

## Context and planning process

The sport of swimming is governed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) through the IPC Swimming Technical Committee as the International Federation (IF) and represents one of nine IPC sports under the umbrella of the IPC. IPC Swimming developed this Swimming 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 "Swimming Strategic Plan" is an excerpt of the overall plan focussing specifically on the priorities in the area of swimming 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 swimming.

**In the swimming context this means** to enable swimmers to achieve their dreams and goals while inspiring and exciting the world in an environmental of excellence. To ensure the organisation of successful IPC Swimming competitions, and to encourage, promote and contribute to the development of swimming at all levels.



## The sport

Swimming has always been a core activity for recreation and rehabilitation for people with impairment. It provides competition opportunities for male and female athletes who perform freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and medley and relay events. IPC Swimming competitions are open to athletes with a physical, visual or intellectual impairment.

Since the Rome 1960 Paralympic Games when 77 swimmers took part, the sport has been an integral part of the Paralympic Movement. It has seen the number of athletes and countries increase every four years since. At the London 2012 Games, 604 swimmers from 74 countries competed in 148 medal events. Furthermore, swimming was the top sport in terms of broadcast time. IPC Swimming is committed to ensuring swimming, the second largest para-sport after athletics, remains a core event on the Paralympic Games programme.



World Championships are now held every two years, in addition to a regional Championships. In August 2013, Montreal hosted the IPC Swimming World Championships with 57 participating nations competing in 172 medal events.



Swimming uses the same rules as its Olympic counterpart the International Swimming Federation (FINA), with some modification where needed. Further to on-going contacts between IPC Swimming and FINA in the course of 2013, there is the desire to explore opportunities for synergies and areas in which both organisations share common interests and can work together.

# International Paralympic Committee Swimming Strategic Plan

A plan of IPC Swimming for the period 2013-2016



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## Paralympic Games and World Championships

### Strategic priorities

- Put rules and regulations in place that are in line with the relevant FINA Rules and Regulations, and with overall IPC policies and regulations.
- Support and co-ordinate the development and implementation of accurate, reliable and consistent sport focused classification systems.
- Ensure top-quality hosts are identified for future World Championships.
- Ensure competition programmes and qualification criteria are developed in a timely manner.
- Implement an athlete qualification system that ensures a) viability of all events, b) participation of top-ranked athletes, and c) representative participation of all genders and all three impairment types from around the globe.
- Ensure regular communication and technical reviews with the event organisers in order to promote management, presentation and officiating of swimming at the expected level of excellence.

### Objectives/outcomes

- Establish a fair classification system in all three impairment groups which is supported by sports and scientific evidence.
- Establish a four-year competition cycle from 2013 to 2016, and beyond, according to the current competition cycle.
- Secure hosts, on-going management and monitoring for 2015 World Championships and beyond.
- Ensure swimming remains on the Paralympic Games programme with an optimum number of events, working proactively to stabilise the programme and ensure opportunities for swimmers with high support needs.
- Clearly lay out the qualification pathway with appropriate Paralympic Games qualifying competitions ensuring balance in terms of affordability and accessibility.
- Ensure that the programme of events is exciting and inspiring and relevant to ticket holders, television viewers, athletes, National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) and all other stakeholders.



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## Athlete Development

### Strategic priorities

- In conjunction with NPCs, identify education needs, establish the delivery method, develop resources and conduct the educational activities.
- Create an online educational tool for technical officials.
- Maintain, update and translate the classification online course.
- Ensure development activities include new countries and athletes in swimming from all three impairment groups and all classes, including those with high support needs.
- Ensure education opportunities for athletes and coaches.
- Ensure classification opportunities are available at different levels of competition in all regions.
- Ensure that the workforce (e.g. officials, Local Organisers, management team) are well trained and educated to run well-organised, fair and equitable sport.
- Build further regional and youth events for the development of the sport, explore opportunities at existing competitions.
- Work with stakeholders to create a strategy for development and sustainability of opportunities for swimmers with high-support needs.

### Objectives/outcomes

- Rely on well-trained classifiers in all regions.
- Establish regional Championships in 2014, and for the next quadrennium.
- Establish a World Series annually for the world's top athletes.
- Ensure that a comprehensive competition calendar with national and international recognised competitions is in place.
- Establish and share best practices in swimming delivery and development pathways.
- Ensure competition approval processes; and results, ranking, licensing and record management processes are in place and operating efficiently.
- Develop educational opportunities, including in the areas of fair-play in anti-doping, classification, the role of the IPC Athletes' Council, and swimming sport medicine and sport science.

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## Paralympic Brand

### Strategic priorities

- Establish a public relations plan that supports the IPC Swimming brand, engages the community, and facilitates an understanding of the uniqueness of swimming (including classification).
- Ensure broadcast agreements (including public broadcast), TV production and other targeted media partnerships are in place for all major championships.



- Be active on social media on a regular basis and provide on-going maintenance of the website.
- Promote the profile of leading swimming athletes and provide education to such athletes.
- Make use of awareness, learn to swim, water safety, local Paralympic promotion and other programmes to promote the brand.
- Secure and engage sponsors that are committed to promotion and brand advancement.

### Objectives/outcomes

- Regular media coverage about athletes and their exciting stories in order to maintain visibility and momentum about their performances and competition pathways.
- Ensure visibility of commercial partners through all communications to value their investment.
- Raise interest and awareness among the media and high-value markets.
- Increase worldwide reach of media coverage working with the swimming community and regions.

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## Funding

### Strategic priorities

- Ensure high quality products in terms of competitions, education, knowledge, etc. which appeal to existing or potential new partners.
- Establish a multi-year Marketing and Sales Plan, outlining clear revenue targets.
- Seek win-win partnerships via professional marketing companies.
- Develop and monitor the annual budget and present financial reports.
- Develop attractive sponsorship packages based on key products, around events and for youth.

### Objectives/outcomes

- Secure one/two commercial partners and secure sponsorship agreements (in kind, service commitments, funding) offering a dedicated investment for swimming by 2016.
- Reach a level to generate a profit from Paralympic Games broadcast activities.
- Use broadcast visibility to guarantee and to further promote sponsorship and advertising sales.
- Work with IPC/NPCs/National Federations (NFs)/Local Organisers to ensure that start-up funds are available for IPC Swimming World Series project.
- Develop innovative programmes and initiatives to access funding, (e.g. one per cent of profit) is contributed by companies to IPC Swimming.

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## Organisational Capacity

### Strategic priorities

- Provide leadership to IPC Swimming based on modern principles of corporate governance.
- Provide top-quality service and support to Local Organisers of competitions.
- Cultivate a volunteer network across all regions through education at events; including programmes for technical officials, classifiers, competition management, and other contributors.
- Establish an IPC Swimming Coaches Advisory Group, Swimming Science Advisory Group and ensure athletes' input, all to be advisory to the Sport Technical Committee (STC).
- Identify needs related to workforce education.
- Define needs and build staff/contractor capacity collaboratively with other sports to support the competition excellence expected for the sports.
- Organise classifiers' recertification and training courses.
- Organise technical officials' recertification and training courses.

### Objectives/outcomes

- Ensure availability of an appropriate number of qualified technical officials and classifiers through the appropriate certification and training process.
- Ensure effective STC meetings based on a standardised operating charter.
- Support STC decision making by reviewing all IPC Swimming operations and setting up key working groups.
- Ensure on-going professional development for IPC Swimming management team and key volunteers.
- Ensure effective communication with and service to the swimming community including engagement of both small and large NPCs throughout the regions.
  - Establish annual work plans with goals, timelines, and priorities to ensure delivery on the IPC Swimming Strategic Plan.

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## Strategic Partnerships

### Strategic priorities

- Develop relationship and explore possible collaboration opportunities with FINA.
- Develop key partnerships with NPCs/NFs to ensure regional delivery of IPC Swimming Strategic Plan.
- Develop partnerships with IOSDs, structures within FINA, the United Nations, in sport and in the disability field.
- Partner with appropriate institutions/universities/NGOs to strengthen research and partnerships in support of IPC Swimming.
- Build strong relationship with the Agitos Foundation.
- Leverage expertise and resources of partners such as NPCs, Local Organisers and host cities in the staging of major competitions.

### Objectives/outcomes

- Participate in, have a presence at and become known at FINA events (congresses, meetings etc.) including the opportunity to make contributions or presentations.
- Formalise relationship with FINA in areas of mutual interest and of benefit to both organisations.
- In conjunction with the Agitos Foundation secure programmes to grow the sport in developing regions.
- Enhance working relationships with all parties involved in staging major competitions and use of synergies and efficiencies in budgets and resources.
- Partner with IPC Swimming host cities to ensure events are economically viable, future legacy partnerships are built into agreements, and knowledge transfer to future hosts is in place.
- Enhance synergies and collaboration through sharing of knowledge and materials available from IPC, NPCs, NFs (e.g. resources for coaching education and for athletes with high-support needs).

