

Distance Event Group Plan



2026-2028 Distance Event Group Plan

Panel members: Collis Birmingham (Vic), Gavin Burren (Vic), Susan Hobson (ACT), Dianne Huxley (Vic), Susan Krumins (Vic & Facilitator), Elizabeth Mathews (Vic), Philo Saunders (ACT) and Avish Sharma (Vic).

All event group's objectives are guided by the overarching statement of '*Australia versus the Rest of the World*', the fundamental purpose of the panels is to:

- Bring together event group coaches/experts to discuss ways to enhance the "Spirit of the Event Group".
- Establish a Three-Year Event Group Plan which will include items such as a calendar of camps/workshops/initiatives aimed at upskilling emerging and established coaches and enhancing the overarching "Spirit of the Event Group"; and
- Identify and implement initiatives that will enhance Australia's capability to achieve sustainable success (i.e., by achieving Medal and Top 8 performances) at Major Championships by the 2032 Brisbane OGs and beyond.

The distance event group's plan, aims to achieve these objectives by:

- Provide targeted education opportunities presented/facilitated by domestic & international experts for
 - coaches of NASS categorised athletes
 - coaches (and parents where appropriate) working with nationally ranked junior athletes.
 - all interested coaches (where applicable)
- Conduct camps and workshops around key distance events (e.g., Nationals (T/F & CC), Zatopek, World Cross Country Trials, Falls Creek/Perisher
- Encourage and help facilitate training groups coming together at various locations around the country.
- Improve communication and collaboration within the distance community to ensure we have the best distance runners racing domestically together.

The distance event group's performance indicators:

1. Full team of athletes in all middle distance and distance events (2 female and 2 male) qualify for each World Under 20 Championship from 2026 onward.
2. Full team of athletes in all middle distance and distance events (2 female and 2 male) qualify for each World University Games from 2027 onwards.
3. Full team of athletes in all middle distance and distance events (3 female and 3 male) qualify for the World Championships & Olympic Games from 2027 onwards.
4. Higher percentage of World U20 T&F Championship athletes transitioning to senior international teams from 2028 onwards.

Event group recommendations (note this is an advisory group)

1. Where possible provide input/consultation into the event grid for major domestic competitions.
2. Conduct some surveys/communication platforms whereby the Panel can both share ideas and seek input from the wider distance community.

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2026 Event Group Initiatives	
January	Altitude Camps – hold distance camp for juniors at Falls Creek in conjunction with senior camps.
April	Coach education national championships: https://www.revolutionise.com.au/aa/events/346229
August	Development Tour (focusing on U23 & U20 athletes), New Zealand Cross Country Championships: https://www.athletics.com.au/event/2026-new-zealand-cross-country-championships/ Coach Education Australian Cross Country Championships
December	Coach education at Zatopek

2027 to 2028 Event Group Initiatives	
2027	January Altitude camp April Coach Education at national championships August NZ Cross Country Tour U20-U23 & Coach Education at XC Championships December Coach Education at Zatopek
2028	January Altitude camp April Coach Education at national championships August NZ Cross Country Tour U20-U23 & Coach Education at XC Championships December Coach Education at Zatopek

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Previous Activities

2025:

Altitude Camps – Perisher/Falls Creek as per hold distance camp for juniors at Perisher in conjunction with senior camps.

Coach education national championships: <https://coachathletics.com.au/aac>

Development Tour (U23 & U20), New Zealand Cross Country Championships

Coach Education Australian Cross Country Championships:

<https://coachathletics.com.au/news/coach-education-at-the-australian-athletics-cross-country-championships>

Coach education at Zatopek

2024:

Endurance Edge Masterclass facilitated by Avish Sharma and conducted in association with the Zatopek meeting: <https://vimeo.com/1039488791>

Post Games debrief (Paris Reflections)

Introduction by Ned Brophy Williams: <https://vimeo.com/1031815368>

Collis Birmingham: <https://vimeo.com/1038067171>

Brendan Mallyon: <https://vimeo.com/1038049818>

Nic Bideau: <https://vimeo.com/1038047059>

Craig Mottram: <https://vimeo.com/1036241104>

Tim O'Shaughnessy: <https://vimeo.com/1031815484>

Justin Rinaldi: <https://vimeo.com/1031815323>

Philo Saunders: <https://vimeo.com/1031815399>

Gavin Burren: <https://vimeo.com/1031815248>

Perisher Altitude Camp - Various distance groups and coaches trained at perisher during January. While not a formal camp there was some group collaboration around training. Plans to make this a more formal/organised camp in Jan 2025 and involve junior athletes & Coaches (Walks Model).

AIS Junior Distance Camp – Led by Di Huxley, Adam Didyk and Collis Birmingham (Additional support staff Philo Saunders, Lynda Gusbeth, Ben Norton & Liz Mathews. Initiated by Collis Birmingham, this 3-day camp brought together 29 junior athletes who competed in the world junior Cross Country trial.

2023:

Altitude and Heat Acclimation Workshop – Coaches of NASS athletes

Perisher training camp – Led by Philo Saunders – Key preparation camp for the High-Performance Para Distance Runners in collaboration with Anthony de Castella (attended last part of camp), Simon Moran and Peter Bock. Collaboration with VIS facilitated by Avish Sharma (attended and helped organise the camp) and Nicky Frey. Coaches involved were Gavin Burren (attended first week of camp) and Steve Fabris.

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Falls Creek training camp – Led by Collis Birmingham – Involved a small group of NASS athletes and non-NASS. Coached by Collis Birmingham, Nic Bideau, Scott West (NSW) and Ben Norton (QLD). It was a 3-week Camp for athletes 800m – Marathon and included TIS, NSWIS, SAIS, WAIS, VIS and QAS athletes. (only supported by VIS). We were supported by Steph Mundy -S+C of VIS (3days), Avish (5 Days) and Andrew White -Massage (21days).