

Strategic Plan for Canoe Marathon in Australia

Draft prepared by the Paddle Australia Canoe Marathon Technical Committee

for consideration by

the Paddle Australia Competition Committee

August 2019

BACKGROUND

In October 2018 Paddle Australia released the 'Strategic Plan for Paddling in Australia' (the "SPPA"). This document was developed based on an extensive consultation and collaboration with the paddling community across Australia. A copy of the SPPA is available on the Paddle Australia [website](#).

Canoe Marathon is recognised under the International Canoe Federation, including both kayak and canoe classes. While competing in the ICF World Championships is the ultimate ambition for many of our paddlers, a strength of Canoe Marathon is its inclusive nature, as it embraces different ages, abilities and craft.

This 'Strategic Plan for Canoe Marathon in Australia' (the "Canoe Marathon Plan") is a complement to the SPPA. It recognises that the strength of the Canoe Marathon discipline will to a large extent be a function of the success of the sport as a whole. Accordingly, while the Canoe Marathon Plan focuses on the development of the discipline, it does so in the context of the **Vision** expressed in the SPPA of "a united paddling community".

WHAT'S IN THE CANOE MARATHON PLAN

It is acknowledged that there are limited resources available to meet objectives. Accordingly, the Canoe Marathon Plan will not seek to address every component of the SPPA but will rather focus on the ways in which the discipline of Canoe Marathon can best contribute. At the same time, there is an identified need to better understand the ways in which the various paddle disciplines, in particular Canoe Sprint, can interact with Canoe Marathon.

The **Activities** and **Actions** that Canoe Marathon will undertake under this plan are broken down into **Strategic Areas**, numbered to correspond with the seven (7) Strategic Areas referenced in the SPPA, as follows:

- 1 Providing participation opportunities for all those wanting to join our community, whatever their age, background or ability
- 2 Promoting and supporting pathways for those seeking to be the best they can be in their chosen area
- 3 Developing our competitions into events that demand attention and involvement
- 4 Developing a network that seamlessly connects and delivers services to the entire paddling community

REFRESHING THE CANOE MARATHON PLAN

The Canoe Marathon Plan will be a dynamic document. The Paddle Australia Canoe Marathon Technical Committee will meet each year with the express purposes of reviewing progress against the Canoe Marathon Plan and considering what changes, if any, are required to its priorities.

This process will align with the rolling nature of the whole of the SPPA, which will similarly be updated annually.

Comments to the Canoe Marathon Plan are welcome via email to marathon@paddle.org.au.

1 STRATEGIC AREA: Providing participation opportunities for all those wanting to join our community, whatever their age, background or ability

- We recognise that if we fail to grow the participation numbers within Canoe Marathon we are unlikely to be able to achieve our goals. The Clubs, including the volunteers within them, which focus on Canoe Marathon provide a strong foundation for our discipline, however we need to invest resources to assist in the development of these Clubs
- We recognise that Canoe Marathon can be well suited to older Australians, women and youth, however adaptations may be required to meet their participation needs. To make decisions which relate to specific segments of our community, we must actively engage with and listen to these groups
- Access to craft, both locally and around Australia, remains a challenge for our sport

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACMTC Actions	PACSTC Measures/Status
1.3 Target specific markets and engage actively with target groups including youth, women and older-aged Australians	Continue to promote and expand Paddle Education, with more deliverers attracted and trained to meet increasing demand	Increase qualified deliverers by 10% per annum until 2021/22	Obtain further clarification from PA regarding the Paddle Education system and how Canoe Marathon can be involved	PA to liaise with PACMTC to confirm system by end Dec
	Seek sources of funding, especially to target women, youth and older-age Australians	<i>Likely outside scope of plan due to limited resources.</i>	Determine strategy to actively introduce diversity of voices into the decisions around Canoe Marathon	Discuss as an agenda item at October meeting
			Determine strategy around targeting youth participation, including utilisation of different communication channels such as Instagram	Discuss as an agenda item at October meeting
1.4 Develop initiatives to reduce barriers, such as equipment rental and storage facilities	Gather examples of best practice and share amongst clubs and other interested parties	Report developed as basis for next steps	Develop information regarding storage of craft which can be used by Canoe Marathon focused Clubs	Work with Canoe Ocean Racing Technical Committee to develop specifications for a shipping container storage option by end Sep

				Seek information regarding storage options from Dragon Boats case study (Canberra) by end Oct
				Work with PA to provide recommendations for utilisation of ex-AIS boats by end Dec

2 STRATEGIC AREA: Promoting and supporting pathways for those seeking to be the best they can be in their chosen area

- The most important function of the PACMTC is to improve the pathways for our athletes, coaches and volunteers
- Well-defined athlete pathways are essential not only in encouraging participation and retention but also for the international success of our best paddlers.
- In recent years the PACMTC has invested considerable effort into developing an athlete pathway. The objective now is to finalise this work and to ensure that the information reaches the Canoe Marathon community.
- There is high reliance on volunteers at all levels of the sport. Recruitment, retention, recognition and reward are all areas that require action and, if not addressed, have the potential to impact negatively on our sport

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACMTC Actions	PACSTC Measures/Status
2.1 Develop athlete pathway for all disciplines to encourage more participation, better retention and improved performance	Continue work to develop long-term pathway plans for all disciplines, working across these disciplines to optimise opportunities where appropriate	4-year development plans in place aligned to 4-year RSP	Finalise the framework for athlete development which has already been commenced	Add performance indicators for each phase by end Dec Consultation process by end April PA, including session at PA Canoe Marathon Championships Publish to community by end June
				Undertake community consultation process for framework, including discussion session at PA Canoe Marathon Championships, by end April Publish final version online by end June
	Develop consistent pathway programs across Australia in all disciplines	Pathway programs clearly documented for all disciplines	Confirm how 'consistent in all disciplines' applies to Canoe Marathon and Sprint pathways	Work with PA to present paper to PA Competitions Committee regarding athlete development across disciplines
			Strengthen relationships with Dragon, Surf, AOCRA	Ensure that 'sprint kayak' wording is removed from the SPPA for its next iteration

	Work with SLSA and their clubs to ensuring mutually beneficial sprint kayak programs are in place	MOU with SLSA and strong mutually beneficial relationships with key clubs		Include opportunity for 'reciprocal rights' for PA Canoe Marathon Championships with other governing bodies
2.2 Develop, document and promote clear pathways for officials and volunteers	Review and agree framework and training and mentoring needs for general and discipline specific pathways for officials at all levels	Framework complete with general and discipline specific officials education programs in place	Provide clarity on officiating pathway to the Canoe Marathon community	Confirm content and delivery requirements for Level 1 officiating by end Oct
				Publicise final Level 1 officiating course by end Dec
2.3 Focus on the development of coach pathways, education and mentoring program	Review and agree framework for general and discipline specific pathways for coaches	Framework finalised, agreed and fully documented	Confirm coach framework	PA to confirm what framework is end Sep
	Ensure that appropriate training and mentoring opportunities are in place for coaches at all levels, including support and resource materials	Quality coach training and mentoring widely available		Provide feedback by end Nov
	Develop a process of continuous education and 'professional' development for coaches at all levels	Process agreed and documented		Sequential to above
				Sequential to above

3 STRATEGIC AREA: Developing our competitions into events that demand attention and involvement

- The PACMTC has been working towards a model for the PA Championships which makes that competition accessible to the entire community. This strategy will continue.
- There are opportunities to improve the profile of Canoe Marathon as well as the presentation of our competitions
- A high standard of technical delivery, and transfer of knowledge between competitions, is needed to ensure the best experience for participants

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACMTC Actions	PACSTC Measures/Status
3.1 Review the purpose of our major events and align programs and structure to purpose	Align our events with our overall strategic direction, create a long-term event strategy and establishing a clear purpose for all National and State events	A documented strategic direction for our events is in place and regularly reviewed	Continue the implementation of agreed upon initiatives for the development of the PA Championships	Data analysis of 2020 PA Canoe Marathon Championships (including linking what is being measured to strategic objectives) by end Jun
				Total participation in 2020 PA Canoe Marathon Championships to exceed 2019
				Reposition novice race within PA Canoe Marathon Championships timetable to encourage participation
				Consider the application of the PNSW participation initiatives to the 2020 PA Canoe Marathon Championships at the October PACMTC meeting

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			Seek to better align Canoe Marathon competition strategy, in particular around competition locations and timings, with Canoe Sprint	Hold collaborative meeting with PA Canoe Sprint Technical Committee by end Dec
3.2 Promote our major events to showcase our sport and our athletes	Develop and annually update communication plans with major events as key component, including livestream of selected events where this can be financed within budget	Annual Comms plan in place as basis for all Events Communications	Seek assistance from ICF in providing additional communications from the World Championships	Hold discussion with ICF Media Manager by end of Sept

4 STRATEGIC AREA: Developing a network that seamlessly connects and delivers services to the entire paddling community

- A key requirement for Canoe Marathon is to find more effective way to communicate with its community around Australia
- The new membership and events platform being introduced by Paddle Australia is seen as an underpinning requirement for the future of the Australian paddling community generally – this network can play a key role in connecting paddlers to clubs and competitions

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACMTC Actions	PACSTC Measures/Status
4.4 Introduce and deliver regular forums for planning, review and information exchange			Improve exchange of information with Canoe Marathon community	Confirm 'Rules of Engagement' for communicating online, including on PA website, by end Aug
				Create PA Canoe Marathon FB profile to correct inaccuracies/provide information on community forums by end Sep
				Host archive of Canoe Marathon newsletters on PA website by end Sep
				Host archive of Canoe Marathon results on PA website by end Sep
	Consider the introduction of a National Conference, addressing content, timing and frequency	Decision taken on introduction of a National Conference	Champion a national coaching conference, across disciplines, to foster information sharing and facilitate provision of information to participants	Work with PA to include budget for national coaching conference in 2020/21