

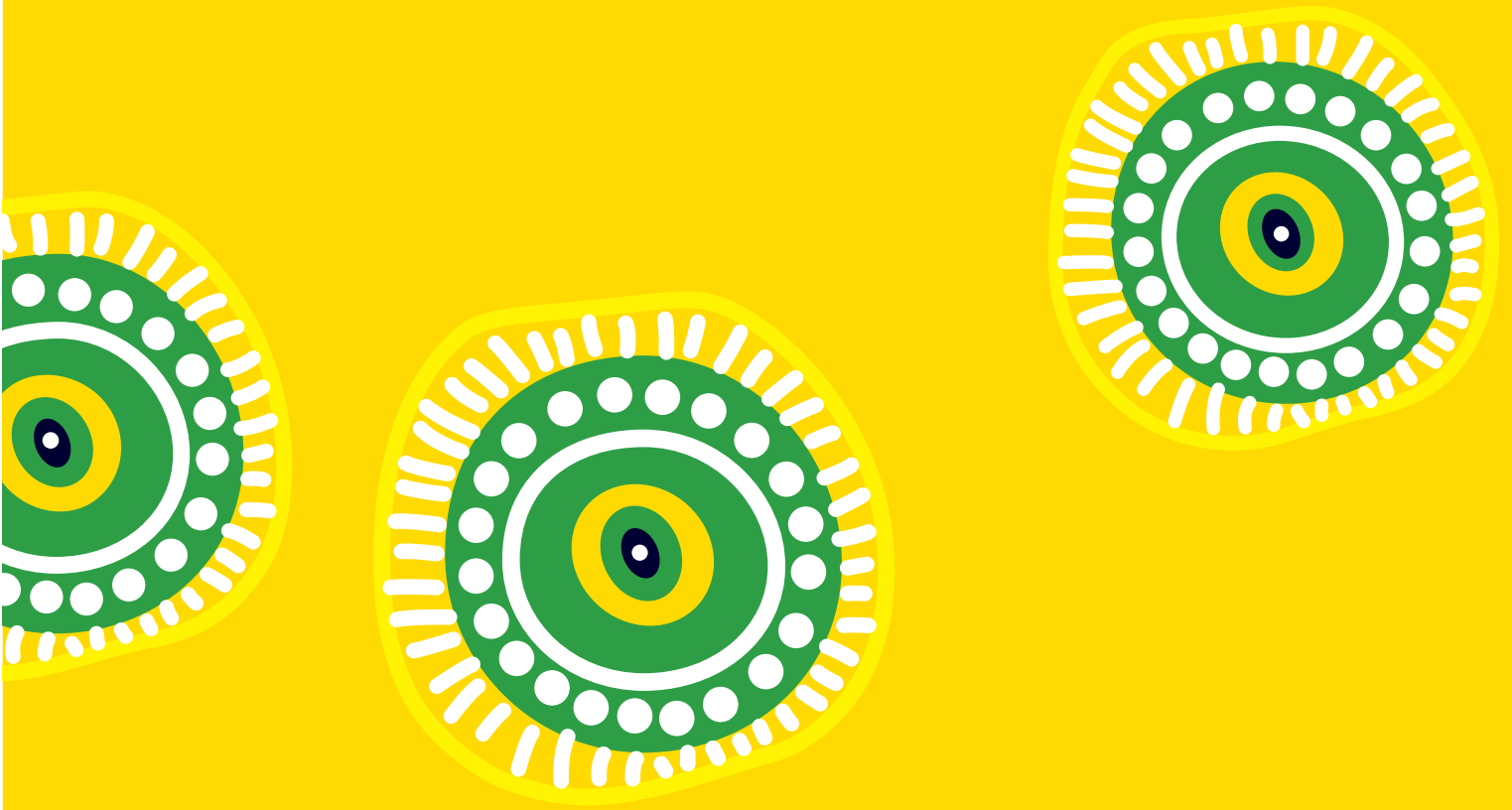


**Australian Government**  
**Australian Sports Commission**

# **ASC Recognition Criteria**

## **March 2024**

### **National Sporting Organisations (NSOs)**



### **Australian Sports Commission Acknowledgement of Country**

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where its offices are located, the Ngunnawal people and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, the people of the Yugambeh Nation and the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation.

The ASC extends this acknowledgment to all the Traditional Custodians of the lands and First Nations Peoples throughout Australia and would like to pay its respects to all Elders past, present and future.

The ASC recognises the outstanding contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to society and sport in Australia and celebrates the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.



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# 1. Introduction

As part of its functions, the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) recognises eligible organisations as National Sporting Organisations (NSOs). Recognised NSOs are organisations the ASC supports to achieve the Australian Government's sporting objectives.

Organisations seeking recognition as NSOs are assessed by the ASC against the ASC recognition criteria, which assist the ASC in determining whether an organisation is considered the pre-eminent body for the sport they represent in Australia, has sufficient standing within its sport and has adequate governance. NSOs are recognised by the ASC for a defined recognition period.

The process for assessing whether an organisation meets the ASC recognition criteria is outlined in section 2 of this document.

The recognition criteria used by the ASC are set out in section 4 of this document.

The ASC periodically reviews and may update the recognition criteria and the supporting process to ensure each remains relevant and contemporary.

## Benefits of Recognition

Recognised NSOs are eligible to access a range of benefits. Recognition does not automatically entitle the NSO to receive ASC funding. Recognition does not constitute an endorsement or accreditation of the quality of the organisation's sport programs or its structures, policies or operations.

Recognised NSOs can access the following benefits:

- the right, subject to any directions or guidelines given by the ASC, to refer to the organisation as an NSO recognised by the ASC and, on the organisation's documents and website, to use an ASC logo provided by the ASC in accordance with the ASC's usage guidelines in conjunction with the following supporting text: "The Australian Government through the Australian Sports Commission recognises [name of NSO] to develop [name of sport] in Australia"
- the opportunity to apply to use the Commonwealth Coat of Arms on playing and dress uniforms of Australian representative sports persons and by accompanying officials on their dress uniforms (requests must be made in writing to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet)
- entry in the ASC's online Australian Sports Directory as the recognised NSO for the organisation's sport
- eligibility to apply to the ASC's grant programs available to recognised NSOs (subject to any additional grant eligibility and selection criteria)
- invitations to attend workshops, seminars and other ASC forums conducted for recognised NSOs
- access to recognised NSO services and information from the ASC Partner Portal and the Clearinghouse for Sport.

## 2. Recognition Assessment Process

A sporting organisation must be assessed by the ASC before it may be recognised as an NSO. The purpose of the assessment is to establish whether the organisation satisfies the recognition criteria.

The recognition process is detailed further below and involves:

- (i) application for recognition/renewal of recognition
- (ii) assessment of application.



Recognition is for a defined recognition period determined during the recognition process and specified in the respective recognition agreement. Recognition is not permanent.

Securing recognition status does not mean that the ASC has approved the internal structures or policies of the organisation or takes any responsibility for its operations.

A sporting organisation can operate in Australia without being an ASC-recognised NSO.

## **2.1 Application for Recognition**

### **New applications for recognition**

An organisation must submit an application to the ASC to be considered for recognition. The application must be in the form prescribed by the ASC and must include all necessary evidence to demonstrate satisfaction of the recognition criteria (as set out in section 4).

After receiving the application, the ASC will contact the applicant organisation to outline the process for assessing the application. If further information is required, the ASC will liaise directly with the applicant organisation's designated contact.

All evidence must be submitted electronically as advised by the ASC.

### **Application for renewal of recognition status**

Three months prior to the end of the recognition period specified in recognition agreements, the ASC will notify currently recognised NSOs of the need to reapply for recognition.

Currently recognised NSOs will be asked by the ASC to provide evidence for the renewal of their recognition status. The ASC may exercise discretion to assist currently recognised NSOs in completing their application for renewal.

## **2.2 Assessment of Application**

All applications will be reviewed by the ASC and assessed against the recognition criteria. Assessments will be conducted by a panel of assessors, with expertise from across the ASC.

Following receipt of an application or during the assessment process, the ASC may request additional information in relation to the applicant organisation's compliance with any criteria.

If the ASC is satisfied that the applicant meets all of recognition criteria 1 to 7, Sport Integrity Australia will be notified by the ASC. Sport Integrity Australia will then assist the applicant to adopt the required integrity and anti-doping policies and education plans necessary to meet recognition criterion 8. Applicants will not be eligible to be offered recognition until recognition criterion 8 is met.

### **Discretion**

While the ASC expects applicants for recognition to be able to satisfy each part of all recognition criteria, the ASC may apply its discretion in determining recognition. This may include offering recognition where an organisation can demonstrate substantial compliance with a criterion or determining that an organisation is significantly progressed towards meeting a criterion and is expected to be compliant in the near future. Such discretion will only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

### **Decision**

Once the assessment of the application has been completed, a recommendation will be made to the ASC Executive General Manager responsible for overseeing the NSO recognition process. The recommendation may be that the Executive General Manager:



- (i) approve the application for recognition, or
- (ii) refuse the application for recognition.

The Executive General Manager will make the decision as to recognition in their discretion after considering the recommendation.

## **Approval**

If recognition is approved, the organisation will be notified in writing and granted recognition, subject to executing the ASC recognition agreement setting out the benefits and obligations associated with recognition.

The ASC may publicly announce organisations which are recognised as NSOs.

## **Refusal**

If an application is refused, the ASC will provide written notification to the organisation advising of the refusal and which recognition criterion was not satisfied. The applicant organisation will be granted an opportunity to submit any additional information to the ASC (within a nominated period specified by the ASC) that:

- (i) is relevant for the ASC to consider in connection with the application, or
- (ii) explains how the organisation satisfies the recognition criterion.

Applicant organisations which seek feedback on any decision made under this recognition criteria document may request a meeting with relevant representatives of the ASC. The ASC reserves its discretion to decline to meet with an applicant organisation.

## **2.3 Multiple Sport Organisations**

The ASC will not recognise more than one NSO for a sport. Should two (or more) organisations assert influence within a sport in Australia, the ASC may elect not to recognise one or both or, alternatively, may propose a course of action or structure that allows the sport to operate under one entity that is supported by each of the organisations.

## **2.4 Recognition Review**

From time to time the ASC may elect to review whether a recognised NSO still complies with the recognition criteria or with the obligations under its recognition agreement. The ASC maintains a right under the recognition agreements with NSOs to withdraw recognition at any time, including, but not limited to, circumstances where an organisation is in breach of its recognition agreement.

A recognised NSO is required under its recognition agreement to advise the ASC of any matter that might affect its entitlement to recognition, following which the ASC may initiate a review as to whether to withdraw its recognition.

An organisation that ceases to be recognised as an NSO may re-apply for recognition. Organisations that re-apply are expected to satisfy each part of all recognition criteria. The ASC may also request further information which addresses any known issues relating to an applicant organisation (such as the reasons for withdrawal of past recognition).

## **3. Review of Recognition Criteria**

The recognition criteria against which the eligibility of all NSOs is assessed are designed to assist the ASC to assess whether an organisation is considered the pre-eminent body for the sport they represent in Australia, has sufficient standing within its sport and has adequate governance.



The ASC may update the recognition criteria and the supporting process at any time to ensure each remains relevant and contemporary.

Periodically, an ASC working party reviews the recognition criteria. Such reviews encompass international benchmarking and wide consultation with Commonwealth and State/Territory stakeholders, including the relevant ASC business areas and Commonwealth/State/Territory sporting agencies.

## 4. ASC NSO Recognition Criteria

To be eligible for recognition by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) as a National Sporting Organisation (NSO), an organisation must:

- (i) meet all the following recognition criteria; and
- (ii) provide all requested evidence to aid in substantiating compliance with the recognition criteria.

### CRITERION 1 – SPORT DEFINITION

The described activity of the organisation is a sport.

For the purposes of recognition, a sport is “a human activity capable of achieving a result requiring physical exertion and/or physical skill which, by its nature and organisation, is competitive and is generally accepted as being a sport” and is not prohibited in any way by law within Australia.

### CRITERION 2 – INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

The organisation is recognised as the pre-eminent organisation for the sport in Australia by an International Federation that is a member of the Alliance of Independent Recognised Members of Sport (AIMS), Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF), Association of the International Olympic Winter Federations (AIOWF), Association of IOC Recognised International Sport Federations (ARISF) or the International Paralympic Committee (IPC).

*Note:*

*Where there is no International Federation for the sport, the ASC may in its discretion consider waiving the requirement to comply with this criterion.*

*Where there are two or more International Federations for a sport, the ASC may in its discretion assess which International Federation is the most appropriate to be considered by the ASC for the purposes of this criterion.*

Evidence required:

- a) Confirmation of International Federation membership, such as a certificate from the International Federation or a link to the International Federation’s website
- b) Confirmation of the International Federation’s membership of an association specified in this criterion, such as a certificate from the association or a link to the association’s website



### **CRITERION 3 – SPORT DEVELOPMENT AND ELITE RESPONSIBILITY**

The organisation is the pre-eminent organisation responsible for the development of the sport in Australia and:

- 3.1 can demonstrate it represents all forms of the sport from grassroots/community to high performance
- 3.2 is accountable for the selection or nomination of teams to represent Australia in events recognised by its International Federation
- 3.3 is accountable at the national level for providing its members with sound sports programs, policies and services, and
- 3.4 has a documented strategy for the development of the sport.

Evidence required:

- a) Constitution
- b) Current strategic plan

### **CRITERION 4 – LEGAL ENTITY STATUS**

The organisation has been incorporated for a minimum of three years, has not-for-profit status and is an Australian company limited by guarantee.

Evidence required:

- a) Constitution
- b) Registration certificate/s showing date of incorporation and registration as an Australian company limited by guarantee

### **CRITERION 5 – GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

The organisation:

- 5.1 has sound governance, and has governance policies and practices that are aligned with the ASC Sport Governance Principles and Sport Governance Standards
- 5.2 has complied with applicable requirements under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) to prepare annual financial reports and directors' reports, and
- 5.3 is financially sustainable and remains a going concern.

Evidence required:

- a) Constitution
- b) List of current directors (including director identification numbers)
- c) [Board charter](#)
- d) [Code of conduct](#)
- e) [Risk management policy](#)
- f) Financial reports for the past three reporting periods, that:





- are prepared in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), along with required prescribed notes, directors' declarations and auditors' opinions, or
  - if the organisation is not required to prepare its financial report in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), at a minimum are financial statements comprising at least a profit & loss and balance sheet accompanied by a declaration from its board that:
    - i. the financial statements give a true and fair view of the organisation's financial position as at each period date and of its financial performance for the period ended on that date, and
    - ii. there are reasonable grounds to believe the organisation will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable
- g) Directors' reports for the past three reporting periods (if required under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth))

## **CRITERION 6 – NATIONAL REACH**

The organisation can demonstrate it has a national reach, with active members or affiliate bodies collaborating with the organisation for the sport nationally and locally.

Where an organisation has a federated structure, the organisation must achieve a minimum of four State/Territory affiliate bodies. Winter (snow) sport organisations must achieve a minimum of two State/Territory affiliate bodies from Victoria, New South Wales or the Australian Capital Territory.

*or*

Where an organisation operates in a national model of governance (unitary, hybrid), the organisation must demonstrate conduct, control and management in a minimum of four States/Territories. Winter (snow) sport organisations must demonstrate conduct, control and management in a minimum of two of Victoria, New South Wales or the Australian Capital Territory.

### Evidence required:

- a) Constitution
- b) Description of the membership structure
- c) Description of key activities delivered by or on behalf of the organisation in each State/Territory, via a calendar or otherwise

## **CRITERION 7 - MEMBERSHIP**

The organisation and/or its affiliate bodies has in total a minimum of 1,000 active members (exception being current Olympic or Paralympic sports) and has a system in place to register and maintain member details (including but not limited to name, date of birth, gender, email and postal addresses).

The ASC defines an active member as an individual athlete competitor, coach, official or volunteer who is registered with the organisation directly or with affiliate bodies.

### Evidence required:

- a) Confirmation your organisation and/or its affiliate bodies uses a database or platform to register and maintain member details



- b) Membership snapshot report including a breakdown of membership numbers by State and Territory for the last annual reporting period

*Note: When uploading the membership snapshot report, please **do not include any personal/identifying information** about your members. Only include total numbers and a breakdown by State and/or Territory. Where possible, also include relative numbers by gender, CALD and First Nations by State and/or Territory and nationally.*

## CRITERION 8 - INTEGRITY

The organisation is accountable at the national level for establishing, maintaining and enforcing the key policies and connected education plans that underpin integrity in their sport and apply to all levels, including:

- 8.1 adopt, implement and enforce national integrity policies, which meet or exceed the standards set by Sport Integrity Australia, which address:
- member protection
  - safeguarding children and young people
  - improper use of drugs and medicine
  - competition manipulation and sports gambling, and
  - complaints, disputes and discipline
- 8.2 adopt, implement and enforce an anti-doping policy, approved by Sport Integrity Australia, that complies with the World Anti-Doping Code, the National Anti-Doping (NAD) Scheme and applicable International Federation anti-doping requirements
- 8.3 adopt and implement an integrity education plan endorsed by Sport Integrity Australia, and
- 8.4 adopt and implement an anti-doping education plan approved by Sport Integrity Australia.

*Note: After all other recognition criteria are met and Sport Integrity Australia is notified by the ASC, Sport Integrity Australia will assist you to adopt the required integrity and anti-doping policies and education plans.*

### Evidence required:

Confirmation from Sport Integrity Australia of:

- a) National integrity policies, which meet or exceed the standards set by Sport Integrity Australia, which address the areas of member protection, safeguarding children and young people, improper use of drugs and medicine, competition manipulation and sports gambling, and complaints, disputes and discipline
- b) An anti-doping policy approved by Sport Integrity Australia, that complies with the World Anti-Doping Code, the National Anti-Doping (NAD) Scheme and applicable International Federation anti-doping requirements
- c) An integrity education plan endorsed by Sport Integrity Australia which sets out required and recommended education for persons bound by the national integrity policies
- d) An anti-doping education plan approved by Sport Integrity Australia which complies with the World Anti-Doping Code International Standard for Education and Sport Integrity Australia requirements on required and recommended education for individuals
- e) Evidence that the required education plans have been implemented



Note:

*Requirements as to the adoption of national integrity policies can be met by adopting the Sport Integrity Australia developed National Integrity Framework or by adopting policies which otherwise meet or exceed the Sport Integrity Australia Integrity Policy Standards.*

*The Australian National Anti-Doping Policy is the national anti-doping policy approved by Sport Integrity Australia for adoption by Australian NSOs that are not a direct signatory to the World Anti-Doping Code.*

*Education plan requirements can be met through a single combined education plan for integrity and anti-doping or two separate education plans.*

*Evidence of implementation of the required education plans may include evidence of completions of required online learning, evidence of coordination of relevant face to face sessions and evidence of resource promotion across all levels of the sport.*

## NOTE

The ASC may request additional evidence where such evidence is required to substantiate compliance with any recognition criteria.

While the ASC expects applicants for recognition to be able to satisfy each part of all recognition criteria, the ASC may apply its discretion in determining recognition. This may include offering recognition where an organisation can demonstrate substantial compliance with a criterion or determining that an organisation is significantly progressed towards meeting a criterion and is expected to be compliant in the near future. Such discretion will only be applied in exceptional circumstances.



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