

**United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee
Certification Review Group**



**Certification Renewal Recommendation Report for USA Archery
December 7, 2023**



**UNITED STATES
OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC
COMMITTEE**

USA Archery Certification Renewal Executive Summary

In January 2021, the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) Certification Review Group (CRG), in accordance with the USOPC's NGB Certification Policy, began a certification renewal review of USA Archery.¹ The CRG evaluated USA Archery and recommends a certification status of Renewal in Good Standing based on input from CRG members, as well as the results of NGB Audit department's 2021 Compliance Audit and 2022 Addendum Report², and USA Archery's fulfillment of Compliance requirements issued in 2022.

The CRG's review of USA Archery found that the organization is meeting the USOPC's NGB Compliance Standards in the five core areas of evaluation for certification: Governance and Compliance, Financial Standards and Reporting Practices, Athlete Protections and Rights, Sport Performance, and Operational Performance. As noted above, USA Archery completed required reforms outlined in a 2022 Demand Letter from the USOPC's Compliance department relating to governance practices and perceived favoritism.

CRG members agreed that USA Archery is meeting the requirements for NGB certification. In its discussions regarding USA Archery's interactions with the USOPC, the CRG did not identify any operational concerns that would prevent the organization's continued certification. However, the CRG noted that there are still opportunities for USA Archery to build on the progress the organization has made where the USOPC will continue to work with the organization.

As a result of this review, the CRG recommends that USA Archery be granted a certification status of Renewal in Good Standing for a four-year certification term ending in 2027.

¹ See Appendix for more information about the certification process, including a link to the NGB Certification Policy.

² [NGB Audit Report](#) and [NGB Audit Addendum Report](#).

Organizational Overview

USA Archery is the USOPC-certified NGB for the sport of archery. The mission of USA Archery is to enable United States athletes to achieve sustained competitive excellence in Olympic, Paralympic, World Championships, and international competitions and to promote and grow the sport of archery in the United States.

Formed in 1879 to foster and promote the sport of archery, USA Archery provides the necessary resources to foster strong athlete participation, competition, and training in the sport.³ USA Archery sanctions more than 350 events annually and conducts indoor, outdoor, collegiate National Championships, and the United States Archery Team Qualifier Series.⁴ The NGB is headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colorado.⁵

Certification History

USA Archery was originally certified in January 2021.⁶ This is the first time USA Archery has gone through the certification review process.

Certification Exceptions⁷

USA Archery did not request any exceptions from the NGB Compliance Standards during its certification review.

Athlete Representation Approval and Exceptions⁸

USA Archery requested that the Athlete Representation Review Working Group (ARRWG) approve additional international competitions as qualifying events for 10 Year and 10 Year+ status to expand the pool of athletes eligible to serve as athlete representatives. The ARRWG approved the following competitions:

- World Archery World Championships (2012 onward)
- World Archery World Cups (2012 onward)
- World Archery Para World Championships (2012 onward)

The ARRWG approved the competitions and effective years as presented and granted an exception for currently serving athletes on NGB Committees and/or the NGB Board who do not meet 10 Year criteria to complete their current term. The exception does not extend beyond that cohort of athlete representatives.

³ [About Us](#), USA Archery Website.

⁴ Id.

⁵ Id.

⁶ Refer to the Appendix for details on the initial certification.

⁷ Refer to the Appendix for details on exception requests to the NGB Compliance Standards.

⁸ Refer to the Appendix for details on athlete representation exception requests.

Certification Review⁹

Governance and Compliance

The CRG determined that USA Archery is fulfilling the Governance and Compliance-related responsibilities of an NGB, including adopting, and enforcing key ethics and compliance-related policies, making them publicly available on its website; and defining procedures to address violations of these policies. In 2023, USA Archery was the subject of a formal Section 9 complaint filed with the USOPC Dispute Resolution Unit (DRU). The Section 9 complaint was remanded to the USA Archery Board of Justice panel.¹⁰ Because the Board of Justice panel was not properly constituted, the arbitrator issued a second interim award concluding that a single, athlete representative arbitrator must be appointed as the Board of Justice tribunal to re-hear the case.¹¹ Ultimately, the final outcome of the right to compete complaint remained with USA Archery.

As a result of the 2021 Compliance Audit, USA Archery updated its bylaws to expressly state that all athlete representatives on committees will be selected by eligible athletes. Furthermore, USA Archery updated its code of conduct and conflict of interest policy, as well as strengthened controls for its conflict of interest disclosure and review process with a focus on providing written direction for mitigating conflicts of interest.

In 2022, outside counsel for the USOPC conducted an investigation which resulted in USOPC Compliance requiring the organization to make changes to its governance practices to meet NGB Compliance Standards. USA Archery addressed the identified concerns by strengthening its board of directors' operations, executing its conflicts of interest disclosure and review process, and by providing diversity, anti-harassment, anti-retaliation, and unconscious bias training for leadership and staff. While USA Archery has made progress in these areas, the USOPC continues to work with USA Archery on ensuring conflicts of interest processes are implemented relating to Athlete Advisory Councils and that it executes other processes that impact members.

Financial Standards and Reporting Practices

USA Archery meets the requirements for an NGB's Financial Standards and Reporting Practices. The organization demonstrates financial operational capability to administer its sport and is financially and operationally transparent with its membership by publishing its audited financial statements and tax forms.

Athlete Protection and Rights

USA Archery maintains and enforces an athlete safety program consistent with the requirements of relevant federal law, as well as with the policies and standards of the USOPC and the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center). As a result of the 2021 Compliance Audit, USA Archery updated relevant documents to expressly require members to comply with anti-doping requirements of the USOPC and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency.

The USOPC is not aware of any cases it has received in the past four years concerning USA Archery that should have been reported to the Center but were not reported in accordance with the

⁹ Refer to the Appendix for details on the review standards and process for information related to the Compliance Audit.

¹⁰ [Interim Award of Arbitrator Vanderwier v. USA Archery](#). April 10, 2023.

¹¹ [Second Interim Award of Arbitrator Vanderwier v. USA Archery](#). April 11, 2023.

Center's reporting requirements. For its part, the USOPC has reported all matters to the Center relating to USA Archery that the USOPC was required to report.

On February 16, 2022, the Center conducted its most recent Administrative Audit¹² of USA Archery's implementation of policies required by the SafeSport Code and the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies, which resulted in no findings or directions for corrective actions.

The Center conducted an Event Audit¹³ of USA Archery on July 11-12, 2023, hosted at the James W. Cownie Soccer Park for the 2023 Junior Olympic Archery Development Target Nationals. The event audit resulted in no findings or directions for corrective actions.

Sport Performance

USA Archery is fulfilling its obligations in Sport Performance. The organization maintains and executes a strategic plan that supports athletes in achieving sustained competitive excellence and grows the sport. USA Archery established selection procedures and executed them effectively to name and train Team USA athletes for Delegation Events.

Operational Performance

The CRG determined that USA Archery is fulfilling a majority of the Operational Performance standards. The organization keeps current insurance policies, and demonstrates financial sustainability. USA Archery updated its whistleblower policy and anti-retaliation policy during the audit remediation period to meet NGB Compliance Standards. As a result of the 2021 Compliance Audit and in an effort to address findings that resulted from the investigation, USA Archery solicited feedback from its athlete representatives and elite athlete members to help the organization improve its culture. While there remain some areas of concern related to community perceptions of managerial capability and the execution of certain processes as noted in the Compliance and Governance section above, USA Archery largely shows the managerial capability to administer its sport.

USA Archery updated its bylaws to comply with grievance procedure requirements, and NGB Audit confirmed that the organization effectively updated its grievances processes consistent with the established requirements. Subsequent to the audit testing period and based on issues noted during the 2023 Section 9 case, USA Archery implemented and executed additional controls to ensure a sufficient number of qualified athlete representatives were included on hearing panels.

USA Archery developed a 2022-2024 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Strategic Plan to reflect the NGB's vision for a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible organization. USA Archery submitted its action plan to the USOPC with sufficient detail to meet the NGB Compliance Standards. The action plan includes four objectives with details relating to specific initiatives, target groups, timelines, and success measures. Objectives include strengthening policies and procedures to be reflective of DE&I initiatives; evaluating business practices to ensure opportunities for all; recruiting diverse candidates for leadership and staff; and educating executive leadership and staff to bring awareness to underrepresented populations.

¹² [US Center for SafeSport Administrative Audit Report](#) – USA Archery, February 16, 2022.

¹³ [US Center for SafeSport Event Audit Report](#) – USA Archery, July 11-12, 2023.

Conclusion

The CRG concluded that USA Archery is performing satisfactorily based on input from the CRG members, the results of the NGB Audit team's 2021 Compliance Audit, and the organization's completion of required reforms from recent Compliance investigations. There are no outstanding areas of significant concern affecting the NGB's certification status at this time, though the USOPC will continue to work with USA Archery to ensure that it is building upon the progress made in addressing past concerns.

Accordingly, the CRG recommends that USA Archery's certification as a member organization of the USOPC be renewed with a rating of Renewal in Good Standing, and the USOPC is ready to assist USA Archery as it continues to build on the reforms it has made over the past year.

Appendix

Certification Renewal Process

The USOPC believes in a culture of strong governance, ethics, and compliance among the NGBs that, as member organizations of the USOPC, make up the Olympic and Paralympic movement. Recent amendments to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, which became effective in late 2020, require the USOPC to certify NGBs.¹⁴ The USOPC determined that as of January 1, 2021, all member organizations would be certified, and their certifications would be reviewed for renewal on a rolling basis every four years.¹⁵

Governed by the USOPC's [NGB Certification Policy](#), the NGB certification review process is supported by a cross-functional body of professionals at the USOPC, the Certification Review Group (CRG), who interact with NGBs in their day-to-day work. These professionals evaluate an NGB's operations across multiple functional areas to provide a holistic review of an NGB's performance and culture.¹⁶ In addition to enumerated standards for NGB performance described in the Act, the Bylaws, and the USOPC's [NGB Compliance Standards](#), the CRG considers departmental observations about an NGB's operations that may not be identified in a formal audit scenario but are relevant to consider when evaluating an NGB's overall performance.

Certification Standards, Exceptions, and Review Components

As described in Section 8.4.1 of the [USOPC Bylaws](#), NGBs must satisfy certification requirements in five core areas: Governance and Compliance, Financial Standards and Reporting Practices, Athlete Safety, Sport Performance, and Operational Performance. The USOPC Implementation Guide for NGB Compliance Standards provides NGBs with specific guidance for how they will be evaluated in each of these core areas.

Section 8.4.2 of the USOPC Bylaws permits an NGB to submit a request for limited exceptions to any of the NGB Compliance Standards which, as a result of its overall structure or other extenuating circumstances, cannot or need not be reasonably met. The CRG evaluates all requests received and grants or denies such limited exceptions.

Various provisions of Section 8.5 of the USOPC Bylaws permit NGBs to seek exceptions related to minimum athlete representation requirements on boards and designated committees as well as exceptions or additions to which of its committees are considered designated committees. The Athlete Representation Review Working Group evaluates and approves or denies all requests made under Section 8.5.

¹⁴ See §220521(a) of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act.

¹⁵ NGB Certification Policy, Section 1.

¹⁶ The CRG uses a four-year lookback period during this review process.