

CANOE RACING NEW ZEALAND – 2020-2030 STRATEGY UPDATE AND CONSULTATION PAPER



PART 1 – BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Our Sport

CRNZ's community is currently small. We have 13 affiliated clubs with a combined total membership of just over 1000. Our largest annual CRNZ event is the Sprint National Champs, which this year received 320 entries. Events on the national ocean ski series typically receive some 60-120 entries.

On the other hand, New Zealanders are interested in participating in paddle sports. The SportNZ Active Survey (2017) showed that large numbers of Kiwis paddle kayaks and participate in watersports generally (448,000 adults participated in kayaking in 2017). The vast majority of these people participate in an unstructured, informal way.

Our Organization

CRNZ's objects are contained in clause 2 of our Constitution. Key aims set out include:

- To promote canoe racing primarily for the recreation and enjoyment of the public
- To support and assist member clubs to deliver canoe racing in NZ, and seek membership
- To promote and develop opportunities, programs and facilities to enable, encourage and enhance the participation, enjoyment and performance in canoe racing in NZ
- To run a high performance program
- To establish, promote and stage regattas
- To foster and develop links with other national sports federations and government agencies to promote our interests
- To encourage and promote canoe racing as an activity that promotes the health and safety of all participants.

Our Members – What You Have Told Us

In May 2019 we surveyed our clubs and members to find out where our community would like to see our sport in 2025-2030. The main themes in the responses were a desire for us to build our sport at the grassroots level and to broaden our focus beyond high performance sprint kayaking. In particular, our members told us they would like to see:

- More numbers participating (variously in races, at clubs or in absolute terms).
- More inclusion and diversity in terms of age, gender and ethnicity.
- CRNZ working with other paddlesports.
- Continued international success (and more success for other disciplines and male paddlers).
- A range of successful events, with a greater number of volunteers, clubs and supporters.
- An active secondary schools paddling scene.
- A much greater focus on surfski.
- A sport that contributes to the wellbeing of our people and community.
- Kayaking becoming a high profile NZ sport with a positive public profile.
- CRNZ becoming financially sustainable, with a funding model that supports development of all disciplines and levels of our sport.
- More sharing and access to the knowledge, skills and experience developed by the organisation.
- Increased depth in coaching.

Our Challenges – a Catch-22

It is currently difficult to promote participation in paddling because we have little money to spend in this area – the vast majority of our funding is tagged to high performance. It is difficult to get funding because we have so few participants – SportNZ requires high participant numbers to access community sport funding, and sponsors will generally only spend money to access a large audience. This creates a catch-22. A number of other paddlesports face similar issues.

We believe we need to do something different in order to build numbers and funding. More funding will enable us to service our community better. More numbers will create a more vibrant community, more exciting events, more volunteers and a healthier paddlesports industry.

Our Context – Changing Landscape of Sport in NZ

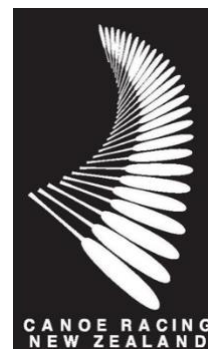
SportNZ makes a number of recommendations as to how sports can keep up with changing times and make sure that offerings cater to people's needs. Some key findings/recommendations that we should reflect in our strategy are:

- sports should create a variety of sport offerings to cater to changing lifestyles and time pressure;
- early specialisation is undesirable and may not lead either to top performance or future wellbeing;
- sports should better communicate opportunities to young people through apps and social media. Smartphones should be the primary source of information, enrolment for opportunities and can provide new ways of experiencing sport;
- organisations should work together (sport-sport; sport-schools; clubs-schools etc) to create opportunities;
- fun, time with friends, fitness/health/wellbeing and learning new skills are the main motivators to participate (the weighting varies depending on age);
- lack of time, energy, motivation, safety and/or lack of opportunity to participate are the main barriers.

PART 2 – DRAFT STRATEGIC DIRECTION

We propose a new strategic direction to promote participation in paddling. We believe this responds to the wishes of our members and fulfils our responsibilities as set out in CRNZ’s Constitution. It will also help us to become a more sustainable organisation, less reliant on HPSNZ funding.

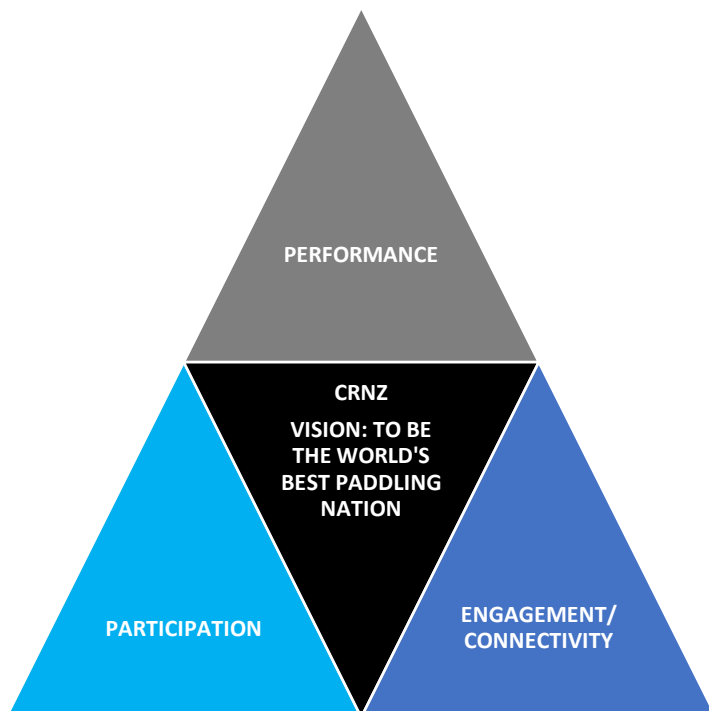
We believe that we can continue to do what we currently do well (that is, high performance sprint kayaking, and running great sprint kayaking events in NZ), but also build a strong, vibrant sport. In order to do this, we are proposing a new strategy with three pillars: Performance, Participation and Engagement/Connectivity.



The ideas set out here are all in draft form – we want to get your feedback before moving forward.

The reasons for selecting the new strategic pillars are, in short:

- **Performance** – HP has been CRNZ’s core business and currently accounts for ~90% of our funding. A strong performance program provides aspiration and inspiration. Rather than splitting this into HP, HPAD and Clubs, we should aim for a single, aligned system from Clubs to HP.
- **Participation** – this pillar is aimed at getting new paddlers, coaches and volunteers into the sport, and ensuring we have scalable systems and structures in place as the sport grows.
- **Engagement/Connectivity** – engaging Kiwis (both the many thousands who already paddle and those who just take an interest in our sport) is important for our success and sustainability. Technology will open up new ways to connect with, follow and participate in paddling.



NEW PILLARS EXPLAINED		
PERFORMANCE	PARTICIPATION	ENGAGEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY
Consistently produce World-class paddlers in all disciplines.	A large, diverse community of paddlers, coaches and volunteers, participating for fun, wellbeing and competition.	Connect Kiwis with our sport and build a more engaged community through communications and technology.
Key focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster excellence in coaching • Give our athletes and coaches the support they need • World-class training environments • Capture our IP to create a New Zealand approach to performance • Support club performance programs as the breeding-grounds of our future performance paddlers 	Key focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce paddling to intermediate and secondary schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AIMS Games ○ New Secondary Schools format and events • Programs and resources to introduce new paddlers to our sport • Build a coach and instructor development framework 	Key focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect paddlers via a digital platform – creating new, innovative ways to communicate, learn and participate • Build our sport’s profile in NZ through media and communications. • Collaborate with other paddlesports to build a stronger paddling community and more crossover/synergies between paddlesports/disciplines

We’d love to know what you think of these ideas. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact Tom Ashley (CEO – tom.ashley@canoeracing.org.nz) or Karen Simpson (Sport Development Manager – karen.simpson@canoeracing.org.nz).

We hope to finalise our 2020-2025 strategy by the end of the year. Key dates in this process will be:

- October – distribution of info;
- November – receive feedback from community; presentation of draft Performance Strategy to HPSNZ for investment;
- 30 November and 6 December – more detailed presentation of strategic to community at King and Queen of the Harbour (Auckland) and Blue Lake 2 (Rotorua). Invitation for further feedback to be delivered to CRNZ by 20 December.
- February 2020 – presentation of strategy at CRNZ AGM.