

POLICY	Governance
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1. PADDLE AUSTRALIA POSITION STATEMENT

Paddle Australia is committed to creating a safe, fair, and inclusive space for all people, regardless of gender expression, gender identity and sexuality. Inclusion is at the core of our values as an organisation, reflective of the diversity of our local communities.

Paddle Australia is committed to ensuring that everyone involved with paddling is treated with respect and dignity and is protected from abuse, bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, unlawful discrimination, victimisation, and vilification. This includes all forms of transphobia, homophobia and/or biphobia.

Paddle Australia has a zero-tolerance to any form of bullying, harassment, and vilification in our sport. Paddle Australia strives to support our paddling community to live happy, healthy, and active lives. Paddle Australia celebrates diversity of sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, skill, cultural background, ethnicity, location, religious or political beliefs, and stage of life.

There is a place for everyone in our sport, exactly as you are.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Participation in sport is a human right.ⁱ We are all born free and equal in dignity and rights.ⁱⁱ
- 2.2 Paddle Australia (PA) recognises that both intentional and unintentional prejudice exists in sport and recreational and related services, programs, operations, and facilities. This can create adverse and potentially significant consequences for some individuals and our communities. PA will take steps to actively promote respectful, inclusive, and collaborative behaviours within our sport.
- 2.3 Although there have been significant changes in the general community towards people of diverse genders and sexualities, research shows significant work is still to be done, for sports to be completely inclusive. PA recognises that the inclusion of the LGBTQ community in sport is a complex and emotive topic.
- 2.4 Sometimes these consequences mean that individuals who want to participate in sport, whether that be as a participant, official, administrator, coach, or volunteer, feel excluded, and thus chose to not participate. In other instances, participants are forced to hide their true self. In some cases, individuals who experience phobic language or actions stay with the sport but continue to be subjected to discrimination and harassment, thus reducing their enjoyment of the sport. None of these outcomes are acceptable.
- 2.5 Legislation exists in Australia to protect and promote equality in Australia. This policy has been developed consistent with, and to give effect to that legislation in a paddling setting.
- 2.6 PA is a Member of the International Canoeing Federation (ICF). The ICF are actively developing transgender and gender diverse policies that will apply at ICF events. In due course, in conjunction with the IOC and ICF, Paddle Australia intends to develop a transgender and gender diverse policy for High Performance and Elite Paddling. This

will apply to National level competition, especially where these competitions are used to determine selection for ICF competitions.

- 2.7 At the time of publishing this Policy, limited data is available to PA regarding the relative disparities of strength, stamina and/or strength in the sport of Paddling. PA will continue to advocate for more research to be undertaken in this area to ensure paddling is both fair and inclusive. However, given the lack of data at this time, only limited guidance can be provided on some issues.

3. DEFINITIONS

Paddle Australia (PA) acknowledges that language constantly changes, we encourage members to stay informed with other language and terminology relative to this topic [HERE](#).

In this Policy, the following words have the following respective meanings:

SPORT SPECIFIC

“Affiliated Club”	means a paddling club or association Registered with a Member State and admitted to the Company.
“CEO”	means the Chief Executive Officer of PA or their nominee from time to time.
“Discipline”	means the Paddling disciplines of Canoe Marathon, Canoe Polo, Canoe Slalom, Canoe Sprint, Paracanoe, Canoe Freestyle, Canoe Wildwater, Ocean Racing and SUP.
“ICF”	refers to the International Canoe Federation.
“Individual Member”	means a person admitted to the Company as an individual member.
“PA”	means Paddle Australia.
“Paddling”	refers to the sport which encompasses the Disciplines as incorporated under Paddle Australia.
“Paddle Organisations”	refers collectively to Paddle Australia, our State Paddle Associations and our affiliated Paddling Clubs that have adopted this policy.
“SPA”	means a State Paddle Association that is a member of Paddle Australia.
“Participant”	means a person who has notified PA or an affiliated SPA or club of their intention to participate in paddling.
“SOM”	means the Sport Operations Manager of Paddle Australia.

BODIES, GENDER, AND GENDER IDENTITIES

“Cisgender / cis”	is a term used to describe people who identify their gender as the same as what was presumed for them at birth (male or female). ‘Cis’ is a Latin term meaning ‘on the same side as’.
“Gender diverse”	refers to ways gender can be experienced and perceived. It can include people questioning their gender, those who identify as trans/transgender, genderqueer, non-binary, gender non-conforming and many more.
“Gender identity”	is defined in the Act as ‘the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not), with or without regard to the person’s designated sex at birth’. For example, a person’s gender identity might be male, female, or non-binary, regardless of what was presumed for them at birth.
“LGBTQ”	(or variations of it) is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning. The acronym is used to refer collectively to these communities. The ‘LGB’ refers to sexuality/sexual identity; the ‘T’ refers to gender identity; ‘Q’ can refer to either gender identity or sexuality.
“Non-Binary”	is a term used to describe a person who does not identify exclusively as either a man or a woman. Genders that sit outside of the female and male binary are often called non-binary.
“Pronouns”	are a grammatical means of referring to a person or persons. Conventional pronouns are ‘she/her/hers’ and ‘he/him/his’. Some people prefer to use gender neutral pronouns, such as ‘they/them/their.’ The pronoun a person uses to describe themselves often reflects their gender identity.
“Sex”	refers to a person’s biological sex or sex characteristics. These may be genetic, hormonal, or anatomical. Unlike ‘gender identity’, ‘sex’ is not defined in the Act.
“Transgender”	(commonly abbreviated to ‘trans’) is a general term used to describe a person whose gender identity is different to the sex they were assumed at birth. Being transgender is about how an individual describes their own gender. It is not necessarily about their biological characteristics.

Words not defined in this Policy have the means ascribed to them in the Constitution of PA unless a contrary meaning appears from the context.

4. SCOPE

This Policy applies to the following individuals or groups within Paddle Organisations:

- a) individuals sitting on boards, committees, and sub-committees,
- b) employees, contractors, and volunteers,
- c) support personnel including, but not limited to managers, physiotherapists, psychologists, masseurs, and trainers,
- d) coaches and coaching staff,
- e) participants,
- f) officials, referees, and volunteers,
- g) Individual members, including life members,
- h) affiliated services' staff, inclusive of members and casual users, whilst using the facilities of a Paddle Organisation and/or participating in sessions on their behalf,
- i) any other person or organisation that is a member of or affiliated to Paddle Australia,
- j) parents, guardians, spectators.

5. OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 To affirm our commitment to supporting the inclusion of LGBTQ identifying people in Paddling.
- 5.2 To ensure we foster a safe, equitable and welcoming environment for LGBTQ identifying people by eliminating discriminative behaviour within our facilities, programs and services and ensuring our staff, volunteers and wider paddling community are suitably educated.
- 5.3 To promote a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment that engages and keeps LGBTQ participants involved in all aspects of Paddling may that be as participants, volunteers, officials, coaches, committee and board members or administrators.
- 5.4 To continue to exemplify leadership and progress in diversity, equity, and inclusion in sport.

6. UNIFORMS

- 6.1 Participants may wear the uniform of their choosing as it aligns with their gender identity, so long as it abides by wider Paddle Australia and/ or ICF rules.
- 6.2 Participants requiring uniforms (for example, participants, officials, and coaches) are to be provided with an appropriate range of uniform styles and sizes to select from.

7. FACILITIES

- 7.1 Paddle Organisations recognise the existing difficulties faced in having adequate changeroom and shower facilities.
- 7.2 In accordance with The Act, Paddle Organisations support the right of people to use changing and bathroom facilities which best reflects their gender identity.

- 7.3 Where new public or privately owned facilities, or upgrades are taking place, Paddle Organisations will advocate for options to create inclusive spaces with appropriate private spaces where the facilities directly support Paddling in some function. Examples of this could include:
- a) changing signage on some facilities to 'all gendered'; and
 - b) modifying changerooms and bathrooms to create private spaces (higher doors, room dividers, shower curtains etc); and
 - c) ensuring all changerooms have appropriate waste disposal.
- 7.4 Where a third-party registration platform is used, Paddle Organisations will advocate for changes to provide gender inclusive registration options, and where appropriate allow for a manual registration using the appropriate gender indicators.

8. PEOPLE AND STAFF

- 8.1 Paddle Organisations value the diversity of their employees and volunteers and support the right of every person to be treated with respect and fairness whilst performing their work.
- 8.2 All people working within Paddle Organisations have the right to be treated with respect and fairness and to enjoy an environment free of discrimination, harassment, bullying and other unlawful behaviour. This is reflective of our values as an organisation and a key feature of an inclusive workplace.
- 8.3 Paddle Organisations are committed to encouraging a diverse and inclusive workplace. This commitment is reflected in plans, policies, and new initiatives, such as providing education to staff.

9. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- 9.1 Paddle Organisations collect personal information to properly and efficiently carry out functions including but not limited to facilitation of competitions and events, facilitate the provision of marketing and promotion and to provide products and services.
- 9.2 Any personal information collected by Paddle Organisations must only be disclosed if necessary and in accordance with the law.
- 9.3 Paddle Organisations must:
- a) securely store personal information, in line with privacy legislation; and
 - b) not disclose the Gender Identity of a participant without the express consent of the individual; and
 - c) ensure correct names and pronouns are used in conversations, databases, documents, and correspondence.
- 9.4 Paddle Organisations will accept a legal declaration to verify name and gender (such as by way of a statutory declaration) in place of identity documents such as a passport or birth certificate, where those identity documents have a Sex/gender marker inconsistent with a participant's Gender Identity for the purpose of membership to the company where necessary.

- 9.5 Paddle Organisations should be aware that, depending on the circumstances, requesting additional information from Transgender and Gender Diverse people may be unlawful.
- 9.6 Paddle Organisations shall protect the privacy of participants.
- 9.7 Paddle Organisations should consider the provisions of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs), and the relevant legislation and regulations of the States and Territories.

10. DISCRIMINATION

- 10.1 Discrimination can be defined as the unjust or prejudicial treatment that makes distinctions between individuals and groups that disadvantages some people or advantages others than on legitimate and lawful grounds.
- 10.2 Discrimination based on sex or gender identity can include both direct and indirect discrimination and may be unlawful under Commonwealth or State Legislation.
- 10.3 'Direct Discrimination' occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of their background or a certain personal characteristic.
- 10.4 Indirect discrimination occurs when there is an unreasonable rule, requirement, or policy that has an unfair effect on a person or group of people with a certain background or personal characteristic.
- 10.5 Discrimination based on sex or gender identity in sport will be permitted under the Act if:
 - a) the different treatment amounts to a 'special measure', or
 - b) an exemption applies.
- 10.6 Discrimination, both Direct and Indirect is referred to and dealt with in the Paddle Australia (PA) Member Protection Policy.
- 10.7 If you do experience discrimination and need to report an incident, you can do so by contacting the PA Integrity Manager (integrity@paddle.org.au). All complaints will be taken seriously, managed confidentially, and dealt with in accordance with the Paddle Australia National Integrity Framework.

11. RELATED POLICIES

- 11.1 All Paddle Australia policies promote the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of paddling.
- 11.2 PA Policies that are relevant to this Policy, include but are not limited to:
 - a) Paddle Australia Privacy Policy.
 - b) Paddle Australia Member Protection Policy.
 - c) Paddle Australia Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy.
 - d) Paddle Australia Code of Behaviour Policy.

12. RELATED LEGISLATION

- 12.1 **Federal/Commonwealth Legislation:** The following laws operate at a federal level and the Australian Human Rights Commission has statutory responsibilities under them.
- a) *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)
 - b) *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
- 12.2 **State/Territory Legislation:** The following laws operate at a state and territory level, with state and territory equal opportunity and anti-discrimination agencies having statutory responsibilities under them.
- a) Australian Capital Territory – *Discrimination Act 1991*
 - b) New South Wales – *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*
 - c) Northern Territory – *Anti-Discrimination Act 1996*
 - d) Queensland – *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
 - e) South Australia – *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*
 - f) Tasmania – *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998*
 - g) Victoria – *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
 - h) Western Australia – *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.

13. BACKGROUND – SUPPORT SERVICES

- 13.1 For external support, Paddle Australia recommends using the following LGBTQ specific providers:

ACON provides counselling as well as social work support to help people resolve complex or ongoing violence and harassment matters.

Freecall: 1800 063 060

Website: www.acon.org.au/mental-health/#lgbti-counselling

QLife provides anonymous and free LGBTI peer support and referral for people wanting to talk about sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings, or relationships.

Freecall: 1800 184 527

Website: www qlife.org.au/get-help

Lifeline provides 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services to all Australians experiencing a personal crisis.

Phone: 13 11 14

Website: www.lifeline.org.au/gethelp

14. BACKGROUND – OTHER DEFINITIONS

- 14.1 Paddle Australia acknowledges that language constantly changes, and while we have done our best to define key terms within this Policy, we encourage members to stay informed with other language and terminology relative to this space via Pride in Sport - www.prideinsport.com.au/terminology

14.2 Bodies, gender, and gender identities

- a) Gender dysphoria is the discomfort a person feels with how their body is perceived and allocated a gender by other people. The experience may occur when a person feels their biological or physical sex doesn't match their sense of their own gender. This feeling, that there is a mismatch, can trigger a range of responses. Some people experience serious distress, anxiety, and emotional pain, which can affect their mental health. Others experience only low-level distress - or none at all. For this reason, gender dysphoria is no longer considered a mental illness. (Not to be confused with 'Body Dysmorphia')
- b) Deadname is a term used by some trans people to describe the name they were given and known by prior to affirming their gender and/ or coming out.
- c) Intersex (Intersex status) is a protected attribute under the Act. Under the Act 'intersex status' means the status of having physical, hormonal, or genetic features that are:
 - i. Neither wholly female nor wholly male
 - ii. A combination of female and male, or
 - iii. Neither female nor maleThe term 'intersex' does not describe a person's gender identity (man, women, neither or both). A person with an intersex variation may identify as a man, woman, neither or both.

14.3 Social attitudes/ issues

- a) **An ally**, cis ally, straight ally, or heterosexual ally is typically a heterosexual and cisgender person who supports equal civil rights, gender equality, LGBTQ social movements, and challenges homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. Not everyone who meets this definition identifies as an "ally". An ally acknowledges that LGBTQ people face discrimination and thus are socially disadvantaged. They aim to use their position as heterosexual and cisgender individuals in a society focused on heteronormativity to counter discrimination against LGBTQ people. An ally can also be someone who identifies within the LGBTQ community and supports an aspect of that community in which they don't identify with (that is a Cisgendered gay man may identify as an ally to transgender individuals).
- b) **Biphobia** is abuse towards someone who is attracted to more than one gender, and even includes when that person's identity is erased. This can be in the form of telling someone that their sexuality is "just a phase", or even telling them to "pick a side."
- c) **Cissexism** is where something is based on a discriminatory social or structural view that positions (either intentionally or otherwise) the trans experience as either not existing or as something to be pathologised. Cissexism believes that gender identity is determined at birth and is a fixed and innate identity that is based on sex characteristics (or 'biology') and that only binary (male or female) identities are valid and real.
- d) **Heteronormativity** (also known as cisnormativity) the view that heterosexual relationships are the only natural, normal, and legitimate expressions of sexuality and relationships, and that other sexualities or gender identities are unnatural and a threat to society (GLHV, 2016).
- e) **Homophobia** refers to negative beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes that exist about people who are not heterosexual. Verbal homophobia is the most common form. Things like name-calling, rumours, and abusive words ('fag' or 'dyke').

Phrases like “that’s so gay” which compare sexuality to words like ‘crap’ can have a negative impact. Homophobia also include abusive threats or actual physical violence, sexual harassment and deliberately excluding someone because of their sexuality.

- f) **Misgendering** is an occurrence where a person is described or addressed using language that does not match their gender identity. This can include the incorrect use of pronouns (she/he/they), familial titles (father, sister, uncle) and, at times, other words that traditionally have gendered applications (pretty, handsome, etc.). It is best to ask a person, at a relevant moment, what words they like to use.
- g) **Transphobia** a refers to negative beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes that exist about transgender/trans and gender diverse people. You may have heard transphobic language like ‘tranny’ or seen restrictions on the way that people are allowed to express their gender. Things like which uniform you’re allowed to wear or toilets you can use. Transphobia can also include abusive threats or actual physical violence, sexual harassment and deliberately excluding someone because of their gender.

15. BACKGROUND – HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPACTS

15.1 In 2022, recent studies on the disproportionate health and wellbeing of the LGBTQ community shows:

- a) 39.9% of Trans and Gender Diverse people aged 18 and over have been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder in their lifetime compared to an average of 26.3% for the general population.
- b) 57.2% of Transgender and Gender Diverse people aged 18 and over have been diagnosed with depression in their lifetime.
- c) 41% of Transgender people and people with a non-Binary gender aged 18 years and over report thoughts of suicide or self-harm in the last 2 weeks.
- d) 87% of gay men and 75% of lesbians are completely or partially in the closet while playing youth sport, compared to 55% of people in the closet within the Australian corporate sector. Many fear discrimination from other players, coaches, and officials.
- e) 75% of people believe an openly gay person would not be safe as a spectator at a sporting event.
- f) 60% of people believe a sporting organisations positive track record on LGBTQ inclusion would positively influence them to join that sport.
- g) Those who identify as LGBTQ are more likely to be diagnosed with anxiety and depression in their lifetime.

16. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

16.1 The ‘*LGBTQ Inclusion Policy*’ has been prepared in consultation with key stakeholders.

16.2 Pride in Sport, ACON, State entities, Paddle Australia (PA) Committees, athletes and national executives and administrators have participated in consultations which lead the development of this policy. PA would like to thank and acknowledge those who participated in this process.

16.3 PA acknowledges resources such as the *'Guidelines for the inclusion of Transgender and gender diverse people in sport'* developed by the Australian Human rights commission, in partnership with the Australian Sports Commission and the Coalition of Major Professional and Participation sports. Many of the concepts and terms used throughout this Policy have been adopted from these resources.

ⁱ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (21 November 1978) art 1; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, GA Res 217A (III), UN GAOR, 3rd sess, 183rd plen mtg, UN Doc A/810 (10 December 1948) art 24; International Olympic Committee, Olympic Charter (entered into force 9 October 2018) 11.

ⁱⁱ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, GA Res 217A (III), UN GAOR, 3rd sess, 183rd plen mtg, UN Doc A/810 (10 December 1948) art 1.