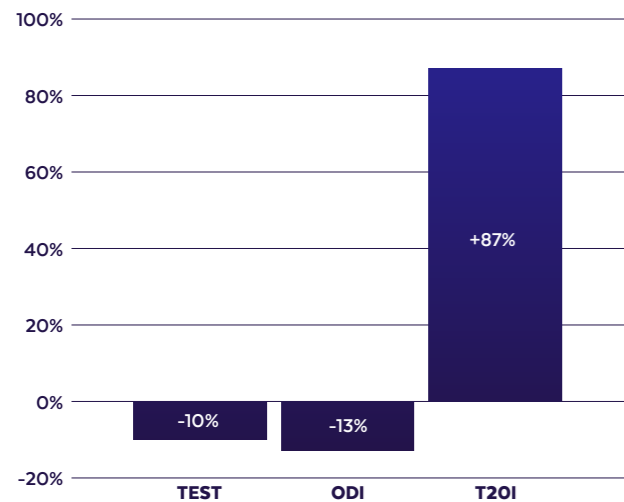
15. What is cricket's greatest strength and opportunity (may be different) that we should be dialling up into the future?
16. What is cricket's greatest weakness and threat we should be looking to address into the future?
17. Does the game need global leadership and a global governing body? Or should it just be allowed to evolve based on regional / market forces?
18. What should the game's global leadership structure look like?

SCHEDULING MEN'S 2025

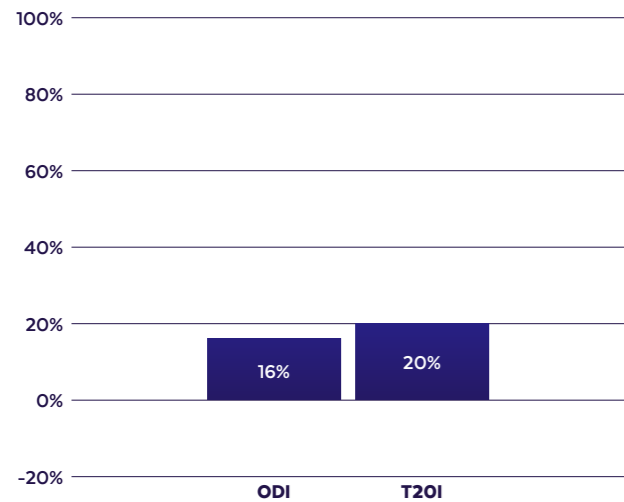
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JAN 25	1													Big Bash	Super Smash		
	2								ZIM Away 2 3 3				PAK Away 2			SA20	International League T20 (UAE)
	3				IND Away 3 5	ENG Home 3 5							Bangladesh Premier League				
	4		SL Away 2								AUS Home 2						
FEB 25	1													Pakistan Super League			
	2	WI Home 3															
	3																
	4																
MAR 25	1												Indian Premier League				
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APR 25	1												Lanka Premier League	Major League Cricket			
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JUN 25	1												Hundred	Global T20 Canada			
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	3																
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JUL 25	1												Caribbean Premier League	Zim Afro T10			
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OCT 25	1												Abu Dhabi T10	Global Super League			
	2																
	3																
	4																
NOV 25	1												Lanka T10 League	Big Bash			
	2																
	3																
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— 2024 MAJOR DT20 LEAGUE DATES

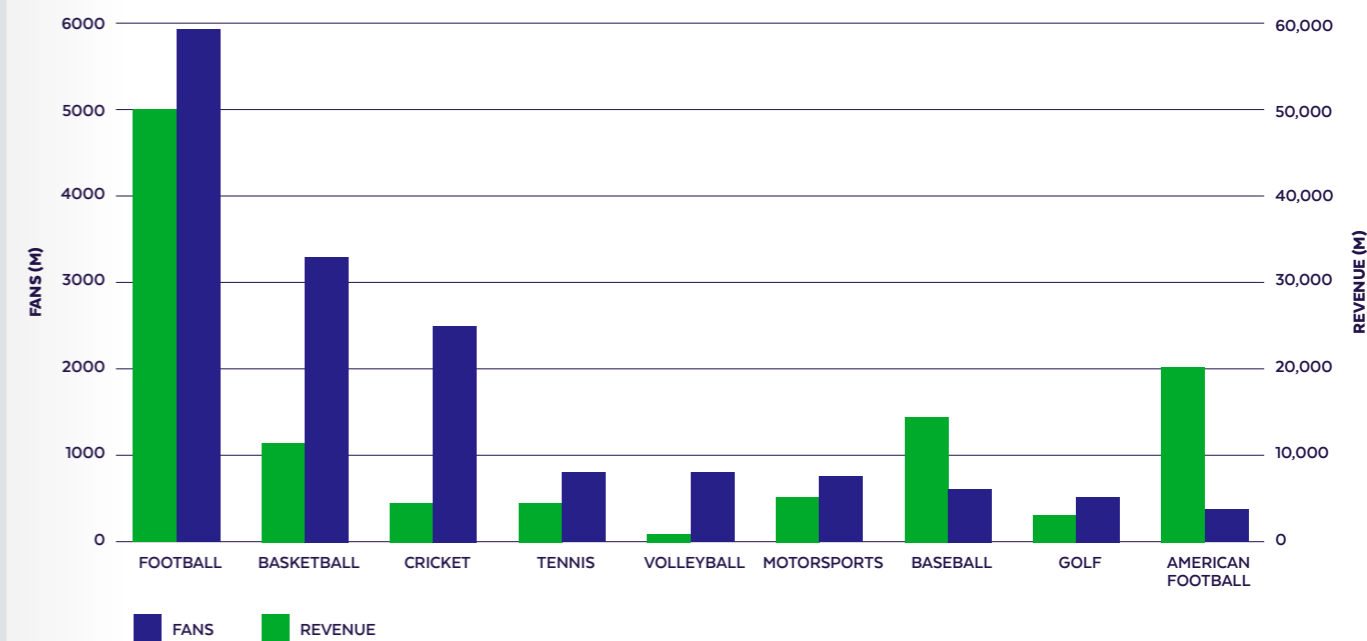
CHANGE IN MEN'S INTERNATIONAL FIXTURES BY FORMAT FOR TOP 9 NATIONS (2017-2019 VS 2021-2023)



CHANGE IN WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL FIXTURES BY FORMAT FOR TOP 9 NATIONS (2017-2019 VS 2021-2023)



GLOBAL FANS AND REVENUES FOR SELECTED MAJOR SPORTS



Sources: International federation reports; Nielsen; Statista

GLOBAL CRICKET ECONOMIC OVERVIEW UNDER THREE SCENARIOS: CURRENT (2024 - 27), BASE SCENARIO (NO CHANGE), AND PROPOSED SCENARIO (2028 - 2031)

ANNUAL REVENUE PER CYCLE (USD M)	CURRENT SCENARIO					BASE SCENARIO (NO CHANGE)					PROPOSED SCENARIO					GOVERNING BODY UPLIFT - PROPOSED SCENARIO VS BASE	
	2024-27					2028-31					2028-31					USD M	%
	BILATERAL	ICC EVENTS	DT20	TOTAL	GOVERNING BODY	BILATERAL	ICC EVENTS	DT20	TOTAL	GOVERNING BODY	BILATERAL	ICC EVENTS	DT20	TOTAL	GOVERNING BODY		
COUNTRY 1	400.0	231.0	1800.0	2431.0	1356.0	536.0	231.0	3230.1	3997.1	2068.0	611.0	62.0	3310.9	3983.9	2004.5	-61.5	-3%
COUNTRY 2	275.0	41.0	75.0	391.0	391.0	340.2	41.0	159.8	541.0	541.0	357.3	37.2	163.8	558.3	557.1	17.3	3%
COUNTRY 3	192.0	38.0	70.0	300.0	300.0	236.1	38.0	119.9	394.0	394.0	257.4	37.2	122.9	417.4	416.2	23.5	6%
COUNTRY 4	30.0	27.0	40.0	97.0	81.0	36.2	27.0	95.9	159.1	120.8	38.9	37.2	98.3	174.4	133.8	14.3	12%
COUNTRY 5	16.0	35.0	30.0	81.0	63.0	19.3	35.0	53.3	107.6	75.6	20.5	37.2	54.6	112.3	78.3	3.9	5%
COUNTRY 6	30.0	27.0	8.0	65.0	65.0	36.6	27.0	13.5	77.1	77.1	36.6	31.0	13.8	81.4	80.4	4.3	6%
COUNTRY 7	20.0	27.0	15.0	62.0	57.0	24.5	27.0	25.8	77.3	68.7	25.2	31.0	26.5	82.7	72.9	5.2	8%
COUNTRY 8	20.0	27.0	15.0	62.0	47.0	24.4	27.0	26.0	77.4	51.4	26.2	31.0	26.6	83.8	56.2	5.8	11%
COUNTRY 9	20.0	27.0	10.0	57.0	49.5	23.7	27.0	19.2	69.8	55.5	26.1	31.0	19.7	76.8	61.1	6.6	12%
COUNTRY 10	3.0	18.0	2.0	23.0	21.0	4.0	18.0	3.4	25.4	22.0	3.4	24.8	3.5	31.7	27.4	6.2	28%
COUNTRY 11	3.0	18.0	0.0	21.0	21.0	4.0	18.0	0.0	22.0	22.0	3.4	24.8	0.0	28.2	27.4	6.2	28%
COUNTRY 12	3.0	18.0	0.0	21.0	21.0	4.0	18.0	0.0	22.0	22.0	3.8	24.8	0.0	28.6	27.8	6.6	30%
COUNTRY 13	1.0	4.0	15.0	20.0	6.0	1.2	4.0	36.0	41.2	7.6	1.4	12.4	36.9	50.7	15.9	8.7	113%
COUNTRY 14	1.0	4.0	20.0	25.0	5.0	1.2	4.0	47.9	53.2	5.2	1.4	12.4	49.1	63.0	13.4	8.6	164%
COUNTRY 15	1.0	3.0	4.0	8.0	4.0	1.2	3.0	7.3	11.5	4.2	1.4	12.4	7.5	21.3	13.4	9.6	227%
COUNTRY 16	1.0	4.0	0.0	5.0	4.0	1.2	4.0	0.0	5.2	5.2	1.4	12.4	0.0	13.8	13.4	8.6	164%
COUNTRY 17	1.0	4.0	0.0	5.0	4.0	1.2	4.0	0.0	5.2	5.2	1.4	12.4	0.0	13.8	13.4	8.6	164%
COUNTRY 18	1.0	3.0	0.0	4.0	3.0	1.2	3.0	0.0	4.2	4.2	1.4	12.4	0.0	13.8	13.4	9.6	226%
COUNTRY 19	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	1.3	12.4	0.0	13.7	13.3	11.6	546%
COUNTRY 20	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	1.3	12.4	0.0	13.7	13.3	11.6	546%
COUNTRY 21	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	1.3	12.4	0.0	13.7	13.3	11.6	546%
COUNTRY 22	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	1.3	12.4	0.0	13.7	13.3	11.6	546%
COUNTRY 23	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	1.3	12.4	0.0	13.7	13.3	11.6	546%
COUNTRY 24	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	1.3	12.4	0.0	13.7	13.3	11.6	546%
REST OF WORLD	11.4	32.0	11.5	54.9	31.9	13.5	32.0	18.4	63.9	27.2	14.6	62.0	18.8	95.5	55.8	30.7	113%
TOTAL (SUM OF ABOVE)	1030.0	600.0 ²⁶	2115.5	3745.5 ²⁷	2543.0	1310.7	600.0 ²⁶	3856.3	5767.0	3589.7	1440.3	620.3 ²⁶	3952.7	6013.4	3761.3	191.9	5%

NOTES

Scenarios:

- **Current Scenario:** Estimated annual revenues per nation in the current 4-year cycle
- **Base Scenario:** Projected annual revenues per nation for the next 4-year cycle assuming no major change is made to the global structure of the game. Considers trends in number of bilateral matches per format per nation, lack of contextual narrative in bilateral matches, increasing player availability issues, industry growth trends, country/market-specific growth, inflation adjustment
- **Proposed Scenario:** Projected annual revenues per nation for the next 4-year cycle assuming recommendations made in this report are implemented. Considers number of bilateral matches per format per nation in proposed schedules, increased contextual narrative and improved player availability created by scheduling structures, industry growth trends, country/market specific growth, inflation adjustment

Formats:

- **Bilateral:** International matches organised between two nations, outside of major tournaments. Growth projections calculated on a per-match basis considering allocation of revenue to different formats, projected number of matches per format, and change in value per match
- **ICC Events:** Revenues generated by ICC through major events and distributed to Members. Revenues conservatively estimated to remain consistent due to current long-term deals in place, with C USD 20M additional revenue estimated due to new high context content
- **DT20:** Revenues generated by major domestic T20 leagues (central and franchise revenues). Growth projections calculated considering historic growth trends, industry growth trends, country/market-specific growth, inflation adjustment, plus impact of clearer scheduling structure on interest and player availability

- **Governing Body:** Revenues from bilateral matches, ICC events and DT20 leagues that are received by the Member Board in each nation. Figures assume current models will remain static for comparison purposes (i.e. we have not considered the impact that the change in The Hundred franchise ownership will have on ECB revenues compared to county / private revenues)

Countries:

- Figures for the top 24 countries in international cricket have been considered
- Additional revenues are not shown in this table. These include:
 - ICC revenues not distributed to Members (e.g. revenues used to deliver major events)
 - Domestic revenues generated by teams (e.g. English counties, Australian states) separate from major leagues

Sources include:

- Member Board financial reports
- Cricket Archive game data
- Deloitte (Indian sports market report)
- PWC (global sports market report)
- TSC SEER research
- Deloitte / ICC Economics of Cricket report
- WCA / TSC analysis

26. ICC generates an additional 300m of revenue that is not distributed.
 27. Global professional cricket revenue is estimated as 4345.5 which is 3745.5 + 300m ICC non distributed revenue and 300m in States/Countries etc revenue.

GLOBAL CRICKET PLAYER PAYMENT OVERVIEW

COUNTRY	LIST A PLAYERS (PRO + SEMI-PRO)	EST. PLAYER PAYMENTS (M)	EST. PLAYER PAYMENTS (AS A % OF REVENUE)
1	1770	150	6%
2	919	100	26%
3	322	80	27%
4	660	20	21%
5	480	14	17%
6	260	19	29%
7	288	10	16%
8	257	14	23%
9	569	7	12%
10	201	3	13%
11	155	2	10%
12	113	4	19%
13	33	8	40%
14	60	15	60%
15	29	2	25%
16	48	0.9	18%
17	54	0.9	18%
18	35	0.4	10%
19	36	0.2	10%
20	25	0.2	10%
21	46	0.2	10%
22	34	0.2	10%
23	37	0.2	10%
24	49	0.2	10%
REST OF WORLD	2000	5	9%
TOTAL	8480	456.4	10.5%

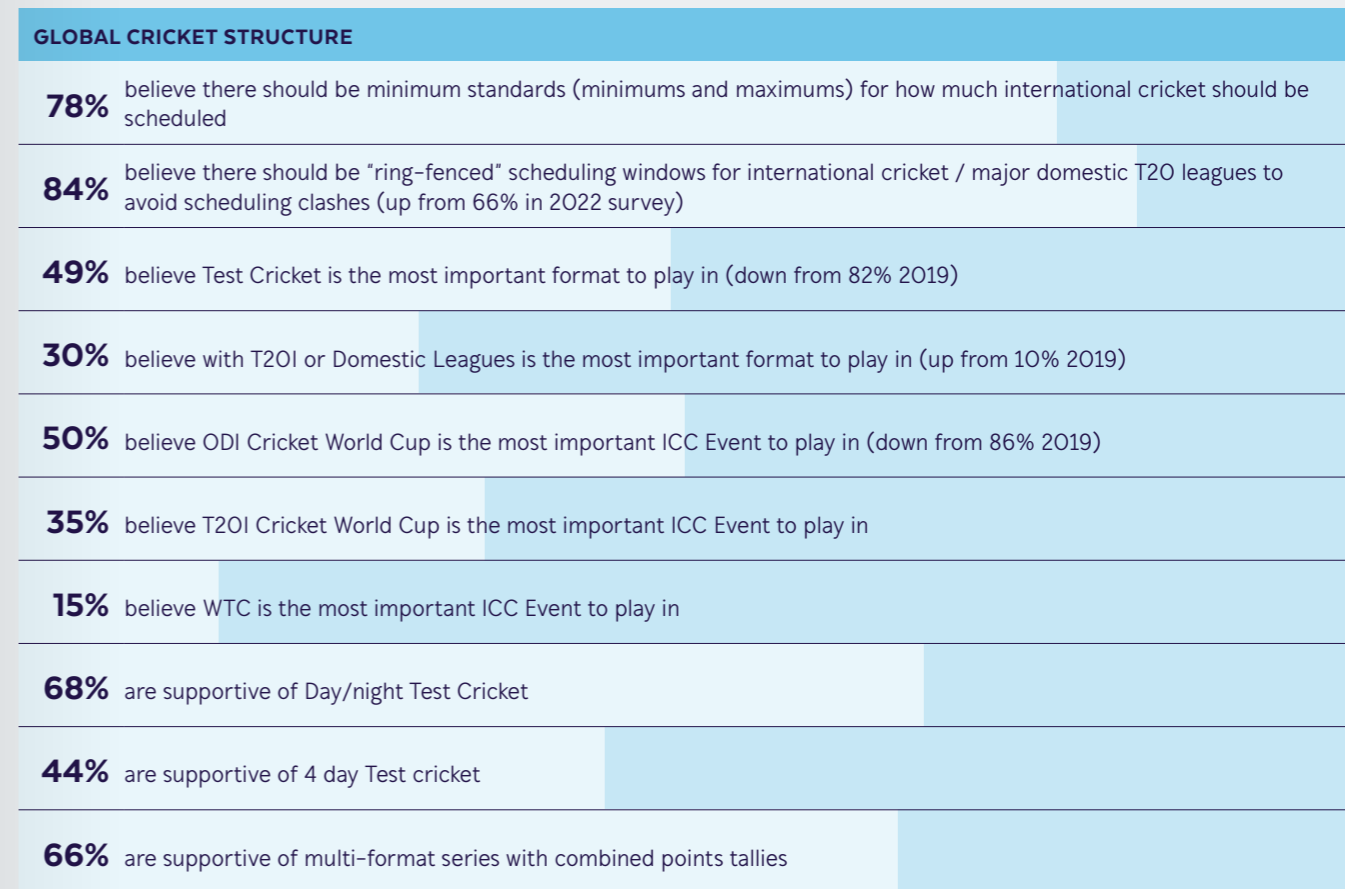
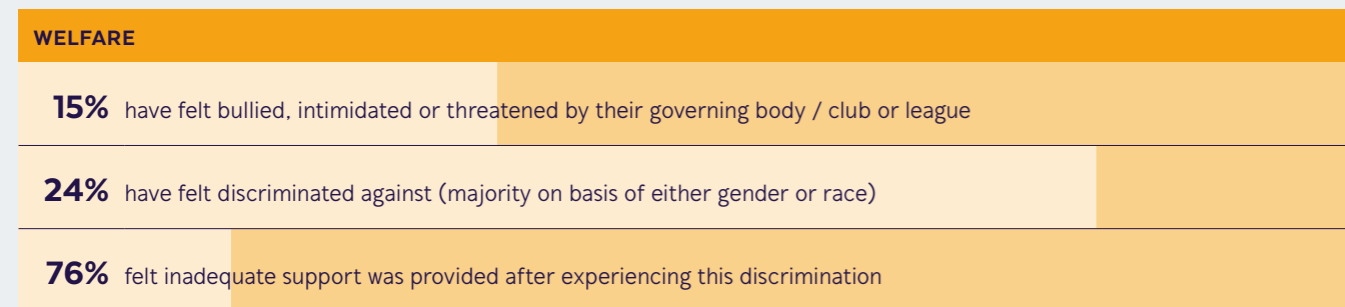
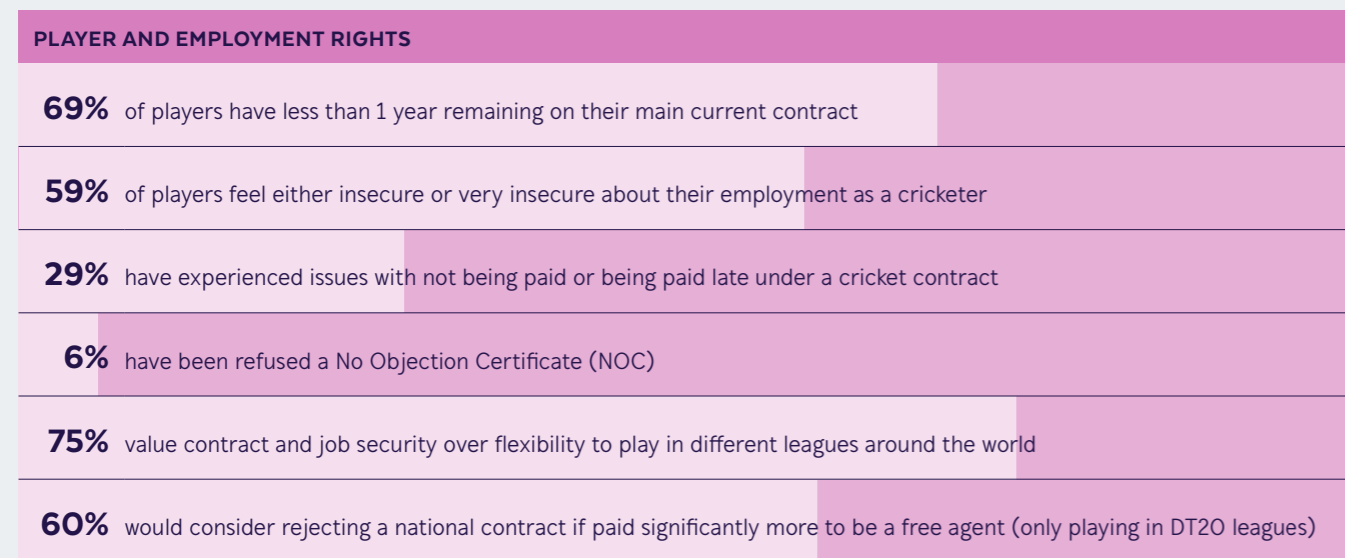
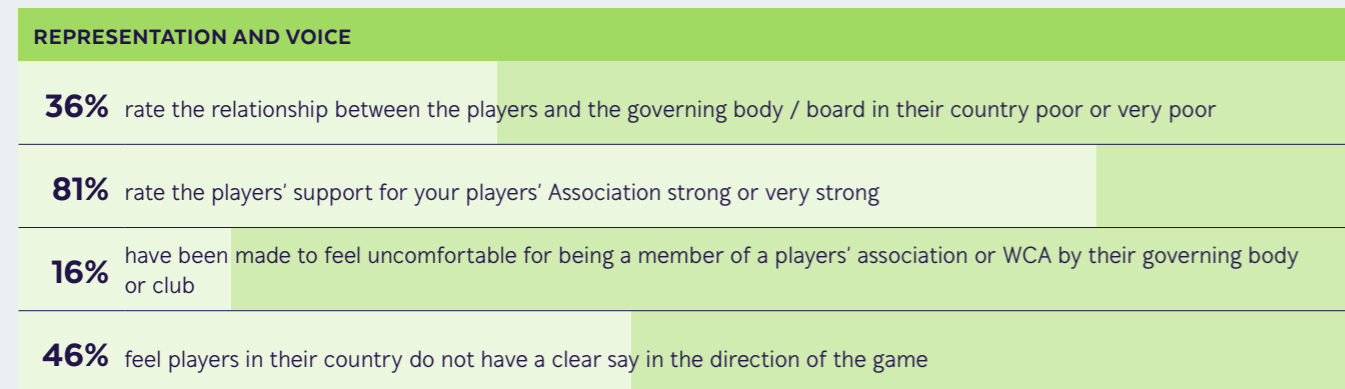
Sources: Member Board financial reports;
WCA / TSC analysis

Imperfect data acknowledgement: In some instances
figures have been estimated and/or rounded.



2024 WCA GLOBAL PLAYER SURVEY

The below is selected global player survey 328 responses from men’s and women’s professional cricketers – majority international.





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