

Policy – Classification

Classification is used to form the structure for competition in Paralympic sport. Paralympic athletes have an impairment in body structures and functions that leads to a competitive disadvantage in sport. Classification is the process by which athletes are grouped according to the impact of their impairment on their ability to compete in a particular sport. The purpose of Classification is to minimise the impact of eligible impairment types on the outcome of competition, so that athletes who succeed in competition are those with best anthropometry, physiology and psychology and who have enhanced them to best effect.

1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 1.1 Set out the position, role and responsibilities of the Australian Paralympic Committee (APC) with regards to classification, in accordance with the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Classification Code and its Standards (“the Code”); and
- 1.2 Create a framework for processes and procedures for the management of classification in Australia.

2. Policy Statements

- 2.1 All Australian athletes with physical, visual or intellectual impairments should have access to classification opportunities relevant to their level of competition.
- 2.2 As a member of the IPC, the APC accepts the following roles and responsibilities under the Code:
 - 2.2.1 Ensuring that its classifications conform to the Code.
 - 2.2.2 Developing a National Classification strategy and practice standards, for its members that provide guidelines for the technical and operational requirements for classification in Australia relating to:
 - athlete evaluation;
 - protests and appeals; and
 - classifier training and certification.
 - 2.2.3 Providing support and leadership to its members to implement activities in compliance with the Code.
 - 2.2.4 Establishing procedures to address non-compliance with the Code
 - 2.2.5 Developing classification resources and education with reference to:
 - the Code and its Standards;
 - IF classification rules; and
 - athletes’ rights and responsibilities.

- 2.3 The APC recognises the primacy of the Code and each international federation's classification rules and associated athlete classifications over national classification activities. In the event that this Policy and its associated practice standards fail to provide for a matter in respect of which there is provision in the IPC Code, the provisions appearing in the IPC Code shall apply.
- 2.4 The APC will only recognise Australian classification activities that are conducted within the scope of this policy and standards that are developed by the APC under this policy.
- 2.5 The APC will only recognise national classification decisions of Australian classifiers where those classifiers are certified by the APC.
- 2.6 The APC expects that its members will comply with the Code, relevant international federation classification rules and this policy, including:
 - 2.6.1 The development and implementation of classification policy and processes relevant to its operational responsibilities that relate to:
 - Australian athlete evaluation;
 - Australian protests and appeals; and
 - Australian classifier training and certification.
 - 2.6.2 Structuring national competition in accordance with the classes defined by the IF classification rules.
 - 2.6.3 Collaborating with the APC in identification and development of Australian certified classifiers.
 - 2.6.4 Developing and circulating general classification information and education for their sport.
 - 2.6.5 Collaborating with the APC in the continuous improvement of national classification activities in their sport.
- 2.5 The APC may suspend funding or support for organisations that are not in compliance with the Code and this policy.
- 2.6 Australian Certified Classifiers must adhere to the conditions laid out in the APC Classifier Agreement, the Code and the relevant sport IF classification rules when involved in activities under the jurisdiction of the APC.
- 2.7 Australian Classifier roles, certification and training shall follow the APC Classification Standard- Classifier Training and Certification.
- 2.8 Athletes and their associated representatives must conduct themselves according to the Code and relevant IF classification rules, when involved in activities under the jurisdiction of the APC.
- 2.9 National Athlete Evaluation that is conducted by the APC shall follow the APC Classification Standard-Athlete Evaluation.
- 2.10 Classification protests and appeals which are directed to the APC shall follow the APC Classification Standard - Protest and Appeals.

2.11 The APC will only provide classification assistance to sports not covered by the Code where resources permit and where this assistance does not detract from the APC's responsibilities identified in this policy and its associated practice standards.

3. Conditions

3.1 Disciplinary action may be taken against APC members, Australian Certified Classifiers, athletes or athlete representatives who breach this policy when involved in APC activities.

3.2 All protests and appeals directed to the APC are confidential. Parties to protests and appeals shall not disclose information relating to the protest or appeal or the proceedings to any person or entity outside those directly required to assist in the resolution, which may include, but are not limited to:

- athletes and their appointed representative(s);
- Australian Certified Classifiers;
- APC employees;
- sport, medical or scientific consultants engaged for the purposes of the protest or appeal; and
- any legal counsel involved in the process.

4. Provision

4.1 The APC will appoint a person who will be responsible for monitoring progress in implementing this policy and for providing advice to the CEO, Board and the APC's members on its implementation.

4.2 APC members and Australian Certified Classifiers have a responsibility to ensure they are aware of, and abide by, the relevant Australian classification policies and guidelines as they apply to their sport.

5 Definitions

Appeal refers to a formal objection to the manner or process in which classification procedures have been conducted.

Australian Certified Classifier is a classifier who has completed all the required training and education to be certified as a national or international classifier for a particular Paralympic sport, and who has been certified by the Australian Paralympic Committee.

Classification is the process by which athletes are assessed by reference to the impact of impairment on their ability to compete in a specific sport.

International Federation (IF) is the international sporting organisation recognised by the IPC as responsible for that sport worldwide. This Federation has authority for classification of its sport internationally.

IPC Classification Code and Standards ("the Code") Is a document which details the policies and procedures that should be common to all sports and sets principles to be applied by all sports within the Paralympic Movement.

National Federation is the national sporting organisation recognised by the International Federation as responsible for the sport within Australia.

Protest refers to a formal objection to an athlete's sport class and/or status outcome which has been allocated through the classification process. See also "**Appeal**".

6 Application:

This policy applies to:

- 6.1 APC members.
- 6.2 All Australian athletes eligible for Paralympic competition.
- 6.3 All Australian Certified Classifiers in any Paralympic sport that is recognised by the IPC.

7. See also:

IPC Classification Code

(http://www.paralympic.org/export/sites/default/IPC/Reference_Documents/2008_2_Classification_Code6.pdf)

APC Classification Roles and Responsibilities in Australia

APC Classification Standard- Athlete Evaluation

APC Classification Standard- Protests and Appeals

APC Classification Standard-Classifier Training and Certification