

**POLICY 4  
DIVISION STRUCTURING**

**4.1 U14, U16 and U19 Divisions**

4.1.1 The determinations of division structures (numbers and tiers of teams) in U14, U16 and U19 will be determined by the SRA Board and will take place prior to the commencement of tryouts. Division structures will be in accordance with the following division structure matrix:

# of Skaters	# of Teams	U14 Structure	U16 Structure	U19 Structure
33 – 45	3	2 B, AA	2 B, AA, DC A	2 B, AA, DC A or B, A, AA
45 – 60	4	3 B, AA, DC A	3 B, AA, DC A	2 B, A, AA
56 – 75	5	3 B, A, AA	3 B, A, AA	3 B, A, AA
67 – 90	6	4 B, A, AA	4 B, A, AA	4 B, A, AA
80 – 105	7	4 B, 2 A, AA	4 B, 2 A, AA	4 B, 2 A, AA
91 – 120	8	5 B, 2 A, AA	5 B, 2 A, AA	5 B, 2 A, AA

- DC = double-carded (travelling team).
- Ranges based on number of skaters, not total number of players, with final determination taking into account number and tier preferences of goalies.
- To optimize development and retention, intent is to offer 3 tiers when practicable, with consideration of the impact on league play in the B stream (A and AA means fewer B teams).
- Ideal minimum number of skaters is 12. This minimum must be reached for AA before A will be offered (default competitive tier, longer season, nationals a week-long event). The absolute minimum number of players per team is 11 (10 skaters, 1 goalie).
- In U19, if numbers only permit 3 teams and several third year B players elect to play 18+, the Board will consider B, A, AA – the single B team can play against U16A/AA and 18+ B/C.
- Default to AA if only enough for 1 competitive team – guaranteed end of season signature event in all age groups.
- Need to keep in mind that A/AA teams may not select maximum allowable skaters, which will impact the number of skaters in B.

4.1.2 SRA will strive for a minimum of 3 B teams in each division to ensure a reasonable rotation in local competition. Exceptions may be made to balance the needs of athletes in the community (B) and Competitive (A/AA) contexts.

- 4.1.3 When numbers only permit 1 competitive team, it will default to AA. This is due to the current competition structure guaranteeing an end of season signature event for AA teams but not A teams: Westerns for U14AA, Nationals for U16AA and U19AA (participation in these events is by choice, whereas in U16A and U19A you have to win Provincials to go to Westerns, unless they are in Saskatchewan).
- 4.1.4 The SRA Board will use roster size matrices to assess different scenarios based on the number of players in each division. In cases where the numbers require an assessment of whether to have more or fewer teams in a division (see overlapping numbers in matrix above), additional factors will be taken into consideration to make the final determination. “(e.g. number and tier preferences of goalies).”

## 4.2 U12 Division and Program Structure

- 4.2.1 SRA will structure the U12 division according to stage development in Learn to Train: early (Red), intermediate (White) and late (Blue). Athletes will be placed on teams in the stage that corresponds to their skill level as assessed at evaluations.
- 4.2.2 The number of teams in each stage will be determined by the SRA Board and will take place prior to the commencement of evaluations. The structure will be in accordance with the following division structure matrix:

# of Players	# of Teams	# of Red Teams	# of White Teams	# of Blue Teams	R-W-B Breakdown
33 – 45	3	3	0	0	3-0-0
44 – 59	4	2	0	2	2-0-2
55 – 71	5	3	0	2	3-0-2
66 – 83	6	4	0	2	4-0-2
77 – 95	7	3 or 5	0 or 2	2	5-0-2 3-2-2
88 – 107	8	3 or 4	2 or 3	2	4-2-2 3-3-2
99 – 119	9	4 or 5	2 or 3	2	5-2-2 4-3-2
110 - 131	10	4 or 5	3 or 4	2 or 3	5-3-2 4-4-2 4-3-3

- Overlapping ranges provide flexibility in team sizes.
  - Flexibility from 7 teams onward allows for different breakdowns based on factors such as talent depth and competitiveness.
- 4.2.3 The SRA Board will use roster size matrices to assess different scenarios based on the number of players in the division. In cases where the numbers require an assessment of whether to have more or fewer teams (see overlapping numbers in

matrix above), additional factors will be taken into consideration to make the final determination.

- 4.2.4 There will be a minimum of 2 teams in each stage to ensure local competition against at least 1 team in the same age group and stage (meaningful competition).
- 4.2.5 The Warman and area/Saskatoon breakdown in terms of numbers, stage preferences, and early evaluation results will be taken into account to determine the numbers and stages of teams in each center.
- 4.2.6 To ensure athletes are in their preferred participation context (recreational or competitive), U12 families will be allowed to opt out of the Blue stage. This will be assessed via an online survey prior to evaluations.
- 4.2.7 Flexibility will be allowed to move athletes between stages. This movement can occur in both directions.
  - Moving up: athlete is no longer being challenged in Red and is overly dominant in competition.
  - Moving down: athlete is over-challenged and it is negatively impacting their development.
- 4.2.8 Requests for movement to a different stage must be agreed upon by the athlete's parents/guardians and coach (joint submission). An assessment committee will be formed consisting of 3-5 Board members, including the Director of Athlete Development, Director of Coach Development and Director of Children's Ringette - Fundamentals (or designate if they are a coach or parent). This committee will submit a recommendation to the Board for final approval. SRA's assessment may include the following:
  - Athlete's performance in the practice environment (in both stages)
  - Athlete's performance in the competition environment (in both stages)
  - Re-assessment of skating ability (timed skating drills)
  - Other information deemed relevant
- 4.2.9 Movement between stages will only be allowed in the first half of the season.
- 4.2.10 Regardless of stage, all U12 athletes should receive the same level of quality in programming and have the same expectations around commitment level and cost. Ringette Canada's parameters for the Learn to Train stage will be enforced to ensure commitment level and cost parity across stages:
  - Up to 3 ringette related training activities per week
  - Up to 20 league games
  - Up to 2 exhibition events
  - Up to 3 tournaments (preferably in-province)

- 4.2.11 In keeping with the importance of multi-sport participation at young ages in order to enhance overall athlete development, coaches must not impose consequences on athletes who miss ringette activities to participate in other sports/activities.
- 4.2.12 U12 league play will be against teams in the same stage/color. It will be up to coaches to decide where their team would have the most meaningful competition outside of Saskatoon (i.e. entering A, B or C depending on the presumed caliber of the tournament).

### **4.3 U10 Division and Program Structure**

4.3.1 All U10 athletes should receive the same level of quality in programming and have the same expectations around commitment level and cost. Ringette Canada's parameters for the Learn to Train stage will be enforced to ensure commitment level and cost parity:

- Up to 3 ringette related training activities per week
- Up to 20 league games
- Up to 2 exhibition events
- Up to 3 tournaments (preferably in-province)