

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



US SPEEDSKATING

**Certification Renewal Recommendation Report for US Speedskating
November 13, 2024**



**UNITED STATES
OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC
COMMITTEE**

US Speedskating Certification Renewal Executive Summary

In July 2024, 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 US Speedskating.¹ The CRG evaluated US Speedskating and, based on input from CRG members and the results of a compliance audit conducted in 2023², recommends a certification status of Renewal with Conditions.

The CRG's review of US Speedskating found that the organization is meeting most of 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. A compliance audit, conducted by the USOPC's NGB Audit department in 2023, identified several areas where US Speedskating was not fully meeting the USOPC's NGB Compliance Standards, including required elements of policies and the execution of its conflict of interest disclosure and review and background check processes.

During the CRG's review period, US Speedskating worked to resolve the outstanding audit findings to comply with the NGB Compliance Standards and remediated most of its audit findings by the time of the CRG's recommendation. However, the CRG determined that the remaining higher risk open audit findings should be considered conditions of US Speedskating's certification. The conditions include:

- In accordance with Standard A.6 b, US Speedskating must successfully demonstrate that it is executing its conflict of interest disclosure and review process that aligns with its updated and compliant conflict of interest policy.
- US Speedskating must successfully demonstrate that it is executing its background check policy in accordance with Standard C.3 a.
- US Speedskating must include required anti-doping language in its bylaws in accordance with Standard C.4 b.

As a result of this review, the CRG recommends that US Speedskating be granted a certification status of Renewal with Conditions with a deadline of December 31, 2024 to fulfill the conditions of certification. In accordance with the NGB Certification Policy, if the CRG determines that US Speedskating has successfully and timely addressed the conditions of this certification, the CRG will recommend that US Speedskating's certification status be upgraded to Renewal in Good Standing. If US Speedskating does not resolve these issues to the CRG's satisfaction by the deadline, its certification rating may be downgraded to Probationary Renewal and the CRG will discuss whether accountability measures are appropriate to address US Speedskating's delayed action.

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

² [NGB Compliance Audit – US Speedskating](#), June 29, 2023.

Organizational Overview

US Speedskating is the USOPC-certified NGB for the sport of speedskating and is the United States' representative to the International Skating Union (ISU), the international federation that governs the sport. US Speedskating's mission is "committed to growing, developing character through [their] shared values, and achieving international competitive success on ice"³. US Speedskating is based in Kearns, Utah.

Certification History

US Speedskating was originally certified in January 2021.⁴ The CRG's certification review was initiated based on US Speedskating's scheduled quadrennial certification review.

Certification Exceptions⁵

US Speedskating did not request any exceptions from the NGB Compliance Standards during its certification review.

Athlete Representation Approval and Exceptions⁶

In October 2021, US Speedskating requested and was granted alterations to its definitions of its NGB 10 Year or 10 Year+ Athlete or exceptions to the athlete representation requirements of the USOPC Bylaws.

US Speedskating requested that the ISU World Championships and World Cups be added to the qualifying competitions for the NGB 10-Year Athlete definition. As the competitions are premiere international competitions with an NGB-led selection process, the Athlete Representation Working Group approved the expansion.

US Speedskating also requested and was granted amended athlete representation on its board of directors⁷ to allow the "Olympian" category, which consists of 10+ Year Athletes to continue to represent athletes on the board. US Speedskating was also granted a temporary waiver of the requirement that the Team USA Athletes' Commission (Team USA AC) Representative have a voting seat on the board of directors until the current representatives' term ends, with the assurance that the Team USA AC representative serves in a non-voting role until that time.

Certification Review

Governance and Compliance

The CRG determined that US Speedskating is fulfilling many of the governance and compliance-related responsibilities of an NGB, including adopting bylaws that meet the requirements of the NGB Compliance Standards; adopting and enforcing key ethics and compliance-related policies, making these policies publicly available on its website; and defining procedures to address violations of these policies.

³ [US Speedskating.org, Who We Are](https://www.us-speedskating.org/who-we-are)

⁴ Refer to the Appendix for details on the initial certification.

⁵ Refer to the Appendix for details on exception requests to the NGB Compliance Standards.

⁶ Refer to the Appendix for details on athlete representation exception requests.

⁷ Updates to the USOPC Bylaws, effective April 1, 2024, preclude the Athlete Representation Working Group from granting exceptions to an NGB's Board of Directors' athlete representation composition and any Team USA AC exceptions. As such, these exceptions will need to be revised in the 2025-2028 quadrennial cycle.

During US Speedskating’s most recent compliance audit in 2023, the NGB Audit department found that US Speedskating was not fully meeting the NGB Compliance Standards within the Governance and Compliance area of evaluation. In particular, the NGB Audit department made findings relating to US Speedskating’s athlete representation, independent and affiliate board membership, execution of its conflict of interest process, as well as some policy deficiencies. US Speedskating made updates to its bylaws and processes to remediate all of these findings, with the exception of those related to conflicts of interest. The NGB Audit department found that US Speedskating’s conflict of interest policy and disclosure review process required revisions to meet the requirements. These findings have not yet been resolved, and their resolution is a condition of this certification.

The CRG sought feedback from US Speedskating athletes about their experiences with the NGB. Athletes commented that their feedback is actively sought with board members and staff working to reach mutual agreements and identify solutions. Additionally, the US Speedskating Athlete Advisory Council believes that US Speedskating’s board composition including 33.3% independent members has benefited the organization and athletes.

Financial Standards and Reporting Practices

US Speedskating meets the NGB Compliance Standards’ requirements for Financial Standards and Reporting Practices. The organization demonstrates financial stability and board engagement on financial matters, and it is financially and operationally transparent with its membership by publishing its audited financial statements and tax forms. US Speedskating also updated its financial policies and procedures during the audit remediation period to address compliance audit findings.

Athlete Protection and Rights

US Speedskating maintains and executes 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). The USOPC is not aware of any non-compliance issues with the anti-doping rules and 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 US Speedskating 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 US Speedskating that the USOPC was required to report.

In April 2024, the Center conducted its most recent event audit⁸ of US Speedskating’s implementation of Center requirements for NGB events. The event audit resulted in “Implemented” ratings in all categories evaluated, with no corrective actions required.

To resolve a finding of the 2023 compliance audit, US Speedskating updated its athlete agreements to include required language and reach full compliance with the NGB Compliance Standards. The NGB Audit department also made findings related to the execution of US Speedskating’s execution of its background check process against its background check policy. To close this finding, US Speedskating must submit additional evidence of process execution to the NGB Audit department, who will conduct supplemental testing to assess compliance of its process. Additionally, the NGB Audit department identified missing required anti-doping

⁸ [US Center for SafeSport 2024 Event Audit Report – US Speedskating](#), April 7, 2024.

language in US Speedskating’s bylaws. US Speedskating must successfully execute its background check processes, and update its bylaws to include the required anti-doping language as a condition of this certification before the CRG considers an upgrade of the NGB’s status to good standing.

Sport Performance

US Speedskating is fulfilling its obligations in Sport Performance. The organization maintains a strategic plan that supports athletes and aims to grow the sport. US Speedskating established selection procedures and executed them effectively to name Team USA athletes for the 2022 Olympic Winter Games.

The 2023 Compliance Audit identified minor improvements required to event sanctioning documents to fully comply with the NGB Compliance Standard. US Speedskating made the required updates within the established remediation period, which the NGB Audit department validated before closing the finding.

Operational Performance

The CRG determined that US Speedskating is fulfilling its obligations for Operational Performance standards. The organization demonstrates managerial capability to administer its sport, keeps current insurance policies, demonstrates financial stability, and maintains compliance with USOPC policies.

In its 2023 compliance audit, the NGB Audit department found that US Speedskating’s grievance procedures and whistleblower policies were missing elements required by the NGB Compliance Standards. US Speedskating revised these policies, which now meet the compliance requirements. The NGB Audit department also found that US Speedskating was not documenting progress against its strategic plan. To resolve the finding, US Speedskating implemented a process that ensures the board is regularly monitoring progress against the strategic plan, and the process implementation was validated by the NGB Audit department in November 2023 to close the finding.

US Speedskating developed a 2021-2024 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Action Plan intended to “develop a sporting community inclusive of a range of ages, races, and ethnicities and balance of gender.”⁹ US Speedskating submitted its action plan to the USOPC’s DE&I team with sufficient detail to meet the NGB Compliance Standards. The action plan includes objectives for each year with details relating to specific initiatives, target groups, timelines, and success measures. Objectives include recruitment, retention, and development goals that focus on encouraging and maintaining participation in classes and events; reducing barriers of entry to the sport; increasing outreach to various communities; and giving back to at-risk youth.

Conclusion

US Speedskating has made significant progress and meets most of the NGB Compliance Standards. However, because athlete safety is of paramount importance, and the effective management of the conflict of interest disclosure and review process is imperative to good governance, the CRG determined that US Speedskating must demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the NGB Compliance Standards before it recommends renewing US Speedskating’s certification in good standing. As such, the CRG recommends that US

⁹ Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2021-2024 – US Speedskating.

Speedskating's certification as a member organization of the USOPC be renewed with a rating of Renewal with Conditions.

As part of this Renewal with Conditions rating, US Speedskating will have until December 31, 2024, as ratified by the USOPC Board of Directors, to correct the outstanding issues. If US Speedskating successfully meets these conditions, the CRG will recommend that its certification rating be upgraded to Renewal in Good Standing. If US Speedskating does not meet the conditions of this certification by the deadline, its certification rating may be downgraded to Probationary Renewal and the CRG will discuss whether accountability measures are appropriate to address US Speedskating's delayed action.

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.¹⁰ 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.¹¹

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.¹² 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.

¹⁰ See §220521(a) of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act.

¹¹ *NGB Certification Policy*, Section 1.

¹² The CRG uses a four-year lookback period during this review process.