To:
- National Paralympic Committees
- Regional Organizations
- International Federations
- International Organizations of Sports for the Disabled
- International Recognized Federations

Bonn, 9 July 2014

IPC Classification Code Review Process — Update #2

Dear President and Secretary General,

The IPC Classification Committee presented the first draft of the revised IPC Classification Code (“2017 Code”) to the IPC Governing Board on 21 June 2014. This draft is now released for consultation to the IPC Membership, together with the revised International Standards.

During the first consultation round in 2013, over 750 separate submissions on the 2007 Code were received from 32 IPC Members, other organizations and individuals, as well as recommendations from the IPC Classification Committee and IPC Management Team, based on the experiences and dialogue with IPC Members using the 2007 Code over the past years. The IPC Classification Committee also considered decisions and recommendations from the IPC Board of Appeal of Classification. Your input was invaluable for the IPC Classification Committee to draft Version 1 of the 2017 Code (2017 Code_v1).

This communication provides an overview of the changes in the 2017 Code and International Standards, and is the start of the second Code consultation round. We welcome your feedback, by means of the enclosed review form, by 30 October 2014 at the latest. All submissions should be sent to Greg Vice, IPC Classification Coordinator, at greg.vice@paralympic.org.

Over the next period from August through October, the IPC and the IPC Classification Committee reach out to different stakeholders to present the draft 2017 Code and International Standards, including the IPC Sports Council, IF Head of Classification Meeting, the inaugural NPC Classification Expert meeting and IPC Membership Gathering.
Any request for individualized meetings can be made through the IPC Medical & Scientific Department (greg.vice@paralympic.org).

Your feedback to this draft Code and International Standards will be considered by the IPC Classification Committee, which will result in another draft that will be available to you in the course of February 2015. As a reminder, these are the timelines the IPC is working from on this project:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2014</td>
<td>Release of the 2017 Code_v1 for Membership Consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 October 2014</td>
<td>Deadline 2nd Membership Consultation Round</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2015</td>
<td>IPC Classification Committee meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2015</td>
<td>IPC Governing Board meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2015</td>
<td>Release of the 2017 Code_v2 for Membership Consultation (final round)</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 April 2015</td>
<td>Deadline 2nd Membership Consultation Round</td>
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<td>May 2015</td>
<td>IPC Classification Committee meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td>IPC Governing Board meeting to approve final version of 2017 Code as a motion for the IPC General Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2015</td>
<td>IPC General Assembly – Motion to approve 2017 Code</td>
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May we kindly ask you to pass this correspondence on to all relevant stakeholders within your Organization, and engage all in providing input to your feedback and comments.

Kind regards

Anne Hart
Chairperson Classification Committee
International Paralympic Committee

Peter Van de Vliet
Medical & Scientific Director
International Paralympic Committee
Significant changes between the 2007 Code and the 2017 Code, version 1

In February 2014, you were informed on the discussions in the IPC Classification Committee and the direction and outcome aimed for with the revised 2017 Code. In keeping the same format, the following provides an overview of the major changes introduced in 2017 Code_v1.

Theme 1. Long Term Objective

There was strong agreement to make the Code more athlete-centred. In this draft, attention was devoted to language that balances the need to meet standards of a Code document, which includes the formalized language required in a fundamental document of foundational principles, with more user-friendly language. For example, explanatory comments have been added throughout the Code.

Examples of the long-term objectives of the Code are included in the Code Introduction:

- Athlete-centred - be fully understood by the Athletes, who are equal participants in the classification process. The input of athletes must be secured on all aspects of the Code and Classification.
- Classification into the next decade – be visionary with viable objectives to keep pace with rapid growth in the Paralympic Movement and increased professionalization of athlete development.
- Guidance to IPC Membership – provide a guide to achieve and maintain Code compliance.

Furthermore, Article 9 has been expanded with a section on roles and responsibilities of athletes (art. 9.5).

Theme 2. Definition of Classification

Since the introduction of the 2007 Code, two policies were adopted by the Paralympic Movement complementing the 2007 Code, defining classification and the purpose of Classification in the Paralympic Movement:
• The Position Statement on the Background and Scientific Rationale for Classification in Paralympic Sport, published in 2009, and in Section 2, Chapter 4.4 of the IPC Handbook; and
• The IPC Policy on Eligible Impairments in the Paralympic Movement approved January 2013 by the IPC Governing Board, in Section 2, Chapter 3.13 of the IPC Handbook.

A number of stakeholders identified the need for a clear definition of classification, a consistent purpose for classification, and the use of the best available evidence to create and support classification systems. Several Code provisions have been modified or added to better take these principles into account, based on the above policy documents. Some examples include:

• Articles 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 define Paralympic Classification and describe its purpose;
• Articles 2.4 and 2.5 describe the principles to achieve this purpose; and
• Article 2.6 describes an Evidence-Based Classification System.
• Article 4 includes the minimum provisions of Athlete Evaluation necessary to arrive at a clear and logical explanation for how Athletes are grouped into Sport Classes. The key elements that must be part of a Classification System are described in Articles 4.7 – 4.12.
• Article 8.6 identifies the responsibility of IFs to notify relevant parties of classification changes, providing these parties an opportunity to submit feedback and comments.

Theme 3. When and where classification takes place

The 2007 Code makes clear when and where Classification takes place. There were strong responses from a wide variety of stakeholders to also allow for classification opportunities outside of a competition. The rationale for allowing remote classification included increased participation by providing better access to classification, cost effectiveness, and standardization of assessments.

Article 4.5 now allows International Federations to have athlete evaluation at the occasion of different competitions, or to make arrangements for remote athlete evaluation to take place and at a time away from competition.

Theme 4. NPC roles and responsibilities
International Federations and National Federations both play a critical role in Classification. From the feedback received, National Federations and NPCs seem to be uncertain of their roles in Classification, and strongly asked for guidance and support. Considering the feedback, the need for the development of an International Standard for National Classification was recognized and this Standard is introduced in Article. 1.7.

In order to improve communication between National Bodies and International Federations, Article 8.6 identifies the need for the IFs to provide appropriate notice of anticipated changes to classification rules, rationale for changes, proposed timelines, transition rules, and opportunities for feedback and comment.

Theme 5. IPC role in classification
Since the writing of the 2007 Code, there has been a fundamental shift in the value of the role of IPC to monitor classification systems, promote better communication strategies, and offer guidance to attain Code compliance, and the need for a more precise monitoring role of Code implementation was identified through the feedback round.

The most important change in this regards is in Article 8.7, requiring IFs to seek approval of the IPC before Classification System changes can be implemented.

Theme 6. Data Protection
The writers of the 2007 Code did not envision the growth of data management and how to secure and protect Athlete classification data. Guidance from International Federations, National Federations, and other stakeholders has been requested, and led to the development of the International Standard on Data Protection (referenced in art. 1.7 and art. 7).

Theme 7. Code administration
The Code review process also has been used as an opportunity to revise the structure of the Code in an attempt to increase the readability (reference to Theme 1—Athlete-centeredness). In this regards, and considering a substantial level of detail was added and the structure of the document revised, the IPC will not produce a redline version of the 2017 Code that identifies all changes to the 2007 Code.
International Standards complement the Code through providing technical and operational requirements for classification and adherence to the International Standards is mandatory for compliance with the Code (art. 1.7-1.8). However, there may be a need to modify such technical and operational requirements from time to time, without changing the fundamental concepts and principles identified in the Code. Articles 10.14 and 10.15 differentiate the process of modifications to Code or International Standards. Amendments to the Code require a two-thirds majority of the IPC General Assembly, whereas amendments to the International Standards shall be approved by the IPC Governing Board after appropriate consultation. In this regards, the 2017 Code mirrors experiences and practices put in place in similar Codes, in particular the World Anti-Doping Code.

Given the differentiated process of amendments to the Code (see Theme 7 above), relevant information from the International Standards has been included in the Code where appropriate. This led to the removal of the International Standard on Classifier Training and Certification, with content from the (old) International Standard on Classifier Training and Certification inserted in Article 3 of this draft Code.

**Significant changes to International Standards**

International Standards complement the Code through providing technical and operational requirements for classification. Adherence to the International Standards is mandatory for compliance with the Code (art. 1.7-1.8).

**International Standard on Athlete Evaluation**

The International Standard on Athlete Evaluation serves the purpose to ensure that a process is in place to assess athletes and allocate sport class and sport class status in a harmonized and uniform matter. It expands on the provisions of articles 2 and 4 of the 2017 Code_v1, and includes provisions that were not considered in the 2007 Code. Examples include article 7 (Remote Athlete Evaluation), article 10 (Assessment of Multiple Impairments) and article 11 (Medical Review).

When the 2007 Code was developed it was recognized that many IFs and Sports did not have a good, complete and well-rounded set of rules for their classification programme. Consequently, the drafting group of the 2007 Code considered it important to insert significant detail on the operational and administrative management of athlete evaluation. At this moment in time, most IFs have considered the provisions of the 2007 International Standard on Athlete Evaluation. Thus, much of the more administrative provisions of the
2007 International Standard became redundant. At this same time, where relevant, a document that is more technical of nature may be necessary to support the implementation of athlete evaluation. Relevant content has been covered under the revised article 1 and also led to the development of article 9 that expands on circumstances where athlete evaluation could not successfully be completed.

**International Standard on Protests and Appeals**

The central features of the current International Standard for Protests and Appeals, being the right to challenge the allocation of a Sport Class, and to have Classification processes reviewed, are retained in the new draft International Standard for Protests and Appeals. There are a number of changes to practice and process, as described below.

The right of a National Federation, National Paralympic Committee or other team entity to challenge the allocation of a Sport Class is retained as a ‘National Body’ Protest in this Standard, with some set criteria detailed in respect of the process that should be followed in relation to such a Protest (Article 3).

The right reserved to a Chief Classifier to make a ‘Protest in Exceptional Circumstances’ in respect of a Confirmed Sport Class has been replaced by a general right afforded to an International Federation to make a Protest in respect of a Sport Class. This right can only be exercised in accordance with the strict grounds set out in the Standard.

The provisions in the Standard regarding the composition of a Protest Panel have been modified slightly, to allow a more flexible approach to the resolution of Protests.

Regarding Appeals, the Standard is clearer as far as the extent to which an Appeal can be made and the scope of review that exists in relation to an Appeal. A number of procedural provisions are made in the Standard to ensure that Appeals are dealt with quickly and fairly.

**International Standards on National Classification**

This International Standard is a response to feedback received as identified under Theme 4, and aims to provide guidance to National Bodies on the implementation of the Code. The International Standard includes provisions for:

- flexibility in national classification in support of national sport development initiatives (art. 2.1, art. 3.4)
- the coordinating role of the NPC towards different stakeholders, both national and international (art. 2.2-2.3)
- international cooperation in athlete evaluation (art. 2.4)
• international and regional cooperation in classifier training and certification (art. 5)
• ensuring alignment of national and international classification (art. 3, art. 5)
• data governance (art. 4).

**International Standards on Data Protection**

The International Standard on Data Protection is a new Standard that has been prepared to create a set of minimum standards that should be adopted by any organization that conducts Classification.

The Standard recognises two crucial features of Classification: first, that Classification requires an Athlete to share a significant amount of personal data, including data relating to health, and second, that in most countries there exist laws that regulate the extent to which such data can be used by, amongst others, organizations that conduct Classification. The Standard therefore establishes a number of principles that such organizations should implement when they handle this sort of data. These will always be subject to the national laws and regulations that concern that organization's use of data.