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Data Protection Bill: Public Bill Committee  
House of Commons  
SW1A 0AA

12 March 2018

Dear Mr Hook,

**Public Bill Committee: Data Protection Bill – support for the submission by the Sport and Recreation Alliance dated 9 March 2018**

The British Paralympic Association is the National Paralympic Committee for Great Britain and Northern Ireland. As Chief Executive, I wish to support the submission by the Sport and Recreation Alliance dated 9 March 2018 to amend the Data Protection Bill at Schedule 1, page 131, line 28, at end insert:

*“( ) risks to fair and equal competition”*

To provide some context, disability sport involves the classification of athletes both nationally and internationally in order for them to compete within classifications for their individual sports. Classification is a defining feature of Paralympic Sport. It acts as a structure for competition - examples of other structures for competition used by both Olympic and Paralympic sport include gender, weight category or age. Classification establishes who can and cannot compete in Paralympic Sport and groups athletes into Sport Classes. It evaluates how much an athlete's impairment impacts on functional activities in each specific sport or discipline.

It is the BPA's responsibility to select, prepare, enter and manage the Great Britain and Northern Ireland team at each Paralympic Games. The BPA is also responsible for fostering the aims and ideals of the Paralympic movement throughout the United Kingdom in accordance with the principles and rules of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), including the IPC Athlete Classification Code.

The BPA recently published a [National Classification Code](#) on 28<sup>th</sup> February which will for the first time codify and set down the various organisations and individuals involved in the classification process in the UK, the rights and obligations available to and expected of them, and how we must as a nation ensure an ethical approach at all times.

Within the Code, there are various sections that require individuals to share their medical information in order to participate fairly in disability sport and to satisfy the requirements of the classification process. These sections include:

***“When a UK NGB identifies an athlete as ready to compete at an international level they must submit medical diagnostic information to the sport’s IF. After reviewing the information submitted, confirming that the athlete has an eligible impairment and meets the sport’s minimum eligibility criteria, the International Federation will allocate a classification appointment time, date and location for the athlete to attend classification evaluation. IFs usually offer classification opportunities immediately prior to IF sanctioned competitions.”***

(UK National Classification Code, page 7, Point 4 “International Classification”)

***“It is therefore critical that NGBs support their athletes to give a true reflection of their impairment and ability during international classification evaluation by ensuring the classifiers are given all relevant medical information and made aware of any exceptional skills and adaptations developed by the athlete. This will allow classifiers to work cooperatively to determine the most appropriate sports class.”***

(UK National Classification Code, page 7, Point 4 “International Classification”)

Under “Rights and Responsibilities” (page 10) athletes are also required to give a true account of their disability in order to compete on a level and fair playing field with other competitors both nationally and internationally. Medical evidence and updates are required as part of their responsibilities;

*“Under the UK Athlete Classification Code, athletes are responsible for:*

- 1. Giving a true reflection of their impairment and ability during classification evaluation*
- 2. Providing accurate and up-to-date medical evidence as directed by their National Governing Body in advance of classification evaluation***
- 3. Notifying their NGB if they experience a change in their condition (whether through a medical intervention or organically) that may impact on their sport class***

4. *Being respectful towards classifiers and their decisions, the classification process and fellow athletes*
5. *Arriving at classification evaluation informed of the classification process, in good time for the start of the appointment with relevant sports clothing and equipment and in good health, in order to participate fully in the evaluation*
6. *Contributing to classification education and classification research if appropriate”*  
(UK National Classification Code, page 10, point 7.2 “Athletes Responsibilities”)

All National Governing Bodies are, therefore, required to collect and hold relevant medical evidence to document that athletes are competing in the appropriate category under the National Classification Code.

Classification is fundamental to the Paralympic movement to ensure fairness and integrity in Paralympic sport. Given the requirement for the presentation of medical evidence as part of the classification process, we support the Sport and Recreation Alliance’s proposal to include an additional insert under line 28, page 131, Schedule 1 to ensure that individuals can submit their medical evidence in order to receive a classification and that National Governing Bodies can hold this data to ensure a fair and level playing field for all athletes, as Paralympic sport continues to grow in the future.

With best wishes,



Tim Hollingsworth  
Chief Executive