HIGH PERFORMANCE
SPORT NEW ZEALAND

HPSNZ COACHING STRATEGY

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES AND DIRECTION 2026-2032

Purpose

To strengthen the coaching capability, leadership and systems that are most critical to current and future international performance, while building sustainable coaching capability within New Zealand's high performance system.

This strategy confirms HPSNZ's role and guides priorities, investment and delivery through Los Angeles 2028, French Alps 2030, Brisbane 2032 and beyond.

1. EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

HPSNZ Coaching is an applied performance function. It works closely enough to priority campaigns to understand context and challenge thinking, while accountability for campaign performance and coaching decisions remains with sports and coaches.

Strategic proposition

Coaching is a core performance lever. It strengthens athlete and team campaigns, improves judgement and decision-making under pressure, and builds the coaching depth required for repeatable international success.

Its contribution is not only to current performance, but also to ensuring that athletes, coaches, knowledge and environments continue to develop across cycles: win, learn, develop and win again.

HPSNZ role	Our method	Our focus	Our test
Strengthen coaches' and campaign leaders' capability, judgement and performance impact.	Targeted, relational and non-embedded consultancy, supported by personalised development and connected learning.	Coaches, campaign leadership and coaching systems material to current and future HPSNZ investment outcomes.	Sports become more capable of sustained performance because HPSNZ Coaching was involved, without becoming dependent on it.

The shift in emphasis

- From broad coach development activity to targeted performance impact.
- From programme participation as the primary measure to evidence of changed practice, stronger campaigns and greater coaching depth.
- From disconnected offerings to an integrated response to current campaign needs and future coaching depth.
- From HPSNZ leading wider coach development to sports owning their coaching workforce, with HPSNZ targeting support where it adds greatest value.
- From broad visibility to targeted campaign support grounded in relevance, quality, evidence and results.

2. STRATEGIC LINE OF SIGHT

This strategy translates the HPSNZ 2025-2028 Strategic Plan into a focused coaching contribution to LA28 and extends that contribution through French Alps 2030 and Brisbane 2032.

This strategy does not create a separate direction. It makes explicit how coaching supports HPSNZ's overall vision, outcomes and strategic priorities.

HPSNZ direction	Coaching contribution	Line of sight to performance
Vision: Inspiring Performance Every Day	Strengthen coaches and campaign leaders who shape daily performance environments.	Better daily decisions, learning and leadership contribute to performance when it matters.
Tū te Ihi: Performance Pathways	Build coaching capability and depth for current and future cycles.	Priority athletes and teams have access to coaching required to develop and succeed.
Tū te Wehi: Wellbeing and Engagement	Embed wellbeing, integrity, inclusion and cultural capability in quality coaching; prioritise coach sustainability and retention.	Coaches create environments in which they and those they work with can perform, develop and thrive.
Tū te Wana: Sustainable Investment	Target support against explicit campaign and workforce needs.	Investment is purposeful, reviewed and connected to sustained performance value.
Collaboration and system capability	Connect insight, expertise and learning across sports.	New Zealand's scale becomes an advantage through faster learning and stronger alignment.
Quality data and decision-making	Use evidence alongside professional judgement to target, review and adapt support.	Clear decisions to continue, adjust, scale or stop activity.

Alignment principle

Every major coaching investment or engagement should show a credible line of sight from the performance need to the coaching response, to changed practice or stronger system capability, and ultimately to the athlete, team or campaign benefit.

The line of sight should also show how coaching contributes to athlete progression, future campaign replenishment and readiness of the next generation of performance athletes.

3. WHY COACHING MATTERS

Coaches shape the daily training environment and execute the coaching contribution to campaign plans. They align performance support, learning and decisions around what is required to perform. Campaign leadership varies by context, so support begins with clear roles and an understanding of the campaign.

Contemporary coaching develops capable, adaptable and increasingly autonomous athletes. Effective coaches balance direction, challenge and support while progressively increasing athlete ownership, voice and decision-making.

HPSNZ priority	Coaching contribution	Organisational value
Targeted athletes and teams	Improve coaching quality, campaign leadership and daily performance decisions.	Help wider HPSNZ support integrate around the performance plan.
Performance pathways	Help sports identify, develop, retain and succession-plan coaches.	Reduce coaching fragility and strengthen continuity.
Sustainable investment	Address explicit needs, with review points and exit conditions.	Direct limited resources to gaps most material to performance.
System capability and insight	Turn proximity to campaigns into practical insight and cross-sport learning.	Improve decisions and reuse effective practice.

4. CORE STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

1. **Start with the performance question**

   Prioritise coaching where it can materially improve athlete, team or campaign performance. Begin with the performance need and define the intended change.

2. **Coach the coach in context**

   Connect development to the real demands of the role, sport, campaign and daily training environment; time support to the decisions in front of the coach.

3. **Keep campaign leadership clear**

   Coaches lead coaching and execution of the campaign strategy. NSOs own performance delivery and workforce decisions. HPSNZ provides investment, targeted support, challenge, insight and assurance.

4. **Build for current and next cycles**

   Support priority coaches today while helping sports identify, prepare and retain coaches for future pinnacle events.

5. **Use connection as an advantage**

   Work through trusted relationships, aligned expertise, cross-sport learning and faster transfer of knowledge around shared performance problems.

6. **Learn and adapt**

   Set an explicit purpose and expected change, review evidence with coaches and sports, and adapt, scale or stop work according to value.

   Coaching contributes to system maturity when capability, relationships and learning remain effective beyond individual athletes, coaches or campaigns. A mature system retains knowledge, develops successors and repeatedly converts potential into performance.

5. STRATEGIC CHOICES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

2032 outcome

By Brisbane 2032, invested sports have stronger, more robust coaching leadership around priority campaigns: coaches lead high-quality daily environments, make sound campaign decisions under pressure and develop successors for critical roles. By the end of 2026, HPSNZ will re-establish coaching capability profile with NSOs and report progress annually.

The outcome also includes clearer evidence that coaching has advanced named athletes and teams, strengthened athlete ownership, supported transition into priority campaigns and contributed to the replenishment of future performance cohorts.

Who receives priority support

- Support is prioritised where the performance need is explicit and a coaching response can materially improve trajectory.
- Decisions weigh campaign or pathway relevance to HPSNZ outcomes; significance and urgency of the coaching gap; the coach's influence; NSO commitment and capacity to enable change; and expected value relative to the support required.
- Future-cycle coaches may be prioritised for a credible succession or depth need.
- Each engagement has a short, agreed brief covering the performance question, expected change in practice, roles, support and time commitment, review date, and exit or transition conditions.
- Programme participation alone does not establish priority.
- For development coaches, priority should also reflect direct responsibility for progressing identified future-cycle athletes, improving a priority daily environment or leading a critical transition into the next campaign environment.

Party	Accountability and commitment
NSO / HPD	Own campaign performance, coaching appointments, workforce plans and the daily environment. Agree the need, enable coach time and authority to act, and review the effect of support.
Coach / campaign leader	Own coaching decisions and application in context. Identify practice to change, test challenge and bring evidence and reflection to review.
HPSNZ Coaching	Recommend and deliver proportionate support, development and external expertise; challenge practice; document learning and report material risks. Does not direct campaign operations or appoint coaches.
HPSNZ investment / performance leadership	Decide HPSNZ resource allocation through normal planning and investment processes. Resolve material trade-offs and escalate risks.

When a critical role is vacant, performance is below expectation or campaign risk escalates, HPSNZ agrees a time-bound response with the NSO: diagnosis, targeted expertise or interim development support, a review point and clear escalation. Employment and selection decisions remain with the NSO.

6. STRATEGIC OPERATING MODEL

Three connected lines of work keep Coaching close to performance, aligned with NSO ownership and useful to HPSNZ decisions.

Line of work	Primary purpose	Main mechanisms	Success looks like
Campaign coach performance	Improve coaches' effectiveness in priority athlete and team campaigns.	HP Coach Consultant; coach performance support; critical conversations; campaign reflection; targeted expertise.	Stronger judgement, leadership and applied practice against agreed needs.
Personalised coach development	Accelerate learning against an agreed performance and development plan.	Performance development plans; targeted investment; mentoring; observation; bespoke learning.	Development applied in context and contributing to coach and campaign performance.
Pinnacles and system learning	Build current and future coaching depth and transfer useful knowledge across sports.	Distinct cohorts, workshops, mentorship pods, regional connection, forums and applied insight.	Stronger coaching depth and transfer of effective practice.

Across all three lines of work, success should be evidenced through both changed coaching practice and the resulting athlete, team or environment progression. For future-cycle activity, evidence should include athlete readiness, transition and campaign replenishment where relevant.

Relational consultancy remains close, challenging and bounded. Engagement is purposeful and proportionate; consultants do not hold operational campaign roles or replace coach or NSO judgement; material insight is shared transparently through appropriate HPSNZ channels.

Clarify how the integrated offer works:

- Campaign coach performance is time-bound consultancy for current needs.
- Personalised development supports an agreed plan and applied practice.
- Pinnacles provides cohort-based learning.
- Coaches may use more than one line where warranted, with each purpose recorded and duplication of NSO provision avoided.

7. PRIORITY AGENDA 2026-2032

Priority	What we will do	Indicative evidence
1. Maximise priority campaign coach impact	Maintain a portfolio of priority coaches; agree needs with the coach and HPD; target consultancy and development.	Agreed plans, review evidence, changed practice and campaign benefit.
2. Deliver an integrated coaching offer	Connect consultancy, personalised development and Pinnacles into one coherent response.	Clear entry points, differentiated support, reduced duplication and applied learning.
3. Support NSO coaching workforce plans	Identify critical roles, gaps, succession risk and development actions with sports.	Current workforce and depth views; material risks visible and acted on.
4. Mobilise high-value knowledge	Use leading coaches, external experts and targeted forums for shared challenges.	Cross-sport application, reusable insight and faster learning.

Add athlete progression and future campaign replenishment to the evidence for priorities 1 and 3, where relevant. This keeps workforce depth connected to the athletes and campaigns that capability is intended to serve.

8. DELIVERY AND EVIDENCE, 2026-2032

Phase	Strategic emphasis	Decision or evidence checkpoint
2026-2028: LA28	Establish the priority coach and critical-role baseline; concentrate applied support on LA28 decisions and daily environments; start succession plans.	Annual portfolio review tests changed practice and campaign benefit; adjust before the next major decision.
2028-2030: French Alps 2030	Transfer learning from LA28; target Winter and Para requirements in context; develop coaches with credible 2030 and 2032 roles.	Review critical-role cover, coach progression and application of transferred practice.
2030-2032: Brisbane 2032	Strengthen readiness and depth; renew external expertise for demonstrated gaps; reduce reliance on consultancy as NSO capability grows.	Compare coaching depth, role readiness and campaign practice with the 2026 baseline.

At each phase, test whether learning is retained and applied beyond the individual engagement, and whether current campaigns are leaving behind stronger athletes, coaches, environments and operating capability for the next cycle.

Evidence and annual review

- Set a baseline with NSOs for priority coaching roles, succession cover, retention and development needs.
- For each engagement, capture observable changes in coaching decisions or practice, evidence from the campaign environment and likely contribution to athlete or team progress.
- State attribution to coaching support cautiously.
- Where the engagement has a development or pathway purpose, also capture the athlete starting point, intended progression, evidence of readiness or transition, and the coach's contribution to that change.
- Include athlete voice as one source of evidence, alongside coach, campaign and performance evidence.
- The annual review asks:
  - What changed in practice?
  - What improved in the campaign?
  - Which critical roles became less fragile?
  - What did not work?
  - What should continue, adjust, scale or stop?
- Findings inform the next portfolio, budget and use of consultants and experts.
- Additional annual review questions:
  - Are athletes showing greater capability and ownership?
  - Are future campaigns being replenished?
  - What learning has been transferred and retained across coaches, environments and cycles?

System capability and access

Workforce discussions with NSOs identify progression opportunities and retention support for underrepresented coaches. Māori and Pacific coaching leadership, women coaches and Para-specific requirements are addressed through relevant selection, sponsorship, expertise and review of opportunity. External expertise includes a clear plan to transfer learning into New Zealand capability.

9. STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- HP Coaching operates as a core applied performance and system capability function within HPSNZ.
- The six principles guide priorities, investment and delivery; the integrated offer serves both current campaigns and future coaching depth.
- Wellbeing, integrity, Te Tiriti, cultural capability, inclusion and deliberate development of women coaches remain embedded expectations.
- Annual delivery plans, resource choices and performance measures are managed through normal planning, budget and reporting processes.

Coaching support will remain athlete and performance-led, progressively build athlete ownership, contribute to future campaign replenishment and strengthen the system's ability to win, learn, develop and win again.

THE PINNACLES OFFER

One integrated coaching offer, connecting cohort development, shared learning and targeted support.

Pinnacles

The overarching HPSNZ Coaching offer that builds current and future coaching depth, connects learning across sports and strengthens the capability required for priority pinnacle campaigns.



Ascent

A campaign-focused development programme for a targeted cohort of elite coaches leading medal-probable environments. Through residentials, facilitated peer learning and application in their own campaign settings, coaches strengthen leadership, judgement, daily training environments, tight-team alignment and readiness for LA 2028 and beyond.

Workshops

Targeted learning experiences that bring coaches and campaign leaders together around shared performance questions. Workshops draw on leading practice, specialist expertise and cross-sport insight, with an emphasis on practical learning that can be applied in the coach's own role, environment and campaign.

Coach consultancy

Purposeful, time-bound support for an explicit coach, campaign or workforce need. HPSNZ Coach Consultants work alongside coaches and sports to challenge thinking, strengthen decision-making and support changed practice, while accountability for coaching and campaign decisions remains with the coach and NSO.

How the offer works

The three parts are complementary rather than separate programmes. Coaches may engage with more than one element where there is a clear performance or development need. The appropriate response starts with the performance question, is agreed with the coach and sport, and is proportionate to the intended change.

Targeted

Support is directed to coaches and environments most material to current and future performance.

Applied

Learning and challenge are connected to real coaching decisions and campaign demands.

Connected

Insight is shared across coaches and sports to strengthen depth and avoid duplication.



HIGH PERFORMANCE
SPORT NEW ZEALAND

HIGH PERFORMANCE SPORT NEW ZEALAND
NATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE
17 ANTARES PLACE,
MAIRANGI BAY, AUCKLAND 0632

New Zealand Government
Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa