

2009 ICF PADDLEABILITY CLASSIFICATION GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

The ICF's objective for PaddleAbility is inclusion: to provide the opportunity for paddlers with a disability to compete at World Canoe Sprint Championships and international Regattas. ICF is responsible for the classification of PaddleAbility Athletes who wish to compete at an international level and has established classification criteria which define the minimum disability of a paddler permitted to compete in each of the designated event classes. Before a paddler can compete in a World Canoe Sprint Championship or an international regatta, Sport Class and Sport status of the paddler must be approved by ICF.

Classification places paddlers in groupings with other paddlers of similar levels of functional ability to provide competition which is as fair as possible. The ICF recognizes and accepts the respective classifications encompass a range of disabilities and there will be paddlers with disabilities which may be greater than the minimum and who may therefore be at a disadvantage competing in their adaptive boat class.

These guidelines will continue to be revised as the ICF works to improve its classification procedures as well as working to harmonize its classification procedures with the International Standards set out in the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Classification Code.

The ICF acknowledges and is working with the International Va'a Federation (IVF) classification system which ICF recognizes as in the interest of all PaddleAbility athletes worldwide.

ICF PADDLEABILITY CLASSIFIERS

An ICF classifier is one who has been approved as such by ICF. There are two types of ICF Classifiers:

- (1) ICF Medical Classifier: a medical doctor, doctor of osteopathic medicine, or physiotherapist
- (2) ICF Technical Classifier: a person with extensive practical knowledge of paddling, such as a paddling coach, sport scientist, former paddler, physical educator or similarly qualified person.

Organization of Classifiers

The Head of Classification shall be appointed by the ICF Canoeing for ALL Committee from amongst the ICF International Classifiers, with responsibility for the overall direction, administration, coordination, and implementation of Classification matters for ICF.

The Canoeing for ALL Committee, in consultation with the Head of Classification, shall appoint an ICF International Classifier as Chief Classifier for each ICF event where PaddleAbility events are held. The Chief Classifier shall be responsible for the direction, administration, coordination, and implementation of Classification matters at the event for which they are appointed.

An ICF Classification Panel shall be appointed for the purpose of classification of paddlers, and shall comprise two (2) ICF Classifiers, one Medical Classifier, and one

Technical Classifier. For international classification, this panel shall be appointed by the ICF Canoeing for ALL Commission and be comprised of international classifiers

Levels of Classifiers

An **ICF International Classifier** is a person who has participated in a ICF International Classification Workshop, has classified paddlers on their own and shown competence in performing all of the classification tasks and has met the requirements of the ICF Canoeing for ALL Committee to be appointed as an ICF International Classifier. An ICF International Classifier may be appointed to serve on an ICF Classification Panel and a Classification Protest Panel, and is qualified to determine the sport class and sport class status of a paddler wishing to compete at an ICF.

A **National Classifier** is a person who has participated in a National Classification Workshop and has achieved a basic understanding of the classification process and has been appointed as a National Classifier. Subject to the rules of the national federation concerned, a National Classifier may serve on a National Classification Panel within their own federation, and determine the sport class and sport class status of a paddler wishing to compete in a national event.

A **Trainee Classifier** is a person who has attended a National Classification Workshop, but who needs supervision to classify paddlers correctly and has not yet been appointed as a National Classifier. A Trainee Classifier may serve on a National Classification Panel with supervision of a National or International Classifier and determine the sport class and sport class status of a paddler wishing to compete in a national event.

The Canoeing for ALL Committee shall organize Classification Workshops and establish qualification criteria for the training and appointment of ICF International Classifiers. The Committee shall consult the Head of Classification and the Canoeing for ALL Committee in making regulations regarding the qualification process and the appointment of Classifiers.

SPORT CLASS STATUS:

New (N) Status

A sport class status of "N" shall be allocated to a paddler who has not been classified by an ICF International Classification Panel but who has been classified by two National Classifiers (one Medical and one Technical) within their own federation or region. A paddler with a sport class status of "N" may not compete at an ICF event.

Confirmed (C) Status

A sport class status of "C" may only be allocated by an ICF International Classification Panel. A paddler with "C" status is confirmed for international competition and may compete in all ICF events permitted by their classification.

Review (R) Status

A sport class status of "R" shall be allocated by an ICF International Classification Panel to a paddler where the Panel considers the paddler's sport class status might change (due to a change in disability or orthotic / prosthetic use), or for reasons determined by ICF (for example a change in the classification process). Paddlers with an "R" status may be required to undergo a further classification evaluation once a year prior to competing at a ICF event, The time frame for review may vary.

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR PADDLERS SEEKING ICF INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Before the classification process can commence, all applicants shall submit complete, sign, and submit to the ICF:

- *Consent for ICF PaddleAbility Classification Form*
- *Declaration of Medical Conditions that may require Emergency Measures Form*
- *ICF PaddleAbility Classification Application Form*
- *ICF PaddleAbility Athlete Certificate of Diagnosis* completed by a medical doctor, written clearly in English.

PROCESS FOR CLASSIFICATION OF PADDLEABILITY ATHLETES

A Classification Panel will assess paddlers with a physical disability according to the process described in the *ICF PaddleAbility Classification Instruction Manual*.

The process involves three parts:

- (1) Medical Examination Benchmark Test – directed by the Medical Classifier with the Technical Classifier in attendance.
- (2) On Water Observation- directed by both the Medical Classifier and the Technical Classifier during training and/or competition.
- (3) Ergometer Test (if necessary)- directed by the Technical Classifier with the Medical Classifier in attendance.

If a paddler in any class with an amputation is classified with a prosthesis or orthosis on, that paddler must compete with the same prosthesis or orthosis, or be re-classified.

ELIGIBILITY

An athlete must be determined as eligible to compete in PaddleAbility events by meeting the minimum requirement for disability which includes:

- Physical disabilities which lead to sufficient loss determined during the functional classification test

Changing Sport Classifications

Sport Classifications can only change due to changes in medical conditions or the change in the use of a prostheses/orthotic. Improvements in stroke technique will not result in the changing of a classification

Paddling Outside of Assigned Sport Class:

Paddlers may compete in a more functional sport class than their assigned sport class, but not a less functional sport class. For example, a paddler classified as TA may compete in LTA events, but may not compete in A events.

SPORT CLASSIFICATIONS

ICF recognizes three (3) sport classes for PaddleAbility: LTA, TA, A. The International Va'a Federation (IVF) recognizes six (6) sport classes. The following classifications blend the two classification systems.

LTA (IVF 5 & 6 Point Paddler)

The LTA class is for paddlers with a disability who have functional use of their legs, trunk and arms for paddling, and who can apply force to the foot board or the seat to propel the boat.

Eligible LTA paddlers may typically have a minimum disability equivalent to one of the following:

- Amputee
- Neurological Impairment equivalent to incomplete lesion at S1
- Cerebral Palsy Class 8 (CPISRA)

LTA paddlers must meet minimum disability requirements:

LTA - The minimum physical disability is a full loss of three fingers on one hand, or at least a tarsal metatarsal amputation of the foot, or the loss of ten points on one limb or fifteen points across two limbs when assessed using the Functional Classification Test as set out in the *Classification Application Form for Physical Disabilities and the ICF Classifiers Instructors Manual*.

TA (IVF 4 Point Paddler)

The TA class is for paddlers who have functional use of the trunk and arms. They are unable to apply continuous and controlled force to the footboard or seat to propel the boat due to significantly weakened function of the lower limbs.

Eligible TA paddlers may typically have a minimum disability equivalent to at least one of the following:

- Bilateral around knee amputation, or significantly impaired quadriceps, or
- Neurological impairment equivalent to a complete lesion at L3 level, or an incomplete lesion at L1, or
- Combination of the above such as one leg with around knee amputation and one leg with significant quadriceps impairment; or
- Classification by the international sports federation for paddlers with cerebral palsy (CPISRA) as eligible to be in CP Class 5.

A (IVF 1 – 3 Point Paddler)

The A class is for paddlers who have no trunk function (i.e. shoulder function only). An A class paddler is able to apply force predominantly using the arms and/or shoulders. These athletes will likely also have poor sitting balance.

Eligible paddlers may typically have a minimum disability equivalent to at least one of the following:

- Cerebral Palsy Class 4 (CP-ISRA); or
- Neurological Impairment with a complete lesion at T12 level, or an incomplete lesion at T10.