International Paralympic Committee

Mr. Geoff Smedley
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Via e-mail: geoffrey.smedley@virgin.net

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PV/IPC

Swimming for Individuals with Down Syndrome

Dear Geoff,

In reference to your email dated 15 February to Sabine Mikulas, and all previous communication on the interest of the Down Syndrome International Swimming Organisation (DSISO) to become a member of the Paralympic Movement, and after a further review of the facts you outlined, we have reached the following conclusions:

1. It is understood by both IPC and DSISO that not all persons with Down Syndrome (DS) meet the criteria for intellectual disability, but it is not all that common (e.g. translocation and mosacism). In the likelihood of occurrence, those particular athletes with DS (without associated intellectual disability) may fit under the current Functional Classification System of IPC Swimming on the condition they meet the requirements for locomotor disability in accordance with IPC Swimming rules and regulations (IPC Swimming Classification Manual, Section 1 – Swimming Classification). There is no need for those athletes to be recognized as a separate disability group within the IPC. The comparison made to

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athletes with visual impairment or cerebral palsy that happen to have an intellectual disability does not stand, as both impairments are qualified as physical impairments (which is not the case for Down Syndrome).

2. Trisomy 21, the most common form of DS, almost exclusively manifests itself with an associated intellectual disability. Within this perspective, according to the IPC Constitution Article 4.1.2, the IPC can only recognize one organization as the sole representative of a specific disability group. In the case of athletes with an intellectual disability the IPC Member is currently INAS-FID. Swimmers with an intellectual disability, including Down Syndrome swimmers with associated ID, have to meet the eligibility criteria of the respective International Federation (INAS-FID).

On the basis of these conclusions, the proposal of DSISO to apply for IPC Membership is no longer considered by the IPC.

Kind regards,

Xavier Gonzalez
Chief Executive Officer
International Paralympic Committee

cc Tim Reddish, Chairperson IPC Swimming
Sir Philip Craven, IPC President