



## WPA INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION PROTESTS- AUSTRALIAN ATHLETICS POLICY

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**The classification process is complex and can be emotive.**

Classification is about the physical presentation at the time of classification and how this fits a predetermined Class Profile. Neither athletes, coaches, nor Australian Athletics choose what class an athlete is assigned to. There can be significant performance implications for changing classes. Class profiles and parameters are sometimes refined over time meaning the goalposts for athletes can change. Australian Athletics offers support to athletes to assist with understanding the process. Decisions on international classification outcomes are made by World Para Athletics international classifiers and not Australian Athletics.

### **Australian Athletics and Paralympics Australia must submit protests**

As stipulated in the World Para Athletics Classification Rules and Regulations, Part Six: Protests, and in accordance with clause 6.3 of the APC Classification Standard: Classifier Training and Certification, any protests of International Classifications must be made through the National Federation that is the International Federation member for that sport (Australian Athletics), in accordance with the International Federation rules.

### **How to put in a protest**

In order to submit a protest, Australian Athletics must be able to provide evidence that either:

- (a) The International classifier's decision was flawed; or
- (b) a specific rule(s) has been breached.

If an athlete disagrees with a classification, they are responsible for providing this evidence.

In accordance with World Para Athletics Classification Rules and Regulations, Part Six: Protests a Protest must be submitted by the National Federation (Australian Athletics) within 60 minutes of the Classification outcome being posted following athlete evaluation OR 15 minutes of the Classification outcome being posted following observation in competition.

In order to meet this criteria, Australian Athletics require an athlete to submit a protest application to Australian Athletics within 5 minutes after receiving the classification outcome.

Australian Athletics will inform the Athlete of whether they will submit a protest to WPA either:

- (a) within 30 minutes of receiving the application to protest after an athlete evaluation; or
- (b) within 5 minutes of receiving the application to protest after an in-competition evaluation.

Australian Athletics will consider the application to protest with the guidance of the principles below. Australian Athletics will ultimately exercise its absolute discretion in deciding whether to protest a classification and that decision will be final.



## **The following principles will determine if Australian Athletics submit a protest on behalf of an athlete**

- The relevance of supporting evidence provided to Australian Athletics as grounds for Protest of either a flaw in decision making or a breach of a specific rule(s);
- Historical knowledge of the athlete's medical impairment;
- Historical observation of the athlete during training, competition and classification environments;
- Supporting medical evidence e.g. specialist reports/objective medical documentation provided by the athlete and submitted to WPA;
- Previous classification protests and/or classification misrepresentation and related outcomes;
- Australian Athletics' understanding of current and historical class profiles, and how the athlete's impairment fits within these class profiles.

For the avoidance of doubt, these matters are not listed in order of priority.

If Australian Athletics chooses to Protest on an athlete's behalf, the process of protesting a classification outcome can be found in the World Para Athletics Rules and Regulations, Part 6; Protests ([Link above](#)).

The Protest Fee (150 Euro) in equivalent currency is payable by the individual responsible for requesting the protest. This fee must be paid at the time the protest is submitted to WPA.

Due to the confidential and sensitive nature of classifying athletes, Australian Athletics asks that all coaches and staff refrain from commenting on another athlete's classification. If you have any concerns about the integrity of the classification process, these should be directed to the Australian Athletics staff member present at International Classification.