



NATIONAL ATHLETE SUPPORT STRUCTURE SELECTION POLICY 2015/2016

Able-bodied and Para- athletes.

Athletics Australia (AA) runs a high performance (HP) program whose purpose is sustained success on the international stage. A key part of the HP program is to identify and support named athletes who have the potential to contribute directly to the Australian Institute of Sport's (AIS's) Australia's Winning Edge (AWE) targets. These athletes are supported through our National Athlete Support Structure (NASS) program. This document outlines the 2015/16 NASS levels and how and when athletes will be selected. This will be the third year of Athletics Australia's NASS program.

The content of NASS program and the benefits that athletes will receive at each level will be published separately and will depend on the resources available to Athletics Australia and the support of our partners in the AIS/SIS/SAS network. Some benefits may only be available to athletes based in Australia.

The document starts by outlining the overall program and then describing each levels.

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Program Outline | The purpose of the NASS. |
| 2. NASS Programs | The programs and levels of NASS. |
| 3. Membership Requirements | Requirements for athletes to be eligible for NASS membership. |
| 4. Eligible Performances | Requirements for valid competition performances. |

The next sections detail selection rules for the various levels of the NASS program.

- 5. Gold & Medal Levels**
- 6. Finalist Level**
- 7. World Class Level**
- 8. International Level**
- 9. Commonwealth Level**
- 10. Development Level**
- 11. U19 Talent Squad**
- 12. Team NASS**

The remaining sections add more detail to how the selection process works:

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| 13. Selection Panel | NASS selection panel members. |
| 14. Capacity | An athlete's capacity to meet the aims of the program are critical to inclusion on the NASS program. This section outlines how AA defines "Capacity". |
| 15. Qualification Matrix | The standards required to be considered for the different program levels. |
| 16. Review Process | How to have a NASS selection decision reviewed. |
| 17. Frequently asked questions | Answers some common questions about the NASS program. |

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1. PROGRAM OUTLINE

1.1 Aims

High Performance is one of the pillars of Athletics Australia's Strategic Plan for 2013 – 2016. Within the plan one of the identified Strategic Initiatives is to "provide a world best approach to identification and preparation of athletes (including Para-athletes) to achieve World Class standards". The NASS program is AA's implementation of this Strategic Initiative and as such it is designed to contribute to AIS's Australia's Winning Edge (AWE) aims of top 5 nation at the Olympics and Paralympics; top nation at the Commonwealth Games and 20 World Champions each year. Therefore the aims of AA's NASS program are:

To achieve medals, supported by additional top eight places, at the Olympic Games and IAAF World Athletics Championships; and

To achieve gold medals, supported by additional silver and bronze medals, at the Paralympic Games and IPC World Athletics Championships; and

To finish the top nation on the Commonwealth Games athletics medal table.

1.2 Philosophy

Membership of the NASS is offered by Athletics Australia (AA) as an investment in an athlete to help them to meet the aims of the program. Membership is not offered as a reward for past success.

As far as practically possible the program will be targeted and delivered consistently across States, across the sport's Event Groups and across the able-bodied and Para programs. Initially there may be differences but we aim to reduce these over time.

AA believe that the keys to success in athletics are (in order):

- Athletes
- Coaches
- Support services (eg medical services and the sports sciences)
- Facilities
- Competition structure

In this document the phrase "Daily Training Environment" (DTE) jointly refers to the Support Services and Facilities.

1.3 Stakeholders and Partners

Australia's Winning Edge (AWE) provides investment in AA through the AIS as Australia's strategic high performance sport agency with responsibility and accountability for leading the delivery of Australia's international sporting success.

The NASS program is consistent with the priorities and targets outlined in AWE.

The NASS program is resourced by AA with the valued support of our partners including the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), the Australia Commonwealth Games Association (ACGA), the Australian Paralympic Committee (APC), the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC), the state institute / academy of sport network, and the partners, sponsors and supporters of Athletics Australia.

1.4 Limitations

The benefits offered to members of the NASS program are limited by AA's resources and the associated constraints of our partners such as the AIS and the SIS/SAS network. Resourcing priorities may impact the

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number of athletes supported, particularly at the lower levels of the program, and/or the benefits offered to NASS athletes may be restricted at certain times. Jurisdictional priorities may impact resourcing however every effort will be made to achieve full alignment of the program across Australia. Additional conditions for access to support and services, induction requirements and/or the need to be in good standing with the organisation may be applied by our partners.

1.5 Selection & Membership Dates

The able-bodied NASS program year will run from 1 October 2015 to 30 September 2016, with a review immediately after the relevant National Championships (April 2016).

Due to the late date of the 2015 IPC World Athletics Championships the Para- NASS program “year” will run from 1 December 2015 to 30 September 2016, with a review immediately after the relevant National Championships (April 2016).

Athletes can only be added to the program or moved between levels at a selection meeting. Athletes can only be deselected at a selection meeting or if their eligibility for program membership changes (see section 3.1.10).

1.5.1 Enhanced NASS Selection (excluding U19 Talent Squad) & Membership Dates

Athletes will be added to, or de-selected at two meetings (the exact dates of the selection meetings will be published on the AA web site as early as possible.):

- 1.5.1.1 A selection meeting immediately after the senior National Championships. In this case athlete membership starts as soon as they have successfully completed any required assessments and returned all of the requested paperwork (see section 3.1). In general membership offered after the senior National Championships will be until the end of the NASS athlete year (30 September) and so will be for approximately 6-months.
- 1.5.1.2 A selection meeting immediately after the last major Championships of the year. In this case athlete membership will start at the later of the start of the program (the 1st October for able-bodied athletes or the 1st December for Para- athletes) or the date when they have successfully completed any required assessments and returned all of the requested paperwork (see section 3.1). In general membership offered after the major Championships will be for a full NASS program year. If deemed appropriate by the selection panel membership may be offered for a reduced time period (for example through to the next senior National Championships).
- 1.5.1.3 Athletes will be informed if they have been deselected from the program. The end date of their membership will depend on the exact dates of selection meeting (which in turn depends on the exact date of the Nationals and/or the major Championships) but typically membership will end on either 30th April (post-Nationals selection meeting) or 30th September (post-major Championships selection meeting).

1.5.2 U19 Talent Squad Selection & Membership Dates

Athletes will be added to, or de-selected once per year (the exact date of the selection meeting will be published on the AA web site as early as possible):

- 1.5.2.1 The selection meeting will be held immediately after the junior National Championships. Athlete membership starts as soon as they have successfully completed any required assessments and returned all of the requested paperwork (see section 3.1).

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1.5.2.2 Only athletes who have nominated to be part of the **U19 Talent Squad** program on the AA website will be eligible for the program and only these athletes will be considered by the selection panel.

1.5.2.3 Athletes will be informed if they have been deselected from the program. The end date of their membership will depend on the exact dates of selection meeting (which in turn depends on the exact date of the junior Nationals) but typically membership will end on 30th April.

1.5.3 Team NASS Selection & Membership Dates

1.5.3.1 Athletes will be added to the Selected Team NASS immediately after their selection to the Australian team.

1.5.3.2 The day after the relevant Championships / Games athletes will automatically become Squad level members until the next National Championships at which point their membership will end.

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2. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

2.1 NASS Programs

The NASS is split into two main programs:

Enhanced NASS This program is targeted at athletes with the most realistic chance to meet the aims of the NASS program; now or in the future.

Team NASS This program is targeted at athletes who do not meet the membership criteria of the Enhanced NASS program but who, nevertheless, are selected to represent Australia in major global Championships.

The **Podium Benchmark** events are the **Olympic Games, IAAF World Athletics Championships, Paralympic Games** and **IPC World Athletics Championships**.

ENHANCED ⁽¹⁾	AA Category ⁽²⁾	Criteria
	Gold	Gold medallist at the most recent Podium Benchmark Event with the capacity to realistically sustain this level of performance at the next Podium Benchmark Event
	Medal	Silver or Bronze medallist at the most recent Podium Benchmark Event with the capacity to realistically sustain this level of performance at the next Podium Benchmark Event .
	Finalist	Fourth to eighth place at the most recent Podium Benchmark Event with the realistic capacity to reach the Podium level within two years .
	World Class	Athletes with the realistic capacity to reach the Finalist level in an individual event within two years .
	International	Athletes with the realistic capacity to reach the World Class level in an individual event within two years .
	Commonwealth	Athletes who do not satisfy the criteria above but who has the realistic capacity to win a medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games .
	Development	Athletes with the realistic capacity to reach the International level in an individual event within two years .
	U19 Talent Squad	Under 19 age group athletes showing the potential to perform at IAAF World Junior Championships top sixteen level within a year (able bodied athletes) and to progress to the Development level.

TEAM	Senior	Athletes selected to represent Australia in identified senior championships.
	Junior	Athletes selected to represent Australia in identified U20 championships.
	Squad	Identified athletes with the potential to represent Australia in 2015/16.

(1) To be included on any Enhanced program level Para-athletes must have an international classification certificate AND must be in a classification likely to be in the 2016 Paralympic Games program.

(2) Refer to the FAQ (section 17) to see how the AA levels align with the AIS categorisation levels.

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3. MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Eligibility

In order to be eligible for membership of the NASS athletes must:

- 3.1.1 Satisfy all relevant International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), International Olympic Committee (IOC), International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and Commonwealth Games Federation's (CGF) eligibility and nationality rules.
- 3.1.2 Hold Australian citizenship at the time of invitation to the NASS.
- 3.1.3 Be a registered member of Athletics Australia through their Member Association.
- 3.1.4 In the case of Para-athletes, hold an international IPC classification of "review" or "confirmed" status.
- 3.1.5 In the case of Para-athletes, be in a classification that will be contested at the 2016 Paralympic Games.
- 3.1.6 In the case of able-bodied athletes membership is only offered for events that will be contested at the 2016 Olympic Games.
- 3.1.7 Athletes whose performance in 2015/2016 is likely to be affected by a known performance limiting factor or planned absence* from the sport will only be included on the Enhanced NASS in exceptional circumstances (where the High Performance Director considers that it is in the best interests of aims of the program). To assess their medical status and suitability for addition to the Enhanced NASS all members will be required to complete a medical form and, if deemed necessary by AA's Chief Medical Officer, undergo further examination. Any falsification of the medical forms will lead to immediate removal from the Enhanced NASS.

(* A performance limiting factor is any known issue that is likely to prevent an athlete from meeting the aims of the program. Examples include pre-existing injuries, known degenerative illnesses, employment that does not allow for high performance preparation, etc. A planned absence from the sport is any pre-planned extended period of time when an athlete is unable to prepare and/or compete at the level required to meet the aims of the program. Each case will be judged on an individual's circumstances such as their event, age, etc but as a rough guideline breaks of over three months will not be allowed. Examples of planned absences include pregnancy, extended study or travel breaks, elective surgery unrelated to athletics performance, etc.)
- 3.1.8 Complete and sign AA paperwork as required. Such paperwork may include an AA Athlete Contract, an AA Athlete Agreement and/or an AA Code of Conduct. The required paperwork will be made clear in the letter offering program membership.
- 3.1.9 Complete ASADA e-learning modules and updates as requested from time to time.
- 3.1.10 Complete and sign an Individual Performance Plan (IPP) with the athlete's assigned Athlete Performance Advisor (APA).
- 3.1.11 Maintain regular contact with the assigned APA providing updates on training status, competition plans and any injuries or illness that impact upon the athlete's ability to train or to reach the aims of the NASS program. For Australian based athletes this process will normally include at least two interdisciplinary meetings with the athlete's coach and services providers.
- 3.1.12 Be and remain in 'good standing' with AA and at all times comply with AA's Code of Conduct and conduct themselves in a way that does not bring themselves, their sport or the National Team into disrepute. AA may consider past and present behavioural conduct in determining whether an athlete is in 'good standing'. If AA determines that an athlete is not in 'good standing' with AA, in its absolute discretion AA may choose not to invite that athlete to be a member of the NASS.

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3.1.13 If an athlete's eligibility for the program changes Athletics Australia may end their membership at their sole discretion either as soon as practical after the athlete's status has changed, or at the end of the NASS athlete year (30th September). Example of how an athlete's eligibility might change include, but are not limited to, a change of nationality, a change to a Para-athlete's classification or the classifications to be contested at the next Paralympic Games, an anti-doping violation, a violation of AA's Code of Conduct, etc.

3.2 Progression between the Enhanced NASS program levels

3.2.1 Athletes are expected to show consistent progression up through the Enhanced NASS levels. Once an athlete reaches a level they are not expected to drop back to a lower level. However it is possible for a **World Class** athlete to continue to improve while the rest of the world improves at a quicker pace. It is also possible for an athlete's Commonwealth status to change quickly. For these reasons only the following program level changes are allowed within the program:

2014/2015 level	Allowed program level(s) for 2015/2016
Gold, Medal, Finalist, World Class	World Class or higher
International Commonwealth	International, Commonwealth or higher
Development	Development or higher
Medical	Equivalent of their previous highest level of the NASS program or World Class , whichever is lower.

3.3 Year-on-year Progression

3.3.1 Athletes are expected to show progression in their personal best every year that they are on the Enhanced NASS program. Athletes who fail to progress for two consecutive years, regardless of injuries or other circumstances, should expect to be de-selected from the program. However, at its own discretion, AA may choose to retain an athlete who doesn't progress their PB within two years if it has good reason to believe that the athlete may still meet the aims of the program due to their personal circumstances, the nature of their event, or similar reasons.

3.3.2 Athletes are expected to progress to the next level of NASS within three years. Athletes that aren't promoted within this timescale, regardless of injuries or other circumstances, should expect to be de-selected from the program. However, at its own discretion, AA may choose to retain an athlete who doesn't progress to the next level within three years if it has good reason to believe that the athlete may still meet the aims of the program due to their personal circumstances, the nature of their event, or similar reasons.

3.3.3 There is no limit to the time that athletes may be on the Team NASS or the number of times that they may exit and then return to the Team NASS program.

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3.4 Age restrictions

- 3.4.1 The following criteria (3.4.3 to 3.4.5) will apply to all able-bodied athletes.
- 3.4.2 The same criteria (3.4.3 to 3.4.5) will be used as guidelines (as opposed to rules) for selection of Para-athletes. Younger Para-athletes than suggested may be considered for the NASS program when, in the opinion of the selectors, membership at an earlier age is in the best interests of the athlete concerned and the program as a whole.
- 3.4.3 Junior athletes (any athlete aged 18 or 19 years on 31 December 2015) may be members on any level of the NASS in any event except the Marathon and the 50k Walk.
- 3.4.4 Youth athletes (any athlete aged 16 or 17 years on 31 December 2015) may only be included on the **Development** or **U19 Talent Squad** levels of the NASS and may be members in any event except the Decathlon, 10,000m, Marathon and the 50k Walk. Male youth athletes may not be members in the Throws.
- 3.4.5 Athletes younger than 16 years on 31 December 2015 may not be members of the NASS program.

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4. ELIGIBLE PERFORMANCES

To be recognised for the purposes of this Policy competition performances must meet the following criteria:

- 4.1 Performances must be achieved during competitions organised or authorised by IAAF or IPC or their Area Associations or their National Member Federations. Results achieved at university or school competitions must be certified by Athletics Australia or the National Federation of the country in which the competition was organised.
- 4.2 Performances must be achieved during an official competition organised in conformity with IAAF / IPC Rules.
- 4.3 Performances achieved in Australia must be in a competition sanctioned by Athletics Australia as an Athletics Australia "National Permit Meeting". Athletics Australia operates a sanctioning process across all meets that involves the issuing of a permit - "National Permit" or "Recreational (State) Permit". A current list of all "National Permit" meetings will be available on the Athletics Australia website. In the case of Para-athletics performances must be achieved at IPC sanctioned events which will also be published on the Athletics Australia website.
- 4.4 Performances achieved in mixed events, on the track and completely in the Stadium, shall not be accepted.
- 4.5 Wind-assisted performances, beyond legal readings recognised by the IAAF / IPC, will not be accepted. For the Combined Events in events where the wind velocity is measured, the average (based on the algebraic sum of the wind velocities, as measured for each individual event, divided by the number of events) shall not exceed 2 metres per second.
- 4.6 Hand-timed performances in 100m, 200m, 400m, 110m/100m Hurdles, 400m Hurdles and 4x100m relay will not be accepted.
- 4.7 Indoor performances for all field events and for races of 400m and longer, will be accepted.
- 4.8 Performances set at altitude, at or over 1,000m, will not be accepted for field events, combined events or for distances of 400m or below.
- 4.9 For individual events, at least three athletes and for relays, at least two teams, must be bona fide competitors in the event.
- 4.10 If the status of performance remains unclear for technical reasons after applying points 4.4 to 4.9 above the selectors will be guided by the IAAF / IPC General and Specific conditions for a World Record (eg IAAF rule 260 and IPC rule book Chapter 5).

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5. GOLD & MEDAL LEVELS

5.1 Limitations

5.1.1 There are no limitations on the number of qualified athletes who can be invited onto the **Gold** or **Medal** levels.

5.2 Qualification for **Gold** and **Medal** levels in 2015/16 – Individual events

5.2.1 Athletes will be invited to be a member of the **Gold** level if they win an individual event at the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) **and** the selectors consider that they have the realistic capacity to win a medal (of any colour) at the 2016 Olympic / Paralympic Games.

5.2.2 Athletes will be invited to be a member of the **Medal** level if they place second or third in an individual event at the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) **and** the selectors consider that they have the realistic capacity to win a medal (of any colour) at the 2016 Olympic / Paralympic Games.

5.3 Qualification for **Gold** and **Medal** levels in 2015/16 – Relay events

5.3.1 Athletes will be invited to be a relay member of the **Gold** level if they are one of the four athletes who compete in a relay final and win the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) **and** the selectors consider that the SQUAD, individually and collectively, have the realistic capacity to win a medal (of any colour) at the 2016 Olympic / Paralympic Games. If a relay squad qualify for the **Gold** level then up to two “additional relay squad members” can be included at this level (See 5.3.3).

5.3.2 Athletes will be invited to be a relay member of the **Medal** level if they are one of the four athletes who compete in a relay final and win silver or bronze at the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) **and** the selectors consider that the SQUAD, individually and collectively, have the realistic capacity to win a medal (of any colour) at the 2016 Olympic / Paralympic Games. If a relay squad qualify for the **Medal** level then up to two “additional relay squad members” can be included at this level (See 5.3.3).

5.3.3 Additional relay squad members will be selected at the sole discretion of the selection panel and will be selected to create the most competitive relay squad possible based on applicable relay skills, team cohesiveness and compliance with the AA relay program. Results in individual events (eg 100m, 200m or 400m), while important, will not be the sole criteria for selection of a relay squad member.

5.4 2014/15 **Gold** and **Medal** level athletes

Athletes on these levels of 2014/15 NASS program who did not win a medal in 2015 will be considered for retention at the same level on a case-by-case basis. Membership and membership level is at the discretion of the selectors who will decide if an athlete retains the realistic capacity to meet the aims of the program in the future. The selectors will be guided by the following notes:

5.4.1 Athletes who, in the selector’s opinion, show the clear capacity to repeat a **Medal** performance within two years will be invited to stay on the program.

Additional guidelines:

- Athletes will not normally be retained at **Gold** or **Medal** levels for more than two consecutive Podium Benchmark Events without achieving another **Gold** or **Medal** performance.

- Where possible performances at the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) will be used to determine if an athlete is placed on the **Gold** or **Medal** levels.

- If an athlete did not compete at the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) due to a documented injury or illness then, at the selectors sole discretion, performances at the 2012 Olympic /

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Paralympic Games and/or 2013 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) can be used to determine if an athlete is placed on the **Gold** or **Medal** levels.

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6. PODIUM POTENTIAL FINALIST

6.1 Limitations

6.1.1 There are no limitations on the number of qualified athletes who can be invited onto the **Finalist** level.

6.2 Qualification for Finalist level in 2015/16 – Individual events

6.2.1. Athletes will be invited to be a member of the **Finalist** level if they finish 4th to 8th in an individual event at the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) and the selectors consider that they have the realistic capacity to repeat, at least, that level of performance at the 2016 Olympic / Paralympic Games.

6.3 Qualification for Finalist level in 2015/16 – Relay events

6.3.1 Athletes will be invited to be a relay member of the **Finalist** level if they are one of the four athletes who compete in a relay final and finish 4th to 8th at the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) **and** the selectors consider that the SQUAD, individually and collectively, have the realistic capacity to reach the final of the 2016 Olympic / Paralympic Games. If a relay squad qualify for the **Finalist** level then up to two “additional relay squad members” can be included at this level (see 6.3.2).

6.3.2 Additional relay squad members will be selected at the sole discretion of the selection panel and will be selected to create the most competitive relay squad possible based on applicable relay skills, team cohesiveness and compliance with the AA relay program. Results in individual events (eg 100m, 200m or 400m), while important, will not be the sole criteria for selection of a relay squad member.

6.4 2014/15 Finalist level athletes

Athletes on these levels of 2014/15 NASS program who did make a final (top eight) in 2015 will be considered for retention at the same level on a case-by-case basis. Membership and membership level is at the discretion of the selectors who will decide if an athlete retains the realistic capacity to meet the aims of the program in the future. The selectors will be guided by the following notes:

6.4.1 Athletes who, in the selector’s opinion, show the clear capacity to repeat a **Finalist** performance within two years will be invited to stay on the program.

Additional guidelines:

- Athletes should normally have achieved at least one **Finalist** level performance since 1st September 2014 (in those events where a standard exists – see section 15).

- Athletes will not normally be retained at **Finalist** level for more than two consecutive Podium Benchmark Events without achieving another **Finalist** performance.

- Where possible performances at the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) will be used to determine if an athlete is placed on **Finalist**

- If an athlete did not compete at the 2015 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) due to a documented injury or illness then, at the selectors sole discretion, performances at the 2012 Olympic / Paralympic Games and/or 2013 World Athletics Championships (IAAF or IPC) can be used to determine if an athlete is placed on **Finalist**.

6.5 Athletes may be considered for the **World Class** level if their capacity to repeat a **Finalist** performance within two years is unclear to the selectors but, in the selector’s opinion, they have the clear capacity to achieve a **World Class** performance within a year **and** to achieve another **Finalist** performance within the following two years.

7. WORLD CLASS LEVEL

7.1 **Limitations**

- 7.1.1 No more than three athletes will be invited onto the **World Class** level in any one event. (For example the able-bodied men's 100m counts as one event and so no more than three athletes can be invited onto the **World Class** level for the able-bodied men's 100m.)
- 7.1.2 The total number of athletes invited onto the **World Class** level across all events may be capped to match the resources available to AA to run the program. A cap may be applied to able-bodied athlete numbers or Para-athlete numbers or both.

7.2 **Athletes who will be considered for places**

The athletes who meet the criteria below will be considered for invitation onto the **World Class** level of the 2015/16 NASS program. Being on the consideration list does NOT guarantee being invited onto the program.

- 7.2.1 Athletes who were considered for higher levels of the program but who were not invited onto the program, subject to the rules in section 3.2.

7.2.2 Para-events:

No Qualification Matrix has been created for these events yet. Therefore in these events the selectors will decide which athletes, in their opinion, meet the criteria of being two years away from a **Podium** or **Finalist** qualifying performance. This decision will be based on the selectors' expertise and evidence from previous Championships results and world rankings where available. Qualification Matrix standards for these events are being compiled (in conjunction with AIS's Innovation Department) but were not available at the time of publication. If the standards are available by the date of the relevant selection meeting they will also be used by the selectors.

7.2.3 All other events:

Athletes who achieve at least one **World Class** level performance based on the Qualification Matrix (section 15).

7.3 **Athlete selection**

- 7.3.1 The selectors will consider all athletes on the consideration list (section 7.2) and select those athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the realistic capacity to reach at least the **Finalist** level within two years subject to the limitations noted in section 7.1 and the following notes:
- Athletes will not normally be selected if they have been at the **World Class** level, or its equivalent, for more than three consecutive years.
 - Athletes should increase their personal best (PB) every year while at the **World Class** level and should not expect to be selected if they haven't set a PB in their main event for two consecutive years.
- 7.3.2 Should the limitations noted in section 7.1 apply then the athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the most realistic capacity to reach at least the **Finalist** level within two years will be prioritised using any and all relevant information that the selectors have available.
- 7.3.3 The selected athletes will be invited onto the 2015/16 **World Class** level.

8. INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

8.1 Limitations

- 8.1.1 No more than three athletes will be invited onto the **International** level in any one event. (For example the able-bodied men's 100m counts as one event and so no more than three athletes can be invited onto the **International** level for the able-bodied men's 100m.)
- 8.1.2 The total number of athletes invited onto the **International** level across all events may be capped to match the resources available to AA to run the program. A cap may be applied to able-bodied athlete numbers or Para-athlete numbers or both.

8.2 Athletes who will be considered for places

The athletes who meet the criteria below will be considered for invitation onto the **International** level of the 2015/16 NASS program. Being on the consideration list does NOT guarantee being invited onto the program.

- 8.2.1 Athletes who were considered for higher levels of the program but who were not invited onto the program, subject to the rules in section 3.2.

8.2.2 Para-events:

No Qualification Matrix has been created for these events yet. Therefore in these events the selectors will decide which athletes, in their opinion, meet the criterion of being two years away from a **World Class** qualifying performance or better. This decision will be based on the selectors' expertise and evidence from previous Championships results and world rankings where available. Qualification Matrix standards for these events are being compiled (in conjunction with AIS's Innovation Department) but were not available at the time of publication. If the standards are available by the date of the relevant selection meeting they will also be used by the selectors.

8.2.3 All other events:

Athletes who achieve at least one **International** level performance based on the Qualification Matrix (section 15).

8.3 Athlete selection

- 8.3.1 The selectors will consider all athletes on the consideration list (section 8.2) and select those athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the realistic capacity to reach the **World Class** level or higher within two years subject to the limitations noted in section 8.1 and the following notes:

- Athletes will not normally be selected if they have been at the **International** level, or its equivalent, for more than three consecutive years.
- Athletes should increase their personal best (PB) every year while at the **International** level and should not expect to be selected if they haven't set a PB in their main event for two consecutive years.

- 8.3.2 Should the limitations noted in section 8.1 apply then the athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the most realistic capacity to reach the **World Class** level within two years will be prioritised using any and all relevant information that the selectors have available.

- 8.3.3 The selected athletes will be invited onto the 2015/16 **International** level.

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9. COMMONWEALTH LEVEL

9.1 Limitations

- 9.1.1 No more than three athletes will be invited onto the **Commonwealth** level in any one event. (For example the able-bodied men's 100m counts as one event and so no more than three athletes can be invited onto the **Commonwealth** level for the able-bodied men's 100m.)
- 9.1.2 The total number of athletes invited onto the **Commonwealth** level across all events may be capped to match the resources available to AA to run the program. A cap may be applied to able-bodied athlete numbers or Para-athlete numbers or both.

9.2 Athletes who will be considered for places

The athletes who meet the criteria below will be considered for invitation onto the **Commonwealth** level of the 2015/16 NASS program. Being on the consideration list does NOT guarantee being invited onto the program.

- 9.2.1 Athletes who were considered for higher levels of the program but who were not invited onto the program, subject to the rules in section 3.2.
- 9.2.2 Athletes who achieve at least one **Commonwealth** level performance based on the Qualification Matrix (section 15).
- 9.2.3 Para-events:

No Qualification Matrix has been created for these events yet. Therefore in these events the selectors will decide which athletes, in their opinion, meet the criterion of being a potential 2018 Commonwealth Games medallist. This decision will be based on the selectors' expertise and evidence from previous Games results and Commonwealth rankings where available.

Athletes will only be included on NASS in events / classifications that have been confirmed on the 2018 Commonwealth program.

9.3 Athlete selection

- 9.3.1 The selectors will consider all athletes on the consideration list (section 9.2) and select those athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the realistic capacity to win a Commonwealth Games medal in 2018 subject to the limitations noted in section 9.1.
- 9.3.2 Should the limitations noted in section 9.1 apply then the athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the most realistic capacity to win a Commonwealth Games gold medal in 2018 will be prioritised using any and all relevant information that the selectors have available.
- 9.3.3 The selected athletes will be invited onto the 2015/16 **Commonwealth** level.

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10. DEVELOPMENT LEVEL

10.1 Limitations

10.1.1 No more than three athletes will be invited onto the **Development** level in any one event. (For example the able-bodied men's 100m counts as one event and so no more than three athletes can be invited onto the **Development** level for the able-bodied men's 100m.)

10.1.2 The total number of athletes invited onto the **Development** level across all events may be capped to match the resources available to AA to run the program. A cap may be applied to able-bodied athlete numbers or Para-athlete numbers or both.

10.2 Athletes who will be considered for places

The athletes who meet the criteria below will be considered for invitation onto the **Development** level of the 2015/16 NASS program. Being on the consideration list does NOT guarantee being invited onto the program.

10.2.1 Athletes who were considered for higher levels of the program but who were not invited onto the program, subject to the rules in section 3.2.

10.2.2 Able-bodied athletes who achieved any of the following criteria in 2014/15 will be considered:

10.2.2.1 Set an Australian record in either the U20 or U18 age group. The record must be in an event contested at the IAAF World U20 or IAAF World U18 Championships and with the same weight implements and/or hurdle height/spacing used at those Championships.

10.2.2.2 Finish top eight at the IAAF World U20 Championships.

10.2.2.3 Win a medal at the IAAF World U18 Championships.

10.2.2.4 Be in the top 32 of the 2015 world U20 ranking lists on 1 September 2015. We will only consider the ranking lists of events contested at the IAAF World U20 Championships and for the same weight implements and/or hurdle height/spacing used at those Championships

10.2.3 The Head Coach can nominate additional able bodied athletes to be considered for the **Development** level.

10.2.4 The Paralympic Performance Manager can nominate additional Para-athletes to be considered for the **Development** level.

10.3 Athlete selection

10.3.1 The selectors will consider all athletes on the consideration list (section 10.2) and select those athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the realistic capacity to reach the **International** level within *approximately* two years subject to the limitations noted in section 10.1 and the following notes:

- Athletes should increase their personal best (PB) every year while at the **Development** level and should not expect to be selected if they haven't set a PB in their main event for two consecutive years.
- The time that an athlete spends on the **Development** level is much more subjective than the other levels. Age specific factors apply (such as transitioning from school to work or university); event specific factors apply (such as transitioning to new weight implements, hurdle height/spacing or race distances); some events mature slowly and some events mature quickly; etc. Subject to point 10.3.2 the selectors will endeavour to keep an athlete on the **Development** level until it is clear that:

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- they have qualified for a higher level of the program (in which case they will be promoted) or
- it is clear to the selectors that the athlete does not have the capacity to progress within the NASS structure within a reasonable time period.

10.3.2 Should the limitations noted in section 10.3.1 apply then the athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the most realistic capacity to reach the **International** level or higher will be prioritised using any and all relevant information that the selectors have available.

10.3.3 The selected athletes will be invited onto the 2015/16 **Development** level.

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11. U19 TALENT SQUAD

11.1 Limitations

11.1.1 The total number of athletes invited onto the **U19 Talent Squad** level across all events may be capped to match the resources available to AA to run the program. A cap may be applied to able-bodied athlete numbers or Para-athlete numbers or both.

11.2 Athletes who will be considered for places

The athletes who meet the criteria below **and** nominate for the program through AA's web site will be considered for invitation onto the **U19 Talent Squad** level of the 2015/16 NASS program. Nominating does NOT guarantee being invited onto the program.

11.2.1 Athletes must nominate for the program online, see

www.athletics.com.au/High-Performance/Able-Bodied/Junior-High-Performance/Under-19-Talent-Squad

11.2.2 Athletes must have nominated to be part of the program on the AA website by at least one week before the Junior National Championships.

11.2.3 Athletes must have achieved an eligible **U19 Talent Squad** standard performance based on the Qualification Matrix on the AA website.

11.3 Athlete selection

11.3.1 The selectors will consider all athletes on the consideration list (section 11.2) and select those athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the realistic capacity to reach IAAF World Junior top sixteen level within a year (able bodied athletes) and to reach the **Development** level in the future subject to the limitations noted in section 11.1.

11.3.2 Should the limitations noted in section 11.1 apply then the athletes who, in the selectors' opinion, have the most realistic capacity to reach the **Development** level or higher will be prioritised using any and all relevant information that the selectors have available.

11.3.3 The selected athletes will be invited onto the 2015/16 NASS **U19 Talent Squad** level.

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12. TEAM NASS LEVELS

- 12.1 Athletes will be added to the Team NASS levels immediately after their selection to the Australian team in the competitions listed below (points 12.2 and 12.3). The day after the relevant Championships / Games athletes will automatically become **Squad** level members until the next National Championships.
- 12.2 **Senior Level:** eligible competitions are:
- Olympic Games
 - Paralympic Games
 - IAAF or IPC World Athletics Championships
 - IAAF World Indoor Championships
 - IAAF World Walks Cup (senior team)
 - Commonwealth Games
- 12.3 **Junior Level:** eligible competitions are:
- World Junior (U20) Championships
- 12.4 **Squad level: Senior** and **Junior** level athletes will automatically become **Squad** level athletes the day after their relevant Championships / Games until the end of the NASS year (30 September).
- 12.5 For the avoidance of doubt, selection at the following competitions does NOT qualify athletes for Team NASS support:
- FISU World University Games
 - IAAF World Cross Country
 - IAAF World Relay Championships
 - IAAF World Marathon/Half Marathon
 - IAAF World Cup Walks
 - any U18 championships
 - OAA Oceanic Area/Regional Championships
 - any other Australian representative competition

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13. SELECTION PANEL

- 13.1 **Gold, Medal, Finalist, World Class, International, Commonwealth** and **Development** levels will be selected by the High Performance Director supported by the Head Coach, the Paralympic Program Manager and the National Junior High Performance Manager. This group will consult AA's Chief Medical Officer and appropriate statisticians. An independent observer, selected by AA's High Performance Advisory Committee, will be present at the selection meetings.
- 13.2 The **U19 Talent Squad** levels will be selected by the High Performance Director supported by the Paralympic Program Manager, the National Junior High Performance Manager and the Junior Coaching coordinator. This group will consult National Junior Coaches, medical staff and statisticians as appropriate.

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14. CAPACITY

The capacity of an athlete to perform in the future depends on their physical potential and their processes. Outstanding physical potential may be sufficient to produce occasional outstanding results, however this must be combined with world class processes in order to excel at major championships and over many years.

Athletics Australia have limited resources and so we will invest the most resources into those athletes most likely to meet the aims of the program – in other words those with the highest capacity.

Across the board we will only invest in athletes with outstanding physical potential. Our expectations for an athlete's processes varies with their training age and experience within the sport. For example we expect that **Podium** athletes will always demonstrate world class processes; we have lower expectations for new athletes on the **Development** level – although we do expect these athletes to improve their processes quickly.

PHYSICAL POTENTIAL

- Competition History
- Training Age
- Year-on-year Progression
- Technical Skills
- Physical Resilience
- Mental Resilience
- Physical Attributes

PROCESSES

- Coaching Quality
- Daily Training Environment
- Planning – short, medium and long term
- Engagement with AA, the NASS and the AIS/SIS/SAS network.
- Professionalism
- Training Commitment
- Sport Commitment
- Access to Competition Equipment (eg Pole Vaulters and Wheelchair racers)

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15. QUALIFICATION MATRIX

These standards were created in conjunction with the AIS Innovations department.

Senior implements and hurdle height/spacing is assumed for all events, unless otherwise noted.

Men

	100m	200m	400m	800m	1500m	5000m	10000m
Finalist	9.99	20.24	45.02	1:44.28	3:34.41	13:06.62	27:28.05
World Class	10.20	20.72	45.78	1:47.04	3:38.28	13:12.56	27:41.68
International	10.33	20.93	46.42	1:48.35	3:43.83	13:18.49	28:36.72
Commonwealth	10.18	20.40	45.30	1:47.00	3:40.00	13:20.00	27:50.00

	110mH	400mH	3000mSC	Marathon	20kW	50kW
Finalist	13.34	48.52	8:15.18	2:09:13	1:21:25	3:45:30
World Class	13.50	49.28	8:22.03	2:11:09	1:22:58	3:47:04
International	13.74	50.21	8:28.87	2:13:05	1:24:32	n/a
Commonwealth	13.65	49.20	8:20.00	2:15:00	1:21:00	n/a

	HJ	LJ	TJ	PV	SP	DT	JT	HT	Decathlon
Finalist	2.30	8.19	17.09	5.74	20.79	65.26	82.46	77.85	8286
World Class	2.24	7.98	16.82	5.52	20.20	63.34	78.90	76.26	7864
International	2.21	7.82	16.54	5.35	19.82	61.45	76.83	74.66	7650
Commonwealth	2.25	8.05	17.00	5.50	19.80	60.50	77.50	70.50	7800

Women

Senior implements and hurdle height/spacing is assumed for all events, unless otherwise noted.

	100m	200m	400m	800m	1500m	5000m	10000m
Finalist	11.01	22.76	50.15	1:59.23	4:03.98	15:02.81	31:25.48
World Class	11.20	23.00	51.16	2:01.40	4:10.00	15:21.65	31:58.74
International	11.30	23.11	52.09	2:04.80	4:13.16	15:24.65	32:18.09
Commonwealth	11.35	23.05	51.60	1:59.35	4:07.00	15:10.00	32:00.00

	100mH	400mH	3000mSC	Marathon	20kW
Finalist	12.74	54.66	9:24.82	2:28:11	1:29:36
World Class	13.06	56.44	9:42.39	2:30:39	1:31:20
International	13.25	57.17	9:59.97	2:33:07	1:32:53
Commonwealth	13.10	56.00	9:40.00	2:35:00	1:32:30

	HJ	LJ	TJ	PV	SP	DT	JT	HT	Heptathlon
Finalist	1.95	6.76	14.35	4.62	19.14	62.96	62.22	73.25	6381
World Class	1.93	6.60	13.90	4.40	17.76	60.19	58.64	68.91	5964
International	1.90	6.45	13.68	4.24	16.58	58.11	55.46	67.80	5791
Commonwealth	1.86	6.50	13.90	4.20	17.00	59.00	59.00	65.00	6000

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16. REVIEW PROCESS

- 16.1 If an athlete does not agree with a NASS Selection Panel decision they may seek a review by the selectors as follows.
- 16.2 The request for a review must be made within 30 days of the NASS Selection Panel decision being published on AA's web site or the athlete being notified directly of the NASS Selection Panel decision, whichever is the earlier.
- 16.3 The request for a review must set out the reasons why the athlete's classification is incorrect.
- 16.4 The NASS Selection Panel will consider the request for a review within 15 days of receipt and shall inform the athlete of their decision as soon as practical after that.
- 16.5 There shall be no right to further review or appeal.

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17. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Q: What is “Winning Edge”?

A: Australia's Winning Edge is a collaborative effort led by the ASC with key partners in the sport sector, and builds on the National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework (the Policy Framework) and National Institute System Intergovernmental Agreement.

The following priorities, agreed through the Policy Framework, focus on what is needed to achieve Australia's Winning Edge.

- **Investing for success:** Investment is targeted to achieve the greatest chance of international success.
- **Planning to perform:** Planning and review processes are contemporary and provide for elevated accountability across the sector.
- **The right support:** High performance athletes have the right support at the right time along their pathway to international success.
- **Good governance and capability:** High performance sports and sector partners have the structure, workforce and leadership capacity to develop successful programs to achieve competitive results and to spend taxpayer funding effectively.
- **Evidence-based decisions:** High performance sports and sector partners have a valid and robust evidence base on which to develop winning high performance programs.

Q: Where do the Qualification Matrix standards come from?

A: The Qualification Matrix standards for **Podium Potential** are based on research by the AIS Innovation Department. In every event the year-on-year progression of season's best of every top eight athlete at the following competitions were studied: Olympic Games 2012, World Championships 2011, World Championships 2009 and Olympic Games 2008. The standards are based on a statistical analysis of this large data set.

The Qualification Matrix standards for the **Commonwealth** level are based on an analysis of actual bronze medal winning performances at the following Commonwealth Games: 2010, 2006 and 2002. Where appropriate the standards match the 2014 AA Commonwealth Games “A” standards.

Q: Why are some young Para-athletes allowed on NASS but not young able-bodied athletes?

A: This is because of the much shorter time to Podium in some Paralympic events.

Q: Why are relay runners included on the NASS when there are athletes ranked higher in the world, in their individual event, who are not included on the NASS?

A: The NASS program is about World / Olympic / Paralympic / Commonwealth medals and top eight places. Relay squads are considered based on their capacity to meet these aims *as a team* and not as individuals.

Q: Where can I find updates to this document?

A: This document will be updated from time to time, new versions will be published on the AA web site. Updates will also be mentioned in the AA Performance Newsletter which is sent to all interested parties on a regular basis. To be added to the distribution list send your name and email address to carol.grant@athletics.org.au

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Q: How many dollars do you get at each level?

A: The main benefits of the NASS program come from an integrated approach between athlete/coach, the AA Athlete Performance Advisor (APA) and the local Institute/Academy of Sport. We include financial (dollar) contracts for the majority of NASS athletes however the amounts are subject to changes with AA's financial resources, the Australian Institute of dAIS system and any similar support or sponsorship that AA can secure. Over time AA's contract system and amounts will align with the AIS dAIS system; we expect complete alignment post-Rio 2016. The levels in 2015/16 will be as shown below.

Athletes will only get one grant amount, so they will not get more if they qualify for NASS in more than one individual event or in and individual event and the relays. In general the selectors will allocate the "highest paying" appropriate level.

Athletes offered a 6-month membership (eg those selected immediately after the National Championships) will be offered half the dollar amount shown below:

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS:

ENHANCED		2015/16 contract level per annum including dAIS INDIVIDUAL events	
		Able-bodied	Para-athletes
	Gold	\$50,000	\$50,000
	Medal	\$40,000	\$40,000
	Finalist	\$30,000	dAIS only*
	World Class	\$12,000	dAIS only*
	International	\$8,000	dAIS only*
	Commonwealth	\$8,000	dAIS only*
	Development	\$6,000	dAIS only*
	U19 Talent Squad	n/a	n/a

* Direct financial support only if accepted by AIS for dAIS

TEAM	Senior	Preparation award for some competitions, amount confirmed pre-departure
	Junior	n/a
	Squad	n/a

RELAY EVENTS:

ENHANCED		2015/16 contract level per annum including dAIS RELAY events	
		Strike-four*	Other squad members
	Gold	\$25,000	\$12,500
	Medal	\$20,000	\$10,000
	Finalist	\$15,000	\$7,500 able-bodied athletes, dAIS only for Para- athletes

* The four athletes who compete in the final.

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Q: How do the Athletics Australia levels align with the AIS categorisations?

ENHANCED	AIS Category	AA Category
	Podium	Gold
		Medal
	Podium Potential	Finalist
		World Class
		International
	Commonwealth	Commonwealth
	Development	Development
Emerging	U19 Talent Squad	