



AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE
STRATEGIC PLAN
 2004-2006





Dear AFL Colleague,

Season 2003 was a celebration of our national reach with clubs from five states competing in the finals. We had more people attending our games, our greatest ever TV ratings, and participation rates at their highest ever levels.

However, much more needs to be done to ensure our continued success.

The AFL Commission and Executive have formulated a strategic plan that will guide the competition over the next three years.

The 2004-2006 AFL Strategic Plan will focus on building our base and seizing our opportunities.

We must deepen and strengthen the presence of our game in New South Wales and Queensland, while continuing to build our success in our traditional markets. We must use the success of our elite competition to support community football, the building block of our game.

The new strategic plan for the AFL recognises that we are both the managers of the national elite competition and the keepers of the code.

Our plan provides the platform for the AFL to actively support the pathway from Auskick to the AFL, and every point in between, Australia wide.

This is not a small task, but we are confident that the AFL faces this challenge with the fundamentals in place: the right people, the right structures and with a guiding plan.

We are pleased to present you with a summary of the 2004-2006 AFL Strategic Plan.

Ron Evans
Chairman
AFL Commission

Andrew Demetriou
Chief Executive Officer

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MISSION STATEMENT

Mission and values

- To manage the national football competition for the benefit of all AFL stakeholders – players, members, supporters, clubs, sponsors and the community.
- As keepers of the code, to actively support all levels of football from Auskick to the elite level of the game and at every point in between, Australia wide.
- To uphold the traditions and principles of our game, while seeking out new opportunities.
- To achieve our mission, we will change and grow, and be guided by the following values:

Equality

- Australian Football is the game that captures the essence of equality in this country. Anyone who plays football is an equal member of the team regardless of their background.
- The ethos of equality underpins the way we manage and grow the game for players, supporters and the whole community.
- Equality between individuals promotes respect. Equality between teams promotes excitement, uncertainty and the highest form of competition.

Fairness

- Fairness is a hallmark of our game and the AFL is committed to applying fairness in everything we do.
- We strive to promote access to and participation in the AFL football experience.
- We are committed to ensuring that the AFL experience is kept affordable for the community.
- Fairness is an essential ingredient for a competitive, harmonious and well governed competition. This is what drives us to develop a strong partnership with our clubs.

Tradition and Opportunity

- We respect the history of Australian Football and the relationship that supporters have with their clubs and the culture of the game
- We must also keep pace with our changing society in order to keep our traditions alive.
- We are committed to reaching out to take advantage of new opportunities to build the strength and success of the AFL competition.
- We will enhance the opportunities for participation in the game among all Australian communities and support the increasing number of Australian Football teams which have emerged in countries throughout the world.

**To achieve our mission, we have identified
four broad reference points which
guide our organisation.**

A U S T R A L I A N F O O PLANNING FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH

GROW THE GAME VIA APPROPRIATE POLICIES

“We strive to have an even competition where any Club is capable of beating another on any day or night to produce uncertainty of outcomes and drive supporter interest – regardless of the relative financial strength of each Club.”

- Ensure the core elements of on-field equalisation are maintained – maintain draft and salary cap
- Maintain a “benchmark” Collective Bargaining Agreement that works for Players, Clubs and the Development of the Game
- Appropriate rules are developed to ensure the Game remains the spectacle it has always been
- Enforce rules in a fair and consistent manner
- Maintain the highest possible standards of umpiring
- Continue to build truly national competition with premierships season games in each State and Territory
- In partnership with Clubs and Governments ensure training facilities for all AFL Clubs are appropriate to attract the best people – staff, coaches and players and provide equal opportunity on the field
- Create a fixture that is fair for all Clubs giving consideration to the interests of all stakeholders and commercial partners

RECRUIT, RETAIN AND DEVELOP PARTICIPANTS

“Aggressively drive high levels of participation in well managed community football programs for people of all ages throughout Australia. Do this in partnership with Clubs, Players and State and Territory bodies .”

- Invest in AFL Auskick as the key driver to capture participants and fans of the future
- Significantly improve conversion rates of AFL Auskickers into community club participants
- Improve the presence of Australian Football in schools at primary and secondary level
- Support the maintenance and development of local community clubs
- Develop programs to recruit and retain the volunteer network
- Work with various levels of Government to improve the infrastructure for local community clubs
- Win an appropriate share of first choice athletes for AFL Clubs and ensure there is a pathway to excel



2004 - 2006 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**CONNECT WITH FANS
AND COMMUNITY**

“We recognise that the supporters of our AFL Clubs and the game are Australian Football’s most important asset and through a range of activities, promote high levels of public interest by building the strongest consumer brand position in Australian sport.”

- Develop positive advertising and promotional campaigns to maximise attendances and participation in all States and Territories
- Work with venue managers to ensure that the best possible facilities are provided at stadiums for all supporters to enjoy the game in a safe, quality environment
- Work with the interest of fans with parties including Clubs, venue managers, ticket agencies, public transport and caterers to ensure the game remains affordable, particularly for families
- Effectively utilise AFL Clubs and their players to strengthen the connection between the game and the community.
- Continue to build an open and honest relationship with the community through transparent and effective communication

**MANAGE RESPONSIBLY,
STRIVE FOR FINANCIAL
GROWTH AND STABILITY**

“We strive to continue to build a strong financial base for the AFL competition and maximise the economic benefits for our Clubs, players, supporters, football fraternity and the community at large.”

- Optimise annual distributions to AFL Clubs
- Maintain the Competitive Balance Fund to assist AFL Clubs to improve their financial viability and sustain a 16 team competition
- Continue to improve financial reporting and procedures with Clubs and State bodies to maximise efficiency
- Continue to develop shared service programs to improve efficiency between the AFL, Clubs, State bodies to reduce costs and boost financial outcomes for the Australian Football system





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