



International
Paralympic
Committee

Chapter 2.5 - Bylaws councils

2.5.1 IPC Athletes' Council bylaws

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International Paralympic Committee

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1 Function

1.1 General role

The IPC Athletes' Council is the collective voice of Paralympic athletes within the IPC and the greater Paralympic Movement. In general, the role of the IPC Athletes' Council is to provide feedback and advice and report to the IPC Governing Board on behalf and in the interest of the athletes in all IPC matters, including but not limited to:

- 1.1.1 Support the IPC Governing Board in its duty of be the guardian of the Paralympic vision;
- 1.1.2 Support the IPC Governing Board in the delivery of the Paralympic mission;
- 1.1.3 Advise the IPC Governing Board in all matters that are within the IPC General Assembly authority;
- 1.1.4 Make recommendations to the IPC Governing Board in the development of the strategic plan;
- 1.1.5 Advise the IPC Governing Board in the development of IPC policies;
- 1.1.6 Provide a forum for exchange of information on matters of common interest;
- 1.1.7 Promote the concept of 'unity in diversity' among the athletes;
- 1.1.8 Collaborate and share information with other IPC councils and committees and be the advocate for athletes' interests within the Paralympic Family;
- 1.1.9 Establish and maintain a method of communication with athletes to solicit input, identify issues, provide education, and disseminate information;
- 1.1.10 Act as liaison between IPC decision-makers, Paralympic athletes and athlete representatives on each of the IPC sports committees;
- 1.1.11 Provide effective input into IPC decisions at all levels of the organisation. To this end, the IPC Athletes' Council works with the IPC to promote effective athlete representation on IPC councils, committees and commissions, as well as to create other opportunities for athlete representation both within and outside the IPC;



- 1.1.12 Promote the concept of athlete-centred decision making, thereby ensuring that the rights of the athletes are respected at all times;
- 1.1.13 Act as an athletes' advisory body within the Paralympic Movement and other forums of international sport.

1.2 Consultative role

The IPC Athletes' Council shall be consulted by the IPC Governing Board in all matters concerning the appointment of any IPC Athletes' Council representatives to IPC councils, committees or working groups wherever and whenever is deemed appropriate and relevant, as well as concerning the nomination of IPC Athletes' Council representatives to external bodies and organisations, prior to taking a decision/position on that matter.

1.3 Delegated authorities

The IPC Governing Board may delegate some of its authorities to the IPC Athletes' Council.

2 Structure

2.1 Composition

- 2.1.1 The IPC Athletes' Council may be composed of elected members, co-opted members, and ex-officio members. Only elected members will have speaking rights and voting rights; co-opted members and ex-officio members have speaking rights only. In these bylaws, elected members will be referred to as voting members.
- 2.1.2 Normally the IPC Athletes' Council shall consist of nine (9) elected members and one (1) ex-officio member, including:
 - Six (6) elected summer athlete representatives;
 - Three (3) elected winter athlete representatives;
 - One (1) ex-officio IOC Athletes' Commission representative, nominated by IOC-Athletes' Council.

Upon the creation of the International Paralympians Association (IPA) (and subject to the constitution of the IPA providing for this) the number of members of the IPC Athletes' Council will be increased to accommodate one (1) ex-officio representative of the IPA.

- 2.1.3 From the elected members, the IPC Athletes' Council shall elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson in accordance with the 'Nomination and Election Procedures for the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson' set out in an Appendix to



this bylaw. For the election of its Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, the IPC Athletes' Council will use a staggered cycle, holding elections every two (2) years. The positions of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will not be open for election at the same time. The election of the IPC Athletes' Council Chairperson will follow the cycle of elections of the IPC Governing Board members.

- 2.1.4 In case of absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall assume the responsibilities of Chairperson for as long as required. In case of a vacancy for the position of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall assume the responsibilities of Chairperson until the next meeting of the IPC Athletes' Council, at which time the election for a new Chairperson will occur.
- 2.1.5 Should the composition of the elected IPC Athletes' Council not represent the diversity of the Paralympic Movement in terms of the IPC regions, sports, range of impairments or gender, then the IPC Athletes' Council may co-opt up to three (3) members to balance out the composition, subject to approval by the IPC Governing Board.
- 2.1.6 If the IPC Athletes' Council decides to co-opt one or more members, it will normally do so within the first two formal meetings immediately following a Summer-athlete or Winter-athlete election.
- 2.1.7 Following consultation with fellow Athletes' Council members, the Chairperson is responsible to submit the proposed nomination(s) for co-option to the Athletes' Council to the IPC Governing Board, for approval. In the instance where a Chairperson has been newly elected, the nomination authority will rest with him or her, and will not remain with the outgoing Chairperson.
- 2.1.8 Athletes eligible for co-option must meet the eligibility requirements identified in section 3.1 of these bylaws. In addition, athletes eligible for co-option must plainly satisfy a diversity category identified in section 2.1.5 of these bylaws, which itself explicitly has been identified by the sitting members of the IPC Athletes' Council as an area of underrepresentation on the IPC Athletes' Council. Athletes are not required to stand for election to the IPC Athletes' Council prior to becoming a candidate for co-option.
- 2.1.9 The term length of any co-opted member shall be two years, calculated from the time of the most recent athlete elections and not from the actual date of the athlete's co-option. Athletes may be co-opted for additional two-year terms, so long as they continue to meet the eligibility requirements of Section 3.1 of these



bylaws at the time of co-option, and continue to satisfy the need to increase diversity on the IPC Athletes' Council.

2.2 Staffing

The IPC management team will provide support to the IPC Athletes' Council. The level of support will be determined in consultation with the IPC CEO.

2.3 Reporting

- 2.3.1 The Chairperson of the IPC Athletes' Council, together with the IPC staff member appointed by the IPC management team, are responsible for keeping accurate records of the meetings of the IPC Athletes' Council.
- 2.3.2 Written minutes of IPC Athletes' Council meetings shall be circulated according to the IPC policy and procedures as outlined in the IPC Policy on Confidentiality.
- 2.3.3 IPC Athletes' Council members are responsible for reporting regularly on the activities of the various councils/committees on which they sit.
- 2.3.4 The Chairperson shall report regularly to the other IPC Athletes' Council members.
- 2.3.5 The IPC CEO shall ensure that recommendations to the IPC Governing Board resulting from IPC Athletes' Council meetings are included on the agenda of the IPC Governing Board. The IPC CEO shall ensure that the subsequent decisions from the IPC Governing Board are communicated to the members of the IPC Athletes' Council.
- 2.3.6 A report on the activities of the IPC Athletes' Council will be developed by the Chairperson, and will be included in the overall biennial report to the IPC General Assembly.

2.4 Representation on external bodies

- 2.4.1 The IPC Athletes' Council shall be entitled to nominate members as Athletes' Representatives to the following IPC bodies:
 - 2.4.1.1 The IPC Governing Board. The IPC Athletes' Council Chairperson is the ex-officio Athletes' Representative on the IPC Governing Board;
- 2.4.2 The IPC Athletes' Council shall submit the nomination of its Chairperson to the IPC Governing Board for approval to be the IPC Athletes' Council representative on the International Olympic Committee's Athletes' Commission.



- 2.4.3 The IPC Athletes' Council shall nominate individuals with the skills and abilities to represent the Paralympic Movement effectively. Where a committee or commission requires a specialised skill set not within the collective talent pool of the members of the IPC Athletes' Council, the IPC Athletes' Council may nominate a non-council member, meeting the definition of an 'active Paralympic Athlete' as defined in article 3.1 of these bylaws, to represent the IPC Athletes' Council in this function. The Chairperson or his/her delegate shall act as liaison with non-members appointed in this fashion.

3 Membership

3.1 Members of the council

To be eligible for election to the IPC Athletes' Council an individual must be an active Paralympic athlete. An active athlete is defined as an athlete that is competing in the current edition of the Paralympic Games or Paralympic Winter Games at which the election is taking place or has competed in either of the previous two editions of the Paralympic Games (if the election concerns summer sport athletes) or Paralympic Winter Games (if the election concerns winter sport athletes).

3.2 Process for nominations/elections

- 3.2.1 IPC Athletes' Council elections take place at every Paralympic Games. At each edition of the summer Paralympic Games, six (6) summer IPC Athletes' Council members are elected, and at each edition of the winter Paralympic Games, three (3) winter IPC Athletes' Council members are elected. Nomination and election procedures are set out in an Appendix to this bylaw ('IPC Athletes Council (AC) Nomination and Election Procedures').

- 3.2.2 Only athletes with an "Aa" accreditation at the relevant Paralympic Games are eligible to vote in IPC Athletes' Council elections.

3.3 Terms of office

- 3.3.1 The term of office for an elected member of the IPC Athletes' Council shall be four (4) years. Members can be re-elected, provided that at the time of the election they still meet the criteria stated in article 3.1.

- 3.3.2 The terms of office for the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the IPC Athletes' Council shall be four (4) years. Either of these officers will be eligible to run for subsequent terms.



3.3.3 In case the terms of office for the Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson expire after the individual's term of office as an elected member expires, the Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson will remain on the IPC Athletes' Council serving as the Chair and Vice Chair for the remainder of the four (4) year term.

3.4 Vacancies

3.4.1 Vacancies in the IPC Athletes' Council occurring through resignation, termination of membership in accordance with article 6, death or any other reason, may be filled by appointment by the IPC Athletes' Council for a term lasting until the next election at the appropriate summer or winter Paralympic Games.

3.4.2 Vacancies shall be filled by inviting the subsequent highest non-elected candidate(s) on the elections result list from the last IPC Athletes' Council elections. Vacancies of summer athlete representatives will be filled by summer athletes, whilst vacancies of winter athlete representatives will be filled by winter athletes.

4 IPC Athletes' Council meetings

4.1 The IPC Athletes' Council shall meet at least once a year at the invitation of the Chairperson or upon request of the IPC Governing Board. Additional meetings must be approved by the IPC Governing Board or IPC CEO.

4.2 The voting members of the IPC Athletes' Council each have one (1) vote at IPC Athletes' Council meetings, with no proxies allowed. Quorum shall be 50 per cent + 1 of the voting members attending the meeting. Ex-officio members have no voting rights.

4.3 The Chairperson shall circulate an agenda at least 10 days prior to the meeting and be responsible for conducting the meetings.

5 Motions

5.1 The IPC Athletes' Council has the right to submit motions to the IPC Governing Board, subject to compliance with the timelines established for the IPC Governing Board meetings.

5.2 The IPC Athletes' Council has the right to submit motions to the IPC General Assembly, through the IPC Governing Board, subject to compliance with the relevant IPC standing



order. The IPC Governing Board shall make recommendations to the IPC General Assembly on all motions submitted by the council.

6 Termination of membership

- 6.1 Membership, including co-opted membership, of the IPC Athletes Council may be terminated by the IPC Governing Board following the recommendation of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members of the IPC Athletes Council, for reasons of non-compliance, not fulfilling his/hers duties, responsibilities or other serious breaches of IPC rules and regulations, including but not limited to absence from two (2) consecutive official meetings without reasonable regrets, or violation of the IPC Anti-Doping Code.

7 Finances

- 7.1 The Chairperson of the IPC Athletes' Council will, in co-operation with the IPC CEO, produce a budget for the Council. The Council budget will be included in the overall IPC budget and submitted for approval to the IPC Governing Board and the IPC General Assembly in accordance with the IPC financial policies.
- 7.2 Reasonable travel and other expenses incurred by members of the IPC Athletes' Council shall be reimbursed by the IPC in compliance with the financial procedures issued by IPC headquarters from time to time.
- 7.3 Members shall send a copy of their reimbursement forms to the IPC Athletes' Council Chairperson.

8 Dissolution

The IPC Athletes' Council can only be dissolved by a decision of the IPC General Assembly.

9 Amendments to bylaws

- 9.1 Amendments to the IPC Athletes' Council Bylaws (and any Appendix) shall be passed by vote of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of voting members present at an IPC Athletes' Council meeting and must be approved by the IPC Governing Board.
- 9.2 IPC Athletes' Council members shall be given thirty days (30) advance notice of suggested bylaw amendments. This requirement may be waived by consent (in writing) of two-thirds (2/3) of IPC Athletes' Council members.
- 9.3 The Chairperson shall be responsible for the circulation of proposed bylaw amendments.