MINUTES
APSO Executive Board Meeting, 15 January 2026

Meeting title	**APSO Executive Board Meeting**
Date	15 January 2026
Time	10:00 – 12:00 CET
Venue	Videocall
Chair	Debbie Alexander, APSO President
Minutes	Sergey Lyzhin, APSO Honorary Secretary General

Attendance List		
Participants	Title	IF
☐ Dr Debbie Alexander (DA)	President	TRI
☐ Mr Steve Loader (SL)	Member	WWR
☐ Mr Richard Perot (RP)	Member	BWF
☐ Mr Jiří Snítil (JS)	Member	WCF
☐ Mr Sergey Lyzhin (HSG)	Honorary Secretary General	APSO
Apologies received		
☐ Ms Charmaine Hooper (CH)	Member	World Abilitysport

Agenda		**Presenter**	**Annex**
1	**Welcome from the President**	**DA**	
2	**Roll Call**		
3	**Conflict of Interest**		
4	**Approval of Consent Agenda Items – Minutes of previous meetings**	**SL/HSG**	
5	**Approval of Agenda**		
6	**Minutes – protocol ratification and circulation**		
7	**Matters Arising – Action Document**	**DA**	
	7.1 Funding/ revenue streams/Budget		
	7.1.1. Membership Fee increase		
	7.1.2 APSO/IPC agreement	**DA/HSG**	
	7.1.3 Special project funding		
	7.1.4 EB Meetings budget	**SL**	
	7.1.5 Paralympic Games revenue distribution		
	7.1.6 APSO banking	**DA**	

	7.2 Indemnity Insurance	**HSG**	
	7.3 Women Leadership training	**HSG**	
	7.4 Milano Cortina 2026 IRIS Proposal	**HSG**	
	7.5 Membership survey	**HSG**	
	7.6 Strategic Plan priorities	**DA/SL/HSG**	
	7.7 Commissions/Working Groups		
	7.7.1 Governance and Legal Advisory Group		
	7.7.2 Commercial and Marketing Advisory Group		
	7.7.3 Education Commission		
	7.7.4 Women in Para Sport Commission		
8	**Updates**	**HSG**	
	8.1 USADA		
	8.2 Meeting EPC (RUS/BLR Athletes)		
	8.3 Central VI services		
	8.4 Classification Commission		
9	**AOB**		
10	**Next meeting**		

Minutes	
1	**Welcome from the President** The Chair welcomed the Executive Board (EB) members to their first meeting of 2026 and wished everyone well for the year ahead. She informed the EB members that she would be attending the IPC Governing Board meeting in Bonn, scheduled for the following week.
2	**Roll call** The roll call was conducted and the quorum confirmed. Charmaine Hooper was excused from attendance.
3	**Conflict of Interest** DA declared that she serves on the IPC Governing Board and is the First Vice President of World Triathlon. JS declared that he represents World Curling and would abstain from voting on the IRIS Data Collection proposal later in the meeting, as the project would be of direct benefit to the International Federation (IF). HSG was **assigned responsibility** for maintaining the APSO Conflict of Interest Register.

4	**Approval of Consent Agenda Items – Minutes of previous meetings** DA introduced the concept of a Consent Agenda, which would include documents or decisions for approval that do not require extensive discussion, such as the minutes of previous EB meetings. Should any item proposed for inclusion in the Consent Agenda require further amendment or discussion, it would be removed from the Consent Agenda and addressed as a separate agenda item. The EB members **agreed** to her proposal. The minutes of the EB meetings held on 9 October 2025 and 13 November 2025 were unanimously **approved**.
5	**Approval of Agenda** DA presented the agenda circulated to EB members in advance of the meeting and proposed the addition of the following discussion items: • Governance and Legal Advisory Group as item 7.7.1. • Future member meetings, to be addressed under Other Business. • Reaching out to Regional Organisations, to be addressed under Other Business. • IFs' role in planning for the Paralympic Games, to be addressed under Other Business. The EB **approved** the amended agenda for the meeting.
6	**Minutes – protocol ratification and circulation** DA noted that the practice of finalising and publishing minutes of a General Assembly prior to the subsequent General Assembly, as well as making minutes of Board meetings publicly available, is not common within the sport ecosystem. She suggested that APSO should align its practices with established industry standards. The EB members unanimously **agreed** to review the protocol framework for the ratification and circulation of meeting minutes and to propose appropriate amendments to the APSO Statutes for consideration and approval by APSO members. The EB further **agreed** to seek advice on this matter from the Governance and Legal Advisory Group (GLAG) once it has been established.
7	**Matters Arising – Action Document**
	7.1 Funding/ revenue streams/Budget HSG informed the EB members that the current APSO funds amount to approximately CHF 33,000 and are held in two bank accounts in different currencies: CHF 21,500 and EUR 12,000, respectively. **7.1.1 Membership Fee increase** DA reminded the EB members that the General Assembly had decided to maintain the 2026 membership fee at CHF 300 and proposed that any further increase be considered no earlier than 2027, should the need arise. HSG informed the EB members that FIS had previously suggested that an increase in membership fees should be considered only as a last resort, and only if no other revenue-generating opportunities were available, such as partnership agreements with the IPC, ASOIF, WOF, or other potential stakeholders. **7.1.2 APSO/IPC agreement** DA informed the EB members that a formal meeting between herself and IPC CEO Mike Peters to discuss the renewal of the APSO-IPC Agreement had been scheduled for the

week commencing 23 March 2026. She also noted that she planned to hold informal discussions on the subject with him on the sidelines of the aforementioned IPC Governing Board meeting in January 2026.

7.1.3 Special project funding

DA suggested that, in order to finance potential projects related to women's leadership training and the implementation of the Strategic Plan, additional or special project funding may be required.

7.1.4 EB Meetings budget

DA reminded the EB members that, in accordance with Article 17.2 of the APSO Statutes, each member federation is responsible for the expenses incurred by the participation of its delegates in APSO Assemblies, as well as for its nominees elected to the Executive Board. It was **agreed** that this approach places independent Paralympic IFs at a disadvantage compared to integrated Olympic/Paralympic IFs, due to significant differences in available funding, and that this issue should therefore be revisited.

SL presented a provisional budget for holding an in-person EB meeting alongside major sport governance gatherings in 2026. The estimated total cost, including travel expenses, accommodation, daily allowances, and event passes for all EB members, would amount to approximately CHF 25,000 for the 2026 SportAccord Convention in Baku, and approximately CHF 9,500 for the 2026 IF Forum in Lausanne.

RP noted that representatives of BWF had previously been able to meet informally with IPC President Andrew Parsons at such events, which helped make the relationship between the two organisations more direct and transparent. The EB members **agreed** that there is value for APSO to be represented at these major gatherings; however, it was also **agreed** that further consideration should be given to the associated budget implications.

7.1.5 Paralympic Games revenue distribution

HSG confirmed that IFs have never received a share of the Paralympic Games revenues, whereas Olympic IFs do receive a portion of the Olympic Games revenues, with the exact amounts allocated to each IF being publicly available (e.g. on the ASOIF website).

The EB members unanimously **agreed** that APSO, on behalf of its members, must continue to advocate with the IPC for the introduction of revenue distribution to the IFs involved, particularly in light of the continuous growth of the Paralympic Games and its brand value.

7.1.6 APSO banking

DA informed the EB members that, in order to authorise outgoing payments from APSO bank accounts, the authorised signatory must reside in Switzerland. As none of the current EB members meets this criterion, she proposed assigning APSO Honorary Secretary General Sergey Lyzhin responsibility for APSO banking operations. She further suggested that, in the event of his unavailability, APSO should designate an alternative signatory, proposing World Triathlon Sport Director Gergely Markus for this role.

The EB members unanimously **approved** the appointment of Sergey Lyzhin and Gergely Markus as signatories with equal access rights to the APSO bank accounts.

7.2 Indemnity Insurance

HSG informed the EB members that he had held informal discussions with staff from various IFs regarding the indemnity insurance coverage provided to their Board members. He noted that the annual premium fees typically ranged between CHF 3,000 and CHF 6,000. SL suggested that, given that APSO does not organise events and therefore does not require public liability insurance, the cost of indemnity insurance for APSO should be lower.

	HSG was **tasked** with approaching IFs to obtain contact details of their insurance service providers and to subsequently request proposals on APSO's behalf.
	7.3 Women Leadership training HSG informed the EB members that he had obtained an updated quote from Gabriela Mueller, who previously delivered women's leadership training for APSO, as well as a new quote from EqualCareers, which recently delivered a successful leadership workshop for ASOIF. DA highlighted the importance of continuing to provide development opportunities for women engaged in Para sport and queried whether it would be possible to apply for IPC special project grants for this purpose. It was noted that applications for IPC grants are currently available exclusively to IPC members, namely NPCs and IFs/IOSDs. It was nevertheless **agreed** that, in the future, APSO should seek to become eligible for project-based grant applications. HSG was **tasked** with sharing the full EqualCareers programme curriculum with EB members for their information and further consideration.
	7.4 Milano Cortina 2026 IRIS Proposal HSG presented the proposal received from IRIS for data collection during the Milano–Cortina 2026 Paralympic Games, similar to the services IRIS provided for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games for Summer IFs. The EB members **agreed** that the project could offer meaningful value to Winter IFs; however, APSO is not in a financial position to fund the project independently. HSG was **tasked** with presenting the IRIS proposal to FIS, IBU, and World Curling Federation (WCF) collectively, in order to assess their interest in jointly and proportionally co-financing the research.
	7.5 Membership survey HSG presented to the EB members a draft survey aimed at collecting up-to-date information on members' annual expenditure on Para sport. The EB **approved** the survey and **tasked** HSG with distributing it to the membership.
	7.6 Strategic Plan priorities DA suggested that she, SL, and HSG convene a separate meeting to prepare an initial implementation plan for the APSO 2025–2032 Strategy. It was **agreed** to hold this meeting on 29 January 2026, and HSG was **tasked** with sending out the videoconference invitations.
	7.7 Commissions/Working Groups **7.7.1 Governance and Legal Advisory Group** DA presented the recruitment package and the Terms of Reference (TOR) for GLAG. She proposed SL as the EB representative on the Group and World Boccia President Jon Morgan as Chair, subject to his availability. The EB members **approved** her proposal. DA further suggested that, in addition to appointing the nominated candidates, the TOR should include a provision allowing the EB to co-opt additional group members, in order to complement and diversify the advisory body's expertise. The EB **approved** this proposal and HSG was **tasked** with amending the recruitment package wording accordingly. **7.7.2 Commercial and Marketing Advisory Group** DA suggested that the creation of an APSO Commercial and Marketing Advisory Group

	would be timely. It was **agreed** to seek expertise internally among the marketing specialists of APSO member organisations who would be in a position to draft the TOR for the Group and lead its work. **7.7.3 Education Commission** DA suggested that the creation of an APSO Education Commission would be beneficial, as it could facilitate knowledge sharing and mutual growth among APSO members, and be of particular assistance to independent Paralympic IFs. It was **agreed** to seek expertise internally among the development specialists of APSO member organisations who would be in a position to draft the TOR for the Commission and lead its work. SL noted that it would be important to assess the education initiatives currently conducted by the IPC in order to avoid any duplication of efforts. **7.7.4 Women in Para Sport Commission** DA highlighted the need to establish a Women in Para Sport Commission and invited proposals from EB members regarding potential leaders for this Commission. Among the names mentioned were World ParaVolley Vice President Elvira Stinissen, Wheelchair Rugby New Zealand President Cherie Harris, and Paralympians Manasi Joshi and Allysa Seely. The EB members **agreed** to continue identifying potential female leaders and gender equality advocates within APSO member organisations who could support the establishment of the Commission.
8	**Updates**
	8.1 USADA HSG informed the EB members that, following the WADA Symposium held in Busan, Republic of Korea, in December 2025, no action or joint statements from Paralympic IFs were required in relation to the USADA Certification Program. The EB members **agreed** to remain in regular contact with the IPC on this matter. **8.2 Meeting EPC (RUS/BLR Athletes)** HSG informed the EB members about a recent meeting with representatives of the European Paralympic Committee (EPC), during which the EPC raised several issues of concern related to the implementation of the IPC General Assembly decision to reinstate full membership rights of the Russian and Belarusian NPCs. These concerns included participation in Para sports for which the IPC acts as the world governing body, leading to withdrawals from hosting continental championships (e.g. the European Para Swimming Championships 2026 in the Netherlands). Additional concerns were raised in relation to the European Para Championships 2027 in Geneva, where athletes from Russia and Belarus may, in some sports, represent their countries, while in others compete as neutral athletes. This situation could create operational and communication challenges, particularly for event organisers and broadcasters. The EB members **agreed** to maintain dialogue with the EPC on these matters. **8.3 Central VI services** HSG updated the EB members on the progress of the Visual Impairment (VI) classification centralisation project being implemented by the IPC. While participating IFs were generally dissatisfied with the quality of services provided to date, they saw no viable alternative but to sign their respective agreements with the IPC, utilise the available special grants to partially offset classifiers' recertification costs, and work towards improved accountability of the IPC in relation to the VI classification services it provides. The EB members **took note** of this update.

	8.4 Classification Commission HSG presented the key takeaways from the APSO Classification Commission (ACC) meeting held on 16 December 2025. He reported that ACC members felt the IPC Classification Code primarily focuses on regulating classification procedures and appeal mechanisms, whereas for the vast majority of athletes the class allocation criteria are of greatest importance. He further noted that handling Intentional Misrepresentation (IM) cases presents significant challenges for IFs, as such cases are frequent but not regular enough for IF judicial bodies to consistently develop the required expertise to adjudicate them fairly. It was therefore suggested that APSO should advocate for the IPC to provide centralised services for IM proceedings and appeals. The EB unanimously **supported** this proposal. HSG also informed the EB members of concerns raised within the ACC that many Para athletes globally lack sufficient knowledge of classification rules and access to financial and/or judicial resources to effectively protect their interests or appeal classification decisions, with such opportunities largely limited to athletes from wealthier nations. RP suggested that APSO should advocate for the IPC to provide financial support mechanisms for athletes in such cases, similar to WADA's support for under-resourced athletes in anti-doping appeals. The EB members **took note** of this suggestion.
9	**Other Business** **Central Hub for Classification Information** FIS suggested that the IPC should serve as a central hub for classification and eligibility information. Under this approach, when an athlete is assigned an ineligible class for a given sport following an international classification procedure, they could immediately receive information on which other sports their impairment may be eligible for. This would help retain athletes within Para sport. The EB members **supported** this proposal. **Future member meetings** HSG was **tasked** with providing provisional budgets for APSO member meetings scheduled for 2026, including the Sport Technical Meeting to be held on the sidelines of the IPC Open Days and the General Assembly aligned with the IPC Members Gathering. **Reaching out to Regional Organisations** DA suggested that APSO should proactively engage with Regional Paralympic Organisations and propose inviting representatives from individual IFs and IOSDs to their regular meetings (e.g. General Assemblies). The EB members **agreed** that this approach would help strengthen relationships between IFs and NPCs. **IFs' role in planning for the Paralympic Games** DA referred to situations where Technical Officials working at the Olympic and Paralympic Games receive different levels of remuneration and service, despite often performing identical duties. She proposed that APSO should advocate with the IPC for a greater role for IFs in the planning and delivery of the Paralympic Games, in order to avoid situations where unilateral decisions by OCOGs could negatively affect the image of Para sport. The EB members **supported** this proposal.
10	**Next meeting** HSG was tasked with coordinating the selection of a date for the next EB meeting via the WhatsApp group.
	The President thanked all participants for their time and commitment. The meeting was formally closed.