

Rowing in Australia

ROW WELL PLAN 2026-2027



STRONGER TOGETHER



INTRODUCTION



Rowing is a sport for life, accessible to people of all ages, genders, fitness and skill levels, and currently enjoyed by over 60,000 participants and 30,000 competitive members ranging from young rowers at school through to those at universities and clubs right through to masters rowing. Rowing Australia Member Associations operate in seven states with over 185 schools and 156 clubs offering rowing programs throughout the majority of Australian community.

The Australian Sports Commission's **Play Well Strategy** has been co-designed by the sport participation sector and identifies six priority areas for the sector to focus on to increase participation in sport. These priorities are as follows and more detailed information can be found at Play Well Sport Participation Strategy.

A national Row Well plan is a road map to help Rowing in Australia (RiA) to deliver on the sport's strategic plan, by agreeing on our objectives and an agreed set of actions. It also ensures the sport considers resourcing and how to measure success.

The Row Well plan is aligned with the Australian Sports Commission's Play Well Strategy. The plan is a 12 month rolling operational plan and is reviewed biannually by Rowing Australia and Member Associations to ensure it continues to deliver on the RiA Strategic Plan.

COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The RiA Strategic Plan is the overarching strategic document which guides Rowing in Australia.

The Row Well Plan links directly to four of the five pillars within the RiA Strategic Plan: Participation & Growth, People & Culture, Commercial and Governance.



**PARTICIPATION
& GROWTH**



**PEOPLE
& CULTURE**



COMMERCIAL



GOVERNANCE

The '**Operational Deliverables**' outlined in those pillars are reflected within the Row Well Plan and set the foundation for the plans initiatives and desired outcomes.



THE PLAY WELL STRATEGY PILLARS

The six main pillars of the **Play Well Strategy** have been utilised as the framework for the **Row Well** plan and are outlined below.

1

EMPOWERING PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS

Building the capability of people and organisations to meet the needs of everyone involved in sport.

2

DRIVING LIFELONG INVOLVEMENT

Foster a sporting environment that enables positive lifelong involvement in sport.

3

ACTIVATING PLACES & SPACES

Creating, improving, activating and better managing places and spaces to ensure everyone can have safe and enjoyable sporting experiences.

4

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Creating a connected and collaborative sport ecosystem that supports all organisations to provide high quality sporting experiences.

5

EQUITABLE ACCESS

Prioritising equity and choice to ensure all Australians can access sport.

6

TRANSFORMING CULTURE

Changing the culture of sport in Australia to create an environment where everyone can access safe, inclusive, welcoming and fun experiences.



PILLAR 1

EMPOWERING PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONS

Rowing Australia and Member Associations are committed to understanding the needs of Clubs, Schools, Coaches, and Officials who make rowing happen in Australia. We are producing the framework, tools, and support structures that support everyone within the sport.

Desired outcomes

- **Participant, Club & Volunteer Experience**
Improve participant satisfaction and engagement while increasing club capability, volunteer sustainability, and the quality of regatta and event experiences.
- **Digital Systems & Operational Effectiveness**
Deliver efficient, financially sustainable, and fit-for-purpose competitions and events supported by quality waterways, facilities, and infrastructure.

Deliverables

-  A framework that identifies and describes the people needed to deliver the sport at all levels is developed.
-  Volunteer recruitment and retention initiatives (including business models) are implemented to support strategic outcomes.
-  A contemporary workforce culture plan focused on driving active engagement and retention is developed for all participants (Coach, Umpire, support, administrators)
-  Sustainable rowing clubs that have the ability to grow and engage with their community

Initiatives

- **Rowing in Australia Regatta Guide**
- **Redevelop the Coaching Framework**
- **Review the Boat Race Officials Framework**
- Club & School Research

PILLAR 2

DRIVING LIFELONG INVOLVEMENT

Rowing is a sport which enables lifelong involvement and accessible to everyone. It works when participation and competition structures meet people where they are. Rowing has many faces and is home to many people. We are reviewing, refreshing, and growing the structures that give everyone a reason to get involved and stay involved.

Desired outcomes

- **Participation & Diversity Growth**
Increase overall rowing participation, improve participant retention, and expand diversity across all rowing programs and pathways.
- **Participant, Club & Volunteer Experience**
Improve participant satisfaction and engagement while increasing club capability, volunteer sustainability, and the quality of regatta and event experiences.
- **Digital Systems & Operational Effectiveness**
Deliver efficient, financially sustainable, and fit-for-purpose competitions and events supported by quality waterways, facilities, and infrastructure.

Deliverables

-  The current competition and events model nationally is enhanced based on identified recommendations
-  Contemporary business models for future membership programs developed for consideration
-  The disciplines of Beach Sprints and Indoor Rowing are developed through an events driven approach

Initiatives

- **Review of Rowing Australia Events Portfolio**
- **Unlocking indoor rowing through Row Nation**
- Delivery of Sporting Schools Program expanded
- **Beach Sprint Rowing event & program support**
- Develop localised School to Club transition programs and tools



PILLAR 3

ACTIVATING PLACES & SPACES

The quality and access to venues and waterways matters enormously to the sustainability of our sport. Clubs, schools, and Member Associations have told us that inconsistent facility quality, ageing infrastructure, and uncertain access are real barriers to events and participation. We are working with councils and governments to advocate for the venues our sport's community needs for a sustainable future.

Desired outcomes

- **Digital Systems & Operational Effectiveness**

Deliver efficient, financially sustainable, and fit-for-purpose competitions and events supported by quality waterways, facilities, and infrastructure.

Deliverables



Investment in facilities and waterways maintained at acceptable levels to protect waterways used for rowing

Initiatives

→ Collaborative approach to governments for facility upgrades & developments



PILLAR 4

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Commitment to building the technological and digital foundations that allow rowing to connect with everyone at each level, and to understand how these foundations underpin the sport's future. The ability to determine strategic growth options and provide greater level of service by understanding how and why our participants connect with the sport of rowing.

Desired outcomes

- **Participant, Club & Volunteer Experience**
Improve participant satisfaction and engagement while increasing club capability, volunteer sustainability, and the quality of regatta and event experiences.
- **Digital Systems & Operational Effectiveness**
Implement modern participant, member, and competition management systems that improve accessibility, operational efficiency, data capability, and user experience across the sport.

Deliverables

-  Benchmark engagement and connectivity metrics identified with rowing participants across all disciplines
-  The level of digital and technological capability required to engage with participants in the future is qualified and quantified

Initiatives

- Rebuilding Rowing Manager for future success
- **Connected participant & member platform**
- Row Nation platform integrated with our current systems.

PILLAR 5

EQUITABLE ACCESS

Rowing continues to be a sport for everyone, acting deliberately, committing visibly, and developing the practical tools that allow clubs and schools to build inclusive programs. We commit to making rowing accessible and representative to any community or individual who hasn't yet found their place in the sport.

Desired outcomes

- **Participant & Diversity Growth**
Increase overall rowing participation, improve participant retention, and expand diversity across all rowing programs and pathways.
- **Participant, Club & Volunteer Experience**
Improve participant satisfaction and engagement while increasing club capability, volunteer sustainability, and the quality of regatta and event experiences.

Deliverables

-  Develop a communications plan to increase the visibility of women across the sport
-  Enhanced opportunities for para rowers at clubs and schools nationally

Initiatives

- Continue to provide opportunities and programs that support Women in rowing at all levels
- **Develop resources and tools to support Para Rowing, including a Classification Guide**

PILLAR 6

TRANSFORMING CULTURE

Committed to giving the rowing community the tools, education, and the framework to build a sustainable culture that attracts people, keeps them in the sport, and wanting to give back. Creating clear expectations, education, and striving for consistent practice across our sport to improve everyone's experience in rowing.

Desired outcomes

- **Participant, Club & Volunteer Experience**
Increase overall rowing participation, improve participant retention, and expand diversity across all rowing programs and pathways

Deliverables

-  A comprehensive DEI Framework and Sport Integrity framework is developed and implemented across the sport
-  Compliance with WHS achieves best practice industry standards

Initiatives

- Implement and promote National Integrity Framework and education opportunities
- Aligned Risk Management Framework for governing bodies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Row Well Plan is a shared commitment to growing the sport of rowing. The plan has been developed in collaboration with:



Rowing Australia is very grateful to our partners for their continued support:

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



MAJOR PARTNERS



Rowing Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters on which it stands, operates and rows on and pays its respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise the outstanding contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to society and to sport in Australia and celebrate the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.





STRONGER TOGETHER

