

**NPCs and IOSDs Widely and Regularly
Practicing Para Athletics
Via Email**

Bonn, 08 March 2017

MASH, Decision to Postpone Implementation

Dear President/Secretary General:

Following update reports at the recent World Para Athletics Forum, we received a number of correspondences from different nations expressing concerns about the implementation of the revised Maximum Allowable Standing Height (MASH) measures.

World Para Athletics has given due consideration to these concerns, and had further consultation rounds with most nations who have athletes competing in the classes impacted by the MASH rules (42-43).

As a result of these consultations, World Para Athletics **has decided to postpone the implementation of the revised MASH rules until 1 January 2018**, and to take the season 2017 as an opportunity to allow all athletes to present for official measurements at designated international classification opportunities prior to initiating the fit of personalised equipment.

In answer to the concerns expressed, World Para Athletics would like to state the following:

1. The MASH formula addresses standing height. This has been a consistent position from the sport since the first proposal for revision has been introduced in 2006, and it has never been questioned before. However, the concern that the MASH formula does not make allowance for triple joint extension for running at full speed is dealt with in two ways:
 - the CANDAs equation (basis of the new MASH formula) predicts height with hip and knee fully extended. It is thus only the ankle that is not plantar-flexed
 - World Para Athletics has decided to add the Pure Error score (PE) of the applicable CANDAs formula. This PE value is approx. 2-2.5% of the estimated body height measure, depending on the formula.

2. The new MASH formula does not systematically favour athletes with fewer limbs to measure. The Lower R2 values do not render the formula invalid. We use the best available formula to provide the most accurate estimate of an athlete's maximum allowable standing height (the alternative would be to use one formula for all, which would default to the measure of sitting height, which is not considered by World Para Athletics).
3. There is no evidence in support of the suggestion that athletes with congenital deficiency should be dealt with differently compared to athletes with a traumatic limb deficiency.
4. World Para Athletics does not accept existing body height measures taken prior to trauma for those athletes from whom such measures might be available from medical diagnostic files. The fact that estimations may vary from pre-existing measurements is acknowledged, but again does not render the formulas implemented invalid. By implementing the same ruling for all athletes, World Para Athletics guarantees that all measurements are taken in a valid and reliable way. This cannot be guaranteed by accepting available historical measurements.
5. There has been some reliability concerns expressed on the variability of measurements, which are considered invalid subject to World Para Athletics ensuring training and certification of classifiers that ensure a correct application of the MASH measurements. The application of the ISAK (International Society of Advancement of Kinanthropometry) protocols ensure the implementation of a valid and reliable measurement protocol. World Para Athletics will ensure a pool of classifiers responsible for a consistent application of the measurements across all events.

In the next days, World Para Athletics will publish a list of events where international classifiers will be available to take MASH measurements under the revised formula. We kindly invite all nations to take advantage of these opportunities to have their athletes measured against the new standards. The scores will be recorded on the classification sheet, and will be effective from 1 January 2018 onwards.

We have instructed the classification panels appointed at SUMMERofATHS Grand Prix in Canberra, Australia about this decision. They will conduct 2 measurements: one against the actual (2016) rules (if needed), and one against the revised MASH measurements (now effective from 1 January 2018 onwards).

For clarity, this decision implies that all competitions taking place prior to 1 January 2018 for T/F42-43 including the London 2017 World Para Athletics Championships, will be contested under the 2016 MASH rules.



World Para Athletics apologizes for the inconvenience caused with this late notice as we wanted to get the views of the World Para Athletics community. We are convinced however that the decision accommodates to concerns expressed at late stage, and will remove uncertainty and stress from athletes and coaches.

We however would like to ask nations to express concerns and questions about rule changes upon notification by the sport of the forthcoming changes. In this particular case, World Para Athletics introduced the rule change with detail on the new measurement standards and methodology at a meeting during the Doha 2015 World Championships, over 16 months ago, and released an instructional video on how to take the revised measurements in November 2016.

We remain available for any further clarification.

In the meantime we wish you a successful start of the new season.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name "Haozhe Gao" in a stylized, cursive script.

Haozhe Gao
World Para Athletics Senior Manager
International Paralympic Committee

CC. Peter Van de Vliet – IPC Medical & Scientific Director

CC. Ryan Montgomery – IPC Summer Sports Director