



INTERNATIONAL RAFTING FEDERATION
PARA RAFTING COMPETITOR
CLASSIFICATION CODE

Rules, Policies and Procedures for Competitor Classification

From March 2021

1. Scope and Application

The IRF is the global governing body of Para Rafting.

The IRF Competitor Classification Code applies to all members of the IRF and to all Competitors competing in IRF Para Rafting Competitions under the jurisdiction of the IRF.

In the early stages of the Para Rafting Policy, proposed changes and evolution is encouraged and sent through to the IRF Para Rafting Committee. Classification Code changes are at the discretion of the IRF.

2. Definition and Purpose of Classification

Competitor Classification in the IRF (referred to in the IRF Classification Code as "Classification") is a defining feature of Para Rafting. It is defined as allocating points and stability status according to how Competitor's functional abilities affect fundamental activities in rafting.

3. Classification Personnel

Classification Personnel have a key role in the organisation, implementation and administration of Classification for the IRF.

1. Types of Classification Personnel

a. Classifiers

- i. A Classifier is a person authorised and certified as an official by the IRF to evaluate Competitors as a member of a Classification Panel.
- ii. Classifiers may be former Competitors or coaches, sports scientists, physical educators and medical professionals, all of whom have the competencies and qualifications relevant to conduct all, or specific parts, of Competitor Evaluation, according to the IRF Classification Code.

b. Classification Panel

- i. A Classification Panel is a group of Classifiers appointed by the IRF to determine Competitors points and stability Status.

c. Chief Classifier

- i. The Chief Classifier is a Classifier appointed by the IRF to direct, administer, co-ordinate and implement Classification matters for a specific Competition according to the IRF Classification Code.
- ii. The Chief Classifier may delegate specific responsibilities and/or transfer specific tasks to other Classifiers, or other IRF officials or representatives, and/or appointed persons in the local organising committee of a Competition.

d. Trainee Classifiers

- i. A Trainee Classifier is a person who is in the process of formal training to become a Classifier for the IRF.
- ii. The IRF may appoint Trainee Classifiers to participate in some or all components of Competitor Evaluation under the supervision of a Classification Panel to develop the necessary Classifier Competencies in order to achieve certification.

2. Classifier Training

- a. Classifier Certification is the process through which an individual achieves the Classifier Competencies in Para Rafting.
- b. The IRF will provide training and education to ensure Classifiers obtain and/or maintain Classifier Competencies.
- c. Classifier Competencies - a Classifier must have:
 - i. a thorough understanding of the relevant IRF Classification Code and all its related rules, policies and procedures
 - ii. an understanding of Para Rafting race rules
 - iii. professional qualifications, level of experience and any other skills or competencies the IRF Para Rafting Committee determines the Classifier must possess to conduct Competitor Evaluation

3. Classifier Code of Conduct

- a. The integrity of Classification in Para sport depends on the professional conduct of Classification Personnel. The IRF's Classifier Code of Conduct forms part of the Classification Rules and is a clear set of behavioural and ethical standards that all Classification Personnel must comply with when acting as a Classifier or Trainee Classifier. These standards are referred to as a 'Classifier Code of Conduct'.
- b. The IRF's Classifier Code of Conduct provides that Classifiers:
 - i. comply with the IRF Code of Ethics
 - ii. act as neutral evaluators in determining points and stability Status for all Competitors using the systems and documentation set down by the IRF
 - iii. perform their duties courteously, respectfully, competently, consistently and objectively for all Competitors
 - iv. comply with the IRF Conflict of Interests Policy in declaring any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interests
 - v. must not assume any other role and responsibility that conflicts with their duties as Classification Personnel at a Competition

Note 1: 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 sport official, when acting as a Classifier in that same Competition.

Note 2: Similarly, Classifiers must declare any pre-existing personal or professional relationship(s) that may give rise to the perception or possibility of that relationship affecting their ability to make an objective decision or assessment when acting as a Classifier.

- c. The IRF, in its sole discretion, will determine whether or not a Classifier has an actual, perceived and/or potential conflict of interest.

4. Classifier non-compliance

Procedures for reporting and investigating complaints of non-compliance with the Classifier Code of Conduct are as follows:

- a. Complainant must send a written complaint to the Para Rafting Committee Chair
- b. Chair informs committee and the complaint is assessed and processed
- c. If deemed necessary, disciplinary measures against Classifiers found to be in violation of the Classifier Code of Conduct will be taken

- d. Complainant is informed of the outcome

4. Competitor Evaluation and point allocation

1. General Provisions

- e. Competitor Evaluation is the process by which a competitor is assessed in accordance with the IRF Classification Code in order that a competitor may be allocated a point and stability Status.
- f. Competitor Evaluation encompasses the allocation of a “point” and stability status depending on the extent to which the Competitor is able to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to rafting.
- g. The assessment as to what point and stability status a competitor is to receive is undertaken by an IRF Classification Panel.
- h. IRF Para Rafting classification concentrates on the Competitor’s functional abilities, not to be confused with physical strength or athletic ability.
- i. The classification is with Competitor’s adaptations and/or prosthetics that are used on race events.
- j. If a Competitor’s impairment affects performance to a preferred side then the classification must be done on strongest side (left or right position of paddler in raft) and in an R2 configuration so all Competitors are classified under the same environment consistency to the highest degree.

2. Classification Panel Procedures

- a. Competitor Evaluation is to be undertaken by an IRF Classification Panel.
- b. A Classification Panel may at any stage seek medical, technical or scientific opinion, with the agreement of the Chief Classifier. This expertise may only be sought if the Classification Panel feels that such expertise is necessary in order to allocate a point.
- c. A competitor must disclose the use of any medication and/or medical device/implant to the Classification Panel.
- d. A competitor must comply with all reasonable instructions given by a Classification Panel.
- e. Competitor Evaluation must take place in a manner that is consistent with the IRF Classification Code provisions for Data Protection and Personnel and Training.

3. Assessment of Competitor

- a. Competitors will be classified as per the IRF Para Rafting Classification Code by a qualified Para Rafting Classifier
- b. Competitors documents and information will be registered by the Classifier
- c. The classification generally remains with that Competitor forever, unless the Competitor’s impairment is not stable i.e. newly injured or degenerative.
- d. A stability status of a Competitor’s impairment will be assessed by medical practitioner diagnosis certificates (submitted before the classification)
- e. A competitor who has an unstable impairment must have a regular classification update. Within every two years.
- f. If a new Competitor hasn't been classified prior to the event and unable to be classified or a competitor is performing outside the norm, then using a combination of diagnosis certificates

(submitted before the competition) and sample assessments of selected Competitors (at the competition) to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the appropriate points have been awarded to each Competitor.

- g. Prior to any competition, teams will be required to obtain unclassified Competitors medical diagnosis certificates from a qualified medical practitioner for each of their unclassified para Competitors, unless the Competitor already has been allocated a point and stability status. These certificates must:
 - i. be completed in English
 - ii. use the format provided in the IRF Para Rafting Competitors Physical Diagnosis Form
 - iii. be returned to the IRF Classification Panel by the date stated
- h. The IRF Classification Panel will then perform a classification process if possible. Alternatively if classification is not possible, allocate a provisional point for the Competitor.
- i. Using the new and the already allocated points the relevant race officials will calculate overall team points to ensure that the team entry will conform to the scoring system used for the races entered.
- j. At the competition, if a race official witnesses' behaviour or physical activity that is not consistent with the submitted diagnosis certificate, that Competitor may be required to undergo an ad hoc assessment and their point may be adjusted. If this assessment can only be done after a race, then the results of that race may also need to be adjusted if the Competitor's revised point results in the maximum points 'cap' for his or her team being breached.

4. Point Status

- a. When a Classification Panel allocates a point to a competitor, it must also designate a stability Status. Stability Status indicates whether or not a competitor will be required to undertake Competitor Evaluation in the future.
- b. The stability status designated to a competitor by a Classification Panel will be one of the following:
 - i. Confirmed (C)
 - ii. Review (R)
- c. A competitor will be designated with a Point Status Confirmed (C) if the Classification Panel is satisfied that the Competitor's Impairment is and will remain stable. A competitor with a Point Status Confirmed (C) is not required to undergo any further Competitor Evaluation. A competitor will be designated a Point Status Review (R) if the Classification Panel believes that further Competitor Evaluation will be required. This may be for a number of reasons, including but not limited to situations where the Competitor:
 - i. has only recently entered Competition in para sports;
 - ii. has a fluctuating and/or progressive Impairment/Impairments that is/are permanent but not stable; and/or
 - iii. has not reached full (muscular skeletal) or sports maturity.
- d. A competitor with a Point Status Review (R) must complete Competitor Evaluation prior to competing at any Competition unless the IRF specifies otherwise.
- e. If the IRF changes the criteria or methodology used to allocate points, it may re-designate Competitors with Point Status Confirmed (C).

5. Classification Points

- a. Competitor points range from 6 to 0. The higher the point the more function of the

Competitor.

- b. 5 Point Competitor is the highest Point for a competitor with an impairment.
- c. In R6 raft total points not to exceed 20 points at A and B level and Paralympic level.
- d. In R6 raft total points not to exceed 22 points in all other events where 6 point paddlers are allowed.
- e. 6 Point Paddler - (able body male 20 to 39) not to be in front or to guide raft.
- f. Subtract Points - Female Paddler 0.5 point / 40+ Masters Paddler 0.5 point / U19 Paddler 0.5 point.
- g. It is mandatory to have minimum of:
 - i. Two female Competitors in all teams
 - ii. Four impaired Competitors in Stream 1 Events
- h. A competitor with severe hearing impairment (deaf) subtracts 0.5 point.
- i. Classification Procedure is defined in the IRF Para Rafting Classification Procedure

6. Base of Classification Points

- a. The following procedures are assessed in these three environments - two controlled environments of dry land and flat water, one dynamic environment that is river based. Competitor's functional ability to:
 - i. use extremities and body; can exert full motion of body to paddle
 - ii. place both feet under foot-cups/thwart
 - iii. sit unassisted and has full trunk & arm motion
 - iv. bring body out of raft via leg power
 - v. rotate body from hips to reach out with paddle in forward & side motion
 - vi. lean fully forward & back to pontoons with both feet under foot-cups/thwart
 - vii. perform overs, weight shift in raft
 - viii. hold paddle with both hands, providing full power
 - ix. dunk head underwater with both feet under foot-cups/thwart
 - x. read water, see gates, hazards
 - xi. communicate with crew
 - xii. throw and recoil throw-bag
 - xiii. perform self-rescue
 - xiv. re-right flipped raft
 - xv. perform team rescue
 - xvi. perform whitewater float position
 - xvii. uses adaptations and/or prosthetic

7. Classification Overview

- a. Competitors are classified under strict direction of Classifiers. Classifiers follow the IRF Para Rafting Classification Procedure and use the direction of the IRF Para Rafting Classification Form and Points Allocation.
- b. On all three classifications, the Competitor will be assessed on their functional abilities to perform the tasks providing different levels of difficulty in relation to the environment.
 - i. Controlled environment
 - 1. Dry land - Competitor's functional abilities without paddle
 - 2. Flat water - Competitor functional abilities in conjunction with paddle
 - ii. Dynamic environment
 - 1. River Class III - Competitor functional ability with movement and hazards

- c. How functional the Competitor is in relation to the activity, the below, depending on the difficulty of the task, will be given as an ability to do the action (This is due to competitor's functional abilities not to be confused with fitness and/or skill):
 - i. Able - can perform task without delay.
 - ii. Affects - can perform task, not to optimal performance.
 - iii. Restricts - can perform task, restrictions apply.
 - iv. Inhibits - can perform task, with minimum affect and/or with assistance.
 - v. Unable - cannot perform task.
- d. The Competitors functional abilities will determine what performance they can contribute to the control, speed of the raft. These points are deemed interchangeable within the paddler's contributions to the team.
- e. Depending on the environment and difficulty of the task a point will be given to each action, stated on the IRF Para Rafting Classification Form and Points Allocation. The average of all of these points minus the points given through age, gender and/or hearing and vision impairment will be the final Point of the Competitor.
- f. If the Competitor's impairment is stable then the Point confirmed by the Classification authority will be the Competitors registered Point until otherwise reviewed at coming of age or from discrepancy. If the Competitor's impairment is changeable as stated in diagnosis form, the Point will be confirmed by the Classification authority until the Competitor's next review date. Details in the IRF Para Rafting Classification Procedure.
- g. The IRF Para Rafting Classification Procedure will also assess Competitor's Rescue Priority. See Para Rafting Safety Guidelines.
- h. The Para Rafting Classification Form provides a comprehensive breakdown of every move and what level the paddler may achieve. Points are awarded to the paddler to ascertain their contribution. As every ability is different it's broken into a very simple classification process. The points range from 0 (tetraplegic female or master division) to 6 (fully able-bodied male).
- i. Points increase every 0.5 for progression of functional ability.

8. Classification Cards

- a. Once Classification has been fully completed a "Classification Card" with Competitor's information will state Competitor's:
 - i. Point
 - ii. Stability
 - iii. Equipment Registered – including photos
 - iv. Rescue Priority – see Para Rafting Safety Guidelines

5. Point Protests

1. Scope of a Protest

- a. A Protest may only be made in respect of a competitor's Point. A Protest may not be made in respect of a competitor's Point Status.

2. Submit a Protest

- a. To submit a protest, the protesting body must show that the Protest is bona fide with supporting evidence and complete a IRF Para Rafting Protest Form which includes the following:

- i. the name of the Protested Competitor
 - ii. the details of the Protested Decision and/or a copy of the Protested Decision
 - iii. an explanation as to why the Protest has been made and the basis on which they believe that the Protested Decision is flawed
 - iv. the Protest Fee
- b. The Protest Documents must be submitted to the Classification Panel or, if at an event, to the Chief Classifier of the relevant Competition within the timeframes specified by the IRF. Upon receipt of the Protest Documents the Classification Panel / Chief Classifier must conduct a review of the Protest, of which there are two possible outcomes:
 - i. the Chief Classifier may dismiss the Protest if, in the discretion of the Chief Classifier, the Protest does not comply with the Protest requirements; or
 - ii. the Chief Classifier may accept the Protest if, in the discretion of the Chief Classifier, the Protest complies with the Protest requirements.
- c. **If the Protest is dismissed**
 - i. The Chief Classifier must notify all relevant parties
 - ii. The Protest Fee will be forfeited
- d. **If the Protest is accepted:**
 - i. The Protested Competitor's Point must remain unchanged pending the outcome of the Protest but the Protested Competitor's Point Status must be changed to Point Status Review effective immediately, unless it is already Review
 - ii. The Chief Classifier must notify the Classification Panel so that the review can be made

3. Intentional Misrepresentation

- a. Any Competitor or Competitor Support Personnel, who knowingly assists, covers up or disrupts the evaluation process with the intention of deceiving or misleading the Classification Panel, or is in any other way involved in any other type of complicity involving Intentional Misrepresentation is guilty of Intentional Misrepresentation and will face disciplinary action by the IRF.
- b. Any consequences to be applied to teams, which include a Competitor or Competitor Support Personnel who is found to have been guilty of Intentional Misrepresentation and/or complicity involving Intentional Misrepresentation, will be at the discretion of the IRF.

6. Data storage, data protection and classification intelligence

1. General Provision

The IRF Classification Panel will comply with the IRF Data Protection Policy and the International Standard for Classification Data Protection regardless of their applicable National Laws.

[Note: Each International Sport Federation must have policies and procedures in place to ensure that Classification Intelligence captured or received is handled securely and confidentially, taking into account the nature of the source and the circumstances in which the intelligence has been received, and that the sources of intelligence are protected.]

2. Classification Data that can be Processed

- a. The IRF Classification Panel will only Process Classification Data if such Classification Data is considered necessary to conduct Classification.

- b. All Classification Data Processed must be accurate, complete and kept up-to-date.

3. **Consent and Processing**

- a. Only Classification Data which has the consent of the Competitor to whom that Classification Data relates will be processed.
- b. If a competitor cannot provide consent (for example because the Competitor is underage) the legal representative, guardian or other competent representative of that Competitor must give consent on their behalf.
- c. Classification Data will only be processed without consent of the relevant Competitor if permitted to do so in accordance with the National Laws of the relevant Classification Organisation.

4. **Notification to Competitors**

- a. The Classification Panel must notify a competitor who provides Classification Data as to:
 - i. the identity of the Classification Panel collecting the Classification Data; and
 - ii. the purpose for the collection of the Classification Data; and
 - iii. the duration that the Classification Data will be retained.

5. **Classification Data Security**

- a. The Classification Panel must:
 - i. protect Classification Data by applying appropriate security safeguards, including physical, organisational, technical and other measures to prevent the loss, theft or unauthorised access, destruction, use, modification or disclosure of Classification Data; and
 - ii. take reasonable steps to ensure that any other party provided with Classification Data uses that Classification Data in a manner consistent with this International Standard.

b. **Disclosures of Classification Data**

- i. The Classification Panel must not disclose Classification Data to other Classification Organisations except where such disclosure is related to Classification conducted by another Classification Organisation and the disclosure is consistent with all applicable National Laws.
- ii. The Classification Panel may disclose Classification Data to other parties only if such disclosure is in accordance with the International Standard for Classification Data Protection and permitted by National Laws.

c. **Retaining Classification Data**

- i. The Classification Panel must ensure that Classification Data is only retained for as long as it is needed for the purpose it was collected.
- ii. If Classification Data is no longer necessary for Classification purposes, it must be deleted, destroyed or permanently anonymised.

d. **Access Rights to Classification Data**

- i. Competitors may request from the Classification Panel:
 - 1. confirmation of whether or not that Classification Panel Processes Classification Data relating to them personally and a description of the Classification Data that is held
 - 2. a copy of the Classification Data held by the Classification Organisation
 - 3. correction or deletion of the Classification Data held by the Classification Panel

4. A request made to access classification data may be made by a competitor or a National Body or National Paralympic Committee on a competitor's behalf and must be complied with within a reasonable period of time

7. Interpretation of the IRF Classification Code

The official text of the IRF Classification Code will be maintained by the IRF and is to be interpreted as an independent and autonomous text.

The Introduction, Glossary and Appendices as well as relating documents included in the Code are an integral part of the IRF Classification Code.

APPENDIX: GLOSSARY

Adaptive Equipment: implements and apparatus adapted to the special needs of Competitors and used by Competitors during Competition to facilitate participation and/or to achieve results.

Competitor: For purposes of Classification, any person who participates in sport at the international level (as defined by each International Sport Federation) or national level (as defined by each National Federation) and any additional person who participates in sport at a lower level if designated by the person's National Federation.

Competitor Evaluation: The process by which a competitor is assessed in accordance with the Classification Rules of an International Sport Federation in order that a competitor may be allocated a Point and Point Status.

Competitor Support Personnel: Any coach, trainer, manager, interpreter, agent, team staff, official, medical or para-medical personnel working with or treating Competitors participating in or preparing for training and/or Competition.

Chief Classifier: a Classifier appointed by an International Sport Federation to direct, administer, co-ordinate and implement Classification matters for a specific Competition according to that International Sport Federation Classification Rules.

Classification: Allocating Competitors points according to how much their Impairment affects fundamental activities in each specific sport or discipline. This is also referred to as Competitor Classification.

Classification Data: Personal Information and/or Sensitive Personal Information provided by a competitor and/or a National Body and/or a National Paralympic Committee and/or any other person to a Classification Organisation in connection with Classification.

Classification Intelligence: Information obtained and used by an International Sport Federation in relation to Classification.

Classification Master List: A list made available by an International Sport Federation that identifies Competitors who have been allocated a Point that permits them to participate in an International Competition.

Classification Organisation: any organisation undertaking the role of classification.

Classification Panel: A group of Classifiers, appointed by the International Sport Federation, to determine Point and Point Status in accordance with the Classification Rules of the International Sport Federation.

Classification Personnel: Persons, including Classifiers, acting with the authority of a Classification organisation in relation to Competitor Evaluation, for example administrative officers.

Classification Rule: Also referred to as Classification Rules and Regulations. The policies, procedures, protocols and descriptions adopted by an International Sport Federation in connection with Competitor Evaluation.

Classification System: The framework used by an International Sport Federation to develop and designate points within a Para-sport

Classifier: A person authorised as an official by an International Sport Federation to evaluate Competitors as a member of a Classification Panel.

Classifier Certification: the processes by which an International Sport Federation must assess that a Classifier has met the specific Classifier Competencies required to obtain and maintain certification or licensure.

Classifier Code of Conduct: The behavioural and ethical standards for Classifiers specified by the International Sport Federation.

Classifier Competencies: the qualifications and abilities that the International Sport Federation deems necessary for a Classifier to be competent to conduct Competitor Evaluation for sport(s) governed by that International Sport Federation.

Code: The Classification Code.

Competition: A series of individual events conducted together under one ruling body.

Compliance: The implementation of rules, regulations, policies and processes that adhere to the text, spirit and intent of the Code as defined by the IRF. Where terms such as (but not limited to) 'comply', 'conform' and 'in accordance' are used in the Code they shall have the same meaning as 'Compliance.'

Diagnostic Information: medical records and/or any other documentation that enables the International Sport Federation to assess the existence or otherwise of an Eligible Impairment or Underlying Health Condition.

Health Condition: a pathology, acute or chronic disease, disorder, injury or trauma.

Impairment: A physical, visual or intellectual Impairment.

Intentional Misrepresentation: A deliberate attempt (either by fact or omission) to mislead an International Sport Federation or National Body as to the existence or extent of skills and/or abilities relevant to a Para-sport and/or the degree or nature of Eligible Impairment during Competitor Evaluation and/or at any other point after the allocation of a Point.

International Competitions: A Competition where the IRF, an International Sport Federation or a Major Competition Organisation is the governing body for the Competition and/or appoints the technical officials for the Competition.

IPC: International Paralympic Committee.

Major Competition Organiser: An organisation that functions as the ruling body for an International Competition.

National Body: Refers to the national member of an International Sport Federation

National Laws: the national data protection and privacy laws, regulations and policies applicable to a Classification Organisation.

National Paralympic Committees: The national member of the IPC who is the sole representative of Competitors with an Impairment in that country or territory. These are the national members of the IPC.

Observation in Competition: the observation of a competitor in a Competition by a Classification Panel so that the Classification Panel can complete its determination as to the extent to which an Impairment affects that Competitor's ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to the sport.

Paralympic Games: Umbrella term for both Paralympic Games and Paralympic Winter Games.

Para-sports: All sport for Competitors with an Impairment whether they feature on the Paralympic programme or not. These terms are used for all other sports events outside of the Paralympic Games.

Para Rafting: The sport of rafting for Competitors with an Impairment

Permanent: The term Permanent as used In the Code and Standards describes an Impairment that is unlikely to be resolved meaning the principal effects are lifelong.

Personal Information: any information that refers to, or relates directly to, a competitor.

Process/Processing: the collection, recording, storage, use or disclosure of Personal Information and/or sensitive Personal Information.

Protest Documents: the information provided in the Protest Form together with the Protest Fee.

Protest Fee: the fee prescribed by an International Sport Federation, payable by the National Body or team when submitting a Protest.

Protest Form: the form on which a Protest must be submitted.

Protested Competitor: a competitor whose Point is being challenged.

Protested Decision: the Point decision being challenged.

Protests: The procedure by which a reasoned objection to a competitor's Point is submitted and subsequently resolved.

Point: A 'Point for Competition defined by an International Sport Federation by reference to the extent to which a competitor can perform the specific tasks and activities required by a sport.

Point Status: A designation applied to a Point to indicate the extent to which a competitor may be required to undertake Competitor Evaluation and/or be subject to a Protest.

Underlying Health Condition: a Health Condition that may lead to an Impairment.