



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Aims:** The NZWP high performance strategy can be split across three areas as described below with their own aims.

- (a) **High Performance:** New Zealand Water Polo teams consistently gaining top eight world championship performances and qualifying for the Olympics.
- (b) **High Performance Athlete Development:** An athlete development pathway that identifies talented athletes and consistently prepares them for high performance.
- (c) **Sport/Participation:** An enjoyable and thriving sport, providing a pool of talented athletes and opportunities for those athletes to achieve their goals in water polo.

2. PERFORMANCE AREAS

2.1 The diagram below describes the four areas that are considered across the high performance strategy (System/Programme, Athletes, Coaching and Environment) and how each strategic outcome fits in each category.

2.2

	High Performance	HP Athlete Development	Sport/Participation
System/Programme	<p>Aligned approach as a solid platform for progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarify, refine and document NZWP performance principles. - Place athletes within professional clubs and college programmes. <p>Ensure transparent and consistent processes are in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selection (teams and squads) - Policies and Standard Operating Procedures. <p>Athlete management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to individual performance plans and learning cycle. 	<p>Consistently apply performance principles to ensure that athletes are prepared for a high performance training and competition environment.</p>	<p>Build a programme and Coaching Framework so that athletes are taught/trained using methods that are research-based and consistent with the NZWP performance principles.</p> <p>Utilise school water polo as a feeder to clubs and events.</p> <p>Encourage training and promote/run events that prepare athletes for future success.</p>

Athletes	<p>Targeted, focused support to the right athletes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blend of individualised and systematised support to identified Olympic-potential athletes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systemised support to developing/pathway athletes. - Refine a system to identify and support talent from water polo and other sports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No focus on individual athletes – NZWP delivers service through our system.
Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration – a group of coaches working together (rather than in competition). - Retain and develop high-quality coaches, actively learning and pursuing excellence in coaching. - A high-quality performance analyst supporting the coaching team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use NZWP Sport Director to build alignment through the performance pathway. - Run targeted initiatives to support the development of high-quality coaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build numbers of club/community coaches. We will achieve this by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing coaching and performance resources that club/community coaches can access and use. - Running coach development programmes. - A sustainable system and pathway for coaches.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical environments to enable high -quality training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnering with pool facilities with 25m and 30m pools and adequate depth. - Strong performance culture within NZWP programmes – build a programme that promotes resilience and self-reliance in athletes to improve performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Athletes and coaches have age and stage appropriate performance environments for day to day training. - Expose HPAD athletes to HP environment in preparation for transition through overseas placements. - Develop performance culture through HPAD programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage inclusive and positive water polo environments that enable future success.

3. SYSTEM/PROGRAMME

3.1 Strategic Priority 1: Build an aligned approach as a solid platform for progression.

- (a) NZWP's goal is to set up a system that allows a consistent and collaborative approach to performance in water polo. To achieve this goal we need (a) a set of agreed performance principles, and (b) an aligned group of coaches working together to apply those principles.

3.2 Strategic Priority 1a: Clarify, refine and document NZWP performance principles.

- (a) NZWP requires clarity on what is required to win in water polo. Our team needs to understand the training required to perform at, or progress towards, world's best. We will work to document this IP to (a) consistently apply the performance principles across the NZWP pathway so that athletes come to the programme prepared for high performance training and competition and (b) create resources for New Zealand clubs and coaches.

4. ATHLETES

4.1 **Strategic Priority 2:** Blend of individualised and systemised support to current cycle Olympic potential athletes.

- (a) NZWP will aim to deliver individualised and systemised support to our Olympic potential athletes through our coaching team and support services. This may include placing athletes within top level professional clubs and/or colleges.
- (b) NZWP has a dual approach (centralised and decentralised) to high performance athlete development:
 - (i) Centralised: NZWP will integrate high performance athlete development athletes into our centralised performance programmes. These programmes will operate in main centres across New Zealand and provide a more consistent daily training environment.
 - (ii) Decentralised: With an established NZWP coaching group, NZWP will lead a development programme that brings together the best young water polo athletes in New Zealand for training camps to better prepare athletes for the demands of the high performance environment.

4.2 **Strategic Priority 2a:** Systemised support to developing/pathway athletes.

- (a) Support to athletes at the start of our pathway will be delivered through our high performance athlete development system. NZWP coaches will run training camps and work alongside club coaches to ensure that athletes have an integrated training plan.

5. COACHING

5.1 **Strategic Priority 3:** Clarify, refine and document the NZWP performance principles.

5.2 **Strategic Priority 3a:** Retain and develop our key current NZWP coaches.

- (a) NZWP requires a high standard of coaching at both high performance and high performance athlete development level. We currently employ multiple part-time to casual basis coaches. These coaches have gained experience through coaching at the national level and exposure to world cup and world championship competitions.

5.3 **Strategic Priority 3b:** Recruit a high quality performance analyst to support the coaching team.

- (a) Our coaching team currently performs their own analysis with limited time and resources. Sourcing and retaining a high quality and water polo specific performance analyst would greatly benefit the coaching team's ability to analyse and systematize athlete performance. It is important that we capture IP to inform strategic priority 1a.

6. ENVIRONMENT

6.1 **Strategic Priority 4:** Domestic training environments.

- (a) NZWP intends to form partnerships with pools in the main centres to secure reliable training space. We are working to build out our training programmes and to offer coaching/performance support resource for a growing number of athletes.
- (b) NZWP aims to use pools for training that are relevant to the international dimensions used in water polo games.
- (c) NZWP encourages athletes at high performance and high performance athlete development level to train at a NZWP hub in order to (a) create the opportunity for our best athletes to train together and (b) maximise the support that we can provide our athletes.