

## EFL Strategic Plan 2014-2018



February 2014

A PLAN FOR THE ONGOING PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE EASTERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE, AND THE  
GAME OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL IN  
THE EAST OF METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE

## 1. PREAMBLE

The Eastern Football League is comprised of 44 senior and 3 junior member clubs and affiliates.

The clubs elect directors to be accountable to them for:

- Setting the strategic direction of the league and its implementation, within the constitutional framework.
- Acting in the best interests of the league and its stakeholders at all times.
- Good governance and compliance.
- In turn the directors, through the Chairman, delegate responsibility for day-to-day operations to the Chief Executive Officer.
- Overseeing the operations of the league.
- Ensuring member clubs and stakeholders are kept informed on all relevant matters.

In this context the Directors and the Chief Executive have completed a review of the existing strategic plan and of the performance against that plan. As a result a new 5 year plan has been developed through to 2018.

Member clubs and stakeholders are encouraged to review the plan and contribute to its further development.

The plan is:

- Intended to represent the aspirations, views, and understanding of the majority of member clubs and stakeholders.
- Subject to ongoing assessment and updating. Planning is an iterative process.
- A driver for behaviour and performance for the entire league in ensuring proper conduct which is fair and equitable.

- The blueprint and guide for the setting of operational plans and KPI's.
- Meant to the extent practicable to be consistent and complimentary with the plans of other relevant organisations (e.g. AFL Victoria), and member clubs of the Eastern Football League.

## **2. EASTERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018**

### **2.1. Vision**

The Eastern Football League will by any measure be acknowledged as the best community sports organisation in Australia.

### **2.2 Mission**

The Eastern Football League will effectively promote and facilitate the playing and development of Australian Rules football for the benefit of all participants, at all levels throughout the eastern region of metropolitan Melbourne.

### **2.3 Our Values:**

We maintain a strong belief system that underpins our actions and way the league is run

We believe in the concept of “a fair go “, with opportunity for all, inclusive of everyone and being non-discriminatory in all that we do.

We recognise the efforts of those who contribute to the well-being of the game at EFL level

We focus on safety

We strive to innovate

We support the big picture and understand that we are just one part of a wider football and general community

We define our position and defend this when appropriate

## **2.4 Situation Analysis- The Current Position**

The EFL has a proud history in successfully presenting and developing a quality football competition and is recognised at all levels of football as a benchmark for community football administration. Prudent financial control, a strong management team, and innovative use of technology have driven the positive operational performance of the EFL.

Previous strategic plans have delivered significant outcomes in participation, commercialisation, facility development and brand awareness.

Junior level participation growth has continued, and senior level participation has increased through the introduction of new clubs to the league. New markets such as female football, AFL 9's and netball are establishing themselves in the broader sporting community and are a growth opportunity for the EFL into the future.

While drought conditions have receded, with most EFL grounds now sown with warm season grasses this as an issue has reduced. Councils and governments have also continued to invest in club facility upgrades but as competitions standards improve and player/spectator expectations increase, so does the need for appropriate facilities.

The EFL brand has developed an enviable position throughout the broader community and resulted in commercial partnerships with a range of prominent organisations. With this has also come expectation for the role the EFL and its clubs plays in managing social issues such as violence, racism and illicit drugs.

Since the development of previous strategic plans, there is a more stable environment surrounding community football across Melbourne and Victoria, with the AFL seeking greater influence.

Past success, however, will not necessarily guarantee future success. The environment is changing and the EFL recognises the need to adapt to these changes. Many of the challenges facing the EFL and its clubs are new and symptomatic of broader cultural, lifestyle and communication changes. This may include changes to the demographic and the cultural mix of established suburbs in the east of Melbourne, and changes to existing revenue streams for the EFL and clubs alike.

## **2.5 Challenges**

### **Key challenges facing the EFL include**

Maintaining and growing participation rates in existing and new markets

Understanding demographic changes including an ageing population, a changing cultural mix and limited population growth areas

Ensuring the viability of EFL clubs and managing the expectations of players with regards to remuneration

Recruitment and retention of volunteers for/by clubs

Managing club player pathways

Maintain, develop and promote the EFL brand

Maintain leadership in on-line and social media and ensure a best practice approach

### **3. Strategic Pillars**

#### **3.1 Clubs**

Collaborate with clubs to ensure that they are effectively managed and sustainable.

#### **3.2 Participation**

Drive participation initiatives in new and existing market segments and manage all competitions to ensure they are of high quality and competitive.

#### **3.3 Partnerships**

Partner with all levels of government and other stakeholders in true collaboration for common gain.

#### **3.4 Operational Excellence**

Embrace technology and explore other initiatives to drive increased functionality and efficiencies.

#### **3.5 Financial Management**

Build the EFL brand to deliver revenue opportunities for the benefit of the league and EFL clubs.



## **Objectives**

### **3.1 Clubs**

Our aim is to collaborate with clubs to ensure that they are effectively managed and sustainable by:

- Ensuring all clubs have appropriate systems and initiatives in place to maximize player recruitment and retention from their local area
- Conduct regular reviews of club planning and financial status to identify clubs in need of assistance and/or improvement
- Provide appropriate training and support for club volunteers and support clubs in ways to recruit and retain volunteers
- Ensuring all coaches are appropriately accredited and trained
- Working with clubs to increase engagement with a broader section of their local community, including striving to achieve an increase in club membership

### **3.2 Participation**

We aim to drive participation initiatives in new and existing market segments and manage all competitions to ensure competitiveness by:

- Focusing on the development of female football, school football and AFL 9's
- Exploring the opportunity for alignment at league and club level with other complementary sports, including Netball
- Managing the competitions to ensure rules are appropriate and enforced
- Continuing to invest in EFL umpiring at all levels to ensure games are managed appropriately
- Research and implement where appropriate equalization measures across all junior and senior competitions to encourage competition and player retention

### **3.3 Partnerships**

We aim to partner with all levels of government and other stakeholders in true collaboration for common gain, including:

- Liaising with clubs, councils and government to assist in the development and improvement of facilities at all EFL venues, including the development of an Eastern Hub for football
- Working collaboratively with the AFL, AFL Victoria and other football leagues to help grow and develop the game of Australian Rules
- Working with sponsors and all levels of government in the implementation of community health and safety initiatives across the eastern suburbs of Melbourne
- Supporting a range of charities

### **3.4 Operational Excellence**

We will embrace technology and explore other initiatives to drive increased functionality and efficiencies, by:

- Using advances in technology to reduce the administrative workload on club volunteers and league administration
- Ensuring we attract, recruit, develop and retain high quality people at both league and club level
- Maintaining on-line activities as a key focus and provide appropriate support to develop this
- Continuing to refine the EFL social media strategy to ensure we retain integrity and remain contemporary

### **3.5 Financial Management**

We will build the brand to deliver revenue opportunities for the benefit of the league and EFL clubs by:

- Continuing to build and promote the EFL brand to the wider community
- Conducting ongoing reviews of the financial status of the EFL
- Delivering sponsor programs that maximize exposure to existing and new league sponsors
- Leveraging commercial partnerships to the benefit of both the EFL and EFL clubs