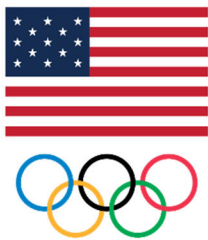


**United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee
Certification Review Group**



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



**UNITED STATES
OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC
COMMITTEE**

USA Volleyball Certification Renewal Executive Summary

In February 2023, 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 Volleyball.¹ The CRG evaluated USA Volleyball and, based on input from CRG members and the results of NGB Audit's 2022 Compliance Audit², recommends a certification status of Renewal in Good Standing.

The CRG's review of USA Volleyball 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.

CRG members agreed that USA Volleyball is meeting the requirements and expectations for an NGB. In its discussions of USA Volleyball's interactions with the USOPC, the CRG did not identify any operational concerns or cultural issues that would prevent the organization's continued certification. Overall, in the areas in which CRG members had interacted with USA Volleyball, the CRG had a favorable view of USA Volleyball's operations.

As a result of this review, the CRG recommends that USA Volleyball 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 Volleyball is the USOPC-certified NGB for the sport of volleyball and sitting volleyball and is the US member to the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB), the international federation that oversees volleyball disciplines and the U.S. member of World ParaVolley, the international federation that oversees Paralympic volleyball disciplines. USA Volleyball’s vision is to “build, create and support a safe, inclusive and positive volleyball experience and a lifetime of opportunity for all.”³ USA Volleyball is divided into 40 regions⁴ and is headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colorado.⁵

Certification History

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

Certification Exceptions⁷

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

Athlete Representation Approval and Exceptions⁸

USA Volleyball requested that the Athlete Representation Review Working Group (ARRWG) approve additional competitions as qualifying events for 10-Year and 10-Year+ status to expand the pool of athletes eligible to serve as athlete representatives. All these events are international, high-level events for which Team USA was chosen in accordance with NGB-led selection procedures. The ARRWG approved the following seven competitions as qualifying events:

- FIVB World Championships
- World ParaVolley World Championships
- Volleyball Nations League
- FIVB World Cup
- FIVB Beach World Tour Events
- WPV Beach ParaVolley Events
- USOPC Designated Operation Gold Events

In addition, USA Volleyball requested an exception to the requirement that the Team USA Athlete’s Commission Representative be a member of the Board of Directors. The ARRWG panel agreed that the current athlete representative structure on the board, which allots athlete seats for each of the three disciplines, provides a balanced and effective athlete voice and approved the exception with the clarification that the Team USA Athlete’s Commission representative and alternate have a right to attend and participate in board meetings, without vote. Additionally, the panel accepted the NGB and AAC request that the votes of athlete representatives in committees larger than 11 individuals be weighted with the condition that bylaws or committee charters be changed to reflect that athletes must be present and able to exercise their 33% weighted vote for committee business or decisions to proceed. Weighted voting was approved for the following four committees:

³ [About](#), USA Volleyball 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.

- Regional Volleyball Association Assembly
- Officials Assembly
- Junior Assembly
- Beach Assembly

Certification Review⁹

Governance and Compliance

The CRG determined that USA Volleyball 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. Additionally, USA Volleyball has not been the subject of any formal complaints filed with the Dispute Resolution Unit within the last four years.

As a result of the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Volleyball updated its bylaws and several governance policies to meet requirements. USA Volleyball also identified additional athletes to meet the 33.3 % athlete representation requirement for several designated committees. In addition, USA Volleyball made changes to the conflict of interest disclosure and review process to ensure forms are completed annually by all required individuals and properly reviewed.

The CRG received athlete feedback regarding USA Volleyball’s governance practices, which was positive overall. Athletes noted some concerns with communication between the Athletes Advisory Council (AAC), and suggested USA Volleyball improve onboarding for new AAC representatives. However, the athletes noted that USA Volleyball is taking steps to improve communication and continues to actively work to meet athlete representation requirements.

Financial Standards and Reporting Practices

The CRG determined that USA Volleyball demonstrates financial operational capability to administer its sport and is financially and operationally transparent, maintaining accountability to its members and to the USOPC.

As a result of the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Volleyball implemented systematic controls to ensure policy compliance and updated the financial policies and procedures to include new grant report review procedures bringing USA Volleyball into compliance.

Athlete Protection and Rights

USA Volleyball 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). It also maintains an anti-doping program consistent with the 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 Volleyball that should have been reported to the Center but were not reported in accordance with the Center’s reporting requirements. For its part, the USOPC has reported all matters to the Center relating to USA Volleyball that the USOPC was required to report.

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

In 2022, the Center conducted its most recent Administrative Audit¹⁰ of USA Volleyball's implementation of policies required by the SafeSport Code and the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies, which resulted in one finding and direction for corrective actions relating to procedures and communication. The Center deemed USA Volleyball's corrective actions as complete and compliant on March 2, 2023.¹¹ On June 28, 2023, the Center conducted its most recent Event Audit of the Girls 14-17s Junior National Championships at McCormick Place Convention Center¹², which resulted in no findings and direction for minor corrective actions related to Communication and Reporting and Quality Control System. The Center deemed USA Volleyball's corrective actions as complete and compliant on September 1, 2023¹³.

In response to the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Volleyball updated their bylaws and policies to include the required Athlete Safety reporting procedures and anti-doping language.

Sport Performance

USA Volleyball 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 Volleyball established selection procedures and executed them effectively to name and train Team USA athletes for Delegation Events.

In response to the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Volleyball made updates to event sanctioning documents and created Paralympic classification policies and procedures that comply with U.S. Paralympics National Classification Policies & Procedures and the IPC Athlete Classification Code and International Standards.

Operational Performance

The CRG determined that USA Volleyball is meeting all the Operational Performance standards. The organization demonstrates managerial capability to administer its sport, keeps current insurance policies, demonstrates financial sustainability, maintains grievance procedures, and enforces a whistleblower and anti-retaliation policy. As a result of the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Volleyball updated several policies, reporting practices, and implemented a process to monitor progress against the strategic plan to fully meet the requirements of the NGB Compliance Standards.

USA Volleyball developed a 2021-2024 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Action Plan with aims to prioritize diversity, increase equity, and create a culture of inclusion. USA Volleyball 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 increasing the diverse reputation of USA Volleyball staff; increasing the representation of staff who have disabilities; removing barriers to participation and using resources to make volleyball more accessible; and using the USA Volleyball Foundation campaigns to fundraise and support DE&I efforts.

Conclusion

¹⁰ [US Center for SafeSport Administrative Audit](#), September 15, 2022.

¹¹ [US Center for SafeSport Corrective Actions Update](#), March 23, 2023.

¹² [US Center for SafeSport Event Audit](#), June 28, 2023.

¹³ [US Center for SafeSport Corrective Actions Update](#), September 6, 2023.

The CRG concluded that USA Volleyball is performing satisfactorily based on input from the CRG members and the results of the NGB Audit team's 2022 Compliance Audit, and there are no outstanding areas of concern affecting its certification status at this time. Accordingly, the CRG recommends that USA Volleyball's certification as a member organization of the USOPC be renewed with a rating of Renewal in Good Standing.

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.