

2026-2028 Walks Event Group Plan

Panel members: Brent Vallance (Vic), David Beacroft (NSW), Jared Tallent (SA & Facilitator), Jess Rothwell (Vic), Lauren Richardson (NSW), Megan Szirom (Vic), Nicole Fagan (NSW), Shane Pearson (Qld) & Terry Swan (Vic).

All event group objectives are guided by the overarching statement of 'Australia versus the Rest of the World'. The fundamental purpose of the panel is to:

- Bring together those with a current involvement from event group representatives that span across coaching, officiating, NIN and Racewalking Australia 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".
- Identify and implement initiatives that will enhance Australia's capability to sustain existing success (i.e. maintain and increase Medal and Top 8 performance achievement) at BME/Championships through the 2032 Brisbane OGs and beyond.

The Walks Event Group Panel's plan aims to achieve these objectives by:

- **Event group training camps:** To enhance the DPE for Australian athletes and coaches, providing an intensified full time athlete environment at key points in the domestic season. Camps should have a theme that targets environmental interventions of altitude and heat exposures.
- **Annual National Racewalking Training Camp (January 2026, 2027 & 2028):** Held annually, with the location set each year (TBC). Fully Funded Training Camp experience focusing on an environmental intervention (Heat or altitude) for categorised athletes (NASS) with reduced levy for PTP athletes.
- **Senior Invitations:** Invitation only with Levy (~\$2000) for additional senior athletes to develop and support a wider talent pool of pathway athletes to improve depth at the Olympic distance event.
- **Junior Development:** Invitation only with focus on development of athletes and coaches for the next World U/20 cycle.
- **Research:** Reengage with ACU and AIS for research funding (Research themed Training Camps).
- **Centres of Excellence (CoE) concept:** SASI and VIS Involvement in National Walks Program camps.

Coach, Official & Athlete Development opportunities:

- **LBG Race Walking Carnival Support:** Support the event each June long weekend to enhance coaching and judging development.
- **Learning:** Targeted, individualised experiential learning.
- **Team Coach Roles:** Team coach roles for developing coaches (World U20, World Race Walking Teams Championships and WUGs).
- **Athlete Mentors (Pathway Connection & Clinics):** Utilise main gathering points (specifically the LBG Carnival) to integrate senior and junior athletes. Senior athletes will facilitate an open-invite clinic for junior/Little Athletics age walkers. The session will focus on technical advice, Q&A (nutrition, tactics), and engagement activities to build a connection between the elite and grassroots levels.

International Competition Opportunity (2026, 2027 & 2028):

- **May 2026:** Tour to Europe for World Athletics Race Walking Tour events.
- **October 2026:** Tour to Takahata (JPN) targeting qualification for the 2027 World Championships in the Marathon Race Walk.
- **2027 & 2028:** An annual international experience for NASS athletes (location and event TBC) with an expanded invitation to a wider group of developing pathway athletes (PTP/U20/Senior).

Australian Competition Opportunities:

- **Dialogue:** Open dialogue with AA and State associations to ensure walkers are adequately catered for at State and National level.
- **State & International Rule Alignment:** Work with State Associations to align age group distances with World Athletics rules. Ensure that athletes are not restricted from racing in longer distances at the state level when they are eligible to do so under World Athletics guidelines.

- **Walkers Clubs:** Develop and support “Walkers Club” competition in each state.
- **International Participation:** International athlete participation in our domestic camps and competition to help raise the performance standard of our domestic season DPE and competition.

Walks Event Group Performance Indicators:

- Improved walks results depth and quality at the Australian All Schools and/or the National Underage Championships from 2026 onwards.
- Qualification of full teams of Walkers for each World Under 20 Championship from 2026 onward, World University Games from 2027 onwards, World Walking Teams Championship 2026 and World Championships & Olympic Games from 2027 onwards.
- Top 8 result at World U/20 is minimum level of expectation in each event (achieved in M&F in 2018, F in 2022, M&F in 2024).
- Improved capacity of existing employed coaches to coach more NASS athletes.
- Improved capacity of volunteer coaches to progress athletes to U/20 and senior National teams and NASS and PTP Programs.
- Increased number of coaches, in particular female coaches.
- Improved representation of Australian Athletes on World Athletics Racewalking Tour and showcasing of the walk events at National level meets.

Event Group Recommendations (Advisory):

- Where possible provide input/consultation into the event grid for major domestic competitions.
- Provide input into Event ages and distances at the key events across the summer (Nov/Dec and Feb trial events).
- Start Negotiation with ACU, or other Universities about potential research themed training camps to provide additional event group funding.
- Set Domestic and International camp date, venue and schedule for 2026 and 2027 in advance.
- Expand coach experience at international events at Asian Tour, WUG, WWTC & WA U/20 Championships.

2026 Event Group Initiatives

January 2-26th, 2026	- National Racewalking Training Camp held at the AIS Canberra. Australian 10,000m Race Walking Championships (WA Silver label racewalking Tour event) and Australian U20 5000m Race Walking Championships.
March 15 – April 2, 2026	- AA/SASI Race Walks Pre-Departure Camp (Brasilia Prep) – Based at SASI Adelaide for NASS athletes. Focus on Heat & Altitude adaptation for World Teams Championships.
May 2026	- Development Tour to Europe for World Athletics Race Walking Tour events.
June 2026	- LBG Race Walking Carnival – Support for Coaching & Judging Development.
October 2026	- Takahata (JPN) Tour – World Champs Qualifier opportunity (Marathon Race Walk focus).

2027 to 2028 Event Group Initiatives

January, 2027	- National Racewalking Training Camp held at Perisher Valley, NSW. Senior/U20 10,000m walk – Supernova (WA Silver Label Racewalking Tour Event).
May 2027	- Poděbrady (CZE) – Poděbrady Walking. World Athletics Race Walking Tour Gold meeting. Half Marathon Race Walk – World Champs Qualifier opportunity.
June 2027	- Darwin Heat Camp – Heat preparation for the World Championships (Beijing). Supported by the SASI Race Walks CoE and the AA Race Walks budget.
June 2027	- LBG Race Walking Carnival – Support for Coaching & Judging Development.
January, 2028	- National Racewalking Training Camp – Location TBC. Senior/U20 10,000m walk – Supernova (WA Silver Label Racewalking Tour Event).
Early to Mid 2028	- International Competition Opportunity – Location TBC. Olympic Qualifiers Opportunity + Expanded Development Squad (U20/Senior).
June 2028	- LBG Race Walking Carnival – Support for Coaching & Judging Development.

Previous Activities

2025:

- January National Training Camp – AIS Canberra
- WA Racewalking Tour events (Canberra and Adelaide)
- WA Racewalking Tour Taicang China and Nomi
- Darwin Heat Camp
- Pre WC Altitude Camp – St Moritz

2024:

- January National Training Camp – Perisher Valley
- WA Racewalking Tour events (Canberra and Adelaide)
- WA Racewalking Tour Taicang China
- Pre OG Altitude Camp – St Moritz

2023:

- January National Training Camp – Perisher Valley
- WA Racewalking Tour events (Canberra and Adelaide)
- Asian Racewalking Champs/ Racewalking Nomi, Japan
- Pre WC Altitude Camp – St Moritz

2022

- January National Training Camp – AIS Canberra