



**INTERNATIONAL  
PARALYMPIC  
COMMITTEE**

# **IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW FINAL DRAFT**

**MEMBERSHIP CALLS, APRIL-MAY 2024**

# WELCOME

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This presentation includes slides used during the Membership calls as part of presenting the final draft Code in April and May 2024, ahead of the Extraordinary General Assembly.

It is shared with the aim of presenting the changes made to the final draft following the third consultation phase and facilitating further understanding of the draft Code.

This resource is prepared for IPC Members, Recognised International Federations, National Federations, Athletes, Classifiers and wider stakeholders.

The slide deck is envisaged to be used to disseminate the information further within these respective stakeholder groups and beyond.

All documents regarding the review of the 2015 IPC Athlete Classification Code are available on the [IPC Classification Code review webpage](#).

For any questions, please contact [codereview@paralympic.org](mailto:codereview@paralympic.org).



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# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW CODE REVIEW TEAM



Bonn January 2024

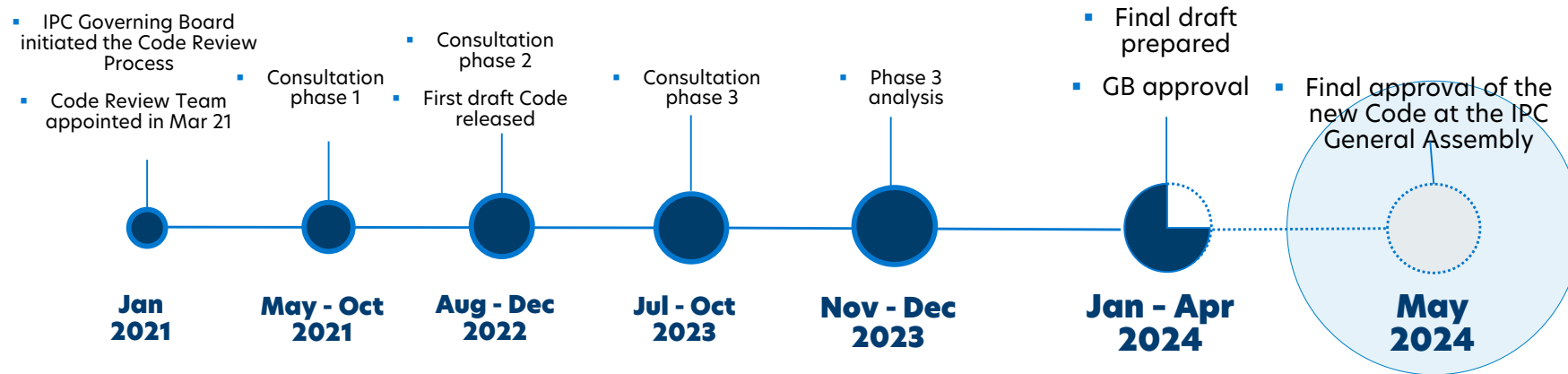


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# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW TIMELINE

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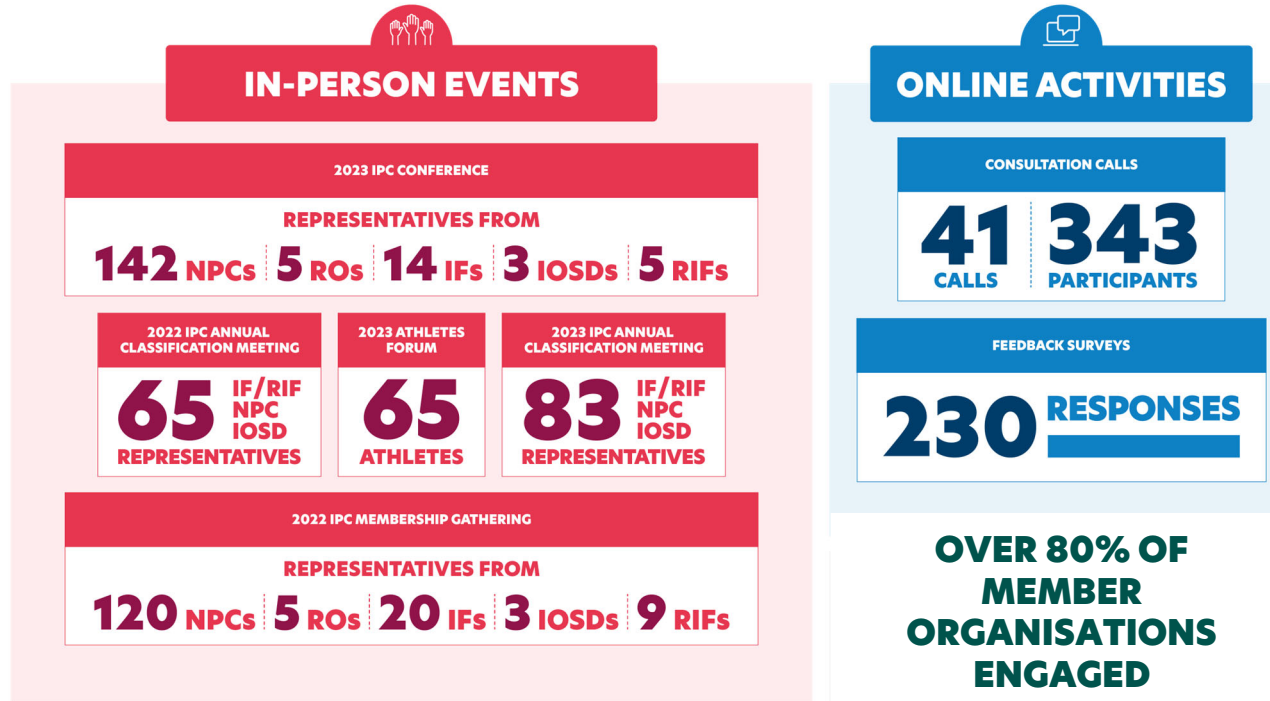


**New Code effective from January 2025**



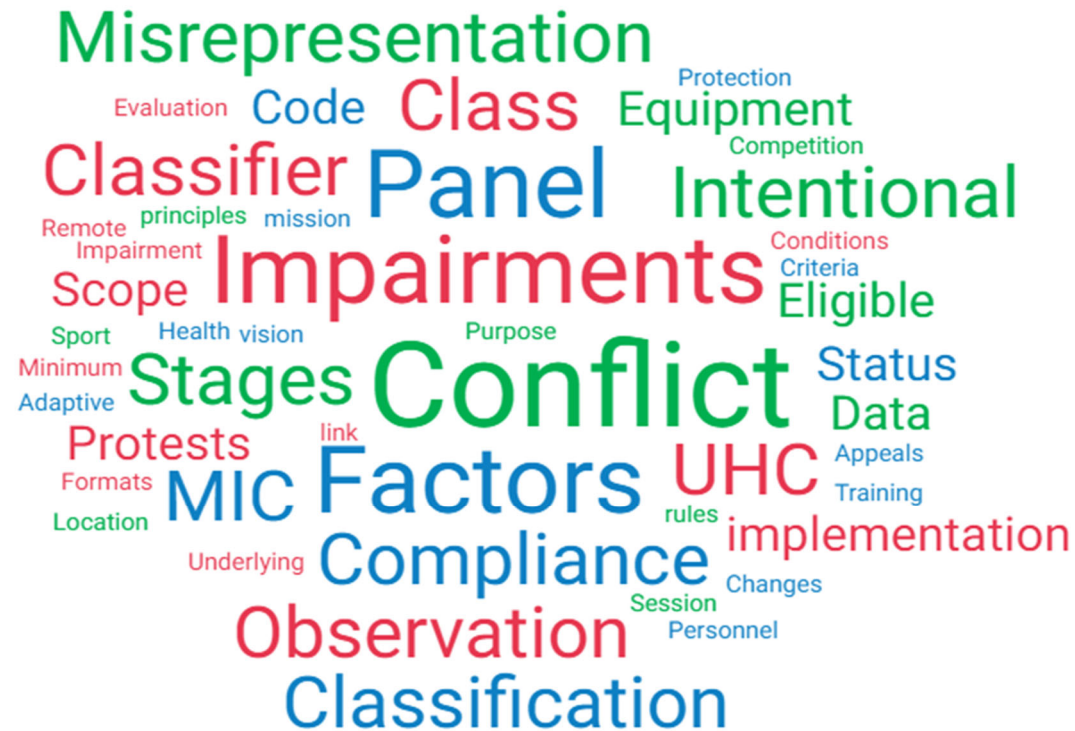
# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

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# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

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# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## FINAL DRAFT CODE AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

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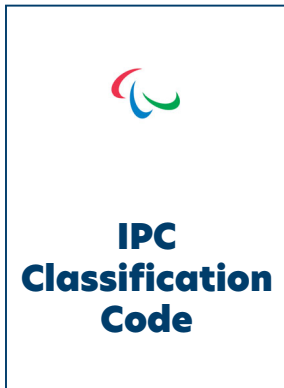




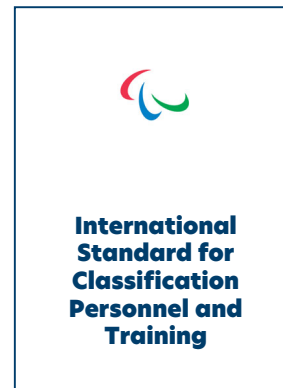
# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## FINAL DRAFT CODE AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

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Subject to approval  
of the  
IPC General Assembly

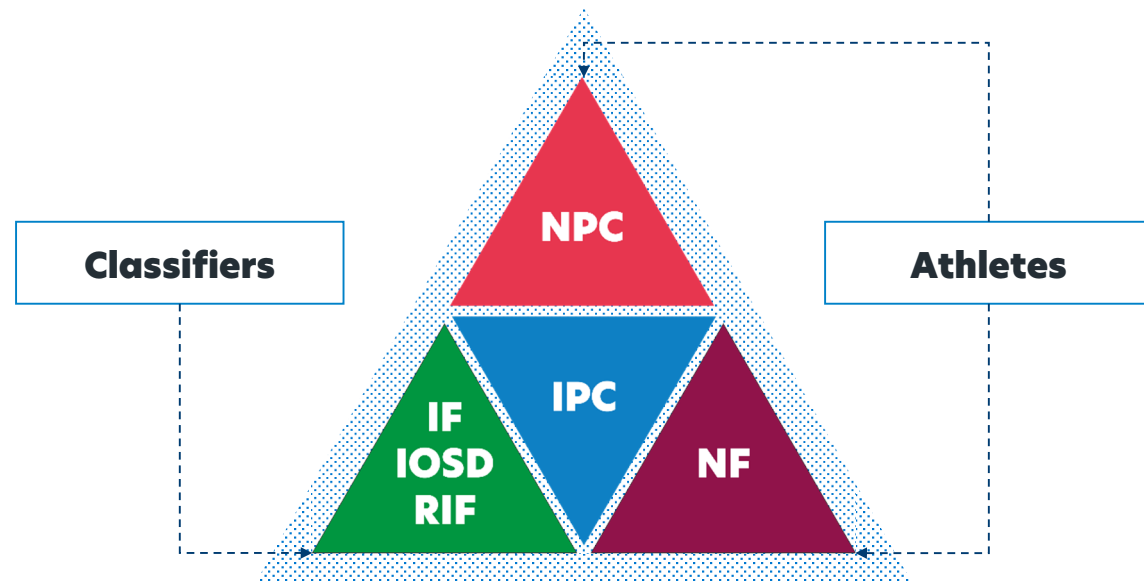


Subject to approval  
of the  
IPC Governing Board



## WHO IS ENGAGED IN THE CODE REVIEW PROCESS?

- IPC Members (National Paralympic Committees, Regional Organisations, International Federations, International Organisations of Sports for the Disabled) and Recognised International Federations
- National Federations
- Athletes and Athletes Support Personnel
- IF Heads of Classification and Classifiers
- Code Review Team
- Classification Compliance and Oversight Committee
- IPC Management Team



# SELECTED TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## SCOPE OF THE CODE

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All IPC Members and Recognised International Federations (RIFs) are bound by and must comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards, subject to the following:

- International Federations are only required to comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards in relation to **disciplines on the Paralympic Games Sport Programme**. International Federations may choose to also apply the Classification Code and International Standards to disciplines outside of the Paralympic Games Sport Programme, but it is not mandatory to do so.
- Each RIF must undertake to be bound by and to comply with the Classification Code and the International Standards in relation to **at least one discipline that it administers**.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## SCOPE OF THE CODE

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The Classification Code and International Standards apply to the following competitions (each, a **Covered Competition**):

- the Paralympic Games;
- World Championships;
- any Competition that is part of the direct qualification pathway to participate in the Paralympic Games, as determined by the relevant International Federation;
- any Competition where Observation Assessment may take place as part of a Classification process; and
- any other event or Competition specified by the International Federation in its Classification rules.

International Federations may choose to also apply the Classification Code and International Standards to other competitions (for example, lower-level competitions), but it is not mandatory to do so.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## COMPETITION FORMATS

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International Federations may choose to allow Athletes with different Sport Classes to compete against each other (**Combined Class Events**), provided that the International Federation's rules make clear:

- which Sport Classes may be combined, and in respect of which Covered Competitions;
- any conditions or criteria applicable to such Combined Class Events (for example, that only specific combinations of Sport Classes are allowed); and
- the reasons why the International Federation has decided to allow such Combined Class Events, and why it considers that the relevant Sport Classes may be combined in respect of such Covered Competitions and subject to the applicable conditions or criteria.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## COMPETITION FORMATS

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**Combined Class Events** may include one or more of the following methods:

- *'Competing up': a mechanism where an Athlete can compete against Athletes from a different Sport Class in circumstances where the relationship between those Sport Classes is linear, hierarchical, and comparable in relation to the impact of the Athlete's impairment on the sport activity. However, it cannot be assumed that the relationship between any given Sport Classes is linear, hierarchical, or comparable; indeed, that is often not the case as each Sport Class reflects fundamentally different sport activity limitations. It should also be noted that the Sport Class numbering used by certain International Federations does not necessarily mean that there is a linear, hierarchical, or comparable relationship between Sport Classes - the consecutive numbering is simply a system that is commonly used by International Federations for labelling their various Sport Classes.*
- *Multi-class events: where, in certain circumstances, International Federations allow Athletes with different Sport Classes to compete against each other.*
- *Multi-class Team Sports and team events: where Athletes with different Sport Classes compete as part of a team. For example, where each Sport Class is allocated a fixed number of 'points', and the team is comprised of Athletes whose total cumulative number of points must be below a certain number.*

# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## COMPETITION FORMATS

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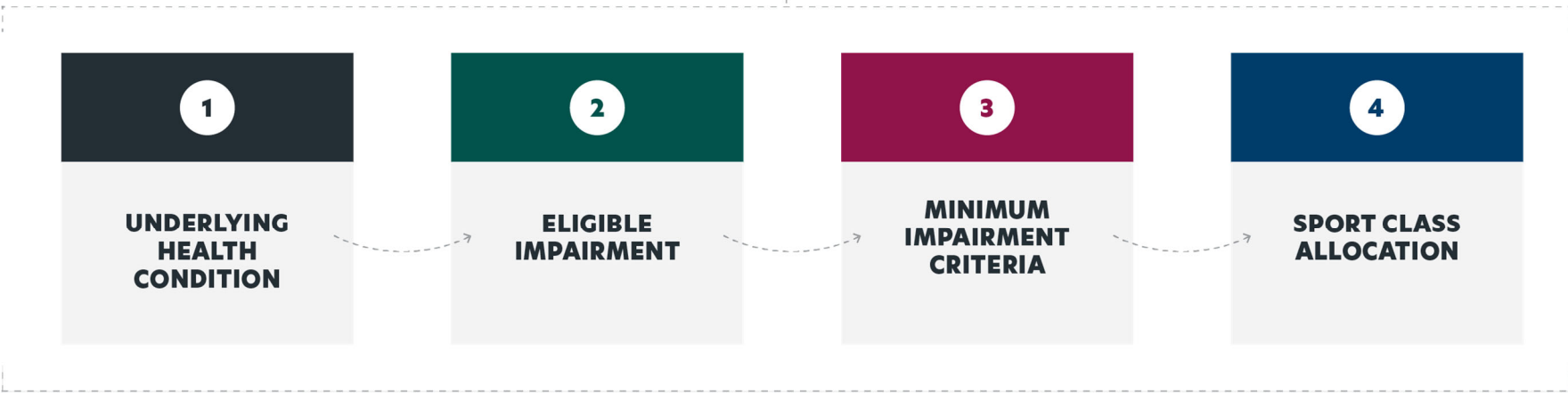
- A small number of International Federations currently apply **performance compensation mechanisms** within their Combined Class Events. Such performance compensation mechanisms are designed to try to account for, and moderate, Athletes' differing abilities to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the relevant sport, based on performance outcomes relative to their individual Sport Classes. Examples of performance compensation mechanisms include so-called factor systems and staggered starts.
- International Federations that are using performance compensation mechanisms within Covered Competitions as at 17 May 2024 **may continue to use such mechanisms. However, no other International Federations may use performance compensation mechanisms within Combined Class Events at Covered Competitions.**



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

### CLASSIFICATION PROCESS



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PROCESS - STAGE ONE

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### **Underlying Health Condition Assessment**

- The UHC Assessor must verify that the Athlete has (or has had) at least one medically and/or clinically diagnosed Underlying Health Condition, based on a review of Diagnostic Information provided by the Athlete's National Federation.

Possible outcomes:

- Designation **New (N)**
- Designation **Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition (Re-evaluation)**
- Designation **Not Eligible - Underlying Health Condition (NE-UHC)**



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PROCESS - STAGE TWO

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### Eligible Impairment Assessment

- The Classification Panel must conduct an assessment to verify (i) that the Athlete has an Eligible Impairment catered for by the sport that is consistent with one or more Underlying Health Conditions reported in the UHC Assessment, and (ii) that there are no inconsistencies with such reported Underlying Health Condition(s).

Possible outcomes:

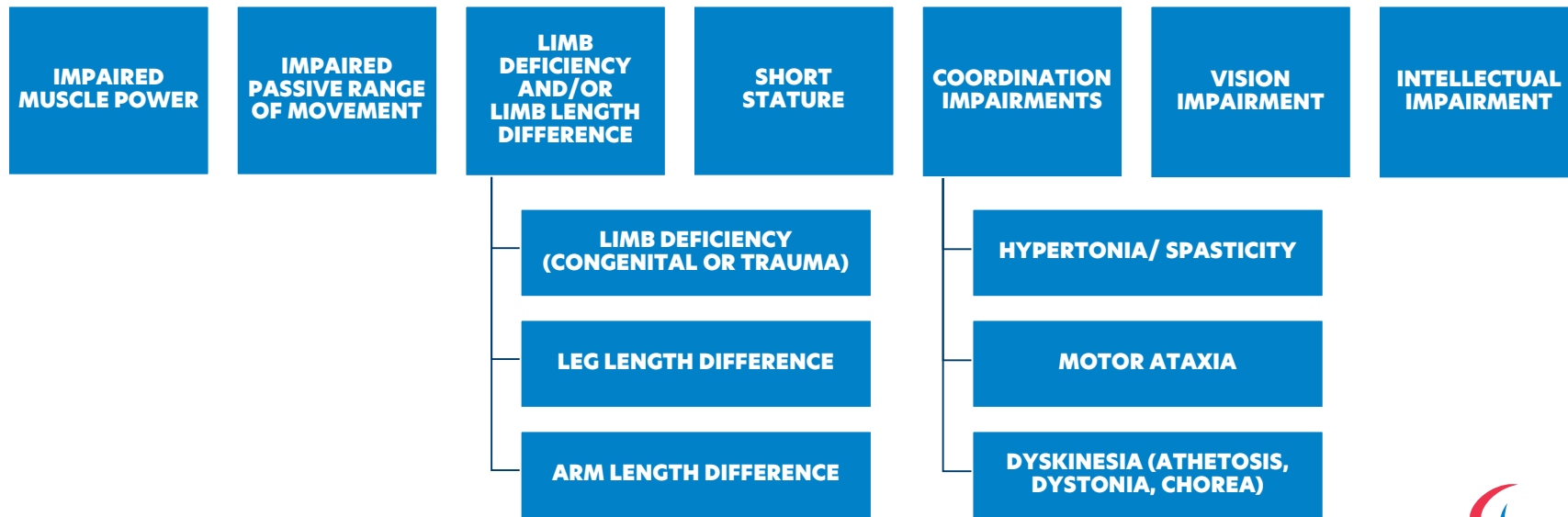
- The Athlete goes to the stage 3 - **Minimum Impairment Criteria Assessment**
- Designation **Classification Not Completed (CNC)**
- Designation **Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment (Re-evaluation)**
- Designation **Not Eligible - Eligible Impairment (NE-EI)**



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

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# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PROCESS - STAGE THREE

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### Minimum Impairment Criteria (MIC) Assessment

- The Classification Panel must conduct an assessment as to whether the Athlete's Eligible Impairment meets the applicable Minimum Impairment Criteria for that Eligible Impairment within the relevant sport Possible outcomes.
- Each IF must in their Classification rules define the MIC for each EI (and for all of the sub-types of that EI) catered for by the sport, which criteria must be based on and assessed using accurate and reliable methods.
- Adaptive Equipment is not taken into consideration at this stage.

Possible outcomes:

- The Athlete goes to the stage 4 - **Sport Class Assessment**
- Designation **Classification Not Completed (CNC)**
- Designation **Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria (Re-evaluation)**
- Designation **Not Eligible - Minimum Impairment Criteria (NE-MIC)**



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PROCESS - STAGE FOUR

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### **Sport Class And Sport Class Status Allocation**

- The Classification Panel must conduct an assessment to allocate an Athlete (i) a Sport Class based on an assessment of the extent to which the Athlete's Eligible Impairment(s) affect(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport (Sport Class Assessment); and (ii) a Sport Class Status to indicate whether and when the Athlete may be required to undergo Classification in the future.
- Each IF must in their Classification rules define what Adaptive Equipment (if any) may and may not be used by Athletes within each Sport Class, and whether the use of such Adaptive Equipment is mandatory or optional within that Sport Class.

Possible outcomes:

- a provisional Sport Class that is subject to confirmation at an **Observation Assessment** (the tracking code 'OA')
- a final Sport Class, accompanied with a **Sport Class Status**
- Designation **Classification Not Completed (CNC)**



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT

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- **Adaptive Equipment** means any implement, apparatus, and/or technical aid adapted to the special needs of an Athlete to reduce the impact of their impairment and that is permitted by the International Federation's rules, except that refractive or optical correction (such as eyeglasses or corrective lenses) are not considered to be Adaptive Equipment.
- The International Federation must:
  - establish a mechanism to record this information (for example, by creating specific designations for Adaptive Equipment); and
  - have an appropriate system in place to ensure that: (i) the Athlete uses the same Adaptive Equipment in all Covered Competitions (if they were allocated a Sport Class on the basis that they would use such Adaptive Equipment), or (ii) the Athlete does not use any or certain Adaptive Equipment in any Covered Competitions (if they were allocated a Sport Class on the basis that they would not use such Adaptive Equipment).



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW OBSERVATION ASSESSMENT (OA)

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- **Observation Assessment** means the observation of an Athlete in Competition by a Classification Panel as part of the Sport Class Assessment so that the Classification Panel can complete its determination regarding the extent to which an Athlete is able to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport.

Possible outcomes:

- a final **Sport Class** and **Sport Class Status**
- to **redo** any prior stages of the Evaluation Session and/or **undergo** a further Observation Assessment
- Designation **Classification Not Completed (CNC)**
- The Classification Panel **cannot**, based on the results of the Observation Assessment alone, allocate the Athlete a Sport Class that is different from the one provisionally allocated following the initial stages of the Sport Class Assessment.





# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

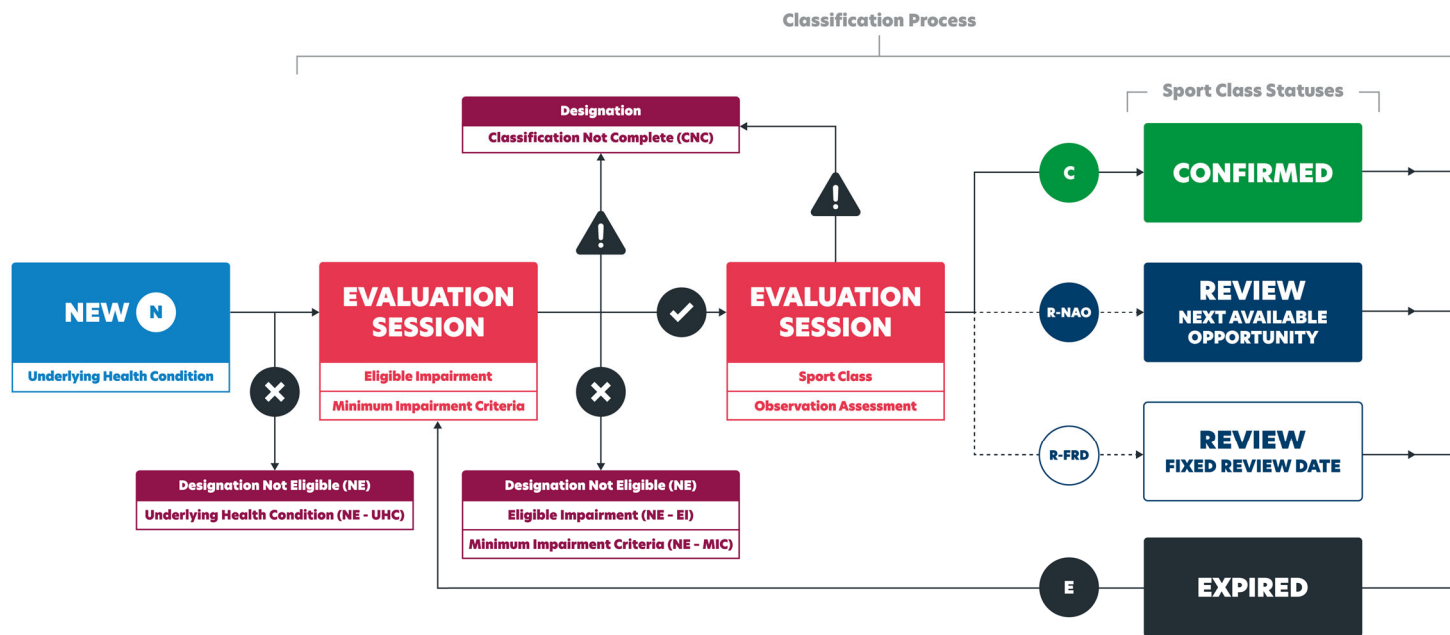
## OA AND OUT-OF-COMPETITION SCENARIO

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- If the allocation of a Sport Class might require an Observation Assessment, an International Federation may still allow for part(s) of the Evaluation Session to take place Out-of-Competition, but the International Federation must (in advance of the Evaluation Session) advise the relevant National Federations that a Classification Panel may conclude that it is **unable to allocate a final Sport Class without an Observation Assessment** (in which case the Athlete **must be designated 'Classification Not Completed' ('CNC')** and required to undergo a further Evaluation Session at a later date).



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW CLASSIFICATION PROCESS



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PANELS, CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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- IFs must appoint Classification Panels to conduct Evaluation Sessions.
- Each Classification Panel must consist of a minimum of two Classifiers.
- At least one member of the Classification Panel **must be of a different nationality** to the Athlete being assessed.
- It is **recommended** that members of the Classification Panel be of different nationalities to each other.
- IFs must develop and adopt within their Classification rules, a policy regarding the **identification and management of Conflicts of Interest**, consistent with the IPC Integrity Code.
- IFs must identify, record and keep updated a register of actual and potential Classifier Conflicts of Interest.
- International Classifiers have a potential or actual conflict if associated with a National Federation or NPC.

# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PANELS, CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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- Classifiers **must avoid taking on any other roles and responsibilities at Competitions** where they are acting as Classifiers (for example a Classifier must not act as a technical official at a Competition, such as a judge or other Para sport official, when acting as a Classifier in that same Competition).
- Classifiers must **declare** any pre-existing personal or professional relationship(s) that may affect or may create the perception that such relationship may affect, their ability to make an objective decision or assessment when acting as a Classifier.
- IFs have the right not to appoint Classifiers, or withdraw appointments of Classifiers, who are in personal or professional relationships that might, in the view of the IF, give rise to an actual, perceived or potential Conflict of Interest.

# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PANELS, CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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- The following persons cannot (i) **commence practical training** to become an International Classifier or **receive or maintain** Certification as an International Classifier, or (ii) **be appointed or retain an appointment** as a Chief Classifier or Head of Classification:
  - an international athlete who is currently competing in any Para Sport, or who has retired from the same Para sport less than four years ago;
  - a national team coach or assistant coach involved in any Para Sport, or who has retired from the same Para sport less than four years ago; or
  - Athlete Support Personnel (other than coaches) with direct involvement with the national team or athletes, or who have had such involvement in the last two years.
- For the avoidance of doubt, a person who has a close association or role with a sport team or National Federation may become a National Classifier.

# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CHANGES TO THE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

30

Before making any substantive changes to their Classification systems and/or Classification processes, **International Federations must:**

- carry out an appropriate assessment of what impact any changes will have on Athletes, National Federations, and NPCs, including consideration of the Paralympic Games cycle, their sport's competition cycle, and the qualification periods for the Paralympic Games;

*[Comment to Article 52.1.1: In particular, International Federations should as part of their impact assessment carefully consider the appropriate timing for any changes that may impact the eligibility or Sport Class of Athletes (for example, changes to the Minimum Impairment Criteria, or to the assessment methodology for the allocation of a Sport Class). **Ordinarily, such changes should not be made during the relevant International Federation's qualification period for the Paralympic Games.]***



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CHANGES TO THE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

31

Before making any substantive changes to their Classification systems and/or Classification processes, International Federations must:

- **provide National Federations** (with a copy to the IPC) with:
  - appropriate notice of the anticipated changes, along with a rationale for the changes, an explanation of the impact, the proposed timelines for implementation, and (if applicable) any proposed transitional rules; and
  - an opportunity to submit feedback before such changes are adopted; and
- **provide the IPC with:**
  - appropriate notice of the anticipated changes, along with a rationale for the changes, the proposed timelines for implementation, any proposed transition rules (if applicable), a copy of the International Federation's impact assessment, and an overview of the consultation undertaken as part of the review process; and
  - an opportunity to submit feedback before such changes are adopted.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CHANGES TO THE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

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If an International Federation makes changes to its Classification rules that may affect the (in)eligibility, Sport Class, and/or Sport Class Status of Athletes (for example, changes to the Minimum Impairment Criteria, or to its assessment methodology), the International Federation must:

- take reasonable steps to **identify** such Athletes and notify them (through their National Federation) that they are entitled to be reassessed; and
- **where applicable, change each such Athlete's Sport Class Status** to 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)' or 'Review with a Fixed Review Date (R - FRD)', as deemed appropriate by the International Federation.





# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## PROTEST AND APPEALS

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- Protests are described as a **challenge filed against the Athlete's Sport Class**, whereas Appeals are described as a **challenge to any aspect of the Classification process** where a breach of the rules has occurred that could have led to incorrectly allocating a Sport Class or any of the designations (NE-EI, NE-MIC, Sport Class Status, CNC).
- The types of Protests are National Federation's and International Federation's Protest.
- While a National Federation **cannot** make a Protest in respect of a Sport Class allocated to an Athlete from another Country/Territory, **it can present any concerns** about the Sport Class allocated to such Athletes to its IF so that the IF may consider if it wishes to make an IF Protest.
- Where an IF makes a Protest after the expiry of the deadline for NF Protests to be made (as specified under the IF Classification rules, the decision of a Protest Panel in relation to the Protest **is not final and may be subject to further Protest**.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW PROTEST AND APPEALS

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To submit a Protest, a National Federation must:

- complete a Protest form in the format prescribed by the International Federation, which must at a minimum require the following:
  - the name and sport of the protested Athlete;
  - the details of and/or a copy of the protested decision;
  - a detailed explanation of the basis for the National Federation's belief that the Athlete may have been allocated an incorrect Sport Class, including (**where applicable**) (i) reference to any specific rule(s) alleged to have been breached or misapplied, and (ii) any supporting evidence for that belief;
- submit the completed Protest form by the deadline set by the International Federation; and
- pay the applicable Protest fee.



# **CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW**

## **THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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- This section of the Code specifies roles and responsibilities of the:
  - International Paralympic Committee
  - International Federations
  - National Paralympic Committees
  - Classification Personnel
  - Athletes
  - Athlete Support Personnel
  - Other Participants



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION RESEARCH

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International Federations must have sport-specific Classification systems that reflect **Best Practice Classification** - meaning that the Classification system:

- adopts the four stages of Classification and describes methods used in each stage;
- uses the best available evidence at each stage, in particular by:
  - focusing on the relationship between the impairment and key performance determinants, where the impairment is the unit of classification and impairments are classified based on the extent to which they impact the Athlete's ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to their specific sport;
  - drawing on reliable assessment results from a range of domains (e.g., training history, impairment(s), performance of novel and practised motor tasks, and sport-specific/sport technical performance);
  - using assessments that are, as a minimum, evidence-informed (scientific evidence indicates that the individual assessments that make up the Classification system will provide information that is accurate and reliable);
  - relying on as few assumptions as possible;



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION RESEARCH

37

International Federations must have sport-specific Classification systems that reflect **Best Practice Classification** - meaning that the Classification system:

- applies principles of clinical reasoning and critical thinking to enable balanced consideration of the assessments conducted at each stage of Classification;
- is consistent with established principles of human movement science, low vision science, cognitive science, and sports performance;
- is consistent with current knowledge of (i) each Eligible Impairment catered for by the sport in question, and (ii) the Underlying Health Conditions that are consistent with those Eligible Impairments



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

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- Provisions surrounding **Intentional Misrepresentation (IM)** have been moved from the Code to a standalone International Standard for Intentional Misrepresentation.
- The following constitutes **IM**:
  - A Participant, at any time, whether by act or omission, intentionally misleads or attempts to mislead an International Federation or any of its representatives (such as Classification Personnel) in relation to any aspect of Classification; or
  - A Participant, at any time, whether by act or omission, engages in any type of intentional complicity in respect of any violation or attempted violation under point above or a period of ineligibility imposed on another Participant pursuant to Article 7.2.3 of the International Standard for Intentional Misrepresentation.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

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Examples of **IM** :

- Submitting forged medical documentation
- Deliberately underperforming during an Evaluation Session
- Deliberately tiring themselves out (in the case of Athletes) or deliberately tiring the Athlete out (in the case of other Participants) prior to an Evaluation Session
- Intentionally presenting for an Evaluation Session without Adaptive Equipment
- Misrepresenting skills, abilities, impairment
- Intentionally failing to disclose the Athlete's use of any medication and/or medical device / implant (including any audio aids and/or refractive or optical correction such as eyeglasses or corrective lenses) and/or any medical procedure to the Classification Panel
- Not providing accurate identity



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

40

Examples of **IM** :

- Deliberately failing to notify the relevant IF of any relevant Classification-related information, including that the Athlete has previously undergone Classification (e.g., on an earlier occasion, or in another Para sport) and/or that there has been a change in the nature or degree of the Athlete's Eligible Impairment that may necessitate a Medical Review
- Disrupting the Evaluation Session or refusing to collaborate with the Classification Panel
- Instructing a Participant to commit IM
- Covering up or not reporting the information of another Participant committing IM
- Where, having discovered that another Participant has violated or intends to violate any period of ineligibility imposed on them, they conceal or cover up the offence, or any information that would assist an IF in the investigation or prosecution of that offence
- Other





# **CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW**

## **INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR CLASSIFICATION PERSONNEL AND TRAINING**

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- Classification Personnel, which encompasses roles from Classifiers to administrative officers, play an essential role in the management and delivery of Classification.
- The Standard emphasizes the continuous development and training of Classification Personnel to ensure confidence in Classification.
- The role of the Head of Classification, vital in the process, can be delivered by multiple individuals. Their role, potential conflicts, and clear communication of whom they are by the International Federation have been highlighted.
- Conflict of Interest is rigorously addressed in the Standard, emphasizing the importance of clear boundaries and professional integrity, especially concerning former athletes, coaches, and support personnel roles in Classification.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR CLASSIFICATION DATA PROTECTION

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### Strengthened positions in the draft Code:

- IFs may share Classification data with other IFs (such as the data reviewed as part of the Underlying Health Condition and Eligible Impairment Assessments and the outcomes of those assessments), provided that such sharing is done in accordance with the International Standard for Classification Data Protection and applicable laws.
- Lawful grounds for processing data: An IF may ask an Athlete to consent to the use of Personal Information in relation to

Classification , but also might take the view that it has a legitimate reason for recording an Athlete practicing, training, or preparing for a competition, even if that Athlete has not been asked to consent to that recording. This provision represents a change from the current practice, where obtaining consent is the main basis for processing Classification data.

- Classification data retention
- Sharing access to Classification data



# Q&A

## QUESTIONS RECEIVED DURING THE MEMBERSHIP CALLS

# DISCLAIMER

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These questions and answers were addressed during the Membership calls scheduled in the months of April and May 2024. Not all questions are recorded and captured here, but a summary of some of the most recurrent and relevant ones addressed during the calls. Answers are provided in a manner addressed in the calls, which should be seen in the context of the broader discussion held during the calls.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Competition Formats

Q: Can IFs that are using performance compensation mechanisms introduce new compensation mechanisms or modify the mechanism or do they need to keep using the same mechanism?

A: The Code does not address that level of detail, and it would be a dialogue with each IF. If there are ways for IFs to update the current methods that is something we can explore with them and would be open to, in terms of introducing it for other classes and disciplines that is where the line is a bit firmer. Having said, we need to understand more about the specific situation and what the proposal is.

Q: Can IFs or RIFs start to use compensation mechanisms if they are not already doing so?

A: No, this is not permitted at Covered Competitions.

Q: Do the combined class rules need to be in the classification rules or in the sport rules?

A: They can be in any IF rules, classification or other - the Code does not specify it so it is left at the IF discretion.

Q: Why is the working group not in place and promised a while ago?

A: The working group is still scoped to be established, but due to a number of reasons we were unable to initiate their work earlier this year.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Fundamental Principles

Q: Can you please give an example what is meant in rule 5.2 with the sentence 'assessments can be carried out in any order.' Is this within each stage or also between the stages?

A: To reflect the current practices implemented across sports, as well as the unique aspects of each Eligible Impairment and its assessment methodology, the draft Code reflects that Stage One - Underlying Health Condition Assessment must always be carried out first. Other Stages do not have to be carried out in the order they are listed, but ultimately the Classification Panel's decision making process will be made in respect to the order of the Stages. In practice, this means an Athlete can present for an Evaluation Session with the Classification Panel, and the first assessment the Panel carries out can be Stage Three - Minimum Impairment Criteria Assessment, after which the Panel will go to Stage Two - Eligible Impairment Assessment (the example provided is from the Vision Impairment domain, where, in order to conduct Stage Two, the Panel may need to dilate the pupils, but once that is done the MIC assessment cannot be carried out, hence why the order is reversed. The other example comes from Physical Impairments, where in certain cases the Panel will conduct the 'technical assessment' first, which is part of Stage Four - Sport Class Assessment. This might be due to the nature of the Athlete's Eligible Impairment, or due to practical reasons (e.g. an access to the venue for the different components of the assessment), where the scheduling is made in a way that the 'technical assessment' is carried out before the so called 'physical assessment'.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Stage one - Underlying Health Condition Assessment

**Q: Is IPC going to set up a UHC Assessor group with special expertise that other IFs can seek for advice in case of rare conditions?**

**A:** This is something we openly explored with Members during the consultation period and we received some good feedback on how we could approach it. Let us please explore it more once the Code review process is done, we would absolutely be looking at providing guideline documents and potentially forming expert groups - this is something Members requested support on. So, in short - yes but TBC on the timeframes and processes around it. It will also be different from one impairment group to the other.

**Q: Is there any scope for IPC to help National Federations with more knowledge to stop overloading IFs with this assessment?**

**A:** Guidelines will be developed which will help all Members when completing Diagnostic Information.

**Q: Can a Classification Panel be the UHC assessor?**

**A:** Yes, this is possible. It is for the IF to indicate in their rules who their UHC Assessors are. These individuals must be suitably qualified.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Designations Not Eligible

Q: Since there are sub-types on NE (i.e., NE-UHC, NE-EI, NE-MIC), will all Athletes who have been considered as NE needed to be assigned the 'sub-types', or this practice will only be effective to new Athletes after the new Code implementation?

A: IFs will be required to reflect the respective NE designations in their Classification Master List for all Athletes (current and new), but what is more important in respect to the Athletes currently in the system is to reflect the appropriate designation in cases where there are still subject to an evaluation - e.g., NE-MIC (Re-evaluation). IFs will need to make an assessment on when and how they will be able to implement this change. Timeframes for implementation may vary from one IF to another.

### Adaptive Equipment

Q: How should IFs act on equipment concerning athletes daily living?

A: If this equipment is not relevant to the Classification process, then there is no need to take it into consideration. Each IF is required to identify what Adaptive Equipment is relevant in their sports/ disciplines.





# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Stage four - Sport Class Assessment and Observation Assessment

Q: Must the same Classification Panel do the additional assessment after Observation Assessment (OA) or can it be a different panel ?

A: It must be the same Classification Panel. Unless the Panel finalizes the assessment in a way of allocating a Sport Class and Sport Class Status or a designation CNC - then it would be a new Classification Panel starting from the beginning of the Evaluation Session.

Q: If I understand correctly Observation Assessment is optional. If OA is used then it must be in competition, but it seems that parts of OA can take place outside of competition, is that correct?

A: If Observation Assessment is utilized by an IF as part of the Classification process (i.e., it is correct that this is optional), then such observation must take place in-competition. Other components of the Sport Class assessment (e.g., what is often referred to as the 'technical assessment') can take place outside of competition.

Q: Is there a recommendation for procedure when OA performance is not maintained in further competitions and the Athlete's performance is 'improved' once OA period is complete.

A: If the OA is completed and a Sport Class has been allocated then this would need to be dealt with via an IF protest.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Stage four – Sport Class Assessment and Observation Assessment

Q: What is the scope of activities that can be considered as part of the Observation Assessment - is this related to only the components of competition where the Athlete is "competing" or preparing to compete - such as call rooms/Athlete check in etc.? or some broader scope.

A: Observation Assessment means the observation of an Athlete in Competition by a Classification Panel as part of the Sport Class Assessment so that the Classification Panel can complete its determination regarding the extent to which an Athlete's Eligible Impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport.

Generally speaking, it **must** be the competition itself, but the definition and provisions in the Code allow some flexibility in how each IF defines **the components of the OA** - article 18.7 has the relevant details on what is required from the IF to define in their rules

Q: If you feel very confident assigning a Sport Class, and then there appears to be a significant discrepancy between the bench and observation. Can the panel go back and re-evaluate after OA if the Athlete already has Confirmed Sport Class Status. Can the Classification Panel re-evaluate following observation of an Athlete who was already given Confirmed Status?

A: No, in this case there must be an IF protest.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Sport Class Status

Q: How should IFs utilize the Expired status ?

A: An Athlete will automatically be allocated the Sport Class Status 'Expired (E)' when they retire, in accordance with the International Federation's rules. Each International Federation must specify the requirements for an Athlete to retire in its rules - so this will depend on the rules of each IF.

IFs also have option to use the Expired Sport Class Status in the cases when an Athlete does not complete an Evaluation Session within the designated period of time; to do so IFs must state in their rules when R-NAO and R-FRD will remain valid.

Q: Could an Athlete who is NE become Expired and therefore be entitled to be reclassified?

A: The Expired Sport Class Status is intended for those who hold a Sport Class (NE is no longer a Sport Class but rather a designation), so an Athlete who is NE cannot be reevaluated in this case.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Classification Panel provision

Q: The nationality of the Classifier must be different from the Athlete? How many people must there be in a panel? (e.g. two Classifiers must be at the Classification session at the same time?)

A: A Classification Panel must consist of a minimum of two Classifiers - yes, both must be attending the Evaluation Session with the Athlete.

Q: Creation of Medical vs. Technical Classifiers in International Standard for Classification Personnel and Training - Will the IPC challenge the IFs to have a differentiation?

A: Optional, not mandatory for IFs. IPC would be looking at the certification process in combination with the elements of the evaluation process. It is an individual IF assessment of what is best for them. IF can have the discretion of the competencies that candidates come with.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Classifiers and Conflicts of Interest / Dual Roles

Q: Some of our NFs use National Classifiers to accompany Athletes going through International Classification. Would this count as a "close association" that would prevent them from being able to become an International Classifier, unless they stopped for 2 years? Is National Classifier attending International Classification prevent their pathway to become international Classifier?

A: It is important to assess each case separately and understand better in what kind of role is the National Classifier accompanying the Athlete in the international Classification, as a team physio, or a coach or an interpreter, as an Athlete support person, etc. The current draft International Standard captures the involvement of the Athlete Support Personnel.

Q: Which category team physiotherapist falls under?

A: Under the last provision - Athlete Support Personnel (other than coaches) with direct involvement with the national team or Athletes, or who have had such involvement in the last two years.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Classifiers and Conflicts of Interest / Dual Roles

Q: If becoming a National Classifier is part of the pathway toward International Classifier education, could this create a conflict of interest if the National Classifier is affiliated with a National Team?

A: So long as their role is limited to being a Classifier (on a national level), the draft suggests there is no conflict. Again, each case needs to be assessed individually to fully understand the situation and associated risks.

Q: It says those related to the NPC teams are retained from being appointed as Chief Classifier or the Head of Classification. So it means these NPC personnel can still be an International Classifiers if they are now one?

A: The International Standard for Classification Personnel and Training provides clarification that in such scenario such persons should not commence practical training to become an International Classifier or receive or maintain Certification as International Classifiers.

Q: What about existing Classifiers in any of these roles - can they continue as Classifiers?

A: The provisions from the International Standard apply to current Classifiers as well. Each IF will need to reflect on current Classifiers, identify any dual roles that need to be managed, and the individual Classifier will likely have to decide which role they wish to maintain. This is not a provision that will be implemented immediately but will be part of the compliance process, and some IF will likely need to assess the implementation timeframes to fully comply.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### Intentional Misrepresentation

Q: ISIM - document mentions several times that IPC may offer assistance to IFs in conducting IM investigations. Is there a will within IPC to develop an assistance programme for IFs to deal with IM?

There are a number of different ways to support IFs. Guidelines and step by step instructions can be provided on the investigation process and on the level of evidence required. Second possibility is for the IPC to step in and investigate cases where there is a high risk and/or the IF is not acting on it, which may happen for a number of reasons. Thirdly, IPC can support an IF in processing investigations by assisting the IF and walking them through the steps of identifying, investigating and charging an IM case.

Q: Can an Athlete's previous competition results be revoked if they have been found guilty of committing IM?

A: Yes, if it has been found that the IM has taken place across a number of events these results may be disqualified.

Q: What are the punishment for the National Federation if the Athlete provides inauthentic documents?

A: Any sanctions applied to National Federations will be at the discretion of each IF.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

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## Q&A

### General

Q: With the implementation of the new Code will Athletes have to be reclassified.

A: This will be dependent on the IF, the changes they make to their rules, and particularly in relation to Stage One - the diagnostic information the IF holds on behalf of the Athlete. It is envisaged that all new Athletes will need to go through Stage One, but for the current Athletes it may be that the IF has already implemented the same process and has a confirmation of the UHC.

Q: How will the IPC be guiding IFs in the development of their Classification Systems? Do we have resources to tap into?

A: With the implementation of the new Code an IF self-assessment will be sent out and this will allow the IPC to assess what support is needed. One of the next slides provides an overview of the documents developed or to be developed by the IPC in order to support the IFs.





# CLOSING

# **CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW**

## **THE CODE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

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- Flowchart and diagrams
- Summary of changes to the final draft
- Azibo story
- Model Rules
- Guideline on UHC and EI
- Guideline on IM
- Best Practice Classification
- Template Medical Diagnostic Form
- Template Conflict of Interest Declaration



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLOSING

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- Thank you for participating in the Code review consultation process.
- All information regarding the Code Review can be found on the [Classification Code review](#) webpage.
- The Code is envisaged to be put forward for the approval of the IPC General Assembly during the 2024 Extraordinary General Assembly, scheduled to take place on 17 May 2024.
- The information presented in this resources is based on the draft Code and International Standards - i.e., not the final approved versions.
- For any questions or further feedback, contact the IPC management team at [codereview@paralympic.org](mailto:codereview@paralympic.org)



**THANK YOU**



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