

# ***Strategic Plan for Canoe Slalom in Australia***

***Draft prepared by the Paddle Australia Canoe Slalom Technical Committee***

***for consideration by***

***the Paddle Australia Competition Committee***

***April 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 Slalom is recognised under the International Canoe Federation, including both kayak and canoe disciplines. It is also an Olympic event, with both Men's and Women's K1 and C1 races to be held at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. Because of this Olympic status, Canoe Slalom is fortunate to receive the assistance of both Sport Australia and the Australian Institute of Sport network. This assistance is recognised with gratitude.

This 'Strategic Plan for Canoe Slalom in Australia' (the "Canoe Slalom Plan") is a complement to the SPPA. It recognises that the strength of the Canoe Slalom discipline will to a large extent be a function of the success of the sport as a whole. Accordingly, while the Canoe Slalom 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 SLALOM PLAN

It is acknowledged that there are limited resources available to meet objectives. Accordingly, the Canoe Slalom Plan will not seek to address every component of the SPPA but will rather focus on the ways in which the discipline of Canoe Slalom can best contribute.

The **Activities** and **Actions** that Canoe Slalom 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
- 6 Reflecting a positive, shared brand, culture and values that make everyone want to be 'a part of paddling'

The Canoe Slalom Plan also recognises that the discipline is a leader in many respects. There are opportunities for Canoe Slalom to provide a greater contribution to the future of paddling in Australia and these opportunities are welcomed.

### REFRESHING THE CANOE SLALOM PLAN

The Canoe Slalom Plan will be a dynamic document. The Paddle Australia Canoe Slalom Technical Committee will meet each year with the express purposes of reviewing progress against the Canoe Slalom 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. Part of the purpose of the Canoe Slalom Plan is to inform these whole of sport discussions and to contribute to the ongoing dialogue around improving the standing of the sport of paddling within the Australian community.

Comments to the Canoe Slalom Plan are welcome via email to [slalom@paddle.org.au](mailto:slalom@paddle.org.au).

## Strategic Plan for Canoe Slalom in Australia

### 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 Slalom we are unlikely to be able to achieve our goals. The Clubs which focus on slalom provide a strong foundation for our discipline, however we need to invest resources to assist in the development of these Clubs and to create more of them.
- Our education programs provide an excellent base for encouraging participation but the basis on which these are offered should be reviewed in consultation with our delivery partners
- Water access and development of infrastructure are issues that already limit participation in some areas. This challenge will continue as population increases. Plans are needed to address this in the medium to long term
- Penrith Whitewater Stadium is a world class venue, however there is risk around its future management and use. Successfully guaranteeing the long term future of this venue is a key strategic priority

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACSTC Actions	PACSTC Measures/Status	Owner
1.3 Target specific markets and engage actively with target groups including youth, women and older-aged Australians	Seek sources of funding, especially to target women, youth and older-age Australians	<i>Likely outside scope of plan due to limited resources.</i>	Develop initiatives aimed at female recruitment/retention	Operational Plan developed by Jun20	All
1.5 Press for increased access to water and the development of appropriate facilities	Gather information and share best practice on the development of access to new bodies of water	Report available. Best practice shared on on-going basis	Development of Slalom Facilities Investment Strategy	Collate national information on existing/previous waterways by Sep19	MD
				First draft of Strategy by Mar20	MD/PA
	Lead and support initiatives for the development of facilities for paddling generally and slalom and sprint facilities in particular	Facility development guide developed with arguments supporting increased water access	Support National Facilities Audit, including waterways themselves	Provide slalom specific information to national process	MD
			Determine infrastructure requirements for Extreme Slalom	Confirm ICF requirements by Sep 19	SN/RL

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			Confirm an agreeable management model with Penrith Whitewater Stadium	Agreed relationship management structure in place by Dec19	PA
			Complete audit of slalom equipment	Circulate asset register to STCs and collate by Sep19	RB
1.6 Increase participation within slalom			Find and develop local champions of slalom	Each STC to provide information of local slalom evangelists by Sep 19	All
			Develop slalom within Queensland	Identify available and potential resources in Queensland by Dec 19	CB
1.7 Club Development			Develop initiatives to strengthen existing Clubs and build new Clubs	Each STC to identify a Club to develop by Sep 19	All
				6 new Clubs providing participants to State Age Championships by Mar 21	All

### 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 PACSTC is to improve the pathways for our athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers
- Well-defined athlete pathways are essential not only in encouraging participation and retention but also for the success of our HP program. Our pathways should encourage participation and be consistent in each state, providing similar opportunities for athletes
- The standard of our current High Performance coaches is a strength of Canoe Slalom, however the lack of quality coaches in the development area of the athlete pathway is a significant issue that needs to be addressed. A considerable amount of work has been done but the involvement of our HP coaches is important in ensuring athletes develop with the right technique and approach
- 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
- In some disciplines, the pathway is limited by the lack of access to appropriate conditions, also impacting on participation. This links to the need to advocate for better water access and where this exists, ensuring relevant disciplines have appropriate access

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACSTC Actions	PACSTC Measures/Status	Owner
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	Develop athlete pathway for slalom using FTEM model	Finalise FTEM model, incorporating competitions and venues, and with reference to existing Sprint pathways by Dec19	MD
				Produce 'one pager' of FTEM pathway by Sep19	MD
				Produce collateral to provide to the community advertising opportunities in slalom by Dec19	MD/PA

				Develop strategy to retain juniors who do not aspire to Mastery by Jun20	MD
				Determine strategy for potential international base by Mar20	MD/WD
				Formalise operational plan for Futures Group to address gap between juniors and U23 by Dec19	MD
	Develop consistent pathway programs across Australia in all disciplines	Pathway programs clearly documented for all disciplines	Review of current programs	Each STC to provide summary of current programs, including learnings by Sep19	All
				Develop draft initiatives to support the 'F' pillar by Sep19	MD/KV
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	Audit of slalom officials	Compile national slalom officials database by Dec19	SN/CM
	Encourage and support Australian officials to gain ICF qualifications and to participate in international events	50% increase in number of Australian ICF Technical Officials	Encourage and support Australian officials to gain ICF qualifications and to participate in international events	Develop list of officials to target for international event attendance by Dec19	SN
			Engage Australian officials in international considerations	Committee to engage with community to provide recommendations for ICF rule changes by Dec19	KV/SS
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		Support coach education pathways review being undertaken by PA as required	All

2.4 Recognise and reward contributions made by volunteers, coaches and officials, especially at club level		Develop communication tool to effectively engage officials community	Work with PA to develop template for regular newsletter using MailChimp by Dec19	PA
		Develop social side of officiating	Develop officials' management process for major events by Dec 19	JB
			Appoint Officials Coordinator at each major event	Ad hoc

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

- We must be clear about the objectives of each of our events and structure them accordingly, with a clear, aligned event strategy in each of our disciplines so that they serve to complement one another. We need to avoid planning in isolation and have a robust governance and decision-making process in place
- Our major events have to be built to promote our sport and our athletes to the public, with our core fan base being the paddling community itself. The fact that international athletes regularly travel to Australia to compete provides significant promotional opportunities
- We see opportunities for Canoe Slalom in the hosting of major international events, not only as participation opportunities for our athletes but as catalysts for the development of our sport across a number of areas
- Some events generate more public interest than others and there needs to be a focus on the promotion of these in the short term. Efforts should be made to secure regular media coverage, using those disciplines that enjoy Olympic status to promote paddling generally
- Canoe Slalom presently has a cohort of world class athletes, headlined by Jessica Fox. We must ensure that these athletes are supported appropriately and assist them in being representatives of our sport
- A high standard of technical delivery, and transfer of knowledge between events, is needed to ensure fair and consistent competition. We have a heavy reliance on volunteers and our discipline committees need to have a focus on the education and management of our volunteers
- As our numbers grow, so will interest in participation events. These events will become an asset, so we must seek to ensure that our community has an ownership stake in these events as they grow through our involvement

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	Actions	Measures/Status	Owner
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	Support production of the PA Competitions Strategy	Support as required	KV
			Ensure we have an event which captures the Festival of Paddling spirit	Organise the 2020 National Age Championships at Mersey with this intent.	PE/RB

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	Make changes to events consistent with agreed strategic direction, noting impacts on Olympic selection in 2020	Changes made to different events within agreed strategy	Consider inclusion of Extreme Slalom in events from 2020	Confirm requirements for Extreme from ICF by Sep19	RL/SN
			Product innovation around competitions	Consider amendments to competition formats for 2020 events	All STCs
3.3 Build competition and event capacity to ensure consistent paddling offering			Recognise the need for slalom events aimed at participation/development	Each state to develop one event in this vein by March20	STCs
			Increase participation through raising the importance of state events	Increase number of participants at State Age Group Championships by 10% by Mar21	All
3.5 Adopt a strategic approach to bidding for international events			Host Asia Pacific U23s	Determine view of NZ and Japan to Australia hosting 2021 Asia Pacific U23s by Sep19	SS/SN
			Consider bid for World Cup	Determine appetite of ICF to Australia hosting a World Cup round in each of 2023/4/5 by Sep19	SS/SN
			Consider bid for World Championships	Preliminary investigation to be undertake on 2027 bid	SS/SN

### 6 STRATEGIC AREA: Reflecting a positive, shared brand, culture and values that make everyone want to be 'a part of paddling'

- We believe that Canoe Slalom has shared values based around responsible enjoyment of an adventure filled sport in an outdoors setting. We want to champion this culture to the Australian community
- As a community, we need to be clear about what we stand for and this needs to be reflected by all of us, in everything we do, especially by our elite athletes, as our key brand ambassadors

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACSTC Actions	PACSTC Measures/Status	Owner
6.1 Agree and promote our core values and what we stand for as a paddling community	PA Board to workshop and agree, then canvas at state workshops held to discuss the strategic vision and plan	Views sought from the community show an increasing understanding of our culture and values and pride in being involved. Methodology to be established but likely to be on line census	Confirm and document the 'agreed values' within slalom	Provide PA with 'Slalom Culture and Values' document by Dec19	All