



XII

PRINCIPLES

FOR THE FUTURE OF
AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

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 to 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 other 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.

CONTENTS

Page No.	
4	The Vision for Australian football
12	XI Principles for the future of Australian football
13	A National Football Identity
17	Resetting the Australian football narrative
21	Stimulating the growth of the Australian football economy
24	Reset and rebuild Australian football products
29	More football, more often: increasing match minutes for youth players and improving the player pathway
32	Create world class environments for coach development
36	A whole of football approach to protecting and enhancing the game through modern, efficient, and effective governance
40	A new model for FFA and the Professional Leagues
45	Reducing the cost of football and securing the future of the game
48	Australia to become the centre of Women's football in the Asia-Pacific region
53	Transforming our National Teams into uniquely iconic brands



THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL



MiniRoos.



Westfield Matildas V China PR. Women's Olympic Football Tournament Qualifier, 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.



Hyundai 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 MF's and Associations, in addition to the near 2,400 community clubs across the country, play a vital role in Australia's football ecosystem.

Australia's Professional Leagues, the Westfield W-League ('W-League') and Hyundai A-League ('A-League') have traditionally been under 100% control of FFA. 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 expected depressed economic conditions that threaten previous levels support.

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

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

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 the 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 this journey of transformation have already begun.

We are seeing a more united game than ever before. FFA and MF's 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 will see a 'festival of football' close out the remainder of the 2019/20 Hyundai A-League season.

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 subject 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.



Hyundai 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 a highly 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 in order 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 VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

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.

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 games' 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.
- 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.



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

- 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.
- Administration of the game truly reflects the diversity of the football community and FFA has had its 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.
- FFA has also enhanced its historical relationships and forged new relationships, with the likes of the Oceania Football Confederation (OFC) and the Confederation 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.
- 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, 16 November 2005

- **We are now a local, but global organisation:**

- 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.
- Australian football has reconnected itself to the global football economy via the establishment of a modern domestic transfer system.

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

- The Matildas have just qualified for the Olympic Games having 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 FIFA Rankings. They have been the number one ranked team in Asia for the last 5 years.
- The Socceroos are a regular participant in and have won the AFF Suzuki Cup.
- The success of the senior National Teams is supported by the junior teams which have qualified for every major tournament for the last 10 years.

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

- Our second-tier competitions are administered 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.
- Our professional leagues 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.
- Our professional clubs are also top regular challengers in Asian club competitions.
- A-League clubs are regular participants at the FIFA Club World Cup while W-League clubs are challenging regularly to win the FIFA Women's Club World Cup.
- The professional leagues also have a significant role to play in producing top quality Australian talent and have a clear position within the player pathway:
 - The W-League works in tandem with the WNPL to ensure that those female players which do not have an opportunity to play overseas, now have more opportunities to play domestically.
 - The A-League has become a supplier of top talent to the world's biggest leagues with the funds from these transfers fuelling the Australian football economy.
- Clubs now play in football-specific 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.
- The professional game has attracted the strong investment and the enterprise value of our professional clubs have experienced continued growth.
- Regionally, our participant clubs have a chance of winning the Asian Champions League (Men & Women).

THE VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

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

- Domestically, top tier competitions, which includes the A/W Leagues and second-tier competitions are aligned through the creation of a 'football calendar' meaning that these seasons are played at the same time. This has enabled FFA to:
 - Align all professional competitions with the Australian grassroots season.
 - Increase its 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 in November each year.
 - Align the professional competitions with the ACL calendar.
- Our second-tier competition is thriving, and finals series are a regular fixture in the football calendar, driving competitive tension and fan interest.
- FFA have introduced a Women's FFA Cup.
- The FFA Cup (men & women) has given clubs across the entire ecosystem an opportunity to compete on the national and international stage.
- 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' and the production of its own content.



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, 2005.

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

- In FIFA's 2024, International Transfer Market Report, Australia appeared in the top 10 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 incentivise and reward Australian clubs to invest in the training and development of players and stimulate the domestic transfer system which underwent significant transformation in 2021.
- The establishment of the FFA Clearing House 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 for our professional football.
- Agents have been operating under an accreditation framework for over 10 years and operate at some of the highest standards seen globally.
- Coach numbers have significantly increased – 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, often requested for the most high profile matches in international football.



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

- **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 towards one strategy.
- Each stakeholder has a clearly defined purpose and role within the broader football ecosystem, leading to more efficient and effective governance of the game.
- Australia is one of the more affordable places to play football while delivering the most value for its participants.
- The game is accessible to all, no matter their 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 tiers of Australian football.
- The game can access significant government funding and via a unified approach.
- The game can maximise its commercial potential via a unified strategy.
- The important role which clubs as hubs for community interaction is enhanced.
- Our workforce is highly skilled and motivated, underpinned by a strong volunteer community – the corner stone of our game.

THE TIME IS NOW RIGHT FOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL TO SET A BOLD AND INNOVATIVE AND DETAILED PATH TOWARDS THE VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE GAME.

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

Throughout the course of 2020, FFA has received extensive feedback from across the football ecosystem including stakeholders, commercial partners, and participants, in relation to areas of possible transformation.

Based on this feedback, FFA has developed the 'XI Principles' outlined in this paper.

The 'XI Principles' are being proposed as fundamental principles for the future growth and development of football in Australia and a steppingstone towards a united vision for the game.

This paper is initially published as a 'living document' and will continue to be shaped as FFA uses it as a basis for consultation with the Australian football community.

FFA has also outlined proposed measures which may be introduced in pursuit of these principles.



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, 15 September 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 Establish an integrated and thriving football ecosystem driven by a modern domestic transfer system.
- IV Create a dynamic and engaging football product by optimising competition structures to connect Australian football; promote competitive balance and tension; promote uncertainty of outcome; incentivise sporting achievement; and prioritise the fan experience.
- 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 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 Continue the growth of the game by driving participation of women and girls and enhancing existing competition structures to promote player development.
- XI Position 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.

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 from Federal Government. For FY 19/20 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). 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.
- 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 well placed to compete to win the upcoming Olympics.
- 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.
- An analysis of the Hyundai A-League over the last 5 seasons reveals that 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, such as the competition calendar, in the best interests of the game or 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 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. 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.

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 broader considerations such as Australia’s Indigenous heritage and account for contemporary influences such as new migrants and those which seek refuge in Australia.

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



May 29, 2019. Young Matildas Shadeene Evans (C) training. Evan, star of the John Moriarty Foundation, established by the first Indigenous player to be selected to play for Australia, John Moriarty, and started her W-League career at Sydney FC.



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.

“We are a strong and united community with a strong domestic brand built upon our large diverse participation base; 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.”

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 games’ stakeholders towards the achievement of this united vision for the game.

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 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.
 - 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.



THE I PRINCIPLE

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

- 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).

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 Government. 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.
- FFA to appoint a Head of Corporate Affairs and Communications to lead the telling of Australian football’s story in all its diversity via a comprehensive Communications Strategy for FFA, on behalf of the football community.
- Football must put forward a strong and unified voice to position itself as a key partner for government.



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



PRINCIPLE

RESETTING THE AUSTRALIAN
FOOTBALL NARRATIVE

RESETTING THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL NARRATIVE



Caitlin Foord, Sam Kerr, Ellie Carpenter and Steph Catley.
Westfield Matildas 2019 Jersey Promotion

The exploits of the Socceroos and Westfield Matildas have gone a long way towards 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 the 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 which 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.

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 entire 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.

Australian football is in an opportune moment to advance a new and bold narrative for the future of the game.

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™ to drive a refreshed 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.
- 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 (e.g. former Socceroos Captain, Lucas Neil).
- 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.

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

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



Socceroos 1993 Jersey

Australian football directly with FFA's CEO and other football administrators. Forums to 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.

- 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 to 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.

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.



West German forward Gerd Mueller (C) scores on a header against Australian goalkeeper Jack Reilly (L) and defenders Manfred Schaefer (2nd L) and Ray Richards (R) during the first round match between West Germany and Australia at the 1974 FIFA World Cup on 18 June 1974 in Hamburg. West Germany beat Australia 3-0.

Establish a home for football in Australia

- FFA to consider relocating to premises which are befitting of its football focus and allows it to create a museum which celebrates the history of football in Australia – a National Home of Football.
- 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.

A new name

- Realign 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.
- Consider renaming and rebranding the National Premier Leagues.
- Rename "Football Federation Australian" to "Football Australia" to realign the game with its roots as 'association' football and bring consistency to the naming of football entities across the game.



PRINCIPLE

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

STIMULATING THE GROWTH OF THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL ECONOMY



Caitlin Foord and Sam Kerr, match up during the FA Women's Continental League Cup Final 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 2019/19 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 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 transfer system 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 access the international 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.

FIFA's Global Transfer Market Report 2019 (Men) ('2019 Transfer Market Report') showed that Australia received just US \$1.9 million in transfer fees, representing a 62% drop from the previous year. Of the three countries ranked higher than Australia (Men) in Asia, Japan (28) received US\$29.4 million and South Korea (40) 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 (53) received US\$33.6 million.

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, 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.

Domestically, 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 and performances of our national teams.

THE III PRINCIPLE

ESTABLISH 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.
- Establish a Clearing House to promote transparency in transfer payments and to centralise and ensure the distribution 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'.

Build a conducive environment to the 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:
 - increased measures to ensure players are not exploited;
 - ensuring rewards are distributed back to training clubs, at all levels of the game, in an accurate, timely and efficient way;
 - 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;
 - 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.
- 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.



Former Soccerroo, Zeljko Kalac, 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.

NW

PRINCIPLE

CREATING A DYNAMIC AND ENGAGING
FOOTBALL PRODUCT

FOOTBALL
QUEENSLAND

NATIONAL
PREMIER LEAGUES

NATIONAL PREMIER LEAGUES QUEENSLAND

2019 GRAND FINAL CHAMPIONS

RESET AND REBUILD 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 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 games' 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 the attractiveness of its products to drive fans into stadiums, increase viewership, improve marketability and overall appeal, and consequently, improve the commercial value of its 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.

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 for FFA and MF's and presents a natural opportunity for collaboration and the possibility of unified national approach. The Association of Australian football Clubs ('AAFC') are the representative body of NPL clubs within MF's .

RESET AND REBUILD AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL PRODUCTS

The challenge for Australian football will be to ensure that its competitions are connected, and all operate to support 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 rescheduling of the upcoming 2020/21 A-League season from December 2020 to July 2021, provides an excellent opportunity for FFA to properly understand the impact this might have on the football ecosystem.

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, in order 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 and refugee communities engaged in football activities increasing significantly. 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 futsal and beach soccer. These forms of the sport represent opportunities for growing football's participation base in new, innovative, and exciting ways.



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

THE IV PRINCIPLE

CREATE A DYNAMIC AND ENGAGING FOOTBALL PRODUCT BY OPTIMISING COMPETITION STRUCTURES TO CONNECT AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL; PROMOTE COMPETITIVE BALANCE AND TENSION; PROMOTE UNCERTAINTY OF OUTCOME; INCENTIVISE SPORTING ACHIEVEMENT; AND PRIORITISE THE FAN EXPERIENCE.



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

Optimise and enhance current and 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:
 - Improve the commercial value of the FFA Cup to allow it to become an additional revenue stream for participating clubs and provide additional matches and match minutes for players to develop.
 - Optimise the competition structure of the FFA Cup, such as 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. The FFA Cup to be the last match of our football season.
 - Set a strategy to increase Australian 'spots' in the ACL and through negotiation with AFC provide a 'spot' or 'half spot' for the winner of the FFA Cup.
 - Work with MF's and AAFC to enhance and optimise the NPL (Women and Men) competitions so they can become a talent pool for Australia's best players.
 - Consider the development of a second-tier competition.

- The development of the NPL should be considered in the context of the Professional Leagues.
- Create more opportunities for our best players at each age group to play with and against the best.
- Each competition should be enhanced and optimised to improve them as football products and promote player production.
- Ensure that contractual obligations of players and regulatory requirements of competitions do not place a hindrance on player development.

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 competitions.

THE IV PRINCIPLE

- Clarify roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of national level competitions.
- Reimagine the player pathway to facilitate player production.
- 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 be played from December 2020 to July 2021. Factors such as ground availability, pitch condition, match scheduling and how the A-League performs in the winter sporting calendar should be factored into this analysis.
- Transition away from a Club Participation Agreement framework and introduce a National Club Licensing framework which acts as a principle-based development tool to improve the standards of clubs across Australia. This will 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.
 - Promotes transparency and encourages best practice across all areas of club operations.
 - Allows access to important data and the creation of a national database to stimulate industry discussion.

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 three years.
 - For UEFA competitions, an 'access list' determines the entry stage of each club into the Champions and Europe 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.
 - Club Licensing is also another mechanism which controls access to competitions and can also be utilised as a development tool by FFA.

Explore new opportunities

- Where possible, investigate creating new football products such as futsal and beach soccer events and how they can be licensed, in accordance with global best practice, to ensure they are delivered in contemporary and innovative ways.
- Create fit-for-purpose football products and offerings to engage more effectively with women, migrant and refugee communities in football activities.

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.



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, 30 May 1999.



V

PRINCIPLE

MORE FOOTBALL, MORE OFTEN:
INCREASING MATCH MINUTES FOR
YOUTH PLAYERS AND IMPROVING
THE PLAYER PATHWAY

MORE FOOTBALL, MORE OFTEN: INCREASING MATCH MINUTES FOR YOUTH PLAYERS AND IMPROVING THE PLAYER PATHWAY

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 and Ellie Carpenter all signing for European powerhouses in the last 8 months.

It makes sense that player production and pathways are continuously assessed to ensure they are achieving the desired outcomes. An internal study of thirty-five 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 teenage 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 U23 Australian players are playing less 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.
 - From the match minutes available in the A-League, 19% are played by U23 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 U23 players.

- In the 18/19 season, Australia only had 3 (U23) 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 below should therefore be a priority for Australian football.
 4. There are key age brackets (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 National Youth League (‘NYL’) competition structure and the inclusion of varying age restrictions across both NYL 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 Goal Keepers must also be addressed. Out of 11 A-League clubs, only six Australian goalkeepers are regular starters for their clubs, including Liam Reddy who is currently 38 years old.



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 amount of match minutes being played by youth footballers

- Promote the production of youth players by providing opportunities for our elite players between U17-U23 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 A-League teams playing in NPL competitions from U20 to U23 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 A-League 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.

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. Findings may be benchmarked against other countries as a point of reference.
- 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.
- Place a greater emphasis on the development of clubs as hubs for player production.
- 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 players' production 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 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.

Create strategic partnerships which promote player development and production

- Develop partnerships with top European clubs to facilitate the transfer of players.
 - For example, FFA would utilise the current exception (following the Midtjylland case) allowing the movement of players internationally where one of FIFA's Member Association enters into an agreement with a club for the transfer of players under 18, under conditions that improve opportunities for the player on and off the pitch.
- Develop strategic partnerships with NCAA colleges 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.
 - FFA would lobby FIFA to ensure that its regulations allowed for such transfers to take place.
- Develop strategic partnerships with NCAA colleges for additional pathways for future Matildas (note: the whole USWNT went through NCAA colleges).
- Replicate these strategic partnerships with clubs and colleges for Indigenous players to access opportunities for further development.



VVI

PRINCIPLE

**CREATE WORLD CLASS ENVIRONMENTS
FOR COACH DEVELOPMENT**

CREATE WORLD CLASS ENVIRONMENTS FOR COACH DEVELOPMENT



Ange Postecoglou of Yokohama F.Marinos lifts the J.League Champions Schale, Yokohama F.Marinos defeat FC Tokyo at Nissan Stadium on December 07, 2019 in Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan

In recent years, we have seen Australian coaches have significant success internationally. Ange Postecoglou's Yokohama F Marinos were crowned J-League Champions in 2019 while in England, Joseph Montemurro led Arsenal FC's Women's Team to the Women's Super League title, also in 2019. These two coaches represent the highest echelon of Australian coaches and form part of a growing number of which have ventured internationally to further their careers.

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 MF's. In the same period, FFA, in

conjunction with MF's, 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' licenses 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 consider its ongoing resources and capability to service the needs of an every-growing game, particularly as Australian football continues to adjust to the impacts of COVID-19. It must also take the opportunity to consider factors such as geography, access to information about courses, the cost of coaching and the course structure which remain currently ongoing challenges to increasing the number of skilled coaches in Australia.

CREATE WORLD CLASS ENVIRONMENTS FOR COACH 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'. 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).

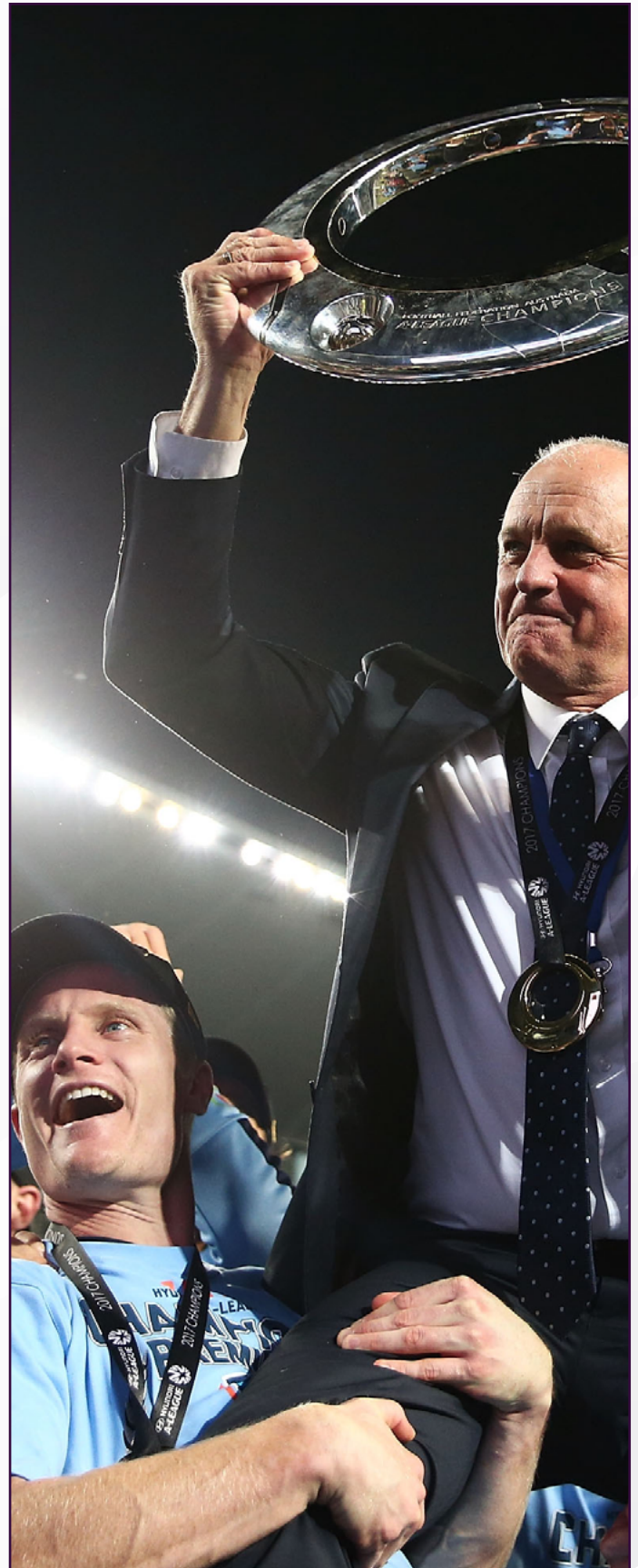
While the FFA typically provides annual support for each MF to fund the appointment of a Technical Director, there is a misalignment in reporting lines with FFA which sees an MF Technical Director report directly to the MF CEO. A lack of a unified national technical direction has also been identified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

As the number of certified coaches in Australia continues to grow, there is scope to improve the number of Women and Indigenous Australians in coaching roles. 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.

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 than any other nation.
- 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 39th with a breakout performance at the last European championships.

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



THE VI PRINCIPLE

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



- 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.

Build key partnerships to enhance coach development

- Establish a Memorandum Of Understanding with Football Coaches Australia which recognises the important role of coaches and captures the key areas of collaboration, including 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Case study: Kevin Muscat

- It was reported that prior to being appointed as Head Coach of Belgian top tier's Sint-Truiden, Muscat had to be hired as a football analyst initially because UEFA didn't recognise his AFC coaching licence.
- Replicate the same opportunities for match officials.

PROPOSED MEASURES

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

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

WVI

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.

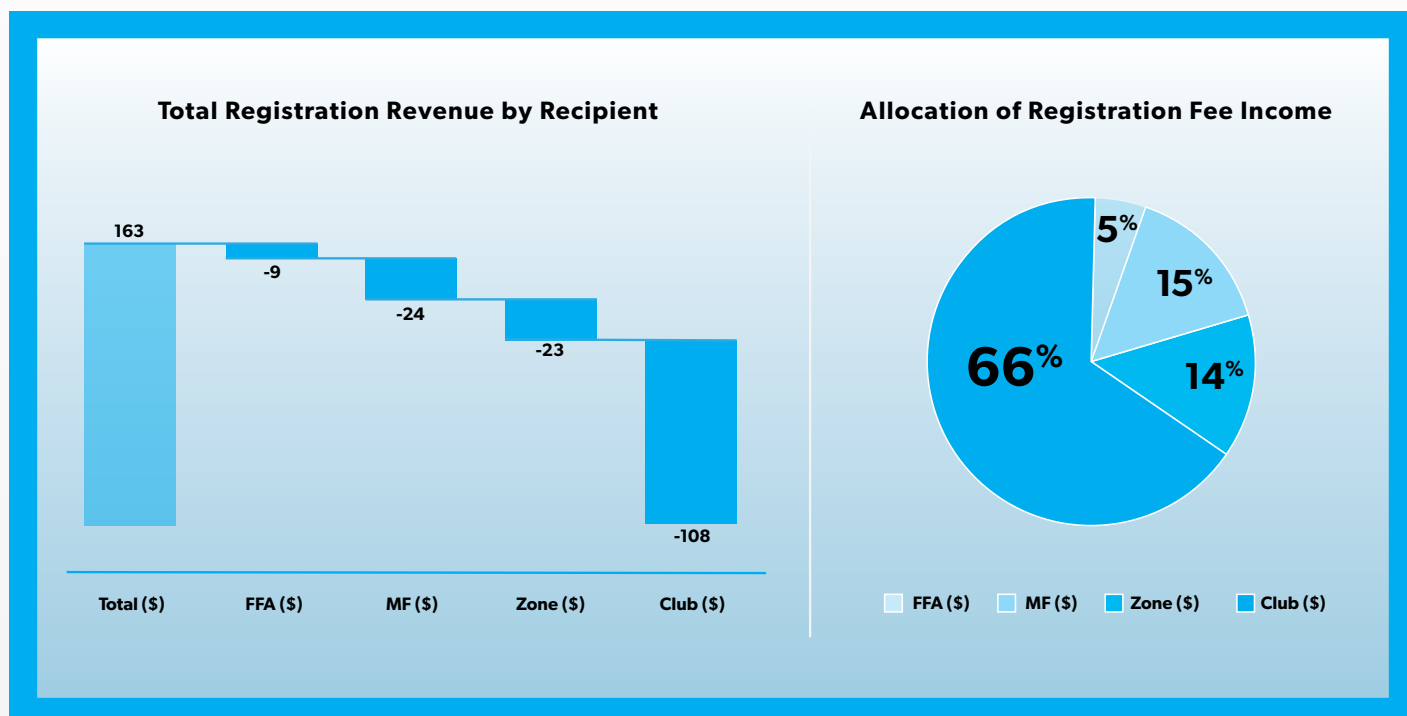
Football in Australia operates through a federated model which has evolved over time to consist of several layers of administration. When considering FFA and the MF layers of administration today, excluding the Zone and Association layers, we see significant duplication across the ecosystem:

- 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 reporting.
- Sponsorship: 10 separate commercial revenue streams.
- Finance: 10 separate sets of audited accounts and finance systems.
- Technology: competition management systems and other technology solutions remain disjointed, 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.

Historically, each layer of administration was established for a particular purpose and had a specific responsibility within the governance framework for Australian football. Over time however, a blurring of roles and responsibilities has added further complexity to an already layered governance framework, creating inefficiencies and impacting effectiveness in the administration of the game across the country.

COVID-19 has exposed the underlying fragilities of the current governance framework of football in Australia and highlights 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 the 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' deals.

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



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 further questions about the cost of playing football and the effectiveness of the re-investment of these revenues into the development and administration of football.²

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 Committee; 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. There is 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 in 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 interest of the sport.

²Source: Play Football registration system, 2019

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 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
- Begin a proposal to carry out governance transformation towards a 'One Football' model in line with global standards and best-practice sports governance 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 unique roles which the various levels of administration in football play in the delivery of the game.
 - Harness the existing knowledge and expertise within the football ecosystem; and
 - Increase clarity of advocacy with government and other entities on behalf 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. For example, FFA

should be responsible for setting the overall strategy for the game while MF's are responsible for delivering that strategy within their jurisdictions, taking into consideration any relevant local circumstances.

- Increase alignment of FFA and MF on strategy and operational matters (e.g. aligning financial years).
- Consider how FFA and MF's 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 MF's, A-League and W-League Clubs, Player representatives and other stakeholders.
- Review the status and relevance of all 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.



WVVI

PRINCIPLE

A NEW MODEL FOR
THE PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES

A NEW MODEL FOR FFA AND THE PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES

The A-League, W-League and Y-League have been owned and 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.

In June 2019, 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.

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 consider a new model to operate the professional leagues that builds on the work of, and has regard to the pros and cons of the current model, .



Western Sydney Wanderers are crowned Champions of Asia in 2014

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

- 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.
 - Evolve the Club Participation Agreement framework to a Club Licensing System to improve standards, capability, and accountability within the professional Clubs and across the professional leagues.
 - Reduce operational costs and increase operating efficiencies through streamlined and shared management.
 - Preserve tax efficiencies through a corporate structure.
 - Incentivise club investment by enabling improved financial performance of the league to flow back to participating clubs.
 - Create sustainable youth development pathways for Women and Men by ensuring a strong connection with grassroots football and becoming a talent pool for domestic players.
- 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.



Any new model should be designed to improve the commercial framework for the game, including potentially by way of the creation of a 'Special Purpose Vehicle' to:

- 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 Cup rights) and the Professional Leagues as well as whole of game rights if agreed with the current rights-holder, such as MF's).
- 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, 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 experience professional 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.

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 Claire 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 that the model promotes connectivity between the professional leagues and the community.
- Ensure Academies are operating in accordance with international best practice standards.
- Football products and offerings should focus on the fan experience and the ability to create authentic football experiences should be enhanced.



Melbourne City hold the trophy after winning the 2020 W-League Grand Final

THE VIII PRINCIPLE



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.

- Ensure the professional Clubs attract the right type of ownership 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.
 - 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’.
 - 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 (e.g. players at the level of Zlatan Ibrahimovic).
 - Extending the existing and develop new school-based football development programs designed to connect students to grassroots clubs as players, and to A-League and W-League Clubs as fans.
 - 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.



XI

PRINCIPLE

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

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



A lack of clearly defined roles and responsibilities for football's administrative bodies has been identified as one reason for the inefficiencies and duplications seen across the administration of the game, which might then have an inflationary impact upon participants.

There is also a lack of understanding in relation to where the costs in football's ecosystem lie. In relation to the National Registration Fee, most clubs which deliver grassroots program will charge fees which are extremely competitive both domestically and globally. There are, however, 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.

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 MF's - 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 MF's annually, leaving FFA with \$3 million (3%) from the National Registration Fee to dedicate to National Team programs and other initiatives.

There is significant commonality and overlap in the operations of FFA and MF's - 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 (\$6m), but does not have direct accountability or authority over policy decisions and reporting lines.

Transitioning towards a 'One Football' model for Australian football could see significant increase in effectiveness resulting in revenue growth (a 10% increase in combined revenue across FFA and Member Federations could yield a \$20m in new income), and savings in operational efficiencies in FFA and across all levels the game, currently estimated at in excess of \$20 million.

There is a strong desire for football in Australia to be a sport which is affordable for all and should be accessed 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.

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.

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.
- 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 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 emphasis 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 registration fees to facilitate cost savings for participants.
- Introduce 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'.



Pararoos 2019



PRINCIPLE

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

AUSTRALIA TO BECOME THE CENTRE OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC



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.

CONTINUE THE GROWTH OF THE GAME BY LEADING WITH WOMEN & GIRLS

Australian football has recognised that to reflect the games' 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.

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.

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?

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.

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.

In 2019, Australian football recorded an increase in volunteer numbers to 23,322, demonstrating the importance of the volunteer workforce to the administration and delivery of the game in Australia. The epicentre of the Australian football community is its nearly 2,400 football clubs across the country. Referees and more generally, match officials, are also an important competent to the delivery of the game and the on-field product. Increasing the number of women as referees and match officials presents an excellent opportunity for growth.

The chance of hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup and 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.



THE X PRINCIPLE

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

PROPOSED MEASURES

Maximise the benefits of hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup and create a lasting legacy Women's Football in Australia which benefits

- Revisit and refresh strategies around the 'AsOne2023' Bid to ensure that Australian football is positioned to maximise the benefits of hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup and create a lasting legacy for football in Australia, particularly for Women and Girls in football.



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

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.
- 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. Soccer Mums).
 - Empowering women through fair representation of women on Boards 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.

THE X PRINCIPLE

Competition structures and pathways for Women & Girls

- 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.

Enhance connection to community and provide support for volunteers

- Growing participation numbers and encouraging people to fall in love with the game must not be lost to other commercial, albeit important, considerations. These commercial opportunities are only made possible via a strong focus on community and participation; and developing excellent football products and services.
- 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 Cultural and Linguistically Diverse 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.



Market the game adequately

- Develop market leading football products and services, which maximise the unique value of women's football and the Matildas, 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.

Provide more support for match officials

- Redesign 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 match officials.
- Increase the profile of Australian referees and match officials and create opportunities for them to be deployed to foreign countries to assist in football development whilst gaining valuable experience.



Temeka Yallop engaging with Westfield Matildas fans.

XI

PRINCIPLE

TRANSFORMING OUR NATIONAL TEAMS
INTO UNIQUELY ICONIC BRANDS

TRANSFORMING 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.

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 BenchMark 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. Aaron Mooy and Mat Ryan currently play for English Premier League side Brighton & Hove Albion. Sam Kerr and Caitlin Foord also play in England (for Chelsea FC and Arsenal FC respectively) while Ellie Carpenter has recently signed with Olympique Lyonnais in France. 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.

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To turn our National Teams into genuinely iconic brands, we must continue to ensure they 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 Nation League – a global competition for Women's National Teams; or the Copa America in South America for the Socceroos.

Our National Teams, however, 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 U23 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 U20 Women's World Cup, including the 2020 FIFA Women's U-20 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 Team 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 Joey's squad which competed at the FIFA U17 World Cup in October 2019, must now compete against players born two 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 however, that Australia does not lose ground to its Asian and European counterparts and programs do not go dormant because of a lack of success and subsequent funding.



Mile Jedinak (c) 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

THE XI PRINCIPLE

POSITION THE 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 CULTURAL BACKGROUND.

THE MEASURES

Prioritising National Team programs

- Increase the number of meaningful National Team matches 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.

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

- Maximise the potential of hosting the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup to advance discussions in relation to establishing a 'Home' for the Matildas. Such an arrangement should benefit 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 Training Centre for the Matildas, other National Teams and as a Centre of Excellence for emerging talent.
- Securing purpose-built administration facilities.
- Long term major events partnership State Government and other relevant institutions – additional revenue source.
- 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.
- Furthermore, establish a National Home of Football to house FFA's administration, technical staff and youth national teams as well as possibly house a National Football Museum.
- Advance the creation of a truly high-performance program for the Women's National Team, particularly for those 'emerging' players which might not have opportunities to play overseas, in the lead up to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup on home soil.

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.
- FFA should support FIFA in its efforts to establish the Women's Global National League and a Women's Club World Cup.



Alanna Kennedy, celebrates and poses with Matildas home fans.

XI

PRINCIPLES

FOR THE FUTURE OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

On Monday, 6 July 2020, FFA will commence a series of online surveys which will allow the Australian football family to provide their views on the XI Principles for the future of Australian football.

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

We look forward to hearing from you!