

Classification Guide

Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games

March 2013

1 Introduction

The Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games Classification Guide (referred to as “guide”) is designed to provide National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) and International Federations (IFs) with information about the classification policies and procedures that will apply to the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games.

1.1 Scope of the Classification Guide

The guide is based on the principles below:

- The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) is the supreme authority of the Paralympic Winter Games.
- The Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games are governed by the IPC Handbook, available from the IPC section of www.paralympic.org.
- The planning and implementation of the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games is a joint responsibility between the IPC and the Sochi 2014 Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, in co-operation with the IFs, who have jurisdiction over their sports on the Games programme.

This guide defines certain classification regulations relating to the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games (referred to as “Games”) that apply to all sports on the Paralympic Winter Games programme and are valid for the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games only. The guide overrules the IF classification rules on the matters specified in this guide. For all other matters that are not specified in this guide, the IF classification rules and regulations apply. Updates to this guide will be sent to all NPCs as required.

The following classification matters are regulated by this Classification Guide:

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1.2 Classification at the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games

The purpose of the Paralympic sport classification system is to minimise the impact of impairment on the outcome of competition, so that the athletes who succeed in competition are those with the best anthropometry, physiology and psychology and who have enhanced them to best effect through hard training and quality coaching. In order to achieve this purpose, athletes are grouped into sport classes according to how much their impairment impacts on their sport-specific performance. The process of athlete evaluation is regulated by the IF classification rules and regulations.

The goal of the IPC and Sochi 2014 is to ensure that classification services at the Games are of the highest quality, and are sport and athlete focused. The IPC and Sochi 2014's key objectives are as follows:

- To enable athletes to focus on training and competition.
- To reduce the number of athletes that will need to undergo classification upon arrival at the Games to an absolute minimum, so that athletes can concentrate on training and competition. Therefore, the IPC and the IFs have agreed to provide increased classification opportunities in the respective sports before the Games.
- To provide the best possible working environment to ensure expedient and accurate classification of those athletes required to present for classification during the Games.

Consequently, this guide is intended to offer provisional procedures for classification only. The restriction of the classification programme to a minimum is defined in the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games Qualification Guide and Chapter 2.1 of this guide.

2 Sport Class Status at the Paralympic Winter Games

Athletes are designated a sport class and a sport class status through athlete evaluation by a classification panel in accordance with the rules of the respective IF. A sport class status identifies

- if an athlete has to undergo athlete evaluation again (New/Review), or if the sport class will not change (Confirmed), and
- if and by what parties the sport class of an athlete can be protested.

According to the Classification Code, there are three sport class statuses in Paralympic sports:

Table A: Sport class status		
Sport class status	Abbreviation	Definition
Confirmed	C	Athletes with C status have been internationally classified and they are not required to undergo athlete evaluation again. Therefore, their sport class remains unchanged. Athletes with C status will not be required to undergo evaluation at the Games.
Review	R	Athletes with R status have been internationally classified, but they are required to undergo athlete evaluation again. Their sport class might be changed after such evaluation. Athletes with R status are required to undergo athlete evaluation at the Games.
	R + Fixed Date	Athletes with R status may also be allocated a Fixed Review Date. Such athlete is not required to undergo athlete evaluation until the Fixed Review Date.
New	N	Athletes with N status have not been internationally classified. Athletes with N status do not meet the eligibility criteria of the Games and thus are not permitted to compete at the Games. (see Chapter 2.1 and 2.2 and the Sochi2014 Qualification Criteria)

If an athlete is required to undergo competition observation, the tracking code "Competition Review Status" (CRS) will be assigned instead of a sport class status to enter the competition. Once competition observation is finalized and the classification panel has confirmed the sport class, the tracking code is replaced by a sport class status.

2.1 Sport Class Status and eligibility criteria

According to the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games Qualification Guide, athletes are only permitted to enter the Games, if they have been allocated one of the below sport class statuses by 21 February 2014, which is the closing date for athletes to meet the athlete the qualification criteria:

Table B: Sport Class Status meeting the eligibility criteria set in the qualification guide	
Sport	Statuses meeting the eligibility criteria
Alpine Skiing and Snowboard	Confirmed , and Review with the Fixed Review Date after the 2013/2014 season (For example, a Fixed Review Date 2014 means that the athlete's sport class needs to be reviewed again in the 2014/2015 season (starting July 2014). These athletes meet the eligibility criteria for the Games for Alpine Skiing).
Biathlon and Cross-Country Skiing	Confirmed , and Review with the Fixed Review Date after the 2013/2014 season (Please see the above example)
Ice Sledge Hockey	Confirmed , and Review
Wheelchair Curling	Confirmed

2.2 Sport Class Status New and Review

Athletes with Sport Class Status New do not meet the qualification criteria for the Games and therefore may not be entered. For the sports Wheelchair Curling, Alpine Skiing, Snowboard, Cross-Country Skiing and Biathlon, athletes with Sport Class Status Review also do not meet the qualification criteria. Exceptions will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the IPC Governing Board for all sports on the Paralympic programme in accordance with the provisions of the IPC Classification Code – International Standard for Athlete Evaluation (art. 13.2). NPCs have to address any outstanding requests for exceptions after the date of final entry (21 February 2014) to the IPC.

If the IPC Governing Board allows an athlete with a sport class status N to compete, she/he will be dealt with similarly as athletes with a sport class status R, with the exception that other NPCs will be permitted to lodge a protest in respect of such athlete.

3 Pre-Games classification activities

IFs are responsible to offer sufficient classification opportunities, for athletes having the opportunity to meet the qualification criteria for the Games. NPCs have the responsibility to enable their athletes to attend such classification opportunities.

With the Classification Master List an IF collects all sport class and sport class status allocations of their athletes. Each IF is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of its Classification Master List, for keeping it updated and for making it available to the NPCs.

Each NPC is responsible for verifying the classification information of their athletes on the Classification Master List. NPCs should liaise directly with the IF, if their Classification Master List contains incorrect information or if an athlete is not included on the relevant Classification Master List.

Sochi 2014 will retrieve classification information from the Classification Master Lists from the IFs on 2 December 2013, which is the deadline of Sochi 2014 to receive accreditation requests.

The final entries deadline is 21 February 2014. After this date, all changes to athlete sport class data must be submitted by the NPC to the IPC. These changes will be considered by the IPC in consultation with the respective IF and Sochi 2014 will be informed of the final decisions taken.

Each NPC needs to nominate a Classification Authorized Representative for each sport which offers classification at the Games and which the NPC enters athletes for. Besides the Chef de Mission and the Deputy Chef de Mission, the Classification Authorized Representatives will be the only ones who are entitled to submit classification protests and they will be the contact person for the IPSF on classification matters.

Sochi 2014 must be informed about the nominations of all Classification Authorized Representatives by 31 October 2013 with the Classification Authorized Representatives form available on the Sochi 2014 ALPINA Extranet.

4 Games-time Classification Activities

4.1 Classification Evaluation Period

The Classification Evaluation Period is the time period identified by each IF when the physical and technical assessment part of classification takes place in the days preceding competition at the Games.

All athletes with a sport class status R are required to arrive at the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games in time to be available for classification during the Classification Evaluation Period for their sport. It is the responsibility of the NPCs and the athletes to ensure the timely arrival for classification.

The Classification Evaluation Period and the location where classification takes place by sport is defined below:

Table C: Classification evaluation periods and locations		
Sport	Location	Classification Evaluation Period
Alpine Skiing and Snowboard		
Athletes with physical impairment	"Rosa Khutor" Alpine Center ¹	5 – 6 March 2014
Athletes with visual impairment	Mountain Village Polyclinic ¹	5 – 6 March 2014
Biathlon and Cross-Country Skiing		
Athletes with physical impairment	"Laura" Cross-country Ski & Biathlon Center ¹	5 – 6 March 2014
Athletes with visual impairment	Mountain Village Polyclinic ¹	5 – 6 March 2014
Ice Sledge Hockey	Shayba Arena	5 – 6 March 2014
Wheelchair Curling	n/a ²	n/a

¹ For Alpine Skiing, Snowboard, Cross-Country Skiing and Biathlon, the Classification programme is provisional and only offered in exceptional cases as described in Chapter 2.1 and 2.2.

² For Wheelchair Curling no classification opportunities will be offered at the Games.

For all sports, the daily classification sessions and the time when classification outcomes are posted during the Classification Evaluation Period, will be as follows:

Table D: Daily classification sessions	
Session times	Classification outcomes posting deadline
9:00–12:00	14:00 (on the same day)
14:00–18:00	20:30 (on the same day)

The Chief Classifiers will share the classification outcomes in a timely manner with the Sport Entries and Classification Office. Classification outcomes will be published no later than at the above times at the Sport Information Desks in the respective venue and in the Paralympic Villages.

4.2. Classification Schedule

The classification schedule for the Games includes athletes who are required to undergo athlete evaluation and details when exactly an athlete is schedule to undergo classification during the Classification Evaluation Period.

The classification schedule will be distributed by email to NPCs after the final entries deadline of 21 February 2014, but may be subject to change thereafter. Changes will be communicated to the NPCs as quickly as possible.

Athletes and NPCs are responsible for ensuring that the athlete

- presents for classification 30min before indicated by the classification schedule,
- brings all equipment, attire and medical information as requested by the IF classification rules and regulations,
- is accompanied by an interpreter, if the athlete does not speak English sufficiently, and
- is preferably accompanied by a member of the NPC delegation (This is mandatory for athletes under the age of 18 years).

If an athlete fails to do so, the Chief Classifier may decide to reschedule athlete evaluation (time permitting). If the athlete fails to meet the above requirements at the time of the second appointment, the athlete will not be allowed to compete at the Games.

4.2 Classification competition period: First Appearance

In some Paralympic sports, observation in competition is a part of athlete evaluation and the final sport class decision may only be reached after the athlete has been observed during First Appearance. First Appearance is the first time an athlete competes in the sport class he/she is evaluated in at a competition.

Athletes who are required by the classifiers to be observed in competition, will be allocated a sport class and the tracking code CRS until First Appearance is complete. After the First Appearance event is concluded, the final sport class and sport class status are published in the Sport Information Centre and at the competition venue no later than 15min after the race results have been published.

At the Games, observation in competition only applies to athletes with physical impairment competing in Alpine Skiing, Snowboard, Cross-Country Skiing and Biathlon. There is no observation in competition for athletes with visual impairment or for athletes competing in Ice Sledge Hockey.

4.3 Re-entry after changes in athlete sport class

If an athlete's sport class changes during the Classification Evaluation Period and/or the competition period, the athlete must re-enter in the updated sport class subject to the re-entry conditions for the specific sport as outlined in the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games Sport Entries Manual which will be distributed in September 2013.

5 Classification protests

Classification panel decisions only can be challenged by protests and appeals, as defined in this guide.

5.1 Protest opportunities

The below table identifies which party may lodge protests in respect of which athletes:

Table E: Classification protest opportunities			
Protests during Classification Evaluation Period			
Sport class status of the athlete at final entry	Protest by own NPC	Protest by other NPC	Protest under Exceptional Circumstances
Review	Yes	No	Yes
Confirmed Review + fixed review date	No	No	Yes ¹
Protests during Competition Period			
Tracking code at entry in competition period	Protest by own NPC	Protest by other NPC	Protest under Exceptional Circumstances
CRS	Yes	No	Yes
Review	No	No	Yes
Confirmed Review + fixed review date	No	No	Yes ¹

¹ There will be no protest opportunities during the Games in the sport of Wheelchair Curling.

For protests by NPCs, please note the following: NPCs can

- only protest the sport class of athletes belonging to their own NPC,
- submit protests regarding athletes during the Classification Evaluation Period, only if they have undergone athlete evaluation in the Classification Evaluation Period, and
- submit protests regarding athletes during the competition period, only if they have undergone athlete observation assessment, and the athlete has not been subject to a protest following the Classification Evaluation Period.

An athlete may only be protested once during the Games, unless if a Protest under Exceptional Circumstances is made.

5.2 Protest submissions by NPCs

If an NPC wishes to submit a protest in respect of one of their athletes, the NPC is advised to:

- Complete the protest form in full and in English, available in the Sport Information Desks and the Sport Information Center, the classification venue and the competition venue; to
- Attach additional information, if necessary, and to
- Pay the protest fee, which is €150 for the Games and is only refunded, if the protest is upheld.

Protests may only be submitted by the Chef de Mission, the Deputy Chef de Mission or the Authorized Classification Representative of the NPC.

The protest submission must be completed before the protest deadlines, outlined in the below table:

Table F: Deadlines for classification evaluation protests		
Athlete underwent classification	Classification outcomes published	Protest deadline
During the Classification Period, 9:00 - 12:00	14:00	17:00 (of the same day)
During the Classification Period, 14:00 - 18:00	20:30	08:30 (of the next day)
During competition, at First Appearance	15min after race results of First Appearance event posted	No later than 15 minutes after the athlete's sport class was posted

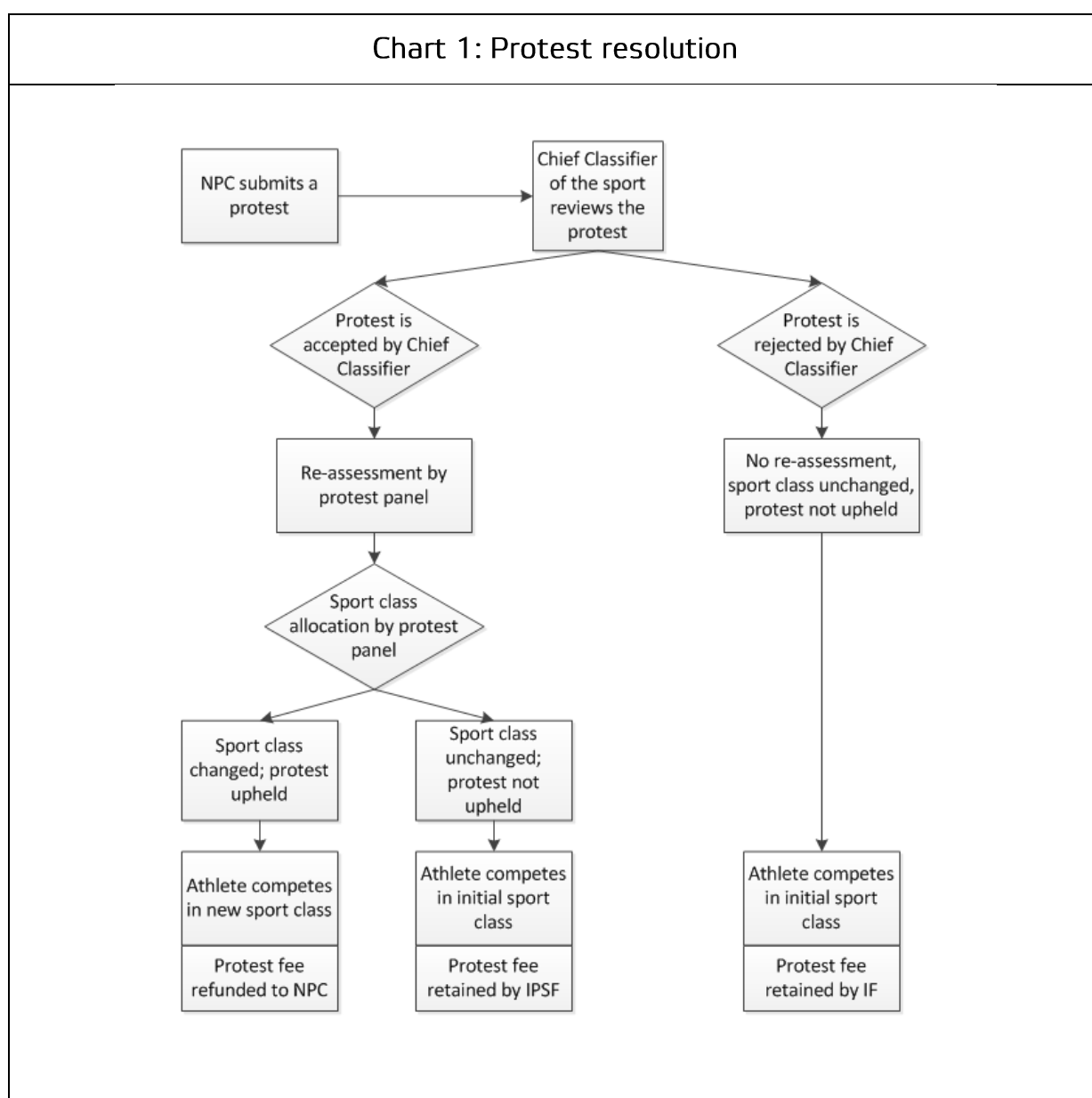
Protest forms are available and protests can be submitted at these locations:

Table G: Where to handle protests?		
Sport	Location - Classification Evaluation Period	Location - Competition Period
Alpine Skiing and Snowboard		
Athletes with physical impairment	"Rosa Khutor" Alpine Center Sport Information Desk and Mountain Village Sport Information Desk.	"Rosa Khutor" Alpine Center Sport Information Desk
Athletes with visual impairment	Mountain Village Polyclinic and Sport Information Desk	n/a
Biathlon and Cross-Country Skiing		
Athletes with physical impairment	"Laura" Cross-Country Ski & Biathlon Center Sport Information Desk and Mountain Village Sport Information Desk.	"Laura" Cross-Country Ski & Biathlon Center Sport Information Desk
Athletes with visual impairment	Mountain Village Polyclinic and Sport Information Desk	n/a
Ice Sledge Hockey	"Shayba" Arena	n/a

*Please observe the opening hours of the Sport Information Desk at the respective venues if you wish to submit a protest.

5.3 Protest resolution

Once a protest is submitted, the following process will be followed. The process is the same during the Classification Evaluation Period and the competition period.



The Chief Classifier of the respective IF will decide if a protest is accepted or not. Reasons for declining a protest can be, but are not limited to

- Protest submitted after the deadline.
- Protest form not completed in full.
- Reason for a protest is not explained sufficiently or is not legible.

If a protest is declined by a Chief Classifier, the NPC may resubmit the protest. For the re-submission of a protest, the protest deadlines need to be observed as well, a new protest form needs to be completed and the protest fee has to be paid again.

If an athlete does not appear for the protest re-assessment at the agreed time, the athlete will not be permitted to compete at the Games.

5.4 Protests under Exceptional Circumstances

A Chief Classifier may lodge Protests under Exceptional Circumstances in respect of athletes in Review or Confirmed Status competing in the sport of his/ her IF.

An exceptional circumstance is an occasion when e.g. an athlete performs in view of the Chief Classifier with significantly less or greater functional ability that does not reflect his/ her current sport class during the competition, or when the Chief Classifier believes that an error has been made by the classification panel that has led to the athlete being allocated a sport class that does not reflect the athlete's abilities correctly.

A Chief Classifier can lodge such protest at any given time (independent from the above set deadlines), does not have to pay a protest fee and may also lodge a protest against an athlete's sport class that has already been protested by an NPC before.

A Protest under Exceptional Circumstances is resolved by a reassessment, and the outcome of this reassessment shall stand and not be subject to further protest.

6 Classification Appeal

The term Classification Appeal refers to the procedure by which a formal objection to the manner in which an athlete's classification evaluation and/or classification procedures have been conducted is submitted and subsequently resolved.

The IPC Board of Appeal of Classification (BAC) is the final appeal body available to NPCs and IFs for the resolution of classification issues for all sports on the Paralympic programme. The Bylaws of the IPC Board of Appeal of Classification are part of the IPC Handbook, available at www.paralympic.org.

Appeal forms are available from the IPC (IPC Handbook, Section 1, Chapter 2.8)

The Appeal procedures described in Appendix 1 to the Bylaws of the IPC Board of Appeal of Classification apply for submission and resolution of appeals (IPC Handbook, Section 1, Chapter 2.8).

7 Sport Class Not Eligible

If an athlete is designated Not Eligible (NE), this means that the classification panel is convinced the athlete either

- does not have an impairment defined as eligible impairment by the sport, or
- the athlete's eligible impairment does not cause an activity limitation significant enough to meet the sport's minimum disability criteria.

The decision that an athlete is NE does not question the presence of a genuine impairment, but is merely a decision on the participation in a certain sport.

Any athlete, who is found to be NE by the first classification panel, is entitled to a re-assessment by a second classification panel.

- If a second classification is available, the re-assessment is done at earliest convenience, and the NPC is informed about time and location of the re-assessment by the respective Chief Classifier.

If the second classification panel finds the athlete to be NE, the athlete is not permitted to compete at the Games.

8 NPC Responsibilities in a Nutshell

In summary, the NPCs are responsible to observe the following obligations related to classification:

Pre-Games time:

- Familiarize with the Classification Guide and inform their athletes
- Check their athletes' data on the IF Master Lists regularly
- Keep informed on classification opportunities offered by the different sports
- Enable their athletes to attend classification opportunities before the Games to meet the eligibility criteria
- Collect medical information for athletes, who will undergo classification
- Appoint one Classification Authorized Representative per sport by 31 October 2013

After 21 February 2014:

- Check the classification schedule and inform their athletes
- Arrive on time for Classification

Games time:

- Make sure their athletes attend classification as scheduled and bring required medical documentation
- Provide an interpreter to attend athlete evaluation, if needed
- Observe the protest procedures, if in disagreement with the sport class allocated

9 Overview of Classification Information by Sport

Sport	IF	Classification Rules	Sport Classes at the Games	Required Sport Class Statuses	First appearance
Alpine Skiing	IPC	Paralympic.org/AlpineSkiing	B1-3, LW1-12	R +year 2014 onwards, C	Only for LW classes
Snowboard	IPC	Paralympic.org/AlpineSkiing	SB-LL	R +year 2014 onwards, C	Yes
Cross-country skiing and Biathlon	IPC	Paralympic.org/NordicSkiing	B1-3, LW2-12	R +year 2014 onwards, C	Only for LW classes
Ice Sledge Hockey	IPC	Paralympic.org/IceSledgeHockey	Minimal eligibility	R, C	n/a
Wheelchair curling	WCF	Worldcurling.org	Minimal eligibility	C	n/a

10 Key dates

31 October 2013	Deadline for nomination of Classification Authorized Representatives
2 December 2013	Deadline for the submission of accreditation forms to Sochi 2014
21 February 2014	Final entries deadline
28 February to 5 March 2014	Delegation Registration Meetings (DRM)
5 to 6 March 2014	Classification Evaluation Period
8 to 16 March 2014	Competition Period

11 Administration

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