

18 December 2002
Lausanne, Switzerland

To: Affiliated Federations
Council and Commission Members
Organisers of World Championships
National Rowing Magazines
Partners



Circular No. 9 of 2002

Ladies and Gentlemen,

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1. Lightweights and the Olympic Programme Commission

We are very pleased to inform you that at its meeting on 26th November, the IOC Executive Board accepted to change the principle in the report of the Programme Commission that weight categories in the Olympic Games should only apply to combat sports and weight lifting.

The new principle is the following: "There should not be any events based on biometric criteria with the exception of those already in the programme."

The IOC can thus protect itself against requests from other federations intending to introduce competitions based not only on weight but also on the height of athletes whilst retaining those events that are already part of the programme. This means that our three lightweight categories are now included in this principle.

A few days later, the IOC Session ratified the decision of the Executive Board. We can consider this a victory for the development of our sport and our efforts to make our sport more universal.

The IOC Executive Board will subsequently examine the elements of the report concerning disciplines and events. Following the internal debate which has already taken place, there is little risk that the lightweight events will now be questioned, especially as the decision will be taken by the Executive Board itself. Nevertheless, the IOC has voted to analyse each sport after each Olympic games and there will be more adjustments to the programme than in the past. We need to continue our work to promote and develop our sport as well as reflect on the structure of our Olympic events, as there will always be some pressure to reduce the number of events and rowers participating in the Games. We also have to think about the problem of identical boat classes for heavy and lightweight categories.

We would like to thank all those who gave us their support to defend this cause vital to our sport.