



AUSTRALIAN ATHLETICS – NATIONAL ATHLETE SUPPORT STRUCTURE (NASS) POLICY

September 2026

Australian Athletics (**AA**) National Athlete Support Structure (**NASS**) is a system that supports Australian athletes who have the greatest potential to achieve AA's HP Program Goals and targets at Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, World Championships and Commonwealth Games.

The NASS selection process identifies athletes and uses the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) **National Athlete Categorisation Framework** to place each selected athlete within a nationally tiered support model. This categorisation model is then applied through AA's delivery partners – the relevant member of the State Institutes of Sport/State Academies of Sport (SIS/SAS). Under the ASC requirements, detailed within the National Athlete Categorisation Framework, to be prioritised for support an athlete must demonstrate potential for future success; past results are not the sole consideration.

The NASS framework has three Streams – the Medal Stream, Pathway Stream and the Representative Stream. These Streams enable AA to identify the medal capable athletes within the current 4-year cycle, our medal capable athletes for future cycles and our prospective senior team athletes for the coming Championships. This enables AA and our SIS/SAS partners to prioritise the resources available to support our elite athletes.

There are also three additional NASS sub-categories alongside the overarching NASS policy and streams; NASS for NCAA, NASS for Relays and NASS for Marathon. These three programs articulate into this policy and provide a framework of AA's support relevant to these specific groups of athletes.

NASS membership has no bearing on selection for an Australian representative team. Equally, selection onto an Australian representative team does not equate to NASS membership.

AA will review NASS athlete selections every six months, through a NASS Selection Meeting, usually after the Australian domestic season and after the international season/benchmark event (**BME**).

1. Aims of the AA High Performance program and NASS

High Performance success is measured against our international peers and is based on selecting the best athletes, supporting them and their coach to close the gap between their performances and the podium and enabling them to perform on the day it counts.

The goals of AA's High Performance program (**Goals**) are:

- **To achieve 7 medals, supported by an additional 6-10 top eight places, at the Olympic Games and World Athletics (WA) World Championships in Olympic events.**



- **To achieve 4-8 gold medals, supported by an additional 16-20 silver and bronze medals, at the Paralympic Games and World Para Athletics (WPA) World Championships, in Paralympic events.**
- **To finish the top nation on the Commonwealth Games athletics medal table and win WA and WPA World Championships Gold medals in non-Olympic/non-Paralympic Events.**

The NASS program will assist in achieving these Goals by providing support to identified athletes and their coaches. AA's NASS program aims to enhance coaching and performance support systems in each selected athlete's Daily Performance Environment (**DPE**) and provide domestic and/or international competition opportunities.

The NASS Medal stream enables athletes who are most likely to win medals within this Olympic/Paralympic cycle to have prioritised access to performance support and HP resources.

The NASS Pathway stream is the initial step on this road to Podium success and is specifically aimed to provide the best support and DPE for a coach/athlete to assist their performance enhancement, planning and programming to achieve these aims.

The NASS Representative stream provides the framework of support for the athletes most likely to be selected onto AA's senior Able Body and Para team each year.

2. Benefits of NASS

Athletes selected to NASS will receive access to a range of resources. The hierarchy of the NASS categorisation is based on the progression outlined by the Performance Criteria provided in the Appendix. The NASS categorisation will assist in the prioritisation of AA and SIS/SAS high performance resources.

The utilisation of these high performance resources is focused on each coach/athlete's Individual Athlete Performance Plan (**IAPP**) – what is required to perform on the day it counts and how the system will support the achievement of these targeted areas. The IAPP will be established by the coach/athlete and their SIS/SAS Performance team.

The IAPP is then the basis of the coach/athlete partnership with AA and SIS/SAS and the high performance resources available through this partnership. The AA and SIS/SAS high performance resources may include:

- Facility access
- Performance support
- Competition support
- Specific testing
- Coach mentoring
- Heat acclimatisation
- Altitude preparation



- Coach development plan support
- Engagement with Australian HP system
- Equipment support
- Research
- Financial support
- Event camp access
- Innovation availability

Further, it is expected that athletes selected to NASS will engage and proactively communicate with AA and their SIS/SAS. An athlete and coach are welcome to choose not to engage with that system and/or choose to not benefit from the high performance resources of AA and/or their SIS/SAS, however, should an athlete choose not to engage, they will likely be exited from or not selected onto the NASS program.

3. Athlete Eligibility

The eligibility requirements (**Athlete Eligibility**) for NASS include that the athlete, at all material times:

- satisfies all relevant eligibility and nationality rules of World Athletics (**WA**), International Olympic Committee (**IOC**), World Para Athletics (**WPA**) International Paralympic Committee (**IPC**) and Commonwealth Games Federation (**CGF**);
- hold Australian citizenship at the time of invitation to the NASS and throughout the NASS year and be eligible and committed to represent Australia (or on a committed path to Australian citizenship to be eligible to represent Australia);
- is a registered member of Australian Athletics through their Member Association;
- in the case of para athletes, hold an international WPA classification of “Review” or “Confirmed” status;
- in the case of guide-runners, must be co-located in the same Daily Performance Environment as the athlete they guide, and play an active part in the support of the athlete’s training for 80% or more of the NASS period;
- comply with all relevant AA and ASC policies including (but not limited to) relevant Codes of Conduct, Team Agreements, Policies and Rules;
- comply with all applicable anti-doping and integrity requirements of Sport Integrity Australia (**SIA**), WA, WPA, Australian Olympic Committee (**AOC**), Paralympics Australia (**PA**), Commonwealth Games Australia (**CGA**), AA and the AIS including SIA level 1 and level 2 Anti-Doping courses and Match-fixing awareness course.



Athletes may be considered for selection on to NASS regardless of whether they have previously been exited from NASS, or if it is the first time they are being considered. Their selection will be based on whether the NASS Selectors believe they can achieve the aims of the NASS program.

4. Performance Criteria

There are no qualification standards whereby achieving the standard determines automatic selection on to NASS. When considering selections, the NASS Selectors will utilise performance-by-age graphs (refer to Appendix 1) for able-bodied athletes, and AA “A” and “B” Performance Standards for Para athletes, as a guide, along with other on- and off-track indicators in section 7 and 8 below.

The capacity of an athlete to assist Australian Athletics to achieve the Goals will be the ultimate guide for Selectors.

5. NASS Selectors, Selection Meetings and Selections

There will be up to eight NASS Selectors. Normally the selectors will be the General Manager - High Performance, Director of Performance Coaching, Head of Paralympic Programs, Director of Performance Sustainability, a performance coaching representative, a State Performance Advisor representative and two other HP representatives. AA’s Wellbeing and Engagement Manager will be a non-voting member of the selection process.

Additional non-Selectors may also attend Selection Meetings: typically, an ASC representative, a SIS/SAS representative, administrators and another person appointed by the CEO, usually with a sporting and legal background, to act as an “Independent Observer” of the process.

The absence from a Selection Meeting of one or more of the NASS Selectors or any of the other people referred to above does not invalidate any selection meeting or selection decision. However, a minimum of five NASS Selectors are required to deliver a selection meeting.

Unless otherwise required, there will be two Selection Meetings per year, one after the Australian domestic season (***Domestic Season Selection Meeting***) and the other after the conclusion of the international season (***International Season Selection Meeting***).

Usually, the **NASS Medal Stream and Representative Stream** will be identified and selected during the ***International Season Selection Meeting*** (when those athletes have had their main competition period) and the **NASS Pathway Stream** will be identified and selected during the ***Domestic Season Selection Meeting*** in non-World Athletics U20 Championships years, and after the ***International Season Selection Meeting*** in World Athletics U20 Championship years (when these athletes have had their main competition period). As a result, athletes will typically only undergo a categorisation change once per year – either at the ***International Season Selection Meeting*** or the ***Domestic Season Selection Meeting***.



Having regard to the guidance in this Policy and, in particular, the goals of Australian Athletics' High Performance program and the aims of NASS, the NASS Selectors will determine, at their discretion, which athletes to offer NASS places to and which level of NASS to offer to selected athletes during these Selection Meetings. In making selection decisions, the NASS Selectors can inform themselves in any way they see fit and are acting as experts.

6. Appeals

Only athletes who have previously been selected as a member of NASS within the preceding period may request reconsideration of the decision regarding their exit from NASS or their change of NASS level (**Request**). This Request must be in writing to the General Manager - High Performance. In their Request, the athlete must address either or both of the following grounds for reconsideration, namely that the NASS Selectors,

- (a) made an error of fact, or
- (b) failed to consider a relevant performance

The Request must be made within seven days of the notification to the affected athlete.

Upon receipt of a valid Request, the General Manager - High Performance will ask the Independent Observer to review the athlete's Request. Following this review, the Independent Observer may invite the NASS Selectors to reconsider their decision or may request the NASS Selectors provide further detail to the athlete addressing their concerns and/or the reasons for the NASS Selectors' decision. The Independent Observer should provide reasons for their decision to the affected athlete and NASS Selectors.

For the avoidance of doubt:

- (a) the Independent Observer is not entitled to make or substitute selection decisions, any changes would need to be made by the NASS Selectors;
- (b) athletes are not entitled to appeal against the selection to NASS of any other athlete;
- (c) there is no further avenue of appeal.

7. NASS Medal Stream

The aim of the Medal Stream is to support athletes who have the *realistic capacity* to achieve top 8 and Medal results at the senior BME within the next 2-4 years, usually indicated through having achieved their performances and results at the most recent Senior BME. Usually, the Medal Stream selections will be made during the **International Season Selection Meeting**.

The athletes and their coaches in these categories of NASS receive Performance Support through their SIS/SAS performance servicing staff.



Selection Considerations

	AA Category	Criteria for the Selectors to consider
MEDAL STREAM	Gold <i>(AIS Category – Podium)</i>	Athletes with the realistic capacity to win a Gold medal (individually or as a relay runner) at the next Olympic / Paralympic Games, who are considered “on-track” (defined below) and who have achieved one of the below performance indicators: (i) Have won a Gold medal at a Benchmark Event within the previous 24 months OR (ii) Have achieved the What It Takes To Win (WITTW) Gold Medal pre-BME SB Performance range within the most recent 12 months (Able Body), AND had a significant performance limiting issue (e.g., injury, illness) at the most recent BME.
	Medal <i>(AIS Category – Podium)</i>	Athletes with the realistic capacity to win a Silver or Bronze medal (individually or as a relay runner) at the next Olympic / Paralympic Games, who are considered “on-track” (defined below) and who have achieved one of the below performance indicators: (i) Have won a Silver or Bronze medal at a Benchmark Event within the previous 24 months, OR (ii) Have achieved the WITTW Medal pre-BME SB Performance range within the most recent 12 months AND had a significant performance limiting issue (e.g., injury, illness) at the most recent BME (Able Body).
	Podium Ready	Athletes with the realistic capacity to reach the Medal level (individually or as a relay runner) at the next Olympic / Paralympic Games within the next four years indicated by one of the below performance indicators and who are considered “on-track” (defined below): (i) Have finished Fourth to Eighth place at a Benchmark Event within the previous 24 months (Able Body), OR (ii) Have achieved the WITTW top-8 performance range at the most recent BME (Able Body), OR (iii) Have achieved the WITTW top-8 pre-BME SB Performance range within the most recent 12 month AND had a significant performance limiting issue (e.g., injury, illness) at the most recent BME (Able Body), OR (iv) Have finished Fourth to Eighth place at a Benchmark Event within the previous 24 months AND finished in top 50% of field (Para), OR



	AA Category	Criteria for the Selectors to consider
		(v) Have achieved multiple AA “A” Para Performance Standard within the most recent 12 months AND had a significant performance limiting issue (e.g., injury, illness) at the most recent BME (Para).
	Podium Potential	Athletes with the realistic capacity to reach the Podium Ready level (either individually or as a relay runner) within approximately four years (based on event-specific development timeframes), indicated by one of the below performance indicators and are considered “on-track” (defined below): (i) Have achieved a top-16 finish at the most recent BME (Able Body), OR (ii) Are within the Age Progression profile for a medal based on their event and person-specific development timeframe (Able Body), OR (iii) Have achieved the AA “A” Para Performance standard (Para).

Medal Stream Realistic Capacity to Medal

An athlete should show year-on-year progression towards the Goals and the aims of NASS.

Within the Medal Stream, an athlete should progress towards the next level of NASS through higher results at the BME on an approximately two-yearly basis; this is a clear indication an athlete has the realistic capacity to medal.

The realistic capacity to medal will normally be shown through the improvement of performance level (PB/PB at BME/SB/Median of SB) in line with WITTW performance data. WITTW performance data is updated after each relevant BME, with the updated data utilised to inform future decisions. Progression may also be shown through improvements in relation to their individual “Gaps to Podium” identified within the athlete’s Individual Athlete Performance Plan (IAPP).

The retention or exit of an athlete on the Medal Stream who does not show improvement in line with these performance progressions will be at the absolute discretion of the Selectors. An athlete may also be retained on the Medal Stream, but at a lower level, if the Selectors believe the athlete still retains the realistic capacity to medal (as identified within this section).

An athlete who has been exited from the Medal Stream may still be considered for selection on the Representative Stream but is unlikely to fit the parameters of the Pathway Stream. An exited athlete may be also re-considered for the Medal Stream in the future.



On-Track Indicators

The realistic capacity of an athlete to medal is determined by a combination of the below “on-track” indicators:

- Improvement of performance level (Personal Best, Finish at BME, pre-BME Season’s Best, Median of top-3 or top-5 Performances within the preceding season) in line with the WITTW data for their event (Able Body)
- Improvement of performance level (Personal Best, Finish at BME, pre-BME Season’s Best) in relation to the AA “A” Para Performance Standards (Para)
- Performances align with the age progression of medallist and top-8 finishers as outlined in WITTW and the performance-by-age graphs (Able Body)
- Continued progression against, and intent to achieve, the identified “Gaps to Podium” outlined as priorities and targets in the IAPP.

Athletes may also demonstrate they are “off-track”, and hence will be considered for removal from NASS, through some combination of the following indicators:

- Repeated underperformance at BMEs relative to entry performance
- Rate of progression in performance level does not match required performance trajectories over an extended period
- A lack of engagement with the Individual Athlete Performance Plan (IAPP) process
- A lack of engagement with their SIS/SAS performance teams
- An inability to meet the criteria required for selection at their current NASS level.

Normally, an athlete who is heading towards being considered “off-track” will be provided feedback and agreed performance measures to achieve prior to their exit.

8. NASS Pathway Stream

The aim of the Pathway Stream is to support athletes with the potential to win Senior BME medals within the next 4-8 years. Usually, the Pathway Stream selections will be made during the **Domestic Season Selection Meeting**.

This stream includes the Developing and Emerging levels of NASS. These athletes and their coaches receive Performance Support through their SIS/SAS performance servicing staff.



Selection Considerations

	AA Category	Criteria for the Selectors to consider
PATHWAYS	Developing	Athletes with the realistic capacity to reach the Podium Potential level (either individually or as a relay runner) within approximately two – four years, as outlined in Section 7, as evidenced by their on-track indicators (detailed below). Typically, Able-Bodied athletes at this level are capable of qualifying for the next BME (with considerations made for events with a later age of peak performance). Typically, Para athletes at this level are capable of qualifying for the next BME, and are achieving the AA “B” Para Performance standards.
	Emerging	Athletes with the realistic capacity to reach the Podium Potential within approximately four – six years (either individually or as a relay runner) as outlined in Section 7 and evidenced by their on-track indicators (detailed below). Typically, athletes at this level are 2-3 years away of being capable of qualifying for a BME (with considerations made for events with a later age of peak performance).

Pathway Stream Age and Performance Considerations

Australian Athletics understand that talent development is complex and non-linear, and that each event may have its own age at peak performance. As a result, there are no specific age bands for membership at the Pathway level, although it is expected that many athletes will be between 18-22 years of age at their initial selection within the Able Body program. When indicated, and in line with performance data and expert opinion, athletes who fall outside of this age band may be selected onto the Pathway Stream.

Due to the relatively wide age bands of this level of NASS, there are no specific performance standards required for entry onto the Pathway Stream. To provide guidance, AA have created performance-by-age graphs (see Appendix 1).

As a general rule Para Pathway athletes will need to show they are within or progressing towards the AA “B” Para Performance standards.

On-Track Indicators

The selection panel will utilise a variety of information to determine whether the athlete is on-track for future medal winning performance when making selections, including:



- Improvement of performance level (Personal Best, Finish at BME, pre-BME Season's Best, Median of top-3 or top-5 Performances within the preceding season) in line with the WITTW data for their event (Able Body)
- Improvement of performance level (Personal Best, Finish at BME, pre-BME Season's Best) in relation to the AA "A" Para Performance Standards (Para)
- Performances align with the age progression of medallist and top-8 finishers as outlined in WITTW and the performance-by-age graphs (Able Body)
- Continued progression against, and intent to achieve, the identified "Gaps to Podium" outlined as priorities and targets in the IAPP
- Age compared to the age profile within the event-specific WITTW (Able Body)
- Event Group performance trends as illustrated within WITTW (Able Body)
- Consistency of performance at major competitions
- Quality of the Daily Performance Environment including coaching, engagement with their IAPP within their SIS/SAS and in particular the utilisation of offered/available performance support.

Athletes may also demonstrate they are "off-track", and hence eligible for removal from NASS, through some combination of the following indicators:

- Continued underperformance at targeted pinnacle events relative to entry performance
- Rate of progression in performance level does not match required performance trajectories over an extended period
- Injury and/or illness profile
- A lack of engagement with the IAPP process and/or their SIS/SAS performance teams.

Normally, an athlete who is heading towards being considered "off-track" will be provided feedback and agreed performance measures to achieve prior to their exit.

Pathway Stream Retention

Ordinarily, athletes will remain on the Pathway Stream for approximately two to six years, with an expectation that, in the final two years of membership, athletes will be demonstrating a realistic ability to qualify for the next BME, with exceptions for events with later ages of peak performance.

9. NASS Representative Stream

The aim of the Representative Stream is to support athletes who are highly likely and fully committed to being selected on the next Senior BME team.



9.1. Representative Stream Selection

Usually, the Representative Stream selections will be made during the ***International Season Selection Meeting***.

The NASS Selection Panel will consider athletes for selection through utilising the WA World Rankings system and Top Lists (Able Body).

NASS Representative Stream selection for Para athletes will be in collaboration and partnership with Para Units support through their SIS/SAS. The majority of Representative Stream support will be provided through the Para Unit programs in each SIS/SAS.

NASS Representative Stream selection will be focused on consideration of the Olympic and Paralympic event list and in certain circumstances, events at World Championships. Only athletes who are considered medal capable in a non-Olympic or Gold medal capable in a non-Paralympic event will be considered for the Representative Stream in those events.

Selection or non-selection for the Representative Stream has no bearing on the ultimate selection or non-selection of an athlete for future Australian Teams. Those decisions are a matter for the AA Selection Panel.

Representative NASS Retention

Athletes will be assessed by the NASS Selection Panel at the International Season Selection Meeting to ensure that the Athlete remains in contention for selection at the next BME.

10. NASS for Relays

For the purposes of the Relay Program, there are three core NASS for Relays categories – Medal Stream, Pathway Stream and Representative Stream. The 2028 Olympic Games events include Men's, Women's and Mixed 4x100m and 4x400m. Where possible the 4x100m (M, W and Mx) will be considered as part of the same squad, as will the 4x400m (M, W and Mx).

The maximum number of athletes will only be considered for the highest category for that relay team. For example if the Men's, Women's and Mixed 4x100m is on the Medal stream up to nine athletes could be categorised for that stream but then only a maximum of six would be considered for the Pathway or Representative Stream.

Category	Description
Medal Stream (maximum of 6 athletes per relay team; for Mx team that is 3 M & 3 W)	The Medal stream is for athletes who, in the opinion of the relay coaches and NASS selectors, will form part of the core relay team at the next BME, and where that team has the potential of achieving a top 16 finish (qualify for World Championships/Olympic Games).



Category	Description
Total of 9 M & 9 W	The Medal stream is further comprised of the following levels: • Medal – where the relay team has the realistic capacity to win a medal at the next Olympic Games, and has achieved a top 3 finish at a BME within the previous 24 months • Podium Ready – where the relay team has the realistic capacity to reach the final at the next Olympic Games, and has finished 4th-8th at a BME in the previous 24 months • Podium Potential – where the relay team has the realistic capability of making a BME final within the next 2 years
Pathway Stream (maximum of 6 athletes per relay team; for Mx team that is 3 M & 3 W) Total of 9 M & 9 W	The Pathway stream is for athletes who, in the opinion of the relay coaches and NASS selectors, meet at least one of the below criteria: • Where the relay team is not categorised in the Medal stream, the athletes who will likely form part of the core relay team at the next BME, and that team will highly likely qualify for the next BME; • Where the relay team is categorised in the Medal stream, the athletes who will likely form part of the core of that team in approximately 2-4 years.
Representative Stream (maximum of 2-6 athletes per relay team; for Mx team that is 1-3 M & 1-3 W)	The Representative stream is for athletes who, in the opinion of the relay coaches and NASS selectors, are either: • Likely to form part of the core relay team for the next 12 months, but where the relay team is not categorised on the Medal or Pathway stream; • Outside of the core relay group but may be utilised in cases of injury to this group.

Expressions of Interest

Athletes are eligible for selection for NASS for Relays support if they submit an Expression of Interest (Eoi) to be considered for selection onto the program prior to the post-international season AA NASS selection process (usually held in October each year). If an athlete does not submit an Eoi it is assumed they do not want to be considered for NASS for Relays.



NASS for Relays Selection Process

The highest category of each of the respective relay squads will be determined by the NASS panel in accord with the categorisation criteria outlined above. Athletes will then be considered for selected for a level of support as outlined above.

The maximum number of athletes selected does not have to be met (i.e. fewer athletes can be selected for the highest level of categorisation for each relay squad). Membership of a relay squad at the previous BME does not necessarily correlate with membership of the relay squad at the next BME, and hence does not guarantee categorisation.

Factors considered for categorising each athlete will include, but is not limited to:

- The role each individual athlete will play in each relay squad.
- Data in relation to involvement in relay camps over the last 12 months in relation to splits and exchange times.
- Baton-changing skills and versatility to run in alternate positions.
- Recent (i.e. in the last 12 months) individual performances in 100m, 200m and 400m.

Note: Finishing position in National finals WILL NOT be the main criteria.

NASS for Relays selections will be reviewed every 12-month following the international competition season. However, athletes may be removed before the end of a given 12-month period or added to the program (or promoted up a level) following the domestic season should their performances warrant such a change to be made.

The full benefits and expectations of the NASS for Relays are outlined separately.

11. NASS for NCAA

A number of promising Australian athletes choose to attend university in the United States. The US college system is a legitimate pathway for developing athletes; in many cases, it allows them to be coached by a professional coach, with other high-level athletes, in a high performance environment with sufficient performance support. In addition, the level of competition faced by athletes based in the US can be excellent.

NASS for NCAA enables the NASS selectors to identify those Australian athletes who are based in the NCAA system who would form part of NASS if they were Australian based. NASS for NCAA also enables AA to offer support for these athletes in partnership with the SIS/SAS but also acknowledging that their circumstances do not require all year access and support.



The key problems facing AA in terms of supporting athletes based in the US for college are:

- As they are based outside of Australia, they do not fall into the traditional service models utilised by the SIS/SAS for athlete support.
- They do return to Australia, typically during school holidays and around the National Championships, and therefore require short periods of facility access and performance support.

For the vast majority of athletes, their University will provide most of what they need to support their success, including:

- Professional coaching
- Training facility access
- S&C delivery
- Sports medicine and physiotherapy

Additional support that may be provided to identified NCAA athletes includes:

- Regular contact with the Australian Athletics (AA) NCAA liaison personal who will provide support and advice regarding AA competition and programs.
- Facility access when the athlete is in Australia.
- Performance support when the athlete is in Australia.
- Return flights for the athlete to return to Australia for the National Championships (noting that not all colleges may support this).

Medal Stream

Collegiate athletes who are categorised on NASS at the Medal Stream level will be considered as full members of NASS. As such, there is no change in how these athletes are handled compared to current practice. The advantage of this is:

- Athletes are eligible to receive dAIS
- Athletes can access their local SIS/SAS site facilities when in Australia
- Athletes can utilise their local SIS/SAS site performance support services when in Australia
- Athletes can utilise their local SIS/SAS site performance support practitioners remotely (i.e., nutrition, psychology, AW&E) as required.

Pathway Stream – NASS for NCAA

Collegiate athletes who are considered at a similar performance and development level as athletes who are categorised on NASS at the Pathway Stream level will be eligible for NASS for NCAA. Here, athletes will be considered in a similar manner to a visiting athlete.



Each athlete will be able to utilise their local SIS/SAS site facilities and performance support when they are in Australia. If SIS/SAS capacity allows an athlete, they may also be able to utilise performance support expertise remotely.

Pre-NASS for NCAA

An athlete who is at NCAA can also be supported outside of NASS for NCAA through the Pathway Transition Program (PTP). This support is outlined separately.

12. NASS for Marathon

Australian Athletics has designed a specific NASS framework for the Marathon whereby AA provide comprehensive support to elite marathon athletes, aiming to develop world-class athletes who can perform at the World Athletics Championships, Olympic Games or Paralympic Games.

This framework recognises there is a limit to the number of Marathons that able body athletes usually run within a calendar year, and that in many cases athletes do not choose to include the World Athletics Championships as one of their Marathon races. It also recognises that at this stage World Para Athletics do not offer a world championships Marathon in between Paralympic Games.

Whilst the World Athletics Championships and World Para Athletics Championships will continue to be the primary focus for Australian Athletics, NASS for Marathon will support Marathon athletes in a manner tailored to the event. Consideration has been given to the manner that Australian athletes compete in the event annually, whilst acknowledging that most athletes will still have success at the Olympic or Paralympic Games Marathon as their primary objective.

NASS for Marathon – Medal Stream:

If athletes are eligible for Podium Ready or Podium levels of the Medal Stream of NASS through their performances at the World Athletics Championships, Olympic or Paralympic Games, athletes will be considered for that level of NASS and similarly receive the same support as all other events. To maintain that level, athletes must also be considered ‘on-track’, which is outlined under the Medal Stream section of this policy.

NASS for Marathon athletes:

Athletes will be identified as Olympic/Paralympic team capable Marathon athletes, defined as those who are highly likely to be eligible for nomination/selection for the next Olympic/Paralympic Games team. This number will normally be no more than three (3) athletes for each event.

The NASS for Marathon athletes will be considered annually at the post-international season NASS Review (usually in October) and if new athletes emerge, prioritisation selections may need to be made, based on the three athletes deemed the most likely to be nominated/selected for the next Olympic/Paralympic team.



In line with the requirement of the event, the NASS for Marathon support through the SIS/SAS will be focussed on Physio, Strength and Conditioning and through a national service for Physiology and Nutrition. The specifics of support for athletes on NASS for Marathon may vary between each SIS/SAS.

13. Medical and Pregnancy

An athlete who is on either the Medal or Pathway Stream may be placed within the Medical or Pregnancy categories, if the Selectors believe that the athlete can return to a performance level congruent with their original NASS Selection and meet the goals and aims of the program in the future. If an athlete is placed on the Medical or Pregnancy levels they may return onto NASS at any time, normally at the level of NASS they were at prior to being placed on Medical or Pregnancy level.

As the Representative Stream of NASS relates to the next upcoming Benchmark Event athletes will not usually be moved from the Representative Stream of NASS to the Medical or Pregnancy categories, but this may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Medical Category

The Medical Category is available for an athlete who incurs a long-term medical issue which means they will be unable to compete to a high level within the next 6-12 months but is likely to be able to return to that level once they have recovered from their medical issue.

Pregnancy Category

Australian Athletics recognises that athletes may take some time away from intense training and competition when they become pregnant or have recently given birth. AA recognises that pregnant athletes may still be on track to contribute to national performance targets at the next pinnacle event.

- NASS funded athletes will still be identified within the Athlete Categorisation matrix, and therefore eligible for funding, if they meet the following minimum criteria:
 - Prior to becoming pregnant, the athlete was categorised AND was receiving funding in the past 12 months;
 - Has an individual athlete performance plan focusing on maintaining physical and mental wellbeing as it aligns to the sports needs and informed by specific medical advice from the NSO/ NIN medical doctor as it relates to pregnancy;
 - Has an agreed return to sport and competition plan including timeframes and regular pre-determined meetings scheduled with their State Performance Advisor and
 - Maintains contact with AW&E staff on a regular basis to ensure athletes are focussed on maintaining their overall wellbeing.

We highly encourage pregnant NASS funded athletes to attend regular medical reviews with their NIN/ NSO medical doctor. Please refer to Australian Athletics' Pregnancy Policy.



14. Time Away From Competition

Australian Athletics recognises that some athletes may need to consider taking a “leave of absence” from the sport that will enable their longer-term continuation of Medal level performance at the next Olympic or Paralympic Games. As such, AA has developed a Time Away From Competition policy. The benefits outlined within this policy may be available for Podium level athletes. In the first instance athletes should discuss their individual circumstances to determine if they meet the requirements of the Time Away From Competition policy with their State Performance Advisor or an AA Wellbeing and Engagement staff member.

15. Review of NASS Structure

AA will review the structure of the NASS program on an annual basis with input from the SIS/SAS and any other relevant system partners.

16. Benchmark Events

The **Benchmark Events (BME)** are:

1. **Olympic Games,**
2. **Paralympic Games,**
3. **World Athletics World Championships, and**
4. **World Para Athletics World Championships.**

Other international and world level competitions may be considered as part of the NASS selection process, but the focus of NASS remains these identified BMEs.



APPENDIX 1

What It Takes To Win (WITTW)

WITTW is a document that serves as an overview of the requirements for success in each event, including key performance data. It has been developed through analysis of the previous 10 years of BME data, along with coaching and performance support staff. Athletes and their personal coaches can view the WITTW for their event by contacting their relevant State Performance Advisor.

Performance-by-age graphs

To assist decision making, Australian Athletics and the NASS Selectors utilise performance-by-age graphs. These graphs outline the performances that previous medal and top-8 finishers have achieved at a given age, allowing the NASS Selectors to understand the overall context of an athlete's performance, in conjunction with the other on-track and off-track indicators highlighted above. Performance-by-age graphs have been established for the Able Body program only and are updated after each relevant BME.

Explanation of Performance-by-Age Graphs

The performance-by-age graphs provide the median, and middle 50%, or performances that World Championships and Olympic Games medal and top-8 finishers achieved at a given age, using data from 2001 onwards. Some events do not have performance-by-age graphs; these are either relay events or newer events that lack the depth of data.

Note: 5000m Track Race Walk and Half-Marathon Race Walk events

These are new events onto the World U20 and World Athletics Championships Program.

However, given the similarities between 5000m and 10000m on the track, and 20km and Half-Marathon at this stage these performance levels will be retained.

Marathon Race Walk event

The Marathon Race Walk event is now only a World Athletics Championship event and isn't included as part of the Olympic Games program. As such, the NASS program will be focused on the Representative Stream for the Marathon Race Walk event.

The Medal Stream will only be offered for the Marathon Race Walk event at the Medal and Gold medal level, and only through achievement of a Gold, Silver or Bronze medal result at a BME in the last 12 months. To maintain that level, athletes must also be considered 'on-track', which is outlined under the Medal Stream section of this policy.



APPENDIX 2

Australian Athletics has developed AA “A” & “B” Para Performance Standards which are used for comparison within the Para event list. Within this NASS policy these Performance Standards are a data point enabling comparison between medal and top 8 level performances at the Para BMEs. These standards will be considered annually.

Men's NASS A	Men's NASS B	Event/Class	Women's NASS A	Women's NASS B
11.25	11.40	100m - T11	12.20	12.50
10.95	11.10	100m - T12	12.30	12.45
10.85	10.95	100m - T13	12.35	12.65
15.25	15.55	100m - T34/33	18.75	19.55
11.95	12.45	100m - T35	15.25	15.85
12.15	12.30	100m - T36	14.50	14.80
11.45	11.90	100m - T37	13.50	13.95
11.05	11.50	100m - T38	12.70	12.95
11.45	11.70	100m - T44/43	14.10	14.85
10.75	10.80	100m - T47/46/45	12.50	12.65
21.50	22.40	100m - T51		
17.10	17.50	100m - T52		
14.90	15.40	100m - T53		
		100m - T53/52/51	16.55	17.25
14.00	14.15	100m - T54	16.25	16.45
12.10	12.55	100m - T63/42	14.75	15.40
10.80	11.20	100m - T64/62	13.00	13.35



Men's NASS A	Men's NASS B	Event/Class	Women's NASS A	Women's NASS B
15.85	16.50	100m - T72/71	18.10	18.90
		200m - T11	25.20	26.25
		200m - T12	25.10	25.55
24.50	25.55	200m - T35	31.55	32.85
		200m - T36	30.60	31.35
23.25	23.80	200m - T37	28.00	29.00
		200m - T47/46/45	25.35	25.80
40.85	42.55	200m - T51		
22.70	23.00	200m - T64/44	27.25	28.40
51.70	52.60	400m - T11	58.45	1:00.90
49.25	50.85	400m - T12	57.00	59.40
49.40	50.70	400m - T13	57.00	59.30
48.00	48.50	400m - T20	56.55	58.00
51.80	53.65	400m - T37	1:07.55	1:10.35
50.90	52.00	400m - T38/35		
		400m - T38/36	1:00.85	1:03.30
48.75	49.10	400m - T47/46/45	58.10	1:00.50
1:01.30	1:02.05	400m - T52/51		
48.95	50.45	400m - T53		
		400m - T53/52/51	56.80	59.20



Men's NASS A	Men's NASS B	Event/Class	Women's NASS A	Women's NASS B
45.55	46.15	400m - T54	53.40	54.00
49.60	51.65	400m - T62/43		
1:38.40	1:42.20	800m - T34/33	2:05.35	2:10.60
1:38.00	1:41.00	800m - T53/52/51	1:51.75	1:56.40
1:29.90	1:30.50	800m - T54	1:43.75	1:46.60
4:05.10	4:15.30	1500m - T11	4:48.20	5:00.20
3:47.80	3:57.30	1500m - T13/12	4:36.65	4:48.20
3:54.35	3:56.50	1500m - T20	4:39.65	4:46.75
3:59.85	4:04.75	1500m - T38/37		
3:53.80	3:59.75	1500m - T46/45		
2:45.80	2:49.90	1500m - T54/53	3:15.05	3:16.25
15:16.20	15:45.90	5000m - T11		
15:03.25	15:20.45	5000m - T13/12		
9:14.30	9:37.40	5000m - T54/53	11:07.05	11:13.80
2:24:18	2:28:03	Marathon - T12/11	3:06:38	3:14:25
1:22:09	1:25:34	Marathon - T54/53/52	1:40:00	1:43:58
		Long Jump - T11	4.75	4.55
		Long Jump - T12	5.25	5.05
6.80	6.60	Long Jump - T13		
7.20	7.00	Long Jump - T20	5.70	5.45



Men's NASS A	Men's NASS B	Event/Class	Women's NASS A	Women's NASS B
5.70	5.55	Long Jump - T36		
6.10	5.90	Long Jump - T37	4.50	4.30
6.40	6.30	Long Jump - T38/35		
		Long Jump - T38/36	5.00	4.80
6.20	5.95	Long Jump - T44/43		
7.05	6.95	Long Jump - T47/46/45	5.50	5.35
		Long Jump - T63/61/42	4.80	4.60
7.55	7.25	Long Jump - T64/62		
		Long Jump - T64/62/44/43	5.25	5.05
1.95	1.90	High Jump - T47/46/45		
1.85	1.75	High Jump - T63/42		
2.00	1.90	High Jump - T64/44		
38.15	36.65	Club Throw - F32/31	25.65	24.65
32.85	32.25	Club Throw - F51	18.50	14.00
		Discus Throw - F11	34.65	33.25
52.15	50.10	Discus Throw - F37		
		Discus Throw - F38/37	35.90	34.45
		Discus Throw - F41/40	29.35	28.20
		Discus Throw - F44/43	35.20	33.80
19.80	19.00	Discus Throw - F52/51	9.00	8.65



Men's NASS A	Men's NASS B	Event/Class	Women's NASS A	Women's NASS B
		Discus Throw - F53	10.40	10.00
		Discus Throw - F55/54	23.50	22.55
		Discus Throw - F57/56	30.50	29.25
57.80	55.50	Discus Throw - F64/62/44/43		
		Discus Throw - F64/62	27.40	22.50
62.15	59.70	Javelin Throw - F13/12	33.50	32.15
34.75	33.35	Javelin Throw - F34/33	17.70	17.00
50.80	48.75	Javelin Throw - F38		
61.50	59.00	Javelin Throw - F46/45	40.10	38.50
		Javelin Throw - F54/53/52	15.20	14.60
		Javelin Throw - F56/55	22.15	21.25
47.50	45.60	Javelin Throw - F57/56/55		
62.50	60.00	Javelin Throw - F64/63/62/61/44/43/42		
13.20	12.65	Shot Put - F11		
15.15	14.60	Shot Put - F12		
		Shot Put - F12/11	10.95	10.55
16.05	15.40	Shot Put - F20	13.70	13.20
9.90	9.50	Shot Put - F32	6.65	6.40
11.65	11.15	Shot Put - F33	7.15	6.85
11.30	10.85	Shot Put - F34	7.55	7.25



Men's NASS A	Men's NASS B	Event/Class	Women's NASS A	Women's NASS B
15.20	14.60	Shot Put - F35	8.90	8.55
14.40	13.85	Shot Put - F36		
14.60	14.00	Shot Put - F37	11.05	10.60
10.75	10.35	Shot Put - F40	8.55	8.20
11.55	11.10	Shot Put - F41	9.20	8.85
		Shot Put - F44/43/42	11.35	10.90
15.70	15.05	Shot Put - F46/45	12.40	11.15
8.25	7.90	Shot Put - F53		
		Shot Put - F54/53	7.35	7.05
12.00	11.50	Shot Put - F55/54		
14.40	13.80	Shot Put - F57/56		
		Shot Put - F57/56/55	10.25	9.85
14.50	13.90	Shot Put - F63/61/42		
		Shot Put - F64/63/62/61	10.00	8.45