



Event Organisation Guide Section 7: Para-cycling



INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Conducting an AusCycling standard event means making a commitment to safety, quality standards and regulations. This booklet is designed will help support event organisers to be inclusive of riders of different abilities and provide practical guidelines for inclusions.

Throughout this document we refer to para-cyclists which has been the nomenclature used in traditional road and track definitions and is likely the most dominant form. This document will use the term para-cyclist in it's broadest sense to include defined para- cycling categories, Adaptive MTB, Transplant Recipients, individuals who have an Intellectual Impairment and those who are deaf. For the purposes of this document when referring to this group we will use the term "para-cycling".

This term evolved from the Paralympic (with the etymology of the Paralympic being 'para' - besides, or alongside and Olympic. This document doesn't set out to create an environment where para-athletes participate in parallel competitions, but to find ways where we can have integrated participation.

This booklet should be read in conjunction with the respective AusCycling discipline organiser guides.



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SECTION 1

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATION FOR PROVIDING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT



Consideration in Communication

Creating events that are inviting for all starts before a rider participates. How the event is described and promoted should all be considered when making an inclusive event.

- Include a statement in event publicity or websites etc. such as 'The [name of event or organisers] welcome entries from all categories of cyclist.'
- Ensure para-cyclists are represented in imagery used to promote the event.
- Encourage para-cyclist to contact you in advance to discuss their participation.
- Do not tell para-cyclists that they are not eligible to participate without consideration of what reasonable adjustments would enable their participation.
- Ensure any language used to describe para-cyclists is respectful and appropriate. Language is continually evolving but what really matters is that language is acceptable to the individual or group concerned. If unsure, ask the participant how they would prefer to be addressed.
- Provide diagrams and/or written pre-race information for participants who are deaf.

Access to Facilities

There is more to inclusion than enabling participation. Some riders may have requirements which, when considered, are typically easy to accommodate and enable better participation.

Undertake a review of the accessibility of facilities including car parking, toilets, changing facilities, access to buildings, signage and other facilities. Consider accessibility for athletes, coaches, officials and spectators during the review.

Ensure there are wide parking bays available to enable riders to get in/out of their car. If parking is on grassed areas, ensure that there is designated disabled parking as close as practicable to pathways.

Ensure registration tents and other facilities are located on an accessible surfaces; avoid surfaces such as mud or soft ground.

Ensure wheelchair accessible toilets are available, open and no key collection is required to access them.

Ensure the awards stage is accessible e.g. ramps to access stages.

In cases where location constraints may make it difficult to meet the needs of some para-cyclists (eg a club road race that hires a hall from the local council which does not have accessible facilities), the organiser should communicate this information as part of the race information.

Provide guidance to appropriate start times for all participants as well as estimates for finishing times (para-athletes and able-bodied) to ensure slower athletes are not jostled by faster athletes coming from behind.

SECTION 2

CATEGORIES OF PARA-CYCLISTS



Under the broad definition of Para-cyclists, AusCycling recognises the categories of:

- **Para-cycling:** individuals with a physical impairment as categorised by the UCI (Road Track all classifications; BMX and Cyclo-cross in some cases)
- **Deaf:** individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired as defined by Deaf Sport Australia
- **Transplant:** individuals who are transplant recipients, who are eligible to compete in the World Transplant Games (solid organ or bone marrow recipients)
- **Intellectual Impairment:** Individuals who have an Intellectual Impairment as classified by Virtus.
- **Adaptive Mountain Bike:** individuals with a physical impairment as categorised by the Breaking the Boundary Guide (Mountain Bike only).

Para-Cycling Categories Explained

Categories for individuals with a physical impairment, as defined by the International Cycling Union (UCI).

These categories are represented as:

- The first letter stands for the gender (M for men, W for women).
- Subsequent letters stand for the sport division (as explained below).
- The final number is the class in that division - with the lower the number, the greater the degree of impairment.

Therefore, WH3 stands for the class Women's Handcycle 3.

Class C (1-5)

Individuals with a physical impairment that disadvantages them in competition with able-bodied Individuals but still compete using a "standard bicycle".

Class H (1-5)

Individuals with a lower limb impairment that necessitates use of a hand-operated cycle. There are five classes of hand cycling.

Class T (1 & 2)

Individuals with an impairment which affects their balance. They compete with a three-wheeled cycle called a tricycle - three wheels providing more balance than a standard two-wheeled cycle.

Class B

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired. They compete using a two-person cycle known as a tandem, with a sighted “pilot” in the front seat. The vision impaired rider is often referred to as a stoker. Under UCI rules, a professional cyclist must not be active for 24 months in any UCI classified road event to apply as a para-cycling pilot.

Further Information:

- [UCI Guide to Para-Cycling Categories](#) (video)
- [Para-cycling road classification](#)
- [Para-cycling track classification](#)

Intellectual Impairmen**Class I (1 & 2)**

Individuals with an intellectual impairment and have been classified by AUSRAPID. Individuals in Class I may compete on a standard bicycle.

Deaf**Class AU (1 & 2)**

Individuals with a hearing impairment and have been classified by Deaf Sports Australia. Individuals in Class AU may compete using a standard bicycle.

Transplant**Class TP**

Individuals who are transplant recipients, who are eligible to compete in the World Transplant Games (solid organ or bone marrow recipients).

Adaptive Mountain Bike

Adaptive Mountain Biking (aMTB), sometimes referred to as “off-road para-cycling”, encompasses a broad range of riders who typically cannot ride a standard mountain bike and require adapted equipment and trails to suit their physical, intellectual, neurological and sensory abilities.

There are varying adaptive mountain bikes available around the world, each designed to meet a rider’s specific need. Many of these bikes are being made in electric assist models. These categories are:

Hand-cycles

- Recumbent
- Kneeling
- Upright

Leg Cycles

- Recumbent Trike
- Tricycle

Tandem

- Bike
- Recumbent Leg Bike
- Recumbent Hand-cycle
- Hand and Leg Combo

Gravity

- Quad
- Bucket Bike

Other

- Hand/Leg Mode
- Aids and Prosthetics
- Electric Assist

Most events conduct an Adaptive Mountain Bike category as a single integrated race category.

SECTION 3**INCLUSION SPECTRUM**

Para-cycling participation in sport can come in various forms. Broadly these can be separated into:

No Modifications: Where a para participant is able to participate competition that has not been modified at all (e.g. A WC5 racing in the National Road Series)

Minor Modifications: Where a para-cyclist can participate in competition with only minor modifications made to the format (e.g. an Adaptive Mountain Biker taking part in a Gravity Enduro Event where they only need to complete certain stages)

Major Modifications: Where the event is significantly modified to allow for a participant (e.g. providing B Lines around the difficult features in a cyclo-cross event).

Primarily for para-cyclists: To provide a better event experience the field is supplemented with able bodied riders using para equipment - typically handcycles or tandems (e.g. a dedicated handcycling Criterium which features able bodied riders riding handcycles).

Only for para-cyclists: Events which are exclusively for para-cyclists (e.g. a National Championships.)

Separated Competition

Like cycling competitions there rarely enough participants in the various subcategories to offer quality standalone grades in many of the para-cyclists categories – a mass start race between two riders of vastly different abilities is rarely enjoyable for either party. As such, separated competition is rarely the best answer, particularly at club and state/territory level. Importantly, like any other participant, para-cyclists want to be part of the sport and the greater community.

Integration of Para Cyclists

When considering mixing competition organisers should work towards solutions to include para-cyclists. The following section is designed to help organisers integrate para-cyclists into able body competition. It is important to note that the advice provided here is general, and the riders requirements and abilities of the riders should always be respected and prioritised.

While some riders will be able to integrate into able-bodied competition with no modification and race regularly at club and state/territory level immediately other riders may require separate competition or specific modifications. Open and respectful conversations need undertaken between riders, coaches, and their support networks, and clubs.

Hand-Cyclists (H1-H5)

Discipline	Race Formats	Level of Competition	Considerations	AC Course Approval Required
Road	Road, TT	National/ State/Territory Championships	Hand-cyclists should be a recognised category in State/Territory and National Championships event for both Time Trials and Road Races. State and Territory Championships may combine the Tandem cyclists with an appropriate age category with placings awarded separately.	Yes
Road	Graded Scratch Race, Handicap, TT	Bronze, Silver	Hand-cyclists can participate in most road events. Considerations should be made for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corner Radii • Maximum/minimum gradient • Bunch Size and experience • Technicalities 	Yes
	Criteriums	Bronze/Silver	Criteriums can be slightly harder to integrate hand-cyclist particularly in larger events where there can be multiple large bunches on the course at once or when the course is considered technical. Common considerations to include are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bunch Size and experience • Number of bunches • Size of the circuit • Technicalities 	Yes
Track	Time Trials Only on outdoor velodromes	Bronze	It is advised that hand-cyclists do not take part in bunch races. They can do timed events on some outdoor tracks where the banking is appropriate. Integrated categories can be offered for these races.	No
Cyclo-cross	All	All	Hand-cyclists should be a recognised category in State/Territory and National Championships event for Cyclo-cross events. All events may integrate para-cyclists with an appropriate age category with placings awarded separately.	No

Tandems (B1-2)				
Discipline (or Sub Discipline)	Race Formats	Level of Competition	Considerations	AC Course Approval Required
Road	Road, TT	National/ State/Territory Championships	Tandems should be a recognised category in State/Territory and National Championships event for both Time Trials and Road Races. State and Territory Championships may combine the Tandem cyclists with an appropriate age category with placings awarded separately.	Yes
Road	Graded Scratch Race, Handicap, TT, Criteriums	Bronze, Silver	Tandems are often integrated into able bodied racing, but consideration should be given to the appropriateness of the event, particularly for criteriums or more technical courses where the dynamics of the tandem bike are different to a shorter wheelbase single bike. Common considerations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corner Raddii • Bunch Size and experience • Technicalities 	Yes
Track	TT Only	Bronze, Silver	Tandem cyclists can be integrated into grades and/or provided with their own dedicated grade. Tandem Racing in bunch races is difficult due to the awareness of required by both the pilot and stoker. Some very experienced stoker/ pilot combinations may be able to participate in some bronze level racing, particularly on outdoor tracks with low numbers of participants.	No
Cyclo-cross	All	All	Tandems should be a recognised category in State/Territory and National Championships event for Cyclo-cross events. All events may integrate para-cyclists with an appropriate age category with placings awarded separately.	No

Tricycle (T1 – T2)				
Discipline	Race Formats	Level of Competition	Considerations	AC Course Approval Required
Road	Road, TT	National/ State/Territory Championships	Trikes should be a recognised category in State/Territory and National Championships event for both Time Trials and Road Races. State and Territory Championships may combine the Tandem cyclists with an appropriate age category with placings awarded separately.	Yes
Road	Graded Scratch Race, Handicap, TT	Bronze	Trikes are permitted to participate in all road events. Consideration should be made to sharp corners on the trike due to the risk of tipping.	No
	Criteriums	Bronze	See above	Yes
Track		Bronze	Trikes should not take part in bunch races on the track, but they are able take part in timed events on some outdoor tracks where the banking is appropriate.	No
Cyclo-cross	All	All	Trikes should be a recognised category in State/Territory and National Championships event for Cyclo-cross events. All events may integrate para-cyclists with an appropriate age category with placings awarded separately.	No

Cyclist (C1-C5)				
Discipline (or Sub Discipline)	Race Formats	Level of Competition	Considerations	AC Course Approval Required
All (except BMX Racing)	All	All	Riders should be eligible for competing in all levels of racing, dependent on their grading. Written or verbal approval from a coach will be required for C1-C3 riders for state/territory and above able body events. See Appendix A Some cyclo-cross courses which require regular dismounting may need modification to allow some C Class riders to participate.	No
BMX	All	All	A C class rider can race a Championship as either age based or as a para-cyclist. They should start in whatever group is most suited to their ability. Medals should be awarded to all categories represented. For BMX, the rider should participate in their age category and can be prized within their classification.	No
Cyclo-cross	All	All	C class riders should be a recognised category in State/Territory and National Championships event for Cyclo-cross events. All events may integrate para-cyclists with an appropriate age category with placings awarded separately.	

Deaf, Transplant				
Discipline (or Sub Discipline)	Race Formats	Level of Competition	Considerations	AC Course Approval Required
All	All	All	Typically, Deaf and Transplant riders can compete at any level of competition assuming there are grades appropriate to their ability. Some consideration may be required for hearing impaired riders to ensure that they don't miss any key information that may be given orally as part of pre-race briefings e.g., written information	No

Athletes with an Intellectual Impairment				
Discipline (or Sub Discipline)	Race Formats	Level of Competition	Considerations	AC Course Approval Required
All	All	All	Eligible for Club Level integration	
State/Territory Championships	All		An AI class rider can race a Championship as either age based or as an AI Class Rider. They should start in whatever group is most suited to their ability. Medals should be awarded to all categories represented. For BMX the rider should participate in their age category and can be prized separately.	No

Adaptive Mountain Bike				
Discipline	Race Formats	Level of Competition	Considerations	AC Course Approval Required
XC		Bronze, Silver	Every rider will have different requirements and abilities and will be able to tackle different technical features. Distances should generally be kept between 6km and 20km, and consideration for appropriate B (or even C) lines around technical features.	Yes
DH		Bronze, Silver	Like all downhill bike racing, adaptive DH requires a high level of skill and appropriate equipment. Only suitably experienced and prepared riders should participate.	Yes
GE		Bronze, Silver	Assuming the trails are appropriate, appropriately skilled adaptive riders should be able to be included in many GE events. Some riders may need to be provided opportunity to skip some stages, or shuttles could be offered to enable better participation opportunities.	Yes
All		National/State Championships	At the time of writing, the adaptive categories are treated as one for National and State Championships. As the popularity of these disciplines increase we would also expect to see the category to be broken up into sub-categories.	Yes

Recognition of Achievement

In integrated competition, para cyclists should be eligible for the category they are competing, along with having their performance recognised against their category peers when relevant.

Examples:

- A C class para-cyclist being eligible for medals in their master's Championships and their category at a State/Territory championship where their event is held on the same day, on the same course. If both races are being conducted at the same time consideration must be made on if this is possible for road races.
- In a combined event listing the sub-category next to the rider's name and club (Jane Doe (Norwood CC) WC5)
- Including filters in results for para-cycling results.

Able Bodied participation in Para-Cycling Categories

In order to build field sizes and provide for a more engaging experience for all, it may be advantageous to offer able bodied participants opportunities to compete in para classes. Examples would include – an able-bodied rider competing on a handcycle, or a sighted stoker participating in tandem racing. This is only appropriate at Bronze and some Silver level racing.

SECTION 4 DISTANCES

The following section outlines the details of the maximum distances for road races for para-cyclists. Cyclo-cross distances should be in line with the maximum distances of this discipline.

The maximum allowable distance for criteriums is equal to the maximum road race distance.

Road Races

Sport Class	Maximum
B men	125 km
B women	105 km
C5 men	100 km
C4 men	100 km
C3 men	80 km
C2 men	80 km
C1 men	80 km
C5 women	80 km
C4 women	80 km
C3 women	65 km
C2 women	65 km
C1 women	65 km
T2 men	40 km
T1 men	40 km
T2 women	35 km
T1 women	35 km
H5 men	80 km
H4 men	80 km
H3 men	80 km
H2 men	60 km
H1 men	60 km
H5 women	70 km
H4 women	70 km
H3 women	70 km
H2 women	50 km
H1 women	50 km



Time Trials

Sport Class	Maximum
B men	40 km
B women	35 km
C5 men	35 km
C4 men	35 km
C3 men	35 km
C2 men	30 km
C1 men	30 km
C5 women	30 km
C4 women	30 km
C3 women	25 km
C2 women	25 km
C1 women	25 km
T2 men	25 km
T1 men	25 km
T2 women	20 km
T1 women	20 km
H5 men	35 km
H4 men	35 km
H3 men	35 km
H2 men	25 km
H1 men	25 km
H5 women	30 km
H4 women	30 km
H3 women	20 km
H2 women	20 km
H1 women	20 km

Track

Time Trial

Sport Class	Maximum
Tandem men and women - B	1000 m
Cycle men – C5; C4; C3; C2; C1	1000 m
Cycle women – C5; C4; C3; C2; C1	500 m

Individual Pursuit

Sport Class	Maximum
Tandem men – B	4000 m
Cycle men – C5; C4	4000 m
Cycle men – C3; C2; C1	3000 m
Tandem women – B	3000 m
Cycle women – C5; C4; C3; C2; C1	3000 m

Scratch Race

Sport Class	Maximum
Men Cycle – C5; C4; C3; C2, C1	15 km
Women Cycle – C5; C4; C3; C2, C1	10 km

Para Omnium

Para Omnium is composed of four (4) events: Flying 200m, 1km/500m, Pursuit, Scratch.

Transplant/IA/Deaf

As per equivalent masters age group or WMAS1 and MMAS1 for riders under 30. Note these are maximums, and particularly for mass start races it is not necessary to reach these distances if there are smaller bunch sizes.

SECTION 5

COURSE CONSIDERATIONS



One of the things that makes cycling special is that every event has the opportunity to be different and unique. From trail choice to race format, field size to infrastructure – these are all things which have an ability to change the race day experience of all those involved. This means it is very difficult to have a one size fits all for rulebook for para inclusion. The following are not an exhaustive list but aim to help race organizers plan their course with respect to inclusion:

- Ensure the course is wide enough to allow sufficient space for riders using modified equipment.
- Try to avoid very steep climbs or descents as riders using modified equipment may be unable to climb them or they may be dangerous on descent.
- Try to avoid sharp turns at the bottom of descents as riders using modified equipment may have difficulty negotiating the turn at speed.
- Cut off times for events should be reasonable and not unfairly set to prohibit the participation of para-cyclists. There are many factors when determining cut off time including the need for sufficient time to dismantle the course before dark, the number of course marshals available for the event, the reasonableness of the length of time they will be required to marshal the course in cold or bad weather, police/local authority permission for road closures, permission for length of time to use the venue.

Specific Considerations

Discipline	Specific Considerations
Road (including Criteriums)	Climbs including maximum gradients Descents Turnaround Points Course Width Site-Lines through corners Camber Race Distances and start/finish times For integrated racing: Number of riders per bunch Number of bunches on course
Track	Velodrome Banking Expected Field Sizes Track Access Starting requirements
Cyclo-cross	Number of obstacles that require dismounting and/or carrying bikes (eg Stairs, Barriers) Passing opportunities (width of course) Approachability of B-lines Camber (In particularly off camber corners) Field Sizes and amount of passing Ground Conditions Gradients & terrain Corner Angles
Mountain Bike	Some MTB trails may already be classified under the Adaptive Trail-Rating System. If not, typical considerations include: Trail width Turning Radius
BMX	8m start hill and pro-straight: riders should only be permitted to participate on the 8m start hill or pro-straight if they have completed the BMX Advanced Rider Certification.

SECTION 6

LET'S FIND A WAY



Sometimes Para-Cyclists will want to enter events where organisers and Commissaires are unwilling or unsure about allowing their participation. Reasons for this hesitation is varied, some will be invalid (e.g., lack of understanding of what a Para-cyclist is able to do or of the technical regulations) but some concerns may be very valid (e.g., a technical hotdog criterium will make handcycling participation difficult, or the trails are too narrow for adaptive MTB participation). Ultimately, running any form of cycling race means that officials take on considerable responsibility for keeping people safe, and just as it's important that we make an inclusive environment as it is to be safe.

Like all things, communication is key and communicating early is likely the best starting point to ensure that amicable outcomes can be achieved. Like all riders, there is a huge difference in abilities between different para riders- even within the same category! As such, blanket decisions and outcomes are typically not the best decisions.

Below are some common issues identified and some practical solutions:

Discipline	Identified	Solution
Cyclo-cross	Barriers present as a problem for para riders who struggle to dismount – remount quickly	Provide a 'b-line' that is achievable for the para-cyclist to ride, which skips the difficult feature.
Road/Crits	Hand cyclists can be low to the ground and hard to see when approaching in a bunch	Hand Cyclists to attach a flag to their bike to increase visibility, and information to other participants provided as part of the rider briefing
All	Rider has balance issues meaning they struggle to mount/dismount unassisted	Rider has a support rider able to assist them as required.
Road	Hand Cyclists descend faster than single bikes creating passing issues	Hand Cyclists instructed to be prepared to stay behind groups they may catch on descents
Mountain Bike	Adaptive Mountain bikers unable to complete some stages of a GE course	Provide aMTB riders with a modified race excluding the effected stage or sections.
Road	Para-Cyclist unable to keep up with slowest grade	The host club could look to run the grade in a handicap format, or schedule other events that the rider could participate.
All	Organiser unsure what is appropriate for the para-cyclist to participate in	Talk to the rider and understand their abilities and requirements. They will raise any barrier to their participation, and likely their experience how they can be overcome.

Discipline	Identified	Solution
All	Concern around able bodied rider skill level when a tandem is introduced	Gradually introduce the tandem into the competition with the tandem pairing to ride at the back of the bunch for a race to enable the other riders to gain an understanding of the handling dynamics. The Tandem pairing should not be expected to pay a race entry till they are able to fully participate in the event. A similar approach may be necessary for HandCycles or Trikes.
All	Financial implications of extra prizing	The extra race nominations will offset this cost.
All	Challenges around providing inclusive facilities	Identify what facilities may be missing and ensure that event listing clearly lists this information. Work with local councils to ensure that any future facility upgrades have inclusion as primary foci.
Track	Riders instructed to start on the fence presents difficulties for some C classified riders	Allow Para-cyclists to be held starts.
All	Some disabilities cause secondary problems with temperature regulations	Allow for shorter races, additional shade, provisioning of ice packs etc.
Track	Rider requirements support to be able to participate from a carer/ support person	Provide an extra infield pass to the rider as required.

What to do if a resolution can't be found?

Sometimes para cyclist participation may not be possible. But before making this decision, AusCycling has committed to fully investing any reasonable request. AusCycling has staff available to help event organisers provide opportunities for riders of all abilities to participate. Reach out to us on events@auscycling.org.au at any time for any help.

SECTION 7

MORE RESOURCES



The following are a useful list of resources available for clubs and event organisers to become better informed, and by doing so, make support informed decision making.

[UCI Para-cycling Regulations](#)
[AusCycling Technical Regulations](#)

[Transplant Australia](#)
[IA](#)
[Dear Sport Australia](#)
[Disability Sports Australia](#)
[Disability Inclusion](#)
[Adaptive MTB and Trail Design](#)

LET'S RIDE TOGETHER



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PARA**

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