

VI Climber Requests - Rule Changes Required (Consolidated)

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Request 1: Clock Positioning for VI Guides

Current State

Document: Competition Regulations Para Climbing Events 2025, Annex B, Section 6.1

"A timing system should be used in the final rounds to display, for both the public and competitors, the remaining time in the collective or individual observation/preparation periods, as well as the remaining climbing time."

Problem: Clock positioning only mentions "public and competitors." VI guides need to see timing while guiding but current clocks face the wall (for sighted climbers looking down). No provision for guide visibility.

Required Update

Amend Competition Regulations Para Climbing Events 2025, Annex B, Section 6 - Add new section 6.2:

6.2 *For events including B1, B2 or B3 Sport Classes, a secondary timing display shall be positioned at the base of the climbing wall, oriented toward the competition floor,*

allowing sight guides to monitor remaining climbing time from their guiding position. This display must be synchronized with the primary timing system.

Jurisdiction: Events Commission (Chair: Marc Norman) + Rules Commission → Executive Board

Request 2: Accessible Document Formats for VI Athletes

Current State

Document: Various IFSC Official Documents (Rules, Regulations, Guidelines)

All official IFSC documents are distributed exclusively in PDF format via the IFSC website.

Problem: PDF documents are not optimized for screen readers, which are the primary tool VI climbers use to access written information. Current PDFs often lack proper heading structure, alt text for images, tagged content, and reading order—making them difficult or impossible for athletes in B1, B2, and B3 Sport Classes to independently review competition rules, classification requirements, and event information.

Required Update

Amend IFSC Communications/Publications Policy - Add accessibility requirement:

All official IFSC documents intended for athlete use shall be made available in accessible formats alongside the standard PDF version. This includes: - Tagged PDF documents with proper reading order and heading structure - Alternative formats such as accessible HTML or plain text versions - Images and diagrams shall include descriptive alt text

The IFSC shall ensure that new documents meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility standards prior to publication.

Request 3: Formal Recognition of VI Guide Status

Current State

Documents: - IFSC Statutes (2025), Section 20 - Definitions - IFSC Rules 2025, Section 2 - Definitions - IFSC Uniform Code (2025), Section 2.1 - Competition Regulations Para Climbing Events 2025, Annex B §4.6, §4.9 - Awards Ceremony Protocol - IFSC Results Website (ifsc-climbing.org/results)

Current Definitions:

IFSC Statutes §20: Defines "Athletes Commission," "Technical Officials," and various other roles but contains no definition for VI guides/sight guides.

IFSC Rules 2025 §2: States "The terms athlete, climber and competitor are used interchangeably" but provides no category for VI guides.

Uniform Code §2.1: "Team members must wear the uniform of their member federation" - covers athletes and team officials but does NOT explicitly include VI guides.

Competition Regs Annex B §4.6: "The Final round should be preceded by a presentation of the finalists" - mentions only athletes, with no provision for VI guides.

Competition Regs Annex B §4.9: Refers to guides only as "Team officials designated as sight guides" - treating them as a subset of team officials rather than a distinct category.

Problem: VI guides currently have no formally defined status within the IFSC framework. They are loosely categorised as "team officials" but this does not reflect their unique role: - They are NOT athletes (they do not compete independently) - They are NOT coaches (they do not train or strategise from the sideline) - They ARE essential performance partners who directly contribute to competition results

This lack of formal status creates multiple issues: 1. No IFSC profile on the results website 2. No recognition at awards ceremonies - guides do not receive medals despite being part of the performance partnership 3. No formal introduction to audiences during finals presentations 4. Ambiguous uniform requirements 5. No recognition in world rankings or competition records

The partnership nature of B1, B2, and B3 Sport Class climbing requires that VI guides be treated as part of a "team" with their athlete, similar to pilot-guide partnerships in Paralympic cycling or tandem events in other sports.

Required Updates

1. Amend IFSC Statutes, Section 20 (Definitions) - Add new definition:

Sight Guide means an individual designated by a team official to provide verbal guidance and direction to an athlete competing in the B1, B2, or B3 Sport Classes during competition. A Sight Guide forms a competition partnership with the athlete they guide and shall be recognised as an integral contributor to competition results in those Sport Classes.

2. Amend IFSC Rules 2025, Section 2 (Definitions) - Add new definition:

Sight Guide means an individual designated to provide verbal guidance and direction to a competitor in the B1, B2, or B3 Sport Classes. For B1, B2, and B3 Sport Classes, competition results are attributed to the athlete-guide partnership. Sight Guides are not classified as athletes, team officials, or coaches, but constitute a distinct category of registered participant.

3. Amend IFSC Uniform Code, Section 2 (General) - Add new section 2.7:

2.7 Sight Guides for athletes competing in the B1, B2 or B3 Sport Classes must comply with the uniform requirements set out in Sections 3, 4, and 5 of this code when accompanying athletes in the Competition Area, Call Zone, Field of Play, or during any ceremony.

4. Amend Competition Regulations Para Climbing Events 2025, Annex B, Section 4.6:

4.6 *The Final round should be preceded by a presentation of the finalists. **For B1, B2 and B3 Sport Classes, the presentation shall include both the athlete and their designated Sight Guide, recognising the partnership nature of visually impaired climbing.***

5. Amend Awards Ceremony Protocol, Section 6 (Procedure) - Add provision for VI partnerships:

For events including B1, B2, or B3 Sport Classes, the Awards Ceremony shall recognise the athlete-guide partnership. Both the athlete and their designated Sight Guide shall:

- March in together to the Awards Ceremony*
- Be announced together by the speaker (e.g., "[Athlete Name] with guide [Guide Name], representing [Country]")*
- Receive medals together on the podium*
- Be photographed together as medallists*

Where a Sight Guide has guided multiple athletes in a single event, the guide shall receive a medal for each partnership that achieves a podium finish.

6. Amend IFSC World Ranking Para Climbing - Add guide recognition:

For B1, B2, and B3 Sport Classes, world ranking records shall display both the athlete name and the name of the Sight Guide who partnered with them for each result.

7. Amend Competition Regulations Para Climbing Events 2025, Annex B §4.9:

4.9 *Sight Guides for athletes competing in the B1, B2 or B3 Sport Classes are allowed to take part in any collective observation period for those sport classes. Sight Guides must be individually paired with athletes for each round. i.e., they cannot guide multiple athletes where a route is attempted on-sight.*

4.9.1 *Sight Guides shall be registered with the IFSC and assigned a unique identifier for results tracking purposes. Guide registrations shall be linked to the athlete(s) they partner with for each competition.*

8. Amend IFSC Results/Database System - Add guide profiles:

The IFSC results system shall include profiles for registered Sight Guides of athletes competing in B1, B2, and B3 Sport Classes. Guide profiles shall include: - Guide name and nationality - Competition history linked to the athlete(s) they have guided - Results achieved as part of athlete-guide partnerships

Guide profiles shall be linked to athlete profiles to reflect the partnership, with results credited to both athlete and guide.

Jurisdiction: - Statutes Amendment → General Assembly (requires 2/3 majority) - Rules Amendment → Rules Commission (Timothy Hatch) → Executive Board - Uniform Code → Rules Commission (Timothy Hatch) → Executive Board - Awards Protocol → Events Commission (Marc Norman) → Executive Board - World Ranking → Para-Climbing Commission (Sian Spencer) → Executive Board - Competition Regs → Rules Commission + Events Commission → Executive Board - Results System → IFSC Office (IT/Digital) + Para-Climbing Commission → Executive Board

Summary Table

Request	Current Rule	Section to Amend	Change Type
1. Clock Position	Comp Regs Annex B §6.1	Add §6.2	New section
2. Accessible Documents	N/A (New Policy)	New Policy	New requirement

Request	Current Rule	Section to Amend	Change Type
3. VI Guide Status	Statutes §20, Rules §2, Uniform Code §2, Awards Protocol, World Ranking, Comp Regs Annex B §4.6 & §4.9, IFSC Results	Multiple amendments	New definition + comprehensive amendments

Action Plan

Submit to: 1. Request 1 → Events Commission (Marc Norman) + Rules Commission (Timothy Hatch) 2. Request 2 → IFSC Office (Secretary General) + Communications 3. Request 3 → General Assembly (Statutes) + Rules Commission + Events Commission + Para-Climbing Commission + IFSC Office (IT/Digital)

Executive Sponsor: Pierre You (VP Para Climbing)

Supporting Allies: - Sian Spencer (Para-Climbing Commission Chair) - Hannah Zook (Para-Climbing Commission athlete rep) - Corinna Wimmer (Athletes' Commission)

Timeline: - Requests 1-2: Achievable for 2026 season implementation - Request 3 (Statutes amendment): Requires General Assembly approval - target 2026 GA for 2027 implementation; other elements (Uniform Code, Competition Regs, Awards Protocol, World Ranking, Results System) can be implemented in 2026