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Issued by English Federation of Disability Sport and MLS

EFDS to manage Inclusive Fitness Initiative in-house

Today the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) announces that the management of the Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) will move from consultants MLS to within the EFDS structure.

In preparation for the forthcoming incorporation of the IFI within the Paralympic Legacy Plan, MLS is now working with the EFDS to support this transition.

The IFI programme supports the fitness industry to become more inclusive, catering for the needs of disabled and non-disabled people alike. Since 2001, through a range of projects and products the Initiative has supported facilities across England to create an inclusive service, increasing participation by disabled people.

The programme remains an important aspect of the EFDS strategy and EFDS will be working with the Government and other organisations to secure funding in order to deliver the Paralympic Legacy, increasing the number of IFI Mark accredited facilities throughout the UK.

MLS will remain the first point of contact until the 1 September 2010 when the formal handover to EFDS will be completed. From this point the initial EFDS contact will be Chris Ratcliffe- Director of Innovation and Development.

The **IFI London Programme** continues to operate and be managed by Interactive, (formerly the London Sports Forum), who have the target of generating 150 IFI Mark facilities by 2013 - ensuring that they are accessible to and inclusive of disabled people. The London Development Agency (LDA) has awarded a four-year grant to Interactive to deliver this particular project.

About the announcement, EFDS Chief Executive **Barry Horne** said:

“EFDS is very proud of the IFI programme and the success it has generated through MLS. MLS have been our Project Management Agents for the IFI since its inception and indeed conducted the initial research that proved the need. They have been instrumental in raising over £20million of public and private funding to deliver the programme over the last ten years. We thank them for their major contribution to the programme. The increase in the number of fitness facilities and equipment now available for disabled people to use is credit to MLS and the legacy they have already provided. We look forward to continuing to deliver these outcomes for the benefit of disabled people”.

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For further press information please contact:

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For more information on EFDS please visit our website: www.efds.co.uk

Notes to Editors:

The English Federation of Disability Sport is the umbrella organisation for the development of sport for disabled people in England. Key areas of expertise include:

- Providing advice, guidance and information on sport for disabled people

- Actively campaigning and lobbying to raise the profile of disabled sportswomen and sportsmen
- Influencing and supporting partners across the delivery system of sport to be more inclusive and to provide a greater range and quality of sporting opportunities for disabled people
- Attracting additional funds to sport for disabled people
- Working with partners to empower disabled people to take a more active role in all aspects of sport and physical activity
- Developing and rolling-out national programmes to improve access to sport and physical activity by disabled people, such as the Inclusive Fitness Initiative
- Providing a range of inclusive, high quality training and coaching opportunities to increase the number of disabled people involved in sport and physical activity
- Providing a comprehensive competition calendar through Disability Sport Events to increase the number of disabled people participating at all levels of the player pathway, and support the identification and development of talented performers

Telephone: 01509 227750

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MLS Contracts Ltd

Working throughout the UK the company are experts in event and project management ranging from professional multi-sport events to community participation events.

The company undertakes a range of work as sports consultants but having managed the IFI for a decade, it offers significant expertise in disability sport and leisure access, and operate numerous sports initiatives that embrace wider social inclusion, legacy and community health agendas.

Telephone 0114 257 1992

www.mls.gb.com

Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI)

The IFI is the nationally recognised accreditation programme for fitness facilities that are inclusive of disabled people. Since 2001, the IFI has been supporting the leisure and fitness industry to become more inclusive by both promoting and providing better access to fitness facilities for disabled and non-disabled people. The IFI is responsible for the development of the nationally recognised IFI Mark Accreditation.

www.inclusivefitness.org

Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) London

In September 2009, the LDA awarded Interactive (formerly the London Sports Forum for Disabled People) a grant to run a specific IFI London project. Working in partnership with the national IFI programme, this four-year project will use the IFI accreditation to ensure that a further 150 fitness facilities across the capital are accessible to, and inclusive of, disabled people.

Interactive are the lead strategic development agency for sport and physical activity for disabled people in London. We ensure equality and inclusion are at the heart of grass root sport and physical activity across the whole of London. To contact the London IFI scheme please call Alex Gibbons on 0207 7171699.

Olympic and Paralympic legacy plan

In March, the first ever Olympic and Paralympic legacy plan to bring about lasting changes to the life experiences of disabled people was published by the Government.

Endorsed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), London 2012: A Legacy for Disabled People, aims to improve the lives of 10 million disabled people in the UK by increasing participation in sport and physical activity; improving business, transport and employment opportunities; and changing attitudes and perceptions of disabled people in society.

Sport England gave sport for disabled people a further boost by announcing that it is investing £1.5 million of Exchequer funding in the English Federation of Disability Sport to help them deliver a new strategy to increase participation and opportunities for disabled people.

They also announced that they will be making £2 million of targeted National Lottery funding available, by application, to nine disability sports organisations. A further £8 million of National Lottery funding has also been ring-fenced by Sport England for investment in sport for disabled people over the next two years.