

ICF Policy

for the participation of Russian and Belarusian Athletes/Athlete Support Personnel in ICF competitions

20.06.23

I. Preamble

The International Canoe Federation (ICF) Board of Directors and Executive Committee recognised that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and the reactions of public opinion and governments around the world, had created unprecedented and unforeseen circumstances and, after careful consideration of all aspects of this complex situation, adopted this Policy.

The ICF recognises the unifying role of sport and is a strong supporter of it, as well as strongly reiterating the separation of politics and sport. The ICF is fully in line with the Olympic Charter and supports that everyone should have access to international sporting competitions regardless of their origin, faith, or sexual orientation.

The ICF stands with and supports the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and has acted according to its recommendations as follows.

- First the ICF Executive Committee voted unanimously to suspend all Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials from participating in all ICF competitions until further notice on 1 March 2022
- Second, the ICF, following the IOC recommendations of 28 March 2023 has decided to lift the protective measures against Russian and Belarusian athletes and athlete support personnel with certain conditions.

Since the beginning of the Russian aggression, the ICF has supported the participation of the Ukrainian Canoe Federation and its athletes and officials in competitions across ICF Competitions will continue to stand in solidarity with our Ukrainian friends throughout these tragic circumstances.

In this very difficult and challenging situation, the ICF is determined to establish a fair and transparent process that allows all stakeholders to be fully aware of their rights and obligations.

This Policy is based on the *Recommended Conditions of Participation for Individual Neutral Athletes and Support Personnel with a Russian or Belarusian Passport in International Sports Competitions Organised by the International Federations and International Sports Competition Organisers* which are the recommendations lastly issued by the IOC on 28 March 2023 and defines the terms and conditions under which Russian and Belarusian Athletes and Athlete Support Personnel may be eligible to participate in ICF competitions.

The Individual Neutral Athletes and Athlete Support Personnel shall be referred as "AIN" Athletes/ Athlete Support Personnel.

II. Scope of application

This Policy shall be applicable to all ICF competitions for all canoeing and paddling disciplines.

The present version of the Policy was approved by the ICF Board of Directors and Executive Committee on the 20 June 2023 enters into force immediately and shall be applicable until further notice.

The present Policy shall apply as *lex specialis* to the ICF rules and regulations in force.

III. Application process

All Athletes and Athlete Support Personnel of Russian or Belarusian sporting nationality shall apply for the AIN status to be entered to ICF Competitions via an administrative process by their National Federation according to the relevant ICF Rules and regulations.

A declaration form (Annex 1 and 2 of this Policy) must be completed by each Athlete/Athlete support personnel and submitted by the National Federation with the list of Athlete/Athlete Support Personnel.

With the declaration the Athlete/Athlete Support Personnel shall confirm that none of the exclusion criteria set forth in the present Policy apply to him/her at the time of the declaration. By signing the declaration form they also accept the conditions of their participation at ICF Competitions and undertake to comply with present Policy until it remains in force.

Athletes/Athlete Support Personnel are obliged to declare the truth when filling in the declaration; otherwise, they will be declared ineligible, and they will be subject to possible further sanctions according to the regulations of present Policy and the respective ICF Rules.

The annexes form an integral part of the Policy.

The sole purpose of this administrative procedure is to allow the Individual Neutral Athletes/Athlete Support Personnel to participate in ICF competitions in accordance with the IOC Recommendations and the remarks of the UN Special Rapporteur, but the other relevant sanctions remain in force as decided by the ICF.

Athlete Support Personnel applications shall be submitted in conjunction with the Athlete(s) they support and shall specify their exact role.

By submitting the declarations and the list of athletes including copies of their passports and details of their club the National Federation declares that all criteria stated in this special policy are met at the time of the submission of the declarations and that the declarations were signed by the athletes themselves and agree to cooperate with the Independent Panel and the ICF if further information is needed for the AIN process.

If during the procedure, it is found that the respective National Federation has failed to provide complete, truthful information or has refused to cooperate with the ICF bodies, it will be subject to possible sanction according to the regulations of this Policy and the relevant ICF Rules.

The National Federations remain responsible for their athletes according to the ICF Rules and regulations with special regard to the ICF anti-doping rules.

The applications which are not sent within the timeline set by the ICF will be irrevocably dismissed.

The ICF will set an appropriate deadline for applications, considering the final entry deadlines for the competitions and the eligibility process.

IV. Eligibility check by the Individual Neutral Athlete Eligibility Panel

The appointment of the Individual Neutral Athlete Eligibility Panel (hereinafter the "Panel") was confirmed at the ICF Board of Directors and Executive Committee on the 28 March 2023.

The Panel is composed of three independent persons who are responsible for deciding on the AIN status of Athletes/Athlete Support Personnel who apply under this Policy.

Separate terms of reference set out the rules for panel members.

In carrying out their duties, the members of the Panel shall have the right to request additional information from the Athletes/Athlete Support Personnel/National Federation.

It is the Panel's responsibility to examine each application by the Athlete/Athlete Support Personnel on a case-by-case basis to determine whether they comply with the provisions of this policy.

Individual controls cover all the criteria set out in this Policy. The review of the criteria should only go back to the date of the beginning of the conflict the 24 February 2023.

Following the control process, the Panel declares the Athlete/Athlete Support Personnel eligible or ineligible to compete as an AIN Athlete or participate as an Athlete Support Personnel at ICF Competitions.

The decision is effective immediately. The ineligibility based on the exclusion criteria is an objective consequence.

The Panel is entitled to check compliance with this Policy at any time and can therefore review a decision in case new circumstances arise.

If, after obtaining AIN status, it is found that the Athlete/Athlete Support Personnel is no longer eligible under the provisions of this Policy, the Panel shall declare the person ineligible. The decision is effective of immediately. This also applies to any infringement in connection with the ICF Competition regarding the prohibition of the display of emblems or logos referring to Russia or Belarus or any verbal, non-verbal or written communication in support of the war in Ukraine.

The Panel will also decide to cancel the results if the Athlete should not have entered the competition in the first place due to an Exclusion Criteria or if the violation of this Policy occurred during the ICF competition.

The Athlete/Athlete Support Personnel('s) National Federation is responsible for informing the ICF if there is a change in the Athlete's/Athlete Support Personnel's eligibility conditions. In case they fail to properly execute this obligation they expose themselves to possible further sanctions.

The Panel may refer the matter to the Executive Committee if it considers that further sanctions should be contemplated within 7 days of the ineligibility decision. The Panel may proceed similarly in case it comes to light that the National Federation has not acted according to the regulations of present Policy. The 7 day deadline is counted from the date the Panel became aware of the possible infringement.

V. Participation

Individual Neutral Athletes and their Athlete Support Personnel may return to ICF Competitions only in an individual and neutral capacity, and not in any way as a representative of the Russian Federation or the Republic of Belarus, their National Federations or NOCs.

Individual Neutral Athletes and Support Personnel who are contracted to the Russian or Belarusian military or national security agencies cannot participate in any ICF Competitions.

Only individuals with high-performance, medical or technical role should be considered for Support Personnel accreditation, to allow individual neutral athletes to have access to the same support personnel as other competing athletes.

Notwithstanding the above eligibility, and in order to protect the implementation of ICF competitions and the safety of athletes the ICF will respect any position and decision of a National Canoe Federation as host of an ICF competition not to include Individual Neutral Athletes. However, the ICF calls on all hosts of ICF competitions to respect the Olympic Charter and to establish conditions that guarantee unhindered access to competitions for all athletes.

VI. Team sports and team competitions in individual sports

The participation of national teams composed of athletes of Russian or Belarusian sporting nationality is not permitted in ICF Competitions.

Individual Neutral Athletes participation is only authorised in competitions based on individual classification.

VII. Active support for the war in Ukraine

Only those Individual Neutral Athletes and Support Personnel who have not acted against the peace mission of the Olympic Movement by actively supporting the war in Ukraine since the beginning of the war may be invited to participate in ICF competitions.

Contracted members of the Russian and Belarusian military or national security agencies are considered to support the war.

With regard to other active supporting measures all relevant circumstances, in particular public statements, including those made on social media; participation in pro-war demonstrations or competitions; and the displaying of any symbol supporting the war in Ukraine, for example the "Z" symbol, have to be taken into consideration.

VIII. Anti-Doping

All Athletes of Russian or Belarusian sporting nationality, like all other participating athletes must meet all anti-doping requirements applicable to them, in particular those set out in the ICF Anti-Doping Rules, and special policies.

In close collaboration with the International Testing Agency (ITA) the ICF will ensure fully compliant anti-doping procedures are applied.

IX. Flags and emblems

Flags and emblems of the Russian Federation or the Republic of Belarus (current or historical) may not be raised or displayed in any official venue or area controlled by ICF.

When a flag or emblem needs to be used to reference Individual Neutral Athletes (e.g for ceremonies, in protocol sets, in-venue, TV/media graphics and social media), the ICF flag or emblem must be used, or no flag or emblem should be used at all.

Each organiser of a competition on the ICF Calendar shall be responsible for ensuring that no flag or emblem of the Russian Federation or the Republic of Belarus, or any other object referring to these countries, is displayed within the scope of, or in relation to, a competition, including by spectators.

X. Anthem

The Russian and Belarusian national anthems (or any anthem linked to the Russian Federation or Republic of Belarus) must not be played or sung at any moment during an ICF competition in any official venue or any other area controlled by the ICF or the Host Organising Committee.

For medal ceremonies involving Individual Neutral Athletes, the anthem shall be the anthem of the ICF.

XI. Uniforms

Uniforms must be completely white.

The uniforms (whether competition, warm-up, formal, ceremonial, casual, etc.), clothing, equipment, accessories and personal items belonging to Individual Neutral Athletes and their support personnel that are worn, used and/or otherwise displayed at competition venues, or any other area controlled by ICF or the Host Organising Committee must not contain:

- Any recognition of, or reference to, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, or their National Federations or NOCs, or any national identification of Russia or Belarus (such as flag, coat of arms or any other national symbol or emblem, whether official or unofficial) in any language or format;

- Any emblem or identification, commercial or otherwise, of any Russian or Belarusian organisation or entity;

- Any expression (message, graphic element, symbol, etc) with a direct or indirect political connotation.

ICF must approve all clothing used by an AIN athlete in advance of the competition. The application shall be submitted to the ICF Competitions team via email to competitions@canoeicf.sport

XII. Medals

Individual Neutral Athletes can be awarded medals for their performances but cannot be included in any medal table drawn up per country, given that they are participating in their individual capacity.

XIII. Neutrality

Participation by athletes and accompanying personnel of Russian or Belarusian sporting nationality must be in full compliance with ICF rules and regulations, including anti-doping rules, the Olympic Charter and other requirements for participation in competitions on the ICF competition calendar.

To adhere the requirement of neutrality, Individual Neutral Athletes and their support personnel must refrain from any activity or communication associated with the national flag, anthem, emblem or any other symbol of the Russian Federation the Republic of Belarus, their National Federations or NOCs, or support for the war in Ukraine, at any official venue or the media prior to, during and following the ICF Competition. This includes any national competitions related to their participation in the ICF Competition.

They must not make any statements or comments, take any action, or conduct themselves in any manner that may be prejudicial to the interests of the competition, its integrity or the participant's neutrality required as a condition of participation.

Any infringement in connection with the present Policy at any ICF Competition will result in immediate removal and exclusion from the ICF competition, and the Athlete's/Athlete Support Personnel's will be referred to the Panel for a determination of eligibility and for the disqualification of all or part of the results obtained.

XIV REMAINING SANCTIONS

The measures against the Russian and Belarusian states and governments, remain in place as follows.

- a) Any bids from Russian and Belarusian candidates for the organisation of ICF competitions or events shall not be considered.
- b) No ICF Events will be organised in Russia or Belarus.
- c) No flag, anthem, colours, or any other identifications whatsoever of these countries displayed at any ICF event or meeting, including the entire venue.
- d) No Russian and Belarusian government or state official can be invited to or accredited for any ICF Event or meeting.

- e) The ICF Board will maintain the ban on all Russian and Belarussian officials holding official positions within the Russian or Belarussian Canoe Federation or the respective NOC or NPC. The officials will not be allowed to sit in any official capacity or at ICF event.

XV OBJECTIONS / APPEALS

In case the Panel decides on the ineligibility the Athlete/Athlete Support Personnel can file an objection to the ICF Executive Committee within 7 days of receipt of the decision sent to the respective National Federation.

The objection does not stay the decision of the Panel.

The decisions of the Executive Committee are exclusively subject to appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) to be decided via an expedited procedure by a single Arbitrator.

XVI FURTHER SANCTIONS

In cases referred by the Panel to the Executive Committee for further consideration of the possible application of further sanctions, the Executive Committee shall proceed in accordance with Chapter IV of the ICF Statutes. The decisions of the Executive Committee are exclusively subject to appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) to be decided via an expedited procedure by a single Arbitrator.

The breach of the present policy shall be deemed to harm the interest of the ICF and violate the special rules therefore disciplinary action can be taken.

This Policy may be amended or repealed by the ICF Board of Directors. The modifications will be published immediately on the ICF website.