

South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee

POLICY AND GENERAL SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE PARALYMPIC GAMES LONDON 2012

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The national debate and discussion on representation of our sports teams in international competitions has prompted SASCO to reiterate its policy on team selection. From its foundation in 2004 SASCO made it clear that South African sport federations needed to accelerate the development of the historically disadvantaged sector so that South Africa's sports teams are representative of the country's demography.

Qualification for the Paralympic Games now takes place via established standard measures which include times, distances, heights, rankings and elimination tournaments. These criteria are effected at worldwide and at continental elimination competitions for National Paralympic Committees. The IPC policy, therefore, now caters for both quality and universality. Quality will ensure that the world's best athletes participate in the Paralympic Games and all of its medallists and commendable performances usually come from this group. Universality would guarantee that there is adequate representation at the Paralympic Games from all continents and provide the inspiration and opportunity to developing athletes for greater performances.

South Africa, being a member of the African continent, is eligible to enter via general international qualification competitions and also through continental elimination tournaments. It is a well-known fact that many Paralympic sports in Africa are still at the developmental stage, whereas others enjoy an extremely high standard. This poses a serious dilemma for SASCO.

South African sport is highly developed; but because of inequities of apartheid, many of these sports are still dominated by one sector of the population. It would be easy to exploit the Paralympic qualification system and thus dominate continental representation but this would be cynical and even dishonest and it would, in our view, go against the spirit of the IPC's policy of universality.

It would mean that only one section of our population would dominate our National Paralympic Team under the dubious banner of "merit" and the majority of our team would come from exclusive sports bodies. We respect the IPC policy with regard to universality and widespread participation. However this is there for

those countries that do not qualify athletes for the Games, which is not so in our case and therefore the route of universality should not apply for us.

This will ensure quality selection and will not, in any way, restrict high level competition. It is high time we remove the cloak of hypocrisy and examine issues honestly. We will guarantee a place for any athlete who is a probable medal hope or will return commendable performances.

In effect, the SASCOC selection policy for the Paralympic Games will still respect the IOC policy.

### Paralympic Programme Guiding Principles

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| <p><b>Quality</b> – The essential principles with respect to grade of excellence; accomplishment and/or attainment.</p> | <p><b>Elite</b> – Representing the highest athlete performances in the context of the specific sport.</p> <p><b>Exciting</b> – Providing a vibrant and energising atmosphere that is entertaining in the context of each sport, yet creates a collective motivational atmosphere that is attractive to spectators and media.</p> <p><b>Inspirational</b> – Creating a distinct opportunity for personal experience/reflection that acts as a catalyst for change through showcasing the extraordinary perseverance of the human spirit through athleticism.</p> <p><b>Fair Play</b> – Driving collective values of the IPC ensuring that the spirit of fair play prevails, that the health risks of athletes are managed, that fundamental ethical principles are upheld, that prejudice and discrimination are not tolerated and that all forms of cheating are discouraged and dealt with sternly.</p> |
| <p><b>Quantity</b> – The principles that establish parameters and/or conditions necessary for success.</p>              | <p><b>Viable</b> – Ensuring operational and programmatic capability in the context of the IPC's obligations to its relationship with the IOC and considering the impact on the POC/OCOG (e.g. financially, cost effective, manageable, number of training and competition venues, safety, risk management).</p> <p><b>Sustainable/Dynamic</b> – Ensuring a healthy and stable programme (components of the sport) that allows forecasting (foresight) and ongoing evaluation.<br/>– “Stable enough to be sustainable, and dynamic</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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|                                                                                                                  | <p>enough to meet the needs of the present and the future.”</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <p><b>Universality</b> – The collective principles or conditions that ensure and reflect a diverse movement.</p> | <p><b>Equitable</b> – ensuring that gender representation and the type and extent of disabilities represented at the Games are taken as a fundamental factor in establishing the Games framework.</p> <p><b>Global</b> – Establishing a framework that strives to ensure regional representation and global nature of the Games.</p> <p><b>Balance</b> – Weighing and positioning the types of sports and competitors included based on the nature of the sports/disciplines (e.g. individual versus team; power versus precision; speed versus endurance, combat versus artistic).</p> |

## **SASCOC's SELECTION POLICY**

SASCOC's Paralympic Selection Policy complies with the letter and spirit of the IPC Qualification Criteria.

However, SASCOC contends that it will not be fulfilling the IPC criteria if it utilises its continental qualification as entry for the Paralympic Games for individuals and teams from the former establishment sector of the population. In fact it would be dishonest if such individual athletes and teams used the continental qualification system to compete in the Paralympic Games as this method of entry was established to encourage development of Paralympic Sports on a worldwide basis. If we allow the advantaged sector to qualify via the continental system, South Africa would qualify with little or no effort in many sports because of the low development of many sports in the rest of Africa. In fact, South Africa would qualify automatically in some sports because of the non-existence of certain sports in the rest of Africa.

## **SASCOC SELECTION CRITERIA**

Selection to London 2012 will be considered if the SASCOC Board is satisfied that one or more of the following criteria can be fulfilled:

### **Entry via Preliminary Qualification:**

1. If the performances and placing of the teams, individuals or combination of athletes in the qualification competition are likely to receive the highest commendation in international sport;
2. If the standard and level of the qualifying competition is of a very high international quality;

### **Direct Entry of the Paralympic Games:**

1. If the individual athletes or combination of athletes can each reach the final or level that is equated to a final in that particular sport;
2. If a team qualifies through its respective Worlds Championships or by virtue of its winning the competition at the previous Paralympic Games.

### **Replacement in case of Withdrawals:**

On certain occasions, South Africa might be called upon to replace individuals, combination of athletes or teams, which have withdrawn after obtaining qualification positions in some competitions, SASCOC will not consider replacements.

## **CRITERIA FOR EACH SPORT**

The preliminary requisites for all non-team sports seeking entry to the Paralympic Games are that athletes and/ or combination of athletes, but excluding relays, must have:

- competed in the Federation's National Championships in their respective events/ immediately preceding the Paralympic Games and / or;
- Competed in the World Championship or its elimination competitions officially representing South Africa, in their respective even/s immediately preceding the Paralympic Games.