

JOINT BOA, BPA AND UK SPORT STATEMENT

The British Olympic Association (BOA), British Paralympic Association (BPA) and UK Sport welcome the news of the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Chief Executive of the BOA, Andy Anson, said: “It is with profound sadness that we accept the postponement, but in all consciousness it is the only decision we can support, in light of the devastating impact COVID-19 is having on our nation, our communities and our families.

“Alongside UK Sport and the BPA, we have consulted with the National Governing Bodies of summer Olympic and Paralympic sports and with athlete representative groups, including our Athletes’ Commissions and the British Athletes’ Commission. It is with their input and support that we have a unanimous view that the impact of COVID-19 on athletes’ training and preparation means their regimes are now compromised irreparably. It is time for them to stop thinking about Tokyo 2020 for now and be home and safe with their families.

“It would have been unthinkable for us to continue to prepare for an Olympic Games at a time the nation and the world no less is enduring great hardship. A postponement is the right decision.

“We have incredible sympathy for the Tokyo 2020 organising committee and indeed our colleagues at the IOC, who are working tirelessly to seek a positive outcome to this difficult scenario. The Olympic Games is a symbol of hope for us all and we are sure that we will be in Tokyo at the right and appropriate time as the world re-emerges from this dark period.”

Sally Munday, CEO of UK Sport said, “We welcome today’s decision from the IOC, IPC and Japan that the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games will be postponed. Given the unprecedented global challenge we face, today’s news means that athletes, their coaches and support staff can now fully focus on what really matters at this terribly difficult time, keeping themselves and their families safe.

“We are working closely with government to ensure we can effectively support sports and their athletes through this distressing period. I’d like to take the opportunity to reassure sports that our guidance from last week remains in place that we will not seek to recover any financial performance investment or Athlete Performance Awards due to disruption caused by COVID-19. We also realise that today’s decision has significant financial implications for our high performance system and we are working hard to identify the wide ranging impacts and scenarios and are in close contact with

government to establish how best to support our summer Olympic and Paralympic sports and athletes to be ready for the Games when they do take place.

“I’d like to thank all our athletes who are playing a role in so many different ways in these challenging times, from supporting their local communities to inspiring us to stay active in our own homes. I’d also like to reassure the public that whilst the games are postponed, we strongly believe the power of sport will inspire the nation again.”

Mike Sharrock, CEO of the BPA, added: “The British Paralympic Association fully supports the decision to postpone the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Stemming this global public health crisis and doing everything possible to safeguard the health and wellbeing of people should clearly take priority in these unprecedented times.

“We welcome the clarity this now gives Paralympic athletes throughout the world who have had their training and qualification plans severely disrupted but also recognise it will still be a deeply unsettling time for athletes who have worked for years focussed on delivering their best possible performance in Tokyo this summer.

“The British Paralympic Association is already implementing contingency plans to ensure ParalympicsGB athletes have everything in place to be best prepared for the Games when they are staged in 2021.

“We recognise that there are a huge range of factors to be considered when looking to postpone an event at this scale and we acknowledge the scale of the challenge for our friends at the Tokyo organising committee, the IOC and IPC in addressing these.

“Now is the time for us all to work together to overcome this global threat. Sport has a unique power to inspire and bring people together and we are certain that the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games can be that beacon of hope for the whole world to focus on to show what the human spirit can achieve.”

We wish to state that this decision – to postpone the Games – should in no way be a reflection on the excellent organisation of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games by the IOC, the Tokyo Organising Committee and the Government of Japan.

Our thoughts remain with the families and individuals affected by COVID-19, as well as the front-line workers – including many health care professionals from the UK sports' network – who are working to keep our communities safe and well.

We also sympathise with the many hundreds of athletes, both in the UK and globally, whose careers and personal ambitions are being impacted after many years of hard work and training.

We remain committed to taking our Olympic and Paralympic athletes to Tokyo for the next edition of the summer Games, at the appropriate time, in the hope that it will be a celebration of the world re-emerging from this unprecedented time.