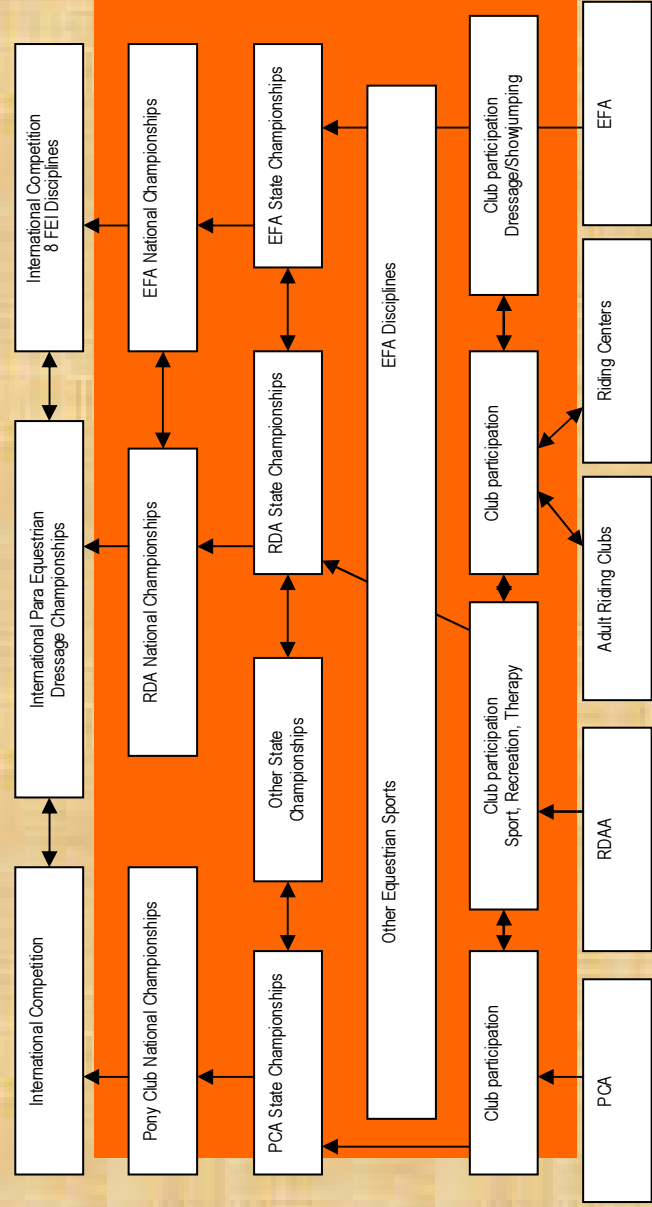


Equestrian Pathways



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Project

Creating Opportunities
 Nationally through
 Networks in Education,
 Classification



Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia Limited & Pony Club Australia working together to create opportunity

ing for the Disabled

What is Project CONNECT all about?

In a combined initiative Riding for the Disabled Association Limited (RDA) and Pony Club Australia Incorporated (PCA) have created pathways and initiatives which will allow riders with a disability to participate in a variety of equestrian activities. This has been achieved through the development and implementation of a Disability Action Plan.

The Disability Action Plan focuses on the four key areas of:

- **disability education**
- **accreditation**
- **classifier support and training**
- **athlete support**

Through this plan RDA and PCA have:

- Identified the pathways, networks and structure that provide opportunities for people with a disability to participate and achieve their full potential at all levels.
- Ensured that the focus of the programs is on ability and skill level rather than disability.
- Raised awareness of the opportunities available for integrating people with a disability at club level. Some riders will begin to ride with RDA and as they become more proficient will be able to integrate into mainstream organizations such as Pony Club.
- Developed an Exemption System and card which will enable riders with a disability to participate and compete on a level playing field in a fair and equitable manner.



It's all about
ability.

Athlete Pathways

RDA and PCA are working together to recognise shared athlete pathways. That will increase the opportunities for riders to move from grass roots participation to the elite levels of the sport.

Project CONNECT initiatives will give clubs the ability to include riders at whatever level their structure, resources and facilities allow.

The Exemption System

The exemption system has been designed to recognise that some rules, regulations and equipment may need to be modified to allow riders to participate in activities and competitions.

The Exemption System can be accessed through the relevant State and/or Territory Offices.

Exemption can only be granted at a National level by recognised RDA and PCA appointed personnel.

Disability Education

The RDA and PCA National Coaching Accreditation Schemes (NCAS) incorporate inclusive coaching practices. Both organisations have a strong focus on Coach Education and through Project CONNECT will include disability awareness training for Coaches, Administrators and Officials.

Accreditation

RDA and PCA are sharing experiences in the fields of coaching and officiating (for athletes with a disability) These areas are dynamic and need to be continually updated to remain inclusive and contemporary. By maintaining current accreditation courses RDA and PCA ensure that their programs remain relevant and inclusive of people with a disability.

Classification

To compete at an international level, riders with a disability need to be classified. Currently RDA riders are classified through the FEI Para Equestrian Elite Sport Classification system. RDA is committed to working with the Australian Sports Commission to increase training opportunities for interested classifiers.

Athlete Support

PCA and RDA are committed to providing support for the involvement of riders with a disability in equestrian sport. A significant step is the development of an RDA/PCA specific Exemption system which will create an even playing field for riders wanting to participate in pony club events and activities.

An Exemption Committee will consider applications and evidence based on the rider's disability and its effect on their ability to perform under the current PCA rules. A card will be issued which will exempt riders from specific rules or allow them to use modified equipment to ensure participation on a level playing field.

Further information is available from the PCA and RDA websites or State and Territory Offices.

Both RDA and PCA recognize and appreciate the significant support of the

Australian Sports Commission.