

**Rowing Australia
Para-Rowing Competition Regulations
Updated November 2017**

The Para-Rowing Competition Regulations apply to all RA organised competitions. These Competition Regulations support the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws. Please refer to the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws for all additional Rules and By-Laws for RA competitions.

Regulation 1 – Application

RA Para-Rowing Competition Regulations apply to all events organised and/or coordinated by RA. State Rowing Associations may choose to adopt these Regulations for State/Club activities.

Regulation 2 – Eligibility

To be eligible to compete, athletes must be formally classified by a full RA or FISA Classification Panel and be granted an eligible sport class, and a national or international sport class status. Athletes who do not have a national or international sport class status, or have been given a sport class status of ineligible, are not eligible to compete.

Athletes with an International or National Review sport class status must be reviewed in accordance with the date or event specified on their classification paperwork.

Regulation 4 – Coxswains

For para-rowing events, there are no restrictions on coxswains in respect of para-rowing eligibility, gender or age. All coxswains must comply with the minimum weight for a coxswain as stated in the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws (RULE 28).

Regulation 5 – Rowing Australia Para-Rowing Boat Classes

RA recognises the following Para-Rowing events:

- PR3 W1x (Including Interstate Regatta)
- PR3 M1x (Including Interstate Regatta)
- PR3 Mix2x
- PR3 Mix4+
- PR2 W1x
- PR2 M1x
- PR2 Mix2x
- PR1 W1x
- PR1 M1x
- PR1 Mix2x

In mixed Para-Rowing events, half of the rowers in a crew shall be male and half shall be female (excluding coxswains). In the PR3 Mix4+, the coxswain may be either male or female. A PR3 Mix4+ crew may include a maximum of two rowers whose impairment is a vision impairment, only one of whom may have a sport class of PR3-B3. A PR3 Mix2x crew may include a maximum of one rower whose disability is a vision impairment.

Intellectual Impairment (II) athletes are included in the PR3 Sport Class at RA competitions.

Regulation 6 – Assigned Sport Class

In competition, rowers may only compete with one classification. This classification must be nominated when entering the event and may not change throughout the event. For example, an athlete who has been classified and deemed to have a physical impairment and a vision impairment, must nominate which classification they will be racing with and must abide by the rules and regulations associated with that classification and impairment.

Regulation 7 – Rowing Outside Assigned Sport Class

Rowers may compete in a more functional sport class, but not a less functional sport class. For example, a rower classified and nominated as a PR2 may compete in PR3 events, but may not compete in PR1 events.

Regulation 8 – Boats and Equipment

RA adheres to and adopts the FISA Para-Rowing Standards and the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws with respect to equipment and strapping requirements.

a) General Aspects

- a.1. The FISA Standard Para-Rowing boats are mandatory for all Para-Rowing PR1 1x and PR2 Mix2x events.
- a.2. The FISA Standard Para-Rowing boats must be designed and built to FISA specifications by a FISA approved Para-Rowing boat manufacturer as outlined on the World Rowing website. These manufacturers are Wintech, Swift, Liangji, Empacher and Filippi.
- a.3. The minimum weight of RA Standard Para-Rowing boats shall be specified in Regulation 9.

b) Para-Rowing PR3 Mix4+, PR3 Mix2x and PR3 1x

- b.1. The boat for PR3 Mix4+ events shall be subject to the same restrictions as those for 4+ events under the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws (RULE 39).
- b.2. The boat for PR3 Mix2x events shall be subject to the same restrictions as those for 2x events under the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws (RULE 39).
- b.3. The boat for PR3 1x events shall be subject to the same restrictions as those for 1x events under the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws (RULE 39).
- b.4. Athletes may use wider and heavier boats if required.
- b.5. Athletes may use pontoons if required.

c) Para-Rowing PR2 Mix2x and PR2 1x

- c.1. The boat for PR2 1x events shall be subject to the same restrictions as those for the 1x events under the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws (RULE 39). Athletes may use wider and heavier boats if required.
- c.2. PR2 Mix2x boats must be designed and built to FISA specifications by a FISA approved Para-Rowing Boat Manufacturer. The hull, the pontoons where fitted, and the seat fixing are part of the standard specifications.
- c.3. Boats used in the PR2 Mix2x and PR2 1x events have a fixed seat and may have stabilising pontoons. The seat itself is not restricted, except that the design of the seat must be compatible with the strapping regulations.
- c.4. PR2 Mix2x and PR2 1x rowers are required to comply with the strapping requirements set out in points (e and f) of these Regulations.

d) Para-Rowing PR1 Mix2x and PR1 1x

- d.1. The boat for PR1 Mix2x events shall be subject to the same restrictions as those for the 2x events under the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws (RULE 39). Athletes may use wider and heavier boats if required.
- d.2. Boats used in the PR1 Mix2x and PR1 1x events have a fixed seat and must have two stabilising pontoons per rigger. The pontoons should be fixed in position so that when the rower is seated in the balanced boat both pontoons shall be horizontal when viewed from the side of the boat and shall, at a minimum, touch the water at the same time.

- d.3. The seat itself for the PR1 Mix2x is not restricted, except that the design of the seat must be compatible with the strapping regulations.
- d.4. The PR1 1x must be designed and built to FISA specifications by a FISA approved Para-Rowing Boat Manufacturer.
- d.5. PR1 1x boats have a fixed seat and must have stabilising pontoons installed, attached to the riggers at a minimum distance of 60cm from centre line of pontoon to centre line of boat.
- d.6. The seat itself and the rigger design of the Standard Para-Rowing PR1 1x are not restricted, except that the design of the seat must be compatible with the standard seat fixing and strapping regulations, and the design of the rigger must allow the stabilising pontoons to be correctly fixed.
- d.7. PR1 Mix2x and PR1 1x rowers are required to comply with the strapping requirements set out in points (e and f) of these Regulations.

e) Strapping

- e.1. PR2 Strapping Requirements – rowers shall be secured with a strap to prevent flexion and extension of the knee(s) during rowing. The strap must be secured under the seat or rails and over the thighs, as close to the knees as possible.
- e.2. PR1 Strapping Requirements – rowers shall use a strap that must be secured to the seat back and around the torso just covering the xiphoid process (bone at the bottom of the sternum). The rower's lumbar region must remain in contact with the seat when the rower reaches forward when rowing, during training, warm up, cool down and racing. The purpose of the strapping is to prevent movement of the lumbar region away from the seat and it must be tight enough to do so. The design and placement of the seat and all straps must allow the lumbar region to be visible from the side during rowing. The straps must be attached to the seat on both sides. The point at which the strap is attached to the seat should be no lower than the top edge of the supportive portion of the strap at the front of the torso. Straps will be assessed with the rower in a static position with the spine straightened by bearing the weight of the upper body through the arms while the buttocks and back remain in contact with the seat. The rower's movement will be observed and assessed during rowing (training and racing). The supportive portion of the back rest of the seat must not be lower than the level of the attachment points of the front strap. The back of the seat may be covered with a soft material to prevent injuries, but the covering material must not be thicker than 2cm. If a bracket is attached to the strap it must not rotate at the attachment point.
- e.3. Additionally, PR1 athletes shall be secured with a strap to prevent flexion and extension of the knee(s) during rowing. The strap must be secured under the seat or rails and over the thighs, as close to the knees as possible.

f) General Strapping Requirements

- f.1. All straps must be a minimum width of 50mm, be of non-elastic material, be without mechanical buckles and must be able to be released immediately by the rower with a single quick hand action of pulling on the free end of the strap.
- f.2. The colour of all straps must be a contrasting colour from the rowers' racing uniform so that it can be clearly seen.
- f.3. All straps for each rower must be released in the same manner and direction.
- f.4. Any hand strapping must be able to be released immediately.
- f.5. Additional strapping may be used by any rower but must be in compliance with these Regulations.
- f.6. To avoid accidents arising from capsizing, all boats shall be equipped with stretchers or shoes that allow the rowers to get clear of the boat independently with the least possible delay.
- f.7. It is solely the responsibility of the rower to ensure that all strapping is compliant with these Regulations.
- f.8. Penalty for non-compliance – The penalty for having raced with non-compliant strapping and/or in the case of an PR1 rower if the lumbar region of the rower does

not stay in contact with the seat when reaching forward, shall be that the crew is relegated to last place in the particular race. If two or more crews in the same race have a non-compliant strap or movement, they shall all be relegated and they shall be ranked in the descending order of their finish. If the crew races again with a non-compliant strap or movement in a later round of the same event, then the penalty shall be the exclusion of the crew.

Regulation 9 – Boat Weights

The minimum weights of Para-Rowing boats are:

PR3 1x	14kg
PR3 Mix2x	27kg
PR3 Mix4+	51kg
PR2 1x	14kg – not including pontoons, fixed seat or strapping. Must be weighed with standard sliding seat.
PR2 Mix2x	37kg – including the seat and strapping
PR1 1x	24kg – including pontoons, seat and strapping
PR1 Mix2x	27kg – not including pontoons, fixed seat or strapping. Must be weighed with standard sliding seats.

Straps, paddings and other items directly related to Para-Rowing which are not part of the pontoons, seat or strapping regulations shall not be included in the weight of the boat. Equipment that replaces a part of the body (prosthesis) even if bolted, screwed, or glued directly to the boat or seat shall not be included as part of the weight of the boat.

Regulation 10 – Length of the Course

The length of the standard course shall be 2000m straight. From time to time, additional races over shorter distances may be included to assist with the development of the sport. In such cases, all athletes must abide by these regulations.

Regulation 11 – Entries

No entry shall be accepted for para-rowing events unless the rower concerned has been classified by a full RA or FISA Classification Panel and has been granted an eligible sport class and sport class status, or is scheduled to be nationally classified at that competition and meets the eligibility prior to the commencement of Para-Rowing racing.

Regulation 12 – Safety of Para-Rowing Rowers

Para-competitors and crews may require special safety procedures to be adopted to ensure safety and fairness. These procedures would require prior approval by the RA para-rowing staff.

Particular care must be taken in weather conditions which may generate extreme uncontrolled body temperatures.

Safety requirements for strapping are set out in Regulation 5.

Regulation 13 – Traffic Rules on the Course

Athletes must adhere to the traffic rules of the event, the venue and the RA Rules of Racing and related By-Laws (Rule 63). The boat launching area and direction of traffic will be advised by the Organising Committee.

Regulation 14 – General Fairness

At all times when on the water during training, warm up, cool down, and competition from the opening day of the course until completion of the final race of their competition, all athletes must row with the prescribed equipment which must be used according to the boat class described in Regulation 6 and/or classification requirements as described in the RA Classification Regulations and By-Laws. Equipment in this context refers to strapping and pontoons.

Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to a penalty being imposed on the crew in accordance with these Regulations, including (but not limited to), where such failure to comply is judged to have taken

place during a race, relegation to last place in the particular race or exclusion of the crew. The appropriate penalty in all circumstances shall be at the discretion of the Jury.

Regulation 15 – Starting Procedure for PR3

The PR3 events may include athletes with a vision impairment. Therefore, at the start of each race for these events, the Starter shall give an additional verbal indication to crews as follows:

After completing the roll call and stating the word “Attention”, the Starter shall say the words “Red Flag” at the same time as they raise the red flag (or in cases where traffic lights are used, “Red Light” at the same instant that they press the button to activate the red light). The starter shall then proceed with the start in the normal way.

Regulation 16 – Steering Procedure for Vision Impaired (VI) Athletes

During 1x races where VI athletes are participating, the athlete is required to nominate a representative prior to the regatta who is responsible for providing steering and race information to the athlete from start to finish, via a walkie talkie system. It is the responsibility of the athlete to source the required communication system.

Athletes whose representative is deemed by the RA Race Umpire to have coached or provided information not within these Regulations may be relegated to last place in that race.

Examples of approved and non-approved calls are below.

Approved

- Calls relating to distance travelled or to be travelled (250m gone, 500m to go)
- Position within the race (4th place by 2 boat lengths, 1st place by half a boat length)
- Steering (harder on bowside, stroke side for two, straight)

Non-Approved

- Coaching calls to assist the athlete to go faster (explosive leg drive, quick catches)
- Calls telling the athlete to race (Lane 3 is making a move - Go, go, go, faster, faster, faster, up, up, up, now, now, now)

Regulation 17 – Finish of the Race for PR3 Events

At the finish of the race in PR3 events, when raising the white flag, the Umpire shall clearly state the words “White Flag” for all crews to hear. Should a red flag be raised, “Red Flag” shall be clearly stated.

Regulation 18 – Responsibility for Decisions on Strapping and Movement Compliance

- 18.1 At RA events, RA will nominate suitably qualified people to adjudicate on strapping and equipment compliance of para competitors in place of RA Umpires (RA para-rowing staff).
- 18.2 RA para-rowing staff will work closely with the RA Umpires to ensure all strapping and equipment are compliant with these Regulations, this includes checking equipment and strapping prior to racing and observing the strapping and movement of para competitors during warm up and while racing.
- 18.3 If a para-competitor is deemed non-compliant, RA para rowing staff are responsible for communicating the non-compliance to the Race Umpire who shall inform the finish and relegate the crew to last place in that race. If more than one crew is relegated, they shall be placed last in the same order that they were judged to finish the race.