



WAFootball

Champion Club Program

Information Booklet

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
FOREWORD	3
BACKGROUND	4
THE CHAMPION CLUB CONCEPT.....	4
THE PROGRAM EXPLAINED	5
WHY JOIN THE CHAMPION CLUB PROGRAM	5
REWARD AND RECOGNITION	5
PROCESS.....	5
GAINING STATUS.....	6
CONTACTS	6
FOUNDATION LEVEL REQUIREMENTS	7
CLUB MANAGEMENT.....	7
RISK MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE	8
CLUB CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT	13
PREMIERSHIP LEVEL REQUIREMENTS	14
CLUB MANAGEMENT.....	14
RISK MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE	17
CLUB CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT	18

Acknowledgments

The Champion Club Program has been produced by WA Football with the assistance of the following individuals.

Corey Ranger, Head of Club Development and Volunteers (WA Football)

Zachary Binning, Club Development and Volunteers Specialist (WA Football)

Jenné Emberson, Club Development and Volunteers Specialist (WA Football)

Brent Sheridan, Manager Country Football South (Country Football WA)

Mark Sanders, Club Development Manager (Perth Football League)

Note: A Club refers to any community Australian Rules Football Club or League operating in Western Australia.

FOREWORD



On behalf of WA Football, I present to you the Champion Club Program and congratulate your club for providing a quality environment for all people associated with the game. Football administrators at all levels must seek to ensure a quality environment exists. We are confident that those involved across all parts of Western Australia (WA) are passionate about Australian Rules Football and want to ensure that it is in great shape not only for the present but for future generations to come.

As a result, the Champion Club Program was developed in the interests of assisting community football clubs to improve their operations and local environment. WA Football is conscious that in many cases, the workload required of local volunteers is high and that help is needed to run a club as professionally as possible. Keeping this in mind, the program is designed to assist club volunteers in meeting minimum acceptable standards, and it is anticipated that every community football club throughout Western Australia will be able to achieve Champion Club Foundation status.

Many of the practices detailed in this program will already be in place at your club, and we, therefore, hope that Champion Club Premiership status becomes a target in the future. A quality environment has numerous benefits to the clubs and sport in general. The program is designed to improve the way your club operates, making it easier for you to attract and retain members.

I wish you well in your efforts to achieve Foundation and Premiership status within this program and remind you that WA Football's Club Development and Volunteers staff are available to assist your club through this process.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Roberts', written in a cursive style.

Michael Roberts
Chief Executive Officer
WA Football

BACKGROUND

THE CHAMPION CLUB CONCEPT

WA Football is tasked with the responsibility of developing and expanding Australian Rules Football throughout the entire state. It is recognised that community football clubs form the foundation of Australian Rules Football, and the future growth of the game is reliant on the strength of our community clubs.

Good governance is essential to the long-term success and growth of community football clubs. For WA Football, it is crucial that community clubs are well-run to ensure they can provide strong foundations for players, volunteers, and the wider football community. Effective governance leads to clear decision-making, accountability, and the ability to adapt to challenges. As community clubs are the backbone of Australian Rules Football, their stability and growth depend on sound leadership and management. The Champion Club Program aims to help clubs reach a standard of governance that allows them to thrive and supports the ongoing growth of the sport across the state. By improving governance, clubs are better equipped to meet the needs of their members and contribute to the future development of the game.

The Champion Club Program aims to offer every community football club in WA the chance to reach a base standard of club governance and to acknowledge and incentivise clubs for their progression from meeting the minimum standard to attaining excellence.

Clubs will have the opportunity to achieve Foundation and Premiership Champion Club status through the following modules:

Foundation Level	Premiership Level
The Foundation Level establishes the minimum standard for effective club administration, acknowledging clubs that uphold solid governance and operational success. The Foundation Champion Club Stamp is awarded to clubs that meet these fundamental standards.	The Premiership Level represents the highest standard of club excellence, pushing clubs to go beyond exceptional governance and operational success. This level is for clubs aiming to continually evolve and set new benchmarks across all aspects of their operations.

The Champion Club Program will be delivered by WA Football with the assistance of the following Affiliates.



THE PROGRAM EXPLAINED

WHY JOIN THE CHAMPION CLUB PROGRAM

Joining the Champion Club Program offers your club the opportunity to attract new participants, members, and volunteers by establishing strong governance practices that drive membership and engagement. As you progress, you'll gain exclusive recognition including the chance to achieve Premiership Level Champion Club status.

Being a Champion Club increases your appeal to sponsors and local businesses, strengthening your financial position and community connections. The program also helps ensure your club meets essential state and federal legal requirements, ensuring smooth operations.

By implementing best practice governance, you'll create a strong foundation for current and future committees, setting your club up for long-term success. Additionally, the program helps minimise risks to your club's reputation and members by providing clear guidelines to follow.

REWARD AND RECOGNITION

Foundation Level

Once your club achieves Champion Club Foundation status, you will receive the following:

- Certificate of Achievement
- Foundation – Champion Club Badge
- Custom Digital Assets for promotion
- Recognition on WA Football web platforms

Premiership Level

Once your club achieves Champion Club Premiership status, you will receive the following:

- Certificate of Achievement
- Premiership – Champion Club Badge
- Custom Digital Assets for promotion
- Recognition on WA Football web platforms

PROCESS

WA Football will be responsible for the implementation of the Champion Club Program.

The process will be as follows:

1. Clubs will be invited to create a club account including adding additional users and club details on the Champion Club Program portal
2. Clubs will then be invited to begin the Foundation Level module which will include answering questions and uploading required documents

3. Clubs will submit the Foundation Champion Club module complete with supporting material for the level that they are applying for.
4. The Foundation and Premiership modules will be located on the Champion Club Program portal.
5. Clubs cannot begin the Premiership module without first completing the Foundation module and receiving Champion Club Foundation status.
6. WA Football will review the submitted module with supporting material. Should all requirements be met, the club will be issued with the recognition for the relevant level.
7. Should compliance not be achieved, the club will be advised accordingly, and additional information requested.
8. Clubs will hold their status within the program until December 2026.

GAINING STATUS

The Champion Club Program will open in February 2025. Clubs will have the ability to gain Foundation and Premiership Level status until December 2026 .

CONTACTS

If you have any queries on the program or require assistance with completing the Foundation and Premiership modules, direct your enquiries to the WA Football Champion Club email.

Email: championclub@wafc.com.au

FOUNDATION LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

To reach Champion Club Foundation Level, clubs will need to complete all the questions within the module. These are the minimum requirements required to operate as a club meeting all legislative requirements.

The questions contained within the module fall into three categories

1. Club Management
2. Risk Management and Compliance
3. Club Culture and Environment

CLUB MANAGEMENT

Committee Positions

Your club is required to select its current Committee Positions from the list provided and add in any additional positions that are not listed.

All club committees are different and have different structures and positions based on many factors including size, demographic and operational requirements.

A club's committee should operate as a team, draw on the skills and talents of each member, and work towards common goals to ensure a club's success.

Effective committee members should have:

- A commitment to the club
- Sufficient time to devote to their role
- An understanding of the role of the committee and their role within it
- Leadership skills and willingness to accept responsibility
- Listening skills
- The ability to use the technology the club uses to communicate to its members.

The specific tasks required of committee members vary from club to club according to the club's plan and the attributes of the volunteers. It is important that the committee is made up of people with a range of skills and expertise to support the broad range of governance and development needs of the club.

Committee Meeting Cycles

Your club is required to describe its committee meeting cycle (e.g., weekly, fortnightly, Monthly, Bimonthly).

Regular club committee meetings are essential for effective communication, decision-making, and coordination among members.

Committee meetings can:

- Ensure accountability

- Enable problem-solving
- Promote member engagement
- Ensure transparency in operations, and
- Aid and adapting to changes

Committee Meeting Agenda and Minutes

Your club is required to submit its most recent Committee Meeting Agenda and Minutes.

A committee meeting agenda is a carefully structured outline or plan delineating the items slated for discussion and resolution during the committee meeting. This agenda functions as a navigational guide for the proceedings, guaranteeing that pertinent topics are addressed efficiently and in a timely manner.

Committee meeting minutes serve as official records that accurately document the discussions, decisions, and actions undertaken during a committee meeting. These minutes provide a comprehensive account, including particulars such as the meeting's date and time, as well as a record of attendees.

Typically, the committee Secretary, in collaboration with other members, compiles the agenda and organises the meeting's progression and content.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

Constitution

Your club is required to submit its current Constitution and provide the year it was last reviewed.

What is a Constitution?

A constitution is a basic set of rules for the running of your club. It details for your members and others the name, objects, methods of management and other conditions under which your club operates, and generally the reasons for its existence. It also regulates the relationship between members by setting out the basis for working with other co-members.

The Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Relations and Safety (DEMIRS) has information on model rules for incorporated associations, which can be adapted and tailored to your club, or used in the absence/silence of rules.

A constitution is a legal necessity of an incorporated association – and allows your club to apply for a liquor licence.

What level of detail should you include?

A constitution can be extremely simple, containing only the basic outline to explain who you are, what you are set up for and important management matters. The extent to which you add detail in the rules depends on the needs or formality of your environment.

Many details relating to minor management matters are best included within by-laws, rules and regulations or policies thus keeping your constitution flexible and easy to operate within.

A constitution should contain the basic administrative principles of your club and can only be changed by endorsement through a general meeting. It may be appropriate to have rules and regulations or by-laws that contain more detailed / operational procedures, which can be changed by the committee.

The rules in your constitution should relate to the administration of the club. They should not relate to the conduct of the activities of the club. Additional non-administrative rules should appear in regulations and by-laws. A clause in the rules empowering the committee to make, alter or delete rules and regulations or by-laws should appear in the constitution.

Updating a Constitution

Every club is different and therefore each constitution should reflect the individuality and points of difference of each club. Club's also change over time. Updating your constitution is an ideal opportunity to ensure that the document reflects your current operations. For instance, your constitution may include archaic objects or classes of membership which are no longer required, or which do not adequately provide for your members.

When updating a constitution, it's a great opportunity to take a deep dive into how your club runs and how the constitution should support your hard-working volunteers. By focusing on the people who will use the document, the process of the review itself will often identify opportunities to improve your club's structure, governance, member protection or operational practices.

Certificate of Incorporation

Your club is required to obtain and upload its current Certificate of Incorporation.

What does being incorporated mean?

It is considered good practice for clubs to become a formal incorporated association. When a group incorporates, it becomes a separate legal entity which can do things in its own name.

Incorporation provides protection to individual members in certain situations and gives your club the right to sign contracts, lease premises, operate bank accounts, receive grants from government and so on.

The main benefits of incorporation are that the group has 'limited liability'. Debts and legal proceedings in most cases will be limited to the assets held by the club. This protects individuals from the club (i.e. committee members) from being personally liable if something goes wrong. There are exceptions, such as in the case where a person on the committee acts improperly or unlawfully, then they will not be protected.

For additional protection, it is recommended that clubs undertake Directors and Officers Liability Insurance (or Professional Indemnity Insurance) to protect committee members from being personally liable for decisions made.

Requirements of being incorporated

In simple terms, incorporated associations under the Associations Incorporations Act (WA) 2015 are required to:

- Keep accurate records such as rules and a register of members
- Keep accurate accounting records and report to members
- Hold an Annual General Meeting
- Ensure committee members act responsibly
- Ensure the rules (or constitution) is kept up to date
- Reports to the Consumer Protection branch of the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
- Follows all requirements set out under the Associations Incorporations Act (WA) 2015

Associations Information Statement

Your club is required to have completed the annual Associations Information Statement and provide the date of completion.

Associations Online is a secure online portal provided by Consumer Protection for incorporated associations, industry stakeholders and members of the public to check the status of an incorporated association, purchase copies of documents, submit a range of applications and update association contact information.

Incorporated associations have an obligation under section 156 of the Associations Incorporation Act 2015 (the Act) to provide information to the Commissioner.

Completing the Associations Information Statement (AIS) is the way that associations meet this obligation.

The information provided in the AIS helps confirm that it is still active, eligible to be incorporated and has held its Annual General Meeting (AGM).

When an incorporated association does not submit its information statement for two or more years, The Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety may believe it is no longer operating and take action to cancel its incorporation.

Not-For-Profit Self-Review Return

Your club must be registered with the Australian Taxation Office, complete the annual Not-For-Profit (NFP) Self-Review Return and provide the date of completion.

NFPs, including sporting clubs, societies and associations, with an active Australian business number (ABN) need to lodge an annual NFP self-review return to continue accessing income tax exemption.

If your club has its own ABN, you'll need to complete your own NFP self-review return even if it's affiliated with a broader sporting group.

AFL National Football Policy Handbook

Your club is required to acknowledge and agree to uphold the principles and standards set by the AFL through the National Football Policy Handbook.

The AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook aims to:

- Make it easier for leagues, clubs, volunteers, and other stakeholders to administer Australian Football at the state and community level.
- Provide a framework for key club requirements in relation to Australian Football at the state and community level.
- Address appropriate standards of behaviour and the prevention of discrimination and harassment in Australian Football at the state and community level.
- Encourage that the game of Australian Football is played in a fair manner and a spirit of true sportsmanship.

While AFL national policies and procedures serve as a guiding framework, your club's local league rules and regulations, as well as WA state government policies, may supersede AFL regulations. In instances where AFL policies and procedures are not explicitly addressed within your local league or competition guidelines, we advise referencing the AFL national policies and procedures guidelines for clarification and determination.

Code of Conduct

Your club is required to upload a code of conduct/s that have been review or created within the last five years.

A club's code of conduct/s is a set of guidelines and expectations regarding the behaviour and attitudes of members (inclusive of committee members, players, coaches, match day volunteers, parents and spectators) associated with the club. This document's purpose is to outline expected behaviours, helping to maintain a positive, respectful and safe environment for all members involved in the club.

Having a code of conduct/s will assist your club to:

- Promote positive behaviour – it sets clear expectations for how members should behave both on and off the field
- Enhance safety – it helps ensure the safety for all participants by outlining acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, reducing the risks of incidents and conflicts
- Reputation management – it protects the club's reputation by promoting professionalism and integrity, which can attract sponsors and new members
- Club protection – it provides a framework for addressing misconduct, helping the club manage disputes and disciplinary actions fairly and consistently
- Consistency and fairness – it ensures that all members are held to the same standards promoting fairness and equality within the club.

Certificate of Currency

Your club is required to upload its Marsh Certificate of Currency for the current year.

A Certificate of Currency is an official document issued by an insurance company. It serves as proof that an entity, such as a sports club, has a valid insurance policy in place. The below information outlines the essential details of the insurance policy, including the type and amount of coverage, the policy period, and the name of the insured entity.

AFL Marsh Insurance - Base Level Cover is automatically provided for affiliated community football clubs in Victoria, ACT, NSW, Tasmania, WA and Queensland for their declared club location/s. Default cover level for affiliated members (excluding Masters) is bronze level and upgrades to silver, gold or platinum are available.

If your club wishes to upgrade its cover, please contact Marsh Insurance.

If unsure of your club's AFLID which is required to access your clubs Marsh Certificate of Currency please contact championclub@wafc.com.au.

Sports club's often need to present this certificate when leasing facilities, organising events, or applying for grants, as it assures the involved parties that the club has financial protection in place to address potential liabilities.

Working with Children

Your club is required to acknowledge that it is compliant with Working with Children legislative requirements.

In Western Australia and the Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands, the Working with Children (WWC) Check is a compulsory screening strategy for people who engage in certain paid or unpaid work with children, described as "child related work" under the WWC Act.

The WWC Check is administered by the WWC Screening Unit within the Department of Communities. In the sport and recreation industry, the WWC Check applies to many people who work with children in Western Australia and the Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands including:

- Self-employed people
- Paid employees
- Volunteers and unpaid people
- Students on placement
- Employers, volunteer clubs and individuals have responsibilities to comply with the WWC Act and keep children safe in their clubs.

In most cases, club child related work falls under Category 12. club, association or movement.

Food Safety Standards (If applicable)

Your club is required to upload your clubs Food Safety Supervisor certificate/s to adhere to Food Safety Standards as outlined in the 3.2.2A Standard.

A sporting club operating a canteen must comply with the Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A, Category One which includes businesses that prepare unpackaged foods ready to eat and serve direct to the public.

To be compliant, your club must have a Food Safety Supervisor who:

- Advise and supervise food handling practices
- Identify, prevent and manage food safety problems
- Share skills and knowledge
- Promote positive food safety practices.

A Food Safety Supervisor must:

- Hold a food safety supervisor certificate issued in the last five years
- Have the ability to manage and give direction on safe food handling
- Be available to supervise food handlers.

Any person working in the canteen must be able to demonstrate skills and knowledge in food safety and hygiene relevant to their food handling activities.

Whilst food handler training is suggested, it is not a legislative requirement as long as the food handler is able to demonstrate knowledge in the below areas and are supervised by a Food Safety Supervisor.

- Safe handling of food
- Food contamination
- Cleaning and sanitising
- Personal hygiene

Liquor Licencing (If applicable)

Your club is required to upload your clubs current Liquor Licence.

Club and Club Restricted Liquor Licence

A club consists of a body or group of persons who join together to further some sporting, social, political, literary or other legitimate aim.

A club restricted licence is a club licence that has restrictions on selling packaged liquor and trading hours.

A club licence under section 48 of the Act, authorises the sale and supply of liquor to members of the club. In essence, the supply of liquor is secondary to the primary objects of the club.

Both a club and club restricted licence are subject to the following conditions:

- An up to date register of members must be available for inspection at the club premises.
- The club must ensure that its rules are not contravened.

CLUB CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Purpose, Vision and Mission Statement

Your club is required to upload its Purpose, Vision and/or Mission Statements.

Having a mission statement, vision statement and/or a clearly defined purpose is crucial for a club for several reasons:

Guiding principles- These statements serve as guiding principles that define the club's core values, objectives, and overarching purpose. They provide a clear direction and help in making decisions that align with the club's ethos.

Unity and focus- A well-crafted mission statement or vision unifies members, coaches, volunteers, and stakeholders around a common goal. It helps everyone understand and work towards the same objectives, building a sense of unity and teamwork.

Motivation and inspiration- A compelling mission or vision statement can inspire and motivate players, coaches, and members. It sets aspirational goals, driving individuals to strive for excellence and encouraging commitment to the club's

Strategic planning- It assists in strategic planning by providing a framework for setting short-term and long-term goals. This allows the club to plan its activities, initiatives, and investments in a manner that aligns with its overall mission and vision.

Attracting support- A clear mission or purpose can attract supporters, sponsors, and volunteers who resonate with the club's values and objectives. It can help in building partnerships and securing funding or resources for the club's activities.

Communication and branding- It acts as a concise way to communicate the club's identity and purpose to the public, potential members, and stakeholders. A well-crafted mission or vision statement contributes to the club's brand identity and can be used in promotional materials and marketing efforts.

Accountability and evaluation- It provides a benchmark against which the club's performance and progress can be measured. It helps in evaluating whether the club is staying true to its mission and vision, facilitating accountability and continuous improvement.

PREMIERSHIP LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

Once your club has achieved Foundation Champion Club status, you will then be invited to work towards achieving Champion Club Premiership Status.

Within the Premiership module there are required and optional questions. To achieve Champion Club Premiership Level, clubs must complete all required questions in the module. Whilst some questions are optional, answering them is encouraged as they help showcase broader achievements, provide historical context, support effective benchmarking and development, and highlight successes beyond football. Addressing these areas strengthens the club's position, demonstrates development, and shows commitment to planning for the future while meeting best practice requirements.

The questions contained within the module fall into three categories:

1. Club Management
2. Risk Management and Compliance
3. Club Culture and Environment

CLUB MANAGEMENT

Committee Position Descriptions

Your club is required to submit its committee position descriptions that have been reviewed or created within the last five years.

Committee role descriptions are important for clubs for several reasons:

Clarity of roles - Role descriptions define the roles and responsibilities of each committee member. This clarity helps in avoiding confusion about who is responsible for what tasks within the club. It ensures that each member knows their specific duties, reducing overlap and ensuring efficient functioning.

Accountability - When roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined, it becomes easier to hold committee members accountable for their tasks.

Efficiency and productivity - Well-defined role descriptions contribute to a more organised and efficient workflow within the club. Committee members can focus on their designated areas, leading to increased productivity and smoother operations.

Recruitment and succession planning - Clear role descriptions aid in recruiting new committee members. Prospective candidates can understand what is expected of them, making the recruitment process more effective. Additionally, having these descriptions helps in succession planning, ensuring a smooth transition when committee members' terms end.

Conflict resolution - In case of disputes or conflicts within the committee, having documented role descriptions can serve as a reference point. It allows for objective discussions about whether a particular task falls under someone's responsibility or not, helping to resolve disagreements.

Consistency and continuity - Role descriptions create consistency in a club's operations. They ensure that essential tasks are consistently performed regardless of changes in committee members. This continuity is crucial for the ongoing success of the club.

Professionalism and governance - Clearly defined roles and responsibilities reflect a level of professionalism within the club. It also aids in governance by ensuring that the club operates in a structured and organised manner, following predefined guidelines and procedures.

Professional Development Opportunities

Whilst this is not a required question, your club is encouraged to provide professional opportunities to its committee members.

Enhancing the professional development opportunities for your club's committee members is imperative as it serves as a foundation for supporting growth and excellence within the club.

By providing tailored development opportunities, committee members can build their skill sets, broaden their knowledge base, and refine their leadership capabilities, thus driving the club towards greater success.

These opportunities not only empower committee members to govern more effectively but also build a deeper connection with the community they serve.

Through collaboration and knowledge sharing, committee members can access new perspectives and innovative ideas, further pushing the club towards its goals.

By investing in the development of its leaders, the club sets itself on a trajectory of continuous improvement, resilience, and long-term success.

Annual Report

Your club is required to upload a copy of its most recent Annual Report.

Developing an annual report for a club is of paramount importance for several reasons:

- **Transparency and accountability** - An annual report provides transparency regarding the club's activities, finances, and governance structure. Members have the right to know how the club is being managed and how their contributions are being used.
- **Communication and engagement** - The annual report serves as a communication tool to engage members and stakeholders. It keeps them informed about the club's achievements, challenges, and plans for the future. This aids a sense of belonging and encourages active participation within the club community.
- **Historical record** - Documenting your club's information, history, and yearly highlights in the annual report creates a historical record of the club's journey. It allows members to reflect on past achievements and learn from past experiences, contributing to the club's continuous improvement and growth.
- **Recognition of stakeholders** - Acknowledging committee members, sponsors, and other stakeholders in the annual report recognises their contributions and strengthens relationships. It also provides an opportunity to showcase partnerships and express gratitude for the support received.
- **Financial transparency** - Including the Treasurer's report and financial statements in the annual report ensures financial transparency. Members can review the club's financial performance, understand income and expenditure patterns, and assess the club's financial health.
- **Alignment with mission and values** - The annual report reinforces the club's mission statement and values by showcasing how its activities and achievements align with its core principles. It reaffirms the club's commitment to its mission.

Strategic Planning

Your club is required to submit a strategic plan that has been reviewed or developed within the last five years.

Strategy connects the objects, purpose and vision with the club's operations and activities. A clear strategy guides the club and provides a framework for decision-making.

When making decisions about the club, particularly large and impactful decisions, an effective committee will ask how the proposed course of action contributes to the achievement of the strategy.

A club strategy typically contains the following key elements:

- A vision statement which outlines what a club is specifically trying to achieve, while the purpose describes what the club does
- A specified longer-term timeframe e.g. three years or five years – visionary and future-focused
- Key focus areas or pillars to categorise work and projects
- Key outcomes/objectives with KPIs to measure success
- Underpinning fundamentals

A club strategy is intended to be 'high-level,' with more detailed functional or operational plans and projects sitting underneath, linked to the strategic focus areas or pillars. The club strategy should be endorsed by the Committee.

Engage your stakeholders throughout the process! Strategic plans should be developed through collaboration and consultation.

Succession Planning

Your club is required to upload its current succession planning document.

Succession planning is about putting systems in place to ensure smooth club operation and transition of new volunteers as old volunteers leave the club. It's a long-term plan to ensure there is someone ready to step up into the role, and transitions smoothly so the club can continue to meet its strategic objectives into the future.

Often within volunteer based clubs and committees, there are a handful of volunteers taking on large amounts of work. They can sometimes get burnt-out and even resentful, leaving the club in a hurry, and leaving a gap in knowledge and expertise. Even if there is someone willing to take over, the task may seem too great, and their lack of skills or knowledge prevents successful succession. Correct succession planning will reduce this risk and ensure the club continues to run successfully despite volunteer turnover.

Succession planning also encourages targeted recruitment of volunteers, investment in developing volunteers' skills and valuing their contribution. It allows volunteers to see a clear path for progression through the club.

Publicly Accessible Documents

Your club is required to provide the link to the club's key documents (e.g., constitution) on the club's website.

Having your club's key documents publicly accessible on your club's website is crucial because it ensures transparency, clarity, and accountability within the club.

By making key documents readily available, members, stakeholders, and the public can easily understand the club's rules, guidelines, and expectations.

This transparency helps support building trust among members, ensuring consistency in decision-making, mitigates misunderstandings, or disputes, and demonstrates the club's commitment to operating with clear and accessible guidelines.

Accounting Program / Software

Your club is required to list the Accounting Software/Program that it uses to support financial management.

It is highly recommended that the club, led by the treasurer, establish a computer-based bookkeeping process utilising appropriate secure software and systems.

Examples to consider include – Xero, QuickBooks and MYOB

Using financial software will further assist a club in:

- Financial management - Helping manage finances effectively by tracking income, expenses, and budgets.
- Transparency and accuracy - Accounting software provides accurate and transparent financial records, ensuring compliance with regulations and giving stakeholders a clear view of the club's financial health.
- Time saving - Automating financial processes through software saves time on manual data entry, calculations and report generation allowing committee members to focus on other crucial aspects of club management.
- Budgeting and forecasting - It enables better budgeting and forecasting by providing historical data and financial insights, aiding in planning for future events and investments.
- Ease of reporting - It simplifies the creation of financial reports which are often required for stakeholders, sponsors and regulatory bodies ensuring timely and accurate reporting.
- Enhanced decision making - Having access to real time financial data helps in making informed decisions promptly, contributing to the overall success and growth of the club.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

By-Laws / Rules and Regulations

Your club is required to submit club by-laws or rules and regulations that have been reviewed or developed within the last five years and provide the year they were last reviewed.

By-laws or rules and regulations set out the guidelines, standards, and expectations for behaviour, procedures, or operations within a specific context. They ensure fairness, order, and consistency while clarifying what is allowed, required, or prohibited.

Key purposes of By-Laws/Rules and Regulations:

- Provide structure - They outline how things should be done in a clear, organised manner
- Set expectations - They define what is acceptable behaviour and what is not
- Ensure fairness - They create a level playing field for everyone involved
- Maintain safety - They protect people from harm and promote a secure environment

- Clarify processes - They explain the steps or procedures to follow in various situations
- Resolve disputes - They provide a foundation for addressing conflicts or violations
- Enforce accountability - They identify consequences for failing to adhere to them.

Policies

Your club is required to submit club policies that have been developed or reviewed within the last five years.

Just as every sport has its competition rules in writing, every club should have their own policies in place.

They set out what behaviour is expected from members and guests. Your club's policies will also guide the club's decision-making processes in line with its purpose, values and/or mission statement. This makes the day to day running of your club much smoother so that you can spend more time focussing on players and volunteers.

Having policies in place ensures the safety and sets standards for your club and by having these policies in writing, they can be referred to and show people that you are committed to creating the best environment possible.

Reviewing a club's policies is crucial to ensure they remain relevant, effective, are up to industry standards, and the club's evolving needs.

Risk Management Plan

Your club is required to submit a Risk Management Plan that has been developed or reviewed within the last five years and provide the year it was last reviewed.

Risk management is the process of identifying a risk and putting in place strategies to minimise or eliminate the risk. It allows club member to take necessary precautions and clearly identifies actions to be taken in the event of a hazard occurring:

Identify the Risk - Identify what, why and how things can arise.

Analyse the Risk - consider the consequence and likelihood of the risk in the current environment. Consequence and likelihood may be combined to produce an estimated level of risk.

Evaluate the Risk - using the estimated level of risk, evaluate the level of risk. If the levels of the risk are low, then it may not need action beyond its current controls.

Treat the Risk - put measures in place to ensure the risk has a minimal impact or is eliminated.

It is important to note that some risks will not be eliminated due to their nature.

CLUB CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Volunteer Recognition

Whilst this is not a required question, your club is encouraged to have initiatives that recognise volunteers.

Volunteers are the backbone of community football clubs. Without them, football would not take place. Consequently, implementing a volunteer recognition initiative or program is paramount to supporting and retaining these invaluable contributors.

A club's volunteer recognition program/initiatives can take many forms aimed at acknowledging and celebrating the dedication of its volunteers.

Initiatives may include, but are not limited to:

- Volunteer appreciation day - dedicated to recognising and honouring the efforts of the club's volunteers.
- Life Membership - to individuals who have demonstrated exceptional commitment and service to the club.
- Certificates of appreciation - to volunteers, formally acknowledging their contributions.
- Volunteer awards - as a highlight of the annual general meeting or club awards ceremony.
- Social events - designed to honour and celebrate the contributions of volunteers, encouraging a sense of fellowship and appreciation.
- Showcasing volunteers – on social media or other platforms.

Promoting Community Umpires

Whilst this is not a required question, your club is encouraged to have initiatives that promote community umpires.

The significant role umpires play in Australian Football can sometimes be overlooked and taken for granted. All umpires who officiate our game do so with the best intentions of implementing the 'Laws of the Game' to the best of their ability.

This is a challenging task that is sometimes viewed in a critical fashion, so it is important that we recognise and appreciate the job umpires do.

Some things you can do as a club:

- Zero Tolerance Umpire Abuse policy
- Provide incentives to players who become umpires
- Participate in Umpire Appreciation Round
- Provide umpires with a drink and food after they complete their umpiring game
- Ensure players and coaches thank the umpires post-game

Match Day Signage

Whilst this is not a required criteria, your club is encouraged to have Match Day Signage to promote a safe and positive game day environment.

Signage is important for clubs for several reasons, including:

- Reinforcing good behaviours and promoting a positive environment
- Visual Reminders
- Promoting Sportsmanship
- Creating a Safe Environment
- Parent Education
- Setting Expectations
- Cultivating Positive Habits

- Community Building
- Reducing Conflict
- Role Modelling

Incorporating match day signage reinforces good behaviours and should align with a club's mission providing a positive environment for players, umpires, coaches, volunteers and spectators.

Signage creates a culture where sportsmanship, respect and teamwork are actively promoted and celebrated.

Volunteer Education

Whilst this is not a required criteria, your club is encouraged to provide educational opportunities to players coaches and match day volunteers.

Education programs for players and coaches and match day volunteers are essential in a club because they provide an opportunity for personal and social development, create an inclusive and positive environment, and contribute to the long-term success and sustainability of the club.

These programs ensure that volunteers and participants are well-equipped, knowledgeable, and aligned with the club's values and goals.