



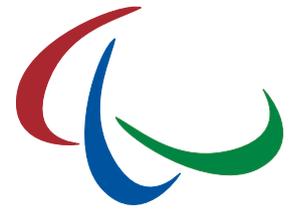
## **Chapter 2.3 – Standing Order: the conduct of IPC Governing Board/Council/Committee meetings**

March 2009

**International Paralympic Committee**

Adenauerallee 212-214 Tel. +49 228 2097-200  
53113 Bonn, Germany Fax +49 228 2097-209

[www.paralympic.org](http://www.paralympic.org)  
[info@paralympic.org](mailto:info@paralympic.org)



Note: Different rulings apply to the IPC General Assembly, IPC Sports' Council and IPC Sport Forums

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Standing Order is designed to assist Chairpersons with the conduct of IPC Committee meetings and, in particular, with the chairing of such meetings. It draws extensively on material currently available in the Constitution and bylaws of the IPC, but it neither replaces this source material nor makes any fundamental change to its content at this time.
- 1.2 Although designed for formal meetings, it is strongly advised that the 'conduct' approved here is applied to all Committee meetings of the IPC, where appropriate, in order to establish a meeting environment which is consistent and with which those attending become familiar over time.

## 2 Opening the meeting

### 2.1 Call to order

- 2.1.1 The Chairperson has the responsibility to call the meeting to order. This is done simply by asking for quiet, introducing herself/himself, and informing those present of the nature of the meeting about to commence.
- 2.1.2 This is also the most appropriate time for any 'housekeeping' announcements to be made (such as the location of toilets, arrangements for coffee breaks, etc.).
- 2.1.3 The Chairperson shall ensure that any persons with an impairment present have full access to the proceedings under way.

### 2.2 Roll call



- 2.2.1 The roll call is taken by the secretary of the Committee (or equivalent) or staff member as announced by the Chairperson.
- 2.2.2 The purpose of this roll call is
- (i) to record which members are present,
  - (ii) to have officially acknowledged and recorded those members who have sent apologies for absence,
  - (iii) to ensure that there is no uncertainty regarding who has (and who does not have) speaking and voting rights,
- to announce the number of those present and entitled to vote.
- 2.2.3 The right to vote is non-transferable between members i.e., voting by proxy is not allowed.
- 2.2.4 The Chairperson appoints tellers and any other 'officials' necessary for the efficient conduct of the meeting.
- 2.2.5 The Chairperson then welcomes everyone to the meeting and, in particular, any special guests and/or observers.

## 2.3 Quorum

- 2.3.1 The number of members required for a quorum at IPC Committee meetings is 50 per cent plus one of the members entitled to vote.
- 2.3.2 If there is no quorum at the start of a meeting, the Chairperson should not proceed and should advise those present that the meeting is adjourned to a time and place specified by her/him and agreed by the meeting.



2.3.3 If the meeting has already started and the Chairperson is advised that there does not appear to be a quorum, s/he will conduct another roll call. If this confirms that there is no quorum, the Chairperson should proceed as above (see article 2.3.2).

2.3.4 If the Chairperson decides to proceed despite the lack of a quorum, any decisions taken must be ratified by the next meeting where there is a quorum.

## 2.4 Proceedings at the meeting

The Chairperson normally should make a statement regarding such matters as speaking rights, voting procedures and the handling of motions and amendments. This should be done before the meeting moves to the agenda.

## 2.5 Adoption of the agenda

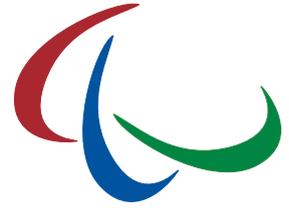
2.5.1 The Chairperson will ask for a motion (and a seconder) from the members that the agenda (circulated in advance) be adopted. The order of business will follow the order as outlined in the adopted agenda.

2.5.2 Although the agenda may be amended by subsequent resolution of the meeting, no subject should be discussed at the meeting that is not on the agenda as agreed or amended.

2.5.3 The agenda can be amended at any time during the meeting given the approval of the appropriate procedural motion by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote (see article 4.3.4 iv).

# 3 Conducting the meeting

## 3.1 Minutes of the previous meeting



- 3.1.1 The Chairperson will ask for a motion to accept the draft minutes as an accurate record of the last meeting: minutes are always 'draft' until approved by the members, at which point they become the official record of that meeting. Provided the draft minutes have been circulated in advance, they will be taken as read.
- 3.1.2 The Chairperson should manage any differences of view as to this accuracy, seeking corroboration from others present to resolve any important issues. Any minor differences of spelling, timing, etc should be accepted: the Chairperson's ruling on accuracy is final.
- 3.1.3 The Chairperson should ask the secretary of the Committee (or equivalent) to present any written amendments that have been submitted in advance with a recommendation that the meeting should either approve or reject the proposal.
- 3.1.4 The Chairperson should ask for any matters arising from the minutes that are neither detailed on the agenda at this point for an up-date nor likely to be covered by any other item on the agenda.

## 3.2 Receipt of reports

- 3.2.1 Reports should be circulated in advance in order for the Chairperson to announce that they will be taken as having been read.
- 3.2.2 The Chairperson could then invite the author of the report to summarise in a few sentences the main highlights of her/his report (but under no circumstances should the report which has been circulated in advance be read out by its author verbatim).
- 3.2.3 The Chairperson should then invite questions from the floor (see 'Speaking rights').



3.2.4 If the report has not been circulated in advance, the Chairperson can decide whether to permit a more detailed oral presentation or to table the report for consideration either later in the meeting or at a subsequent meeting.

### 3.3 Speaking rights

3.3.1 Only those members present and entitled to vote are permitted to speak as a right.

3.3.2 The Chairperson may invite someone to speak who does not have speaking rights or may acknowledge someone wishing to speak who does not have 'rights' and allow them to do so: this is within the authority of the Chairperson, but should be exercised sensitively.

3.3.3 The Chairperson shall be assisted by the person seated to her/his left or right in maintaining a list of those wishing to speak and the assistant shall indicate to the Chairperson the next speaker. The Chairperson should not try to keep her/his own list.

3.3.4 Requests to speak from the floor should be indicated by a raised hand. The Chairperson will acknowledge such requests, either by granting an immediate right to address the meeting or, where several people wish to speak at the same time, by indicating the order in which these contributions will be taken.

3.3.5 Speakers must always address their remarks to the Chairperson and not conduct a debate with either a member of the 'top table' or a member within the meeting.

3.3.6 Speeches are only permitted if they are relevant to the current business, or to a point of order or point of information or a challenge to a ruling from the Chairperson.



- 3.3.7 A person who has spoken once in a debate on a particular subject or motion may not speak again, except:
- (i) to speak once on an amendment moved by someone else,
  - (ii) to exercise the right of reply as mover of the original motion,
  - (iii) to move a further amendment if the motion has been amended since the person first spoke,
  - (iv) to move a procedural motion,
- to make a personal explanation.
- 3.3.8 The Chairperson may indicate time limitations to the speeches and has the final decision in terms of what is considered a relevant speech or a speech that has gone on too long.
- 3.3.9 Personal explanation. Where a person who has already spoken at the meeting feels her/his views have been grossly misrepresented, she/he shall be granted the right to make a personal explanation. She/he can attract the Chairperson to her/his wish to correct such misrepresentations by raising a point of information. However, this must be limited to the part of the speech that she/he believes has been misrepresented.

## **4 Motions and voting**

### **4.1 Motions**

- 4.1.1 Motions shall not be discussed or debated unless they have been formally 'moved' (or 'proposed') and 'seconded' (supported). Only someone entitled to speak and vote at the meeting can propose and second a motion or an amendment to the motion.



- 4.1.2 The Chairperson then calls upon the proposer of the seconded motion to make her/his justification for its submission.
- 4.1.3 The Chairperson should then give preference to any member who has indicated in advance that they wish to speak in opposition to the motion. If there is no pre-notice of an opposing speaker, the Chairperson may call upon any member who wishes to speak in opposition.
- 4.1.4 The Chairperson should try to alternate between speakers for and against.
- 4.1.5 The Chairperson should control the discussion and make sure that speakers are not simply repeating points already made, that speakers normally recognise that they have one chance per discussion to speak and that s/he identifies when the discussion should be concluded, for example, by announcing that s/he will take two or three more speakers before allowing the proposer to sum up.
- 4.1.6 The Chairperson should allow the proposer (not the seconder) to conclude the discussion with a brief statement. The proposer should neither be allowed to introduce new material nor to answer point by point issues in her/his opinion that need clarification or the arguments of opponents to the motion.

## 4.2 Amendments

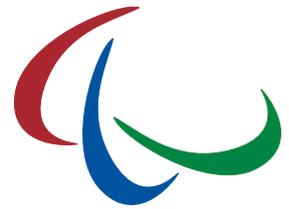
- 4.2.1 The proposer, with the approval of the seconder of the motion, can accept an amendment without further discussion or vote, which has the effect of amending the motion accordingly. The discussion then continues on the motion as amended.
- 4.2.2 Any member, including the proposer and seconder, may propose an amendment to the motion under discussion. The amendment must be seconded.



- 4.2.3 Amendments should be taken in the order they are proposed.
- 4.2.4 An amendment shall be relevant to the motion and may consist of proposals to add or omit words. It must have the intention of modifying the motion and not negating it or proposing something unrelated or different. The Chairperson can rule that the amendment cannot continue to be presented if she/he believes that any of these obstructive actions are the intention of the amendment.
- 4.2.5 During discussion on an amendment, discussion on the main motion is suspended. Eventually, the Chairperson will call for a vote on the amendment only.
- 4.2.6 If the amendment is adopted, then the original motion plus the amendment now become the substantive motion and the discussion continues until the Chairperson calls for a vote.
- 4.2.7 If the amendment falls, the discussion continues on the main motion and eventually the Chairperson will call for a vote.

### 4.3 Procedural motions

- 4.3.1 The most common form of procedural motions are points of information and points of order.
- 4.3.2 Points of information seek clarification by the speaker and may be raised at any time if the speaker holding the floor is prepared to accept the question.
- 4.3.3 A point of order can be raised by anyone entitled to speak and vote in case she/he believes that there has been a material breach of a constitutional requirement, bylaw or standing order. She/he may at any time other than during the process of voting specify the alleged breach, with a clear reference to the clause, rule or



bylaw allegedly being breached, whereupon the Chairperson will rule as she/he sees fit.

4.3.4 The other forms of procedural motions that may be put are as follows:

(i) to table a motion,

(The Chairperson will put that motion immediately to the vote unless s/he feels that insufficient discussion has been allowed. If the motion to 'table the motion' is carried, no further discussion on the motion or any amendments will be permitted.

A 'tabled motion' will appear automatically on the agenda of the next meeting unless withdrawn by the proposer).

(ii) to adjourn the meeting or the debate until a certain time,

(iii) to put the motion to the vote immediately,

(iv) to proceed to the next agenda item or to modify the agenda,

(v) to challenge the ruling of the Chairperson,

(vi) that a member be not further heard,

(vii) that a member must leave the meeting.

4.3.5 The nature of procedural motions, points of order and information and a challenge to the ruling of the Chairperson inevitably require the current proceedings to be stopped. Those proposing such actions should do in a respectful tone of voice, indicating by hand and speech that they wish to, for example, make a point of order, propose a procedural motion.

4.3.6 Provided such requests are in accord with this Standing Order, then the Chairperson is obliged to immediately suspend the current discussion no matter how close the discussion is to a vote.

## 4.4 Voting Procedures



- 4.4.1 Any member present shall be entitled to vote whenever a vote is called by the Chairperson. A member who has left the room at the time of the call for a vote forfeits his/her rights to participate in the vote.
- 4.4.2 All motions require a simple majority to be successful (50 per cent plus one of the votes cast for or against the motion).
- 4.4.3 For the purpose of calculating whether an appropriate majority has been obtained in any vote, an abstention or a vote which is not exercised (the member entitled to exercise the vote has left the room) shall not be treated as a vote.
- 4.4.4 An equality of votes shall be considered as a refusal.
- 4.4.5 All voting shall be done by show of hands, except when, at the request of any member, a secret ballot is accepted by the Chairperson, or agreed by the majority of the members.
- 4.4.6 The recording of a voting by name may be requested by any member; however, not following a secret ballot.
- 4.4.7 The tellers will oversee the vote and verify to the Chairperson the outcome. Tellers need to be observant and discreet when carrying out their duties.
- 4.4.8 The Chairperson shall announce the voting results. Any member questioning the result may raise a point of order, which subject to the Chairperson's ruling, may lead to a recount of the vote. Voting results shall however, not be contested following the closure of the meeting.

## 5 Other rulings

### 5.1 Rulings from the Chair



5.1.1 The Chairperson can rule on any matter relating to the conduct of the meeting, points of order, personal explanations and the construction or interpretation of the constitution, bylaws or standing orders governing the meeting, and her/his ruling shall be final and accepted without debate.

5.1.2 Any person present and entitled to speak at the meeting may formally challenge the ruling of the Chairperson by the procedure outlined below.

## 5.2 Challenge a ruling

5.2.1 When a member challenges a ruling of the Chairperson, the Chairperson will ask if there is a member who will second the challenge. If the challenge is seconded, the meeting will be temporarily suspended.

5.2.2 The Chairperson will hand over the chair to the most senior member of the Committee present at that time to continue as Chairperson of the meeting.

5.2.3 The temporary Chairperson will allow the member proposing the challenge to give specific reasons including quoting, 'Standing Order Article #', etc and will then allow a limited debate, two or three speakers. In this situation the proposer may not conclude the discussion.

5.2.4 The temporary Chairperson will then call for the vote for or against the challenge, to be determined by simple majority.

5.2.5 The chair will then be handed back to the original Chairperson who will act upon the wishes of the members, either to continue with the meeting as s/he had formerly ruled or issue a new ruling, which of course could be subject to another challenge.



### 5.3 Unacceptable behaviour

- 5.3.1 When the conduct of any speaker risks disrupting the proper and efficient conduct of the meeting, any member may move that this person 'be no longer heard' (see Procedural Motions Article 4.3.4 vi). If carried, the person is not allowed to take any further part in that particular debate.
- 5.3.2 If the behaviour of the individual so cited continues to be disruptive, any member may move that this person 'must leave the meeting' (see Procedural Motions Article 4.3.4 vii). If carried, the person in question must immediately leave the meeting.

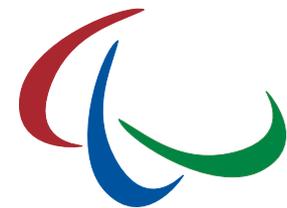
### 5.4 Chairmanship

- 5.4.1 In addition to her/his responsibility for the efficient conduct of the meeting, it is also paramount that the Chairperson resists any temptation to abuse her/his authority by showing favour in any debate or otherwise influencing the outcome of any decision-making process.

## 6 Adjourning and reconvening the meeting

### 6.1 Justification for adjournment

- 6.1.1 It will be necessary for a meeting to be adjourned when
- (i) the meeting requires more than one session,
  - (ii) it is ascertained that there is no longer a quorum,
  - (iii) a procedural motion (see Procedural Motions Article 4.3.4 ii) 'to adjourn the meeting' has been put to a vote and carried.
- 6.1.2 In all three cases, the Chairperson must suspend the business under discussion and indicate when and where the meeting will be re-convened.



## 6.2 Re-convening the meeting

- 6.2.1 When a meeting is re-convened following adjournment, the Chairperson must undertake all the duties normally associated with opening a meeting and then direct the meeting to resume its business at that point in the agenda where the meeting had previously been adjourned.

## 7 Closing the meeting

### 7.1 Any other business

Having concluded the business specified in the agenda, the Chairperson should ask those present if there is any other urgent business requiring the immediate attention of the meeting. The amount of time allowed for this purpose, and whether or not any matter raised is debated immediately or tabled for consideration at a future meeting, is at the discretion of the Chairperson.

### 7.2 Date and venue of next meeting

The date or the approximate time of the year and any possible venues for the next meeting should be given to the members before the meeting is closed.

### 7.3 Closing the meeting

Having ascertained that there is no other business to be conducted, the Chairperson's last responsibility is to declare the meeting closed. However, in doing so, s/he may wish to ensure that any necessary housekeeping announcements are made, to thank the host for organising the meeting, and to thank tellers, interpreters and any other 'officials' who have contributed to the efficient conduct of the meeting.