

Context and planning process

The sport of ice sledge hockey is governed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) through the IPC Ice Sledge Hockey Technical Committee as the International Federation (IF) and represents one of nine IPC sports under the umbrella of the IPC. IPC Ice Sledge Hockey developed this Strategic Plan as a sport-specific extension of the overall IPC Strategic Plan 2011-2014 and in line with the mandate of the IPC General Assembly to further strengthen the development of the IPC sports with the aim of making them self-sustainable. This strategic plan has been developed in parallel with the strategic plans of all other IPC sports following a common framework and recognising their commonalities and combined



strengths, while it also carves out the sport specific long-term strategies and objectives.

The common elements which emerged from the integrated development process are described in more detail in the overarching document "Overall IPC Strategic Plan on IPC sports." This present "Ice Sledge Hockey Strategic Plan" is an excerpt of the overall plan focussing specifically on the priorities in the area of ice sledge hockey thus taking into account its specificities and current stage of development. It has been written in a way to be a comprehensive and self-contained document in its own right.

Vision, mission and values

The strategic plan development process revealed consensus and a common understanding about the vision, mission and values of the nine IPC sports. It is also considered important to have one common reference to guide and strengthen the sports collectively. Hence here below you find the vision, mission and values applicable to all IPC sports while putting this into the context of ice sledge hockey.

In the context of ice sledge hockey this means to develop a sustainable ice sledge hockey sport system, nationally and internationally, with successful IPC Ice Sledge Hockey competitions, and to encourage, promote and contribute to the development of IPC Ice Sledge Hockey at all levels. To promote the inclusion of ice sledge hockey as an integral part of the national hockey federations, where appropriate, and ultimately obtain self-governance.

Vision

Provide a platform for para-athletes to regularly practice and to showcase their ability to their full potential and to reach their sporting pinnacle and dreams

Mission

Organise successful competitions as part of a stable calendar while encouraging participation and development at all levels and promoting the core values of the Paralympic Movement

Athlete centred

Equitable & Fair play

Transparent & Accountable

Collaborative & Engaging

Professional & Ethical

Values

The sport

Ice sledge hockey originated during the 1960's when a group of people at a rehabilitation centre in Stockholm, Sweden wanted to continue playing hockey despite their impairments. The sport quickly caught on, and by 1969, the city had a five-team league. The game then reached Norway, Great Britain, Canada and Estonia. Since its inception at the Paralympic Winter Games in 1994 the sport has spread widely across Europe, North America and Asia.

Ice sledge hockey is played by athletes who have a physical impairment in the lower halves of their bodies. It follows the rules of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) with modifications. Instead of skates, players use double-blade sledges that allow the puck to pass beneath them, and they use two sticks that have spike-ends for pushing and blade-ends for shooting.

Ice sledge hockey made its Paralympic debut at the Lillehammer 1994 Games with five teams and 57 athletes and has quickly become one of the biggest attractions for

spectators on the winter sports programme in all Games editions ever since. Much of this can be credited to improvement in both the quality and quantity of the resources required for the sport. Whilst already six nations with 88 athletes took part in the Paralympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City 2002, the sport has constantly grown over the years to eight teams and 117 athletes in Vancouver 2010.

IPC Ice Sledge Hockey is starting to cultivate a close working relationship with its Olympic counterpart IIHF. A memorandum of understanding between the two organisations is currently under discussion with the aim to sign an agreement by the end of 2014. This agreement outlines various areas of co-operation, such as development of emerging countries and their programmes, development of players and coaches, and sharing of best practices in areas of marketing, sponsorship and broadcasting. Many of the member nations already maintain close working relationships or are directly managed and funded by the national ice hockey federations.



International Paralympic Committee

Adenauerallee 212-214
53113 Bonn, Germany

Tel. +49 228 2097-200
Fax +49 228 2097-209

ipcicesledgehockey@paralympic.org
www.ipc-icesledgehockey.org

[@IPCISH](https://twitter.com/IPCISH)
[/IceSledgeHockey](https://www.facebook.com/IceSledgeHockey)



International Paralympic Committee

Ice Sledge Hockey Strategic Plan

A plan of IPC Ice Sledge Hockey for the period 2013-2018



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1

Paralympic Games and World Championships

Strategic priorities

- Increase organised, IPC sanctioned play among A-Pool and B-Pool teams throughout each season beginning in 2015.
- Ensure the highest quality competition management and officiating at friendly matches between countries, European and Pan-Pacific Championships, World Championships and Paralympic Winter Games.
- Begin preparation for the development and implementation of a Women's World Championships prior to the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games.
- Ensure regular communication and technical reviews with the event organisers in order to promote management, presentation and officiating of the sports at the expected level of excellence.

Objectives/outcomes

- Each nation strives to play between 20-30 international games per season at A-Pool level and 12-20 international games per season at B-Pool level.
- High quality hosted World Championships in A-Pool with eight competitive teams in 2015 and 2017.
- High quality World Championships for B-Pool teams in 2015 and 2017 at the appropriate scale.
- Receive and review multiple high quality competitive bids for World Championships and qualification events.
- Increase female participation with the objective to hold a major Women's Championships in 2019.



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Athlete Development

Strategic priorities

- Promote the development of increased season-long play at A-Pool and B-Pool level in Europe, North America and Asia.
- Promote the development of season-long play at the club level through existing national leagues throughout Europe, North America and Asia.
- Increase the number of nations practising the sport of ice sledge hockey with focus on Europe and Asia.
- Expand women's programmes in all three Regions for 2013-2018.
- Develop youth and junior athletes throughout Europe, Asia and North America to prepare them for national team programmes.
- Provide competitive opportunities for youth and junior athletes to gain international experience
- Create a statistical platform to support national teams, member clubs and leagues in co-operation with the IPC media department.
- Support athletes with access to affordable sports equipment/sledges through the Ottobock equipment loaner programme.
- Provide knowledge, educational resources and programmes to National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) for coaches, players, technical officials and classifiers.

Objectives/outcomes

- More opportunities for athletes to experience international competition including increased classification opportunities.
- Establish fair classification which is supported by sports and scientific evidence.
- Better tracking of results and thus opportunities to recognise athletes based upon performance and accomplishments.
- Statistical platform will provide an increased ability to monitor competition and regulate rosters and administer discipline.
- Increased visibility and promotion of participating athletes and teams through the IPC communication platforms.
- Inclusion of four new nations in Europe and Asia involved in the development of the sport including two countries that are participating at World Championships level.
- Assess opportunities and test new competition formats for youth and juniors. Starting with a development camp in 2015 and a Junior World Cup in 2016.

3

Paralympic Brand

Strategic priorities

- Ensure visibility of the IPC Ice Sledge Hockey brand at all IPC major events and in the media / TV.
- Ensure TV broadcast and web streaming agreements and in-depth coverage for all major championships.
- Utilise the IPC communication platforms which includes sport website, Facebook and Twitter to support IPC Ice Sledge Hockey.
- Utilise the current communication platforms and create new channels that raise the profile of leading athletes to a wide, global audience.
- Create a brand development section in IPC Ice Sledge Hockey marketing plan with targets for further reach.
- Engage other partners who can carry the brand message for IPC Ice Sledge Hockey, such as marketing and sponsorship partners, the Olympic IF and/or its competitions and National Federations (NFs).



Objectives/outcomes

- Create competition/event highlights in-between Paralympic Winter Games and World Championships to engage the world's media in ice sledge hockey
- Increase visibility of ice sledge hockey competitions and its high-profile athletes in order to allow for continuity and for fans to follow the sport on an on-going basis.
- Promote brand with NFs.
- Reach consistent application of brand and terminology with good understanding of commercial rights and implications.
- Establish a set of objective criteria to be determined and measure brand visibility against initial plans.

4

Funding

Strategic priorities

- Sign agreements with key marketing and sponsorship partners to contribute to the funding and development of IPC Ice Sledge Hockey. Increase funding opportunities with existing IPC partners.
- Develop an IPC Ice Sledge Hockey Marketing and Sales Plan following the IIHF models for uniform and in-arena advertising.
- Create a major donor programme to provide an opportunity for high-wealth individuals or private or corporate foundations to make donations in support of ice sledge hockey.

Objectives/outcomes

- Secure at least one ice sledge hockey specific sponsor by 2018.
- Raise EUR 5,000 in donor contributions by 2016.
- Ensure resources from corporate sponsors, major donors, the Agitos Foundation, broadcasting and general membership to support the IPC Ice Sledge Hockey priorities.



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Organisational Capacity

Strategic priorities

- Provide quality service and support to European and Pan-Pacific Championship and World Championships.
- Define strategy of sharing staff resources collaboratively with other IPC sports to increase efficiency.
- Recruit and train capable officiating supervisors from existing IIHF pool of supervisors in all participating countries.
- Increase the number and availability of top qualified officials with focus on referees.
- Provide on-going support to existing classifiers while mapping out the identification of new international classifiers to establish the optimal level.
- Increase the number of qualified technical delegates, with targeted recruitment specific to European and Asian regions.
- Development and distribution of manuals and best practices guides to future organising committees.
- Host a Sport Forum twice during the quadrennial to involve all nations in key planning and decision making.
- Set up a sport-specific equipment expert group to implement and endorse the IPC Equipment Policy.
- Foster engagement with IPC Ice Sledge Hockey community through social media and web forums.

Objectives/outcomes

- Increased ability to support international competitions outside of World Championship events.
- Increase the pool of highly qualified officials to select from for Paralympic Winter Games and World Championships.
- Increased level of officiating at inter-country exhibition games and tournaments.
- Increase the capacity of supervision of officials throughout the season.
- Increase the consistency of teaching methods for officials and rule interpretations.
- Enhance communication with key ice sledge hockey communities such as with athletes, coaches and officials.
- Ensure that the needs of athletes and the wider ice sledge hockey community are taken into account in the further planning and development of the sport.

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Strategic Partnerships

Strategic priorities

- Continue dialogue with the IIHF on the concepts and areas of collaboration in order to facilitate integration.
- Develop key partnerships with NPCs and NFs to ensure regional delivery of the IPC Ice Sledge Hockey Strategic Plan.
- Use the Sport Technical Committee where appropriate to engage with partners where required to deliver development opportunities for IPC Ice Sledge Hockey.
- Partner with appropriate external institutions/universities/NGOs to strengthen the development of ice sledge hockey.
- Leverage expertise and resources of partners such as NPCs, Local Organisers and host cities in the staging of major competitions.
- Examine the feasibility of including club ice sledge hockey as licensed members of the IPC.

Objectives/outcomes

- Enhance relationship to ensure that IPC Ice Sledge Hockey has a presence on the IIHF website.
- Develop relationship to ensure IIHF co-operation in the education of IPC Ice Sledge Hockey technical officials.
- Enhanced working relationships with all parties involved in staging major competitions and use of synergies and efficiencies in budgets and resources.
- Enhance educational opportunities within the sport of ice sledge hockey.
- Creation of European, North American and Asian club championships under the governance of the IPC.
- Inclusion of the sport of ice sledge hockey as an integral part of the national hockey federations where appropriate.

