

Para Sailing Classification: 2027 Rules Transition Consultation

Para Sailing and Classification

Classification is the system used by all Para sports which decides who is eligible to enter, compete, and engage in Para competition.

The purpose of Classification, set out by the International Paralympic Committee, is

“To minimise the impact of the impairment on athletes’ performance so that the sporting excellence determines which athlete or team is ultimately victorious. Ensuring that athletes are classified prior to competing is crucial to safeguarding the integrity and credibility of the competition.”

This system, common to all Para sports, ensures fair competition, and is the core of the Paralympic movement.

Why are the Classification Rules changing?

The rules are changing to incorporate the 2025 International Paralympic Committee classification code, which include:

- The verification of an Underlying Health Condition prior to Eligible Impairment Assessment
- International Standard for Classification Personnel and Training
- International Standard for Intentional Misrepresentation
- International Standard for Classification Data Protection

Every Para sport is required to adopt the 2025 Classification Code.

What is changing?

Eligible Impairments

The proposed rules expand the Eligible Impairments for Para Sailing incorporating **Lower Limb Length Difference** and **Short Stature**.

Sport Classes

Sailing’s current “points” based Sport Class system is based on previous Paralympic Equipment. The Sonar and Skud18 had points based team configurations, whilst the 2.4 Metre was based on Minimal Disability.

The provisional 2027 rules have revised the Sports Class system, moving away from an equipment focus, to the impact of an athlete's disability on Sailing performance.

There is now the addition of the **Sailing Specific Functional Tests**. These tests determine your Sport Class.

The proposed list of Sport Classes is:

Physical Impairment	Visual Impairment	Intellectual Impairment
Class 1	B1	II
Class 2	B2	
Class 3	B3	
Class 4		

** Information on Sport Class allocation can be found in Appendices 1, 2, and 3 of the proposed 2027 Rules*

These Sport Classes are solely dependent on the Sailing Specific Functional Tests score, making them directly linked to the Athlete's disability and impact on Sailing performance.

Classification Process

Currently an Athlete presents for an In-Person session at competition to identify their Eligible Impairment, calculate their Minimum Impairment Criteria (the base level of eligibility for Para Sailing), and assign their Sport Class.

Under the proposed rules, Classification has changed, simplifying the process for the athlete.

The Athlete will have the opportunity to apply for an In-Person Classification session and submit supporting documentation in advance.

All applications will be reviewed by our Classification team to deem whether an In-Person session is required.

How can I be part of the conversation?

World Sailing is inviting Athletes, Member National Authorities, Organising Authorities, and Para Inclusive community to engage in a consultation process regarding the proposed rules from **9 June to 9 August**.

Please use the [Classification Page](#) on the World Sailing Website to have your say.

In addition, there are two in-person opportunities to engage directly with World Sailing and our International Classifiers: **The RS Games, 16– 21 July**,

Travemünde, Germany, and The Eurasian Inclusive Cup, 25–31 August, Royal Mysore Yacht Club, India.

Timeline of Adoption

Following the consultation period, the finalised rules will be presented to the World Sailing Council on the 9 September for approval. These rules, following further consultation, will come into effect on the **1 January 2027**.

Upon official adoption of the new rules, all Para athletes will have until the **1 January 2029** to determine their new classification.

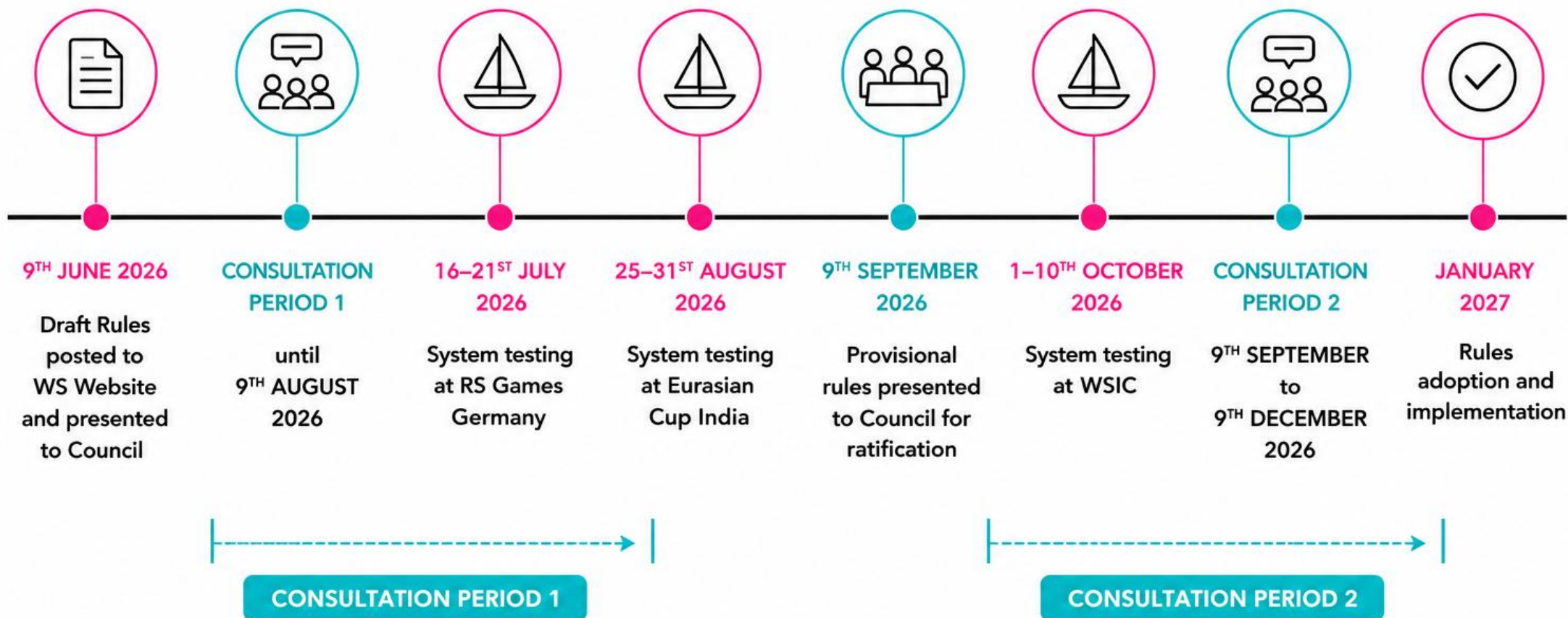
For the avoidance of doubt, the Para titles of the World Sailing Inclusion Championships, in October 2026, will be run under the 2019 rules.

Inclusive Sailing

As outlined in World Sailing's Para Inclusive Strategy 2024-2029, Inclusion remains the foundation supporting our work to get as many people on the water as possible. Inclusive sailing remains barrier free and sailors are not required to classify.

If you have general comments or queries regarding the proposed rules, please contact World Sailing at para.classification@sailing.org.

CLASSIFICATION TIMELINE



INCLUSIVE SAILING.
STRONGER TOGETHER.



WORKING TOGETHER TO DEVELOP
A FAIR, CONSISTENT AND INCLUSIVE
CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM.



ONE COMMUNITY.
EVERY OPPORTUNITY.
ALL ABILITIES.