Shooting Australia Athlete Categorisation Frequently Asked Questions

Updated October 2026

1. WHAT IS CATEGORISATION AND WHO DETERMINES THE ATHLETES THAT ARE CATEGORISED?

The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) uses the National Athlete Categorisation Policy and Framework to provide a clear and consistent basis, both within sports and across the Sport System, to:

- Identify athletes with the greatest potential to contribute to Australia's performance targets at the Olympic and Paralympic Games (i.e. Pinnacle Events);
- Inform the prioritisation of Sport System support to these athletes; and
- Track athlete progression based on their performances over time.

The Shooting Australia (SA) Categorisation Panel identifies which athletes should be considered for categorisation and then provides these recommendations to the AIS. The Panel is comprised of:

(i) The SA Chief Executive Officer (Chair of Panel);
(ii) SA's Shotgun Program Manager;
(iii) SA's Precision Program Manager;
(iv) National Institute Network (NIN) Representatives (e.g. VIS); and
(v) AIS Representative (Independent Observer).

2. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING CATEGORISED?

Depending on the level of Categorisation, athletes may receive

- direct funding through SA's Categorised Athlete Support (CAS) scheme,
- performance support from the NIN
- priority consideration for selection to National Teams based on their individual performance plans (IPP)
- close support from the SA High Performance Program staff; and
- invitations to participate in other program activities or initiatives.

3. WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF CATEGORISED ATHLETES?

Athletes who are identified for, and accept Categorisation, are expected to:

- Sign an SA Athlete Agreement and continue to meet the requirements as detailed in the Agreement;
- Work closely with SA's High Performance Program staff to develop an IPP;
- Maintain regular dialogue with the SA High Performance Team and relevant NIN performance support staff;
- Fully engage in all National Squad and Team camps, competitions and other activities, unless exceptional circumstances prevent this;
- Advocate for SA's 'Win Well' program and commit to a performance lifestyle that enables success on and off the range and reflects elite athlete status;
- Demonstrate the values of SA, and the Olympic and Paralympic spirit.

4. HOW ARE THE INDICATIVE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS DERIVED AND HOW INFLUENTIAL IS THIS IN DETERMINING CATEGORISATION?

Indicative Performance Standards (IPS) have been calculated using qualification results from World Cups, World Championships and the Olympic and Paralympic Games over the past two years.

For example, in Shotgun, the IPS' reflect the averages of the qualification scores for the following positions by Categorisation level:

- Podium and Podium Ready – 8th place (using Olympic Games and World Championships data only);
- Podium Potential – 8th place;
- Developing – 20th place;
- Emerging – 30th place, etc.

IPS' may be reviewed and updated each year at the conclusion of the international competition season.

IPS' are intended to help illustrate the progression that SA/the AIS expects to see from categorised athletes as they develop themselves and progress through the levels of Categorisation.

They are one of the factors that the Categorisation Panel will consider when determining whether an athlete should be nominated to the AIS for Categorisation and at what level.

5. WHAT PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE DATA IS USED TO DETERMINE AN ATHLETE'S ELIGBILITY FOR CATEGORISATION? ARE DOMETISTIC PERFORMANCES TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION?

Progression in an athlete's Average Performance Score (APS) - by itself and when compared with IPS' - is another important factor that the Panel will consider when determining if that athlete should be nominated for Categorisation.

For Categorisation in 2027, each athlete's APS will be determined by calculating the average of their best three qualification scores in the same event, taken from both domestic and international competitions since 1 January 2025. Current APS results are available on SA's website.

6. IF I AM CATEGORISED, HOW LONG WILL I REMAIN CATEGORISED FOR?

The term of Categorisation will be 12 or 24 months and will be determined by the Categorisation Panel. In most cases, athletes that meet all criteria will be categorised for 24 months, However, in some circumstances where athletes do not completely meet the criteria, they might only be categorised for 12 months and then reviewed at the next Panel meeting (i.e. 12 months – November 2026), including a possible change to the athlete's categorisation level or status.

7. HOW DOES CATEGORISATION LINK TO THE SA NATIONAL SQUAD?

From 2026, the members of SA's National Squad will include any athletes that meet the criteria for any of the categories within Shooting's National Athlete Categorisation Framework. These include:

- The 5 categories recognised by the AIS and national institute network (NIN):
  - Podium;
  - Podium Ready;
  - Podium Potential;
  - Developing;
  - Emerging; and

- The two categories recognised by SA but NOT the AIS/NIN, which are:
  - Representative; and
  - Future Emerging.

8. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CATEOGIRES THAT ARE RECOGNISED BY THE AIS/NIN AND THE CATEOGIRES THAT ARE ONLY RECOGNISED BY SA?

Only athletes identified in the AIS-recognised categories (i.e. Podium, Podium Ready, Podium Potential, Developing, Emerging) are eligible to receive:

- Direct funding through SA's CAS scheme;
- Performance support from the NIN;
- Priority consideration for selection to National Teams based on their IPPs.

Athletes identified in the SA-recognised categories (Representative and Future Emerging) may be invited to participate in SA High Performance Program activities including national camps. Representative categorised athletes will also be included in communication relating to the LA 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games campaigns.

9. DO I NEED TO APPLY TO BE CONSIDERED FOR CATEGORISATION?

No, athletes do not apply to be considered for Categorisation. Athletes who regularly compete in SA-endorsed domestic events, have an APS, and meet the eligibility criteria in clause 4 of the Athlete Categorisation Policy 2026-2028 can be considered for Categorisation.

10. IF I HAVE NOT COMPETED INTERNATIONALLY IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, BUT HAVE BEEN COMPETING IN SA ENDORSED DOMESTIC EVENTS, DO I STILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE CONSIDERED FOR CATEGORISATION?

Yes, but only in the Representative, Emerging or Future Emerging categories (i.e. depending on your age and stage of development).

11. IF I AM A JUNIOR ATHLETE, DO I STILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE CONSIDERED FOR CATEGORISATION?

Yes, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria. The Emerging and Future Emerging categories are primarily focused on junior athletes; however, there is nothing preventing a junior athlete from being considered for Developing or higher if they meet the required criteria for these levels.

12. IF I DO NOT SHOOT AN OLYMPIC OR PARALYMPIC DISCIPLINE, CAN I BE CONSIDERED FOR CATEGORISATION?

No, but if you are interested in shooting an Olympic or Paralympic discipline, we recommend you visit the club/range closest to you that offers your preferred ISSF or WSPS discipline. The SA Domestic Endorsed Event Series is also a great opportunity to get involved.

13. IF I AM CATEGORISED, DOES THAT MEAN I WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE SELECTED TO NATIONAL TEAMS FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS INCLUDING WORLD CUPS AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS?

Selection is not automatic; however, priority consideration will be given to the selection of categorised athletes to National Teams based on each athlete's Individual Performance Plan (IPP). For further details about National Team selection, athletes must refer to the relevant Competition Selection Criteria.

14. IF I AM NOT CATEGORISED, CAN I STILL BE CONSIDERED FOR SELECTION TO NATIONAL TEAMS FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION (E.G.: WORLD CUPS AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS)?

Yes, in accordance with the relevant SA Competition Selection Criteria available on the SA website.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

APS (link to website)

Selection Criteria (link to website)

Categorisation Policy (link to website)

Flowcharts (link to website)

Shooting Australia Athlete Categorisation Frequently Asked Questions

Updated October 2026