

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Paddle Australia (PA) Athlete Categorisation (“Athlete Categories”) guidelines have been developed following the AIS athlete categorisation criteria guidelines. The PA Athlete Categories will provide a consistent basis to:
 - a) identify the athletes with the greatest potential to contribute to PA’s performance targets in Tokyo 2020 and beyond and at World Championships annually;
 - b) track their performance over time; and
 - c) inform prioritisation of resources and support to athletes
- 1.2 Importantly, membership of an Athlete Category requires evidence of an athlete’s potential for future success. It does not solely recognise past results.
- 1.3 PA has developed these selection criteria to select athletes to the different categories and for nomination to the AIS for inclusion in the national list of Athlete Categories, which includes athletes across all sports.
- 1.4 Resource allocation will be commensurate with athlete categorisation levels and athletes categorised as Podium Potential and above will be recognised as National Centre of Excellence (NCE) Athletes and will receive significantly higher funding allocation from PA (including PAAS support) than lower category levels. Principle support for Developing and Emerging athletes will be from their respective SIS/SAS programs and/or National Pathway activities.

2. CATEGORISATION PROCESS

- 2.1 These criteria may be amended or supplemented by PA, or the AIS, in its absolute discretion from time to time.
- 2.2 The Selection Panel will consist of the NPD, relevant National Coach (Men, Women, Para) and each relevant SIS/SAS Head Coach or Program Manager. This panel will determine the nomination of athletes under these criteria within each State.
- 2.3 Membership of an athlete category will be formally reviewed twice annually at which point athletes may be added, removed or moved to a different category. Individual athlete reviews will occur following the completion of the BME and following national team selection trials each year.
- 2.4 PA will submit the list of selected athletes to the AIS for ratification in March/April (based on domestic performances) and October/November (based on International Performances) each year.
- 2.5 Selection to the PA Athlete Categories does not imply selection to PA national teams or squads which are governed by separate selection criteria available on the PA website. Equally, non-selection to the Athlete Categories does not exclude Athletes from selection to PA national teams or squads.
- 2.6 The Selection Panel will consider evidence provided to support each selection and will only select athletes that genuinely satisfy the performance guidelines.

- 2.7 The Selection Panel may at its discretion, request a review of an athlete at other times (e.g. following a benchmark event or if an athlete is not actively training or demonstrating the required commitment levels as determined by the SIS/SAS and/or National Coach).
- 2.8 Athletes will remain in an Athlete Category until such time as they are removed. Athletes may be excluded at any time from the Athlete Categorisation program at the absolute discretion of PA.
- 2.9 As a principle, athletes must continue to demonstrate potential to medal at a future BME or, demonstrate progressive improvement each year in performance areas identified in their IPP. Unless there is other evidence that an athlete is on-track to contribute to PA performance targets, athletes who fail to progress may be removed from the Athlete Categories.

3. ELIGIBILITY

- 3.1 Athletes seeking selection to the Athlete Categories must:
 - a) Be a current member of PA, eligible and available to represent Australia in international competition and actively training towards the Olympic Games, Paralympic Games or the World Championships. This includes athletes who are currently pursuing citizenship for the purpose of representing Australia at the Olympic/Paralympic Games.
 - b) Have submitted to PA a signed Athlete Agreement and an Individual Performance Plan (IPP) endorsed by the Coach (National or SIS/SAS Head Coach or nominated delegate), and attend athlete development meetings with the NPD, or his nominated delegate, and other PA or NIN high performance staff as required;
 - c) Comply with all anti-doping requirements of PA and the ASC;
 - d) Maintain a lifestyle conducive to sporting excellence, as outlined in the PA Athlete Agreement;
 - e) Abide by both the rules and the spirit of the sport;
 - f) Maintain the high standard of personal behavior expected of an athlete representing Australia; and
 - g) Not bring PA, its partners, or the ASC, into disrepute.

4. ATHLETE CATEGORY PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- 4.1 The Athlete Categories determined by the AIS consist of five levels (Podium, Podium Ready, Podium Potential, Developing and Emerging). Generally, the higher level of categorisation, requires greater evidence and objective performance criteria than the lower levels of categorisation. For selection to all levels, recent performance must be supported by evidence that the athlete demonstrates progression towards meeting PA's performance targets within a defined time period. Schedule A outlines the performance standards that will be used when considering athlete categorisation across Sprint, Slalom and Paracanoe.
- 4.2 The Athlete Categories apply to Olympic and Paralympic disciplines and events only.
- 4.3 For the purposes of the above Athlete Categories:
 - a) Only athletes competing in Olympic or Paralympic disciplines are eligible for the PA Athlete Categories.

- b) Athletes with performances in Non-Olympic/Paralympic events may be included only where there is clear evidence that performance in a Non-Olympic/Paralympic event will contribute to the performance targets in Olympic or Paralympic events. Alternatively, these athletes may be included in a separate 'Associate' category which will be assessed on a case by case basis.
 - c) Athletes who do not satisfy any of the Podium Pathway category criteria but has earned selection for the national team or squad preparing for the NSOs benchmark event may also be included in a separate 'Associate' Category which will be assessed on a case by case basis.
 - d) Should an exceptional circumstance prevent an athlete from achieving the benchmark event criteria for Podium potential or above, and there is compelling evidence that the athlete would otherwise meet the criteria for that level, PA may take into consideration extenuating circumstances. In particular, PA will consider the Athlete's ICF ranking and/or likelihood to qualify an Olympic quota for Tokyo 2020 and contribute to PA performance targets in Tokyo 2020.
- 4.4 Athletes in an Athlete Category are expected to show a continual progression in performances and results. A detailed review will be undertaken of all categorised Athletes. Athletes should be able to demonstrate improvement each year, e.g. an improvement in their personal best, or maintenance of a medal winning position.
- 4.5 It is acknowledged that athlete progression is not always linear and therefore performance plateaus and regression will be considered. Generally, affordance to maintain categorisation levels will be provided for a period of 18-24mths, but only when there is evidence of strong athlete commitment and compliance to continuous improvement. For instance, an athlete who fails to qualify for a BME event or a particular event, but still demonstrate strong signs of performance progression may be maintained at a certain category, despite not achieving the objective performance targets. Athletes who fail to progress or demonstrate the commitment will be removed or demoted from the Athlete Categories.
- 4.6 Athlete Categorisation will ultimately be used to prioritise PA's and the high performance system's resources, including PA financial support and access to Performance Support servicing. The athletes in the higher categories can expect to receive a greater level of support than those in the lower categories. In all cases, the provision of services to athletes in the Athlete Categories is subject to available resources.
- 4.7 The 'Associate' category is not a formally recognised category according to the AIS Categorisation criteria. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that there may be certain athletes who fail to achieve the necessary performance criteria but add significant value to the performance pathway within either the DTE or national team or squad. Similarly, where an athlete achieves National Junior or U23 team selection but has not yet achieved the International BME performance, may be categorised as 'Associate' and treated as a nationally categorised athlete, within each State jurisdiction, until an International BME performance can be achieved.
- 4.8 Selection to a certain category does not automatically entitle an athlete to receive servicing and/or financial support, and athletes within the same category may not receive the same level of support. In particular, the AIS Direct Athlete Support (dAIS) criteria may not align directly with the Athlete Categories.

5. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES & SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

- 5.1 The Selection Panel should take into consideration the potential of an athlete to assist PA in achieving its performance targets. The Selection Panel may consider a range of circumstances in determining whether an Athlete should be included or maintained in an Athlete Category, including but not limited to the following:
- a) In particular, special consideration may be given to maintain a Podium Athlete in the Podium Category for two years, where there is clear evidence that this will assist the potential of PA to achieve its performance targets.
 - b) Special consideration may be given to NOC rankings where an Athlete has demonstrated the potential to achieve a podium or podium potential performance or qualify an Olympic quota that could provide that athlete or another athlete with an opportunity to deliver a medal winning performance, based on NOC rankings not absolute rankings.
- 5.2 If an **exceptional circumstance** prevents an otherwise eligible athlete from satisfying the criteria for an Athlete Category, PA, in its absolute discretion, may allow for special consideration. Such circumstances could include illness at the time of the benchmark event, an athlete returning from injury or an expected reduction in the international competitiveness of the discipline (e.g. competitor retirement).

SCHEDULE A

Paddle Australia Athlete Categorisation – Performance Standards

Level	AIS Categorisation Description	CANOE SLALOM	CANOE SPRINT	PARACANOE
Podium	Athlete who had a medal performance at an Olympic/Paralympic World Championship (or equivalent) event in the previous 24 months and is considered capable of a medal at the next world championship (or equivalent) event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Podium at Senior BME Olympic Event within the last 24 months, and, meets Senior Minimum Performance Standards; and, ▪ Capable of a medal at the next BME event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Podium at Senior BME Olympic Event within the last 24 months; and, ▪ Capable of a medal at the next BME event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Podium at Para BME Paralympic Event within the last 24 months; and, ▪ Finish in the Top 50% of their competitors; and, ▪ Capable of a medal at the next BME event
Podium Ready	Athlete who placed fourth to eighth at the most recent world championship (or equivalent) event and is considered capable of progressing to Podium in the next two years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Place 4th - 10th at the most recent Senior BME Olympic Event, and, meets Senior Minimum Performance Standards; and, ▪ Capable of a medal at a BME in the next 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Place 4th – 8th in K1/C1 or K2/C2), or 4th – 6th in K4 at the most recent Senior BME Olympic Event; and, ▪ Capable of a medal at a BME in the next 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Place 4 - 8th at most recent Para BME Paralympic Event; and, ▪ Finish in the Top 50% of their competitors; and, ▪ Capable of a medal at a BME in the next 2 years.
Podium Potential	Athlete who is considered capable of progressing to at least Podium Ready in the next two years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Place 11th - 20th at the most recent Senior BME Olympic Event, and meets Senior Minimum Performance Standards; or, ▪ Place Top 10 at U23 BME Event, and, meets U23 Minimum Performance Standards; or, ▪ Quality performance at an alternate international event (e.g. world cup); ▪ and, capable of a medal at a Senior BME event in the next 4 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Place 9th – 12th in K1/C1 or K2/C2), or 7th – 10th in K4 at the most recent Senior BME Olympic Event; and finish in the Top 50% of their competitors; or, ▪ Medal at U23 BME Olympic Event; or, ▪ Quality performance at an alternate international event (e.g. world cup); ▪ and, capable of a medal at a Senior BME event in the next 4 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Place 9 - 12th at most recent Para BME Event; and, ▪ Finish in the Top 50% of their competitors; ▪ and, capable of a medal at a Senior BME event in the next 4 years.
Developing	A/ Athlete who is considered capable of progressing to at least Podium Potential in the next two years (Tokyo Target)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified National Senior Team member and, meets Senior Minimum Performance Standards; or, ▪ Identified National U23 Team member, and, meets U23 Minimum Performance Standards; or, ▪ Quality performance at an alternate international event (e.g. world cup); ▪ and, capable of progressing to Podium Potential in the next 2 years. ▪ Athlete with recent Extenuating Circumstances (e.g. injury/illness) will be considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified National Senior Squad member; or, ▪ Identified National U23 Team member, who place: 4th – 9th in K1/C1 or K2/C2), or 4th – 6th in K4 at the most recent U23 BME Olympic event; and finish in the Top 50% of their competitors; or, ▪ Quality performance at an alternate international event (e.g. world cup); ▪ and, capable of progressing to Podium Potential in the next 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified National Development Squad member; ▪ and, capable of progressing to Podium Potential in the next 2 years.

	B/ Athlete who is considered capable of progressing to at least Podium Potential in the next two years (Paris Target)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified National Junior Team member, and, who placed Top 15 at the most recent Junior BME event; or, ▪ and, capable of progressing to Podium Potential in the next 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified National Junior Team member, who place: 1st to 9th in K1/C1 or K2/C2), or medal in K4 at the most recent Junior BME Olympic event; or, ▪ and, capable of progressing to Podium Potential in the next 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified State Development Squad member; ▪ and, capable of progressing to Podium Potential in the next 2 years.
Emerging	Athlete who is considered capable of progressing to at least Developing in the next two years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified National Junior Team member, and meets Junior Minimum Performance Standards and/or; ▪ Capable of progressing to Developing in the next 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified National U23 Team member, who place: 10th – 18th in K1/C1 or K2/C2), or 7th – 10th in K4 at the most recent U23 BME Olympic event; or, ▪ Identified National Junior Team member, who place: 7th – 18th in K1/C1 or K2/C2), or 4th – 9th in K4 at the most recent Junior BME Olympic event; or, ▪ Quality performance at an alternate international event (e.g. world cup or Asia-Pacific Regatta); and; ▪ Capable of progressing to Developing in the next 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identified State Development Squad member; ▪ and, capable of progressing to Podium Potential in the next 4 years.
Associate	Athlete who does not fulfil the PA categorisation criteria but demonstrates potential and/or contributes to the DTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Junior, U23 or Senior athletes selected for a National Team to compete at the Junior, U23 or Senior BME event and do not fall in the above categories or are not medal potential ▪ Identified Athlete's who add value to the DTE ▪ Absolute Discretion of the National Coaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Junior or U23 athletes selected for a National Team to compete at the Junior or U23 BME event and do not fall in the above categories ▪ Absolute Discretion of the National Coaches or SIS/SAS Coaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Absolute Discretion of the National Coaches

Note: BME = Benchmark Event. This refers to the single highest level of competition within in each year. Typically it refers to the World Championships and in the Olympic/Paralympic year, it refers to the Olympic and Paralympic Games.