



STATE TEAM SELECTION POLICY

Version 3

Version	Approved Date	Effective Date	Content reviewed/purpose
1.0	12.07.2023		Introduction of policy
2.0	21.08.2023		Competition alignment
3.0			Updated terminology to CEO Updated number of state team

WATER POLO WA STATE TEAM SELECTION POLICY

This policy may be amended or supplemented by Water Polo WA (WPWA) at its discretion to achieve the objectives of the Organisation. Specifically, the policy may be amended where matters arise which, in the sole opinion of WPWA have not been provided for in this policy, or where the literal application of this policy would not achieve the objectives.

Any variation or amendment must be in writing, given by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on behalf of WPWA who will provide as much notice as possible to all persons affected by any amendment(s) in or supplement to this policy.

1. DEFINITIONS

- “Athlete” means all players in the affiliated WPWA competitions.
- “CEO” means the Chief Executive Officer of WPWA.
- “HOS” means the Head of Selectors appointed by the High-Performance Committee (HPC). The HOS holds a position on all State Team Selection Panels (STSP) (or all of one gender) to ensure continuity of selection and process.
- “HPC” means the High-Performance Committee appointed by WPWA.
- “Official” means Coaches, Assistant Coaches (if applicable), Managers, Physiotherapists, and Selectors for the State Teams and State Squads.
- “STSP” refers to the State Team Selection Panel and the convened panel to select the State Squad(s) and State Team(s).
- “PPO” refers to Pathways and Program Officer and appointed employee within WPWA.
- “WA PP” refers to the WA Performance Pathway program.
- “WPWA” means Water Polo Western Australia Incorporated.

This policy does not apply to State Country or State Masters Teams.

2. PURPOSE

This State Team Selection Policy applies the following principles:

- Select State Squads from which respective State Team(s) are selected, compete, and represent WPWA in the National State Championships.
- Select the best combination of athletes to form a State Team to achieve success at the respective National State Championships.

- Employ a fair and transparent selection process to ensure all Athletes have the opportunity to challenge for positions in State Squads and State Teams.
- Identify the best Officials to establish and maintain an environment for Athletes that is educational, motivational, and growth-focused.
- Complete the selection process in an appropriate timeframe.
- Complete the Head Coach appointment process in an appropriate time frame.

3. STATE TEAM SELECTION PANEL (STSP) STRUCTURE

Each STSP will be comprised of three (3) individuals:

- The Head of Selectors (HOS).
- The Appointed Age Group Team Coach.
- A member with suitable knowledge and experience. This individual should have limited or no conflict of interest with any Athlete or coach vying for selection or appointment. This member may sit on multiple State Selection Panels.

4. STATE TEAMS

WPWA is allocated by Water Polo Australia (WPA) the following maximum number of State Teams to be entered into the respective National State Championships:

	Under 15	Under 17
Male	1 team	1 team
Female	1 team	1 team

The number of State Teams competing at National State Championships is determined by the WPWA HPC and is based on the number and quality of Athletes determined by the STSP for each gender and age grouping.

5. SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process for Athletes in WPWA State Teams applies the following steps:

- 1) State Team Athlete Nomination Forms are made available to Athletes, clubs, and Associations for each gender and age grouping. State Team Athlete Nomination Forms are

returned by the due date outlined on the form. To nominate, Athletes must be current financial members of WPWA and Water Polo Australia (WPA).

- 2) State Team nomination pools are comprised from:
 - a) nominating Athletes through the State Team Nomination Form;
 - b) Athletes identified through WPWA competitions and invited by WPWA;
 - c) Athletes identified from the WA Performance Programs (North and South);
 - d) Athletes identified at relevant talent identification events by WPWA; and
 - e) Athletes participating in National Squads for WPA.

Membership in a State Team Nomination Pool does not automatically relate to State Team selection.

The STSP in conjunction with the WPWA HPC will determine the date, time, and location of State Squad selection trials for gender and age groupings.

- 3) Athlete selection to State Squads may be determined through assessment by the STSP using the Athlete Assessment Matrix (*Appendix 3*) and team composition requirements for a State Team.
- 4) Athletes selected to State Squads must commit to the training program for gender and age groupings. Training exemptions may be considered by application to the WPWA HPC and will be accepted from Athletes who face challenges in committing to the training program but wish to be considered for the State Team. Decisions on exemptions and eligibility for players to remain in consideration for a State Team will reside with the WPWA HPC in their absolute and sole discretion.
- 5) When operating, State Squad training programs are delivered through the WA Performance Pathways Program. At other times, Athletes will be advised of the training and commitment required.
- 6) State Team representation will be communicated to selected and non-selected Athletes.
- 7) Athletes selected for State Teams must commit to training and representation requirements. Selected Athletes are required to sign the WPWA Athlete Agreement and Code of Conduct.
- 8) Once the selection process has been completed and the team selected, relevant comments for each Athlete considered will be provided to the CEO for approval by the WPWA HPC and to the WPWA Board for noting.

5.1 ATHLETE SELECTION

The STSP select Athletes to the State Squad, who, to the satisfaction of the STSP in its sole discretion, achieve the optimum Squad/Team compatibility and balance to achieve the best possible results for Western Australia in accordance with the Objectives of WPWA.

The STSP are aware and will manage the following cognitive bias in the selection of Athletes:

- i) Relative age effect – the tendency for Athletes born in the early months of the eligibility cut-off to be overrepresented at age-group level competitions. This is because they are, on average, larger and more physically mature than their peers. This can mean they are more ‘effective’ in the game at that moment in time. As such coaches/selectors who confer current physical fitness/ability with future potential (or outcomes) are more likely to favour these Athletes.
- ii) Similarity bias – the tendency to favour Athletes whom they are more familiar, have worked with previously, etc.
- iii) Confirmation bias – the tendency to look for information that reinforces beliefs about something/someone (yet, ignore or not value information that might challenge that belief).
- iv) Roster management bias – the tendency to select Athletes based on their ability to fill a specific role on the team, rather than their overall ability as an Athlete.

Athlete selection for State Squads and State Teams will be on the following criteria, with the combination of the below information informing the selection discussion and decisions:

- Consistency and quality of performances in competitions within the past 24 months. For the avoidance of doubt, not all performances during the 24-month period need to be considered, but performances for a period of up to 24-months may be considered by WPWA and the STSP panel. Performance beyond that time frame will not be considered.
- Composition and balance of the State Squad and State Team including but not limited to positional coverage relevant to the style of play decided upon by the coach the coaches wishes to play.
- The Athlete’s coachability, willingness, and desire to improve as an Athlete and person.
- The attributes described in the Athlete Assessment Matrix (*Appendix 3*), including:
 - Physical capacity to perform at the required level in competition.
 - Technical skills to perform at the required level in competition.

- Tactical awareness and decision-making in competition.
- Performance Factor relates to the player's ability to combine all their abilities to perform in pressure situations against competitive opponents.
- Team Performance Behaviours refer to the Athlete's contribution to the State Squad/State Team both in and away from the competition environment which may include but not be limited to leadership capability, behaviour and overall contribution to the program's performance and ability of the Athlete to demonstrate the relevant values and behaviours.

5.2 ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for selection to the State Squad and, or State Team an Athlete must:

- Meet the training requirements of state team program
- Be in good financial standing with WPWA and WPA.
- Be a current registered member of WPWA and WPA.
- At all times acted in a proper manner and not have engaged in any conduct that has, or is likely to bring WPWA, WPA, the Athlete, or the sport of water polo into disrepute, censure or ridicule.

5.3 ATHLETE – EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Athletes who are unable to meet the obligations of the State Team program (where a suitable training alternative, approved by the State Team Coach, has not been made) , should apply for an exemption from the WPWA HPC prior to the commencement of the program.

For one-off or infrequent occurrences where Athletes are unable to compete at tournaments, trials, training camps, or other attendances required under this policy, they must advise the relevant Coach of this absence and the reason therefore, at the earliest possible opportunity.

5.4 REPLACEMENT OF SELECTED ATHLETES

Athletes may be replaced for the following reasons from relevant State Squads or State Teams:

1. Injury or illness – Where a legitimate concern is raised regarding a change in an Athlete's capacity to perform as expected from when the State Squad/State team was selected, Athletes may be assessed by a qualified health practitioner nominated or agreed to by

WPWA, who assess the Athlete. If the player is declared unable to perform to expectation, they may be replaced in the team.

2. Discipline – Athletes, who for reasons of poor discipline are being considered to be replaced, will be counselled by the relevant State Coach to give them the opportunity to rectify the situation. The State Coach and Athlete(s) will set a mutually agreed time and, at the end of that time, the situation will be reassessed. A breach of discipline will also include an Athlete's failure to observe any relevant WPA or WPWA Policy.
3. Failure to pay for the State Team travel commitments up to two (2) weeks before the scheduled departure for the tournament.
4. Failure to complete the mandatory Sport Integrity Australia requirements to compete in the National State Championships by two (2) weeks prior to the event.
5. Failure to return all required State Team documentation two (2) weeks before the scheduled departure of the tournament. Forms include Medical Forms, Team/Athlete contracts, and Code of Conduct.
6. Failure to meet the requirements of the state team program

In all cases, a written report from the relevant State Team Coach and the STSP will be immediately submitted to the CEO explaining in detail the background of the circumstance and the action taken, for approval of the CEO

WPWA will advise the respective Athletes in writing of their exclusion from the State Squad or State Team, and the reasons for such. If an Athlete is to be replaced, the STSP be tasked with the process of selecting a replacement Athlete.

5.5 ADDITIONAL ATHLETES TO STATE SQUAD OR STATE TEAM

The STSP may, with the approval of the WPWA Board, add Athletes to the relevant State Squad or State Team at any stage, subject to those Athletes satisfying the relevant selection criteria.

5.6 REMOVAL OF AN ATHLETE FROM A STATE SQUAD OR STATE TEAM

The STSP may, with the approval of the HPC and the WPWA Board remove Athletes from the relevant State Squad or State Team at any stage, subject to those criteria contained in section 5.3.

6. COST

WPWA undertakes the conduct of State Teams on a cost-neutral exercise. WPWA does not make any profits from State Teams and only seeks to recover the cost of training and competing in the National State Championships.

Costs for competing in the National State Championship may be equalised across all competing Athletes from within the same age and gender group including, flights, accommodation, ground transfer, Coach and Managers expenses, team nominations, and pool hire.

8. STATE TEAMS – OFFICIALS’ SELECTION

8.1 GENERAL

1. The appointment of Coaches and Managers is event-specific and duties shall include any pre-event training and organisation and post-event follow-up and reporting that may be required.
2. Selection preferences for Managers will be given to those that best meet the objectives and have the most experience. The HPC may take into account if applicants have family members in the representative team.
3. The HPC will recommend the Head Coach of each team who will contribute to the selection of Team Managers. All Official appointments must be approved by the WPWA Board.

8.2 PROCESS

The selection of Officials will follow the steps below:

1. The HPC apply the criteria outlined within the Coach Position Description to individual applicants who submit an expression of interest within the allocated timeframe.
2. The WPWA HPC will select team Coaches, Assistant Coaches (if applicable), and Managers.
3. Applicants are notified of their application status in writing by the CEO of WPWA following the decision made by the HPC, and approval by the WPWA Board.

8.3 ELIGIBILITY OF OFFICIALS

1. No person is eligible to be appointed to be Head Coach, if he, she or they have a family member (i.e. brother, sister, son or daughter), who is standing for selection in that State Squad or State

Team, or if by reason of relationship with a prospective member of the State Squad or State Team would be reasonably considered to be other than impartial.

2. The WPWA Board may recommend to the STSP that in exceptional circumstances where the Board is of the opinion that no bias is likely, a coach otherwise be appointed. Such a recommendation shall be at the sole discretion of the Board.
3. The minimum requirements to be considered for a State Team Coach appointment are as follows:
 - a. Current and valid Working with Children and Vulnerable Persons Card.
 - b. Completion of the Sport Australia Community Coaching Essential Skills online program.
 - c. Completion of Sport Integrity Australia education programs relevant to the National State Championships.
 - d. Completion of any WPA course ie Development Coach etc
4. In addition, the appointment panel will consider the following factors:
 - a. Does the coach demonstrate a growth mindset in relation to their own development as a coach?
 - b. Is the coach's behaviour consistent with community expectations in relation to the treatment and development of children and young people?
 - c. Consultation with the coach's current Club/Association/School to determine the level of Athlete engagement, enjoyment and retention of Athletes in their teams. This can be assessed by attendance rates at training and if players stay with the coach over multiple seasons.
 - d. Observation of the coach in action, during local games, to enable the appointment panel to assess suitability for the role applied.
 - e. Does the coach have the requisite skills to lead and manage a group of young people on an interstate tour, if not, is there appropriate support that can be put around them to do this?

9. REQUEST FOR APPEAL

Refer to the [WPA Selection Appeals Policy](#).

10. CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS

All STSP members will be required to sign a WPWA Confidentiality Agreement. Selectors and coaches will not discuss selection matters outside official selection meetings. Contravention of the Confidentiality Agreement will lead to removal from the STSP.

STSP members will be required to declare any conflicts of interest in relation to the Athlete selection process. A register of conflicts of interest will be managed by the HOS and reviewed by the HPC and CEO of WPWA.

APPENDIX 1: STATE TEAM SELECTION PANEL CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

State Team Selection Panel (STSP) – Confidentiality Agreement

As a member of the STSP you are required to be cognisant of and abide by the following:

1. Communications between candidates and members of the selection group:
 - Discussions or correspondence regarding the selection process are not entered into with any candidates during or after the process, unless such discussions are relative to their individual application.
 - If at any point STSP members are conflicted or feel they are being coerced, bullied, or influenced to not act within the process or with regard to a fair and equal opportunity for all applicants, they are to advise the WPWA CEO and Head of Selectors immediately.
2. Any relevant correspondence will be channeled through the Head of Selectors and approved by the Water Polo CEO prior to dissemination to any candidate(s).
3. All candidates are to be treated equitably.
4. The decision of the TSP is binding on all members of the panel.
 - The final decision on the selection of Athletes or officials binds everyone on the panel, even if individuals do not agree with the final decision.
 - TSP members shall not make any comments publicly.

State Selection Panel Member Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 2: STATE COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

Code of Conduct - State Coaches

The role of the State Team Coach is critical to the experience and performance of team members. Water Polo WA support and practice the principles of the [*Think. Act. Play.*](#) program

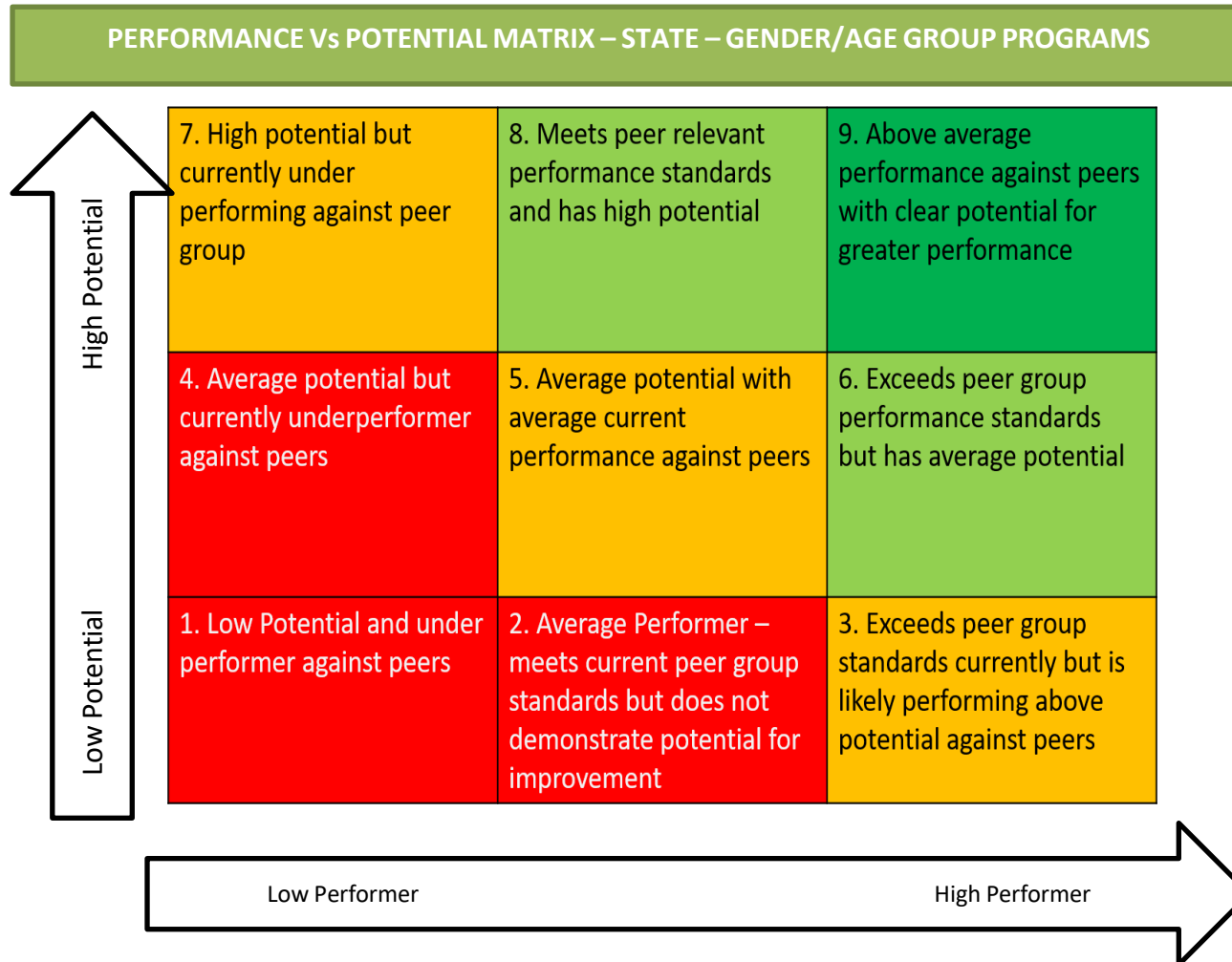
As a State Team Coach, there is an expectation of a high level of professionalism and behaviour. You are required to abide by the following Code of Conduct principles that form part of the WPA Member Protection Policy:

1. Respect the rights, dignity, and worth of every human being.
2. Ensure the Athlete's time spent with you is a positive one.
3. Treat each Athlete as an individual.
4. Provide a drug-free environment.
5. Be fair, considerate, and honest with Athletes.
6. Be professional and accept responsibility for your actions.
7. Make a commitment to providing a quality service to your Athletes.
8. Operate within the rules of your sport. Any physical contact with Athletes should be:
 - I. Appropriate to the situation.
 - II. Necessary for the Athlete's skill development.
 - III. Refrain from any form of personal abuse towards your Athletes.
9. Refrain from any form of harassment.
10. Provide a safe environment for training and competition.
11. Show concern and caution towards sick and injured Athletes.
12. Be a positive role model for your sport and Athletes.
13. Refrain from inappropriate behaviour towards other coaches, officials and parents.

Name of Coach _____

Signed: _____

APPENDIX 4: PERFORMANCE Vs POTENTIAL MATRIX FOR INITIAL TALENT ID AND SELECTION



APPENDIX 5: WATER POLO INTEGRITY REQUIREMENTS

National State Championships	WWCC	SIA Coach Course	WPA Recommended Accreditation	Clean Sport 101	Anti-Doping Fundamentals (formerly Level 1)	Annual Update 2022 (formerly Level 2)**	Whereabouts Course (RTP Players and Coaches Only)	Competition Manipulation and Sports Betting	Illicit Drugs in Sport	Ethics and Ethical Decision Making in Sport	Sport Australia Community Coach General Principles	Medical Practitioners Course	Parents Guide to Clean Sport
All Coaches	Required	Required	Platinum or Gold Members	-	Required	Required	-	Recommended	Required	Required	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Support Personnel (Anyone working with players)	Required	-	-	-	Required	Required	-	Recommended	Required	Required	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Managers	Required	-	-	-	Required	Required	-	Recommended	Required	Required	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Table Official	Required	-	Competition Official	-	-	-	-	Recommended	-	-	-	-	-
Medical Officers (if engaged by Team)	Required	-	-	-	Required	Required	-	Recommended	Required	Required	Recommended	Required	Recommended
Players	-	-	-	-	Required	Required	-	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	-	-	Recommended