



## WPA INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION PRIORITY- AUSTRALIAN ATHLETICS POLICY

AUGUST 2022

**Today's Benchmark Events (Paralympic Games & WPA Championships) have a “zero classification” policy.**

The IPC have adopted a “zero classification” policy which requires an athlete to attend the BME with a ‘confirmed’ or ‘review’ status with a ‘fixed year date’ after that in which the BME takes place.

For example, an athlete wishing to compete in the 2023 BME, must have an international classification status of ‘confirmed’ or ‘review: fixed year date – 2024’ or later.

The IPC adopted this policy to ensure that the attending athletes focus is solely on competition and not the status of their classification. The classification process can impact on an athlete's ability to perform on the day of competition and the IPC has put this measure in place to ensure that performance outcomes are achieved by the athlete's skill, fitness, power and endurance and not the effects of their impairments.

**Australian Athletics will prioritise athletes first and foremost on their ability to achieve medal outcomes at the next BME.**

Historically there is one international classification in the Oceania Region, endorsed and led by World Para Athletics and hosted by Australian Athletics. World Para Athletics are responsible for the allocation of international classification slots to the competing Nations. Due to the limited number of slots that are made available to Australia, Australian Athletics will be required to prioritise para-athletes in accordance with the below principles;

- Prioritisation decisions are based around the proximity to BME's such as WPA Championships and Paralympic Games.
- Decisions are based on our understanding of an athlete's most recent results; an athlete's current national and international classification and classification status; and the level of information and direction we are given from World Para Athletics.

### **Prioritisation considerations:**

- High medal chance and/or high classification risk athletes will be prioritised prior to attending senior benchmark events (WPA Championships / Paralympic Games).
- An athlete will be prioritised where a classification circumstance limits that athlete's ability to compete nationally.
- NASS Athletes and/or Paralympic Pathway Athletes will be prioritised over non-NASS athletes.

Australian Athletics needs to ensure that access to international classification is used first and foremost for athletes on the Paralympic pathway and to support realistic medal chances at the upcoming BME's.