



Date: 16 February 2026

ROWING SOUTH AFRICA (RowSA) SELECTION POLICY FOR INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. This Rowing South Africa selection document aims to provide a clear pathway for Athletes, who have ambitions of representing South Africa at World Rowing sanctioned events and other key international regattas.
- 1.2. This selection policy should be read in conjunction with:
 - 1.2.1. the annual update of the pathway document (Annexure B) per age group;
 - 1.2.2. the RowSA Important dates publication.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This Selection Policy applies to the following events:
 - 2.1.1. RowSA has designed this Document to facilitate a transparent process for Athletes to represent South Africa at the following events:
 - 2.1.1.1. World Rowing Championships;
 - 2.1.1.2. African Rowing Championships;
 - 2.1.1.3. World Cup Regattas;
 - 2.1.1.4. Henley Royal Regatta or such other international events at which South Africa may be represented;
 - 2.1.1.5. World Rowing Under 23 Championships;
 - 2.1.1.6. World Rowing U19 Championships;
 - 2.1.1.7. World Rowing Coastal Championships
 - 2.1.1.8. Other events where National Colours are to be awarded.
- 2.2. This Selection Policy does not apply to:

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- 2.2.1. *Student World Games or Championships*: These two events are covered in a separate selection document produced by USSA Rowing from time to time.
- 2.2.2. *Olympic Games*: A separate policy will be published in conjunction with SASCOC closer to the time.
- 2.2.3. *Paralympic Games*: A separate policy will be published in conjunction with SASCOC closer to the time.

3. ELIGIBILITY

- 3.1. In order to be considered for selection an individual must fulfil the following minimum eligibility criteria:
 - 3.1.1. be a member of and in good standing with RowSA. Athletes not based in South Africa may be exempt from this requirement however will need to be regularized if ultimately selected;
 - 3.1.2. signed the Commitment Agreement for the relevant Season;
 - 3.1.3. hold a valid South African passport;
 - 3.1.4. be eligible to compete under the World Rowing Nationality Regulations;
 - 3.1.5. be eligible to compete under the World Rowing Gender Regulations;
 - 3.1.6. in the case of Para athletes, comply with the World Rowing Classification Regulations;
 - 3.1.7. in the case of age group Championships, athletes must be eligible to compete under the World Rowing Age Group Regulations;
 - 3.1.8. fulfil any other eligibility rule or requirement from World Rowing, WADA or any other relevant international or national governing body or organisation;
 - 3.1.9. not be subject to any period of ineligibility or provisional suspension due to an antidoping rule violation arising from any nature whatsoever e.g. sanctioned by another sporting code;
 - 3.1.10. be a fit and proper person to represent Rowing South Africa by remaining compliant with the Rowing South Africa Code of Conduct and not being subject to any other conduct, disciplinary or safeguarding investigations;
 - 3.1.11. complete the registration process for candidate athletes as per the annual pathway document;
 - 3.1.12. complete, or be exempted from, each element making up the Selection Trials Process as set out in the relevant annual pathway document;
 - 3.1.13. be available for any crew formation process or ad hoc trial notified by the relevant lead coach; and
 - 3.1.14. comply with any requirements or criteria set out in the annual relevant pathways document (Annexure B).
- 3.2. The relevant Selection Panel may exclude from the process any crew or individual who cease for whatever reason to be eligible.

4. OVERSIGHT OF SELECTION

- 4.1. For each event listed at 1.1, the selection process is overseen, and selection decisions taken, by a Selection Panel comprising of 3 Selectors who will be named in the relevant pathways document (Annexure B).
- 4.2. A Selection Panel will consist of the following 4 Selectors:
 - 4.2.1. Chairperson of RowSA's International Commission, or his/her nominee, who shall chair the selection meeting;
 - 4.2.2. the Head Coach or nominated Lead Coach for the relevant squad/event; and
 - 4.2.3. two Additional Selectors of which one will be a member of RowSA's International Commission.

- 4.3. Selection Panel meetings may take place in person or via video conference. Where selection meetings are called on short notice, they may take place via telephone.
- 4.4. In the event that a panel member is unable to fulfil their duties a suitable nominee may be appointed by the Chair of the International Commission.
- 4.5. The 'Additional Selectors' in their role alongside the Head Coach or their nominee, will:
 - 4.5.1. ensure that the Selection Process is followed by the appointed Head Coach;
 - 4.5.2. highlight any deviations from the agreed stipulated process to be explained and scrutinised for fairness and provide the Head Coach with an opportunity to answer this with further evidence/explanation; and
 - 4.5.3. actively contribute to the discussion so as to select the best individuals and crews.
- 4.6. In the event of an actual, potential or perceived conflict relating to a member of the Selection Panel, these shall be declared and recorded before the selection takes place and must fall part of the supporting evidence for an selection. Where a member of the Selection Panel declares a conflict, the remaining Selection Panel members shall determine whether such conflict requires action. Where relevant the Chair of the IC may issue a directive for a suitable nominee to assume the role of the conflicted individual for the purpose of considering the decision in question.
- 4.7. Decisions of the Selection Panel must be unanimous.
- 4.8. Other interested parties may (by invitation) be involved in the deliberations of selection results however the ultimate decision rests with the Selection Panel. Other interested parties may however not disclose any information discussed as part of the deliberation and their views may contradict those of the selection panel.
- 4.9. Selection decisions shall be communicated to athletes promptly in an appropriate manner by the Nominated Coach and/or Chair of the IC or their nominee. Nevertheless the results of the selection will be communicated by no less than 7 days following the selection event.

5. **SELECTION STANDARDS AND RATIONALE FOR SELECTION**

- 5.1. To be selected to represent South Africa a crew must, in the opinion of the relevant Selection panel, meet one of the following criteria:
 - 5.1.1. Performance**
 - 5.1.1.1. be of at least a standard to finish in the top half of the predicted entry;
 - 5.1.1.2. where stricter performance standards are outlined in the Annual Performance Strategy, boats must satisfy these criteria to be selected under 5.1.1.
 - 5.1.2. Future Potential**
 - 5.1.2.1. where a boat is not capable of achieving the selection standard a crew of future prospects with a trajectory for medal success may be selected.
- 5.2. For the avoidance of doubt, and notwithstanding any other provision in the policy, the Selection Panels reserve the right not to nominate a crew for a particular event.

6. **SELECTION FACTORS**

- 6.1. The factors that may be considered by the Selection Groups in making their selection decisions include:
 - 6.1.1. Primary factors**
 - 6.1.1.1. results from crew formation races;
 - 6.1.1.2. ergometer results;
 - 6.1.1.3. timed water assessments
 - 6.1.1.4. performance in the Selection Trials Process;
 - 6.1.1.5. performance in ad hoc trials (which the election panel may call in instances where crews are given additional opportunities to qualify);
 - 6.1.1.6. national and international racing results in the current or previous seasons;

- 6.1.1.7. training performance including inter squad racing and trials;
- 6.1.2. **Secondary factors**
 - 6.1.2.1. ability to maintain training loads;
 - 6.1.2.2. technical proficiency, level of skill and fitness;
 - 6.1.2.3. any past, current or recurring injury or condition (physical or otherwise) which has or may have the potential to inhibit the performance of an athlete (or group of athletes);
 - 6.1.2.4. factors relevant to an athlete's combination within a crew, including but not limited to compatibility, personal attributes and attitudes, technical compatibility, crew balance and harmony;
 - 6.1.2.5. factors relevant to team balance and harmony;
ability or willingness to train and compete within the RowSA programme at times and places required or designated by RowSA International Commission;
 - 6.1.2.6. findings from medical examinations, psychological evaluations or physiological analysis;
- 6.1.3. potential for future development as an individual or combination; and
- 6.1.4. any extenuating circumstances that may have impaired an athlete's performance or authorised exclusion of an athlete from an event or trial.
- 6.2. Additional factors that may be considered by the Selection Panel in making selection decisions relating to Beach Sprints Candidates, both scullers and coxes, include:
 - 6.2.1. ability and requirement to sprint in line with World Rowing's regulations relating to the gender of runners; and
 - 6.2.2. athlete suitability for the competition location, beach profile, and anticipated wave conditions at the relevant event.
- 6.3. Additional factors that may be considered by the Selection Panels in making decisions relating to coxes include:
 - 6.3.1. making and maintenance of body mass targets in accordance with the information outlined at Appendix A;
 - 6.3.2. ability to steer;
 - 6.3.3. coxing ability on the water in a racing, race piece and/or training setting. This may be live or via a recording;
 - 6.3.4. coaching ability in a launch setting including the briefing, session coaching and debrief of a crew;
 - 6.3.5. interaction with coaches, staff and squad colleagues on land.
- 6.4. RowSA recognises the subjective nature of selection decisions and in making these, the Selection Panels, in their sole discretion and reflecting their expert opinion, may give what they consider to be appropriate weight to any one or more of the factors in 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 as appropriate.
- 6.5. In the assessment of on water performances, individuals and crews may be assessed against "Gold Medal Times" (GMTs) as well against each other, or international opposition. GMTs set by RowSA, and reviewed annually, represent the predicted standard to win a gold medal in best possible conditions.
- 6.6. In relation to the selection of reserve athletes for events, the Selection Panels shall take into account the needs of the team as a whole. This may mean, for example, picking a reserve who is able to sweep row and scull efficiently, rather than the next best sculler or rower. The role of the reserve athlete is to support the training needs of the team. If a substitution is required at an event the needs of the racing crew will be prioritised and the next best available athletes will be selected. This will not necessarily be the named reserve.

7. **SELECTION PROCESS**

- 7.1. The timeline for the selection process will be published in pathways document (Annexure B). This will provide dates by which the selection of boats for events listed in 1.1 will take place (the "**Selection Date**").
- 7.2. Late entries to the process may be accepted at the sole discretion of the relevant Selection Panel.

- 7.3. If an athlete cannot participate in a trial or other test for either medical or other reasons, they must submit their case in writing to the National Head Coach and Chair of the relevant Selection Panel. This representation must be received at least 12 hours before the selection event. In any event any representation must be made before the selection event. i.e. no representations can be made after the event. Failure to comply is likely to result in an athlete becoming ineligible for selection.
- 7.4. Assessment of performance will be assessed against World Best Times (WBT). These are updated annually in each pathways document. Where the IC consider the WBT not to be appropriate a revised time will be published in the pathways document.
- 7.5. An athlete will be expected to produce their best performance at all Selection Trials, other trials and races. If there is a medical or other reason why an athlete or crew cannot perform at their best, the National Head coach must be notified in writing in advance, together with a medical certificate if appropriate. The nature of the illness or injury or other reason will be established and monitored at an early stage by the Doctor nominated by the national head coach or their nominee, who will advise the relevant Coach and National Head Coach accordingly.
- 7.6. While the Selection Panel may take account of any factor affecting performance, RowSA Rowing is not bound to delay or alter the selection process as a consequence.
- 7.7. Where there is disruption to the Selection Trials Process and/or other events (for example due to illness or adverse weather conditions), selection shall be made using the factors available to the Selection Panel.
- 7.8. The Head Coach, with the approval of the Selection Panel, may organise additional and compulsory assessments, tests and trials. Should it be required, a minimum notice of 14 days will be given for any additional trial.
- 7.9. RowSA acknowledges the time taken to build successful crews and the Selection Panel may select an individual or crew ahead of the stated Selection Date for an event.
- 7.10. The Selection Panel may also give continuity of development to crews or elements of crews from one event to the next without further testing.
- 7.11. There is however no guarantee of selection for a subsequent event. The Selection Panel retains the right to make unilateral changes to the shape of the team where results of international racing or internal testing indicate that changes to crews, no matter how successful they have been, could lead to better results against the stated outcome targets or aims in the relevant Annexure B.

8. CHANGES TO CREWS / DESELECTION

- 8.1. Following selection, an athlete may be de-selected by the relevant Selection Panel or RowSA in the event of:
 - 8.1.1. the athlete ceasing to comply with the eligibility criteria set out in this Selection Policy, medical injury or serious misconduct;
 - 8.1.2. where it is substantially proven that an athlete is not training according to instruction and program.
 - 8.1.3. where the relevant Selection Panel, consider another athlete or selection decision is likely to lead to better results against the stated outcome targets or aims in the relevant annual pathways document.
- 8.2. In the event of there being a query over the ability of an individual to be able to compete to the best of his/her ability at an event due to an injury or illness, pre or post-selection the following procedure will be followed:
 - 8.2.1. the Head national coach can require an athlete to undergo a medical examination to determine his/her fitness to participate. This examination will be carried out by the Doctor nominated by the national head coach. If it is the opinion of the nominated doctor that the athlete is not able to compete for medical reasons, he/she will be withdrawn from the event and if appropriate, a replacement will be selected in accordance with the Selection Policy;
 - 8.2.2. if the athlete passes the medical examination but the coaching and/or support staff still have concerns over whether or not the athlete is able to compete to the best of his/her ability due to the underlying injury or illness, the Head Coach can require the athlete to undergo a set of sports specific performance tests where the results will be compared to the athlete's previous relevant results. The tests can be repeated more than once and within a short timeframe if required and will

be carried out by designated support personnel. If as a result of the injury or illness the athlete does not meet the required test levels, he/she will be withdrawn from the event on medical grounds and, if appropriate, a replacement will be selected in accordance with the Selection Policy.

- 8.3. If a situation arises where the timing dictates that it is not possible for the relevant Selection Panel to meet, the decision will be taken by the age group Head Coach and or national Head coach, with the decision of the Head Coach being final in the event of any disagreement.

9. APPEALS

- 9.1. Athletes may appeal selection decisions relating to the events listed at 1.1 in according to the RowSA Team Athlete Appeal Procedure. This will be made available on the RowSA website.
- 9.2. Athletes are reminded of the strict time limits relating to appeals that are designed with the intention of resolving issues in a timely manner not just for the appellant but for any other parties affected by the appeal.
- 9.3. Athletes who do not follow this process may not at any later stage bring an appeal.

10. AMENDMENTS TO THIS POLICY

This Selection Policy may be amended by the RowSA International Commission before being published for the following year unless required for compliance with World Rowing, SASCOC or WADA regulations.

11. QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS POLICY

Questions about this policy should be directed to IC Chair Email - int-commission@rowsa.co.za