

# **Swimming New Zealand**

## **Athlete Leadership Group Terms of Reference**

### **1. Purpose**

The Swimming New Zealand (SNZ) Athlete Leadership Group (ALG) aims to provide a platform to communicate between High Performance (HP) athletes and SNZ leadership, contribute to key decision-making, and enhance athlete perspective into governance, policy, and HP strategy planning. The group will advocate for a positive, inclusive, and athlete-focused environment aligned with SNZ HP outcomes.

### **2. Objectives**

The key objectives of the ALG are to:

- Represent the interests, concerns and experiences of HP and other senior and upcoming SNZ athletes. This may expand to encompass younger swimmers in future.
- Provide real time feedback for continual improvement in performance, development pathways, and athlete wellbeing.
- Provide an athlete voice for SNZ HP management.
- Advocate for athlete safeguarding, equity, fairness and transparency in decision-making.
- Collaborate with SNZ on policies, competitions, culture/legacy, staffing, uniform (including togs, race suits and other swim related gear), preparation camps and long-term strategies.

### **3. Membership**

#### **Composition:**

- The ALG will consist of 5-8 athlete representatives. Consisting of:
  - A minimum of 1 Para athlete;
  - A minimum of 2 male athletes;
  - A minimum of 2 female athletes;
  - A maximum of 2 recent retirees.
    - A recent retiree relates to athletes retired in the last 4 years.
- Members will be selected to ensure diverse representation across disciplines, genders, with a minimum age of 18-years-old, and have competed internationally at Pinnacle Events.
  - The above composition requirements do not prohibit members of the ALG from consulting with other active swimming athletes across all ages and experience levels for their thoughts and opinions on various matters.

#### **Selection Process:**

- Initial members have been nominated/appointed by SNZ HP management to form this group, noting the importance an athlete voice mechanism.
- Further nominations or expressions of interest will be accepted from SNZ-affiliated athletes for remaining members.
- A selection panel (including SNZ HP team representatives and ALG) will appoint new members.

### **Leadership:**

- A Chairperson will be elected by the group to organise, lead meetings, and liaise with SNZ.
- A Deputy Chairperson will be appointed to act on behalf of the Chairperson in their absence.

### **Membership Term and Cessation:**

- Members will serve a 2-year term, with staggered appointments for continuity. Members may serve a maximum of 3 terms.
  - Previous ALG members may be consulted by current ALG members for advice on various matters.
- A member may resign at any time by providing written notice to the chair and deputy chair of the ALG.
- Should a member represent the interests of the ALG without expressed approval from the group, or act in such a way that negates the values and morals of the ALG, their membership will be brought into question and appropriate disciplinary action agreed upon amongst the other members.
- A member may resign at any time on written notice to ALG Chair.
- In extreme circumstances the ALG may remove a member via unanimous vote.

### **4. Responsibilities and Principles of Engagement**

- To act as a conduit for athlete feedback and concerns.
- To operate in a collaborative and candid way with SNZ HP leadership.
- To be respectful, transparent, and trustworthy.
- To work with integrity, uphold confidentiality, and professionalism.
- SNZ HP leadership and the ALG agree to have an environment where the two groups can work without fear of consequence.
- Attend and actively participate in meetings amongst the group and with SNZ.
- Proactively engage with the broader athlete community, being accessible and visible to gather insights.
- Respond to any email queries received by the ALG group email ([athletes@swimming.org.nz](mailto:athletes@swimming.org.nz)) in a timely and professional manner, after discussion and agreement amongst the group as to a response and/or course of action.

### **5. Meetings**

- **Frequency and format:**
  - The ALG will meet with SNZ HP representatives on a monthly basis to discuss current matters.
  - The ALG will meet quarterly, with additional meetings as required.
  - The ALG will meet with SNZ CEO and SNZ Board as needed.
  - The Chair will set the agenda and advise SNZ HP staff for their additional agenda items.
  - For meetings with SNZ HP leadership, minutes will be documented by SNZ HP leadership.
  - For meetings with ALG, the Deputy Chairperson/Chairperson will take minutes and any other relevant notes.
  - Meetings will be held either in person or online.

## **6. Accountability & Reporting**

- ALG representatives may be invited to present at SNZ meetings or events.

## **7. Resources & Support**

- SNZ will provide administrative and logistical support to facilitate meetings and communications.
- Training in leadership, advocacy, and governance may be offered to members.
- Reasonable costs associated with travel for meetings may be covered by SNZ.
- Actively engage with the Athlete Leadership Network.

## **8. Review & Amendments**

- The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually each year, to ensure alignment with SNZ's objectives and athlete needs.
- Amendments may be made following consultation with ALG members and SNZ leadership.

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This Terms of Reference establishes a formal framework for the Swimming New Zealand Athlete Leadership Group, ensuring athletes have a meaningful role in shaping the future of the sport.

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