



Athletes Commission 2013 – 2017

Terms of Reference

As approved by the Board of Directors

on 19 June, 2013

Terms of Reference

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Athlete's Commission is to give the athletes a forum to have an input into the preparation programmes of Paralympics Ireland before each Paralympic Games. It also provides a direct link for Paralympics Ireland to confer with athlete advocates on particular issues.

The International Paralympic Committee have a stated policy requesting all National Paralympic Committees to ensure athlete representatives are involved in decision making at all levels of the organisation. These terms of reference outline the means by which athletes are central to the decision making of Paralympics Ireland.

2.0 Role of Paralympics Ireland's Athletes Commission

- 2.1 To act as a voice for athletes at all levels of the organisation from strategy and programme planning to Board level.
- 2.2 To ensure strong channels of communication are in place to ensure athlete specific issues are highlighted at the appropriate level of the organisation.
- 2.3 To support the work of the Paralympics Ireland Board and Management Team in an advisory capacity.
- 2.4 To ensure strong athlete advocacy throughout the organisation.
- 2.5 To provide an avenue for athlete grievances to be considered.
- 2.6 To act as advocates for Paralympic Sport and Paralympics Ireland.
- 2.7 To support and coordinate the activities of the Paralympics Ireland Paralympians Club

3.0 Structure & Membership

- 3.1 Paralympics Ireland will appoint between 6-10 Athlete Advocates to comprise the Paralympics Ireland Athletes Commission
- 3.2 Athletes who competed at either the Athens 2004, Beijing 2008 or London 2012 Paralympic Games as members of the Irish Paralympic Team are eligible to become Athlete Advocates
- 3.3 Athlete Advocates will be representative of Paralympic Athletes, not representatives of their individual sport.

4.0 Frequency of Meetings

- 4.1 The Athletes Commission will meet at least three times per year. Further meetings may be convened by the Chairperson as required to carry out the business of the Athletes Commission effectively.
- 4.2 On at least one occasion each year, the Athletes Commission will meet in an open forum session with Paralympics Ireland's Management Team and members of the Board to share ideas and strategies re the organisations programmes and policies development.
- 4.3 Meetings will not be convened at Paralympics Ireland training camps.
- 4.4 Meetings may take place at any venue on the island of Ireland, but the majority of meetings will be held at Paralympics Ireland's Head Office at Irish Sport HQ, National Sports Campus, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, or at a Moran Bewleys Hotel.

5.0 Appointing the Athlete Advocates

- 5.1 Paralympics Ireland will seek ‘expressions of interest’ from athletes who have competed at the Paralympic Games between 2004 & 2012 to become Athlete Advocates (members of the Athletes Commission).
- 5.2 The Board or Paralympics Ireland will select 6-10 individuals to sit on the Athletes Commission as Athlete Advocates.
- 5.3 In determining the composition of the Athletes Commission, the Board will consider the spread of sports represented, the nature and severity of disabilities of the athletes, experience and gender.
- 5.4 The Board of Paralympics Ireland retain the sole right to appoint or withdraw individuals as members of the Athletes Commission.

6.0 Appointing the Chairperson

- 6.1 The Chairperson of the Athletes commission will be appointed by a majority vote of the members of the commission at the first meeting.
- 6.2 This position will be for a four year term.
- 6.3 The Chairperson of the Athletes Commission will also represent the athletes as a member of the Board of Directors.
- 6.4 In the event of the Chairperson stepping down, a new Chairperson will be nominated to the Board of Paralympics Ireland by the commission following a further ballot of the remaining commission members.

7.0 Responsibilities of the Chairperson

- 7.1 Act as the link between the commission and Paralympics Ireland for all correspondence.
- 7.2 Act as the Athletes Commission representative on the Board of Directors of Paralympics Ireland.
- 7.3 Convening & chairing of meetings and the design of meeting agendas.
- 7.4 Agreeing the draft minutes of meetings with the Secretary prior to issue to commission members and the CEO of Paralympics Ireland
- 7.5 Liaise with Paralympics Ireland’s Office Administrator on the logistical elements of preparing Athletes Commission meetings.

8.0 Appointing the Secretary

- 8.1 The Chairperson will be responsible for appointing the Secretary of the Athletes Commission.

9.0 Responsibilities of the Secretary

- 9.1 Recording of minutes of all Athletes Commission meetings
- 9.2 Issuing the draft minutes to the Chairperson for approval following each meeting.

9.3 Agreeing the agenda for each meeting with the Chairperson and issuing the draft agenda and minutes of the previous meeting to each commission member at least seven days prior to each meeting.

10.0 Voting

10.1 Any agenda item that requires a vote will be conducted on a one attending member, one vote system.

10.2 In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote.

10.3 The quorum for a valid vote is 50% of Athlete Commission Members.

11.0 Timelines

June 2013 – Terms of reference approved

June 2013 – Paralympics Ireland seeks expressions of interest for positions on Athletes Commission from Irish Paralympians from 2004-2012.

July 2013 – Paralympics Ireland Board selects Athletes Commission members

July 2013 – Athletes Commission convenes to elect Chairperson and nominee to the Paralympics Ireland Board of Directors.

February 2017 – Review of Athletes Commission Terms of Reference.