



ISSF Criteria for Eligibility of Transgender Athletes in International Competition

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 The International Shooting Sport Federation, as the international federation responsible for the global governance and regulation of shooting sport, has adopted these ISSF Criteria for Eligibility of Transgender Athletes ('Criteria') as devised with the guidance of the experts on the ISSF Medical Committee, in order to facilitate the participation of all Transgender Athletes at the international level (or in 'International Competition') in the category of competition that is consistent with their gender identity.
- 1.2 The term 'Transgender' is used in these Criteria to refer to individuals whose gender identity (i.e. how they identify) is different from the sex designated to them at birth, whether they have done so pre- or post-puberty, and whether or not they have undergone any form of medical intervention.
- 1.3 ISSF seeks to be totally inclusive to provide a clear path to participation in its sport for all who wish to participate in International Competitions under the jurisdiction of the ISSF.
- 1.4 The need to respect and preserve the dignity and privacy of Transgender Athletes and to avoid improper discrimination and stigmatisation on grounds of gender identity, is paramount. All cases arising under the ISSF Eligibility Rules and these ISSF Criteria for the Eligibility of Transgender Athletes are to be handled and resolved in a fair, consistent and confidential manner, recognising the sensitive nature of such matters.

2. Scope:

- 2.1 This document outlines the basis and criteria to be applied in ISSF's assessment of eligibility requests for Transgender Athletes.
- 2.2 It is to be applied on a case-by-case basis, based on a robust, scientific, medical and evidence-based approach – as provided for in *IOC Framework on Fairness, inclusion and non- discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sex variations*, which the ISSF respects and implements.

3. Evidence Based Approach:

- 3.1 The IOCs position on the integration of Transwomen Athletes into elite competition does not focus on any specific sport and prioritises fairness, as reflected in the 2015 IOC consensus on sex reassignment and hyperandrogenism (Committee IO, 2015), which states: *“The overriding sporting objective is and remains the guarantee of fair competition. Restrictions on participation are appropriate to the extent that they are necessary and proportionate to the achievement of that objective (Committee IO, 2015).”* The same principles apply under the new IOC framework on *Fairness, inclusion and non- discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sex variations* as well as in basic principles applicable in human rights law.
- 3.2 Using the same decision-making process, the ISSF objectively justifies prioritising inclusivity. Although ISSF does wish to maintain two separate Male and Woman categories, field of play evidence confirms that men and women are typically shooting similar scores. Thus, the Woman category need not be “protected” per se in the name of fairness. The gender category protection component is thus not a concern nor is the safety component material to consider in shooting at elite level.
- 3.3 The ISSF Medical Committee has taken into consideration available evidence indicating that transwomen who have undergone testosterone suppression have no clear biological advantages over ciswomen in elite shooting sport¹.
- 3.4 The ISSF Medical Committee has also taken into consideration statistical and scientific data which shows that as shooting does not involve a significant strength component given the nature of the sport that requires heightened visuospatial coordination, control of breathing and lengthy periods of concentration, *there is no discernible difference between cis-male and cisfemale shooters* in shooting².
- 3.5 Given that the only potential and negligible advantage that transwomen may have is in visuospatial coordination³, ISSF the Medical Committee finds that it would be justified in terms of shooting to prioritise inclusion and allow Transgender women to compete freely in the Woman category in International Competition. The same is true about Transgender men wishing to compete in the Men category in International Competition.
- 3.6 Notwithstanding the same, to ensure that Athletes do not “flip-flip” between gender categories, upon request for an ISSF ID, Transgender Athletes must provide evidence of completion of at least 3

¹ Blair R. Hamilton, Fergus M. Guppy, James Barrett, Leighton Seal & Yannis Pitsiladis (2021): Integrating transwomen athletes into elite competition: The case of elite archery and shooting, European Journal of Sport Science, DOI: 10.1080/17461391.2021.1938692

² Mon-López D, Tejero-González CM, Calero S. Recent changes in women's Olympic shooting and effects in performance. PLoS One. 2019 May 13;14(5):e0216390. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0216390. PMID: 31083662; PMCID: PMC6513084

³ Blair R. Hamilton, Fergus M. Guppy, James Barrett, Leighton Seal & Yannis Pitsiladis (2021): Integrating transwomen athletes into elite competition: The case of elite archery and shooting, European Journal of Sport Science, DOI: 10.1080/17461391.2021.1938692

months of Gender Affirming Treatment (GAT) of any kind and/or a formal declaration that the person is trans and/or a diagnosis of gender dysphoria.

4. Criteria:

4.1 As a result, the ISSF Medical Committee criteria shall generally be applied as follows:

- a. Subject to compliance with all other eligibility condition, Transgender men will be eligible to complete in the Men category in International Competition.
- b. Subject to compliance with all other eligibility condition, Transgender women will be eligible to compete in the Women category in International Competition.
- c. Once a Transgender Athlete has been granted an ISSF ID by satisfying the relevant eligibility requirements and has started participating in International Competition in the category of competition consistent with his/her gender identity, he/she may not then switch back to participating in the other gender category in International Competition.
- d. In order confirm that they are committed to their new gender, prior to being granted an ISSF ID to compete in their chosen gender, Transgender Athletes must along with their application for an ISSF ID, submit evidence of completion of 3 months of GAT (in any form) and/or a formal declaration that the person is trans and/or a diagnosis of gender dysphoria.
- e. For the avoidance of doubt, no Athlete will be forced to undergo any medical assessment and/or treatment. It is the Athlete's responsibility, in close consultation with his/her medical team, to decide on the advisability of proceeding with any assessment and/or treatment.
- f. Also for the avoidance of doubt, the eligibility conditions for Transgender Athletes set out in these criteria operate without prejudice to the other eligibility requirements that are applicable to all Athletes (Transgender or otherwise) under the ISSF Regulations, which must also be satisfied at all relevant times. In particular, nothing in these criteria is intended to undermine or affect in any way any of the requirements of the World Anti-Doping Code, of the WADA International Standards (including the International Standard for Therapeutic Use Exemptions), or of the ISSF Anti-Doping Rules. Nothing in these criteria permits, excuses or justifies non-compliance with any of those requirements, including any requirement for an athlete to obtain a Therapeutic Use Exemption for the use of substances on the WADA Prohibited List, such as testosterone, spironolactone, or GnRH agonists.

5. Process

5.1 Any Transgender Athlete who wishes to be deemed eligible to compete in his or her gender category is to first make a request to the Medical Committee by way of ISSF Headquarters at safesport@issf-sports.org.

- 5.2 The need to respect and preserve the dignity and privacy of Transgender Athletes and to avoid improper discrimination and stigmatisation on grounds of gender identity, is paramount. All cases arising under Article 4.1.9 of the ISSF Eligibility Rules and the application of these ISSF Eligibility Criteria for Transgender Athletes are to be handled and resolved in a fair, consistent and confidential manner, recognising the sensitive nature of such requests.
- 5.3 An application for an ISSF ID made by a Transgender Athlete should include all relevant evidence in support. Although it will generally be granted based on the criteria above, the ISSF Medical Committee may request that the individual supplement the evidence upon assessment of the application and supporting documentation (and medical file where relevant).
- 5.4 Upon receipt of the application of a Transgender Athlete for an ISSF ID, the ISSF Medical Committee will assess the request based on the above, criteria and issue its decision within 20 working days.
- 5.5 Once an individual chooses a category of competition and is granted an ISSF ID in relation to the same, they will be expected to continue to compete in that gender category from the date of obtention of their ISSF ID (in other words one cannot compete as a Transgender woman or man for one year, then choose to return to compete in International Competition against the other gender at a later date).
- 5.6 The ISSF Medical Committee Decision may be appealed in accordance with the ISSF Eligibility Rules and other ISSF Rules.