

## **World ParaVolley Classification Review Process Communication to Stakeholders – October, 2016**

### **1. Introduction**

All International Federations that are members of the International Paralympic Committee have become signatories to the IPC Classification Code and its associated International Standards. As a signatory, World ParaVolley is not only obliged to apply the Code but also to review its own classification rules and processes to ensure that they are compliant, and remain compliant, with the Code. It is the goal of the World ParaVolley, as it is of all International Sports Organisations that are signatories to the IPC Classification Code, to ensure that our classification rules and the processes that support them are as credible, sport focused, objective and transparent as possible.

Within World ParaVolley, we have a classification system that was developed many years ago, and that has had some modification over time. However, since 1997 there had not been a significant substantive and consultative review of our classification rules and processes, particularly with respect to Sitting Volleyball, even though the Medical and Functional Classification Handbook was updated and rebranded with the World ParaVolley logo in 2011. It is broadly acknowledged that, while improvements have been made, there is a lack of sport specificity as well as some ambiguities within the system. These issues can and have at times led to misunderstandings and inconsistent application of the classification rules. Anecdotal evidence would indicate that while there are significant differences in opinion about what should be changed in our classification system, there does appear to be a consensus that there is a need for a substantive review, which includes opportunity for the membership and stakeholders to provide input.

At the 2012 General Assembly the Sport Director made a commitment to ensure a review of the WOVD (now World ParaVolley) Classification system would take place after the London 2012 Paralympic Games, and to advise the membership in a timely manner, what that process of review and consultation would involve. To that end, it was proposed that WOVD (now World ParaVolley) undertake a transparent and consultative review of its classification system and processes. The Review Process was initiated, but was halted before completion following IPC's announcement of their review and revision of the IPC Classification Code.

The updated IPC Athlete Classification Code (2015) has now been released, as well as the recently IPC approved International Standards (September 2016) that accompany the Athlete Classification Code. The Classification Review Panel has been reconvened and all members have accepted their appointments. The Panel will be Chaired by Wayne Hellquist, Vice-President of World ParaVolley. The process for the review is outlined below.

Please note the Code is to be effective January 1, 2017, with required compliance by January 1, 2018. Therefore, it is very important that all stakeholders review the timelines, circulate the information as appropriate, and provide feedback within the

timeframes outlined. This will start with the initial survey, which will be distributed in the next 7-10 days.

Our aim is to ensure that our existing classification system is as robust, credible, transparent, accessible and sport-focused as possible. There will be several opportunities for interested parties to give feedback and make recommendations about what is working well, what is not, and what could be done to improve our classification rules and processes, whilst remaining within the IPC Classification Code to which World ParaVolley is a signatory.

We will also consult with outside experts and look at 'Best Practice' models for ideas on how we could improve what we do in this area. For this review we will examine the actual classification rules for Sitting Volleyball (as a priority), as well as the processes surrounding how we conduct player classification evaluation and how we manage protests and appeals. The other disciplines Standing Volleyball (indoor and Beach) will also be reviewed at a later date by repeating relevant sections of the review process for those disciplines.

## 2. Key Components of the review

- Communication to all members and stakeholders that World ParaVolley will be conducting a full review of the existing classification system and that there will be opportunities for input into the process.
- Classification Review Panel – appointed by the World ParaVolley Medical Director including experienced classifiers, sport experts (coach and athlete representation, etc.), as well as others with expertise in research/change management / marketing / administration.
- Stakeholder consultation at two key points in the process
- Expert feedback and advice – internal and external
- Review of research literature
- Review of World Best Practice models
- Review of 2015 IPC Classification Code and 2016 International Standards
- Introduction of any amended classification rules and processes with a transition period

## 3. Process and Timeline:

Key Activity	Description	Timeline
1. Initial Stakeholder Feedback – Develop & Distribute Stakeholder Survey (Note: initial stakeholder	This is the first phase of consultation whereby written feedback is sought from key internal and external stakeholders regarding the existing classification rules and processes, and issues requiring consideration – targeted	Survey Distributed Oct 20, 2016  Deadline to Return Survey Nov 10, 2016

	feedback collected in March 2013 has been retained and will also be considered in the review)	questions requesting feedback and proposed solutions to issues raised.	
2.	Review of the Literature & the Master List for Impact Evaluation	Review of available relevant documents including 2015 IPC Classification Code and 2016 International Standards and World Best Practice Models – results reported to the Classification Review Panel	Completed Nov 30, 2016
3.	Targeted Consultation – IPC and other sports	Consultation with experts – internal and external, and face-to-face consultation with key stakeholders including coaches, classifiers, IPC and other relevant parties to solicit expert input and feedback.	Completed Nov 30, 2016
4.	Classification Review Interim Report	To be drafted by Classification Review Panel outlining key findings from consultation and reviews (Steps 1-3), and providing broad overview of proposed changes to classification rules and processes, including more detailed implementation timelines. This to be presented by the Classification Review Panel Chair to the World ParaVolley Board	Completed Report December 30, 2016 – January 7, 2017
5.	DRAFT Revised Classification Rules and Briefing Paper	Classification Review Panel meet to work through key areas of player classification systems, and protests and appeals processes, and produce a DRAFT Revised Classification Handbook (Classification Rules & Regulations) and a Briefing Paper outlining key changes proposed. This document to be presented to the Board by Head of the Review Panel	January 15, 2017
6.	Final Stakeholder Feedback	Same stakeholders as step 1, inviting comment and feedback on Revised Classification Handbook and Briefing Paper	Distributed February 3, 2017  Deadline to submit Feedback March 3, 2017

7.	Final Classification Rules in DRAFT form	Classification Review Panel reviews final feedback, makes any appropriate modifications and then Head of Review Panel presents Final Classification Rules & Regulations and Briefing Paper to World ParaVolley Board for Approval	March 31, 2017  Board Approval April 30, 2017
8.	Publishing and Informing - Rules published and circulated	Classification Rules & Regulations and Briefing Paper circulated to member nations, NPC's Internal stakeholders, IPC etc.	Commencing after Board Approval (May 1, 2017)
9.	Senior classifiers and then other classifiers attend classifier update training	Ensure all Senior Classifiers are updated regarding changes to the classification rules and processes (online), with other levels of classifiers trained	Before June 30, 2017
10.	New Classification Rules Implemented		June 30, 2017
11.	All current players will undergo classification Review once new rules adopted	All players on the masterlist will be put on Review Status, and will be required to submit a Medical Diagnostic Form 3 months prior to their next international competition. This will allow the revised classification rules and processes to be applied to ALL players for the 2020 Paralympic Games. This has an added benefit of allowing a more accurate Master List / Classification Database to be compiled.	January 1, 2017
12.	Monitoring	Classification Review Panel will monitor the new classification rules and processes on an ongoing basis.	2017 and ongoing