**A Strategic Plan**

**For**

**The Asian Paralympic Committee**

**2015 – 2018**

1. **INTRODUCTION**
   1. The purpose of this document is the preparation of a draft strategic plan for the Asian Paralympic Committee. The plan is based on discussions with APC in Kuwait, outputs from the APC Gathering in Abu Dhabi, and the knowledge the World Academy of Sport has of the Paralympic movement globally. It should be read in conjunction with the slides prepared for the gathering and with the summary of the outputs from it.
   2. The Paralympic movement has gone from strength to strength over the last decade, as evidenced by the success of the Paralympic Games. The number of athletes and countries participating in the games has continued to increase. Television coverage grew from 535 hours in Athens 2004 to 2,500 hours at London 2012, while the cumulative TV audience rose over the same period from 1.9 to 3.4 million. Spectator attendance at the London games reached record numbers with the Olympic Stadium full to capacity. The Paralympic Games are now the world’s third biggest sporting event, behind the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup.
   3. The challenge for the APC is to replicate the success of the IPC in Asia. Asia already accounts for 60% of the global population, and 44% of its GDP, and is forecast to become the dominant economic powerhouse in the world in the next 25 years, as industry moves East and South. To this extent the performance of the Paralympic movement in Asia will have a significant impact on the continued success of the IPC.
   4. The APC has managed to run with some success two Asian-Para Games, but it is acknowledged within the region that there are major opportunities for improvement in the management of the Games. The APC itself has suffered from some shortcomings in terms of governance, and hasn’t been as proactive as is needed to match the advances made by the IPC itself. The aim of this document is to address the challenges the APC faces, help it develop a more clearly defined role, and become a more decisive force in the growth of the Paralympic movement in Asia.
2. **VISION**
   1. It is proposed that the vision for the APC should be **“To make Asia one of the leading regions of the Paralympic movement in enabling athletes with a disability to achieve sporting excellence and inspire and excite the world”.** This vision is an exciting one, and represents a stretch goal for the APC. It will only, however, have form and substance if the APC benchmark the development of its performance against other regions in the Paralympic movement on criteria agreed to be the appropriate measures of success. Without such benchmarking, the vision will be meaningless.
   2. The values with which athletes with a disability are associated have been highlighted by the IPC as:

* **Courage** – Para-athletes through their performances showcase to the world what can be achieved when testing your body to its absolute limits.
* **Determination** – Para-athletes have a unique strength of character that combines mental toughness, physical ability and outstanding agility to produce sporting performances that regularly redefine the boundaries of possibility.
* **Inspiration** – As role models, para-athletes maximise their abilities, thus empowering and exciting others to participate in sport.
* **Equality** – Through sport para-athletes challenge stereotypes and transform attitudes, helping to increase inclusion by breaking down social barriers and discrimination towards people with impairments.
  1. Supported by the APC Gathering, it is these values which must be reflected in everything the APC does in organisation of the Asian Para Games, in promotion of the movement, and in management of its own activities.

Games Concept and Management

Organisation

Culture and Governance

Partnerships

Asian Para Games

Asian Paralympic Committee

Competition Structures and Athlete Pathways

Funding

Promotion

1. **THE ROLE OF THE APC**
   1. In fulfilment of the vision, the role of the APC can be defined as:

* Establishing the Asian Para Games as a premier sporting event.
* Empowering Para-Athletes and support the development of Para-Sports through NPCs.
* Assisting the IPC in improving the recognition and value of the Paralympic brand in Asia through acting in a coordinating and supporting capacity.
  1. Specific activities which should form the key elements of the role of the APC include:
* Leading on developing and delivering the Asian Para Games.
* Managing cooperation with the OCA in this process.
* Organising in conjunction with the International Federations competition structures so that they form an integrated set of activities, and provide a soundly based pathway for athlete development in the region.
* Facilitating again in conjunction with the International Federations the development of coaches, classifiers and support staff so that the Asian region becomes self-sufficient in this respect.
* Aiding the IPC in coordination of the NPCs and sub-regional organisations involved in the Paralympic movement.
* Promoting the involvement of females and athletes from conflict zones and economically deprived areas in Para sports.
  1. The reality is that the resources of the APC are extremely limited, and the worst thing the organisation can do is spread itself too thinly across too many activities. Its overriding priority is clearly the development and delivery of a successful Asian Para Games.

**IV. SUSTAINABLE FUNDING**

* 1. The APC is currently caught within the straitjacket of extremely limited funds. The organisation has little reserves to call on, and depends for the most part on the monies it obtains from granting cities the right to host the Asian Para Games. The revenue from this source itself varies according to the number and wealth of the cities that bid for rights.
  2. It is the IPC view that the demands made in terms of hosting fees should not be overstated, but should be related to the value of the Games and set at a level which is reasonable and sustainable over time so that meaningful planning can be carried out.
  3. The APC should seek to secure additional funding by:
* Establishing the benefits to Abu Dhabi from becoming ‘The home of the APC’. These benefits are likely to become increasingly significant over time
* Building a close relationship with the OCA, and through this securing increased financial support
* Sharpening its commercial acumen to make the Asian Para Games more appealing to television and sponsors.
  1. It is recommended that the APC set itself the task of reducing its dependence on host city contracts and making a step change in the funding it receives from other sources by 2018, achieving this through an overhaul of the commercial model for its core asset, the Asian Para Games.

**V. PARTNERSHIPS**

* 1. Critical to the success of the APC is its ability to form partnerships, in particular with the OCA and the IPC. Relationships with these two organisations have not been as close and as productive as they should have been to the detriment of the APC.

**IPC**

* 1. The APC should help the IPC in ensuring its membership development initiatives reach the Asian NPCs by acting as the accelerator and facilitator in order to maximise the impact of such initiatives. The main objectives for the APC should be to:
* Establish a strong working and collaboration culture with the various Divisions of the IPC, such as the Agitos Foundation, the IPC Sports and the IPC Academy, taking advantage of existing and future opportunities and programmes created or led by them, as well as developing together with them programmes dedicated to the needs and aspirations of the Asian NPCs.
* Work with the IPC and its various divisions to obtain funding, know-how and other support to help secure realisation of these programmes.
* Utilise best practices and know-how created through the years by the IPC around the organisation of the Paralympic Games, in order to establish a strong base to effectively coordinate the Asian Para Games and support their local organisers
* Support the IPC in its efforts to secure the organisation of successful Paralympic Games in the Asian Region in the next seven years, achieving the widest possible impact and disseminating legacy effect throughout the region.

**OCA**

* 1. The APC should aim to work with the OCA to ensure an integrated organization of the Asian Games and Asian Para Games from a single organising committee to
* Seek the synergies and benefits arising from the organisation of the Asian Para Games in the same city and from the same local organising committee as for the Asian Games few weeks later, using the same infrastructure and similar services level
* Create a robust collaboration mechanism, working processes and coordination structures to effectively guide and support Games organisers to deliver effectively both events, including development of event guidelines and transfer of know-how.
  1. It should strengthen cooperation with the OCA to the benefit of development of the Olympic and Paralympic Movements in Asia to
* Establish representation in each other’s committees and working groups, initiate and develop collaboration at the staff level, and alignment of processes,
* Identify areas and programmes where synergies can be achieved at the sub-regional bodies and national level to support grass roots development of Para Sports in Asian countries

**VI. COMPETITION STRUCTURES & ATHLETE PATHWAYS**

* 1. The APC needs to provide sanctioned events across a diverse number of Para sports throughout the Asian region that create opportunities for Asian athletes to qualify for higher level regional and world events. In establishing these competition structures the APC is committed to creating sustainable para sport in the long term by ensuring appropriate resources are developed and deployed across sports. The coordination of resources will ensure that athletes have more classification opportunities with more locally based classifiers, better quality events through having more and better technical officials, NPCs will be better informed of event opportunities and processes for sanctioning of their events.
  2. The Strategic Priorities of the APC are to work with the IPC, International Federations, the National Federations and other related stakeholders to:
* Ensure athletes and coaches have input to and are part of the decision making process of competition structures for Asia
* Establish, implement and maintain criteria and process for selecting priority target sports for the region
* Develop and deploy a centralised calendar of sanctioned events
* Provide a diverse and balanced sport programme through representation in national and Asian championships and/or sub regional games
* Increase opportunities for participation outside strict territorial boundaries by athletes from smaller and poorer countries
* Promote the development and deployment of TOs and Classifiers throughout the region
* Provide information and workshops for NPCs to enhance event management capacity and better understand event sanctioning requirements across sports

**VII. GAMES CONCEPT AND MANAGEMENT**

* 1. In terms of the Asian Para Games the first and foremost requirement of the APC should be to define a clear concept for the Games and identify its key priorities. Should for example the number of sports featured be limited to those recognised by the IPC, or should the sports portfolio be extended to include those sports which have a popular following in a limited number of Asian countries? Should its prime function be to act as a qualifier for the Paralympic Games?
  2. As part of this process there should be a review of the Asian Para Youth Games to determine whether these should be continued, and if so, how they can be enhanced.
  3. From the standpoint of Games Management the priorities are to:
* Make more efficient and effective use of the expertise of the IPC until such time as the APC is able to build the necessary competence within the Asian region, and ideally within the APC.
* Lay down guidelines, in terms of accreditation, to ensure an equable representation across countries in Asia and that no country can take unfair advantage of the support mechanisms available.
* Make recommendations on how a host city can derive sufficient legacy benefit to justify the costs involved in hosting.
* Lay down a knowledge management process so that lessons to be derived from each Games can be translated into the management of future events.
  1. The APC needs to analyse carefully the lead times required for effective organisation of the Games so that actions can be taken in time, and hasty improvisation with all the imperfections it inevitably leads to can be avoided. These lead times need to be analysed by function, since some are much more complex than others.
  2. The APC must ensure more attention is focused on increasing spectator numbers at the Asian Para Games. They should require the local organising committee as part of their contractual commitment to implement a promotional campaign in the host country. It is the host city, and indeed the host country, that will provide the bulk of the spectators as was indeed the case even with the more prestigious event in London 2012. But particular emphasis in terms of promotion should be placed on below the line activity. In the wider Asian region, it is the APC who should take responsibility for promotion.
  3. If it is assumed that the Asian Para Games are not yet sufficient in and of themselves to attract spectators, then consideration should be given to adding other entertainment features into the Games. This is happening to an increasing extent in other sports, as the distinction between sport and entertainment becomes more and more blurred.

**VIII. PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY**

**Television**

* 1. In terms of securing Broadcast coverage, the APC needs to absorb and apply the lessons to be derived from London. These can be summarised as:
* Choose as a Broadcast partner a channel that is prepared to work with the APC in a creative and collaborative manner to create awareness in, and excitement around, the Asian Para Games.
* Make a deliberate and sustained attempt to create athlete stars and rivalries which will stimulate interest in watching the event.
* Go even further and create activities in and around the games to build interest and excitement.
* Make sure that the Asian Para Games have a distinct identity and operation from the Asian Games. A fine balance needs to be struck between differentiation and integration.
  1. The APC should work with the IPC on negotiation of Broadcast coverage. The emphasis should not be on securing right’s fees but on obtaining coverage, through either live or highlight broadcasting, to popularise the Asian Para Games. Commercial payoff is likely to occur at a later stage of the evolution of the Games.

**Internet**

* 1. Allocation of promotional budgets in most organisations are continuing to move away from television to the internet and social media, and this is clearly an area that offers major opportunity to promote the Paralympic movement, as the IPC has found.

* 1. The APC needs to use the internet to improve communications with National Paralympic Committees and with the athletes for whom they are responsible, and to capitalise on the opportunity that the medium offers to create awareness and interest in the Asian Para Games.
  2. For creating awareness and interest in the Asian Para Games, the APC needs to:
* Look at opportunities for live streaming of the event utilising the platforms and expertise of the IPC.
* Build a database of people interested in the Paralympic movement by using every opportunity to collect email addresses, at the same time harnessing the knowledge which the NPCs have, or can be encouraged to build.
* Set up regular communication with the target audience through its website and through social media.
  1. Effective use of the internet and social media will entail the APC investing in building the necessary expertise in-house and in collaboration with the IPC.

**Sponsorship**

* 1. In terms of sponsorship the APC needs to work with the IPC to help develop convincing arguments to support investment in the Asian Para Games. While these may over time focus on the Games as a commercial social opportunity, in the short and medium term they are more likely to revolve around commercial social responsibility.
  2. Initial efforts to generate sponsorship for the Asian Para Games should pinpoint those organisations that are currently sponsoring the IPC. Other prima facie primary targets include:
* Organisations that are seeking to grow in the region, and have some challenges in the area of social responsibility.
* Companies in the Emirates who want to help strengthen the association of the region with the Paralympic movement.
* Organisations that have existing expertise in sport sponsorship
  1. The APC cannot pursue these opportunities in isolation, but need to work closely with the IPC to ensure there is a coordinated approach and any potential conflicts of interest are avoided. Sponsorship activities of the APC need to be approved and agreed by the IPC.

**IX. ORGANISATION**

1. If the APC is to play a significant role in the development of the Asian Para Games, it needs to have staff in place to perform the key functions for which it is responsible. This is difficult given the financial constraints under which it is having to operate.
2. It has identified and is seeking to fill the following positions under the leadership of the President and the CEO:

* **Sports Manager**. This is seen as the key priority and will be a full time role.
* **NPC Relations and Services Manager**, a part time role.
* **Protocol & Events Manager**, a full time role.
* **Accountant**, a part time role.
* **Media & Communication Manager**, a part time role. (discussed an ‘awareness manager’ with a heavy leaning to commercial and comms depending on Asian Para Games objectives)
* **Administrative Secretary**, a full time role.

Additional service providers for APC:

* **IT Manager**, a full time role through a specialised company.
* **A legal consultant** through a legal firm paid on case by case basis
* **Auditing firm** for accounts and expenditures monitoring and financial reports.
  1. This is the most that can be achieved given the financial constraints. Without these appointments the organisation will be little more than the post box it has been sometimes described as. Ideally the organisation also needs some expertise in event management to ensure that the mistakes made at Incheon are not repeated.

**X. CULTURE AND GOVERNANCE**

* 1. There is a general perception among the NPCs in the Asian Region that the culture of the APC needs to change. In particular, the organisation needs:
* To become more transparent so that members are fully cognisant of what the organisation is trying to do.
* To have a clear and measurable definition of objectives so that the organisation can be held accountable for its performance.
* To become more proactive in consultation with its members, so that the decision making process becomes more participative and democratic.
* To have its accounts independently audited and results of this audit communicated to its members.
  1. The cultural changes identified need to be reflected in a revised governance statement. This statement should form part of the basis by which the organisation is evaluated. Carrying out such a revision would be in line with what has happen (IPC) and is happening in other sports organisations, including the IOC.