



**Australian Tagaroos  
Trans-Tasman**

**2025**

**Selection Policy and  
Guidelines**

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# Australian Tagaroos Trans-Tasman – 2025 Selection Policy and Guidelines

## Introduction

This policy outlines the guidelines that will be in place for the selection of the Australian Oztag (AO) Representative Squads and Teams, known as the Australian Tagaroos (AT), for the 2025 Trans-Tasman tournament to be held in New Zealand.

Australian Oztag (AO), the Australian Oztag Coaching Director (AOCD) and the Australian Tagaroos Advisory Committee (ATAC) have been directly involved and or consulted in the final brief and recommendations regarding these policies and guidelines.

This policy should be used as the starting point for selection of all representative squads and teams as it will ensure the selection process is consistent at all levels and is not compromised in any way.

The aim of this policy is to ensure selections are objective, are seen to be fair by all and ensure that all aspiring players are given a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate their skills and abilities.

The Squads and eventually Teams will be selected from the 2024 Senior National Championships (SNC) and or any approved dispensations.

The 2025 Trans-Tasman Divisions are:

- Men's 21's, Women's 21's and Mixed 21's
- Men's Opens, Women's Opens and Mixed Opens
- Men's 30's and Women's 27's
- Men's 40's and Women's 37's
- Men's 45's and Women's 47's
- Men's 50's
- Men's 60's
- Mixed Seniors

## 1. Selection Process – Overview

- 1.1 Michael Buettner, AOCD will be responsible for the coordination, communication, and arrangements for the selection process, including communication with Coaches, Managers, Selectors and Players.
- 1.2 AO and or AOCD may appoint a tournament Selection Manager who will assist with all selection matters and coordination at the tournament, if required.
- 1.3 AO will appoint a coach for each division. AO has a preferable position of a non-playing coach. However special circumstances may prevail, and dispensation can be gained from AO.
- 1.4 Squads and final teams will be approved by AO and announced by AO on a date TBA taking into consideration all relevant factors. E.g. plenty of notice to organize personal arrangements, travel arrangements etc.
- 1.5 Any disputes in relation to the selection process or decisions of the selectors shall be overseen by the AOCD & AO.

## **2. Selection Panel Appointment**

- 2.1 Where possible the Selection Panel will consist of at least three (3) selectors with a combination of either;
- 2 NSW and 1 QLD, or
  - 2 QLD and 1 NSW.
- 2.2 The appointed head coach is to be included as one of the appointed selection panelists. This also includes the assistant coach, if one is appointed.
- 2.3 Selection panelists must be approved by AO. An AOCD approved delegate can be appointed as a replacement selector if and when required.
- 2.4 AO and AOCD will select the squads and teams based on the criteria below, in consultation with the appointed head coach for each respective division. The head coach of each respective division will be the head of selectors for his/her division at the Australian Championships.
- 2.5 AO and AOCD reserve the right to make changes or recommendations in consultation with the head coach, at any time and, if required. The AO and AOCD will oversee the selection process at all times.

## **3. Eligibility Criteria**

- 3.1 All players must meet AO eligibility criteria.
- 3.2 Players will be selected from the 2024 Senior National Championships and/or players who have approved dispensation.
- 3.3 Players under the age of 18 years wishing to nominate for selection in the under 21's & Opens division will require permission from a Parent/Guardian if selected.
- Age Divisions - Players must meet the age criteria specified in section 9 of this document.
  - Players must compete in one Division only.
  - All Players must nominate on the AO official registration form if they are available for Australian selection or not.
  - All players wishing to apply for dispensation must do so in writing no less than 14 days from the tournament date (email – mick@oztag.com.au). (*refer section 5 & 6*)

## **4. Ineligibility Criteria**

- 4.1 Failing to meet any of these criteria means the player is ineligible for selection or be a continued member of the squad and or team, as the case may be.
- 4.2 Failure to meet AO eligibility criteria.
- 4.3 Breach or failure to observe the Selection Policy and Guidelines.
- 4.4 By reason of illness or injury is unable to perform to the required standard in the opinion of AO or the AOCD and Head Coach (after receiving advice from a medical practitioner).
- 4.5 Failure to observe the AO's Code of Conduct or deemed to have brought the game into disrepute.

- 4.6 Playing or trialing for another ITF affiliated team/country at an AO and or ITF sanctioned tournament after being selected to play for Australia. This includes the period prior to the tournament and concludes the day after the completion of the tournament, including officials.
- 4.7 Failure to adhere fully to and or attend the specified training camp, as approved by AOCD.

## 5. Injury or illness During Selection - Dispensation

- 5.1 If players are unable to attend the Senior National Championships, they may submit a dispensation request in writing to the AOCD (mick@oztag.com.au) prior to the tournament. Any request received less than fourteen (14) days prior to the tournaments will not be considered except for requests based on illness supported by a medical certificate.
- 5.2 For medical dispensation, a medical certificate should also be provided, stating the nature and extent of the injury/illness, along with the expected recovery time.
- 5.3 It is the responsibility of the player to provide documentation prior to the tournament. Verbal notification for dispensation will not be accepted, unless under extenuating circumstances (e.g. compelling family reasons, illness).
- 5.4 Medical dispensation requests will be reviewed by AOCD who will provide a recommendation for consideration by the Selection Panel.
- 5.5 All medical dispensations will be ratified by AO and AOCD. Players will be notified of the result together with any related information.
- 5.6 Acceptance of medical dispensation does not equate to automatic selection.
- 5.7 AO will give consideration based on the information provided and reserves the right to refuse acceptance of the medical dispensation request.

## 6. General Dispensation

- 6.1 **General Dispensation** - AO will give "general dispensation" consideration for all divisions after an official request, in writing, has been received via email (mick@oztag.com.au), no less than 14 days prior to the commencement of the applicable tournament. All relevant information is to be provided, including:
- Name, date of birth (age), address and contact details,
  - Current playing team and or region/association,
  - Alternate division selection, (if eligible)
  - Full justification of request, examples below:
    - *My region has no playing division entered in my age group so I need to play in another division in my region, which I am eligible to play in, and I do not wish to enter the "Players Pool" for my age group.*
    - *I was entered into the "Players Pool" but was not picked-up by any team thus I was unable to play at the tournament.*
- 6.2 Player general dispensation requests will be reviewed by AOCD who will provide a recommendation for consideration by the Selection Panel.
- 6.3 All general dispensation requests will be ratified by AO and AOCD. Players will be notified of the result together with any related information.

- 6.4 Acceptance of general dispensation does not equate to automatic selection.
- 6.5 AO will give consideration based on the information provided and reserves the right to refuse acceptance of the general dispensation request.

## **7. Alternate Division Nominations**

### **7.1 Players will only be able to be selected in the division in which they are competing in at the 2024 Senior National Championships.**

AO will give consideration for all players to be selected in another division for the Trans-Tasman if eligible by nominating on the official tournament registration form and by informing the AOCD via email – [mick@oztag.com.au](mailto:mick@oztag.com.au) (refer to section 6).

- 7.2 Any Alternative Preference selection nominations will be ratified by AO in consultation with AOCD. Players will be notified of the result together with any related information.
- 7.3 Alternative Preference selection nominations will be reviewed by the AOCD who will provide a recommendation for consideration by the **Coach and Selection Panel**.
- 7.4 Please note that players wishing to be considered for Selection in any Mixed Teams must be competing in a Mixed Division at the 2024 Senior National Championships. Alternatively, any player wishing to be considered for Selection in a Men's or Women's Team must be competing in a Men's or Women's Division at the 2024 Senior National Championships.

Dispensation will only be considered for Players not playing in the correct Division as mentioned above if the players particular Region does not have a team competing in the relevant Division. An email requesting dispensation will need to be sent to [mick@oztag.com.au](mailto:mick@oztag.com.au) for approval.

- 7.5 Acceptance of Alternative Preference selection nominations does not equate to automatic selection.
- 7.6 AO will give consideration based on the information provided on the official tournament registration forms and reserves the right to refuse acceptance of the Alternative Preference selection nomination.

## **8. Australian Tagaroos – Divisions and Squad/Team Composition (Trans-Tasman)**

### **8.1 Australian Oztag will select teams in the following divisions:**

- \* Men's 21's, Women's 21's and Mixed 21's
- \* Men's Opens, Women's Opens and Mixed Opens
- \* Men's 30's and Women's 27's
- \* Men's 40's and Women's 37's
- \* Men's 45's and Women's 47's
- \* Men's 50's
- \* Men's 60's
- \* Mixed Seniors

### **8.2 Squads** - all Squads will consist of twenty (22) players.

### **8.3 Teams** - all Teams will consist of eighteen (18) players.

#### 8.4 The **Mixed** Composition:

- **Squad** - that is - number of female players, number of male players (as applicable) and playing positions; will be at the Coach's recommendation to the AOCD but will not have less than 10 Females.
- **Team** - that is - number of female players, number of male players (as applicable) and playing positions; will be at the Coach's recommendation to the AOCD but will not have less than 8 Females.

8.6 In the case of a Squad it will be the responsibility of the Head Coach for the appropriate division and the AOCD to determine the final composition/selection of the Team for final AO approval.

8.7 All **shadow players** are to be ranked according to their performance at the Australian Championships. Additionally, placed into playing positions to ensure an unbiased decision is made upon a replacement for the Tagaroos team.

8.8 A list of a further **eight (8) players** (minimum) will be recorded but not announced. This list will be held by the AOCD so that in the event a team might exhaust all shadow players, this list may be used, if necessary, in compiling the final team.

8.9 All squad numbers shall be maintained at not less than **twenty-two (22) players** until the final team is announced.

8.10 It will be preferable that all **team** numbers be maintained at **eighteen (18) players** up until two (2) weeks prior to the commencement day of the tournament. Only after the **two (2) week** deadline can the team numbers fall below **eighteen (18) players**, and it would be preferable that they not fall below **sixteen (16) players**.

#### 9. **Age Divisions**

- |     |                                     |  |
|-----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 9.1 | Men's 21s, Women's 21s & Mixed 21's | Players must be 21 or younger on the 1 <sup>st</sup> day of the Tournament (November 1, 2024)                              |
| 9.2 | Men's, Women's & Mixed Opens        | no age limit.  |
| 9.3 | Women's 27's, 37's & 47's           | players must be the age of the div or older in 2024.   |
| 9.4 | Men's 30's, 40's, 45's, 50's & 60's | players must be the age of the div or older in 2024.   |
| 9.5 | Mixed Senior's                      | <b>Men</b> – players must turn <b>33</b> or older in 2024.<br><b>Women</b> – players must turn <b>30</b> or older in 2024. |

## 10. AO Team Registration Form

- 10.1 All **Tournament Team Registration Forms** (as shown in Annex 1) must be **fully** completed and submitted to AO either prior to the tournament or at the tournament administration office prior to the commencement of the team's first game.
- 10.2 Forms **partially completed may not be accepted** thus your team and players risk the chance of having games forfeited. This may also impact on a player's chance of being selected for the Australian Tagaroos.
- 10.3 The field on a player's availability for selection for the Australian Tagaroos must be marked **YES** if they would like to be considered for selection. If left blank, a player's chance of being selected for the Australian Tagaroos maybe jepodised. If marked **NO**, then a player's selection may be considered forfeited.
- 10.4 It is the responsibility of the Regional Coach to make sure that all required fields on the form are completed, true and accurate otherwise penalties may incur.

## 11. AO Team Rating Form - Regional Team Coach

- 11.1 Team coaches at tournaments will receive an **AO Team Rating Form** via Electronic Link (TBA).
- 11.2 The electronic AO team rating form must be completed online and returned to the AO after the completion of each team's tournament (**no more than 5 days after – Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024**).
- The electronic AO team rating form (as shown in **Annex 2**) is to be filled out **rating players 1 to 8 for the Finalists** (Quarter Finals, Semi Finals and Grand Final, as applicable). It is not mandatory to rate all 8 players.
  - Teams who **do not** make the Finals Series are to rate **no more than 4 players**.
  - Players must also be rated in their playing position (**Middle, Rover, Link & Wing**).
- 11.3 The AO team rating form is to be filled out without biased, to be fair and reasonable. There should be no preconceived criteria that either includes or excludes a player.
- 11.4 The completion of the AO team rating form is the responsibility of the regional team coach and if not completed may jeopardise selection of players from your own team in being selected in the Australian Tagaroos Squad/Team.
- 11.4 The AO Team Rating Form may be used to provide detailed information on each player rated (Annex 2 refers).

## 12. AO Finalists Rating Forms - Regional Team Coach

- 12.1 **Finalist** team coaches at tournaments will have the opportunity to rate **their top 4 players** and the **oppositions top 4 players** from the **Quarter Finals, Semi Finals and Grand Final**, whichever is applicable.
- 12.2 The **AO Finalists' Rating Form** (as shown in **Annex 3**) will be available online through an electronic link provided by AO and must be submitted by the completion date of the tournament. (**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2024**)
- 12.3 The completion of the AO Finalist Rating Form is the responsibility of the regional team coach and if not submitted may jeopardise selection of players from your own team in being selected in the Australian Tagaroos Squad/Team.



12.4 The AO Finalist Rating Form may be used to provide detailed information on each player rated.

### **13. Australian Tagaroos Squad - Player Assessment and Selection**

13.1 Player assessment/selection is to be undertaken by the head coach and selectors, referred to as the "Selectors Panel". The head coach will be the head of selectors of his/her respective division.

13.2 Regional Team Rating forms and the Finalist Rating forms will also be utilized in the selection process.

13.3 All players must adhere to the AO Code of Conduct. Player's conduct, including conduct from previous events, may be taken into consideration during the selection process.

13.4 If a player is provided dispensation, that player will not be denied selection on the basis that any one member of the selection panel is not sufficiently familiar with the player's ability. If members of the selection panel can attest to the player's ability, in comparison to others at the event, then that player is to be added to the selection process for further assessment.

13.5 The successfully selected players for the **Australian Tagaroos Squads** will be notified via the **AO website**.

13.6 **Confidentiality** of all selected players must be adhered to by all selection panel members, coaches and the AOCD involved in the selection process prior to the announcement.

### **14. Confirmation of Availability and Selection in the Australian Tagaroos Squad**

14.1 All selected players will be contacted by their respective Head Coach/Team manager to confirm their selection for the **Australian Tagaroos Squad** who will then inform the AOCD via email (mick@oztag.com.au). Confirmation of availability is required by date **TBC**.

14.2 A player's failure to confirm availability by the deadline as indicated by the Head Coach/Team Manager may result in a player being replaced.

*Note: Further attempts to make contact with players is at the discretion of AO but in true fairness a follow up may occur via either:*

- *direct contact - mobile phone (text or call) and or,*
- *contacting the player's region administrator and or association coach or manager.*

14.3 On completion of all confirmations the Head Coach will make contact with all his/her players to set out the representative program in consultation with AOCD. Players will be provided with information criteria which they will have to accept and adhere to when accepting their position, *e.g. touring cost, deposit deadline, departure date, AO training camp availability etc.*

### **15. Australian Tagaroos Team – Final Selection**

15.1 The head coach will select his/her team of 18 players and 4 shadows from the squad and submit to the AOCD. AOCD will then forward to the AO for final approval and announcement.

15.2 The final team will be announced on a date **TBC**.

## **16. Australian Tagaroos Shadows - Selection**

- 16.1 After the team of 18 has been announced the remaining **four (4)** from the squad will automatically become shadows.
- 16.2 Shadow players will be required to accept their positions as a shadow.
- 16.3 Shadow players are required to train with the team in case of a player withdrawal and will incur any costs and or fees associated with selection in the Squad/Team, this includes the playing kit.
- 16.4 Travel and Registration Fee Deposits incurred by shadow players will be fully refunded if they do not compete in the tournament.

## **17. Australian Oztag Coaching Directors - Duties and Responsibilities**

- To call for nominations of Australian Coaches.
- To recommend coaches to AO for appointment and subsequently advise appointed Coaches of their appointment.
- To approve the appointment of the Selectors Panel for each respective division.
- To conduct a meeting with the Selectors Panel prior to the 2024 Senior National Championships regarding the selection process, policies and procedures for Selections relating to the Trans-Tasman 2025.
- To provide the Selectors Panel with any necessary documentation and information.
- To plan, lead, monitor and control the Selectors Panel by providing motivation, guidance, assistance and directions during the Championships.
- To be available to attend any Selectors Panel meeting and Tournament meetings.
- To be available to assist, if necessary, in the final composition of the Teams in all divisions.
- To submit the final Team Lists for AO approval.
- To assist in the final Team announcements.
- To offer written feedback with regards to the Selectors Panel members' performances with the view to future education, coaching and assessment.
- To obtain written feedback from all the head of selectors (head coach) regarding all matters relating to all tournaments, both on and off the field.

## **18. Australian Tagaroos Selection Panel**

- 18.1 The Panel are accountable for selecting the best possible team from the available players. They must display honesty, objectivity and impartiality in their findings and recommendations and must have the ability to work in a team environment with fellow panel members. It is also a requirement to be organised in the recording of information. Finally, professionalism is required at all times this includes behaviour and appearance such as appropriate uniform and conduct, both on and off duty.

### **18.2 General Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of each panel member after notification of their appointments will vary according to their experience at this level. The following is a general list of items to assist in the process:

- Obtain a current copy of the AO Selection Policy and Guidelines.
- Examine the coach's requirements and the selection criteria.
- Become familiar with the selection process and the AO selection forms being used for selecting players.
- The games being played.
- The times and teams participating.

- The field allocation for each game.
- Consult Regional Coaches or AOCD regarding players with injuries (if required).
- Regularly communicate with the AOCD throughout the process.

### 18.3 First Impressions

First impressions, either favorable or unfavorable for the player, can influence later judgements, especially if negative points are observed first. To avoid this, reserve all judgements regarding a player until after the observation period.

### 18.4 Key Responsibilities and Roles of Selectors

- Responsible for selecting the best available players and or team in line with the selection criteria.
- Work as a part of the selection panel, whilst still providing individual opinions.
- Earn the respect of players/coaches/panelists/others and be accountable for actions and making hard, yet fair and impartial decisions. Be prepared to convey those decisions to the relevant people.
- Capacity to work well under pressure.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Excellent organisational skills.
- Able to maintain confidentiality.

### 18.5 2024 Senior National Championships

- The selection panel must attend the Selectors Panel meeting prior to the commencement of the tournaments to have their role identified.
- The Head of Selectors (AO Head Coach) may make them self-known to Regional Coaches so they can give you information on injuries, resting players, positional changes etc. but at no time is the Head of Selectors to show favoritism or biased to any team or player.
- It is preferable selectors and coaches don't make themselves known to players.
- Analyse standard of the games.
- Establish optimal vantage points, but also move around the field.
- Establish player positions.
- Assess and keep notes on as many players as possible.
- The selection panel will meet each morning before the commencement of play with AOCD.

### 18.6 After the Selection Process:

- Remain available until after the team has been finalised in case changes are needed.
- Maintain unity and confidentiality of discussions.
- All selectors' notes need to be handed to the Head Coach for retention of each division in case replacement players are required or justification of player selection is required.
- All selection rating forms and other related information and or documents remain the property of AO and AOCD and are required to be handed into AOCD. These rating forms, documentation and information are not to be distributed, copied and or released to the general public in any manner and or form.

## 19. Australian Oztag Individual Appointed Selector/s

19.1 Where necessary AO will appoint a selector to perform duties that fall outside of the division selectors duties, when required.

19.2 This/these selectors will be governed by AO and report directly to AOCD and or the divisional

selectors if required.

- 19.3 These selectors will not form part of the “Selectors Panel” but purely aid the selection process on an individual basis, ad hoc duties and or specialized duties, if required.

**20. Further Information**

For further information and or clarification of any points contained within this policy and guidelines please email AOCD at [mick@oztag.com.au](mailto:mick@oztag.com.au)

**ANNEX 1.**  
**AUSTRALIAN OZTAG CHAMPIONSHIPS - REGISTRATION FORM – ATTACHED WITH EMAIL**

**ANNEX 2.**  
**AO TEAM RATING FORM – REGIONAL TEAM COACH (EXAMPLE)**

**ANNEX 3.**  
**AO FINALIST RATING FORM – REGIONAL TEAM COACH (EXAMPLE)**