

# Workout Group Task Force Report to the Board

## Proposed Legislation change:

**Workout group:** A subordinate organization (subgroup) of a club that is a member of USMS registered through an LMSC. Individual members of a workout group are also members of the parent club.

### Rationale:

For a number of years USMS has recognized workout groups, by defining workout groups in code we officially recognize them and can more effectively develop administrative procedures to provide programs and services to the workout groups and our members. The first sentence of the definition describes how USMS will recognize the entity (the workout group). The second sentence clarifies that individual members do not need to register twice and that they can not register to be a member a workout group of one club while also being a member of a different parent club.

## Requested action of the Board:

- Approve the proposed amendment and submit to the legislation committee or return the Workout Group Task Force with suggested revisions.
- Determine what fees, if any, should established for the registration of a workout group

## Background and expanded rationale

The primary mission of the task force was to 1) determine if workout groups were of value, 2) if yes, then how should they be recognized, and 3) present any necessary proposed amendments to code to the Board for approval and presentation to the HOD.

The task force determined that there is value in officially recognizing workout groups. By officially recognizing them and having them register with USMS, we could then provide improved benefits and services to the members of workout groups.

The task force determined we wanted to recognize workout groups, but that we did not want to grant “member” status to them (as we do for clubs, per USMS 201.2). The task force prepared a lengthy proposed amendment to Part 2 to codify the status of workout groups. In the end, we decided that we could accomplish our mission with the single definition in code and operational procedures defined in the USMS Guide to Operations.

Therefore we came up with a simple definition that defines a hierarchical structure of workout groups under clubs, which describes how USMS will view workout groups. And it defines the relation of individual members to both clubs and workout groups. We determined that both of these elements were important enough to define in code, rather than leave it up to administrative procedures to define.

We discussed including language that would provide structure to the meaning of a workout group of a club but we determined that this would cross the line of USMS involvement in club business, which is beyond the scope of our mission.

We discussed the impact of workout groups on sanctioned events. And we determined that our definition has to do with the USMS organizational view, which does not effect how an event director wishes to recognize groups internally within the confines of their event.

We discussed what to call them. While workout group seems to be a commonly accepted term, we were not adamant about it and saw merit to other terms such as chapter or team. Our preference is to pick one and

stick with it. For example, we define “club” while a number of our clubs define themselves as “teams” and there are no problems of note with this dichotomy. We believe the same will hold true for workout groups.

## **Response to board questions and suggestions**

To address the concerns raised by Dr. Miller; the proposed definition does not in any way limit who can attend the practices of any club or workout group. Today, Dr. Miller’s group is listed as a workout group under the Virginia Masters club. USMS does not promote restrictions on who can attend his ACAC workout group of VMST, other than those which allow the group to be covered by insurance. The proposed definition does not diminish this for clubs or workout groups. In fact it may improve this by having the workout groups identify any restrictions they may have on who can attend their practices.

To address the questions about participation in sanctioned events; the proposed definition does not effect this. Today, an event director is allowed to score/recognize participants in any way they wish, provided it is approved by the LMSC sanction chair. And provided the official results submitted to USMS are by club. For example, the event director could score by workout group, gender (men vs. women), pick-sides (team captains choose sides from registered swimmers), etc. The internal composition of “teams” in a sanctioned event (exclusive of national championships) is currently not dictated by code. There is no proposal from us to change this.

To address the question of allowing a workout group to affiliate with multiple clubs; again the primary purpose of officially recognizing workout groups is to gather relevant and timely information about the organization and to provide services to the group and our members. The administrative effort for a workout group to sign-up with multiple clubs in multiple LMSC’s is seen as an unnecessary burden and could lead to confusion amongst the members. From Dr. Miller’s example above, he has swimmers who are registered in workout groups of the NC regional club. These members choose to register with and I assume represent the NCMS club in competition and possibly their NCMS workout group if they attend meets in NC that recognize workout groups in scoring. By registering an ACAC in NC, swimmers may be confused. And again, if a club/workout group allows members of other clubs (or unattached members) to participate in practices, this is a non-issue.

To address the question of having multiple official names of the designation “workout groups”, we looked at other names and designations (workout groups; aka chapters...) and we determined that having multiple designations typically leads to more confusion not less. Additionally the term workout group seemed common and representative; however we are not opposed to the selection of another single designation. We saw this as a similar to the use of the defined term “club”. Currently within USMS we have many registered clubs who call themselves “teams” as well as those who call themselves “clubs.” The official designation of “club” does not appear to cause any problems with the teams or clubs. We feel that, once established, the official designation of “workout group” will stick regardless of the group calling themselves workout groups, chapters, sub-clubs, whatever.