



# 2025 IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE

FEI PARA EQUESTRIAN FORUM  
25-26 FEBRUARY 2025

TEA CISIC, STEPHEN HALPIN

**INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE**

# SESSION OVERVIEW

## Introduction

### 2025 IPC Classification Code and International Standards

- Review process
- Main changes
- Code implementation, compliance and education

### Selected topics for discussion

- Intentional Misrepresentation

### Discussion / Q&A



# INTRODUCTION

©OIS/Emma Da Silva



# INTRODUCTION

## WHO IS WHO

- IPC Classification Team - [IPC Management Team](#)
- IPC Classification Compliance and Oversight Committee - [IPC Bodies](#)



Cairo, October 2023

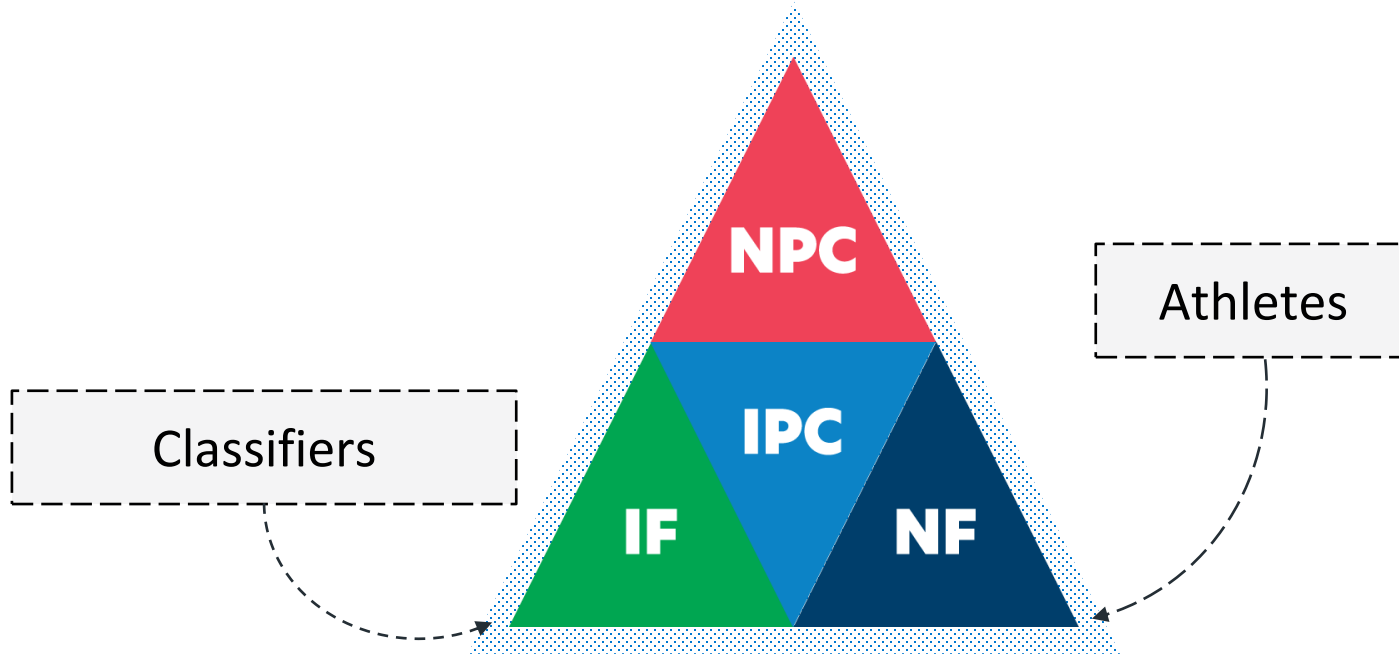


Bonn, June 2024



# INTRODUCTION

## WHO IS WHO



# INTRODUCTION

## WHO IS WHO

©IPC, Bonn, October 2024 IPC Annual  
Classification Meeting, group photo



# INTRODUCTION

## WHO IS WHO – IPC CODE REVIEW TEAM



Bonn, January 2024

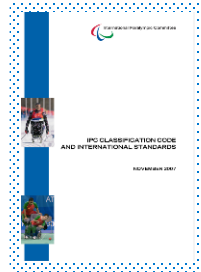


Bonn, February 2023



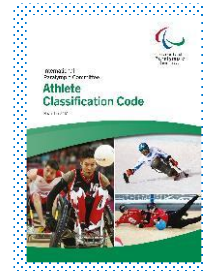
# IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE EVOLUTION

- Fundamental document upon which Classification in the Paralympic Movement must be based.
- Aims to uphold confidence in Classification and promote participation by a wide range of Athletes.
- Details policies and procedures common across all Para sports and sets principles to be applied by all Para sports.
- Intends to achieve harmonisation where standardisation is required and allow flexibility to cater for the needs of each sport.



2007 IPC Classification Code

2007



2015 IPC Athlete Classification Code

2015



2025 IPC Classification Code

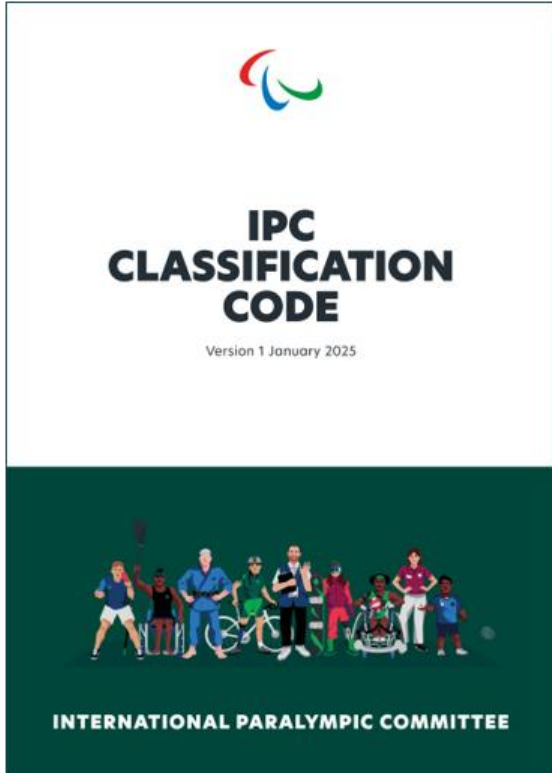
2025





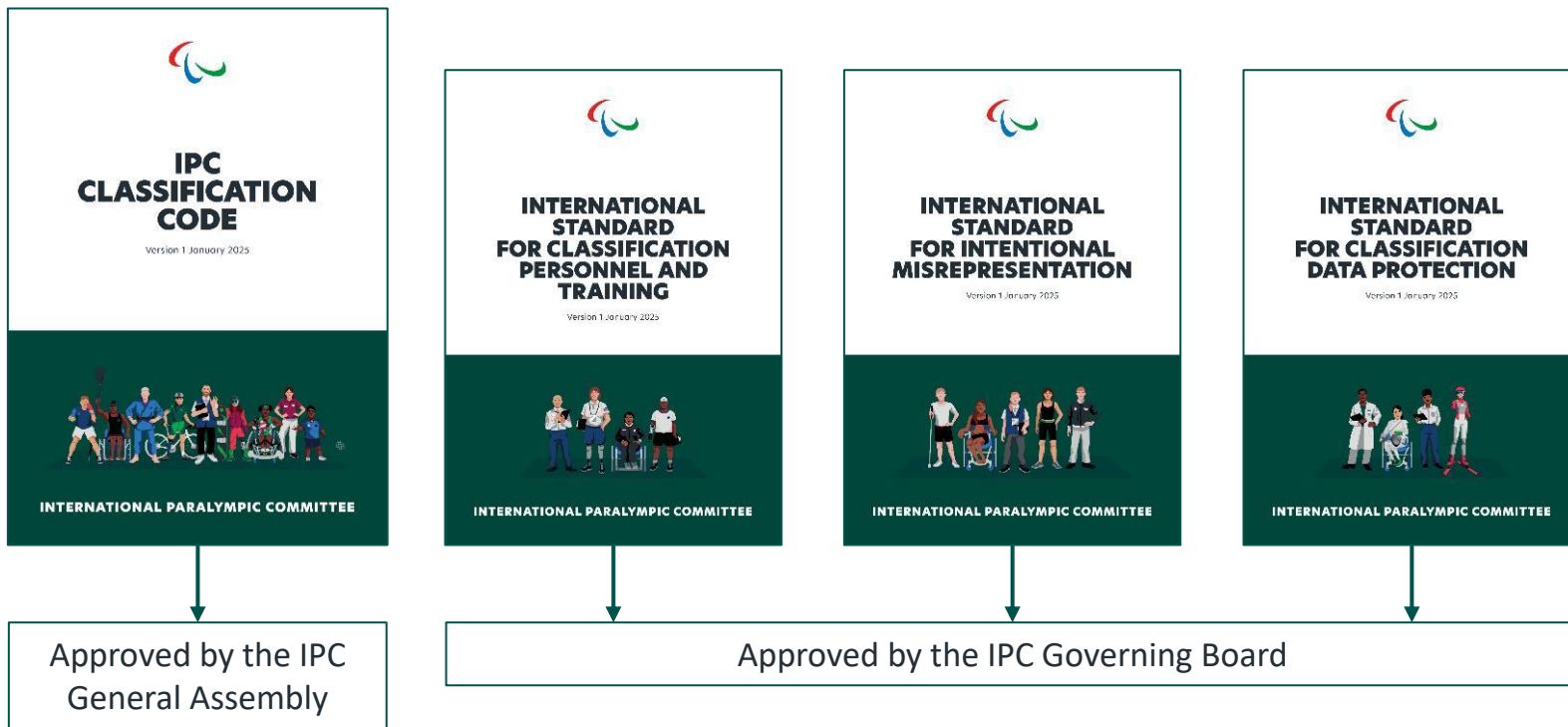
# IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE

## 2025 IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE AND IS



- The 2025 Classification Code seeks to keep pace with the rapid development of the Paralympic Movement and builds on the first two editions of the Classification Code.
- It is the result of an extensive three-year review process, based around open consultation with the IPC Membership and feedback received from other stakeholders.
- Sets out minimum requirements for classification in Para sports and provides recommendations across different topics.
- Provides opportunities for continuous improvement, collaboration and growth.
- Requires all Members and Recognised International Federations to comply with the policies and procedures.

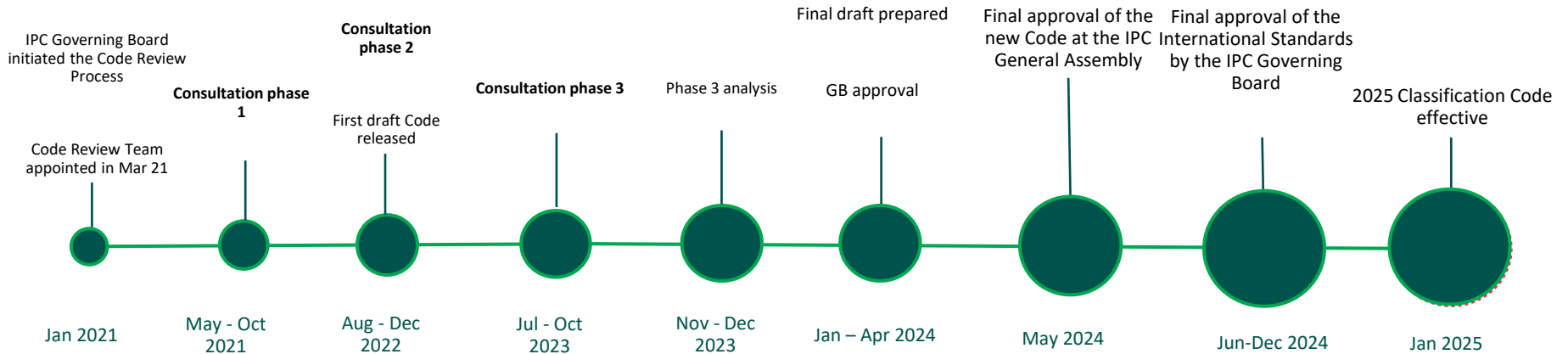
# 2025 IPC CLASSIFICATION CODE CODE AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS



Electronic copy available at: [Classification Code review](#)



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW TIMELINE



OVER 80% OF  
MEMBER ORGANISATIONS  
ENGAGED





# OVERVIEW OF MAIN CHANGES TO THE 2025 CODE AND IS

# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF CLASSIFICATION

**Classification** means (i) the determination of which athletes are eligible to compete in Para sport; and (ii) the grouping of eligible athletes into Sport Classes based on the extent to which their impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the relevant sport.

The purpose of **Classification** is to enable athletes with Eligible Impairments to participate in competitive Para sport with a pathway to sporting excellence, the pinnacle of which is the Paralympic Games.

**Classification** is essential to the Paralympic Movement as Para sport cannot exist without Classification.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF CLASSIFICATION

**Classification** establishes a unique framework that promotes fair and meaningful competition by minimising the impact of athletes' impairments on the outcome of competition so that the outcome is determined by factors other than impairment.

To achieve its purpose, **Classification** performs two critical functions:

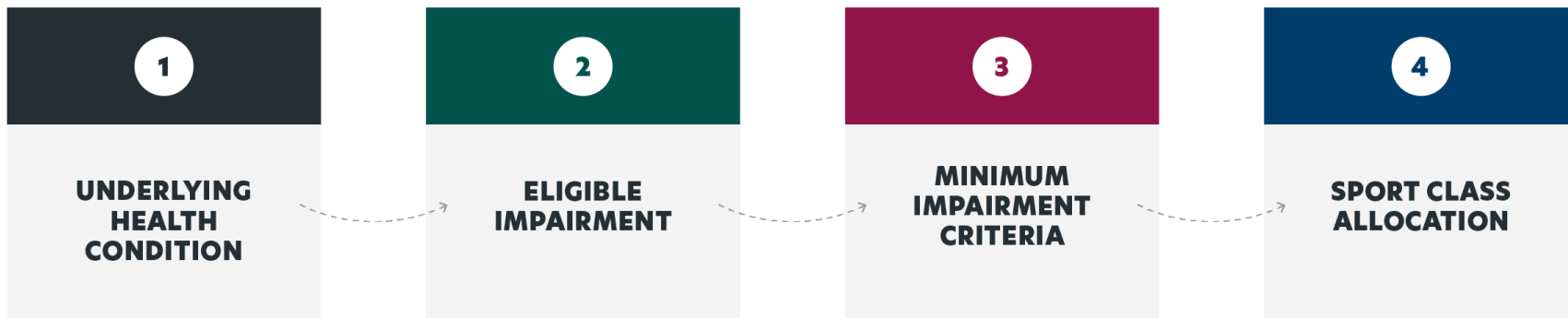
- the determination of which athletes are eligible to compete in Para sport; and
- the grouping of eligible athletes into Sport Classes based on the extent to which their impairment(s) impact(s) their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the relevant sport.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES


### CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

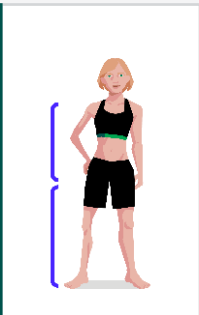



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

 PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT

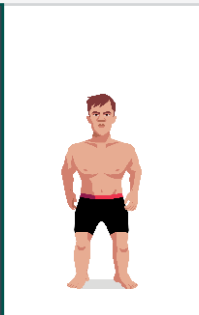
 Impaired Muscle Power




 Impaired Passive Range of Movement



 Short Stature




 Limb Deficiency and/or Limb Length Difference

Limb Deficiency

Arm Length Difference

Leg Length Difference

 Coordination Impairments

Hypertonia/Spasticity

Motor Ataxia

Dyskinesia





# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS



INTELLECTUAL  
IMPAIRMENT



Intellectual  
Impairment



VISION  
IMPAIRMENT



Vision  
Impairment



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PROCESS – STAGE 1



### 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.
- Assessment done as a review of papers submitted.

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 – STAGES 2-4



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PROCESS – STAGE 2

2

ELIGIBLE  
IMPAIRMENT

20

### Eligible Impairment Assessment

- The Classification Panel conducts an assessment to verify (i) that the Athlete has an Eligible Impairment (EI) that is consistent with one or more Underlying Health Conditions reported in stage 1, and (ii) that there are no inconsistencies with such reported Underlying Health Condition(s).
- In person assessment with the Athlete and Classification Panel.

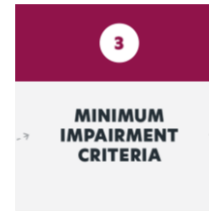
Possible outcomes:

- 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

## CLASSIFICATION PROCESS – STAGE 3



### Minimum Impairment Criteria (MIC) Assessment

- The Classification Panel conducts an assessment as to whether the Athlete's Eligible Impairment meets the Minimum Impairment Criteria (MIC) for that Eligible Impairment within the relevant sport
- Each IF must in their Classification rules define the MIC for each EI (including the sub-types of that EI) catered for by the sport, 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 4

4

SPORT CLASS  
ALLOCATION

22

### Sport Class Assessment and Sport Class Status Allocation

- The Classification Panel conducts an assessment to allocate an Athlete (i) a Sport Class; 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 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 OBSERVATION ASSESSMENT (OA)

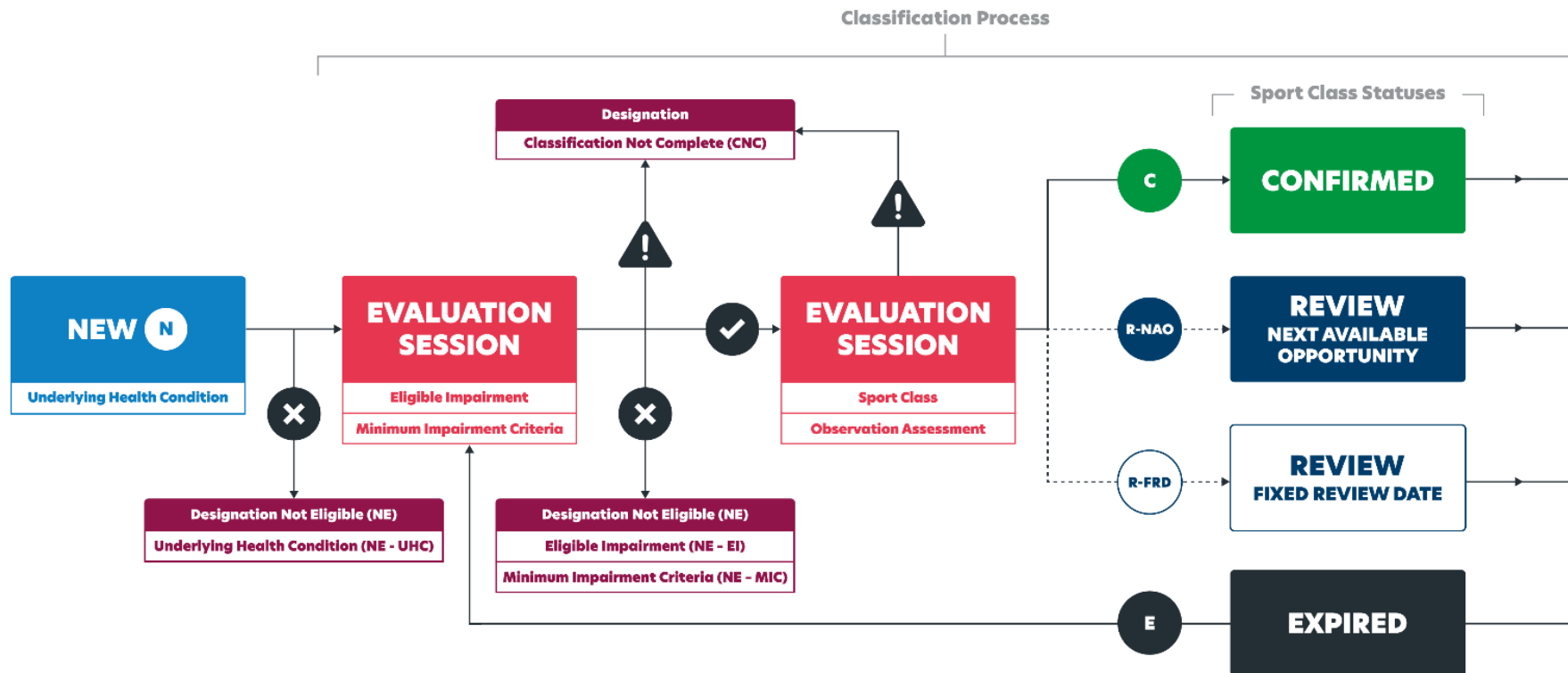
**Observation Assessment** means the observation of an Athlete in Competition by a Classification Panel as part of the Sport Class Assessment so that the Classification Panel can complete its determination regarding the extent to which an Athlete is able to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental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





# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## PROTESTS AND APPEALS

- **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

## PROTESTS AND APPEALS

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 IF; and
- pay the applicable Protest fee.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CHANGES TO CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

Before making any substantive changes to their Classification systems and/or Classification processes, IFs 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
- **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 on Athletes, the proposed timelines for implementation, and (if applicable) any proposed transitional rules; and
  - an opportunity to submit feedback before such changes are adopted.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CHANGES TO CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

If an IF 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 IF 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 IF.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION PANELS

- 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.
- In exceptional circumstances, an IF may authorise a Classification Panel to consist of a sole Classifier and/or Classifiers who are each of the same nationality as the Athlete being assessed, provided that:
  - any Sport Class issued to the Athlete must be accompanied by the Sport Class Status 'Review at the Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO)'; and
  - any sole Classifier must be certified to conduct all of the assessments within the Evaluation Session.
- The IF must ensure that all members of the Classification Panel sign appropriate confidentiality undertakings.

# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR CLASSIFICATION PERSONNEL AND TRAINING

## International Standard addresses:

- Classification personnel
- Classifier competencies
- Recruitment and retention
- Training and development
- Classifier certification
- Identifying and managing conflicts of interest
- Classification personnel code of conduct



# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR CLASSIFICATION PERSONNEL AND TRAINING

- 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, clear communication and identification of who they are by the IF 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.



# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

## International Standard addresses:

- What constitutes Intentional Misrepresentation
- Obligations to report and cooperate
- Investigations
- Proceedings
- Confidentiality
- Sanctions
- Decisions
- Appeals
- Public disclosure





# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR CLASSIFICATION DATA PROTECTION

### International Standard addresses:

- Principles for processing classification data
- Lawful grounds for processing classification data
- Processing for classification research
- Notification to athletes and others
- Classification data security
- Disclosure of classification data
- Retaining of classification data
- Rights relating to classification data



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR CLASSIFICATION DATA PROTECTION

- 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 CODE REVIEW

## CLASSIFICATION RESEARCH - IMPORTANCE

- Classification systems evolved from **medical** and expert based systems, to **functional** sport-specific and nowadays strive towards **evidence-based sport-specific** classification systems.
- Multidisciplinary classification research leads to **valid** and **robust** classification systems where the **evidence** informs how athletes are grouped into **sport classes** to provide **fair** and **meaningful competition**.
- Such systems will ensure **integrity** and **credibility** on Para sport competitions and the Paralympic Movement.
- IFs must have sport-specific Classification systems that reflect **Best Practice Classification**.



# CLASSIFICATION CODE REVIEW

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

## THE CODE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Flowchart
- 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



# IPC Classification Code (2025)

## Impact on the FEI and Para equestrian?

- At this time the current FEI Classification Rule apply
- FEI to conduct, in the near future, an assessment of those areas to be uplifted to comply with the 2025 Code
- There will be change over time to the Classification Rules – stakeholders will be informed of these changes
- A clear four step process for classification – the FEI will need to implement
  - *Underlying Health Condition - UHC assessment*
  - *Assessment of impairment (verification and no inconsistencies)*
  - *Assessment if athlete meets Minimal Impairment Criteria*
  - *Allocation of Grade (sport class) and allocation of sport class status*
- Change in the language used on the FEI Classification Master List
- Adaptive Equipment



# 2025 CODE IMPLEMENTATION, COMPLIANCE AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

# 2025 CLASSIFICATION CODE COMPLIANCE

- **Compliance** means the implementation of rules, regulations, policies, and processes that adhere to the text, spirit, and intent of the Classification Code and International Standards.
- Compliance with the IPC Classification Code (the Code) is crucial in order to achieve the aim of a consistent, structured and effective approach to Classification across Para sport.
- While all IPC Members are bound by the Code, the Code compliance responsibilities will vary between each group.
- The 2025 compliance strategy will look beyond having provisions in the rules but not be too rigid in respect to implementation timeframes.





# 2025 CLASSIFICATION CODE COMPLIANCE MISSION, VISION, PRINCIPLES AND ACTIVITIES

## Compliance Mission

To ensure Code compliant classification rules and processes are being implemented and enforced consistently and effectively across the Movement by all Code Signatories.

## Compliance Vision

To achieve a positive compliance culture underpinned by a shared commitment to the principles of Classification which will support the stated IPC priority to advance Classification across the Movement, thereby promoting greater understanding of Classification as well as giving Athletes and the wider public confidence in the integrity of Para sport.

## Compliance Principles

Collaboration  
Proactivity  
Approachable and contactable  
Open dialogue  
Consistency  
Promoting classification understanding and education  
Clear and fair processes and outcomes  
Transparency

## Compliance Activities

Self-assessment survey  
Compliance calls and visits  
Action plans  
Audits  
Monitoring reports

# 2025 CLASSIFICATION CODE COMPLIANCE

## COMPLIANCE CRITERIA

### Criteria

1. Purpose of Classification
2. Scope of the Code
3. Fundamental Principles
4. Stage 1: Underlying Health Condition Assessment
5. Stage 2: Eligible Impairment Assessment
6. Stage 3: Minimum Impairment Criteria Assessment
7. Stage 4: Sport Class Assessment, Sport Class Status allocation
8. Eligible Impairments definitions
9. Classification Panel provisions
10. Adaptive Equipment
11. Observation Assessment (if applicable)
12. Sport Class Status
13. General Provisions for Evaluation Sessions
14. Designations
15. Suspension or termination of the Evaluation Session
16. Location of the Evaluation Session
17. Notification And Publication - Classification Master List
18. Medical Review
19. Competition Formats
20. Protests
21. Appeals
22. Intentional Misrepresentation
23. Changes to the Classification system
24. Data protection regulations and processes
25. Classification Personnel and Training
26. Education and Awareness
27. Fit for purpose classification system



# CODE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

Classification Fundamentals  
Course

IPC Learn - Learning Management  
System

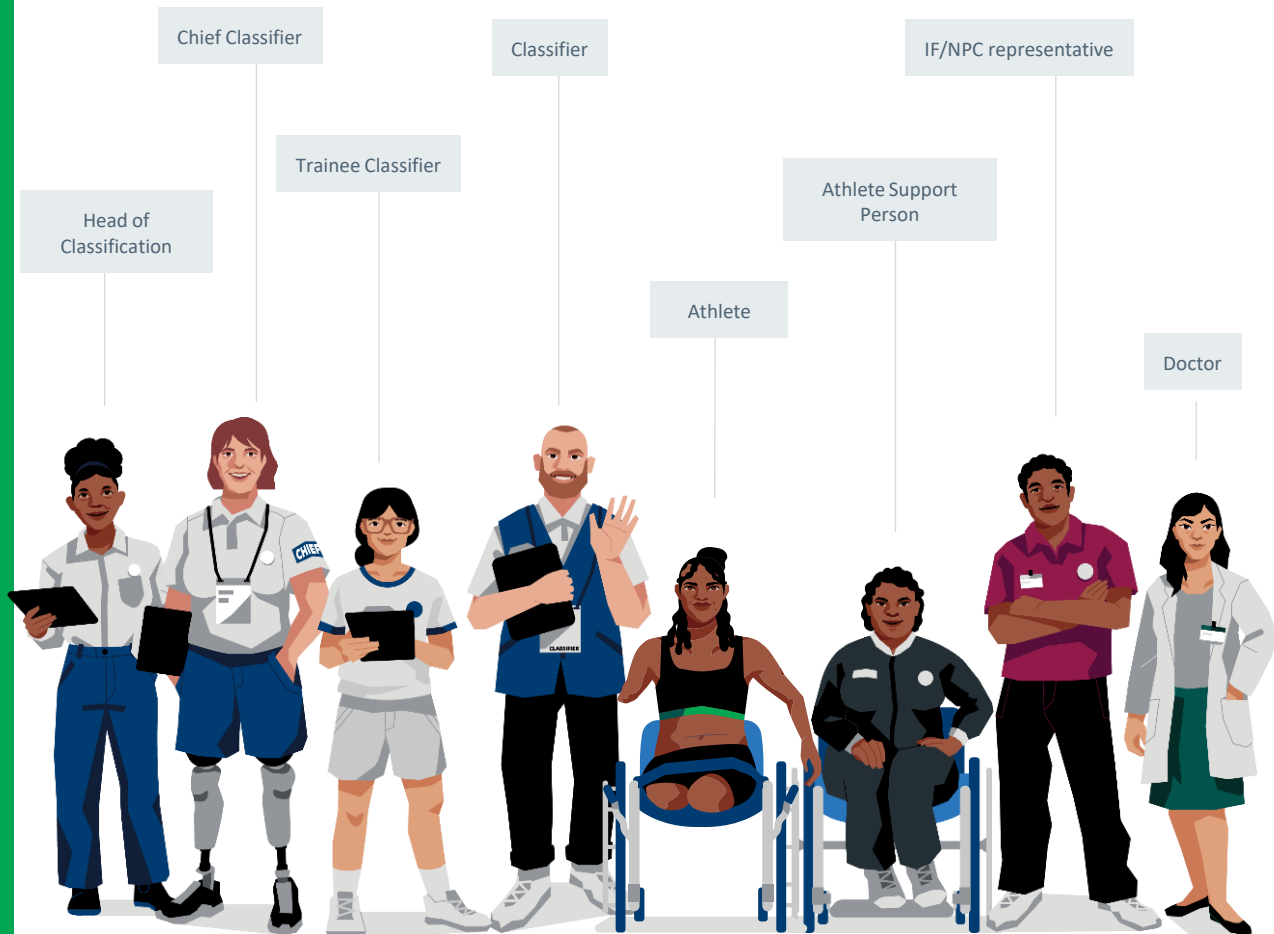
In-person courses and workshops

Classification illustrations

Targeted engagement activities  
(e.g., NPC engagement calls, IF  
Compliance calls)

Dialogue with Members and other  
stakeholders

Advancing Classification systems  
through research



# CLASSIFICATION FUNDAMENTALS ONLINE COURSE

1

## MODULE 1

The Paralympic Movement



- 📖 The Paralympic Movement
- 📖 The International Paralympic Committee

2

## MODULE 2

The Development of Paralympic Classification



- 📖 What is Classification?
- 📖 The three eras of Classification
- 📖 Eligible Impairments

3

## MODULE 3

The IPC Athlete Classification Code and International Standards



- 📖 The 2015 Athlete Classification Code
- 📖 International Standards
- 📖 Classification roles and responsibilities

4

## MODULE 4

Classification and the Athlete journey



- 📖 Athlete Evaluation and the Classification process
- 📖 Minimum Impairment Criteria
- 📖 Sport Class Allocation and Sport Class Status
- 📖 Challenging Classification decisions and Intentional Misrepresentation



Available now



Under revision Q1-Q2 2025

# CLASSIFICATION FUNDAMENTALS

- An introductory course containing four modules and several individual lessons that help to explain Classification.
- Intentionally designed for a broad audience, with later modules suitable for standalone use as targeted resources for Athletes and Trainee Classifiers.
- Released in October 2023 and freely available via the IPC website.
- Under revision to capture provisions from 2025 Code.

Structured lessons

Learning objectives

Knowledge checks and module quizzes

Audio and video content

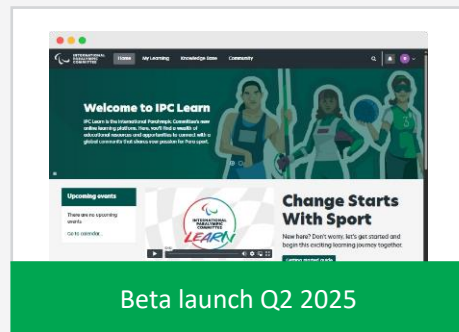
Interactive resources

Microlearning summaries and key points



Under revision Q1-Q2 2025

# IPC LEARN LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



[learn.paralympic.org](https://learn.paralympic.org)





INTERNATIONAL  
PARALYMPIC  
COMMITTEE

1

Home

2

My Learning

3

Knowledge Base

4

Community

1

HOME

A clear and informative landing page, including an onboarding process and support features for new learners.

2

MY LEARNING

A personalised dashboard tracking individual progress and providing a snapshot of the latest learning opportunities available.

3

KNOWLEDGE BASE

A searchable portal of core Classification information, signposting to more detailed and sport-specific resources.

4

COMMUNITY

A space to connect with Classification peers, share ideas, and engage in dialogue related to events hosted by the IPC.



# EQUESTRIAN

## SPORT CLASSES

### Eligible Impairments

- Coordination Impairments
- Short Stature
- Impaired Passive Range of Movement
- Intellectual Impairment
- Impaired Muscle Power
- Vision Impairment
- Limb Deficiency and/ or Limb Length Difference



Grade I



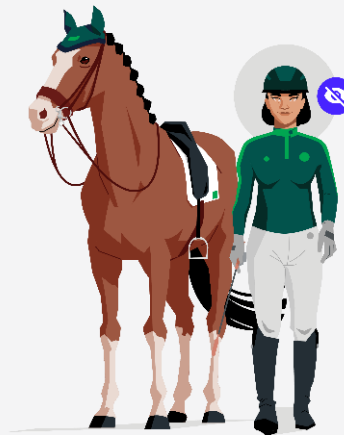
Grade II



Grade III



Grade IV



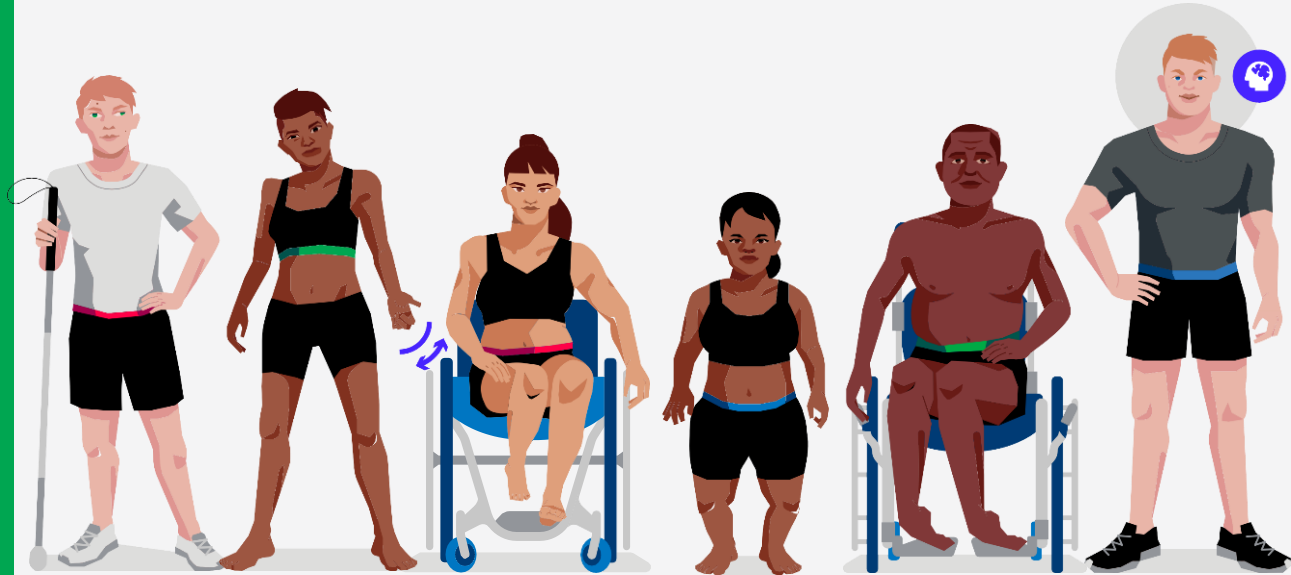
Grade V



# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

## Links:

- [IPC Classification](#)
- [Classification Code review](#)
- [Classification education](#)
- [Classification Code Compliance](#)





## SELECTED TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

ADAM THEW  
IPC SENIOR LEGAL COUNSEL

# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

## International Standard addresses:

- What constitutes Intentional Misrepresentation
- Obligations to report and cooperate
- Investigations
- Proceedings
- Confidentiality
- Sanctions
- Decisions
- Appeals
- Public disclosure



# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

The following constitutes **Intentional Misrepresentation**:

- A Participant, at any time, whether by act or omission, intentionally misleads or attempts to mislead an IF 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 the above behaviour.
  - Also an offence for any Participant to breach a period of ineligibility imposed on them in relation to Intentional Misrepresentation, or to be complicit in another Participant doing so.



# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION

## Examples of Intentional Misrepresentation:

- Submitting forged medical documentation
- Deliberately underperforming during an Evaluation Session
- Deliberately tiring themselves out (Athletes) or deliberately tiring the Athlete out (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 and/or any medical procedure to the Classification Panel
- Not providing accurate identity
- Instructing a Participant to commit IM,
- Covering up or not reporting the information of another Participant committing IM



# INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION PROCESSING, TRACKING, CHARGING AND PREVENTING

## Processing allegations of IM

- **Priorities to consider:**
  - Is the athlete in the correct Sport Class?
  - An IF Protest can often be used to address this and can preempt IM in many cases.
  - If an Athlete is given a Review Status this gives the opportunity of another Evaluation Session.
  - Consider recording and documentation of Evaluation Sessions where concerns of IM have been raised.
  - Suspension of an Evaluation Session and use of CNC designation may be used.
  - System in place for participants to report concerns and for IF to investigate.
  - Collecting evidence which can be used as basis to charge a participant for IM.



# INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION PROCESSING, TRACKING, CHARGING AND PREVENTING

The test under the Code for IM

- IF needs to prove two things:
  - that the athlete misrepresented their skills and/or abilities and/or the degree or nature of their impairment; and
  - that the misrepresentation was intentional.
- Opening an IM case:
  - Consider a structure for IM investigations – what further information does the IF need to collect? How does the IF handle information provided to it from various sources?
  - Legal proceedings should start with a notice of charge.
  - Consider an option for athlete/ASP to accept the charge and the proposed consequences.



# INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION PROCESSING, TRACKING, CHARGING AND PREVENTING

Challenges in bringing successful cases

- **Practical challenges**
  - IM cases will have a burden on time and resources.
  - Legal representation will be needed for the parties.
  - Availability of witnesses.
  - Others?
- **Legal challenges**
  - Explaining how the athlete has represented their abilities in a clear manner.
  - Proving that the behaviour of the athlete was intentional.
  - Consider the forms and reliability of evidence on which the IF's case is based.





# INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION PROCESSING, TRACKING, CHARGING AND PREVENTING

## Longer-term solutions and structural concerns around IM

- Educate athletes and other participants in relation to IM and the relevant rules.
- Equip Classifiers with tools to prevent, detect and report cases of IM and support them in the process of addressing it.
- Maintain a list of IM concerns, allegations received and the status of each case.
- Collaborative approach across the Movement.



# INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION CASES



## BAC sanctions athlete Vinod Kumar for two years for Intentional Misrepresentation

The results obtained by the Indian athlete in Para athletics competition at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games have been disqualified

The Board of Appeal of Classification (BAC) has sanctioned India's Para athletics athlete Vinod Kumar to a period of two years' ineligibility for the disciplinary offence of Intentional Misrepresentation.

World Para Athletics commenced disciplinary proceedings with the BAC after Kumar intentionally misrepresented his abilities when he presented for classification at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. The athlete was observed performing several movements and functions in competition which were not consistent with his performance during the physical and technical aspects of classification.

Under the World Para Athletics Classification Rules and Regulations, it is a disciplinary offence for an athlete to intentionally misrepresent their skills or abilities and/or the degree or nature of their impairment. It is also a disciplinary offence for any athlete support person to assist, conceal or be complicit in any intentional Misrepresentation by an athlete.

As a result of the disciplinary offence, the athlete will be ineligible to compete in Para athletics competition until August 2023. The results which the athlete obtained in competition at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games have been disqualified.

Christian Holtz, Managing Director of World Para Sports, said: "Intentional Misrepresentation is a very serious offence and athletes are required to give their best effort when presenting to a classification panel. The classification system is crucial to ensure fair competition and this case shows how committed World Para Athletics is to protect the integrity of the sport."

Each athlete is responsible for being knowledgeable of and complying with all the terms of the World Para Athletics Classification Rules and Regulations and for participating in athlete evaluation in good faith.

The BAC is an independent body that considers, and when appropriate, conducts hearings regarding classification appeals in Para athletics, among other sports. It also has jurisdiction over the resolution of disputes that involve allegations of intentional Misrepresentation in some sports, including Para athletics.

## [BAC sanctions athlete Vinod Kumar for two years for Intentional Misrepresentation](#)



## Classification Intentional Misrepresentation Case – December 1, 2020

The independent World ParaVolley Judicial Commission has suspended a Sitting Volleyball Athlete (the Player) for one year after determining that the Player had committed Intentional Misrepresentation during Classification. The Player is now classified as Sport Class Not Eligible and will be eligible for re-classification in October 2021.

After considering evidence provided by World ParaVolley, including video evidence illustrating the Player's performances in competition and during classification, and testimony provided by the Player and the Player's delegation, the hearing panel concluded that the Player had misrepresented the extent to which the Player's impairment affected the Player's ability to play Sitting Volleyball. The one-year suspension was awarded in accordance with the World ParaVolley Classification Rules and consistent with the IPC Classification Code.

"It is important to see that athletes have an opportunity to be heard in a disciplinary process and that an Athlete was part of the Hearing Panel" said Jose Rebelo, Chair of the World ParaVolley Athlete's Commission. "Athletes want to feel that everyone performs by the same rules. This decision shows that World ParaVolley works in giving all athletes a fair and respectful environment to compete."

World ParaVolley takes allegations of Intentional Misrepresentation very seriously and will take the necessary steps to investigate potential cases. World ParaVolley President Barry Couzner said "The integrity of the World ParaVolley classification process is all-important, and is fundamental to the fairness of our sport." Couzner highlighted that "our disciplinary frameworks are designed to provide justice to all members of the ParaVolley community – I am completely satisfied that due process was provided in this case by the independent Judicial Commission and I thank them for their time and efforts."

Note: Athletes are bound by the Code to give their best effort during classification evaluation. Intentional misrepresentation occurs when an athlete deliberately conceals or misrepresents their skills and abilities or degree of their impairment to classification personnel either during or after classification.

## [Classification IM Case - December 1, 2020 < World ParaVolley](#)

## Irish wheelchair rugby player star handed two-year ban for intentional misrepresentation

By Nick Butler @Tussock\_10 July 2018



Ireland's Alan Lynch has been handed a two-year suspension by the international Wheelchair Rugby Federation (IWRF) for violating classification rules.

Lynch, the Irish team captain since 2007, has been accused of "intentional misrepresentation", which occurs when an athlete "deliberately conceals" or "misrepresents their skills and abilities or the nature or degree of their impairment" in an effort to deceive classification personnel during or after classification.

An IWRF investigation ruled that Lynch had "deliberately concealed his functional abilities from IWRF classifiers during the classification evaluation process".

A release revealed that he had waived his right to a hearing and accepted the imposed sanction.

"An athlete who conceals their physical function from classification personnel, in order to be assigned to a lower sport class, is committing a serious violation," IWRF chief executive Eron Main said.

"IWRF takes this very seriously, and we are taking ongoing steps to investigate potential cases of intentional misrepresentation.

"This is absolutely necessary to ensure a fair and level playing field for all wheelchair rugby athletes."



## Classification Sanctions

IFCPF's Classification Committee takes decisions based on the specific circumstances of each case. Some decisions may be subject to appeal.

This information is provided as information for the general public. Only the decision as communicated to the concerned parties shall be deemed an official decision.

Please be aware that sanctions for [Discipline](#) and [Clean Sports](#) are recorded on separate pages.

### Intentional Misrepresentation (IM)

The intentional Misrepresentation It is a disciplinary offence for an Athlete to intentionally misrepresent (either by act or omission) his or her skills and/or abilities and/or the degree or nature of Eligible Impairment during Athlete Evaluation and/or at any other point after the allocation of a Sport Class. This disciplinary offence has consequences such as disqualification, and sanctions for a period of time.

The following athletes or athlete support personnel have been sanctioned by the CC to a period of ineligibility for the disciplinary offence of Intentional Misrepresentation under the CP Football Classification Rules and Regulations:

NAME (FAMILY NAME, GIVEN NAME)	NATIONALITY	SANCTION PERIOD - FROM	UNTIL
Ezzatdoust Sehsani, Amirreza	Islamic Republic of Iran	January 1, 2018	December 31, 2018
Faraji, Saeid	Islamic Republic of Iran	January 1, 2023	December 31, 2025
Valencia Esguerra, Jhonier Andres	Colombia	November 30, 2022	November 30, 2023
Duran, Hans (coach)	Colombia	September 17, 2023	September 17, 2024
Bedenok, Serhi	Ukraine	June 14, 2023	June 14, 2025

## [Classification Sanctions - CP Football](#)



## DISCUSSION TIME AND QUESTIONS

# THANK YOU

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# Classification Research

*“research is a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue”. It consists of three steps: pose a question, collect data to answer the question, and present an answer to the question”*

John W. Creswell 2008



# Classification Research

- During 2017 the FEI made a significant commitment to a research strategy with the aim of developing an evidence-based classification system
- Embarked on the process of identifying a suitable research organisation to carry out the project
- A collaboration between University of Central Lancashire and Hartpury University and Prof Hilary Clayton (Sport Horse Science) was awarded the funding for the project based on their research proposal

<https://inside.fei.org/fei/disc/para-dressage/classification/research>

# Classification Research

## Question

What is the impact of impairment on performance in Para dressage athletes?

Acknowledgment - Sarah Jane Hobbs, Jill Alexander, Celeste Wilkins, Lindsay St. George, Kathryn Nankervis, Jonathan Sinclair, Gemma Penhorwood, Jane Williams and Hilary Clayton

## Data collection

- Literature Review - key determinants of dressage performance,
- Study of stakeholder perceptions regarding the key determinants of, and impact of impairment on, Para dressage performance,
- Review of existing clinical impairment assessment tools and suitability for classification.
- Evaluation of the effects of impairment on objective performance measures in Para athletes -21 elite Para dressage athletes (grades I to V) and 11 non-disabled dressage athletes (competing at Prix St. Georges or Grand Prix) participated

# Classification Research

## Outcome/answer

- Three assessment tools identified for possible use in the classification process
- 4 performance measures identified
  - **Harmonics** - the coordination between horse and athlete, the influence of the athlete on the gait quality of the horse
  - **Head stability** - Better control of athlete head movements, is an advantage for performing gaits and movements precisely within the confines of a dressage arena
  - **Within-athlete coordination variability** – coordinated movement of the trunk and pelvis
  - **Dynamic pelvic symmetry** – can have an impact on the gait of the horse
- A limitation of this research, was the small number of athletes tested and limited impairment types.
- The outcomes achieved above will be considered in progressing the review of the classification system for para dressage.



# Research – Next steps

- The investment on Classification research made by the FEI since 2017 is not lost, as collecting the scientific evidence to improve any classification system is a long-term commitment.
- In the meantime, there are important changes in current classification practice that, if addressed systematically, will lead to vastly improved and more defensible classification systems that can be implemented in a reasonable timeframe.
- A new project titled has commenced - *Achieving Best Practice Classification and Code Compliance for Para Equestrian* (Professor Sean Tweedy, university of Queensland) More detail will be presented on Day 2 of this Forum
- In its pursuit of Best Practice Classification, FEI will have the advantage of being able to draw on the results of the research conducted since 2017.