

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



**National Wheelchair Basketball Association  
Certification Renewal Follow-Up Report  
December 7, 2023**



**UNITED STATES  
OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC  
COMMITTEE**



## **National Wheelchair Basketball Association Certification Renewal Follow-Up Report Executive Summary**

In December 2022, the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) Board of Directors certified the National Wheelchair Basketball Association (NWBA) as a National Governing Body (NGB) with a status of Certification with Conditions. In accordance with the USOPC's NGB Certification Policy and the Certification Agreement entered into by the NWBA and the USOPC, the NWBA was required to fulfill the conditions outlined in its conditional certification, then the Certification Review Group would evaluate the NGB's progress and deliver an updated recommendation to the USOPC Board of Directors.

The CRG's initial certification review of the NWBA found that the organization was 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. However, at the close of the initial certification review, the CRG had concerns about the organization's operational capabilities, particularly as it related to its then-vacant CEO position and its financial capacity. The Certification Agreement required that the NWBA meet conditions to address these concerns, including by hiring a new CEO, developing a sustainable high performance model that is incorporated into the organizational strategic plan, and demonstrate improvements to the organization's cash flow.

During the remediation period set forth in the Certification Agreement, the NWBA fulfilled the conditions set forth to the satisfaction of the CRG. As a result of the NWBA's timely action to meet the Certification Agreement, the CRG recommends that the NWBA's certification status be upgraded to Certified in Good Standing for its certification term ending in 2026.



## **Certification History**

The CRG began its certification review of the NWBA in 2020 when it applied for NGB status, and the organization participated in two public hearings and a membership audit conducted by the USOPC's NGB Audit department. The NWBA successfully met all of the NGB Compliance Standards, but the CRG still had some concerns related to the organizational capability of the NWBA based on its then-vacant CEO position and its financial health. As a result of the certification review, the USOPC entered into a Certification Agreement with NWBA outlining the conditions of the organization's certification and the CRG recommended that the NWBA be certified with a status of Certified with Conditions. The USOPC Board of Directors accepted this recommendation and ratified it on December 7, 2022.

## **Certification Conditions**

The NWBA's Certification with Conditions certification status was contingent on the completion of the following conditions:

- The NWBA must name an interim CEO who is not a member of the Board of Directors as soon as possible to serve until a full-time CEO is hired
- The NWBA must begin a CEO search, conclude the search by March 1, 2023, and onboard the new CEO as soon as practicable
- The NWBA must develop a high performance model that is sustainable over the long term and includes, but is not limited to, consideration of identifying a partner organization to support the high performance program
- The NWBA must include the new high performance model in its Board of Directors' approved strategic plan
- The NWBA must demonstrate efforts to increase overall funding for the organization, including through grants (excluding USOPC grants), sponsors, and membership fees
- The NWBA must demonstrate improvements to the organization's cash flow over the course of 2023 by identifying new, stable revenue streams

## **Remediation Actions**

### *New CEO*

Upon entering into the Certification Agreement, the NWBA's interim CEO resigned from her seat on the board to fulfill the condition that the organization have a non-board member serving in the interim CEO position. The organization also began its search for a permanent CEO and hired David Shaffer, who was onboarded as CEO as of April 1, 2023.

### *High Performance Model*

At its January 2023 meeting, the NWBA Board of Directors approved revisions to its organizational strategic plan to fulfill conditions outlined in the Certification Agreement. Specifically, the NWBA Board of Directors approved revisions to its 2020-2024 Strategic Plan to include "High Performance Excellence" as a pillar for the organization. The strategic plan includes initiatives to build a talent identification program, increase competition opportunities for emerging elite athletes, create a sports medicine portfolio, increase training and career transition resources for athletes, and engage Team USA players for assistance in events, speaking engagements, and fundraising opportunities and specific success measures for each of the initiatives.



### *Financial Capability*

The NWBA has demonstrated an improvement in overall cash flow and is tracking to increase its overall revenue in 2023. Through the third quarter, the NWBA's revenues have increased by 4% year-over-year relative to the same period in 2022, with increases in revenues from grants and donations during the first three quarters of 2023. The NWBA's new CEO has prioritized fundraising and sponsorships, and is exploring additional grants to supplement NWBA's other revenue streams, including membership dues. The NWBA has made progress and improved its financial position, and the CRG has confidence in the actions taken by the organization's new leadership will build on this progress, satisfying the conditions of certification related to the organization's financial capability.

### **Conclusion**

The CRG concludes that the NWBA is performing satisfactorily overall based on input from CRG members and its completion of the conditions required as part of the Certification Agreement and its subsequent December 2022 Certification with Conditions certification. The NWBA completed all requirements within the designated remediation period and there are no outstanding areas of concern affecting its certification status at this time. Accordingly, the CRG recommends that the NWBA's certification status be upgraded from Certified with Conditions to Certified in Good Standing for its current certification term ending in 2026.