



XI

PRINCIPLES

FOR THE FUTURE OF
AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

OCTOBER 2020



Chris Nikou

Chairman, Football Federation Australia

There is no doubt that we are facing some of the most challenging times we have seen, both as a sport and society more broadly. COVID-19 has forced us all to take a step back and reflect so that we may make changes for the betterment of our sport and our community. Australian football, however, is resilient and we will bounce back.

For any team or organisation to reach the peak of its performance, it must be willing to embrace change and adapt quickly. Football Federation Australia ('FFA') has itself been undertaking its own process of change and adaptation for several years now.

In 2018, FFA expanded its Congress so that it better reflected our diverse football community. The FFA Board has equal gender representation and we have former Socceroo, Mark Bresciano, and Matilda, Amy Duggan, who bring their years of playing and professional experience to the team.

We will also never forget the moment FIFA President, Gianni Infantino, announced Australia as co-host of the FIFA 2023 Women's World Cup – this in itself presenting a unique window during which the benefits of further meaningful change will only be amplified.

We believe firmly in taking the necessary steps to ensure the protection, enhancement, and continued growth of our game. Our administration, led by CEO, James Johnson, has been empowered to take a deep dive into the many challenges facing our game today and chart a plan for our new path forward.

On behalf of the FFA Board, it brings us great pleasure to endorse the 'XI Principles for the future of Australian football'.



James Johnson

Chief Executive Officer, Football Federation Australia

I grew up playing my junior football in regional Queensland, for the mighty Berserker Bears Football Club in Rockhampton where my parents were volunteers. Like many of us involved in the game, our football club was the centre of a community which shared in a common joy and love of football.

COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on the Australian football landscape but it has not diminished that joy and love of football which makes our game special. It is the strength of our community, just like the Berserker Bears Football Club community and many others like it around the country, which will see us through this.

The challenging circumstances which the game finds itself in demands that we adapt and transform Australian football – change and innovation are the commodities we must deal in now. Securing the immediate future of our professional leagues and being awarded co-hosting rights to FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, gives us an excellent platform to transform football in Australia for its new future.

The 'XI Principles for the future of Australian football', are a collection of principles which have been developed based on feedback received over the course of this year from across the football ecosystem. They are designed to lead us on a path of further contemplation and discovery so that we can go deeper into the challenges facing the game together.

Australian football now finds itself on the precipice of a fundamental shift which will be both challenging and confronting, but one which I believe is inherently filled with opportunity and hope.

Our first step on this journey is to start with a conversation and we look forward to talking football with you all.

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The background image shows two Australian women's football players in action. The player in the foreground is wearing a white jersey with the Australian crest and is shouting with her mouth wide open, showing intense emotion. The player behind her has 'CARPENTER' and the number '21' on her back. The entire image is overlaid with a dark teal color and white geometric shapes, including circles and lines, suggesting a football pitch layout.

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL



MiniRoos players prepare for their first football experiences.



Westfield Matildas celebrate after equalising with China PR in the Women's Olympic Football Tournament Qualifier at Bankwest Stadium on February 13, 2020 in Sydney.



Tim Cahill scores during the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil Group B, Socceroos V Netherlands at Estadio Beira-Rio on June 18.



A-League Grand Final 2006, Sydney FC defeat Central Coast Mariners Aussie Stadium March 5, in Sydney, Australia.

Australian football is a melting pot of 2 million participants represented by over 200 different cultures. We are the most diverse and globally connected sport within the Australian sporting landscape.

We are a multi-layered and complex landscape, with Football Federation Australian ('FFA'), the governing body of football in Australia, co-existing with nine State and Territory Member Federations ('MF') which administer the game at State and Territory level. Some MFs will also have affiliated Zone Associations ('Associations') representing geographic regions within their boundaries. Both MFs and Associations, in addition to the near 2,400 community clubs across the country, and our dedicated volunteer community, which increased by 18% in 2019 to over 23,000, play a vital role in Australia's football ecosystem.

Australia's Professional Leagues, the Westfield W-League ('W-League') and A-League have traditionally been under 100% control of FFA. At the time of publishing, the details of a Heads of Agreement between FFA and the Australian Professional Football Clubs Association ('APFCA'), the representative body of the professional clubs, to complete the unbundling process of the professional leagues from FFA has been finalised.

The National Premier Leagues ('NPL' for Men and 'WNPL' for Women), represent the second highest level of elite football in Australia, albeit it grassroots, operating within each MF and providing a boost for both the Men's and Women's game at this level.

FFA is also part of a global football community and is a member of Fédération Internationale de Football Association ('FIFA'), the international governing body for football (information regarding FIFA is available at FIFA.com), the Asian Football Confederation ('AFC') and the ASEAN Football Federation ('ASEAN').

While the challenges and ailments of Australian football have been well documented over the past decade, and will be addressed in this paper, 2020 saw the emergence of a new threat, not just to football but on economies and to human life. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly challenged the traditional operating model of Australian football and there is no doubt that it represents the most serious existential threat the game has ever seen. It is likely that this impact will be felt for years to come as Australian football faces an unprecedented loss of revenue due to the suspension of the grassroots game and professional game expected depressed economic conditions that threaten previous levels support.

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

Unlike some of the other major participation sports in Australia, football has a 'ground-up' funding model, with registrations from grassroots participants fuelling the system and providing necessary income for the levels above to administer the game. COVID-19 has forced the entire football family to rethink the way it is set up to deliver the game to Australians all over the country, as noted by the constructive debate going on amongst our community since the pandemic took hold.

Football has worked in close partnership with Government throughout COVID-19 and as the imposed Federal, State and Territory Government restrictions ease and life for Australians begins to resemble some form of normality, we are also slowly seeing Australian football find its feet once again. There are positive signs for Australian football as it continues its road to recovery. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a unique opportunity to consider how Australian football can transform so that it is better suited to its current environment and the first steps in this journey of transformation have already begun.

We are seeing a more united game than ever before. FFA and MFs have remained in constant dialogue throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and together with the A-League Clubs and Professional Footballers Australia ('PFA'), were able to arrive at a united stance in relation to the suspension of football in March of 2020. That same level of dialogue ensured that football could resume in line with Government guidelines,

breathing life into the sport. FFA, A-League Clubs and the PFA were also able to successfully conclude an agreement which saw a 'festival of football' close out the remainder of the 2019/20 A-League season and Sydney FC crowned Champions of Australian football for the fifth time.

FFA is also focused on ensuring that football remains at the core of its decision-making and has established its Starting XI – a group former players and administrators with years of lived experience in football, both domestically and abroad, who themselves have the best interests of football at heart. The Starting XI have already commenced providing guidance to FFA on all football-related subjects and in early June, recommended that FFA establish a new and modern domestic transfer system to address some of Australian football's player production challenges and kickstart the domestic football economy.

Fox Sports Australia ('FSA') has been a partner of Australian football through its broadcasting agreement with FFA since the inception of the A-League and W-League. The termination of FFA's long term broadcast agreement with FSA, and then the subsequent negotiation of a one-year deal, has meant that FFA has been able to maintain its relationship with a long-term partner and secure the immediate future of both the A-League and W-League. The agreement is a significant achievement in a time of increased financial constraints on football and the Australian sports industry more broadly.



A-League players and Westfield W-League Players pose during the 2018/19 A-League Season Launch Fox Studios on October 15, 2018 in Sydney.

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL



Celebration as FIFA announced Australia as the hosts to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup at the FFA Offices on June 26, 2020 in Sydney, Australia.

A NEW OPPORTUNITY

In the early hours of Friday, 26 June 2020, FFA and New Zealand Football ('NZF') were awarded hosting rights for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, after the FIFA Council voted 22-13 in favour of its joint, As One bid. It is a decision which will change football in Australia forever.

The success of the bid represents a watershed moment for football in Australia and indeed global football. The first Women's World Cup to be held in the Southern Hemisphere; the first co-Confederation Women's World Cup; and the first senior FIFA tournament in Australia and New Zealand, are a few factors which made the 'AsOne2023' bid unique and which ultimately contributed to its success.

Significantly for Australian football, it also a show of intent to the Australian sporting community and the global football landscape as to the type of future which it sees for itself. Australian football has been knocking on the door of global football for some time now and many will remember its bid to host FIFA's 2022 World Cup, which was ultimately awarded to Qatar. FFA hosted an extraordinarily successful AFC Asian Cup in 2015, attracting record crowds and television audiences. Both endeavours reflect the imperative for Australian football to achieve recognition and influence within football's global landscape.

The awarding co-hosting rights to FIFA's 2023 Women's World Cup, has breathed new life into Australian football and will go a long way to cementing Australian football's place as a serious player in the domestic and international sporting landscapes. The support of Australian Governments to deliver a technically superb bid, and the public reaction since the decision, shows that the community has a genuine and widespread interest in football.

Through this heightened period of community and government interest in the game, the event provides a once in a lifetime opportunity to realise a truly meaningful legacy for the game. Investment in stadium and elite training infrastructure is already under discussion, development of grassroots facilities will be essential to meet the surging demand that is expected in participation at the amateur level. New fans will be attracted to the event and, if planned for properly, could become life-long fans of the professional game. Finally, the player pathway, youth and senior national team camps and matches will need to be prioritised in order ensure the Westfield Matildas perform at their best in 2023. All these outcomes will only be achieved through coordinated planning across the football ecosystem and with key external stakeholders such as Federal, State and Territory Governments.

The desire for Australian football to maximise the opportunity to host the tournament and leave a lasting legacy for Australian football, particularly women's football in Australia, only strengthens the case for change and amplifies the opportunity before Australian football for transformation.

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

What does this transformation look like and how does Australian football carry on the momentum it has built so far in its journey of transformation?

If two individual nations can come together, As One, to agree on a common vision for the FIFA Women's World Cup, and succeed in this endeavour, then what gains could be made if the entire Australian football ecosystem were to do the same?

FFA believe that the next step for Australian football is to develop a united 'Vision' for the game to work towards. We dared to dream when we submitted our joint bid to host the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup and look where dreaming got us. So, let us dream once again and imagine a future for Australian football - what will Australian football look like in 15 years' time?

IMAGINE.....

In pursuing its Vision to become 'a leading Football nation where everyone is inspired to live and love the game', this is what the Australian football landscape looks like in 2035:

- **Australian football has a strong football identity:**

- Australian football has a built strong sense of community which holds together an ecosystem in which the game's stakeholders have clarity of role and responsibility, are unified towards a single vision for the game, and an appreciation for the interdependency required for football to thrive.

- Our volunteers are celebrated, and their experience has been prioritised and enhanced through best of class administration platforms.
- Australian football has a place to call 'home' where we can come together to tell our stories and celebrate our rich history.
- Having made the strategic decision to focus more on producing the best talent possible, Australian clubs are known globally and have a reputation for developing world-class talent.
- The strengthening of Australia's player production line has yielded significant benefits for Australian clubs and leagues via increased transfer fee revenues, improved quality in the leagues because of high quality players in the domestic market, and a strong connection with the world's best clubs and leagues.
- Australia has players located around the world plying their trade in the biggest leagues and for the biggest clubs.
- Our professional leagues (A-League and W-League) have ranked consistently in the 'top 3' in Asia with our Women's League ranked in the 'top 5' globally.
- Australian football has a unique identity and has deeply embedded itself in the culture of Australian society by embracing its roots, tapping into its diverse community, and setting global trends.
- Through better alignment of its domestic competitions and a functioning domestic transfer system, the game enjoys a strong connection between its large participant base and the professional game.



Julie Dolan projected on the Sydney Opera House on June 25, 2020 in Sydney.

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

- Football has been able to establish positive and supportive environments which encourage and promote the involvement of women in football. This has resulted in football's administration truly reflecting the diversity of the football community and the appointment of the games' first female CEO and Chair.
- Australian football has strong relationships across all levels of Government and has worked collaboratively to secure its infrastructure requirements for its continuously growing community.
- Australian football has industry-leading programs and pathways to provide participants with para and/or intellectual disability opportunities to play at all levels and into our elite para football men's and women's national teams.
- Football plays a significant role in the lives of those which have sought refuge in Australia through innovative industry-leading programs.
- Australia is seen as one of the leading voices in global football and has a representative on the FIFA Council and Asian Football Confederation ('AFC') Executive Committee.
- As a member of the AFC Executive Committee, Australia is 'hard-wired' into regional football matters and is a well-respected and leading voice in the region.



Action from the 2019 National CP Football Championships.



Players representing Ivory Coast and Mali take part in the 2019 African Cup NSW tournament.

- FFA has also enhanced its historical relationships and forged new relationships, with the likes of the Oceania Football Confederation ('OFC') and the Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association of Football ('CONCACAF'), to build important international strategic partnerships.
- The 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup set new standards for the tournament and has left a legacy for women's football in Australia, and across Asia and Oceania.
- Australian football is recognised as a leader in Indigenous sporting programs and the reconciliation process for Indigenous Australians.
- Football has built strong programs and mechanisms for communication and interaction with multicultural and CALD backgrounds which sit 'outside of the system' but have strong cultural ties and connections with football and utilise it as a tool for social cohesion and integration.
- Australian football has continued to grow its participation base, which now sits at approximately 3.7 million participants, and has maintained itself as the largest participation-based sport in the country through new and innovative programs and services designed to penetrate deeper into Australia's diverse society.

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL



Socceroos winning the penalty shootout 4-2 against Uruguay in the 2006 FIFA World Cup qualifier, Sydney, November 16, 2005.

- **We are now locally focused, but globally minded:**

- Football, in line with FIFA President Gianni Infantino's vision, has become "truly global".
- FIFA is administering: the FIFA World Cup, Club World Cup (men); the Global Nations League (women); and Women's Club World Cup.
- Australian football has considered the global landscape and has set its domestic strategy to maximise its opportunities in these global competitions. As a result of this shift, regional club competitions in Asia have become more relevant.
- Australian football has reconnected itself to the global football economy via the establishment of a modern domestic transfer system.
- Following the successful hosting of the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, Australia has cemented itself as a world class organiser of football tournaments and has hosted more AFF, AFC and FIFA tournaments.
- Corporate Australia understands the global reach of football and the unique way football can open doors to key markets. As a result, Australian companies are more engaged in football in Australia and across ASEAN and Asia.
- FFA has successfully bid and hosted a FIFA Congress, solidifying Australia's presence in global football matters"

- **National Teams have a strong reputation and we have had regular success on the international stage:**

- The Olyroos and Westfield Matildas have just qualified for the Olympic Games.
- The Matildas have won the Olympics or a Women's World Cup previously.

- The Socceroos will begin their WC Qualifying campaign later in the year, having regularly been in the top 15 in the FIFA Rankings.
- The Socceroos have been the number one ranked team in Asia for the last 5 years and are a regular participant in, the AFF Suzuki Cup.
- The success of the senior National Teams is supported by the junior National Teams which have qualified for every major tournament for the last 10 years.
- We have established an Indigenous national team and along with our Para national teams, are competing on the global stage.

- **Our Leagues and clubs are healthy and thriving:**

- Our professional leagues (A-League and W-League) have experienced a good period of prosperity, are sustainable and are consistently ranked in the 'top 3' Leagues in Asia with our women's league ranked in the 'top 5' globally.
- Each year, our professional clubs (Women and Men) are competing for success at a regional and global level.
- Our professional clubs are also top regular challengers in Asian club competitions.
- A-League clubs are regular participants at FIFA's revamped Club World Cup while W-League clubs are challenging regularly to win FIFA's new Women's Club World Cup.
- Our professional leagues (A-League and W-League) also have a significant role to play in producing top quality Australian talent and have a clear position within the player pathway:

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

- The W-League works in tandem with the WNPL to ensure that those female players who do not have an opportunity to play overseas, now have more opportunities to play domestically.
- The A-League has become a producer of top talent which the world's biggest leagues and clubs closely watch, with the funds from international transfers fuelling the Australian football economy.
- Clubs now play in football-specific or appropriately sized stadiums across the country. Stadiums are accessible and the fan experience has been prioritised and enhanced so supporters are able to express themselves freely, but always with respect, in a genuine football atmosphere.
- The professional game has attracted strong investment and the enterprise value of our professional clubs and game have experienced continued growth.
- Regionally, our participant clubs are now among regular favourites to win the AFC Champions League ('ACL') (Men and Women).
- Our second-tier competitions are administered, centrally, effectively and play a key role in the player pathway.
- We now enjoy the highest rates of player transition from our second-tier competitions into our Professional Leagues.
- The general health of our second-tier clubs is at an all-time high because of innovative club development programs and the application of a relevant national club licensing system.



Joshua Wilkins (C) of Heidelberg United celebrates victory after the penalty shoot out. FFA Cup Round 16, Sydney United 58 FC v Heidelberg United at Sydney United Sports Centre on August 23, 2017.

- **We have strong football products which are driving increased participation and fan engagement**

- Hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup proved a catalyst for growth in participation numbers across all demographics but particularly for Women and Girls.
- Australian football reached its goal of obtaining a 50/50 split between female and male participants by 2027 and now maintains a healthy balance as participation numbers continue to grow.
- Domestically, our professional leagues and second-tier competitions are aligned through the creation of a 'national football calendar'. This has enabled FFA to:
 - Better align all professional competitions with the Australian grassroots season.
 - Increase the conversion rate of its now approx. 3.7M participants into fans.
 - Create a special place in the sporting calendar for the football finals to be played each year with the FFA Cup being the last match of the season.
 - Align the professional competitions with the ACL calendar as well as FIFA International Match Calendar.
- Our second-tier competition is thriving, and its 'finals series' is a regular feature in the annual football calendar, driving competitive tension and fan interest.



Ellie Carpenter (L) and Kyah Simon of Melbourne City celebrate winning the 2020 W-League Grand Final. Melbourne City V Sydney FC at AAMI Park on March 21, in Melbourne.

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

- FFA have introduced a Women's FFA Cup.
- The FFA Cup (Men and Women) has given clubs across the entire ecosystem an opportunity to compete on the national and international stage.
- Futsal and Beach Soccer have been established as important forms of the game domestically with representative National Teams competing regularly at international level.
- The future of the game has been secured via the creation of an entity which has enhanced commercial opportunities for the game via innovative solutions such as a 'digital football hub'.
- Coach numbers have significantly increased, particularly for women, Indigenous Australians and those seeking refuge in Australia – courses are accessible and career opportunities for Australian coaches have developed domestically and internationally.
- Numbers of referees and match officials have increased domestically. Internationally, Australian match officials are well-respected and often appointed for the highest profile matches in international football.

- **The domestic football economy is healthy and thriving:**

- The domestic football economy is healthy and thriving, fuelled by the establishment of a domestic transfer system which has been in operation since 2021.
- In FIFA's 2034, International Transfer Market Report, Australia appeared in the top 15 ranked countries for value of transfer receipts having received more than US \$85 million in transfer fees for the 5th year in a row.
- The steady flow of transfer fees into Australia continues to stimulate the domestic football economy and reward and incentivise Australian clubs to continue to invest in the training and development of players.
- The establishment of the FFA Clearing House now helps ensure that training rewards are being distributed to Australian clubs and FFA can regulate the domestic transfer system effectively.
- Professional football is a stable and rewarding career of choice for our players.
- Agents have been operating under an accreditation framework for over 10 years and operate at some of the highest standards seen globally.



The girls Newcastle Indigenous All Stars team celebrate at the 2019 Clash of Cultures tournament in NSW.

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

- **Improved governance structures and operations have strengthened and enhanced the game:**

- The game is united, not only in spirit, but also in terms of governance and operations. These operational improvements have had positive flow-on impacts on the game:
 - Australian football is aligned and has one strategy.
 - Each stakeholder has a clearly defined purpose and role within the broader football ecosystem, leading to more efficient and effective administration and delivery of the game.
 - Australia is one of the more affordable places to play football at all levels whilst still delivering the most value for its participants.
 - The game is accessible to all, no matter age, ability, gender, cultural or socio-economic background.
 - This affordability means that football continues to experience growth and tap into Australia's diverse society.

- We have one of the highest rates of qualified coaches per capita at all levels of the game, driven by a focus on finding the right balance between 'coach accreditation' and 'coach development'.
- Australian coaches dominate both the professional leagues and second tier competitions of Australian football.
- The game can access significant government partnership and funding via a unified approach.
- The game can maximise its commercial potential via a unified commercial strategy.
- The important role which sees clubs as hubs for community interaction is enhanced.
- Our workforce is highly skilled and motivated, underpinned by a strong volunteer community – the cornerstone of our game.

A NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR FOOTBALL FEDERATION AUSTRALIA

In the first quarter of 2020, FFA began the strategic planning process for its upcoming operating cycle. Before COVID-19 took hold, FFA was able to establish a new strategic framework and had refreshed its Purpose, Vision and Values. The XI Principles have been drafted within this new strategic framework.

The refreshed Purpose, Vision and Values of FFA are as follows:

PURPOSE

Bringing communities together through football; connecting Australia to the world

VISION

A leading Football nation where everyone is inspired to live and love the game

VALUES

IMPACT, ON AND OFF THE FIELD

We challenge how we think and what we do; We seek ways to grow the vast impact football can have on our communities and people's lives; We strive to influence as industry thought-leaders.

INCLUSIVE & DIVERSE FOOTBALL FOR ALL

Our strength is our diversity; We celebrate that football is embedded in the nation's social fabric; it follows the story of Australia; We strive to be accessible for all.

A UNITED TEAM

We bring people together to unleash the power of football, and to deliver our shared Vision; We are each other's advocates and care about everyone's wellbeing; We bring our team spirit to the game.

TRUST

We seek to build trust across the whole football community, with all who take part, for the good of the game; We are trusted custodians of the Australian game; we act with integrity and objectivity.

XI PRINCIPLES FOR THE FUTURE OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

This second and final iteration of the XI Principles discussion paper builds on the 'living document' published in early July 2020 and represents the culmination of a thorough consultation process. The discussion paper has been updated, where possible and appropriate, to reflect to feedback received and the numerous steps which have been taken in the interim to bring the XI Principles to life.

The XI Principles represents the strategic agenda for Australian football in this upcoming operating cycle and will replace the Whole of Football Plan published in May 2015. Importantly, it establishes an excellent platform to develop an exciting and new strategic direction for Australian football.



Lisa De Vanna (L) celebrates after scoring during the 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup football tournament Group C match Australia against Norway, Hangzhou Dragon Stadium in Hangzhou, September 15, 2007. She went on to score 4 in the tournament.

THE XI PRINCIPLES BEING PROPOSED ARE:

- I Build a consistent and strong identity for Australian football which inspires all Australians.
- II Develop a new narrative for football which signifies a fresh start for the game in Australia, successfully ties together all new initiatives and distinguishes it from other sporting codes in the country.
- III Evolve and grow an integrated and thriving football ecosystem driven by a modern domestic transfer system.
- IV Ensure the Australian Football pyramid is aligned and connected through optimised competition structures.
- V Create a world class environment for youth development /production by increasing match minutes for youth players and streamlining the player pathway.
- VI Create a strong culture around coach and referee development by emphasising the importance of the role as a skilled position and a vital link in player development.
- VII Transition towards a modern, fit-for-purpose governance framework for football in Australia in line with global standards and best-practice sports governance in Australia.
- VIII Create an operating and governance model for the A-League, W-League and Y-League which is fit for the current circumstances.
- IX Ensure that football becomes more open and accessible to the Australian community and that cost does not remain a barrier to participation.
- X Accelerate and enhance the growth of the game by driving participation of women and girls and enhancing existing competition structures to promote player development.
- XI Elevate even further the Westfield Matildas and the Socceroos as the unifying symbols of the game and heroes who epitomise the Australian football identity to inspire every young Australian regardless of their ability or background.



PRINCIPLE

A NATIONAL FOOTBALL IDENTITY



A NATIONAL FOOTBALL IDENTITY

When we look around the world, we see that all great football organisations have a strong identity:

- Spain has 'tiki-taka' football, its league football is built upon the success of two mega clubs in Real Madrid and F.C. Barcelona which are regular winners of European club competitions.
- Brazil is synonymous with 'jogo bonito', its formidable national teams, the 'Selecao', and has a unique competition structure consisting of state and national based competitions.
- German football has a strong national identity underpinned by the performances of its national teams and Bundesliga's "51% community ownership model".
- Belgian football is now renowned for youth development, demonstrated by the fact that despite not having won any major trophies in the last 15 years, its men's national team is ranked number one in the world.
- The United States and Japan are leaders in women's football.
- England's FA Cup has strong community and grassroots ties with a long history of connecting all levels of domestic football in England. It is described by the English FA as a competition which still, despite the league pyramid in England, "is the only way in which a team of postmen, office clerks and production line workers might get the chance of walking out at Old Trafford, Anfield or Stamford Bridge".

Today, Australian football can be identified by some of the following characteristics:

- Football has the highest rates of participation of any club-based participation sport in Australia with 2 million participants across the country in club-based, schools and other programs, and operates in the most globally competitive landscape of any sport.
- Despite strong participation rates and the most internationally competitive environment, football has not been able to convert this into a commensurate investment in high-performance from Federal Government. For FY19/20 it was allocated \$3,447,750 under Sport Australia's investment allocation, compared to: Swimming (\$14,109,352); Hockey (\$8,763,490); Basketball (\$8,468,783); Sailing (\$9,074,272) and Cycling (\$11,540,825). The Australian Government's high-performance funding has, to date, been determined by the prospect of Olympic success, however success in a FIFA World Cup would have the same (if not more) impact in inspiring Australians to play sport and delivering civic pride. All the while, other nation states around the region continue to prioritise investment in football development in search of success in the most international of sporting arenas, steadily closing (or widening) the performance gap at youth and senior-level. Competition for places at FIFA World Cups is heating up, and the support of government to ensure Australia does not drop off the pace is vital.

- Australian Governments are increasingly understanding and accepting of the enormous scale of football at a grassroots level across the community. Most recently, for example, State and Territory Member Federations have had good success in creating strong partnerships with Government for various initiatives. For example, in 2018, Football Victoria, in collaboration with the Victorian Government, established its \$20 million 'World Game Facilities Fund' a state-wide program that funds the development of high-quality, accessible community football infrastructure. However, with only 18% of all football facilities considered to be 'female-friendly', considerably more investment is required to upgrade community facilities to be fit for purpose.
- Our senior men's and women's national teams are two of the most popular teams in the domestic sporting landscape. The Socceroos have qualified for every FIFA World Cup since 2006 and the Matildas are ranked seventh in the World by FIFA and expected to improve in the coming years.
- Despite the recent successes of the Olyroos and Joeys, the performance of our junior men's and women's national teams in regional competitions and the success rate of qualifying for FIFA tournaments has been inconsistent over the last 10-15 years, ever since joining the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) from the Oceania Football Confederation (OFC).
- An analysis of the A-League over the last 5 seasons reveals that players who turned 32 years old during the season played the most match minutes, meaning the A-League can be profiled as a league with an identity of playing older players.
- The professional game has operated under a business model which has restricted its ability to make decisions in the best interests of the game and has sought to avoid 'competing' with other codes.
- After making both domestic and international headlines, FFA underwent significant governance reform in 2018 to broaden its membership.
- The awarding of co-hosting rights of FIFA's 2023 Women's World Cup to FFA is recognition of Australian football's domestic efforts in the advancement of women's football and its place as a world leader in women's football.

But there is so much more to Australian football than what we might read in the papers or hear in the news. From the migrants who brought the game to Australia in the late 19th Century to the vast volunteer workforce, to the games' proud Indigenous heritage, Cultural and Linguistically Diverse Communities ('CALD') and LGBTIQ+ communities, Australian football has been nurtured and shaped for over a hundred years by its diverse and passionate community. There is a strong sentiment for Australian football to return itself to this heritage and do more to harness the diversity inherent in its community.



A NATIONAL FOOTBALL IDENTITY



Female footballers taking part in the Football South Australia African Nations Cup in 2019.

In recent times, FFA has been criticised for taking an elitist approach to the way in which the game is administered, in so much as it has not been able to consistently strike the appropriate balance between grassroots and community football, and the professional game and national teams. Whilst there is widespread recognition of the importance of a thriving professional game and strong support for national teams, these should act as points of inspiration for the wider football community and work to support its continued growth.

The key component of the Australian football community is its 2,400 football clubs and volunteer workforce across the country, which in 2019, increased to 23,322 people, demonstrating the importance of the volunteer workforce to the administration and delivery of the game in Australia. There are also currently several football communities that are outside of the current FFA-sanctioned football system. Many of these communities are from multicultural and CALD backgrounds who often have strong cultural ties and connections with football. These communities utilise football as a social cohesion tool and an effective integration instrument for new members of their communities. Football needs to evolve how it interacts with communities outside of the system and how it assesses the tangible and intangible benefits of association. Making a connection with CALD communities would provide opportunities to increase the talent pool and potential football participant base.

The changing habits of society, a changing environment, and the ever-increasing rate of globalisation in football means that the way in which we interact with our game is constantly evolving. This, consequently, has an impact on the way we deliver football, the types of products we create and the type of players and brand of football we produce.

Australian football must ensure that its grassroots community, which makes up most of the Australian football ecosystem, remains a key component of its identity. The challenge for Australian football today is to develop a clear identity which truly resonates across the entire spectrum of its football community. The identity should embrace its multicultural origins and the diversity of its community. It must also be reflective of Australia's Indigenous heritage and account for broader societal influences such as new migrants and those who seek refuge in Australia. It should also continue to become embedded in the Australian way of life in all forms, in either structured club competitions on a Saturday morning or in informal social settings whenever Australians choose to play, and not be considered or positioned to be a "niche" sport.

As the most global sport in the Australian landscape, Australian football has an opportunity to tap into its powerful and inherent characteristics to position itself as a game for all, no matter your background or ability, in a way which is unique to Australia.



THE I PRINCIPLE

BUILD A CONSISTENT AND STRONG IDENTITY FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL WHICH INSPIRES ALL AUSTRALIANS.



Tim Cahill celebrates scoring the opening goal with David Carney and Brett Holman. 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa Group D. Australia V Serbia at Mbombela Stadium on June 23, 2010

PROPOSED MEASURES

A simple and clear identity:

- Create a personality unique to Australian football that is relevant and speaks to all segments of Australian society which acknowledges Indigenous heritage and, maximises and embraces the diversity inherent in Australian society today.

Establish strong measures for what success looks like:

- Develop a clear understanding of what success looks like for Australian football by articulating a clear vision for the game which unites the Australian football community.
- Ensure clarity in roles and responsibilities for each of the game's stakeholders towards the achievement of this united vision for the game.
- Promote and deliver the standards of behaviour expected of all participants in the game, which are inclusive, unifying and respectful, by embedding these behaviours in FFA's Member Protection Framework.

Connect with our Indigenous heritage and our diverse history:

- Develop a clear plan for the development and growth of Indigenous football that creates opportunities in football for Indigenous talent whilst also making a meaningful contribution to reconciliation.
- FFA to appoint a dedicated resource to develop and lead national Indigenous programs.
- Reconnect with the roots of Australian football by:
 - Acknowledging and celebrating its rich history e.g. the creation of an Australian football museum.
 - Embracing the game's multicultural origins and diverse history by bringing this into the mainstream.

"We are a strong and united community with a strong domestic brand built upon our large, diverse community; we are a producer and exporter of top global talent; our National Teams and administration reflects the diversity of our community; our Professional Leagues are amongst the best in Asia; we are a global leader in women's football; National teams are strong global brands."



THE I PRINCIPLE



NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian speaks to the media during a media opportunity following Australia's announcement as co-host of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023

- Recognising those, across all eras of the game and all stakeholders, who have made significant contributions and for their service to the game such as players, coaches, volunteers, and administrators.
- Create an FFA "Legends" program to ensure that our former Socceroos and Matildas are still able to make contributions to the game long after they have finished playing and to inspire the next generation of Australian footballers.
- Harmonising the records of our competitions so they remain connected.

- Maximise Australia's diverse history and traditional relationships to lay the foundation for strategic partnerships with other countries which will promote exchange and collaboration (e.g. establish a Memorandum of Understanding with New Zealand Football).
- Initiate connection to multicultural communities adjacent to the system and provide fit-for-purpose support to those communities.
- Enhance the role of community clubs in engaging and working collaboratively with CALD communities.

Define our way of football:

- Take a player-centric approach by identifying desired player characteristics and embedding these into talent identification systems.
- Identify characteristics of a style of play which are authentic and resonate with Australian society.

Create a strong and unified voice:

- Football must put forward a strong and unified voice to position itself as a key partner for the Governments. MFs can play a significant role in enhancing positive relationships with State and Territory Governments to advance both a local and national football agenda.
- FFA should make a strategic shift towards becoming the publisher and teller of football stories to enhance its communications, through new and innovative content-driven solutions direct to the football community.

Enhance connection to community and provide support for volunteers:

- Remain connected to the community and put forward a strong and unified voice to position itself as a key partner for Government to facilitate opportunities (and additional funding) to grow the game through specific diversity and inclusion programs. These include programs for CALD communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, All Ability participants and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Evolve community and grassroots football product offerings to ensure the game is adaptive and reflective of the diversity and needs of the football community.
- Prioritise the experience of the game's volunteer workforce and ensure that they are receiving the required support to carry out their role in delivering and administering the game at grassroots level.
- Enhance the role of community clubs in bringing our communities together.



PRINCIPLE

RESET THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL
NARRATIVE

RESET THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL NARRATIVE



Australia's crest on the 2020 National Team home jersey.

The exploits of the Socceroos and Westfield Matildas have been key in gaining broader acceptance of football within Australian society and establishing it as one of the premier sports in the country. Today, our national teams, continue to be some of the most well-supported teams in Australia.

The Westfield Matildas were ranked as Australia's most-loved sporting team according to the BenchMark Emotional Connection study, conducted by True North Research following their FIFA Women's World Cup 2019 campaign in France. The streamed replay of the Socceroos famous victory over Uruguay in the 2006 FIFA World Cup Qualifier on Facebook in March 2020, reached more than 1.6 million people, and the #AUSvURU hashtag trended on Twitter with a total of 3.1 million impressions. The Socceroos 'top 5' viewing audiences for its FIFA World Cup matches all averaged over 2 million viewers.

Over many years, there have been those that have sought to paint football as an "outsider" in the Australian sporting

landscape and a game preoccupied with politics and in-fighting. The challenge for Australian football, is to take a deliberate and considered approach to resetting and controlling its narrative, both domestically and abroad, to one which truly reflects its aspirations, the strength and diversity of its community and the popularity of the game in Australia.

At the centre of this narrative, must be Australian football's identity. From the game's multicultural history and its broad participation base, to the success of all national teams, these stories must be communicated, shared, and celebrated. Importantly, it must be a narrative which resonates with all members of the football community, particularly our youth, regardless of ability or achievement. Outside of the more common stories in relation to elite football, football's narrative must do more to recognise the various layers of the game. Australian match officials are well-respected both within AFC and FIFA but opportunities to promote and celebrate these achievements at a national level can sometimes be overlooked.

RESET THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL NARRATIVE

There is also significant work within grassroots football within the CALD, LGBTIQ+, Indigenous and All-Abilities communities, and mechanisms should be introduced which promote collaboration and connection to these communities to ensure that they are brought into FFA's mainstream storytelling as demonstrations of the power of football to promote social cohesion and inclusion. The National Indigenous Football Championships, the African Nations Cup and Canberra United's All-Ability Academy are all examples of initiatives which should form core aspects of the Australian football narrative.

The awarding of co-hosting rights of the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup to Australia and New Zealand was a watershed moment for Australian football and is a significant step towards the game resetting its narrative. The announcement has united the nation around the game and galvanised the Australian football community behind a common cause. It is also due recognition of Australian football's commitment to advancing women's football and its ongoing efforts to strengthen its position within global football affairs. Confirmation that the Victorian Government will invest \$1.5 million towards master planning and design for the Home of the Matildas in Victoria facility is an example of the opportunities available to the sport to maximise Australia's hosting of the tournament via a unified strategy. The 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup is a significant milestone in the 15-year vision outlined by FFA and has the potential to change the face of Australian football forever.

FFA must ensure that football's narrative captures the uniqueness of the game in a cluttered domestic sporting landscape and is used to foster strong connections and engagement with the football community in a way which builds trust and confidence that FFA, together with the game's stakeholders, is working to deliver a better game.

In August 2020, FFA appointed a Head of Marketing, Communications and Corporate Affairs to develop a comprehensive Communications Strategy for FFA, and lead the telling of Australian football's story in all its diversity.

Australian football is in an opportune moment to advance a new and bold narrative for the future of the game via innovative and contemporary platforms. It must be a narrative which builds trust, shifts sentiment, and fosters goodwill for the new trajectory of football in Australia.



Maverick Turner playing for Sydney Rangers FC, Australia's first gay and inclusive men's club, at Blick Oval in Canterbury, NSW.



Grassroots and community club Fitzroy Lions in the 2020 National Teams Kit.

THE II PRINCIPLE

DEVELOP A NEW NARRATIVE FOR FOOTBALL WHICH SIGNIFIES A FRESH START FOR THE GAME IN AUSTRALIA, SUCCESSFULLY TIES TOGETHER ALL NEW INITIATIVES AND DISTINGUISHES IT FROM OTHER SPORTING CODES IN THE COUNTRY.

PROPOSED MEASURES

Reset the narrative of Australian football

- Reset Australian football's narrative based upon 'values' of football which can be adopted nationally across all stakeholders and the broader football community.
- Build on the momentum created by winning the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup Bid to drive a fresh and positive narrative for Australian football.
- Create a narrative which is contemporary, genuine, and acknowledges Australian football's multicultural origins, its rich history and diverse football community today. It must foster unity, be football-focused and capitalise on football's global nature for the benefit of the Australian game.
- Foster an environment which promotes fair and objective discussion and debate amongst the football community that makes a positive contribution to the game in Australia.
- Improve engagement with former great players to involve them in the telling of the Australian football narrative, particularly those not currently involved in Australian football.
- A new narrative must emphasise a "fresh start" for football in Australia which leaves the politics and in-fighting of old in the past and presents an opportunity for all involved in the game to contribute to "a new chapter" (not a new book) of football in Australia.
- Develop a comprehensive Communications Strategy for FFA, on behalf of the football community.

Create and reinforce an identity for the National Team jersey

- Create an identity for the national team jersey which inspires all Australians. For example, the Nigerian national team jersey has become an icon amongst football fashion aficionados and is renowned for integrating hand drawn traditional aesthetics with modern football designs. The release of Nigeria's jerseys and team apparel for the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia paid homage to the Super



Socceroos 1993 Jersey

Eagle's previous FIFA World Cup jerseys and received world-wide admiration for its integration of traditional identity with retro football design.

- Create a Matildas jersey in the lead up to hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup which tells the unique story of the team.

Build platforms for dialogue within the football community

- To empower the voice of the Australian football community, establish 'Grassroots Forums' as a platform where members of the football community and fans can share their views on Australian football directly with FFA's CEO and other senior football administrators. Forums will be held all over Australia in person and via online platforms to ensure they are accessible and reach as many members and fans of the football community as possible.

THE II PRINCIPLE

- Establish an 'Executives Program' which brings the game's appointed leaders and senior administrators from all levels of the game and all stakeholders together to discuss, debate and collaborate on the most pressing matters impacting the game. The Executives Program will be held at regular intervals throughout the calendar year.
- Establish an annual 'Football Summit' to bring industry leaders from around the globe together in a collaborative and interactive forum which showcases football and connects Australian football and its community to the world.
- Enhance the role of community clubs in engaging and working collaboratively with the CALD, LGBTIQ+, Indigenous and All-Abilities communities by providing appropriate tools and support.

Establish a home for football in Australia

- FFA has terminated its lease agreement and will soon depart its current premises. It must now look to establish a national 'Home of Football' that creates a sense of place for all levels of the game, providing high-performance spaces for national teams and development pathways, as well as servicing the surrounding grassroots football community.
- Alongside the Home of Football, FFA will seek to create a museum which celebrates the history of the game in Australia.
- Build a strong and diverse FFA team to support the delivery of football across Australia to ensure that FFA has the best football administrators from across the country.
- Support the establishment or modernisation of State Homes of Football where such facilities do not yet exist (Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Australian Capital Territory, Western Australia).

A new name

- Consider realigning FFA with its roots as 'Association' football and bring consistency to the naming of football entities across the game.
- Consider renaming and rebranding the A-League and W-League in conjunction with the clubs following the completion of the unbundling process.
- Consider renaming and rebranding the National Premier Leagues.

Promote the game

- Develop market leading football products and services, which maximise the unique value of women's football and the Matildas, particularly in the lead up to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, to drive interest, fan engagement, participation numbers, and commercial revenues which should ultimately be invested back into the game, and to support national teams.
- Commit resources to ensure the game is strategically marketed to engage all levels of the game and across all eras of football.
- Create targeted marketing campaigns to strategic football strongholds and key growth regions e.g. Sydney and Melbourne.
- Ensure that FFA can deliver a consistent grassroots program across Australia so that more Australians can fall in love with the game.
- Create talk shows for women in football and women's football.
- Showcase and market the global game, particularly in regional areas around Australia e.g. FFA's joint bids with Cessnock City Council and Greater Shepparton City Council to host qualification groups for AFC's U-17 and U-20 Asian Cup in 2022.



West German forward Gerd Mueller (C) scores against Australian goalkeeper Jack Reilly (L) during the first round match between West Germany and Australia at the 1974 FIFA World Cup



PRINCIPLE

STIMULATE THE GROWTH OF
THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL
ECONOMY

AMERICAN
EXPRESS

STIMULATE THE GROWTH OF THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL ECONOMY



Caitlin Foord and Sam Kerr, match up during the FA Women's Continental League Cup Final between Chelsea FC Women and Arsenal FC Women at City Ground on February 29, 2020 in Nottingham, England.

The global football transfer market has evolved over the many years it has been in place. In 2018, FIFA announced landmark reforms to the global transfer system which place an emphasis on returning rewards to training clubs. These reforms, which remain ongoing and will need to be implemented at a domestic level in the coming years, have been agreed to by the likes of the World Leagues Forum, European Clubs Association and FIFPro.

Driving the global football transfer market is European football, which had a market revenue in the 2018/19 season which totalled €28.9 billion and is comprised of approximately €8 billion in transfer fees (international and domestic), representing over 28% of revenues in the European game.

Australian football has not operated with a properly functioning modern transfer system for some time, creating a 'gap' in the Australian football ecosystem which requires urgent remedy. In June 2020, the newly established Starting XI recommended to FFA's Football Development Committee and in turn the FFA Board that FFA establish a new and modern domestic transfer system. There has since been strong support from the football community for its implementation to help address Australian football's player production challenges.

The successful implementation of a revised domestic transfer system would provide much-needed stimulus to the Australian football economy and lay the platform for Australia to further access the international transfer market. It is important that FFA

raise awareness of the international transfer system, the growing market and the recent reforms introduced by FIFA. FFA must then look to establish a new and modern domestic transfer system which complements the international transfer system and promotes a healthy domestic transfer market.

An optimised domestic transfer system will ensure clubs are not only incentivised to do so, but will also have more to invest, via transfer fees, in the continued training and development of players. It must also strike the appropriate balance between the ability for players to move freely, with a club's desire to secure players for longer periods and receive the benefit of its investment. The domestic transfer system must also adequately protect minors and vulnerable players from being exploited.

The recent transfer of Liberato Cacace from Wellington Phoenix to Belgian club, Sint-Truiden, was reported to be valued at approximately US \$1.4 million, nearly the entire amount of Australia's transfer receipts reported in FIFA's Global Transfer Market Report 2019 (Men) ('2019 Transfer Market Report') at just US \$1.9 million, representing a 62% drop from the previous year. Of the AFC Member Associations ranked higher than Australia (Men) in Asia, Japan (28) received US \$29.4 million and Korea Republic (39) received US \$26.6 million. Outside of Asia, countries ranked similarly to Australia are also outperforming it in the international transfer market: Canada (73) received US \$30.4 million; Czech Republic (45) received US \$43.8 million; and Scotland (49) received US \$33.6 million.



STIMULATE THE GROWTH OF THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL ECONOMY



A product of the Westfield W-League, defender Ellie Carpenter was transferred to women's football giants Olympique Lyonnais in June, 2020.

FIFA's 2019 Transfer Market Report also shows that a healthy level of international transfer receipts may have a positive impact on the performance of a national team. Out of the top 10 FIFA-ranked nations in Men's Football, eight (8) also appear in the top 10 ranked countries for value of incoming transfer fees.

To put this into perspective, Belgium, the number one ranked team in the world currently, received US \$295.6 million in transfer fees while China spent US \$298.2 million. So, in 2019, Belgian football received nearly US \$300 million which it was able to reinvest into its domestic football market and the continued training and development of its players.

Australia has largely underperformed in the international transfer market for many years (for men) meaning it has significantly less than its counterparts to invest back into the domestic football economy for the continued production of Australian players.

The Training Rewards regime is a fundamental aspect of the international and domestic football economies. Domestically, FFA has been undertaking a review of the existing Training Rewards framework. This review is timely as FFA has been informed that many clubs and Associations across Australia may not have a clear understanding of the Training Reward regimes at both domestic and international levels. As a result, clubs may not fully appreciate the value of investing in the training and development of players – from a commercial, sporting, personal or social perspective. In addition, the movement of players both domestically and internationally is not monitored as effectively as it could be, largely due to system and resource constraints, and it is conceivable that significant sums of rewards owed to Australian clubs, in accordance with the current regimes, have not been claimed.

The production of Australian players will ultimately have a beneficial impact on the quality of our domestic competitions and the performance of our national teams.

It appears that the current framework in Australian football is restrictive to the growth of the domestic football economy and does not adequately incentivise clubs to invest in the training and development of players.



Players from the APFA Girls Skills Acquisition program alongside players from the Women's National Premier Leagues First Team.

THE III PRINCIPLE

EVOLVE AND GROW AN INTEGRATED AND THRIVING FOOTBALL ECOSYSTEM DRIVEN BY A MODERN DOMESTIC TRANSFER SYSTEM

PROPOSED MEASURES

Establish a new and modern domestic transfer system

- Establish a modern domestic transfer system to grow the Australian football economy by prioritising the production of top global talent and ensuring that Australian clubs are incentivised to invest in the training and development of players.
- The modern domestic transfer system must:
 - Reflect global best practice and adopt, at a local level, the latest reforms to the global transfer system introduced by FIFA.
 - Ensure that appropriate measures are introduced which are reflective of and address the unique challenges faced by the Women's game.
 - Balance the interests of contractual stability for clubs and a player's ability to move freely.
- Review all regulations to ensure they promote transparency, good governance principles and financial stability within the domestic transfer system and across the entire Australian football ecosystem.
- Facilitate the implementation of the FIFA amendments to the transfer system and the regulatory framework, which includes, but is not limited to, updates to FFA's digital platforms for the purposes of enhancing transparency and to further integrate with the international transfer system through the allocation of a global football identity.
- Establish mechanisms, such as a Clearing House, to promote transparency in transfer payments and to centralise and ensure the distribution of domestic training reward payments to Australian clubs.
- Dedicate resources and establish mechanisms within FFA which will allow it to produce annual reports to measure and gain insights into the growth of the 'Australian professional football economy'.
- Develop a transfer system reform issues paper to identify:
 - The current state of the Australian football economy;
 - The objectives of transfer system reform;
 - The foundational pillars of a modern domestic transfer system, including international benchmarking;

- Challenges and opportunities in the Australian context;
- The prospective timeline for implementation, including the feasibility of establishing and launching a modern domestic transfer system in advance of the next domestic grassroots season and any associated proposed plans; and
- Proposals for stakeholder consultation and feedback.
- Complete the review of the domestic training rewards framework to ensure that this framework appropriately reflects the current domestic football landscape and the costs associated with the training and development of players and to adequately reward and incentivise clubs for the development of players.



Former Socceroo, Zeljko Kalac's - AKA 'Spider' - \$1.7 million transfer from National Soccer League club Sydney United to England's Leicester City in 1995 is a record that still stands.

THE III PRINCIPLE

EVOLVE AND GROW AN INTEGRATED AND THRIVING FOOTBALL ECOSYSTEM DRIVEN BY A MODERN DOMESTIC TRANSFER SYSTEM



FIFA's Solidarity and Compensation Payments reward clubs for their part in training players to reach the highest level.

Hardwire Australian football into the international transfer system

- Implement the ongoing reforms to the international transfer system at a domestic level as soon as it is practical to do so.
- Provide regular workshops and other education resources for the football community to ensure that the training reward mechanisms and other aspects of the international transfer system are understood and applied correctly.

Build a conducive environment to support the growth of the domestic economy

- Consult with the players and clubs across all levels of the game in relation to the various mechanisms that will bring the domestic transfer system to life. These may include:
 - Player registration rules;
 - Transfer windows and the national football calendar;
 - Increased measures to ensure players are not exploited;
 - Ensuring training rewards are distributed back to training clubs, at all levels of the game, in an accurate, timely and efficient way via a Clearing House;
 - Calculating the value of a transfer fee and any associated training reward;
 - Creating value in a player's registration to encourage clubs to sign professional players to longer term contracts;
 - Creating solidarity between professional and grassroots football;
 - Removing the restrictions on the 'loan system' for professional players in the A-League;

- The regulation of intermediaries (agents);
- Encouraging fiscal responsibility and sustainability of clubs and competitions; and
- Promoting transparency and accountability.
- Align the domestic transfer windows with the new national football calendar so that they align strategically with international transfer windows and the professional competitions across Australia.
- Provide clear, aligned, and proactive communications to ensure that all stakeholders within the Australian football ecosystem understand the role of the domestic transfer system in stimulating the growth of the domestic game.
- Continue to provide regular workshops for the football community to ensure that the training reward mechanisms are understood and applied correctly.
- Develop a strong culture in which clubs are celebrated for producing top players who can transition into senior and professional football.
- Re-introducing a player agent accreditation system to help ensure the activities of player agents are regulated, part of the football framework and the highest levels of professionalism are maintained – Australian agents to be consulted regularly on the accreditation system and changes to the agent system. This accreditation system will need to take into account any reforms to the FIFA regulatory framework but must also consider the unique nature of the Australian football ecosystem.
- Create a platform which recognises the role that agents play in the transfer system (both domestic and global) which allows open and constructive dialogue to ensure that Australian talent is nurtured, protected, and promoted in the right way.

NW

PRINCIPLE

RESETTING AND REBUILDING AUSTRALIAN
FOOTBALL PRODUCTS



NATIONAL PREMIER LEAGUES QUEENSLAND

2019 GRAND FINAL CHAMPIONS

RESETTING AND REBUILDING AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL PRODUCTS



APIA Leichhardt Tigers players celebrate an upset win over Melbourne Victory in the FFA Cup round of 16, Leichhardt Oval on August 21, 2018 in Sydney, Australia.

The A-League and W-League have enjoyed varying degrees of success in attracting mainstream media support, broadcast deals, commercial partnerships, and increased recognition. However, a challenge remains to ensure the leagues can capitalise on Australian football's market advantage as the largest club-based participation sport in the country and to convert these participants into fans in what is a very competitive and saturated domestic sporting landscape.

COVID-19 has had a drastic impact on Australian football. This will place significant pressure on the game's ability to invest in the promotion of the A-League and W-League and other levels of the game, such as the NPL competitions, to achieve the desired cut-through with fans. A concerted effort will be required across all of football's major products to rebuild revenues lost during the COVID-19 period.

It will be imperative that Australian football reimagine its football products in this new landscape. In particular, Australian football has an opportunity to refocus on its 'football core' to reset and rebuild its products to increase their attractiveness to drive fans into stadiums, increase viewership, improve marketability and overall appeal, and consequently, improve the commercial value of those products

The FFA Cup has received wide-spread acceptance by the Australian football community because of its ability to connect all levels of the game across Australia. It represents a great opportunity to create natural rivalries and competitive tension in Australian football. An FFA Cup for women and our youth teams should eventually be considered.

At the centre of Australian football competitions are the over 2400 clubs across the country which are vital to the ongoing development and organic growth of the game. Our clubs are the breeding ground for players of all abilities and achievement, a central hub for community interaction and social cohesion. FFA must ensure that clubs receive the support required, particularly considering COVID-19, to ensure that they continue to play this vital role. It must also ensure that the appropriate conditions are set to allow clubs to fulfil their true potential and for football to thrive.

RESETTING AND REBUILDING AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL PRODUCTS

The aspiration of NPL clubs across the nation has created a platform for the discussion and preliminary workings of a national second division model. In June 2019, the national second division Working Group submitted a White Paper – A Plan for a national second division in Australia. This paper highlighted the importance of a national second division towards bringing the game together, providing further match minutes for our young Australian players and commercial opportunities that the competition can provide. The paper advanced several recommendations and considerations, including the establishment of the national second division by 2021/22. COVID-19 forces the game to reconsider these recommendations and considerations in a new light. Whilst unforeseen barriers have been encountered, FFA is encouraged to continue to work with key stakeholders within the game for this to come to life.

Meanwhile, the NPL competitions are operated by each Member Federation across the entire country under a unified brand. This affords Australian football a unique opportunity, which not many other sports enjoy, for the future of the second-tier competition in Australia, which must be explored. In the interim, ensuring the NPL competitions can be delivered to a consistent standard nationally remains an

ongoing challenge and presents a natural opportunity for collaboration for FFA, MFs and the Association of Australian Football Clubs ('AAFC'), towards a unified national approach.

The challenge for Australian football will be to ensure that its competitions are connected, and all operate to support and foster a sense of alignment, inclusion, and engagement across the broader football ecosystem. Scheduling of competitions and incentivising sporting performance are various mechanisms which Australian football has an opportunity to consider.

The suspension and then subsequent restart of the 2019/20 A-League season in July 2020, provided an opportunity for the Australian football community to see A-League football played during winter months. FFA learnt that during the restart period, the tempo of the game, measured by the number of passes per minute of possession, improved. Prior to the restart, there were only 2 teams that had more than 14 passes per minute and 4 teams below 13 passes per minute. During the restart however, all teams averaged over 13 passes per minute of possession, with 6 teams averaging more than 14 passes per minute of possession. When looking at the Top 5 Leagues around the world plus the top nations in the AFC, we see that these teams average above 14 passes per minute.



Futsal tournament during the Nike 'No Turning Back' Fan Meet & Greet at Hangar 85 on June 10, 2017 in Melbourne, Australia.

RESETTING AND REBUILDING AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL PRODUCTS

There are other variables to consider but these preliminary findings support much of the feedback received from the football fanbase and observations made by FFA's technical team that teams moved the ball quicker during the cooler months of the restart compared to the period before the suspension.

The rescheduling of the upcoming 2020/21 A-League season from December 2020 to July 2021, will provide another opportunity for FFA to properly understand the impact this might have on the football ecosystem and the quality of the matches.

While the game must continue to adapt to the evolving challenges presented by COVID-19, administrators must also remember that football is for the football community and fans. Australian football must ensure that it prioritises the fan experience and supports the desire of fans to create authentic football experiences. Rekindling the passion of active supporters, to re-create the unique atmosphere of club football, should therefore be a priority.

Australia's football landscape has changed significantly in the last 25 years with the number of women, migrant, refugee and Indigenous communities engaged in football activities increasing. While the sport has made significant progress, more can be done to better engage these segments of society, by creating fit-for-purpose football products and offerings.

In addition, Australian football also has an excellent opportunity to capitalise on its world class facilities and natural surroundings and to explore opportunities to grow football products such as Walking Football, futsal, beach soccer and school programs. These forms of the sport remain largely untapped markets and represent natural opportunities for growing football's participation base in innovative, and exciting ways. Football currently only reaches 7.5% of primary schools through Sport Australia's Sporting Schools representing an excellent opportunity for growth.

Australian football can create new additional regional state and national level community and development competitions to increase grassroots engagement and create competitive environments for talented players. This is done to only a limited degree at present, with FFA hosting National Championships, NTC Challenges and National Futsal Championships often in partnership with Member Federations. The opportunity exists to create national championships at youth level across clubs, schools and for regional areas (to name but 3). These competitions at the base of the pyramid could also enhance Indigenous football development (e.g. a national as well as more regionalised set of Indigenous football championships). Such events would bring together Australia's vast football community and more than likely appeal to governments seeking to stage mass-participation events attracting visitors from around the country as the nation emerges from COVID-19.



Walking Football aims to promote positive physical & mental health benefits, social connectedness and the benefits of ongoing physical activity.

THE IV PRINCIPLE

ENSURE THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL PYRAMID IS ALIGNED AND CONNECTED THROUGH OPTIMISED COMPETITION STRUCTURES



Brisbane Roar celebrate victory in the A-League Grand Final match against the Central Coast Mariners at Suncorp Stadium on March 13, 2011 in Brisbane, Australia

PROPOSED MEASURES

Establish a 'national football calendar'

- A national football calendar should be aligned to the Asian and international match calendars.
- Competition structures in Australian football must be 'reconnected' by developing a proposal for a 'national football calendar', which seeks to:
 - Optimise and align competitions across all levels of the game.
 - Take into consideration the differing circumstances between men's and women's football.
 - For example, there is a significant representation of WNPL players in the W-League so any W-League competition should not coincide with the WNPL competitions to allow for a player to compete in both.
 - Identify the ideal number of matches for both men's and women's top-level competitions.
 - Balance and maximise the availability of venues throughout the season.
 - Make football a sport that is played all year-round.
 - Reimagine the player pathway to facilitate player production and create greater opportunities with more access to national level competitions and increased match minutes.

- Clarify roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of national level competitions.
- Undertake an analysis into the impact of aligning the rescheduled 2020/21 A-League season which will now coincide with the winter grassroots season and is currently proposed to be played from December 2020 to July 2021. Factors such as alignment of registration windows, ground availability, pitch condition, match scheduling and how the A-League performs in the winter sporting calendar should be factored into this analysis.
- Use of the FIFA windows to provide further opportunities for all our national teams to play more matches on home soil.
- Maximise youth national championship opportunities and linking these tournaments with national team activity and other football products.

Optimise competitions by enhancing existing competitions to improve the fan experience

- The Australian football calendar should be underpinned by strong football products and in addition to reimagining the professional leagues, existing competitions must be optimised and enhanced to promote the offering and experience for traditional football fans, and appeal to a broader audience:

THE IV PRINCIPLE



Adelaide United lift the FFA Cup trophy for a second year in a row, having defeated Melbourne City 4-0 in the Final at Coopers Stadium in October 2019.



Wollongong Wolves were crowned National Premier Leagues 2019 Champions after defeating Lions FC in the Grand Final.

FFA Cup

- Develop a strategy which aims to create a stronger connection between the FFA Cup and 700+ participant clubs. Ensuring that all clubs are a part of the entire FFA Cup journey – converting participant to fan.
- Leverage the high club participant numbers to drive commercial opportunities, by creating greater awareness and vision of the earlier stages of the competition and promoting community grassroots clubs throughout the FFA Cup Preliminary Rounds.
- Optimise the competition structure of the FFA Cup, such as transitioning into a group stage.
- Introduction of an open draw for the FFA Cup Final Rounds, which will increase uncertainty and competitive tension and enhance its ability to engage with the Australian football community.
- The FFA Cup Final to have its own identity within the national football calendar parameters and be played on a stand alone weekend.
- Assign the 'half spot' currently with A-League clubs to the winner of the FFA Cup.
- Give the FFA Cup Final prominence by making it the final match in the domestic football calendar and establish complementary events to coincide with it, such as a national football conference or a national football weekend festival.
- Continued assessment of implementing an Women's FFA Cup and ensuring it can be sustainably implemented.
- Continued assessment of transitioning into a group stage, to enhance its ability to engage with the roots of Australian football and increase the number of matches being played and match minutes to encourage player production.

National Premier Leagues

- Enhance and optimise the NPL (women and men) competitions so they can become a talent pool for Australia's best players.
- The introduction of an NPL Women's Finals Series in 2021.
- The enhancement of the current NPL Men's Finals Series to include more teams and Football Northern Territory for the first time.
- The development of the NPL should be considered in the context of a national second-tier framework and the professional leagues.
- Create more opportunities for our best players at each age group to play with and against the best.
- Ensure that contractual obligations of players and regulatory requirements of competitions do not place a hindrance on player development.
- To address the various player development gaps, implement FFA recommendations for NPL competitions in 2021:
 - The age-restrictions for A-League teams participating in the NPL be lifted to allow players born after 1 January 1998 to participate in the NPL 2021 competitions.
 - All A-League teams participating in the NPL to participate in their respective NPL 1 competition in 2021.
 - Thirty (30) matches in an NPL 1 Regular Season is recommended for all men's and boy's competitions involving players over the age of seventeen (17).

THE IV PRINCIPLE

Continue the development of a national second-tier framework

- Continued development of a national second-tier framework, including any proposed national second division, with key stakeholders (Member Federations, the AAFC and NPL clubs) which outlines a plan towards the implementation of the competition (domestic, conference and national based models).
- Framework to be tested with stakeholders from late 2020 and throughout early 2021 for implementation in 2022.
- Such framework, , amongst other things:
 - Be based on contemporary and sound financial modelling and should be developed for the benefit of the entire game by supporting the sustainability of clubs and competitions.
 - Ensure a connection to the NPL competition via sporting merit.

Create a regulatory framework which supports efficient and effective competitions

- Aligned competition structures must be accompanied by a complementary regulatory framework which

promotes competition integrity, competitive balance and tension; uncertainty of outcome; and incentivises sporting achievement and player production.

- Any proposed regulatory framework should also consider how 'access' to competitions (e.g. ACL, A-League & NPL) may be regulated.
 - In Mexico's Liga MX, promotion from the tier below is based on a points-per-game basis over the last 3 years.
 - For UEFA competitions, an 'access list' determines the entry stage of each club into the Champions and Europa League in each season. The clubs qualify for UEFA's club competitions through their performances on domestic level.
 - In Europe, the top 12 ranked nations each receive a place in the Europa League Group Stages for its domestic cup winner.
- Introduce a national club licensing framework which regulates access to competitions (FFA to be responsible for ACL and professional leagues and MFs for NPL) and acts as a principle-based development tool to improve the standards of all clubs, including professional clubs, across Australia.



The South Melbourne Football Club celebrate with coaches and team officials after the win in the NSL Grand Final Match between South Melbourne and Sydney United, played at Olympic Park, Melbourne on May 30, 1999.

THE IV PRINCIPLE



A local MiniRoos player on the pitch at half-time of the Westfield Matildas' 2020 Olympic Football Tournament Qualifier in Newcastle.

Enhance football's introductory programs to convert primary school students into football participants and fans of the game

- Redevelop, standardise and extend football's sample offering in primary schools, by utilising the MiniRoos Kick-Off product as the introductory offering.
- Enhance connections between schools and associated local community clubs to support the students' transition into club football participation.
- Up-skill, support and grow state workforce to extend football's footprint in primary schools nationally, with a strong focus on servicing regional areas.
- Develop fan engagement strategies to increase football match attendance and viewership.

Establish a national agenda for futsal and beach soccer

- Reinvigorate dialogue between FFA and relevant stakeholders in a unified, inclusive, and collaborative manner to establish a national agenda for futsal and beach soccer.
- Investigate the creation of new football products to grow futsal and beach soccer.

- Consider how futsal and beach soccer events can be licensed, in accordance with global best practice, to ensure they are delivered in contemporary and innovative ways.

Explore new opportunities

- Investigate the establishment of new tournaments such as a Women's & Youth FFA Cup; an FFA Charity/Community Shield, being the A-League champions against NPL champions; national, state and regional youth, schools, Indigenous, CALD and other competitions

Support those that support the game

- Our referees and match officials make a significant contribution to the quality of the domestic football product and more must be done to support their growth and development to ensure they are officiating matches to the highest standards possible.
- Referees, match officials, administrators, club officials, volunteers and all other relevant personnel must be provided with appropriate support to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of competitions.



PRINCIPLE

MORE FOOTBALL, MORE OFTEN:
INCREASING MATCH MINUTES
FOR YOUTH PLAYERS

MORE FOOTBALL, MORE OFTEN: INCREASING MATCH MINUTES FOR YOUTH PLAYERS



Sydney FC celebrating their NYL Grand Final win over Melbourne Victory in January 2020.

Premier League Chief Executive, Richard Scudamore, is reported to have labelled Steven Gerrard, *“the Holy Grail of all youth development - a boy who qualifies for his local team, going onto lead that team and then onto lead England”*.

Australian player development must also pursue the same ideal – local players, developed at their local clubs who then go on to achieve great things for the Australian national team.

Australian football can point to the likes of the ‘Golden Generation’ for the Socceroos which qualified for the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany and the current Westfield Matildas playing group as testament to Australia’s player development pathways. While we are starting to see a decline in the number of our Socceroos playing in the biggest leagues in Europe, we are seeing the opposite for the Matildas with Caitlin Foord, Sam Kerr, Alanna Kennedy and Ellie Carpenter all signing for European powerhouses in the last 8 months.

An internal study of 35 Professional Men’s Leagues around the world, including the A-League, conducted by FFA made several key findings:

1. A key factor in player development is the number of games a player accumulates between the ages of 17 – 23. It is reported that current Manchester United Captain, Harry Maguire, did not play top-flight football until age 22, but unlike many young English players his age, he already had a wealth of first-team experience having broken into the Sheffield United First Team aged just 18. Maguire made over 100 appearances in League One before exiting his teen age years.
2. The study also showed that there are significant restrictions on player development and impediments for Australian players to transition into professional football. It showed further that U-23 Australian players are playing fewer match minutes relative to their counterparts around the world:
 - The A-League has 317,901 match minutes available – lower compared to countries like Japan (832,016) Thailand, Wales, and UAE.

MORE FOOTBALL, MORE OFTEN: INCREASING MATCH MINUTES FOR YOUTH PLAYERS

- From the match minutes available in the A-League, 19% are played by U-23 players – the equivalent of 2 players from a starting 11. By contrast, Leagues in Croatia, Uruguay, Holland, Serbia, Belgium, and Norway will have anywhere from 24% to 36% of available match minutes being played by U-23 players.
 - In the 18/19 season, Australia only had 3 (U-23) players (out of 93) who played 2250 (approximately 25 games) or more 1st Division minutes – Japan had 25; Belgium 13; and Holland 22 (which has reported approximately €300 million in transfers in the past 18 months).
- 3.** More than half (55%) of Australian players who play more than 2,250 minutes in an A-League season, before they turn 23, are transferred overseas for a transfer fee. Increasing the number of matches being played by players 23 or younger should therefore be a priority for Australian football.
 - 4.** There are key age brackets (born 1990 and 1996) within Australia's recent development cycles for its men's program which, for various reasons, have had their development significantly impacted.
 - 5.** Changes in the Y-League competition structure, reducing it from 18 to 8 games per season, and the inclusion of varying age restrictions across both Y-League and NPL have significantly reduced the opportunities available for talented youth footballers to obtain match minutes in comparison to previous generations and other nations.
 - 6.** This significant reduction in available match minutes during a critical development stage for youth footballers has led to many Australian junior men's national team representatives exiting the professional game prematurely; namely those born in 1990, and 1995 – 97.
 - 7.** On average, the number of players from each age group (by birth year) to go on to play for the Socceroos, will be 7 to 8. From the group of players born in 1990, only 3 have gone on to play for the Socceroos (Aaron Mooy, Aziz Behich, Apostolos Giannou).
 - 8.** From the group of players born in 1996, the study identified that:
 - There have not been any overseas transfers from A-League clubs.
 - 15 players who were selected in Australia's junior men's national team at the AFC Championships are not currently professional footballers – they are 24 years old and should be entering the 'peak performance' period.
 - Only one player has played for the Socceroos (Ajdin Hrustic).
 - 9.** Australia's development programs for goalkeepers must also be addressed. Out of 11 A-League clubs, only 6 Australian goalkeepers are regular starters for their clubs.



Ajdin Hrustic, who was born in 1996, representing the Socceroos against Nepal in Canberra in a FIFA World Cup Qualifier.

MORE FOOTBALL, MORE OFTEN: INCREASING MATCH MINUTES FOR YOUTH PLAYERS

A similar study comparing the Matildas and Australian women's football with 11 other leading female football nations across both senior and youth international football, and domestic/continental club competitions over a four-year cycle from 2017-2020, found the following:

1. Australia has a strong 'core' of national team players who play considerable match minutes for both club and country. Five players rank in the 'top 20' globally for match minutes played.
2. There is an opportunity for Australia's 'fringe' players to obtain more crucial match minutes against diverse opponents. Eight players have debuted for the Matildas since 2017 with only 2 having played over 200 match minutes for Australia.
3. Comparatively, Australia has played the second fewest senior international matches over the last four-year cycle (44) - USA played 68 and Japan 53. Australia also benchmarks low in both senior and youth matches against European opposition – nations that routinely excel at FIFA Women's World Cups.
4. Australia, along with Brazil, oversee the fewest number of youth international programs – three – while England, Japan, Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States, each oversee 7.
5. Additionally, Australia played the fewest number of international matches at youth level between 2016 and 2020 (57). By way of comparison, USA, Norway, Germany and France each played over 200 matches, highlighting the opportunity to play more matches for Australia's 'young' players.
6. Australia's domestic league structure – with a maximum of 14 games on offer – allows for just 113,444 match minutes, compared to the average of the leagues studied of 291,660 minutes, limiting the opportunity for young players to gain valuable match minutes.

There is an overwhelming sentiment amongst the Australian football community that a priority for Australian leagues should be giving minutes to Australian youth players. It makes sense therefore that player production and pathways are continuously assessed to ensure they are achieving the desired outcomes.



An 18-year-old Karly Roestbakken made her Westfield Matildas debut at the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup in France.

Reviewing Australia's current technical approach to build a deeper understanding of the player production ecosystem in Australian football should therefore be prioritised. Streamlining the talent identification process and improving the monitoring of players across the game is vital to enhancing the ability to instil the technical identity of Australian football early in the development process. Consideration must be given to players in regional areas who often find it more difficult or do not have the opportunity to participate in State or National events. Furthermore, regional areas may not have competitions for players, which include most of our Indigenous football population, to receive consistent match time or receive regular coaching. Football's administrative bodies should be encouraged to look at new and innovative ways to engage with players in regional areas through better alignment in competition and program delivery. As Australian football looks to grow its participation base and excel at international level, it is vital that players are able to play as many match minutes as possible to promote their enjoyment of the game and enhance their development without unnecessary hinderance.

THE V PRINCIPLE

CREATE A WORLD CLASS ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT / PRODUCTION BY INCREASING MATCH MINUTES FOR YOUTH PLAYERS AND STREAMLINING THE PLAYER PATHWAY

PROPOSED MEASURES

Increase the number of match minutes being played by youth footballers

- Promote the production of youth players by providing opportunities for our elite players between U-17 to U-23 to regularly obtain valuable match minutes, resembling their counterparts in Europe, to create a bigger talent pool of players (for national teams) who are playing more match minutes every year.
- Develop measures to address short term player development 'gaps' e.g. in the lead up to the Tokyo Olympics, increase the age limit for men's A-League clubs playing in NPL competitions from U-20 to U-23 to ensure that all identified players have increased opportunities for valuable match minutes in the lead up to the tournament.
- Increase the number of domestic matches played at a 'national' level through new dynamic competition structures, such as the establishment of a national second tier competition, which would have a focus on 'home grown' and young players and reconnects the Professional Leagues to the other tiers of Australian football.
- Consider how match minutes for elite female footballers playing domestically can be increased, particularly those players who play in the W-League, either through alignment of underpinning competitions or extension of the W-League season.



The Westfield Junior Matildas visit the Pacific, in partnership with the Australian Government and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade as part of the 'Pacific Step-Up' and the Australia Pacific Sports Linkages Program.

Build a deeper understanding of the player production ecosystem in Australian football

- Embed the Starting XI within the analysis of the Australian player production ecosystem.
- Undertake an analysis of the player pathway to build a detailed understanding of the player production ecosystem in Australian football with findings internationally benchmarked.
- Place a greater emphasis on the development of 'home grown players' and player production to build a culture which celebrates and recognises clubs for producing top players.
- Improve collaboration amongst the game's administrative bodies to enhance talent identification processes and support the transition of identified players into elite player development and national team programs.
- Review the current club academy framework and its relationship to the broader football ecosystem.
- Review the current youth development programs, club academy structures and player pathways (and relevant supporting activities, programs, and services) to ensure the roles and responsibilities are clearly defined to support the production of players.
- Establish an aligned competitions structure that supports a player's development and likelihood of transitioning into professional football.
- Create talent identification and scouting systems which align with the national identity.
- Consider further financial incentives to reward investment in youth development.



THE V PRINCIPLE



Cameron Peupion in action for the Joeys against Nigeria at the 2019 FIFA U-17 World Cup in Brazil.

Create strategic partnerships which promote player development and production

- Enhance relationships domestically with and amongst clubs and administrative bodies to foster collaboration and grow a culture of player production.
- Develop partnerships with top European clubs to facilitate the transfer of players.
 - For example, FFA would pursue approaches within the existing and developing regulatory framework to support the movement of student players internationally under conditions that improve development opportunities for the player on and off the pitch.
- Foster strategic partnerships with National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) member colleges and European clubs which lead the way in women's football for additional pathways for future Matildas (note: the entire US women's national team went through NCAA colleges).
- Replicate these strategic partnerships with clubs and colleges for Indigenous players to access opportunities for further development.



V

PRINCIPLE

CREATE WORLD CLASS ENVIRONMENTS
FOR COACH AND REFEREE
DEVELOPMENT

CREATE WORLD CLASS ENVIRONMENTS FOR COACH AND REFEREE DEVELOPMENT



Westfield Matildas head coach Tony Gustavsson alongside Westfield Matildas forward Caitlin Foord at the Australian High Commission during FFA Head Coach Announcement on 29 September 2020 in London, England.

In recent years, we have seen Australian coaches like Ange Postecoglou, Tanya Oxtoby, and Joseph Montemurro enjoy success coaching abroad. These 3 coaches represent the highest echelon of Australian coaches and form part of a growing number who have ventured internationally to further their careers, including most recently, Tony Popovic and Kevin Muscat.

High quality coaches are essential to the youth development process and it is imperative that opportunities for growth and development for coaches continue to be provided. Australian football continues to see a healthy and steady increase each year in numbers of participants attending courses, with over 1,500 participants attending Advanced Coaching courses in 2018/19 organised by FFA and MFs. In the same period, FFA, in conjunction with MFs, also delivered 95 Advanced Coaching courses, increasing by 12 from the previous year. It is also noted that Australian football has departed from AFC's coach

education guidelines for 'C' Licences to some degree so that it may run its own courses in this space.

To continue this positive rate of growth, FFA has an opportunity to consider its ongoing resources and capability to service the needs of an ever-growing game, particularly as Australian football continues to adjust to the impacts of COVID-19. In doing so, it must consider factors such as geography, access to information about courses, the cost of coaching and the course structure which remain ongoing challenges to increasing the number of skilled coaches in Australia. This may also provide an opportunity to review the content of coach education courses and the Australian coaching methodology, so that the appropriate balance can be found between a 'system-based' (i.e. focusing on one system of playing) and a 'player-centred' approach (i.e. adapting to the capability of the players). Coaching courses need to be designed and delivered in a manner which truly enhances the coach's ability to impact the development of players at the appropriate stage of their football development.

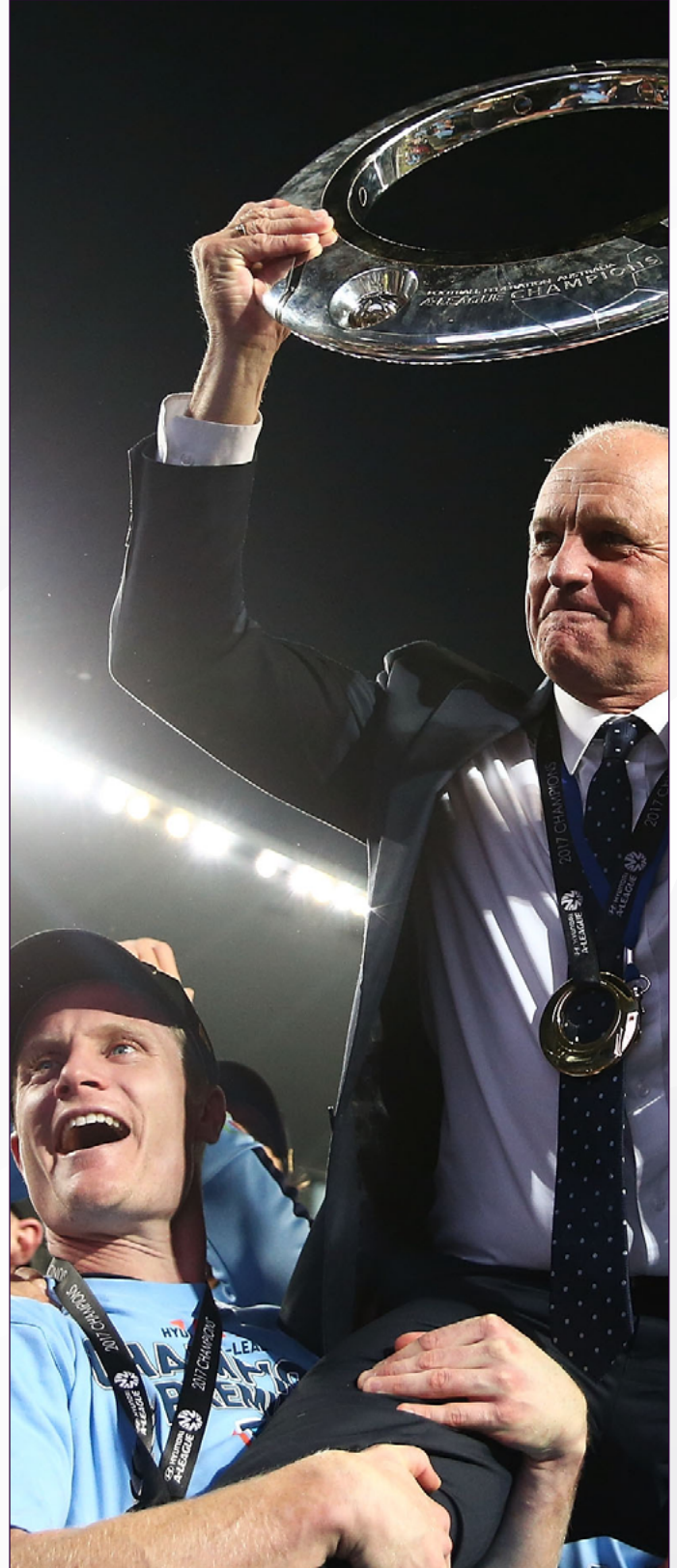
CREATE WORLD CLASS ENVIRONMENTS FOR COACH AND REFEREE DEVELOPMENT

As Australian football looks to increase its numbers of licensed and accredited coaches, it must ensure that it continues to build the right culture and provide more opportunities for coach 'development'. Such a culture should promote the inclusion of women and Indigenous Australians in coaching. The number of top-level coaching positions in Australia also remains limited, a contributing factor as to why Australian coaches now look overseas for coaching opportunities.

While FFA typically provides annual support for each MF to fund the appointment of a Technical Director, there is a misalignment in reporting lines with FFA which sees an MF Technical Director report directly to the MF CEO. A lack of a unified national technical direction has also been identified as a reason why we might see diverging technical strategies across the country.

Coaches play a vital role in the development of players and in August 2020, FFA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Football Coaches Australia (FCA) to enhance coach development. This agreement focuses on, amongst other things, the development and implementation of standard form contracts for coaches engaged by professional Australian football clubs, and the establishment of a national arbitration tribunal to hear employment disputes between coaches and professional Australian football clubs – both are measures designed to enhance the career-appeal of coaching. Importantly FFA and FCA will collaborate to deliver aligned technical education and professional development programs for Advance Licence and Community coaches at all levels.

On 29 September 2020, FFA announced that it had appointed highly experienced Swedish mentor, Tony Gustavsson, as the new Head Coach of the Westfield Matildas for a four-year term which will include four major tournaments - the Tokyo (2021) and Paris (2024) Olympic Games, as well as the Women's Asian Cup in 2022 and the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup. A two-time FIFA Women's World Cup winner and Olympic Gold Medallist with the US women's national team, Gustavsson has been tasked with sharing his wealth of knowledge and experience to leave a legacy for Australian football by improving women's coaching in Australia and creating a pathway for his successor to be appointed from within the Matildas set up.

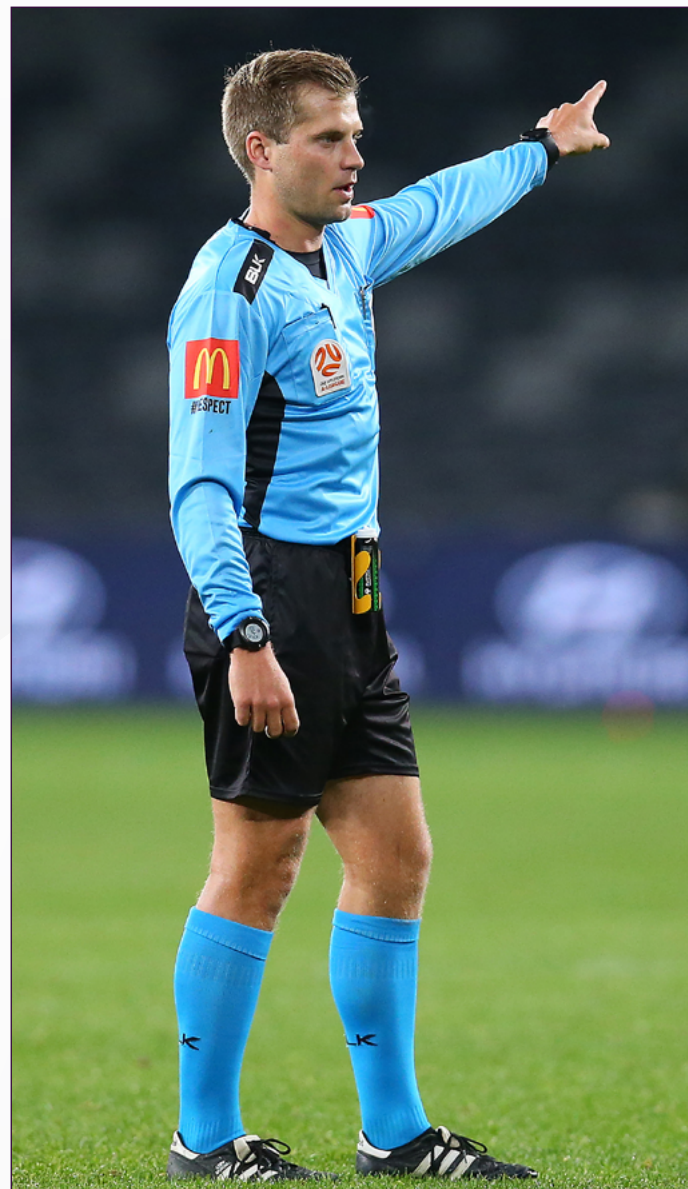


Graham Arnold Celebrates winning the A-League Grand Final Sydney FC defeating Melbourne Victory at Allianz Stadium on May 7, 2017 in Sydney, Australia

CREATE WORLD CLASS ENVIRONMENTS FOR COACH AND REFEREE DEVELOPMENT

Case Study: Iceland

- With a population of approximately 340,000 and approximately 22,000 players, Iceland prioritised and invested in the development of coaches and now boasts one of the highest rates of coaches per capita in the world.
- Culturally, coaching is seen as a 'skilled' position.
- In 2016, it was reported that it had nearly 850 coaches holding UEFA licences.
- The women's team is ranked 19th while its men's team is ranked 41st with a breakout performance at the last European championships.



A-League match official Alex King referees a match between Western Sydney Wanderers and Melbourne Victory at Bankwest Stadium.

Creating a professional and sustainable high-performance environment for Australian referees and match officials must also become a priority for FFA and Australian football who are vital contributors to the quality of football matches. In the context of the professional leagues, it is about ensuring that they are supported by fully professional referees and match officials with only four full-time referees. While at a global level, the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia represented the first time since 1978, that Australia did not have a match official in the Candidate's Selection Program.

Australian referees are highly regarded globally and are often invited to AFC tournaments. Domestically however, much work needs to be done to improve the reputation of referees. Australian football must look to develop a culture of respect for referees who should be viewed as respected contributors to the quality of matches and the development and growth of football in Australia. Campaigns to support referees in the past have not gained the traction and ongoing support which is required to effect significant change. A strong narrative should be developed to underpin culture change which engages the community and celebrates the success of Australian referees and match officials. Such a narrative should appeal to clubs, supporters and parents alike.

The development pathway for referees and match officials is fragmented and unclear which, anecdotally, has resulted in high drop-off rates in some parts of the country. Just as we look to support the pathways to promote the training and development of players and the performance of players, so too should Australian football consider the development opportunities for Australian referees and match officials. Australian football has an opportunity to reimagine the development pathways for referees and match officials and to make appropriate investment into their development.

THE VI PRINCIPLE

CREATE A STRONG CULTURE AROUND COACH AND REFEREE DEVELOPMENT BY EMPHASISING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROLE AS A SKILLED POSITION AND A VITAL LINK IN PLAYER DEVELOPMENT



MiniRoos coach celebrates with a player at the 2019 North West Sydney Football MiniRoos Gala Day.

- Create opportunities for further education and professional development of Technical Directors and Referee Instructors across the game.
- For coaches:
 - Find the right balance between the 'development' of coaches and 'accreditation' of coaches. Findings may be benchmarked against other countries as a point of reference.
 - Increase the number of former semi-professional/professional players involved in coaching and player development roles. Develop strategies to ensure more Australian coaches are provided opportunities to coach at National and club level football. Review how FFA can support coaches source opportunities internationally where opportunities may not exist in Australia. Modernise the method of delivering coach education (e.g. digitally) to reduce costs savings which are passed onto coaches.
 - Consider realigning the coaching framework with the AFC standards.
 - Embrace the opportunity to increase the number of female coaches to grow the talent pool of coaches.
 - Improve the standard of coaching through a quality assured coach development system with support mechanisms for coaches along their development journey.

PROPOSED MEASURES

Build a deeper understanding of the coach and referee development ecosystem in Australian football

- Embed the FFA Starting XI in the development and implementation of measures to address the challenges in coach and referee development.
- Undertake an analysis to build a deeper understanding of the coach and referee development ecosystem in Australian football, including the barriers.
- Align Australia's technical football strategy by redefining current reporting lines of MF Technical Directors and Referee Instructors into FFA's Technical Director.
- Ensure that the technical expertise within MFs and MF Technical Directors are utilized more effectively in alignment to the national technical strategy.
- Increase the number of coaches and referees by removing the barriers to education, especially for women and Indigenous Australians.

Build key partnerships to enhance coach development

- FFA to work with FCA to develop plans to implement the various initiatives captured within the FFA/FCA MoU.
- Increase opportunities for continued professional development of coaches such as the deployment of Australian coaches to foreign countries to assist in football development whilst gaining valuable experience.
- Increase the profile of Australian coaches abroad and lobby the AFC and other continents to ensure Australian coach accreditation is 'recognised' in top football countries around the world. In the alternative, investigate the possibility of making international coaching qualifications available in Australia.

THE VI PRINCIPLE



Australian match officials Sarah Ho and Lara Lee refereeing a match between the Junior Matildas and Tonga in Nuku'alofa as part of FFA's 2019 Pacific Step-Up Tour. Photo credit: Joseph Mayers Photography

- Expand partnerships with DFAT to enable Australian coaches to be despatched to Member Associations across AFC to support coach and player development whilst also gaining meaningful experience.
- Establish a pool of elite coaches from which clubs from the professional leagues (A-League and W-League) can choose and FFA can identify for further development opportunities.

Case study: Kevin Muscat

- It was reported that prior to being appointed as Head Coach of Belgian top tier club Sint-Truiden, Muscat had to be hired as a football analyst initially because UEFA did not recognise his AFC coaching licence.

Provide more focused support for match officials

- Establish closer working relationships with referees and match officials.
- Establish a clear and strong narrative to build a culture of respect for referees and match officials by further promoting the behavioural standards expected of all participants and embedding them within FFA's Member Protection Framework.
- Increase opportunities for continued professional development of referees and match officials such as the deployment of Australian coaches to foreign countries to assist in football development whilst gaining valuable experience.
- Increase the profile of Australian referees and match officials abroad.
- Expand partnerships with DFAT to enable Australian referees and match officials to be despatched to Member Associations across AFC to support football development whilst also gaining meaningful experience.
- Reimagine the development pathways and opportunities for referees and match officials.
- More emphasis must be placed on encouraging women and girls to take up opportunities to become referees and match officials.

VII

PRINCIPLE

A WHOLE OF FOOTBALL APPROACH TO
PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE GAME
THROUGH MODERN, EFFICIENT, AND
EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

A WHOLE OF FOOTBALL APPROACH TO PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE GAME THROUGH MODERN, EFFICIENT, AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE



NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Football Federation Australia Chief Executive Officer James Johnson and Marise Payne, Australia's foreign minister walk with Matildas players Alanna Kennedy, Lydia Williams and Steph Catley and Football Fern, Rebekah Stott during a media opportunity following the successful bid for Australia & New Zealand to host the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, at Hickson Road Reserve, The Rocks on June 26, 2020 in Sydney, Australia.

Football in Australia operates through a federated model which has evolved over time to consist of several layers of administration. When considering FFA and the MF layers of administration today, excluding the Zone and Association layers, we see significant duplication across the ecosystem:

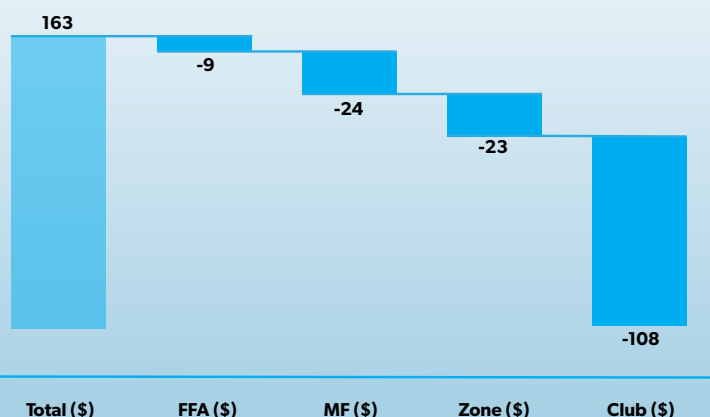
- Administration: 10 different legal entities; 10 Chairs; and some 70 or so Directors.
- Workforce: 10 CEO's; and 10 CFO's.
- Strategy: 10 Strategic Plans and no consolidated strategic planning or reporting.
- Sponsorship: 10 separate commercial revenue functions and streams.
- Finance: 10 separate sets of audited accounts and finance systems.
- Technology: community digital systems are aligned but require modernisation, whilst other technology solutions remain disjointed and misaligned, while data management and insights are yet to be fully developed or harnessed.
- Technical: Technical strategies focussed on player and coach development are not being totally aligned.
- Disciplinary and Arbitration Tribunals: MFs and their underlying associations have established various disciplinary and arbitration tribunals to deal with disciplinary matters and disputes with varied jurisdiction and procedures.

The purpose and responsibilities of each layer of administration within the governance framework of Australian football have blurred over time, creating inefficiencies and impacting effectiveness in the administration of the game across the country. This has also led to a lack of understanding amongst the football community of the roles and responsibilities at each level of football.

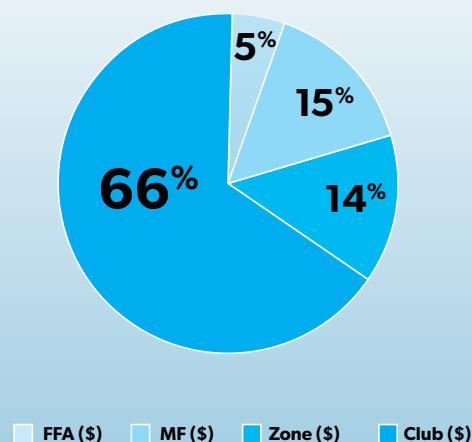
COVID-19 has highlighted the urgent need for transformation towards a modernised governance framework that better serves the game today. In this light, a shift towards a 'One Football' model, in line with global standards and best-practice sports governance in Australia, could reduce duplication and inefficiencies that hinder the current framework and provide the game with better prospects to maximise its opportunities and protect it against threats and risks. It could also see football make significant cost savings – estimated to be in excess of \$20 million – and improve the opportunity for more effective spending across all levels of the game. A shift to this type of model could also result in millions of dollars of 'new revenue' via 'whole of game' partnerships.

A WHOLE OF FOOTBALL APPROACH TO PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE GAME THROUGH MODERN, EFFICIENT, AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Allocation of Registration Fees, millions



Total Registration Revenue by Recipient



It is estimated that across FFA, MFs, Zones/Associations and Clubs, in excess of \$160m in registration and governing body fees are levied upon players and/or their parents. It is a significant sum of money which prompts questions about the cost of playing football and effectiveness of the re-investment of these revenues into the development and administration of football.

Football must consider what the purpose of the various administrative bodies in Australian football are and the role they play within the ecosystem. Without clearly defined roles and responsibilities, Australian football will continue to struggle to reach its potential. Thought must therefore be given to what the role of the various administrative bodies and other football entities should be to ensure that Australian football can be administered more efficiently and effectively.

In addition to its Judicial Bodies (Disciplinary and Ethics Committee and Appeals Committee) FFA itself has 14 Standing Committees, most of which have not been established in accordance with the FFA Constitution, bringing into question their utility and relevance. FIFA, the governing body of world football and its 211 Member Associations, has 9 Standing Committees.

The biggest strength of Australian football is its community and the people within it. Current structures have however, not promoted alignment and connectivity between our community

and the game's administrative bodies, particularly FFA. Creating stronger ties and closer connections is vital to unlocking the true potential of football and there has been good support from across the football community for this to happen and for the appropriate structural changes to the game to take place, as a matter of priority, to facilitate this.

There is also a deep knowledge and expertise which spans different eras of the game and across numerous administrative bodies right across Australia. Each stakeholder has an important contribution to make in Australian football's transformation and it is vital that the game comes together to ensure that it can maximise and capitalise on the collective expertise and knowledge which exists across the game.

Strengthening Australia's sport industry is a priority for the Australian Government which, in its national sport plan - Sport 2030, recognises the complexity of traditional sporting models and the impact which this has on the delivery of sport in Australia. Given the circumstances in which football finds itself today, it would be prudent for FFA and the MFs to transition towards a 'One Football' model to create a governance framework which truly aligns its members and stakeholders to act in the best interests of the sport as a whole. There is also strong sentiment from the football community that FFA address this quickly and play a leading role in driving change in this space.

THE VII PRINCIPLE

TRANSITION TOWARDS A MODERN, FIT-FOR-PURPOSE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR FOOTBALL IN AUSTRALIA IN LINE WITH GLOBAL STANDARDS AND BEST-PRACTICE SPORTS GOVERNANCE IN AUSTRALIA.

PROPOSED MEASURES

Transition towards a 'One Football' governance framework for football in Australia in line with global standards and best-practice sports governance in Australia to protect and enhance the best interests of football and our community

- Create a clearly defined roadmap and official forum to engage with stakeholders from the different levels of the game to discuss and review the current governance framework, including the multi-layers of governance.
- Implement governance and administration transformation towards a 'One Football' model in line with global standards and best-practice in Australia to:
 - Improve agility in decision-making.
 - Remove duplication and increase effectiveness by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the football ecosystem.
 - Reduce administration costs across the game through the sharing of services.
 - Align strategy across the game via a nationally shared vision, direction, and goals that can be tailored to suit circumstances at a local level.
 - Enhance commercial revenue potential via the alignment of assets to create opportunities for more 'whole of game' commercial partnerships.
 - Reduce the cost of football for participants, specifically in relation to those areas of the football ecosystem where they are unreasonably high.
 - Enhance the levels of support provided by the game's administration by reinvesting efficiency gains in improved services to the football community.
 - Harness the existing knowledge and expertise within the football ecosystem.
 - Increase clarity of advocacy with government and other entities on behalf of the game.
- Consider pilot transformations in specific States where MFs have already commenced governance and administrative reform processes e.g. in Queensland where Football Queensland has completed a six-month consultation process into key areas of the game.

- Consider how football's administration at all levels can be redefined or repurposed to ensure more effective and efficient delivery of football across the country.
- Increase alignment of FFA and MF on strategy and operational matters (e.g. aligning financial years).
- Consider how FFA and MFs can maximise football's extensive workforce and expertise and promote efficiency and effectiveness across the game (e.g. a shared services model for certain services and functions, or coordinated financial budgeting and investment decision-making) in light of the current constraints upon the game.

Introduce measures to support Australian football's transition towards a 'One Football' governance framework

- Establish a revised and proper functioning 'Football Stakeholders Committee' that has a meaningful role to play in key decisions of Australian football. The Committee would have a balanced representation of MFs, A-League and W-League Clubs, Player representatives and other stakeholders.
- FFA to review the status and relevance all of its Standing Committees and other associated bodies and working groups to reduce administrative burden and associated costs as well as to improve operating structures to produce effective and efficient decision making.
- Embed the Starting XI within the football structures of FFA to tap into its vast pool of knowledge and wealth of experience to support FFA being a 'football-focused' organisation.
- Improve accountability within the football ecosystem by ensuring that all funds distributed by FFA into the ecosystem are properly utilised and acquitted for in line with best practice funding and accounting principles.
- Improve effectiveness of FFA funded programs by ensuring that they are aligned to and implemented in pursuit of key strategic priorities.
- Create and give access to resources which adequately explain the structure of football in Australia to promote transparency and access to information.



WU

PRINCIPLE

A NEW MODEL FOR
THE PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES

A NEW MODEL FOR THE PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES

The A-League, W-League and Y-League have been operated by FFA since they were established. Previously, the National Soccer League was also fully controlled by Soccer Australia. Throughout the history of the professional leagues, there have been mixed financial results for FFA and the Clubs. This has in part been due to the design of the league, management decisions, competitive landscape, and economic drivers.

A major challenge for the professional leagues remains how best to effectively capitalise on football's market advantage as Australia's largest club-based participation sport and to convert a good portion of the game's 2 million participants into 'fans' – currently, less than 7% of these are members of an A-League or W-League club. One criticism of the professional leagues is that they have lacked a strong connection to the broader Australian football community and that this may be an underlying reason for low conversion rates. Outside of the fan and match day experience, 'connection' is a key influence for a person's decision to support an A-League or W-League club. Mechanisms for connection between the professional leagues and the football community must be enhanced. The unbundling of the professional leagues will allow FFA to increase its focus on connecting the whole game, from the top to the bottom of the pyramid.



Western Sydney Wanderers are crowned Champions of Asia after winning the 2014 AFC Asian Champions League.

A NEW MODEL FOR THE PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES



Sydney FC lift the A-League Championship trophy after winning the 2020 Grand Final.

The professional leagues have always been administered by FFA. In June 2019 however, an 'in-principle agreement' was reached by stakeholders to establish a new model for the professional leagues following extensive work through the New League Working Group process. The unbundling of the professional leagues from FFA is a positive development as it shows that Australian football is maturing. Despite the difficulties created by COVID-19, FFA and the Australian Professional Football Clubs Association ('APFCA'), which represents the professional clubs, have been working cooperatively towards finalising the unbundling process. It will be the first time in the history of Australian football that the professional leagues will be administered by the clubs but under the umbrella of FFA.

Over the course of 2020, and in deference to the in-principle agreement, FFA has gradually implemented practical changes to shift towards the role of 'Regulator', and has given the professional clubs and the APFCA more operational control. For the Clubs and the APFCA, this has included assuming direct control over the negotiation with Professional Footballers Australia ('PFA') of the Collective Bargaining Agreement ('CBA') for the professional leagues. It has also taken on direct responsibility of selling the commercial properties of the leagues.

FFA being awarded co-hosting rights to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup provides a unique opportunity for

the focused growth and development of the W-League. There has been strong support for FFA's vision for the W-League to become a 'Top 5' ranked league globally and consistently ranked in the 'Top 3' in Asia. The continued rise of women's professional leagues in European and America, and the continual movement of Australia's best players to these leagues, means that a deliberate and innovative strategy which recognises the opportunities presented by women's football in Australia should be developed.

The success of the professional leagues is critical to the ongoing growth of the game and there is strong sentiment across the football community to see it flourish and thrive. Clarifying the identity of the professional leagues and developing a strategy which aligns to the broader objectives of football in Australia will be vital. Whilst it is recognised that the professional leagues still provide an excellent opportunity for the commercial growth of the game, ensuring the professional leagues play a key role in the player development pathway must also remain a top priority for Australian football and for the professional leagues.

COVID-19 has however, had a significant impact on the financial health of the game. Given the current circumstances and financial realities confronting Australian football, it is prudent to establish a new model for the professional clubs to operate the professional leagues that builds on the work of and has regard to the pros and cons of the current model.

THE VIII PRINCIPLE

CREATE AN OPERATING AND GOVERNANCE MODEL FOR THE A-LEAGUE, W-LEAGUE AND Y-LEAGUE WHICH IS FIT FOR THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

PROPOSED MEASURES

Create a new model for the A-League, W-League and Y-League which is relevant to and reflects the current circumstances of Australian football

- Establish a separate entity to house and administer the professional leagues, which will include the following competitions:
 - A-League;
 - W-League;
 - Y-League; and
 - E-League.
- The separate entity will be administered and managed by its own board of directors which are responsible to its own shareholders.
- The board directors will be comprised of a mixture of FFA, APFCA, and independent representatives.
- Any new model should be designed to:
 - Ensure clearly defined roles and responsibilities which promote alignment of objectives between FFA and Clubs.
 - Increase ability for Clubs to control operations and strategy for the professional leagues in alignment with FFA's broader strategy for the game.
 - Empower FFA to act as the regulator of the professional leagues.
 - Promote increased performance and greater accountability for all levels, including FFA, the professional leagues and Clubs.
 - Preserve tax efficiencies through a corporate structure.
 - Incentivise club investment by enabling improved financial performance of the league to flow back to participating clubs.
 - Deliver on the youth development objectives outlined in this document and in alignment with any technical strategy established by FFA.
- Any new model must also support the recovery of professional football, in particular, the rebuilding of football as a worthwhile, stable, and rewarding profession of choice for footballers in Australia.



The A-League Championship Trophy.

- Consider creating a 'Special Purpose Vehicle' to:
 - Improve the commercial framework of the game.
 - Optimise the value of rights and sponsorships (e.g. media rights, sponsorship, licensing) across the game to enhance commercial opportunities for the game and professional leagues.
 - Operate as the exclusive partner for FFA (including national team and FFA or Australian football properties) and the professional leagues as well as whole of game rights if agreed with the current rights-holder, such as MFs).
 - Potentially, attract third party investment to allow FFA to invest in the future of the game.
 - Acquire and go to market with other football rights, including those in South East Asia and Oceania e.g. Soccer United Marketing which has previously acquired rights to Mexico's Liga MX.
 - Reduce revenue leakage by targeting ventures outside the traditional revenue streams of FFA or clubs. This might include club friendlies/exhibition matches, international friendlies, travel, and other media-based opportunities.
 - Act as a vehicle for a possible over the top ('OTT') platform (either in-house or in partnership) and a 'digital football hub' to provide for a 360° view of the football market and allows it to engage more effectively with the football community and in turn maximise potential commercial benefit to the game.

THE VIII PRINCIPLE

Create a clear vision and strategy for the A-League, W-League and Y-League

- To support the professional leagues, develop a strong vision, aligned to FFA's broader Vision for the game, for the leagues and ensure any new model is established to support this vision.
- The professional leagues should be optimised to encourage opportunities for young players to gain valuable professional experience and important match time.
- The identity of our professional leagues should also be considered e.g. the talent are 'home grown' players with the remainder being exceptional foreign players; the leagues play an important role in the production of players; deeper engagement in Asia through high level performance in AFC competitions and regular participants in FIFA's global club competitions; professional leagues to be a powerful voice within the World Leagues Forum.
- Align the professional leagues to the national second tier competition and grassroots competitions via the proposed national football calendar and transfer system including national transfer windows.
- Work with NPL competition administrators to provide opportunities for more match minutes to the Australian elite youth players by, for example, adjusting the age of A-League clubs participating in the NPL competitions to U-23, and facilitating the participation of these teams in the top NPL division.
- Evolve the Club Participation Agreement framework to the proposed National Club Licensing framework to improve standards, capability, and accountability within the professional clubs and across the professional leagues.

- The National Club Licensing framework will:
 - Be administered by FFA with licensing criteria being developed in consultation with the professional clubs.
 - Categorised into 3 tiers and include frameworks for:
 - Asian Champions League;
 - Professional leagues; and
 - NPL competitions.
 - Allow the Australian game to:
 - Create a tailored system which is relevant and can be applied to the various tiers of football in Australia.
 - Lift the standards of club football by focusing on key areas of development.
 - Promote transparency and enable the enforcement of best practice across all areas of club operations.
 - Allows access to important data and the creation of a national database to stimulate industry discussion which will help measure the growth and development of clubs over the years.
- FFA to retain rights over access into the professional leagues and will consult with the professional clubs on creating transparent criteria for promotion into the professional leagues in future rounds of expansion. Criteria to include football merit, commercial merit and sporting merit.

Create mechanisms to promote 'connection' between the Professional Leagues and the football community

- FFA to facilitate increased collaboration between MFs and A-League clubs to help promote connectivity and engagement between the professional game and grassroots football, particularly in regional areas.



Melbourne City lift the trophy after winning the 2020 Westfield W-League Grand Final.

THE VIII PRINCIPLE

Introduce measures to strengthen the A-League, W-League and Y-League

- Introduce measures to increase the length of time players stay with their clubs to develop a stronger connection between the club, player, and fan (e.g. Matt McKay and Clare Polkinghorne at Brisbane Roar).
- Support the re-launch of the A-League and W-League brands and narrative to reclaim a core football audience while at the same time repositioning the brand as 'edgy' and a challenger in the Australian sporting landscape.
- Ensure academies are operating in accordance with international best practice.
- Football products and offerings should focus on the fan experience and the ability to create authentic football experiences should be enhanced (for example, active fan support should be encouraged and cultivated).
- Ensure professional clubs attract strong ownership interest which understands the value in investing in the Australian football ecosystem and the positive flow-on impact this has on the value of the game, the professional leagues and the enterprise value of professional Clubs.
- The A-League should be reconsidered in the context of current circumstances and the following imperatives:
 - Ensuring effective spending to control and bring balance to escalating costs.
 - FFA, in collaboration with APFCA, building a strong relationship with IFAB to become the most progressive league in the world in pioneering the use of VAR and the first to broadcast live discussions between on-field referees and VAR.
 - Becoming a full member of the World Leagues Forum in 2020 or once these reforms have been implemented.
 - Driving support for the FIFA Club World Cup concept to access what is projected to be a US\$11 billion competition.
 - Expanding the A-League with the goal of reaching 16 teams in the next two expansion stages – expansion should also consider both sporting and administrative performance of clubs from the second tier.
 - Engaging with fans to build trust and alignment – building fan forums and other platforms to encourage fan integration into club administration should be encouraged.
 - Introducing initiatives that will allow football to increase its conversion rate of 'participants' into 'fans'.



Andrea Pirlo (R) of Juventus hugs his old team mate Alessandro Del Piero of the A-League All Stars during the match between the A-League All Stars and Juventus at ANZ Stadium on August 10, 2014 in Sydney, Australia.

- Reintroducing a 'Marquee Player' system to ensure designated players have the desired impact e.g. the "Beckham factor". Consideration should also be given to a system in which all clubs receive the commercial benefit of the League attracting one major marquee signing.
- Recognising that the best standard of refereeing is essential to creating the best product so KPI's around stoppages, free kicks and cautions should be considered to ensure the on-field product is fast and with as little stoppages as possible.
- Create an annual A-League and W-League 'All Stars' match against top European opponents.



PRINCIPLE

REDUCE THE COST OF FOOTBALL AND
SECURE THE FUTURE OF THE GAME

REDUCE THE COST OF FOOTBALL AND SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE GAME



Junior player from Narellan Rangers Soccer Club playing in the Macarthur Football Association 2019 Gala Day.

There is a general lack of understanding in relation to where the costs in football's ecosystem lie. In addition, a perpetuating narrative that football is "too expensive" has left participants, administrators, and the broader football community frustrated.

In relation to the registration fees, most clubs which provide a grassroots program will charge fees which are extremely competitive both domestically and globally, often delivering more value over the course of a season than many other sports within the Australian sporting landscape. Despite this, there is still a view that the cost of football remains prohibitive and acts as a barrier for entry, particularly in regional areas and for Indigenous communities, where players often have to bear additional traveling costs to compete in tournaments or elite competitions and training programs. There are also those clubs delivering more elite level programs which will charge much higher fees to account for the additional expenses required to deliver these programs. One reason has been the escalation of requirements upon clubs; another, at least anecdotally, may be payments to senior players outside of registered player contracts.

A lack of clearly defined roles and responsibilities for football's administrative bodies has also been identified as a reason for the inefficiencies and duplications seen across the administration of the game, which might then have an inflationary impact upon participants. There is significant commonality and overlap in the operations of FFA and MFs - each entity has its own Technical, Competitions, Communications, Digital, Finance, Legal, Marketing,

Government Relations and Commercial operations. In some cases, FFA funds roles across these functions through technical, pathway or community services funding, but does not have direct accountability or authority over policy decisions and reporting lines.

There is also significant opportunity to improve clarity and transparency around the collection and application of registration fees to promote trust and understanding in the game. Currently, approximately \$164 million in registration fees is collected through FFA's Play Football payment gateway on an annual basis. Of this total amount:

- Approximately, \$108 million (66%) remains with clubs.
- Approximately, \$23 million (14%) remains with Associations.
- Approximately, \$24 million remains with MFs - which will usually receive approximately \$6 million distribution from FFA each year, totalling approximately \$30 million (18%).
- Approximately, \$9 million is retained by FFA - which usually distributes \$6 million of this amount to MFs annually, leaving FFA with \$3 million (2%) from the National Registration Fee to dedicate to National Team programs and other initiatives.

Transitioning towards a 'One Football' model for Australian football could see a more concerted effort to generate new revenues across the game (a 10% increase in combined revenue across FFA and MFs could yield \$20 million in new income), and savings in operational efficiencies across just the FFA and MF levels of the game currently estimated in excess of \$20 million.

REDUCE THE COST OF FOOTBALL AND SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE GAME

There is a strong desire for football in Australia to be a sport which is affordable for all and should be accessible anytime, by anyone, anywhere, by whatever means available. It must encourage mass participation and provide the right architecture for those that wish to transition into elite football, the ability to do so without unnecessary barriers.

There are varying views in relation to the cost concerns which exist within football today. An objective analysis of where the costs within the football ecosystem lie must therefore be an imperative for Australian football. A clear and strong narrative should also be developed to encourage transparency, accountability and build trust within the football ecosystem. Furthermore, and to help promote trust that football's administrative bodies are delivering the game in the most effective and efficient manner, the narrative should begin

shifting the discussion from one which is focused purely on cost, to one which demonstrates that value which is yielded from the costs associated with the game.

The existence of private academies is another major element to Australian football that extends the amount of football that is played, but at the same time significantly increases the cost of playing football. In some cases, privately run football programs are operated in tandem with club-based football training. In other cases, parents will enrol their children in academies to seek to boost their contact hours over and above training hours provided by their registered club. Whatever the context, private academies are not specifically regulated by FFA and absorb a considerable share of the total national expenditure on football by its very community. FFA and other governing bodies must therefore consider whether to incentivise high-standards and affordability by way of a long-discussed private academy accreditation scheme, or further consideration should also be given to the establishment of new forms of incremental football tuition administered by FFA and/or other affiliated football bodies in which standards can be directly set and costs maintained at a reasonable level.



Girls from an U/12's Bankstown District Amateur Football Association team celebrate.

THE IX PRINCIPLE

ENSURE THAT FOOTBALL BECOMES MORE OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE TO THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY AND THAT COST DOES NOT REMAIN A BARRIER TO PARTICIPATION.

PROPOSED MEASURES

Conduct an objective assessment on the cost to play football in Australia

- Undertake an objective assessment of the cost to play football to:
 - Build a deeper understanding of where the costs within the ecosystem lie.
 - Identify where there is duplication of functions and the potential to establish shared services and revised accountabilities to generate efficiencies in terms of cost reduction and revenue maximisation.
 - Build an accurate narrative in respect to the cost to play football in Australia at each level of the game and across the numerous areas of the football ecosystem.
- Outcomes of the assessment should be communicated to improve understanding amongst the football community and to create better transparency and accountability within the game.
- Establish a 'one football budget' for Australian football to ensure that football operates in a sustainable and transparent way – either in aggregate or in targeted areas.
- Review the role of private academies and consider new and innovative ways to deliver more contact hours for players at a reasonable price.

Communicate an accurate narrative on the cost of football

- Develop and communicate a clear and strong narrative to encourage transparency, accountability and build trust within the football ecosystem.

Unify the game and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens

- Each stakeholder will have a vital role to play making the game more efficient and effective. FFA must maximise the collective knowledge, expertise and talent which exists within the Australian football ecosystem.
- FFA must pursue efficiency gains within itself and, equally, across the football ecosystem to improve its current level of effectiveness and grow into an industry leadership position.



The Pararoos in a final team huddle before they face Canada at Cromer Park, Manly on November 30, 2019.

- Early estimates demonstrate that the cost benefits provide a compelling argument for FFA to carry out transformational change towards a 'One Football' model in line with global standards and best-practice sports governance in Australia.
- Such principles could also be applied currently to competition structures and technology products including registration and competition management systems which need to be optimised and which should also ultimately lead to cost benefits to participants.
- Develop a single unified strategy that integrates priorities and emphasises clear accountabilities for key initiatives that require ecosystem-wide collaboration to deliver successfully.
- Improve accountability by ensuring that any funding distribution made by FFA is done so in alignment with a unified national strategy.
- Improve the current FFA Play Football payment gateway to remove unnecessary administrative burden and associated costs.

Increase regulatory measures to ensure football remains accessible to all

- Consider other regulatory measures, such as the introduction of financial controls on player payments at NPL level or enforcement of the regulations regarding the reasonableness of registration fees to facilitate cost savings for participants.
- Introduce further transparency measures in relation to how registration fees are collected and applied by clubs/ administrative bodies to promote trust and accountability e.g. establishing a mechanism which allows registration fees to be 'tracked'.



PRINCIPLE

AUSTRALIA BECOMING THE
CENTRE OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL IN
THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

AUSTRALIA BECOMING THE CENTRE OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION



2019 FIFA Women's World Cup France Group C match between Australia and Brazil at Stade de la Mosson on June 13, 2019 in Montpellier, France.

The awarding of co-hosting rights to FFA for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup provides additional impetus, not only to continue the growth of women's football in Australia, but to turn Australia into the 'centre' of women's football in the Asia-Pacific region.

Women's football in Australia has made significant progress (underpinned by the success of the Matildas) and continues to present the greatest opportunity for growth in Australian football. FFA's 2019 Census Report showed 6% overall growth on 2018 participation to 1,957,552 participants, including significant increases across several areas, including social football (35%) and among coaches (7%) and volunteers (27%). Significantly, the number of women and girls playing football has risen to record numbers rising by 11% and now representing some 22% of total players.

FFA and its Women's Football Council have developed a 10-year business case plan to drive significant investment in women's football in Australia from new sources of funding. The business case plan draws comprehensively from 80 respondents from all corners of football and from other leading sports and builds on FFA's Gender Equality Action Plan 2019 and long-term Women's Football Plan.

Three major pillars which underpin the business case plan are:

- Accelerate and retain participation of women and girls.
- Appoint women to decision-making roles across the game.
- Ensure national team success.

The business case plan also has identified several factors to improve gender equity in the Australian game:

- Improve funding to drive change.
- Introduce measures to address the specific sporting needs of women adequately.
- More women in decision-making positions.
- Establish clear priorities and a consistent approach to women's football.

AUSTRALIA BECOMING THE CENTRE OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

Australian football has recognised that to reflect the game's true diversity and global appeal, more women must be advanced into senior administrative roles across the game. Following recent governance reforms and its 2019 Board elections, the FFA Board now meets its own 40:40:20 representation requirement. More broadly, there is a great need for football to adopt further system changes, remove barriers to entry and improve the culture and environment for women in the game. By doing so, we will be able to increase the number of women participating in all areas of the game, particularly the number of women appointed to decision-making positions. By increasing the number of opportunities and better supporting women involved in the game, we will ultimately expand the talent pool and the game will benefit from this rich and underutilised expert knowledge base. This approach will extend to women and girls with all abilities and from Indigenous and CALD communities. Specialised programs should be developed to attract, retain and support these women and girls.

Australian football must also address the unique challenges faced by women's football, particularly in relation to its player development pathways including consistency of delivery within each MF, the financial ability of players to access these programs, and increase opportunities for elite football, particularly for those national team players who do not secure opportunities to play in the United States or Europe. It is imperative that as the game moves towards its goal of having 50:50 representation in participation numbers, there is a corresponding increase in both the availability

of facilities and also opportunities for women and girls to play more often and in better quality competitions, to match the rise in numbers of women and girls.

In difficult circumstances, FFA's new agreement with Fox Sports Australia has secured the next season of the W-League and ensures that professional women's football has a platform to continue to grow. Like the A-League, the W-League is a competition which has an opportunity to establish a clear identity and vision. In 2019, the US National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) contributed more players to the Women's World Cup than any other league in the world. The NWSL is known as one of the premier women's competitions around the world - what should the W-League's identity be?

The granting of co-hosting rights to FFA for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup presents an excellent opportunity to anchor the continued growth of Australian football in the growth women and girls in football and to position the Matildas at the forefront of this transformation. The interest it will generate in the sport should be maximised so that it can have a positive impact on the broader growth of Australian football. A comprehensive, whole of game legacy strategy must be developed to unlock incremental gains for women's football in key areas such as infrastructure, high-performance, participation and leadership and culture in order to facilitate meaningful partnership with governments, corporate entities, philanthropy and FIFA itself.



Referees from Football South Coast walking out to officiate the 2019 Women's Division 1 final.

THE X PRINCIPLE

ACCELERATE AND ENHANCE THE GROWTH OF THE GAME BY DRIVING PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS AND ENHANCING EXISTING COMPETITION STRUCTURES TO PROMOTE PLAYER DEVELOPMENT.



MiniRoos in action at the 2019 North West Sydney Football MiniRoos Gala Day.

PROPOSED MEASURES

Maximise the benefits of hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup and create a lasting legacy for women's football in Australia

- Ensure that Australian football is positioned to leverage the anticipated interest and maximise the benefits of hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, and drive transformational change by establishing an innovative 'Legacy Framework' around the 'AsOne2023' Bid, in consultation with the game's stakeholders.

Deliver the women's football business case plan

- Create a Women's Football Department and appoint a head within FFA to lead the growth of the women's game in Australia. The Head of Women's Football would lead the national strategy and build a team, that would include direct reports based within each MF.

- FFA should strengthen its working relationship with the Women's Football Council and immediately consider and champion the implementation of the 10-year women's football business case plan, including an assessment of the global women's football environment, in the context of a post COVID-19 landscape and FFA's overall refreshed strategic direction.
- Leverage the significant opportunities to improve outcomes in football for girls and women by:
 - Building on the success of the Matildas.
 - Leveraging best practice which exists in pockets across the game.
 - Leveraging football's competitive advantage as a family-friendly and community orientated sport.
 - Accessing genuine funding growth opportunities including those available via government grants and subsidies.

THE X PRINCIPLE



FIFA President, Gianni Infantino, announces Australia and New Zealand as co-hosts of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023

Competition structures and pathways for women & girls in conjunction with the professional leagues

- Develop a clear identity and vision for the W-League towards being a 'top 5' global league which rivals its counterparts in the United States and across Europe.
- Enhance our national pathways to support and nurture Australia's aspiring female football player talent to improve quality, consistency, and regional access.
- Review the competition structures of NPL and W-League and develop a clear, unified strategy around promoting player development.
- Consider thoroughly the opportunities available for female players domestically, clearly define the pathway for women, and how the competitions connect - the pathway for women and girls should be reimagined so it is fit for purpose.
- Utilise former Matildas and elite female footballers to inspire young women and girls through football during key age group e.g. Skills Acquisition Phase (9-12 years old).
- Increase the participation base well above 200,000 players to fuel player depth for elite female teams.

- Ensure that participation numbers for women and girls in football continues to grow, particularly by:
 - Increasing support resources to help football clubs and community groups to ensure all football participants feel welcomed and valued, fostering safe and inclusive practices that encourage growth in participation and retention rates among women and girls, and families.
 - Enticing introductory programs that compete against competitors' offerings (MiniRoos).
 - Aiming for a 50:50 split of total participation numbers by 2027 by developing modified versions of football to suit the specific needs of women and girls (e.g. 'SoccerMums').
 - Empowering women through fair representation of women on boards/committees and in management, administration, and elite coaching and refereeing.
 - Introducing 40:40:20 principle across the game.
 - Introducing measures to promote a culturally diverse and inclusive game including the establishment of strong requirements for gender parity, diversity and inclusion on board, management, and committees across the game.



Celebrations on Finals Day at Football South Coast.



XI

PRINCIPLE

TRANSFORM OUR NATIONAL TEAMS INTO
UNIQUELY ICONIC BRANDS

TRANSFORM OUR NATIONAL TEAMS INTO UNIQUELY ICONIC BRANDS



Alanna Kennedy, Emily Van Egmond and Ellie Carpenter celebrate after defeating the United States 1-0 during the 2017 Tournament of Nations at CenturyLink Field on July 27, 2017

Following unparalleled levels of support during their FIFA Women's World Cup 2019 campaign in France, the Matildas were ranked as Australia's most-loved sporting team according to the Bench Mark Emotional Connection study, conducted by True North Research (2019). The positive groundswell of support during and post the Women's World Cup is evident in an influx of celebrity and fan support across social media, an increase in viewership figures for their 2019 matches, and growth in bid supporter registrations which closed at over 800,000 when the announcement to award FFA co-hosting rights was made.

SBS revealed that 1.39 million Australians watched the Matildas battle it out during the opening weekend - almost double the visibility of the last tournament in 2015. When the USA defeated England 2-1 in the semi-finals of the 2019 Women's World Cup, more than 11.7 million people watched it on television in the United Kingdom, making it the country's most-viewed TV show of the year when it aired. The Matildas have a very real opportunity to win a major trophy at its upcoming major tournaments, which include, the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup which will be hosted on home soil.

The Socceroos remain our most followed national team on FFA's digital platforms with the recent success of FFA's

streaming of the Socceroos' historic World Cup qualifying match in 2005 against Uruguay demonstrating the continued popularity of the team and the strong connection to its past iconic achievements, particularly of the 'Golden Generation'. The Socceroos have also qualified for every FIFA World Cup since 2006, a considerable achievement given the growing competitiveness of teams in Asia and the duration of the qualification process.

The opportunity to see the Socceroos and Matildas playing in the world's biggest leagues and for some of the biggest clubs, also provides a unique point of exposure for the game. Most recently, Ellie Carpenter's Olympique Lyonnaise in France were crowned Champions of Europe while Sam Kerr's Chelsea FC won its first League Cup after triumphing over an Arsenal side which included several Matildas, Caitlin Foord, Lydia Williams and Steph Catley. Meanwhile, both Mat Ryan and Mathew Leckie currently have commenced their seasons in two of the biggest men's Leagues in Europe, the English Premier League and German Bundesliga respectively. Currently, members of both the Matildas and Socceroos ply their trade in top divisions across Europe and Asia. This has provided, not just the Australian football community, but also the broader Australian sporting public the opportunity to engage with football and connect with the global game.

TRANSFORM OUR NATIONAL TEAMS INTO UNIQUELY ICONIC BRANDS

Our senior national teams must be supported by the success of our junior national teams which have been inconsistent over the past 10 to 15 years:

- The Olyroos (Men's U-23) failed to qualify for the Olympics in 2012 and 2016 but finished in third place (the best performance in four editions of the AFC U-23 Championship) at the recent Asian U-23 Championship to qualify for Tokyo.
- The Young Socceroos (Men's U-20) have not qualified for the past three editions of the FIFA U-20 World Cup (2015, 2017, 2019) having reached the finals in 15 of the previous 17 tournaments.
- The Joeys (Men's U-17) qualified for the 2019 FIFA U-17 World Cup in Brazil, just the third time in seven editions they had made it to the finals where they were eliminated in the Round of 16.
- Since 2006, the Young Matildas (Women's U-20) have failed to qualify for seven editions of the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup, including the 2020 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup which was scheduled to be held in Costa Rica and Panama in August this year.
- The Junior Matildas (Women's U-17) have qualified for all but one of the AFC U-16 Women's Championships since its inception in 2007, however, this record has not been good enough for them to qualify for any of the seven editions of the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup.

The current age structure of Australia's junior national teams limits the potential for players born in certain years to gain exposure to national team football, thereby reducing the talent pool for Australian national teams. For example:

- If a player is not born in the year of a World Cup cycle, they have limited opportunities to join the junior national team set up and may not gain national team experience until later in their playing career.
- Players from the Joeys' squad which competed at the FIFA U-17 World Cup in October 2019, must now compete against players born 2 years older than them to be a part of the Young Socceroos program. Typically, only 3 to 4 players will succeed, meaning that the remainder of that playing group, will have little to no further national team experience.

It is imperative that Australia does not lose ground to its Asian and European counterparts and programs, particularly for Junior national teams, who must not go dormant because of a lack of success and subsequent funding. Confirmation that the Victorian government will invest \$1.5 million towards master planning and design for the Home of the Matildas facility is the type of welcome investment required to ensure national team programs receive the support required for the success of our national teams.



Mile Jedinak (c) as he lifts the trophy after the Socceroos defeated South Korea in the AFC Asian Cup football final at Stadium Australia in Sydney on January 31, 2015

TRANSFORM OUR NATIONAL TEAMS INTO UNIQUELY ICONIC BRANDS



The Westfield Matildas celebrate Emily van Egmond's late equalising goal during an Olympics qualifying match against China PR in February, 2020.

The football community want to see the Socceroos and Matildas as unifying symbols of Australian football and the granting of co-hosting rights to host the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, now presents Australian football an excellent opportunity to position its national teams, particularly the Matildas, as uniquely iconic and distinguishable brands, both domestically and abroad. To do so, we must continue to ensure that our national teams are not only participating in, but are also successful, in the biggest competitions. One such example for the Matildas would be the proposed FIFA Women's National League – a global competition for women's national teams; or the Copa America in South America for the Socceroos. FFA must also look to secure more matches for national teams, especially junior national teams on home soil to give our heroes of tomorrow the opportunity to showcase their talent in front of friends and family. This should also however, include maximising the opportunity to showcase all national teams, including our Pararoos and Futsalroos, as well as the establishment of Indigenous national teams.

COVID-19 has significantly disrupted the international calendar in 2020, starting with the relocation of the Women's Olympic Qualifiers from Wuhan to Sydney and extending to

World Cup Qualifiers involving the Socceroos. Our national team players must continue to be supported as they navigate the personal and professional challenges of being involved in representative football during these trying circumstances. FFA and PFA, and national team players, must continue to engage in a spirit of collaboration and act in the best interests of the game to develop and implement a plan to recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

The positioning of the national teams must be underpinned by a strong narrative and a complementary strategy to communicate the achievements of the teams and of the players. The opportunity to enhance digital transformation in this space must be harnessed as demonstrated by the double and even high-triple digit growth in a range of key digital and social media metrics across FFA's digital platforms over the past year, despite the Socceroos and Westfield Matildas having had their match schedules disrupted due to COVID-19. Continuing to evolve digital and social products to ensure that the Australian football community can enjoy a closer and stronger bond with national teams and players by providing access to engaging content to enjoy and providing value to partners, should continue to remain a priority.

THE XI PRINCIPLE

ELEVATE EVEN FURTHER THE WESTFIELD MATILDAS AND THE SOCCEROOS AS THE UNIFYING SYMBOLS OF THE GAME AND HEROES WHO EPITOMISE THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL IDENTITY TO INSPIRE EVERY YOUNG AUSTRALIAN REGARDLESS OF THEIR ABILITY OR BACKGROUND.

THE MEASURES

Prioritising national team programs

- Create value in national team matches by increasing the number of meaningful matches (e.g. against 'Top 10-ranked' opponents) to maximise player exposure and capture the hearts and minds of fans.
- Build a deep understanding of how the current talent pool might impact the performance of national teams.
- Establish programs for tours and development camps for Australia's junior national teams.
- Establish a program for Indigenous national teams (women and men).
- Consider the introduction of additional junior national teams programs in coming years to address 'gaps' in the junior national team development pathway.
- Create more opportunities for national team games on home soil such as the Women's Olympic Qualifiers held in March 2020 and hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.
- Advance the creation of a truly high-performance program for the women's national team, particularly for those emerging players who might not have opportunities to play overseas, in the lead up to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup on home soil.

- Enhance support for national team players and staff to help them cope with performance expectations, feel fulfilled and supported to learn, and positively contribute during their time in the sport and into the future.

Create a 'home' for the Matildas and a 'home' for Football

- Ensure the proposed 'Home' for the Matildas benefits the game by:
 - Engaging both State and Federal Governments in a key partnership.
 - Creating a major asset for Australian football.
 - Increasing opportunity for revenue generation for the game.
 - Creating a world class National-level Training Centre for the Matildas, other national teams and as a Centre of Excellence for emerging talent in each State.
 - Securing purpose-built administration facilities.
 - Leveraging long term major events partnerships with State Governments and other relevant institutions as an additional revenue source.
 - Becoming a regional 'Centre of Excellence' for women's leadership / coaching / refereeing programs, ideally in collaboration with FIFA and AFC.
 - Access to special facilities and programs for community.



Alanna Kennedy celebrates with students from her former primary school, Rosemeadow Public.

Connect to the global game via our national teams

- Promote football's strong connection to the rest of the world and the opportunities that come with that – via the Matildas.
- Maximise the opportunity of hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, to position the Matildas as a global brand to connect Australian football to the global football community.
- Host more international matches and tournaments, particularly in regional Australia, to connect our communities to the global game e.g. FFA's joint bids with Cessnock City Council and Greater Shepparton City Council to host qualification groups for AFC's U-17 and U-20 Women's Asian Cup in 2022.
- FFA should support FIFA in its efforts to establish the Women's Global National League and a Women's Club World Cups.

The logo features the letters 'XI' in a large, bold, dark green font with diagonal hatching. Below it, the word 'PRINCIPLES' is written in a smaller, bold, dark green sans-serif font. The background is white with faint, light gray geometric shapes including circles and overlapping rectangles.

XI **PRINCIPLES**

FOR THE FUTURE OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

**Head to www.ffa.com.au
for more information.**

We look forward to hearing from you!