



Club management program



**COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS**
FOR FOOTBALL CLUBS



Club management program

Published by the Australian Football League.

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Printed by: Condor Printing



The Australian Football League acknowledges the significant financial support from the Australian Sports Commission for this resource program.

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Further acknowledgement to the following for their contribution:

Ross Allen, Eric Bott, Grant Burgess, John Cutler, Peter Di Sisto, Michelle Donat, Cherie Fraser, Quinton Gleeson, Anton Grbac, Peter Harley, Rod Hughes, Roslyn Jeffs, Fiona Macmillan, Annette Maher, Shelley Maher, Paul Matton, Peter McDougall, Paul Milo, Wes Mudge, Rod Nicholson, Tania O'Day, Adrian Panozzo, Hayden Park, Peter Quigley, Trevor Robertson, Julianne Rose, Kevin Sheehan, Martin Shields, Bernard Slattery, Bruce Stephens, Mark Stone, John Strachan, Steve Teakel, Kathy Tessier, Clare Toia-Bailey, Rob Veale, Brian Walsh, Bruce Wickett.

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Welcome to the AFL club management program

The Australian Football League recognises that club volunteers and administrators make a significant contribution to Australian Football. It also recognises that the demands on club volunteers and administrators are increasing along with the need for clubs to operate in a professional manner.

As a result, the AFL, in conjunction with the Australian Sports Commission, has developed the AFL club management program aimed at supporting community football through providing an education program for club administrators. Community football clubs and leagues form the cornerstone of the AFL game and the support of community club football is a critical component to the overall success of the competition at all levels.

The AFL club management modules have been developed through extensive consultation with volunteers and administrators and the six modules have been identified as the main priority areas of assistance required by community clubs.

Each module of the AFL club management program has been designed as a stand-alone workshop/ seminar to allow for clubs members to attend the workshops that are particularly relevant to their role within the club or their own interests.

While the six modules are designed to be stand-alone, it is important to recognise that the planning module is the foundation upon which club management is based. Therefore all club members are encouraged to participate in the planning module and, ultimately the club's overall planning process.

I encourage you to attend and be part of all workshops offered through your local league/association and in the process help better your club and grow community club football.

I wish you all the best in these endeavours.



Andrew Demetriou

Chief Executive Officer
Australian Football League

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AFL club management program

The AFL club management program consists of the following modules:

Planning – The purpose of this module is to:

- Identify the need for clubs to plan.
- Provide the basic framework for organising a planning workshop.
- Outline the planning process and the 10 basic stages involved.
- Provide practical templates to assist in writing a plan.
- Identify methods of reviewing the effectiveness of the plan.

Risk management – The purpose of this module is to introduce:

- The application of specific legal principles in the football environment.
- Considerations relevant to liability and duty of care.
- The risk management process.
- Waivers, indemnities and warnings.
- Risk management policies and procedures.
- Legislative requirements.
- Insurance – National Risk Protection Program.
- Match-day checklists.
- The importance of establishing a risk management officer.

Volunteer management – The purpose of this module is to:

- Outline the rights and responsibilities of volunteers.
- Encourage clubs to appoint a volunteer coordinator.
- Outline the importance of job descriptions.
- Identify ways to recruit, retain and recognise volunteers.
- Identify how to develop a volunteer management policy.
- Outline the process of selecting and screening volunteers.
- Identify the need for succession planning.

Community partnerships – The purpose of this module is to:

- Explore the ways in which a community club can build relationships with other sports and groups within the community.
- Identify how clubs can form favourable partnerships with local government authorities.
- Develop ways of attracting sponsorship and fundraising opportunities.
- Show ways of obtaining grants and funding from various agencies – local, state and federal level.
- Establish how to create a healthy environment within the club.
- Identify how to attract and support umpires.
- Provide ways clubs can promote their activities within the community.

Financial management – The purpose of this module is to:

- Explore the roles and responsibilities of the treasurer within a football club.
- Outline the processes involved in and the issues that should be addressed when considering the financial management of a football club.
- Provide information that will assist the club treasurer in fulfilling his/her role with regard to the financial management of a club.

Junior development – The purpose of this module is to:

- Develop an understanding of AFL Game Development structure and philosophy.
- Provide an understanding of the underpinning principles at each level of the participation pathway with a focus on AFL Auskick, youth football, recreational football, female football and children with disabilities.
- Identify the responsibilities of clubs and AFL Auskick centres in relation to the organisation of junior programs and competitions.
- Outline the coaching and umpiring support and resources available for all levels of Australian football.
- Identify the value in developing club links with AFL Auskick centres, schools and the community.
- Indicate ways of recruiting and retaining children and parents in junior development programs.
- Highlight the importance of developing a quality club environment.

Introduction

The on-field and off-field success of a football club relies heavily on other key members of the community and not just the football club itself. By building community partnerships with other community stakeholders, football clubs can increase community spirit, develop good will, and improve the quality of the club environment, which all ultimately contribute to greater community support and more club members, players and volunteers.

The purpose of this module is to explore the ways in which a community football club can build relationships within a community by:

- **Building partnerships within the community.**
- **Developing relationships with other sports within the community.**
- **Developing relationships with local government authorities.**
- **Developing ways of attracting sponsorship.**
- **Organising various fundraising activities.**
- **Obtaining grants and funding from various agencies.**
- **Developing innovative ways to promote the club within the community.**
- **Creating a healthy environment within the football club.**
- **Attracting and supporting umpires.**

Football clubs, like all community organisations, are an integral part of the local community and that is why it is crucial that we look after their health in the same way we look after our own bodies. We need to nourish them, keep them healthy and be pro-active to ensure they don't wither and die.

The reason is simple. The research says that people that care about their local community and become involved in local community groups are healthier and live longer than those who don't.

Football clubs offer so much more to their communities than the opportunity to have a kick. They bring so many different people together, give them a sense of common purpose, make them laugh – and cry – but, importantly, they help make people belong.

They are valuable community assets and it is important that clubs these days build partnerships within their own communities to ensure that other groups such as local businesses, local government, other non-profit groups and various funding bodies, all recognise the value of the club.

For the volunteers that run football clubs, it has become harder than ever before and the need for help is greater. I have found with our work at www.ourcommunity.com.au producing grants and fundraising advice, that there is no shortage of committed people prepared to put the hard work in to make their club strong and sustainable. All they need is the knowledge, the tools and the resources, and this wonderful resource that the AFL has put together will certainly help with that.

RHONDA GALBALLY AO
Chief Executive Officer
www.ourcommunity.com.au

Section one – Building partnerships within the community

Importance of community spirit

Australian football clubs play a key role in forming part of the 'social fabric' of any community. Their existence within the community structure draws a wide variety of people together to share a sense of belonging and companionship, as well as the opportunity to participate in a sporting capacity.

A successful and well-run Australian Football club helps build spirit within a community by providing recreational and social opportunities for families. However, as the demands on clubs and their volunteers are increasing, clubs need to become adaptable and open to change so that they remain a viable part of the community.

Clubs should look at developing partnerships within the community to ensure that other groups such as local councils, other sporting groups and local businesses recognise the value and importance of the club. If clubs can develop partnerships with various groups in the community, they will in effect be maximising the perceptions of the club by the community at large.

Building partnerships with community groups

Building partnerships with community groups serves two main purposes: to increase awareness for potential membership and community standing, as well as providing increased sponsorship opportunities.

Some examples of community groups that clubs should look at developing partnerships with include:

- Other sporting clubs.
- Local schools – primary and secondary. A key ingredient for establishing successful school-community partnerships is identifying your own needs and finding the right partners who can assist with them.
- Community and recreation centres.
- Recreational clubs and groups.
- Scouts or girl guides and other groups developed specifically for children.

Partnerships with various volunteer groups in the community should also be formed. As well as building community spirit and awareness, there may be many potential volunteers willing to help out with your club. There are many community minded people who enjoy volunteering their time and would be happy to help out if asked.

For details of the local schools, sporting and community groups, contact your local council.

Four elements for developing and maintaining a good partnership:

1. Partnership must be mutually beneficial.
2. Partnerships must have a strong "teamwork" element.
3. Partnerships must establish and maintain open paths of communication.
4. Partnerships must have measurable outcomes, to monitor their effectiveness.¹



Sustainable community sport – how is it done?

A study undertaken by the South West Sports Assembly looked at a generic model of principles for sustainable community sport.

Based on a football/netball league development in south-west Victoria, the study found that the key to sustaining community sport was for all parties to recognise, support and foster the community-sport nexus:

“The promotion of community ownership and utilisation of community goodwill, and the opportunity for partnership development in the planning and development of sustainable sport is enhanced.”

In addressing issues of sustainability, the study took two innovative approaches:

- Rather than targeting clubs in isolation, the development of principles would be formulated around all the key stakeholders or a sporting cluster, which includes the league, clubs, communities, regional and state bodies, regional sports assembly and local and state governments.
- The traditional approach of prescriptive programming was discarded and a consultation process undertaken to develop a model that would be responsive to the needs of the sporting cluster.²

For further information go to www.southwestsport.com.au.

We cannot have sustainable communities without ensuring that people feel they are living in safe, secure and attractive living environments, which improve their quality of life.

Many local councils have a series of policies and actions aimed at assisting the community to become more sustainable.

A true community partnership has a responsibility to be inclusive, working to assure that all voices are heard and involved in the process.

The town of Yinnar in the Latrobe Valley of country Victoria has a population of 550. There are many towns similar to Yinnar all over Australia – with one remarkable exception. The Yinnar Football and Netball Club is home to seven football teams and 11 netball teams, as well as having an AFL Auskick and Netta netball centre. It has 280 players from 400 members from 300 households.

The club has achieved this through developing a strong partnership with the local community and key organisations, as well as developing various policies linked to fostering positive community behaviour and spirit. The relationship between football and netball is also a collaborative partnership where both sports work well together.

(Source: AFL Record 2002³)



Section two – Developing relationships with other sports

Working with other sports

The key to success in sports such as Australian Football is teamwork and cooperation. State governments and local authorities believe these aspects should also be applied to ensure strong relationships between Australian Football clubs and other sports. Developing relationships with other sporting clubs enables teams and sports to reach a bigger pool of potential members and supporters, share social and recreational facilities and develop joint funding submissions together with allowing for strategic development of key issues such as player welfare, health and safety.

Across Australia, especially in country areas, there are many examples of strong and cooperative relationships between different sporting clubs, particularly football with netball and football with cricket.

Cooperative planning, design and management of facilities works best when clubs work together. This will maximise the use of facilities, gain support from local council, create a community hub, share operating costs, services, resources and expertise, improve relationships between participating groups, increase community ownership of facilities, increase patronage and reduce vandalism.

Some of the key issues that need to be considered when planning cooperative projects include:

- Location – suitable to all sporting organisations.
- Design – sporting fields need to be the right size for all sports concerned.
- Equitable distribution of costs – stronger, more financial sports/clubs cannot support the smaller sporting organisations.
- Day-to-day management – committee of management established representative of all groups.
- Insurance – different insurance needs of groups.

In Western Australia, for example, two municipalities jointly developed the Altone Park Sport and Recreation Centre. The land is owned freehold by the WA Planning Commission and is leased jointly by the City of Bayswater and Shire of Swan.

Often clubs will be required to share facilities with other sports, particularly in areas where there are limited facilities available. There will be sporting clubs which occupy facilities in the off season to football (such as cricket) but also there will be arrangements in place where Australian Football clubs will need to share facilities during the same season, such as with hockey, baseball/softball.

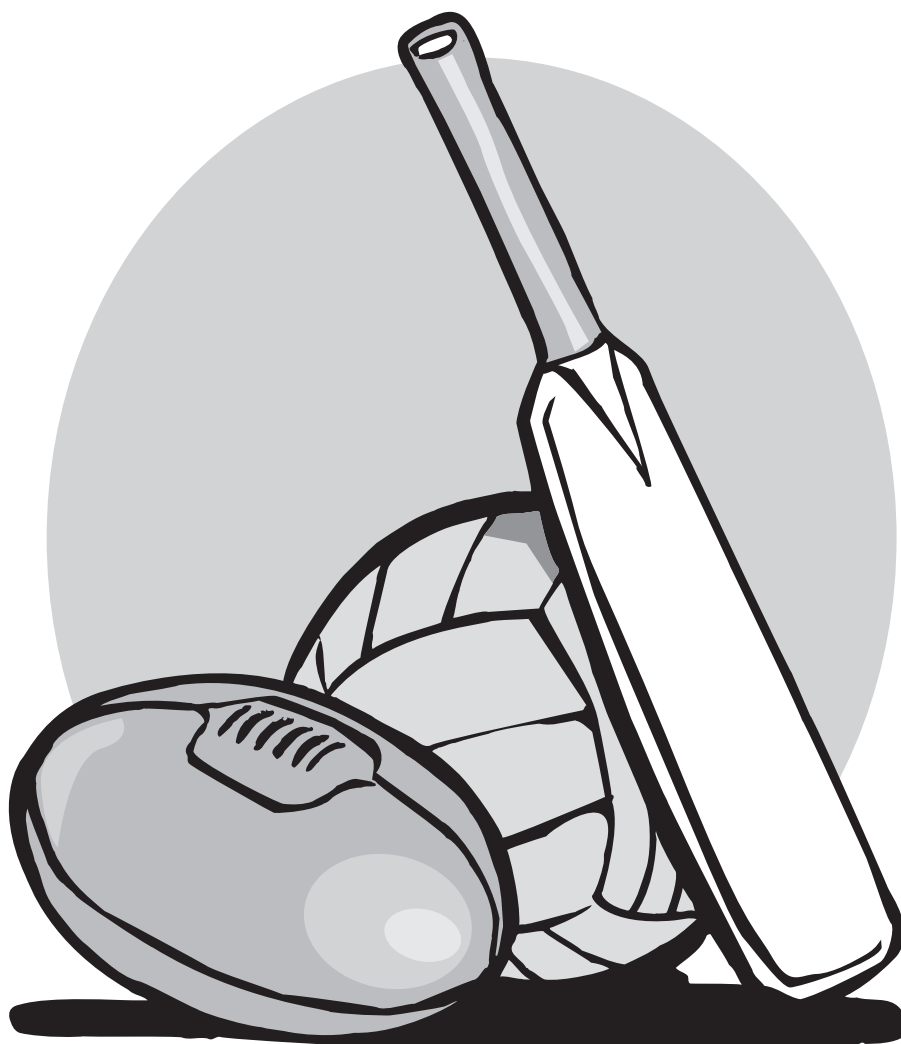
Multi-use facilities – working together to become stronger

Traditionally, sport and recreation facilities have been planned, designed and built for separate sections of a community, be it a school, local government, private company, sporting association or community group. This approach has been characterised by a lack of coordination and cooperation, often leading to duplication and under-utilisation of some facilities.

The AFL supports the concept of multi-use facilities – facilities that are used in conjunction with other sporting bodies.

Advantages of sharing a facility include:

- Year round utilisation of an oval-shaped facility.
- Focused attention and funding on the development of one facility as opposed to two.
- Efficiency of ongoing management, including repairs, maintenance and administration.
- Increased patronage – facilities will be used more often.
- Less duplication – joint use of a facility will ensure that the unnecessary and costly duplication of facilities is avoided.
- Cost sharing – organisations can share the burden of capital replacement costs as well as operating costs (electricity, gas, cleaning, security, building maintenance and lease agreements).
- Improved relationships – increased interaction based on cooperation and sharing will result in improved relationships between participating organisations.
- Eliminate unnecessary duplication of sports facility management.
- Partnerships with local government which can help to reduce the total cost to all levels of government in providing facilities within communities, by reducing duplication costs.
- Hire out the facility on a casual basis.
- Improved communication between sports groups and organisations.
- Shared parking.
- Combining the various elements in one location. For example, offering recreational opportunities for families and for individuals at all ages and levels of competition.
- Increases opportunities.
- Providing better facilities than individual clubs could afford.



Section three – Developing relationships with local councils

One of the keys to success for Australian Football clubs at local or country level is maintaining a strong, healthy relationship with the local council.

Most sporting grounds are on council property and are managed by the local council. As a result local councils are generally responsible for areas such as ground maintenance, pavilions, rubbish removal and car parking, however, this is not always the case. All football clubs should ensure they clearly understand what the council is responsible for and, therefore, what the club's responsibility is in relation to their allocated sporting ground and facilities.

It is vital to maintain a strong and healthy relationship with the local council if the club is to be successful. Research shows local councils spend between 10 and 15 per cent of their annual budgets on maintaining sports and recreational facilities. Clubs should not take these services for granted and should ideally work towards building and maintaining solid relationships with the council officers, particularly in an era when the user-pay philosophy rules.

When looking to form relationships with the local council, your club should:

- Ensure its needs are at the forefront of local council plans and strategies.
- Get to know the local council through councillors, senior officers and recreation and maintenance staff. Make sure they are invited to and acknowledged at club functions, get them involved in events (by presenting trophies, for example) and offer help for council activities such as school holiday programs.
- Insist on high standards of behaviour on and off the field (particularly in relation to language) to help build the club's reputation and standing within local council circles and the wider community.
- Maintain positive relationships with neighbours next to your facilities to avoid complaints to council. Be considerate and always notify neighbours of any functions and activities that have the potential to be a nuisance. A letterbox drop works well and it also assists with positive promotion of activities happening at the club.
- Ensure the local council is part of the club's strategic public relations campaign. Always update key personnel for all aspects of club operations.
- Always seek win-win solutions for problems.

Using council facilities

When applying to local council for allocation of a ground each season, make sure you provide:

- A list of the grounds and recreational facilities or pavilions required for the season.
- Fixtures, training times and pavilion usage times.
- A copy of the club's public liability insurance policy that meets the council's specific requirements.
- A copy of the club's liquor license (if applicable).
- Any changes to the liquor license or other documents.
- A copy of the club or league's audited financial statement.
- A contact list of club committee members.
- The name of the person who is the council liaison officer.
- A description of membership demographics (if requested).

Once your club has been allocated a ground or facility, it is important that you:

- Ensure pavilions and facilities (if applicable) are properly used and kept neat and tidy at all times.
- Inform the council immediately of any maintenance issues that are not the club's responsibility.
- Contact the council if there are changes to your club's committee (always keep the council up-to-date on current contact details for the club's council liaison officer).
- Stay informed about community issues by attending council workshops or seminars.
- Report any theft or vandalism as early as possible.

Each local council will have a different policy relating to seasonal allocations. It is important to ensure that you provide the local council with all the information requested for numerous reasons:

- Casual bookings may be made in the times that you have indicated you will not be using either the ground or the pavilion.
- Details about the club's programs will provide the council with an understanding of what the club offers – i.e. often new residents to the area will contact the council for information about sporting clubs for their children. If the council knows that you have an AFL Auskick centre, they can direct new enquiries to your club.
- A council officer needs to know who the main contact for the club is (council liaison officer) to ensure communication is maintained at all times with the same person and not with four different people. If four people are ringing the council over the same issue, the council officer's time is also being wasted.

Most local councils will have a formalised seasonal tenancy agreement that sets out the expectations of the council, as well as the conditions relating to club tenancy. It is important that all club committee members are familiar with this document and the issues relating to the club's rights and responsibilities.

Information that is contained in these agreements includes:

- Fees for use of sports fields and pavilions.
- Maintenance issues relating to sports fields. i.e. line marking, rubbish removal, cleaning of pavilions.
- Use of sports fields for pre-season training, practice matches and finals.
- Infrastructure. i.e. goal posts, scoreboards, fencing and coaches' boxes.
- Usage issues relating to liquor licensing, car parks and canteens (food registration).
- Maintenance responsibilities – club responsibilities and council responsibilities. i.e. who is responsible for mowing the ground?
- Capital works developments and pavilion alterations.

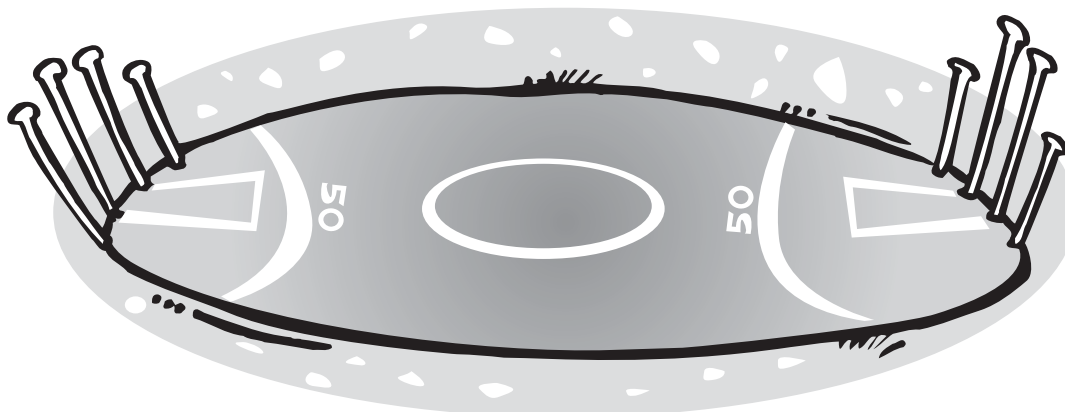
New South Wales isn't the only state requiring new grounds for Australian football. New clubs or expanding clubs may also need to approach councils in other states/territories for a new ground/pavilion. However, vacant sporting fields are a rare commodity and securing a ground for a new club or a growing club can be a big task.

The City of Yarra and the City of Frankston (two municipalities in Victoria) offer a few points to consider:

- Many municipalities do not have spare grounds; if they do, they use them as overflow grounds when permanent grounds are being renovated.
- If a ground does become vacant, most councils will look to extend the offerings in the community and will grant the facilities to a club that is proactive, offers a broad target market and is willing to cater for the whole community, including minority groups.
- Some councils may wish to grant clubs tenancy on a trial or year-to-year basis.

(Source: Team Magazine, April 2002⁴)

Clubs wishing to secure new facilities should consider how they could present their case to council through showing their community appeal and focus. Information on how to include people with disabilities in your program, as well as providing a healthy club environment, can be found in sections eight and nine.



Leases and contracts

If a facility is used solely by a football club (not seasonally allocated), the club may have a lease agreement in place. This may also be the case where football clubs have social facilities/buildings leased through the council. In this case, the community does not have direct access to the facilities and, as a result, it is reasonable for the council to have little or no involvement in the maintenance of the facilities.

Clubs should seek advice when developing lease agreements if they are not familiar with the legal terminology and conditions outlined in a lease. Most councils will work with the club to ensure all parties understand the lease and the specific requirements for both parties.

All states and local council authorities have different policies relating to leasing, social facilities and maintenance. Although various suggestions and considerations have been outlined, it is important to stress that these situations may not be applicable to your club's local council.

Regardless of the differences, it is crucial that your club is familiar with the council recreation/leisure staff and the various policies, seasonal tenancy agreements or leases that are available for sporting clubs. Football clubs are not the only sporting clubs that councils need to look after – remember that other clubs and the general public need to use the council facilities as well. Respect their wishes and work towards developing a favourable relationship with local council officers, other sporting clubs and the general public. They are all important to the future of your club.

Council policies

Each local council will have other policies and procedures that clubs will need to be familiar with and ultimately abide by, as part of their seasonal agreement or lease. Ignorance of these policies will only result in causing friction between the club and the council, ruin any favourable relationship developed and jeopardise the agreement for future seasons.

Some examples of these policies may include:

- Smoke-free policy – It may be a requirement for all council buildings to be smoke-free.
- Advertising/signage policy – Check what the restrictions may be around the ground on the fence or on the building.
- Food safety/food handling requirements – Running a canteen makes clubs a food provider under the Australian New Zealand Food Authority standards. Clubs will need to check what they are required to do to comply with the standards.
- Capital works policies – Each council will have a process by which clubs should apply for capital works requests. Generally, clubs will be required to show planning towards various requests and inform council officers well in advance (sometimes a few years) before council capital works budgets are set for each financial year.



Section four – Marketing your club

A recent report in *Australian Leisure Management* (ALM) magazine suggests clubs often struggle due to lack of marketing expertise and skills.

It stated that “the commitment and enthusiasm of club members and volunteers are often not enough to ensure a club will remain viable both competitively and financially. Clubs need to be guided in their marketing activities in a clear and simple manner. Like any business, a sporting club needs to continually analyse itself. It must define its purpose and goals and be prepared to re-define these. By identifying its purpose and goals, a clear and simple understanding emerges of how the club views itself, its role in the community and its responsibilities to committee members and volunteers alike”.

To enhance their well-being, ALM argue that clubs need to:

- Better understand their membership base, and keep them informed.
- Identify the right sponsors and work towards mutual benefits.
- Conduct events that help promote spirit and image.
- Portray a strong, consistent image to all parties.⁵

For further information go to www.ausleisure.com.au.

Marketing your club

Marketing should be seen as a key component of the management of any club and requires the same amount of time, commitment and energy that goes in to other aspects of the club. Broadly speaking, marketing your club involves satisfying the needs and wants of a particular group of people, such as members, volunteers and coaching staff. It involves offering a service to an existing market or a new service to a new market and is essentially concerned with developing the right product or service to fulfil a particular need and delivering it to the customer.

Four main elements make up the marketing process, including:

- Product – what are you selling?
- Price – how much?
- Place – where can you sell your product or service?
- Promotion – how will you let people know?

These elements form what is known as the marketing mix. For a marketing campaign to be successful, clubs must effectively communicate their message to the intended target market, incorporating all elements of the marketing mix. The message should be well planned, contain the right information and be delivered in the right way through the right outlets, such as local newspapers, posters and community centres.

Developing a marketing plan

The first step of the marketing process is to develop a marketing plan to determine what you are ‘selling’. A marketing plan is a written document that outlines what you will do to promote your club in the community and gain additional resources to make your club successful.

The marketing plan essentially covers three basic questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to be?
3. How will we get there?

When asking “Where are we now?” it is necessary to describe the current situation of the club. This is often referred to as a situation analysis and the following points should be included:

- Introduction – a description of the club, location, mission, services and main markets. It is important to identify the club’s mission and goals. In doing this, write down the things that your club has to offer – the playing environment, friendships, sport and competition for example.
- Customer analysis – describes the demographics and behaviour of members and the size of the area that the club is situated in.
- Market analysis – describes the club and its members, membership fees, promotional activities, current facilities, personnel and members’ perceptions of the club.
- Competitor analysis – identifies competitors (other clubs, their location and other characteristics) and helps you to determine exactly how you can get your club to stand out.
- External environmental analysis – analyses trends such as political, financial, demographic and technological forces. Information can come from sources such as newspapers, local papers and council reports for example.

The next step is to pinpoint any opportunities the club can take to enhance its operation (opportunity analysis). To work out “where do we want to be?” use the information obtained from the situation analysis (above) to identify any potential opportunities, problems or gaps. Identifying approximately six of the most important points from the situation analysis will allow you to establish where you want your club to be in the future.

Identifying your target audience is a major component of this step. If you wish to increase your membership, for example, you need to identify your target group by looking at the type of people you want to have at the club in terms of demographics (age, gender, background and interests) and create a promotional strategy that best suits the needs of this group.

It is also recommended that you hold sessions with current members to find out exactly what sort of programs/ activities they want. Look at areas that will make you stand out from other clubs, such as membership base, facilities and social activities.

The opportunity analysis becomes the basis for the action plan, which answers the final question of the marketing plan – ‘how will we get there?’.

When asking this question, you will need to think about the different types of strategies that will be implemented to achieve the objectives identified in the first two steps of the marketing plan. The action plan gives an indication of exactly how you will go about achieving the goals and objectives of the club, who will be responsible for performing each task and the date that each task will need to be completed by, along with budgets and expected costs of each activity.

During this step you will also need to consider exactly how you will go about promoting your club to the wider community. Promotion is one of the major components of the marketing mix and considers the methods you will use to sell the club. Visual displays, newsletters, advertisements in local newspapers, local radio advertisements, media releases and letter box drops are just some of the many ways you can promote your club to the wider community. Information on how to promote your club is contained in the next section.

The marketing plan is essentially a summary of your marketing objectives, a description of your target market, the aspect of the club that you are selling to your target market and the method by which you will do so.

Marketing a football club at a glance.

Define the service – WHAT are you providing that is different, in demand or needed?

Establish the objectives – WHAT do you want to achieve for your football club?

Define the target market – WHO do you want to attract? Be very specific in terms of gender, age, skill level, disability type etc.

Develop the marketing strategy – HOW are you going to promote your program to your potential market?

Include timelines, action items.

A template for a marketing plan can be found on the following page.

3. Devise strategies to achieve these goals, people responsible, the date by which these strategies need to be completed, the expected cost of each strategy and the planned budget.

STRATEGY/ ACTION PLAN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BE COMPLETED BY	EXPECTED COST	PLANNED BUDGET

Section five – Sponsorship

What is sponsorship?

While Australian Football clubs rely heavily on the contribution of their volunteer communities, sponsorship remains one of the main ways of generating funds.

A sponsorship involves a partnership between two parties, in which both seek benefits through an equitable exchange. A sponsorship agreement usually involves a contract with specific terms for both parties.

Generally, an Australian Football club seeks funding, goods or services, with the sponsor aiming to receive media exposure, access to a supporter base and representation, via signage for example, at matches or events. Some sponsorships are conducted on a 'contra' or 'in-kind' basis, where a sponsor provides services or goods instead of cash contributions, in return for signage and exposure.

How to attract sponsors

Unfortunately, sponsorship opportunities are not unlimited and the marketplace is very competitive. Therefore, it is essential that clubs thoroughly plan their pitches to potential sponsors.

A club or league must be specific in its approach, detailing to a potential sponsor exactly what it wants and what it can deliver in return. It also must be able to establish what costs will be involved in servicing a sponsor, and determine whether a potential sponsor is the right 'match' for it.

Clear communication is therefore essential when planning for and pitching to potential sponsors. Be prepared to tell potential sponsors of your past track record – how your club or league has managed sponsorship deals and the benefits it delivered to past sponsors.

Sponsors will be looking for specific returns, so it pays to put yourself in their shoes. Therefore, consider issues such as:

- Attendance figures and the demographic of your supporter base.
- The type of media exposure your club or league receives in its local area.
- The club or league's standing in the community, and the potential for a sponsor to consider that in relation to additional sales.

The pitch

Most sponsorship proposals are presented in written form, however there are other options, such as CDs or websites, that may be worth considering. Decide which format is best suited to the potential sponsor.

Whatever format your club or league decides to take, a sponsorship proposal should include:

- Background of Australian Football in your club's area, including history, image and membership.
- Details of your club or league's home ground, including administrative headquarters, participant numbers, crowds etc.
- Future goals – show evidence of planning for the club's future
- The program budget – how much your club or league will contribute and what it is asking for in sponsorship.
- The proposal – for what purpose the sponsorship is needed, example \$2000 over two years for football jumpers and boots.
- The benefits your club can deliver in return, including advertising, media exposure, promotional opportunities and direct access to membership base.
- The frequency and type of exposure for a sponsor, example logos on the front and back of jumpers and on club stationery.
- Other related materials, including annual reports, financial statements, demographics and press coverage.
- Contact person and key details of the club.

Your club may also consider including a value for the sponsorship based on factors such as goodwill. Sports sponsorship is a very effective marketing tool that can be used over a period of time to build a strong brand. Goodwill that is generated through sponsorship lasts a long time and builds a brand the general public associates with.

Although the association of the sponsoring company with any club takes a while to build, once it is built it stays there for a long time. Sponsorship generates goodwill by influencing the attitude and perception of the community towards the sponsoring organisation.

Refer to the Appendix for a sponsorship proposal outline.

Selling your pitch

Arguably the most important part of the process, the sell relies on making positive contact and creating a good first impression. Therefore, it is important that this step is carried out professionally.

While you may think your club's proposal is thorough and should sell itself, a verbal presentation supporting the document is most important.

Again professionalism is vital, so your club must be represented by the best possible person, preferably someone with past experience or knowledge of the sponsorship concept.

Make sure you find out the contract details of the potential sponsor and make an appointment to speak to them face-to-face. Determine the company's sponsorship criteria and history so you know exactly what they want from a deal.

Present only well-prepared and thorough material in a professional manner, typed and properly formatted.

Have appropriate supplementary information, and anticipate answering a host of questions. Follow up the meeting by thanking the person for the opportunity to present your proposal.

Potential sponsors

All types of businesses are prepared to provide sponsorship, as long as they believe that they are receiving value for money.

Potential sponsors can come from within the club and its membership base. By gathering relevant information about your members, your club can identify those that may have businesses or business connections that the club may wish to have a partnership with. Local members will often be interested in gaining further penetration in their local market and because of their past involvement they are likely to become dedicated sponsors for the club.

Gather information from media services. Look at similar events or sporting clubs that are advertised on television, newspapers or on the radio. By looking at your local newspapers you may identify local businesses that may fit with your club's own customer base.

It is important not to overlook small companies. Too often clubs look to the larger corporations, which generally receive regular sponsorship proposals and as such may simply disregard them. Also, if a smaller company is unlikely to be able to afford the package then look at dividing the package between a number of small businesses.

There are no limitations on who to approach when it comes to sponsorship, sponsors may include local recreational centres, local pubs, and fitness equipment providers just to name a few. The most important thing is to provide specificity in your sponsorship, which refers to matching your needs and their needs to create a mutually beneficial relationship.

What to offer your sponsor

In creating your pitch it is important to evaluate what you can offer your sponsors. A list of potential ideas includes providing:

- Area and perimeter advertising space.
- Signage and banners.
- Invitations to events.
- Free tickets or admission to events.
- Opportunities for them to host associated lunches, dinners etc.
- Placement on official guest list.
- Opening function/coin toss.
- Presentation of awards.
- Name and logo on program, invitations, other printed posters, flyers, newsletters.
- Name and logo on media release, letterheads and media packages.
- Name and logo on newspaper or on television advertisements.
- Name mentioned on community service radio announcements and advertisements.
- Clothing opportunities, such as caps, shirts or shorts.
- Name and logo on awards and trophies.
- Possible introduction to other organisations/people that potentially might buy their product/service.
- Naming rights to events.
- On-site displays and or sales opportunities.
- Opportunity for company staff involvement, eg: discounted tickets.

Keep working together

Once you have struck a deal with a sponsor, it is crucial to keep working on making the relationship mutually beneficial. Clubs regularly fail to maintain sponsors long-term because they fail to service them by delivering on promises.

Ongoing communication about all aspects of your club or league is vital, and the sponsor must be kept informed, via:

- An initial thank-you letter, signed by the president or general manager, acknowledging the agreement and reiterating its terms.
- Regular press updates, with clippings highlighting exposure for the sponsor.
- Regular written reports updating sponsors on team performance, projects and functions.
- Acknowledging the sponsor's performance in its area of expertise.
- Regular newsletters.
- Linking your sponsor to high-profile events and aspects of your club, including adding your sponsor's name to an award.
- Updating your sponsor on progress and your club's desire to build on or extend the relationship.



Evaluating the sponsorship

Evaluating the sponsorship should be a co-operative project carried out at the end of the sponsorship agreement. If the agreement is a long-term one, then more regular assessments may be required.

Both parties should ask some relevant questions:

- Did both parties meet their obligations?
- Did the partnership work?
- Did the sponsor achieve its objectives?
- How can the arrangement be improved?

To help a sponsor assess the arrangement, your club should present it with:

- Copies of media releases.
- Press clippings, local media coverage.
- Details about events and functions, including crowd numbers.
- Photographic material.
- Copies of advertising and promotional materials highlighting the sponsorship arrangement.
- Financial statement, budget and sponsorship renewal proposal.
- Club results.

For further information, the department of sport and recreation of Western Australia has a free booklet called *Seeking and Servicing Your Sponsor*, that you can download from their website at www.dsr.wa.gov.au/dubs/sponsorship.asp.



Section six – Raising funds for your club

It doesn't matter how much money your club raised last year to put teams on the field, provide resources for your off-field administration or maintain and improve facilities, the one certainty is that this year you need more.

The demand placed on raising funds has increased markedly in recent years. As costs have soared, football clubs have had to become more resourceful and creative in the ways they raise money.

Increasingly, fundraising is seen as an essential and indispensable skill in the operation of any football or sporting club and has become a fact of life for all clubs. Football clubs, like many non-profit groups, see fundraising as a chore but it doesn't have to be. It can be exciting and it can be fun and, normally, the more successful you are, the more fun it becomes.

In this section a number of tips will be provided to help your club produce an integrated fundraising strategy that can help you expand your fundraising options.

What is fundraising?

The Australian Sports Commission defines fundraising as "a systematic process designed to secure funds additional to a club's operating budget" and is usually required for special activities, including buildings, innovative events or projects, or new programs.

Fundraising can take in major projects such as raising money to build new clubrooms, or smaller-scale projects such as paying for padding around the goalposts to reduce injury. Whatever the level of fundraising, it still needs to be linked to the overall goals and strategies of a club/league.

These days an integrated fundraising strategy will look at all aspects of generating revenue for your club – membership schemes, sponsorships, special events, grants funding, appeals, merchandise sales, raffles and auctions and bequests. All need to be examined together because most are linked and the market for many of these activities is in fact the same people.

Fundraising Appeals Act

Australian Football clubs, as non-profit organisations, should be aware of their responsibilities when it comes to seeking funds or donations from the community.

The Victorian Fundraising Appeals Act of 1998 introduced a number of laws and requirements for Australian Football clubs looking to raise money.

Under the act, Victorian football clubs wanting to hold public fundraising activities must notify and lodge relevant paperwork with the Office of Fair Trading Business Affairs at least 28 days before any fundraising activity starts.

For further information on this act got to www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au.

Clubs are exempt from this rule if they use only volunteers and raise less than \$10,000 a year from the public. Clubs should also contact the Australian Taxation Office should they have any queries relating to tax exemptions and tax deductibility.



Fundraising activities

- Doorknock appeals.
- Telemarketing.
- Traffic intersection collections.
- Donations to clothing bins.
- Sale of goods at opportunity shops.
- Public appeals to support a club, association, or an environmental or community cause.
- Public appeals to support a cause or a person or a group of persons.

Clubs or leagues must keep records and accounts of all fundraising activities, including income and expenditure; how the funds were allocated and spent; wages and commissions paid in raising the funds, and administrative expenses.

Anyone collecting in a public place on behalf of a football club or league must wear an identification badge detailing whether the person is a volunteer or is being paid. The person in charge of the fundraising activity must provide the identification badge.

Laws vary from state to state, so it is essential you familiarise yourself with the law before embarking on any fundraising exercise. Contact your local state member of Parliament or state/territory Office of Business and Consumer Affairs for more information.

Fundraising and GST

Non-profit Australian Football clubs or leagues must be registered for the goods and services tax (GST) if their annual turnover is \$100,000 or more. Being registered for GST allows clubs to claim a credit from the Australian Taxation Office for any GST paid for products purchased.

According to the Australian Sports Commission, money, goods or services gained via fundraising is provided without obligation and, therefore, not subject to GST.

The good news is that people continue to give to non-profit groups. According to research by Prof Mark Lyons, Australians donated \$5.4 billion to all non-profit groups in 1997, with the majority (nearly \$3 billion) generated from individual giving. About eight per cent of that total was donated to sporting organisations.

The trick continues to be in accessing this money. For football clubs or leagues to run successful fundraisers that bring in sufficient revenues, generate enthusiasm, reinforce a positive image and maximise genuine support from a wider audience for your club, its mission and aims, it is essential to:

- Determine why funds are required – have a clearly defined purpose for seeking funds.
- Set objectives that are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely).
- Assess available resources, including people, equipment and facilities.
- Develop strategies – how will the activity be conducted?
- Establish priorities, implement and monitor strategies.



Creating a practical, integrated fundraising strategy.

A strong, coordinated fundraising strategy can be a way for your club to avoid any mini-financial crisis and bring order to your financial planning.

A strategy identifies the various fundraising methods and helps to systematically work through the best possible options for your club in terms of costs, possible returns and also any downside risks. It's a way of exploring new fundraising options and learning to "value-add" by making the most of the fundraising activities you have now.

Tips on creating your fundraising strategy

Step 1 Make one person accountable for the development and implementation of a fundraising plan.

Everyone in the club needs to contribute but one person needs to be in overall charge to make it work.

Step 2 Make sure everyone understands the importance of finding money.

Everyone acknowledges the need for raising funds but few people enjoy asking for money, even from those who are happy to give. It shouldn't be like that. Fundraising is fun, even more so when it is successful and allows clubs to fulfil all planned projects.

Your club needs to put aside specific time (at least two or three hours). Appoint your best facilitator of creative meetings, as you want ideas to abound. The facilitator's role is to get the group to discuss the fundraising ideas by:

- Identifying the wish list and order them into priorities.
- Brainstorming the network of existing friends and potential friends of your club.
- Generating interest from club members willing to take on the job of asking for money.
- Devoting some of the discussion to finding out who knows who in the local world of business, federal, state and local government departments, as well as the philanthropic trusts and foundations.
- Checking with the group if there are any strong feelings about taking money from particular corporations such as tobacco and alcohol companies.
- Drawing out any fundraising ideas that members of the group have tried already. Honestly assess the time and energy put in against the financial return.
- Considering all possible areas of funding, including special events, grants, individual donations, online donations, marketing and direct mail, products and services, sponsorships, in-kind support from business, membership fees, bequests etc.

Step 3 Develop the elements of the strategy

Now that the organisation as a whole has taken fundraising to its heart, it's time to develop the fundraising strategy, which will:

- Set out the fundraising priorities, including the case for support, the need and the purpose, the method, the timeline, the evaluation strategy and budget for each project.
- Sort the priorities into categories such as: specific projects or programs, ongoing running costs, building an investment fund for the future and premises, equipment and refurbishment
- Match the category and the specific initiatives to the funding method that will work best; eg -seek grants funding for a new building project, personal approach to major business friend to pay for scoreboard repairs, special events to pay for new jumpers for the juniors.

The fundraising strategy should include elements from:

- Membership fees – different levels of membership or association fees – standard, family, non-playing, "Friends of" or associate membership, "Angels" or 'Gold" membership, Lifetime members, three-game members.
- Funding grants – identify federal, state or local government, philanthropic and corporate grants programs open to your group (use the www.ourcommunity.com.au easy grants newsletter and database).
- Sponsorship – identify possible major and minor sponsorships, including possible naming rights – team, building, uniforms, scoreboard, events, players, trips, newsletter, lunches.
- In-kind services – everything from venue/accommodation, office supplies, printing and photocopying, transport, entertainment, pro bono work (legal, accounting, IT, marketing/public relations, auditing), gifts, subscriptions, uniforms.

- Special events – which can include:
 - Sales, fetes.
 - Trivia nights, fashion parades, talent contests, art shows with a local retailer or gallery, dances and discos, film nights, restaurant function.
 - Various 'athon events, with club members and players gaining sponsorship for a walkathon, readathon, skipathon, workathon or skillathon.
 - Games' nights using casino-type games and 'play money'.
 - Sponsored record attempts or other similar quests.
 - Fun runs (carefully check legal requirements with local authorities).
 - Consider offering a special afternoon of skill activities in your sport.
 - Barbecue and refreshments stalls at matches.
- Gifts and donations, including online donations – personal asking, general appeals, direct mail, appeals to your email database of all former players, members and supporters.
- Sales of products and services, including fundraising drives – chocolates/lamingtons/pies/plants/cosmetics/toothbrushes/photos/wine etc.
- Raffles, competitions, auctions etc – major items, memorabilia, services, travel, gifts, tickets etc ...
- Bequests – providing general information/personal approaches to long-time benefactors/supporters that they provide an ongoing gift for your club.
- Merchandising – club clothing, office products, sports products, glass wear etc.

When developing your fundraising strategy, remember to:

- Attach realistic expectations of amounts to be raised for each initiative within each of the categories and list the contact person for each initiative.
- With every fundraising idea, see if you can value-add to the event to raise more money. Examples are handing out membership information at dinners or public events, selling club merchandise at special events, providing bequest information as part of membership details, offering people the option of donating money even if they can't attend functions.

Step 4 Send your draft strategy to the committee/board and a cross-section of the organisation.

This will reinforce the support and need for the strategy, prompt even more ideas about networks and contacts, raise the importance of realistic targets and set firm and clear timelines.

Step 5 Have your club committee/board sign off on the annual fundraising strategy.

This will mean that fundraising is an item on every committee meeting agenda and will also ensure that it is featured in your regular newsletter with various milestones noted and celebrated.

Step 6 Keep the annual fundraising strategy fresh and dynamic.

Update and change the strategy as circumstances change and be alert to new fundraising ideas and lessons learned from your own experience. If you see an idea that works, grab it and try and adopt and adapt it to work for your club.

General fundraising Ideas:

- Cake stall.
- Renting out your club house to outside groups.
- Selling personalised merchandise.
- Auction/silent auction.
- Fete/bazaar.
- Bequests.
- Bingo.
- Selling products from national fundraising companies.
- Bus tour.
- Cocktail Party.
- Car Wash.
- Wine tasting.
- Dinner with a profile coach/administrator/celebrity.
- Annual garage sale.
- Personalised coffee mugs.
- Install a vending machine.
- Sausage sizzle.
- Movie, theatre, or concert night.
- Merchandising campaign.
- Fashion parade.
- Celebrity autograph and photo session.
- Celebrity sporting contest.
- Golf tournament.
- Publishing a cookbook or calendar.
- Selling advertising space at the club.
- Car raffle.
- Selling bricks for memorial sidewalk.
- Raffle, BBQ and a major sporting event viewed in a big-screen TV.



(Material adapted/supplied by Our Community.)

More fundraising ideas can be found in the monthly Our Community Raising Funds newsletter, or on their website www.ourcommunity.com.au. This organisation provides some great ideas and advice on fundraising.

Section seven – Conducting club events

Conducting an event is a great way to get members involved in different club activities, at the same time as promoting the club to the wider community. There are many types of events that a club can organise, including fundraising activities, social nights, fetes and special competitions such as carnivals, tournaments and finals.

Events can either be a once-off occasion, annual or occur more frequently, such as a once-a-month car-boot sale or market. Planning and organising an event is crucial to its success. Events that are not properly planned or adequately organised do not rate well among those involved and, as a result, many people do not want to be involved in the organisational side again. The size of the event should not be indicative of the level of planning that is required, as even small events are complicated to organise and generally require a large number of workers, resources, time and planning and commitment.

Planning for an event

When organising an event, it is important to keep in mind why and for whom the event is being held.

Questions to consider include:

- When and where will the event be held?
- Who will be responsible for organising the event?
- What resources are required?
- Are there contingencies in place in the event of bad weather?

If positive responses can be drawn from these questions, then the event is justifiable and you are ready to move on to the next stage of planning. The following points should be considered when making the final decision of whether the event will go ahead:

- What facilities and equipment are needed for the event?
- Why exactly do we want to stage the event?
- How can we overcome any barriers to staging the event?
- Is there enough time to adequately plan for the event?

When organising an event, you must further consider:

- Duration.
- Entertainment, music.
- Materials required.
- Goods and services required from various suppliers.
- Invitations.
- Government requirements.
- Insurance.



Tip

- Avoid clashes with other occasions such as sporting events, elections and other major forms of entertainment that club members may be involved in.

When planning for a particular event, dates, times, deadlines and other relevant information must be realistic and all people involved in the staging of the event should be contacted. People at the venue and the caterers, for example, need to be contacted so they can have some input and offer any suggestions. This will increase the likelihood of the event being successful.

It is advisable to establish a social/events coordinator who will be responsible for organising the event. Clubs may already have a fundraising committee, events sub-committee or social committee. The size of these committees will depend on the membership size of your club and the number of people your event will need to cater for. The more people involved in offering ideas, contacts and time, the greater the chance of raising money.

The fundraising committee should work towards special goals and targets, which will contribute to achieving the overall goals of the club.

Budgeting for an event

When planning an event, it is important to consider all the costs involved.

Tips

- **Start from scratch and list all the costs that will be involved in the event. This will ensure that the event is costed accurately.**
- **Break the items of expenditure into several key areas such as administration, event delivery, marketing and communication.**
- **Be sure that the budget is indicative of true costs – try and avoid hidden costs.**
- **Include a target for income. Most events attract some income and this income can be divided into a number of categories.**
- **Direct income is income from gate takings, catering and car park takings, whereas indirect income is income from advertising, sponsorship, sales and donations.**



Identifying roles and responsibilities for the event

The social/events coordinator should identify all tasks and roles that are required to stage the event and provide a short job description of each, so that people fulfilling these roles are fully aware of their responsibilities.

Typical roles that are required include:

- Ticket sellers – fundraisers.
- Event promoters.
- Caterers.

Tips

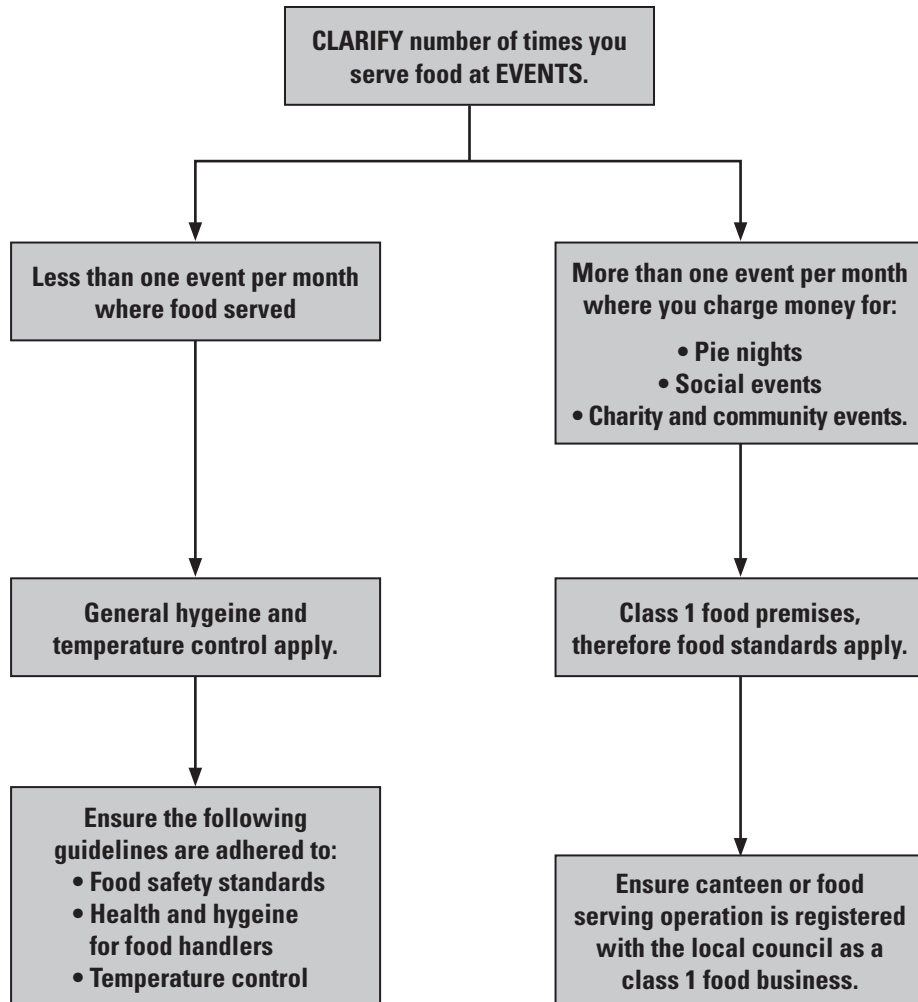
- **Set regular meeting dates and times with all those helping out so that the progress can be monitored.**
- **Keep minutes from these meetings and follow up on anything that needs particular attention. If problems are identified early, the chances of rectifying the situation before the event are enhanced.**

Communication between all club officials and volunteers is essential in order to ensure that various tasks are being carried out in the required time.

Food handling at your event

Serving food at club events

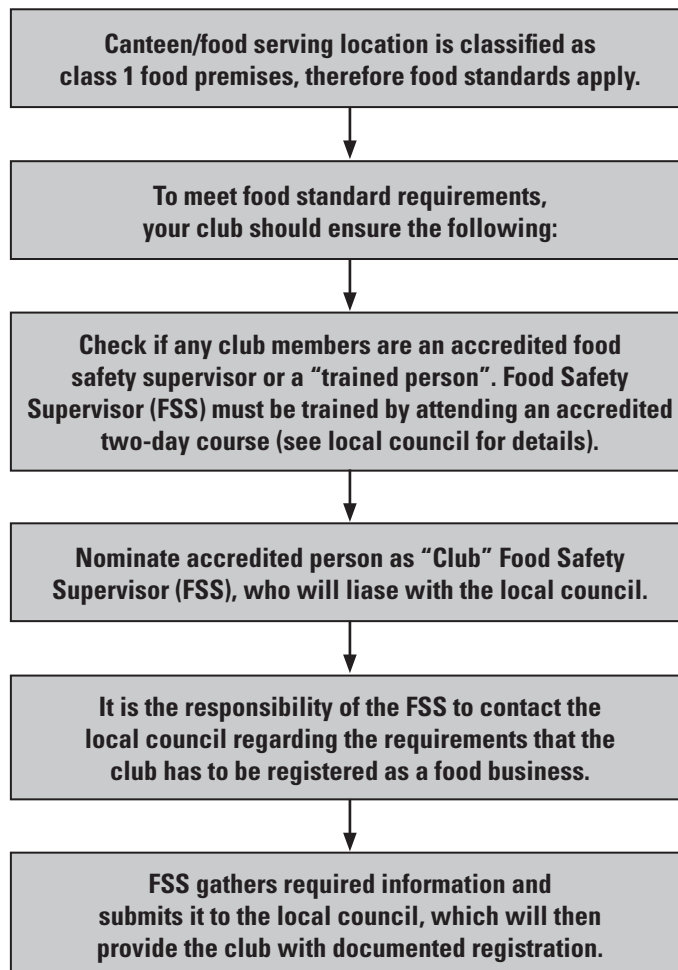
When serving food at any event run by your club, you will firstly need to determine if your club is required to meet the FSANZ criteria. This can be done by the following flowchart:



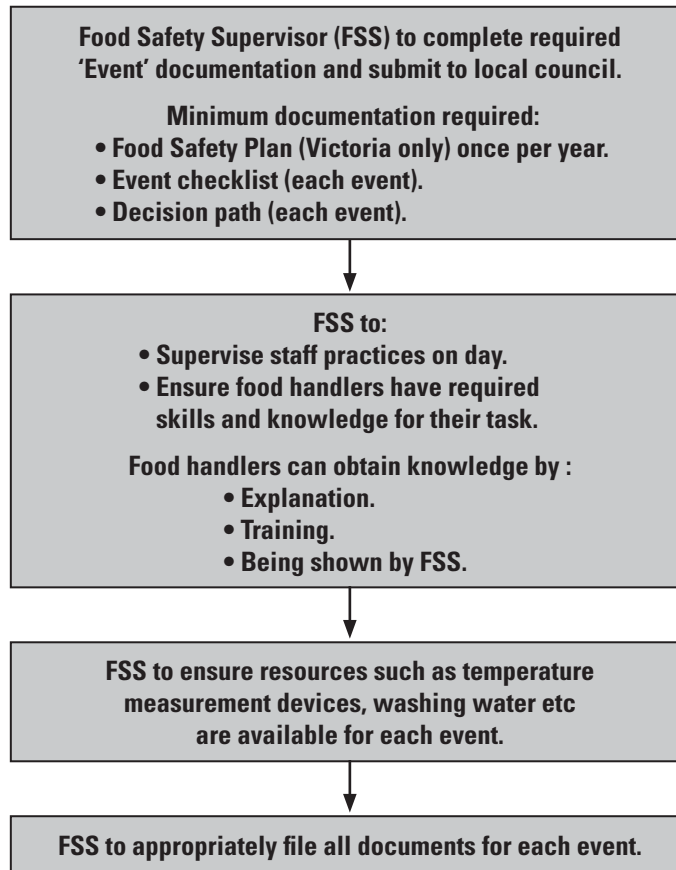
For further information and fact sheets look up www.foodstandards.gov.au and follow these links: media releases/ publications/ fact sheets for charities and community organisations.

Additional information can be found in the *Risk Management Manual* of the AFL club management program.

In the situation where your club serves food more often than once a month, the requirements are slightly more complex. The following flowchart highlights the steps that your club should take.



The following activities should be undertaken each time food is served at an event run by your club.



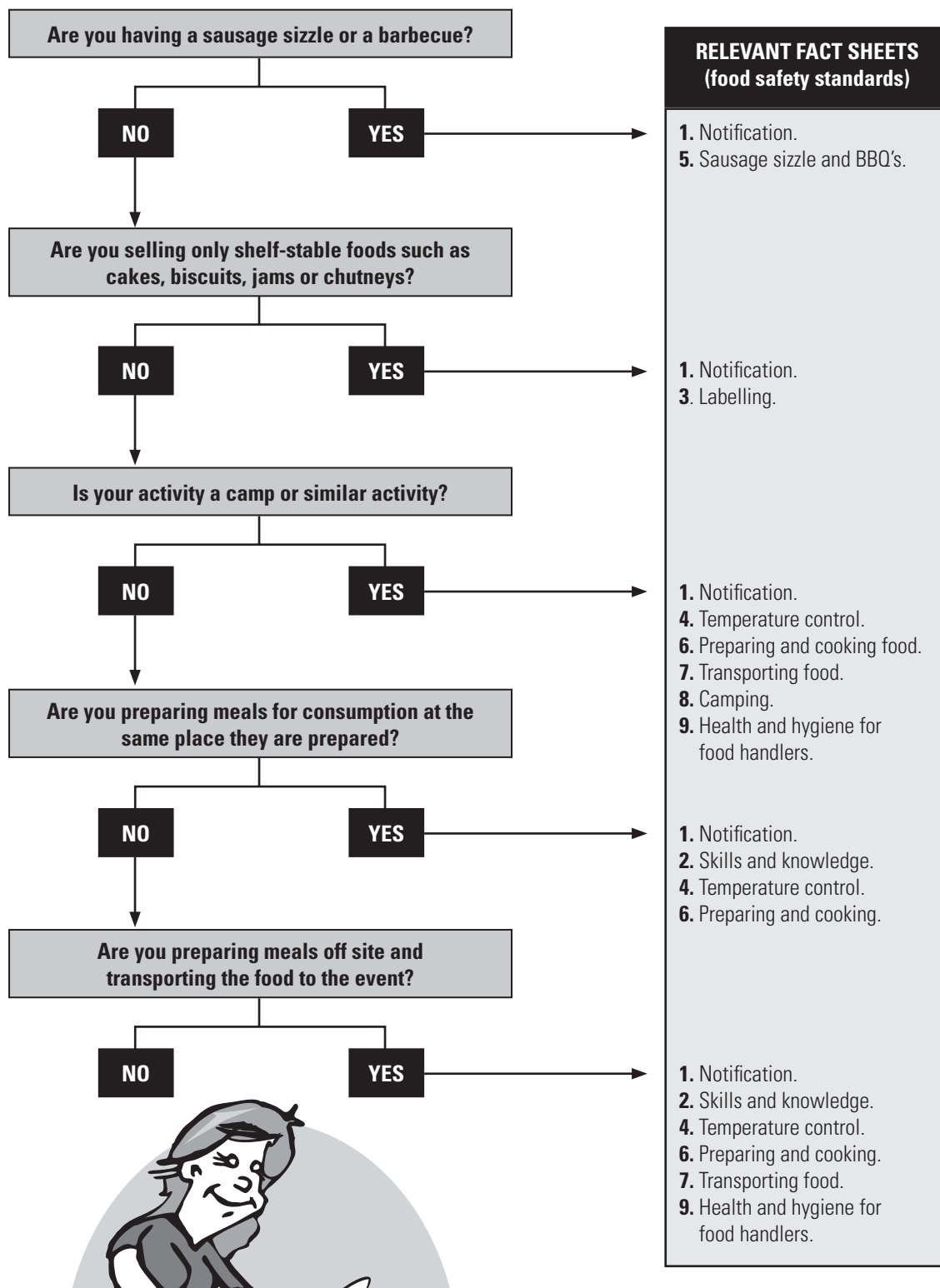
Event decision
(refer to page 33)



Event checklist
(refer to page 34)



Event decision pathway for organisers



Event checklist

It is very easy to forget to do things when you are busy trying to organise events. If you tick the boxes of this checklist for each activity, you will be less likely to miss important jobs.

Event:	Date:	(✓)
Have you:	YES	NO
• Decided which activity on the decision path covers the event?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Notified your enforcement agency about the event?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Identified all volunteers participating in the event?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Provided volunteers with the appropriate information sheets?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Checked that handwashing facilities will be provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Checked that drinkable water will be available at the site or an adequate supply will be transported to the site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Checked whether power or gas will be available if needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Determined how to dispose of wastewater and rubbish?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Checked that premises and temporary stalls are clean and appropriate for the activity being undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Checked that adequate temperature control equipment will be available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Checked that a thermometer will be available if potentially hazardous foods will be handled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Talk to your local enforcement agency if you have any concerns. If you have answered **NO** to any questions, you need to consider what can be done to ensure that your club meets the food safety standards.⁶

Organising social events

There are many advantages of organising social activities within a club. Social activities bring all club members together and are a great way of introducing and involving new members in the club.

However, although it may seem that organising social activities within a club may not require as much planning as other events, it is important to remember that regardless of size, all events require a high degree of planning and a lot of time and energy.



Section eight – Grants and funding

Successfully operating an Australian Football club has become increasingly challenging over the past few years. While the support of volunteers is crucial, the fact remains that clubs and leagues must keep finding more money to manage the growing aspects of their operations.

One way that clubs have been able to fund some activities is through accessing grants provided by federal, state and local governments, as well as corporate and philanthropic foundations. Each year hundreds of millions of dollars are provided to non-profit groups for community projects. One grant can do the work of 50 sausage sizzles or raffles.

Grants may cover the entire project cost or be in the form of challenge grants requiring groups to match the funding dollar-for-dollar or find another corporate partner to help out.

Sources of funding

There are a number of sources that football clubs should look to for funding and grants. They include:

Federal sources:

- Through the Australian Sports Foundation.
- Trusts.

State sources:

- State departments of sport and recreation.

Local Sources:

- Local government.
- Rotary and Lions Clubs.
- Licensed clubs.
- Other.

By regularly checking the local media in your area and the internet, clubs will be able to keep abreast of any funding or grant opportunities.

The role of state governments

Limited financial support is available to not-for-profit Australian Football clubs and leagues via a host of grant and funding schemes operated by state government sport and recreation departments or through government-funded bodies such as VicHealth in Victoria.

Clubs can apply for funds to help with one-off projects, purchase safety equipment, develop long-term strategies, train staff and volunteers, take activities into the wider community or upgrade facilities. The amount of funding, how it is allocated and what criteria needs to be met varies from state to state and grant program to grant program.



The Eudunda Football Club in country South Australia was able to implement a junior development program by applying for a grant through the SA government's active club program. When player numbers kept dropping, the club decided it should focus on building support at the junior level. With the grant, it was able to develop a program based on supporting coaches and volunteers to gain accreditation, build a safe training environment and develop a junior information pack.

(Source: AFL Record 2002)

The role of local governments

In looking for grants, clubs often overlook their own local government bodies, who do have a key role in providing limited grants for organisations such as football clubs. Grants offered by local governments (often using funds redirected from state governments) tend to be made available for specific projects or are aimed at target groups within a community. Check your local council for details of their grants program. Another funding option is to see if a "community chest" operates in your area and whether your club is eligible for funding.

Remember you are a valuable community asset

Too often football clubs think of themselves solely as sports clubs and look only at "sport and recreation" grants programs. The reality is that football clubs are valuable community assets that provide a healthy, inclusive atmosphere that brings communities together to work for a common good. When you take a more lateral view of the impact of football clubs you find they provide:

- An inclusive, tolerant pastime open to people of all cultural and economic backgrounds.
- A health and well-being message where people are encouraged to exercise.
- An anti-drug, anti-smoking and responsible alcohol message.
- A message that teamwork can and does achieve a common goal.
- An environment for young people and children to improve their self-esteem and self-worth.
- An environment where young people can learn valuable leadership and life skills.
- An environment where people with disabilities are encouraged and embraced.

By broadening the thinking of the community work a football club performs, you open up access to health, youth, anti-drug, multicultural, indigenous and training funding programs.

Preparing a successful grant application – planning for success

While there are a host of grants available, the first challenge for Australian Football clubs is to find where the grants are and how to access them. Check local newspapers, contact the relevant government departments (sports and recreation/health etc), councils and state/territory organisations.

In Victoria, for example, Sport and Recreation Victoria offers a community facility funding program (funded under the Victorian Government's community support fund) that contributes to the provision of high quality and accessible community sport and recreation facilities. The minor facilities funding category of this program aims to respond to the grass roots needs of local community sport and recreation through the development of quality sport and recreation facilities.

Although local councils are only eligible to apply directly to Sport and Recreation Victoria for funds under this program, community organisations such as football clubs have the opportunity to access the funds by applying directly to their local council. You will need to complete a community club application form and return it to your local council by a specified date. When applying for funding, clubs are generally required to include with their application form:

- A written quote for any works.
- Relevant bank statements.
- Voluntary support and in-kind labor proforma.
- Draft plans.
- A response to the funding criteria.
- Letters of support.
- Confirmation of other funding sources (Rotary, other grants, local businesses).
- Planning permits.
- If applicable, legally binding agreements between private landowners, clubs and council or evidence of lease arrangements/land tenure.
- Proof of incorporation and constitution.
- Brief CV's of the board and key staff of your club.
- Annual report, including a copy of the audited financial figures.

Although a wide variety of sport and recreation projects are eligible for funding under this program, priority is given to projects that:

- Broaden community access and increase or maintain opportunities for participation.
- Improve access to those groups traditionally disadvantaged.
- Address issues around safety and risk management.
- Provide opportunities for informal sport and recreation pursuits.
- Maximise the range of users of a facility.

All grants programs differ but to be a successful applicant you will need to:

- Research the funding body: discover what types of projects they have previously funded and the projects they are most likely to back.
- Be clear about what you are doing: before you apply, ensure your club is totally behind the project, and has clear and defined aims and objectives, as well as a realistic timetable.
- Be clear about how much money you want: make sure your budget is properly costed. Grant-makers don't want inflated budgets and you don't want a half-completed project.
- Read and stick to the guidelines: if asked for two pages, provide two pages not 10. If asked for a brief description, stay brief. Answer all questions, even if you have to say "not applicable".
- Include all material requested: follow the request exactly and don't forget to check you have listed the amount needed, contact details, and your name.
- Contact the funding body: most grant-makers are happy to talk to applicants to tell them if their project is suitable or help focus on the elements of a project that interests them.
- Keep it simple: most successful proposals win the battle in the first page. Use plain, simple English and don't lose people in technical jargon.
- Show community benefits: most grant-funding bodies will be interested in the benefits of a project to the wider community, not just the group asking for the money.
- Show community support: if you have wide community support, show it. If not, get it through backing from other groups and letters of support from local MPs and councillors.
- Demonstrate what you will contribute: even if it is your volunteer time, cost that out as your in-kind support for the project.
- Align your values to the grant-maker's stated values: don't change your values, just understand what they see as important. Show how your project helps achieve their aims.
- Have someone read your application: before you send it, ask someone new to the process to read your application to see if you have made a compelling case.
- Keep to the deadlines: get in early. Don't risk missing the cut-off date.
- Show passion: if you think it is a great idea, express it with passion.
- Talk people, not numbers: show how you impact on real people, not on bland figures.
- Show the project is sustainable: show it can survive after their initial funding dries up.

Successful applications are a result of thorough planning and considerable effort over a period of time. Rushed, last-minute applications are rarely approved.

Tips for preparing an application

- **Planning – make sure that you give your club sufficient time to prepare a well thought-out proposal.**
- **Address the major criteria set out by the funding source.**
- **Show the benefits to the wider community.**
- **Show community support for the funding – other businesses, volunteers and members getting involved.**
- **Show the programs sustainability – other related infrastructure.**
- **Show how your club values are similar to the funding sources.**
- **Include all the material requested.**
- **Keep it simple.**

Australian Sports Foundation

Many businesses and individuals only want to fund non-profit groups with deductible gift registration so they can claim a tax deduction. The Australian Sports Foundation is one group that helps sporting clubs – who are mostly unable to get tax deductibility in their own right – to offer tax deductibility.

Established in 1986, the Australian Sports Foundation helps generate funds for not-for-profit sports from the corporate sector and the wider community. Donations made to the Australian Sports Foundation are tax deductible and made directly to it, not individual clubs. Donors may nominate specific projects they want to support. Funding must be used for an approved, specific project such as a new training facility, equipment or hosting a training course, with the money allocated back to the club or league by the Australian Sports Foundation.

For more information visit the Australian Sports Foundation website at www.asf.org.au.

Where else to look

www.ourcommunity.com.au provides The Easy Grants newsletter detailing all federal and state government and philanthropic and corporate grants programs available to community groups.



Section nine – Opening doors – including people with a disability

Does your club need more players, administrators and volunteers? If the answer is yes then read on! Including people with a disability is simply about including more people in your club – and importantly, accessing a virtually untapped market. Clubs forget that people with a disability are a viable market sector worth pursuing.

Never underestimate the skills of people with a disability – their skills and abilities vary as much as able-bodied people do. They also come with a set of friends and family that can be valuable assets to your club, too.

Clubs do not need to have any special disability specific knowledge or be experts in disability – they need expertise in football, a positive attitude and a willingness to give it a go.

It is a myth that footballers with a disability cannot participate in the game of football for medical or safety reasons. In fact there are very few disabilities that preclude a person from participation in football.

Benefits for the club

You should realise that there are many benefits of including people with a disability at your club. These include:

1. Financial benefits as extra money comes from new members and their families.
2. Extra volunteers.
3. Reinvigoration of a football club with 'new blood'.
4. Social benefits.
5. Expertise in assistance in officiating, coaching and/or administration.



1. Financial benefits

It is important for clubs to realise that many people with a disability are often working or have other sources of disposable income. Most are able to make a financial contribution comparable to other members. They are able to pay membership fees, attend social functions and support fundraising events. For a club they are another potential and vital source of income.

Also, grants are available to assist with new programs, training of coaches or personnel and for redevelopment of facilities to better cater for players with a disability. This additional funding will also have broader 'spin-off' benefits for your club.

Clubs that include people with disabilities are viewed favourably by both the local and wider community. Councils, sponsors, government agencies and peak bodies all have an interest in encouraging access for people with disabilities.

2. Extra volunteers

Not only are the people with disabilities themselves potential volunteers, but so too are any friends, family or carers who may come to your club with them. How much does your club need more volunteers?

New members full of enthusiasm and vigour can replenish your football club's volunteer stocks with renewed skills and vision.

3. Reinvigoration of a football club

Clubs are always looking for players with drive, determination and enthusiasm. Footballers with a disability have often overcome significant obstacles in their desire to participate. Therefore, they are generally 'can do' people who can pass on that enthusiasm to others. Their value to the football club may be that they bring to the club experience, enthusiasm and skills, which could assist and inspire others to emulate their performances. Often the introduction of such 'new blood' can re-focus other members of a club to re-evaluate their commitment and energy.

4. Social benefits

Friendships can and will develop between existing members and new members with disabilities as people begin to see abilities rather than disabilities. Prejudices may be discovered to be unfounded as existing members begin to see the person with a disability as an individual.

This will have a 'feel good' value for other members, which will often influence and improve morale within the club. Members may see that they are also valued for who they are rather than what they are and discover that their individual capabilities are recognised and celebrated.

5. Expertise in administration

Many people with disabilities have had previous experience with assisting the administrative side of a wide range of clubs and other organisations. By having people at the club that have had experience in this field, you will be easing the burden on others who may be less experienced.

Clubs may also find that by improving access for people with a disability they may inadvertently encourage other groups to join such as older adults, parents with small children or non-English speaking adults.



Marketing to people with a disability – getting them to your club

You can't just wait for people to come to your club because you are keen to have them, you have to go and get them! Marketing to people with a disability is no different to marketing than others in your community – you need to go directly to your target group and tell/show them what a fantastic club you have and that you want them to be part of it!

It is even better if you can go straight to a captive audience, for example special schools, and tell them how much you would like them to be involved in your club.

Identify exactly who you might approach

Most people who join your club will live locally. Look around and identify what organisations or individuals are located near you and approach them first. Occasionally, individuals from other areas may join if what you are offering is not offered in their area.

Check to see if there is a specific group or body operating in your area which might be interested in working with you. Ask existing members for their ideas, look in the *White Pages* or ring your local council. It is all a matter of knocking on the right doors.

Contact individuals or clubs and ask what they want

People with a disability will join your club only if you meet their needs. Exploring what the person/footballer with a disability expects to gain is useful. Make an opportunity to talk to whoever you can, to identify what footballers with a disability are looking for and what you might be able to provide.

Develop your product

Work out exactly what your club can offer and be realistic about this according to the club's resources and overall plan for the future. It should be value for money, without being charity and should be clearly meeting the needs you identified in discussions earlier.

Not all people with a disability will want to participate in a club's activities. Just because you have presented a plan to a person with a disability doesn't mean you will get a response.

Reach out

Once you have worked out what you are going to offer, you have to let people know where to go and how to get it. You will need to use a range of promotional mediums to get the information to your target group.

- Use local radio stations for interviews and advertisements.
- Ask local papers for publicity and develop feature stories.
- Make presentations to individuals or to groups in larger clubs.
- Plan try-out days and family days to target specific groups or local clubs.
- Work with local disability clubs, local council, state disability sporting associations and your state football body.
- Remember to include the services provided to footballers with a disability in all football club promotional brochures and material.

When planning and developing programs for members with disabilities, there are many people who can help – various other clubs, support groups and resources can help your club attract people with a disability.

Including footballers with disabilities in your football club is not difficult. Subtle changes you may need to make will benefit all members of your club. Not only will your football club be more accepting of individual needs, it will gain valuable expertise, assistance and support. Having a closer look at what you do to attract footballers with disabilities to your club will help in your recruitment and promotion generally.

No special skills are required – just enthusiasm, a flexible attitude and a willingness to try! Remember, it's about becoming a better club for everyone.

The following checklist will help your club include players with a disability:

Opening doors – including footballers with a disability

Have you:

(✓)

- Considered both the positives and negatives of involving football players with disabilities in your club?
- Discussed the possibility of having people with disabilities involved in the club with other members?
- Identified whether any disability specific knowledge is required?
- Identified whether coaches and other personnel will need additional training?
- Established exactly what the club can offer in terms of resources and future plans to football players with disabilities?
- Assessed the accessibility of the club in terms of facilities?
(For example, are toilets easily accessible by wheelchairs?)
- Developed strategies that will allow football players with a disability to participate in or become actively involved in the clubs activities?
- Considered a buddy system so that those people who are new to the club know the layout and routine of the football club?
- Identified organisations and people within close proximity to your football club that might want to become involved in the club?
- Gone directly to the target group (for example, special schools) and asked them exactly how they want to be involved in the club?
- Explored the various expectations that people with a disability will have with regard to the club?
- Considered ways of advertising information for various target groups?
(radio, newspaper, try-out days for example)
- Spoken directly to the person or people with the disability and not just the carer, friend or family member?
- Asked exactly how the person with the disability wants to become involved in the club and its activities?
- Asked the person with the disability whether they want their disability to remain confidential?
- Requested that each new member (regardless of whether they have a disability or not) fill out a medical form?
- Ensured that all people involved in the club are made to feel valuable?

The Moonee Valley Magpies: a real life story

Moonee Valley Football Club is a strong and successful club. It has a history and tradition of strong and sensible management. The committee has always been very strategic in its management and has planned for a long and successful future rather than just winning this year's premiership. The club has an AFL Auskick program as well as a Super Rules side, including the youngest and the more experienced players.

With this in mind the club was delighted when approached to include a new side – a side from the FIDA (Football Integration Development Association) and involves players with an intellectual disability.

The Magpies have had a huge impact on the club and have ultimately had a very positive effect on the number of players and volunteers at the club. It has also enhanced the "culture" of the club, with players from the Magpies always present at most of the club's other games. Many of the players reciprocate the support and crowds at the Magpies games have never been bigger! There is little doubt that the inclusion of the Magpies at the Moonee Valley Football Club has been a winner for all.

Including the side from FIDA made good sense to the management committee of the club – after all, the club's mission was to increase the number and quality of players at the club.

They have since found that the Magpies have brought a new meaning to an already great club. They have brought more helpers and players – and a new feeling to the club. Long-term members have been delighted in the change that the Magpies have made.

The Magpies have also enabled the club to further recruit through linking into the local special schools network and running an AFL Auskick program at the ground during school hours. Interested students can then go on to either play in the FIDA or the club's mainstream competition depending on their skill level and choice. In addition to this, the Magpies have enabled the club to gain lots of goodwill from existing sponsors and the local council.

Marketing of the Moonee Valley Magpies

- Initially the club went straight to a specific target market (the existing competition).
- The club made contact with two local organisations that could support it – the Access for All Abilities worker at the local council (exclusive to Victoria) and the State Disability Education Program Coordinator.
- The club offered to host an AFL Auskick program with 12 local special schools, which ensured it had a 'feed' of young footballers for either its competition for people with a disability or its mainstream (regular) under-16 competitions.
- Other strategies planned for next season include: to make contact with the local day centre (for people with an intellectual disability) and residential units.



This disability section has been produced by Kathy Tessier, adapted from the *Australian Sports Commission's Disability Education Program* resources, courses and presenters' manual.

For a full list of contacts in your state for disability go to www.activeaustralia.org/dep/natnetworks.htm.

For further information on the ASC disability education program visit www.ausport.gov.au.

Section ten – Creating a healthy environment

Sport generally and Australian Football in particular have always been considered healthy, recreational pursuits contributing positively to participants' health and overall well-being.

According to VicHealth, "people are entitled to live in healthy environments and are becoming aware of the benefits of such a lifestyle. Sporting organisations have opportunities to increase the quality of people's lives by supporting the development of healthy environments."

To maximise your club's ability to provide a healthy, family-friendly environment, it is recommended that you develop and implement various policies focusing on:

1. A smoke-free environment.
2. Responsible consumption of alcohol.
3. Healthy eating.
4. Sun protection.
5. Friendliness, sense of belonging and connectedness (mental health).
6. Drug awareness.

While it is advised that you have the above policies in place, you may wish to start with one or two that are most important to your club and then build on these further down the track.

1. Smoke-free – a healthy way to be

By operating in a smoke-free environment, your club will be:

- Catering for the majority of members who do not smoke.
- Reducing the risk of legal action (especially with regard to passive smoking).
- Reducing fire risk which may lead to lower insurance premiums.
- Creating a healthy family friendly environment which encourages new members to join, especially juniors.
- Fulfilling local council tenancy and lease requirements.

Clubs need to create and implement a smoke-free policy. The following steps outline how to develop a smoke-free policy:

1. Assess the current situation. Are there any current policies that need updating? Survey members to assess their support, determine the level of smoking among members.
2. Get the support of your management committee.
3. Draft your smoke-free policy. Include the reasons why the club will be smoke-free, where people can and cannot smoke, when the policy comes into effect, who is responsible for enforcing the policy and what to do if people ignore the policy.
4. Develop a non-compliance strategy. Tell people what to do if someone smokes in a smoke-free area.
5. Promote the smoke-free policy to all members and supporters. The timing and manner of introduction is important (beginning of a season is good).
6. Label promotional material.
7. Educate staff and volunteers.
8. Prepare your venue/facility. Remove ashtrays, provide butt tins in outside smoking areas and place signs around the club rooms and facilities.
9. Inform all user groups about the new policy.
10. Review your policy and set dates to review the policy.



Major venues, including the MCG, Telstra Dome, Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre, Olympic Park, Vodafone Arena and Melbourne Park, have already adopted a smoke-free policy, with smaller venues, leagues and clubs following suit.

The Victorian Amateur Football Association actively encourages its member clubs to be fully smoke-free.

The Fitzroy Amateur Reds Football Club adopted a smoke-free policy in 1998, with all aspects of the club modified to ensure the policy was recognised and enforced. *"We found that after the initial step was taken to become smoke-free, very little effort was required to implement the change,"* president Mark Frisby said in 2000.

(Source: Going smoke-free – a policy kit for sports clubs and associations, QUIT®)

Tips

- Designate all indoor areas as smoke-free.
- Tell all coaches, trainers, administrators and volunteers not to smoke while in uniform or acting in an official capacity.
- Put signs up that indicate smoking is not allowed.

Further information about going smoke-free and how to develop a smoke-free policy can be found at www.quit.org.au.

Australian legislation

Clubs should be aware that as of July 2001 smoking is prohibited within enclosed restaurants and cafes and the dining areas of premises with a licence or club licence.

From July 2003 smoking is banned from all gaming areas.

Duty of care

Your club owes a duty of care to all its patrons, including the staff. As such, clubs should be aware that not providing a smoke-free environment can lead to liability claims in the future.

Horsham Cycling Club

"The Horsham Cycling Club owns clubroom facilities which include a hall. The hall is used for club activities as well as a hired function venue, but the greater use of it is for bingo, which the cycling club runs. Bingo is held twice weekly, attracting up to 130 patrons.

We were somewhat concerned about the legal consequences of smoking, in particular the liability aspects. As the owner of a facility, our club has a legal responsibility to ensure that users aren't exposed to potentially dangerous situations when on our premises. Our club has to exercise an appropriate level of care for visitors and patrons, and in our opinion providing a smoke-free environment is a major step in this direction.

The club also employs staff to coordinate bingo activities. Occupational health and safety legislation also clearly states that workers must not be exposed to dangerous situations: passive smoke can cause a potentially dangerous environment."

(Source: Peter Frecklton - president Horsham Cycling Club – January, 2000)

Legal Case

In May 2001, the New South Wales Supreme Court ordered the Port Kembla RSL Club to pay compensation (plus legal costs) to a former bar worker who had developed throat cancer. During her 11 years of employment, the non-smoking bar worker had been regularly exposed to environmental tobacco smoke in her workplace. The jury found that the RSL club breached its duty of care to provide a safe working environment, and as a result the RSL club was forced to pay compensation that amounted to \$466,000.

2. Responsible drinking – be smart

There is research to suggest that amateur and community based sports clubs contribute to alcohol problems by accepting and promoting excessive drinking and providing inappropriate role models for young people. Helping sporting clubs implement sensible alcohol practices and policies allows clubs to develop a culture that will attract junior players. It can also reduce binge drinking and underage drinking, lead to a lower incidence of offences and reduce the risk of potential liability by upholding “duty of care” with respect to player, member and supporter safety. All clubs, particularly those with a large junior component, should be in a position to encourage safe and responsible use of alcohol both at and away from the club.

Developing and implementing a responsible drinking policy:

- Creates a positive image for clubs in the community.
- Leads to better player performance.
- Increases membership and attendance.
- Strengthens relationship between clubs and other community organisations.
- Maintains ownership of a liquor licence.
- Creates new income sources.

Your policy should consider aspects including:

- Legal issues such as serving minors or intoxicated patrons.
- Meeting state liquor licensing requirements.
- Training bar staff in responsible alcohol serving practices.
- Providing low and non-alcoholic drinks such as light beer and water.
- Providing food.
- Providing activities such as pool tables.
- Providing safe transport options.
- Banning alcohol at junior events.



The Good Sports Program

The Good Sports Program is a partnership between the Australian Drug Foundation (ADF), state, regional and local sports bodies, and the government sector to develop a safer and healthier Australian community. The Good Sports Accreditation Program (GSAP) helps sporting clubs manage alcohol responsibly, and displaying the Good Sports logo sends an important message to club members and the community. It indicates that the club promotes a responsible attitude towards alcohol, thereby providing a safe environment for players, members, families and supporters.

In Victoria, the program is supported by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, the Transport Accident Commission and the Department of Human Services, while in NSW, it is supported by the Roads and Traffic Authority and the Southern Area Health Network. There are four levels to the GSAP and at each level, clubs must meet a range of criteria. There is no cost to participate in the program and community partners have been appointed by the Australian Drug Foundation to assist with the accreditation process. The four levels of accreditation and criteria for each include:

Level 0

This is for clubs that do not sell or consume alcohol on club grounds at any time, but wish to become a Good Sports accredited club. Clubs must address the following criteria:

- Alcohol-free club facilities.
- Smoke-free facilities and meetings.
- Fundraising, functions and prizes without an emphasis on alcohol.
- Promotion of the Good Sports Program to club members.
- Development and implementation of a written code of conduct.

Clubs are given 12 months to reach this level once they are registered in the program.

Level 1

This is for clubs that sell or consume alcohol on their premises. Clubs must address the following criteria:

- Compliance with liquor licensing requirements.
- Responsible serving of alcohol training for bar staff.
- Smoke-free change rooms.
- Promotion of the Good Sports Program to club members.

Clubs are given 12 months to reach this level once they are registered in the program.

Level 2

This level is also for clubs that sell or consume alcohol on their premises. Clubs must address the following criteria:

- Implementation of all components in Level 1.
- Provision of non and low alcohol drinks.
- Responsible alcohol management practices.
- Safe transport strategies.
- Provision of food when serving alcohol.
- Fundraising, functions and prizes without emphasis on alcohol.
- Smoke-free club social rooms.
- Promotion of the Good Sports Program to club members.

Clubs are given two years to reach this level once they are Level 1 accredited.

Level 3

This level is for also for clubs that sell or consume alcohol on their premises. Clubs must address the following criteria:

- Implementation of all components in Level 1 and Level 2.
- Implementation of all remaining optional criteria from Level 2.
- Development and implementation of a written code of conduct.

Clubs are given two years to reach level 3 accreditation once they are level 2 accredited.

Further information on the Good Sports Program can be found at www.adf.org.au. Clubs in South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory should also contact the Australian Drug Foundation to obtain information on state specific responsible serving of alcohol programs.

Liquor licensing – what your club needs to know

Australian Football clubs serving alcohol require a liquor license that is issued by their relevant state authority.

Generally, the aims of a licensing agreement are to:

- Minimise harm arising from the misuse and abuse of alcohol by providing adequate controls over its supply and consumption, and ensuring the supply of liquor enhances, not detracts from community life.
- Facilitate the development of diverse licensed facilities reflecting community expectations.
- Contribute to the responsible development of liquor and licensed hospitality industries.

Liquor licensing laws vary from state to state, so you should contact your relevant state authority to obtain further information. The liquor licensing departments in each state are as follows:

- ACT – Liquor Regulation Branch.
- NSW – Department of Gaming and Racing.
- NT – Licensing Commission.
- Qld – Liquor Licensing in Queensland.
- SA – Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commission.
- Tas. – Liquor Licensing in Tasmania.
- Vic. – Liquor Licensing Victoria.
- WA – Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor.

Contact details for these departments can be found in the further information section of this resource.

Types of liquor licenses

The types of liquor licenses offered by each state department also vary from state to state, so you should contact your state department to obtain information on the types of liquor licenses that are available.

In Victoria, under the Victorian Liquor Control Reform Act (1998), the types of liquor licenses available include:

- BYO club permit.
- BYO restaurant permit.
- Club license – full.
- Club license – restricted.
- General license.
- Limited license.
- On-premises license.
- Packaged liquor license.
- Pre-retail license.
- Vignerons' license.

A full club license in Victoria authorises the supply of liquor to members for consumption on and off the licensed premises, whereas restricted licensees may only purchase liquor from the holders of a general or packaged liquor license. In Victoria, a general license is one that permits the supply of liquor for consumption both on and off the licensed premises and a packaged liquor license is one that authorises the supply of packaged liquor in sealed containers for consumption off the licensed premises.

Does your club have a duty of care?

In a word, yes.

Liquor Licensing Victoria (LLV), the body responsible for issuing licences in Victoria, argues that “clubs have a responsibility to provide a safe, social environment for players, families, friends and supporters.

“Most community and sporting clubs operate bars and supply liquor as part of their services to members and to raise revenue to meet club expenses. While liquor served and consumed responsibly enhances many social activities, it can also cause problems.

“A strong commitment to the responsible serving of liquor within licensed clubs is essential if member and community expectations are to be met and the club is to be well regarded and supported.

“The sale of liquor in the club environment often presents additional challenges as the membership of committees changes regularly and the bar may be staffed by members with only limited experience in serving liquor.

“It is important that club committee members and bar staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, the conditions of their licence and of the rules of their club,” the LLV says.

3. Healthy eating

Nutrition plays a role in four of the risk factors for cardiovascular disease – high blood fats, high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes. In many cases, these risk factors can be reduced or avoided with lifestyle changes. Eating a varied and healthy diet and keeping physically active can help people maintain independence in their later years, contributing to vitality and energy levels and to mental health and social functioning.

Good nutrition enhances the quality of life, contributing to overall health and a general sense of well-being. It is particularly significant to the health of infants and children and is a key factor in optimal physical and cognitive growth and development. Poor nutrition throughout childhood correlates highly with an increased risk of abdominal obesity, diabetes, hypertension and other forms of cardiovascular disease during adult life. Eating a balanced, healthy diet will also contribute to enhanced energy levels and optimal performance on the football field.

Clubs should provide fresh fruit, vegetables, breads and free water when food is served.

The Eat Well Australia agenda for action for public health and nutrition was developed by the Strategic Inter-Governmental Nutrition Alliance of the National Public Health Partnership. It is a vital resource that has been developed to guide Australia’s investment in public health and nutrition over the next decade and provides a broad direction for the many partners from different sectors who make individual contributions to the health of Australians through improving our nutrition.

More information on the Eat Well Australia initiative can be found at www.nphp.gov.au.

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating, produced by the Children’s Health and Development Foundation in 1998, is designed to help you choose the foods for health and well-being that will fit in with everyday life. It also provides information about the amounts and kinds of food that you need each day to get enough of the nutrients essential for good health and well-being.



In order to eat a healthy diet, it suggests that you should:

1. Choose foods from each of the five food groups every day.
2. Eat:
 - Plenty of plant foods (bread, cereal, rice, pasta, noodles, vegetables, legumes and fruit).
 - Moderate amounts of animal foods (milk, yoghurt, cheese, meat, fish, poultry, eggs).
 - Small amounts of the extra foods, including oils and margarines.
3. Choose different varieties of foods from within each of the five food groups from day to day, week to week and at different times of the year.
4. Drink plenty of water.

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating also emphasises that physical activity is also an important component of a healthy diet. Thirty minutes of moderate activity every day (like walking), even if done in three 10 minute bursts, will make you fitter and healthier.

Further information on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating can be found at www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/publicat/document/fdbrox.pdf.

4. Sun protection

Developing a sun protection policy that ensures club members are protected from the sun and that the club promotes sun protection awareness to potential new members is important for all sporting clubs. Although Australian Football is played in the winter months, states such as Queensland and Western Australia will still experience days when sunburn can occur. Even in other states, the sun can cause damage when least expected.



Club administrator points:

1. Provide players with protective uniforms and hats.
2. Encourage sunscreen use at all times.
3. Club administrators should be role models for sunsmart behaviour.
4. Provide permanent and portable shade for players and spectators.
5. Aim to schedule sports events away from peak sun periods, especially for children.

For further information visit www.sunsmart.com.au. The website provides information about their sunsmart sports policy and also information about applying for club shade grants.

5. Mental health

Mental health refers to the process of developing friendliness, a sense of belonging and a feeling of connectedness. There are many positive mental health and well-being benefits from belonging to a football club/group that provides opportunities for people to establish friendships, interact with each other and develop a sense of community connectedness. People who are socially disconnected have between two and five times the risk of dying from all causes compared to those who maintain strong ties to friends, family and community.

Football clubs have an established place in Victorian communities. There is potential to build on this strength and to enhance the role of local clubs in helping people to develop a sense of connectedness and belonging.⁹

6. Drug awareness

Clubs are sometimes confronted with the use of illegal substances, or the misuse of legal medications or other substances by athletes and other members. The use of illegal substances generally occurs for the following reasons:

- The desire to increase size or enhance performance.
- The desire to reduce recovery time (from training, competition or injury).
- The perception that competitors are gaining an unfair drug-induced advantage.
- A social culture or acceptance of a type of drug use within the environment.
- Not being aware the drug or substance is not permitted or illegal.

It is unethical, unhealthy and illegal to use banned drugs or substances to try to increase performance. The longevity of clubs today relies on a clean image, as juniors and families are more likely to stay involved in a club that is clean, healthy and drug free. Clubs must educate all members and develop a drug policy in order to address drug-related issues, together with the problems associated with the misuse of drugs and other substances. Within any club, there should be a zero tolerance when it comes to drug use.

In Australia, many organisations are working together to combat the issue of drug use in sport. The Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA), together with the Australian Sports Commission, condemn the use of performance enhancing drugs in sport, as it is contrary to the ethics of sport and is potentially harmful to the health of all athletes.

The Australian Sports Drug Agency has become one of the leading anti-doping organisations in the world through the delivery of a comprehensive anti-doping program, which includes drug testing, education, policy advice and advocacy. The *Drugs in Sport Handbook* is an important part of the ASDA's education program. It provides athletes, support staff and the medical community with a reference guide to permitted and restricted drugs. By using this handbook, athletes can avoid taking banned substances and returning a positive test result as a consequence. The handbook also provides information on banned and restricted substances together with the drug testing process, athletes' rights and responsibilities, sanctions and questions asked by athletes about drug testing.

Further information on ASDA's education program can be found at www.asda.org.au. The website provides a current and comprehensive list of all the banned drugs in Australia.

Having a drug policy that incorporates education on drug related issues will:

- Raise the awareness of issues surrounding doping and drugs in sport.
- Provide skills to increase resilience towards drug use.
- Influence attitudes towards a healthy behaviour.
- Teach young people about the potential harm associated with the use of banned drugs in sport and encourage them to remain "clean" and "safe" in sport.

Effective education and promotional programs can greatly increase the impact of policy and testing initiatives. A drug policy for community sports clubs should focus on providing drug awareness and education strategies for all club members.

Further information on what to include in a club's drug education policy can be found on the Australian Drug Foundation's website at www.adf.org.au.

The Marble Range Football Club in South Australia has embarked on a drugs awareness program. The club wanted to become a better informed club capable of addressing any potential problems before they became a reality. It has held education seminars in conjunction with the local drug and alcohol council and local police. In addition, it has set up a confidential support program and a clear policy relating to the use of drugs and alcohol. The club has made it clear that illicit drugs are banned at all times and that team managers can enforce these guidelines.

(Source: AFL Record 2002)

Section eleven - Umpiring

Umpires are a fundamental component of any team sport and play a pivotal role in Australian Football. According to the Australian Football League's Level One coaching manual, *The Coach*, umpiring "is a challenging and exciting activity which can provide a great deal of self satisfaction and enjoyment."

The AFL manual also explains that all parties involved in the game need "to promote and enhance the image of umpiring as an attractive sporting career. In this way, it will be possible to attract good people to umpiring and encourage them to stay."

Umpires have a critical role in the game of football. Australian Football is losing umpires at a faster rate than they are being recruited as a result of the negativity that characterises the public and media views of umpires. While there will always be a passionate relationship between spectators, players and umpires because of the nature of the game and the nature of many rules, spectators, players and administrators must be fully aware of the role of the umpire so that negative attitudes towards umpires are reduced.

The role of the club in developing and supporting umpires

Within many Australian Football leagues, clubs are responsible for supplying goal and boundary umpires for some grades of competition and, therefore, have a responsibility in relation to the welfare of umpires and the game in general. All clubs should be involved in recruiting, training and educating umpires and should continually recognise and reward their efforts to strengthen the relationship between the umpire and the club.

Developing internal support for umpires

Clubs must learn to recognise and value the role of umpires. Fostering a supportive internal culture for umpires and the concept of umpiring is one way your club can continue to support the game.

Clubs should be involved in recruiting, training and educating umpires, as well as recognising and rewarding their efforts.

Clubs can support umpires by:

- Involving them in all off-field activities.
- Providing changeroom facilities, hospitality and a safe environment on match day.
- On match day, meeting them on arrival and providing personnel to escort them when leaving the ground at half-time and at the end of the game.
- Providing refreshments at appropriate times throughout the match.
- Creating a policy where parents and spectators encourage children to understand the rules by showing a genuine interest, lead by example, respect all umpires and avoid publicly criticising umpires.
- Reinforcing that all players play by the rules, control their temper and avoid arguing at all times.

The coach is the most influential role model for players. Coaches' behaviour towards umpires will be reflected in their players' behaviour. All coaches should be familiar with the rules of the game and encourage players to learn them as well. They should also discuss with their players the spirit of the laws and teach and encourage them to play within the rules.

At junior level, parents have a critical role when it comes to umpires. The AFL has recommended that clubs develop and implement a behaviour code for parents, with zero tolerance for umpire abuse. Clubs should conduct regular information sessions for parents and establish rules regarding inappropriate behaviour. Rules must include a process for dealing with breaches, and penalties must be clear.



Parents and spectators should:

- Encourage children to understand the rules by showing a genuine interest.
- Lead by example and respect all players, coaches, umpires and other spectators.
- Avoid publicly criticising umpires by raising any concerns in private.

Players should also be encouraged to be aware of key issues, and clubs should continuously promote concepts of good sportsmanship. Players should:

- Play by the rules.
- Avoid arguing.
- Control their temper.
- Show respect to umpires.

Look outside your own environment

Most leagues have umpires' groups or associations. Get them involved in your club with regular contact and inform them about news and events. Add them to your newsletter or media release list so they become aware of your club, and invite them to functions.

Work the relationship both ways by offering local umpires' groups help in promoting their role. Ask whether they need to use your training facility or clubrooms and generally how you can help promote their cause.

Perhaps the greatest positive contribution clubs can make to umpiring is through recruitment. Clubs can do this by providing one umpire each to the local umpires' panel and continuing to provide club support for that umpire.

"I started up umpiring due to the monetary incentive but soon started to appreciate it for more than that. I now love umpiring. It is a great challenge because you deal with slightly different scenarios every week. It also keeps me fit, which increases my self confidence and enables me to do well in other aspects of life, not just umpiring. I have developed great friendships since taking up umpiring, both within the umpires group and with football players and clubs. I look forward to the football season now. I am still making money, although this is not the reason I umpire. I have gained so much out of umpiring, and you can too."

(Source: Andrew, 16-year-old umpire, AFL Capricornia)



Section twelve – Promoting your club through the media

Australian Football clubs play a significant role in the make-up of major cities, regions, smaller suburbs and country towns, with media outlets tending to follow their fortunes closely. Local newspapers, community radio and television stations usually provide a substantial level of coverage to football in general, although it is still important to develop strong working relationships with the reporters and broadcasters in your local area/region. A favourable relationship with the media will assist you when promoting an event or covering a story on a particular aspect of your club.

Your media strategy

Your club should consider developing a basic media strategy, outlining who is responsible for compiling information and pitching story ideas, how information will be distributed and who is best placed to act as the club's spokesperson.

There are a number of ways that a football club can make contact with media outlets – through press releases, story ideas, direct telephone contact or regular briefings. Remember that media outlets receive many press releases in a day, so the release from your club should stand out in order to avoid being rejected. It is important to avoid releasing information that is irrelevant, outdated or trivial.

Developing a media release

Media releases, including standard issues such as weekly scores, injury updates and training notes, can be issued via fax or standard mail.

When writing a media release, consider the following points:

- Be consistent when releasing information such as game scores so that media outlets know when to expect material from your club.
- Be sure to work around a media outlet's deadline in order to increase the chance of your club's material being used.
- Type your release on a club letterhead and remember to include the date, together with a catchy title and information that is concise and accurate.
- Always include a contact name and number on the release (after hours contact as well) and follow up with a phone call.
- One page is a good guide.
- State clearly whether the media release needs to be embargoed and if so, till what date and time.
- Ensure that media release is grammatically correct, including spelling, as some media will simply publish the media release word-for-word.

The key to developing a good working relationship with the media is to be proactive. Know exactly who will be reporting and commenting on your club and make contact with these people on a regular basis. Invite the media to any special events so that they can keep in touch with the operations of your club.

Work with the media – support each other to promote your club

The key to developing strong relationships with media personnel is to be proactive. Have a strategy and know who will be reporting or commenting on your club. Make contact with them on a regular basis, hold regular briefings with them and give them access to your staff and players.

If possible, prepare information for them on match days and, if possible, allocate a viewing area for them at your matches. Ensure they are invited to match-day lunches and other special events so they are kept in touch with your club's operations.



Section thirteen – Other ways of promoting your club

Communication

Communication is the key to spreading information about your club throughout the community. Quite simply, communication involves sharing information and there are many ways that you can communicate your club to the wider community.

Football clubs should use communication to:

- Inform the general public.
- Interact with different members of the public.
- Test ideas.
- Shape attitudes.
- Seek support or gain financial assistance.

Football clubs can communicate their information to the public through:

- Club and league publications.
- Mass media: radio, TV, newspapers.
- Correspondence to members and sponsors.
- Telephone.
- Press releases.
- Internet site.
- Meetings and other functions.
- Signage at grounds.
- Schools.
- Sales pitches.
- Scoreboards.
- Flyers at games.



The importance of a newsletter – get yourself in print

A regular newsletter is an ideal way for a football club to communicate both internally and externally. A well-planned, thorough newsletter helps people build awareness of your club within the community, and provides all members with information on what is happening at the club.

The key to a good newsletter is proper planning. Determine why you want to produce a newsletter, who your target audience is, what you want to say, how you want to say it, who will be responsible for it and how regularly it will be distributed.

Producing a high-quality newsletter need not be expensive, but does require some research. Ask around the club and find out if there is anyone with experience or involvement in producing newsletters or who works in industries such as printing or graphic design. These people can help you establish start-up costs and work out what time commitments you need to allocate to producing a newsletter. If there is no one at the club with experience in producing a newsletter, it may be helpful to contact another club or your league to discuss the procedures that are involved.

Your newsletter should have a name that reflects an aspect of the club and is easily recognisable. You should plan a yearly calendar and pick key times for distribution, especially when you may have a major event to promote.

Investigate using a graphic design house to get your newsletter looking as professional as possible, to ensure it won't be ignored among the clutter of information being distributed daily. For a small fee, a graphic design house can set up a template that you can then work from.

Make one person responsible for the central collation of material that needs to go into each newsletter, including reports from the president, coach or general manager, as well as photos and advertisements. The coordinator can then keep track of material and work towards meeting deadlines, with other volunteers available to help with specific requirements such as layout, booking printing times, writing articles, taking photos or managing distribution.

Writing a newsletter – keep it efficient

Always allow enough time to make corrections and review a newsletter before it is printed.

Consider using more efficient distribution modes, such as email, which can cut down on printing costs.

When planning distribution, consider other groups outside the club that you can market to. You might want to add local media, chambers of commerce, schools, businesses, local government, local libraries and other key sectors of your community to the distribution list.

Other forms of communication, such as a segment on the local radio or flyers at a shopping centre, could also work for your club. The key is to plan and establish the best method of raising the awareness of your club, taking into account the costs involved.



Conclusion

This module has addressed the importance of building relationships within a community. Football clubs must work alongside other community members and consider the many ways in which they can create a prosperous, successful and healthy environment for their members through building favourable relationships with local government authorities, other sporting organisations and various community groups.

As well as fostering relationships within the community, football clubs should also look at diversifying their programs by providing opportunities for the wider community to be involved. Creating opportunities for community involvement will enhance the relationship between the football club and members of the community, therefore strengthening the level of support for the club and its members.

Glossary

Bequests – contributions that are made to the club by long-serving members or supporters.

Capital works policies – a set of policies regarding the process for requesting capital works within a club.

Collaborative partnerships – involve working closely with another organisation or club, or sharing resources with another sporting body.

Constitution – a document that identifies the rights and liabilities of members within a football club. It also establishes the club and sets out the purpose for which it has come together and all the rules under which it will operate.

Council liaison officer – a person within a football club who is responsible for communicating with the council.

Facilitator – a person who will coordinate a meeting.

Fundraising – a process that is designed to secure funds that are additional to the club's operating budget.

Grant – a type of funding that is given to clubs and organisations and is designed to provide a club with financial support.

Incorporation – the process of creating a separate legal entity for a football club, thereby giving it a legal existence.

Marketing strategy – the methods that will be used to promote a particular program within a club.

Non-compliance strategy – a plan that will be implemented when a certain rule or regulation is not abided by.

Policies – statement of principles, including rules, covering specific areas that are to be followed by a football club.

Seasonal tenancy agreement – a document that sets out the expectations of the council with regard to club tenancy.

SMART analysis – principles that should be followed when establishing objectives for a club:

Specific.

Measurable.

Achievable.

Relevant.

Timely.

Sponsorship – a partnership between two parties, where both parties seek benefits through an equitable exchange.

Sporting cluster – the key stakeholders that are involved in the club or organisation.

Sustainable community sport – concerned with ways in which the existence of sport within a community can be prolonged.

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Melbourne Sports Network, *TEAM magazine*, April 2002, Volume 4, issue 2.

South West Sports Assembly, *Sustainable Community Sport – The Heytesbury Mt Noorat Football Netball League Project*, February 2002.

Sport and Recreation Victoria, *Building partnerships in community development – a manual for action*, September 1999.

Vichealth, *Promoting Mental Health – ‘together we do better’* campaign pack.

Vichealth/QUIT, *Going smoke-free – a policy kit for sports clubs and associations*.

Further information

- **Australian Drug Foundation**
www.adf.org.au
- **Australian Guide to Healthy Eating**
www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/publicat/document/fdbrox.pdf
- **Australian Sports Commission's Disability Education Program**
www.ussport.gov.au
- **Australian Sports Drug Agency**
www.asda.org.au
- **Australian Sports Foundation**
www.asf.org.au
- **Australian Taxation Office**
www.ato.gov.au
- **Eat Well Australia**
www.nphp.gov.au
- **Liquor licensing departments**
 - ACT** – Liquor Regulation Branch
www.fairtrading.act.gov.au/OFT/liquoradulthome.htm
 - NSW** – Department of Gaming and Racing
www.dgr.nsw.gov.au
 - NT** – Licensing Commission
www.nt.gov.au/nt/licensing/liquor/liquor.htm
 - Qld** – Liquor Licensing
www.liquor.qld.gov.au
 - SA** – Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commission
www.sacentral.sa.gov.au/agencies/lc
 - Tas.** – Licensing (Liquor and Accommodation)
www.treadury.tas.gov.au
 - Vic.** – Liquor Licensing Victoria
www.liquor.vic.gov.au
- **Office of Business and Consumer Affairs**
www.consumer.gov.au
- **Our Community**
www.ourcommunity.com.au
- **QUIT**
www.quit.org.au
- **SunSmart**
www.sunsmart.com.au
- **VicHealth**
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

Appendix

Sponsorship proposal outline

In creating a sponsorship proposal, use the following outline to guide you.

Step 1 Covering letter

A letter addressed to the actual person that you are targeting. It should be one page, inviting them to consider the attached proposal and indicating that you will follow it up next week.

Step 2 Title page

Include the sponsor's name and the event or organisation name. If you can, download the target's logo to the front cover. Date the proposal and put it on good letterhead. The presentation is the key, if your document is professional it will at least be read.

Overview

Give an overview of what your club is all about. Use key statistics to set the situation. This page should be used as an emotional appeal to them.

Club details

This is where you list the hard information about your club. Sub headings should include:

- Dates and times.
- Location.
- Target group and participation.
- Audience demographics.
- Cost.
- Management.

Development importance and community benefit

Provide a short paragraph on how important this sponsorship would be to the club.

Event promotion

Should include headings such as:

- Media support.
- Promotional activities and plans.

Sponsor benefits

Start the paragraph, with something such as:

- As a major sponsor of the – club you will receive the following comprehensive package of benefits.

Ideally, this list should be at least a couple of pages long. Use your inventory and create a comprehensive list of real benefits. Depending upon how long the list is you may wish to categorise the benefits.

Some sub-headings may be:

- Naming rights or logo exposure.
- On-site.
- Hospitality and networking.
- Media profile.
- Tickets.

Cross promotional opportunities

This area is optional, if you have done your research on your sponsor it is your opportunity to solve their problems or meet some of their needs.

For example:

- Tell the airline how they can increase their frequent fliers or VIP lounge members.
- Tell the brewer how they can run promotions in pubs for free merchandise and tickets.
- Tell the cereal company how they can use their event to get into schools.
- Tell the insurance company how they support the launch of their new product.
- Tell the mobile company how they can capture potential customer details and the age of their current phones.

Brainstorm with your organisation. Do lots of research of what has and has not worked for other sporting clubs in your area.

Sponsorship investment

Outline how much it is going to cost. This can be a cash only or a combination of cash and contra. Be sure to include a proposed payment schedule.

Your club should also include a minimum promotional commitment, ensuring that they embark upon at least some activities to maximise the sponsorship, and that there are activities that will benefit you as well. You should also state that this proposal is an invitation for negotiation.

Evaluation

One of the most important and neglected parts of the sponsorship proposal is the evaluation. How will you measure the success of the relationship. These days sponsors want to see what results your club has achieved and whether they have achieved value for money.

