



# 2018-19 ANNUAL REPORT





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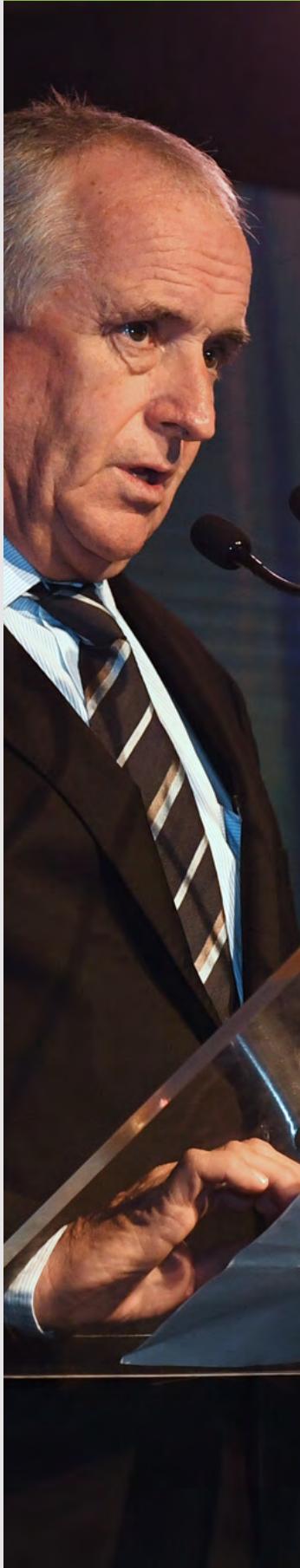
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*Ross Coburn*

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Welcome to the 2019 AFLNT Annual Report. As Chairman I would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the major items for the year.

It has certainly been a mixed year with positive achievements in so many areas with some difficult decisions being made and enacted. This in particular relates to the discontinuance of the Thunder NEAFL men's and VFL women's teams. This has been met with varying opinions on the future outcomes and benefits such a decision will bring. It is strongly believed that in tune with the overall AFLNT Strategic Plan pathways, this year's decisions will allow for greater participation, AFL game involvement, talent identification and drafting growth in the years to come.

Alice Springs again put on a fantastic exhibition of our great game at a magnificent venue with the perfect backdrop and a lead up game that showcased the amazing skills of our Territory talent to an Australia-wide audience. Thank you to all who were involved locally and to the AFL and Channel 7 for their support and coverage.

It was great to see a strong NT contingent participate in and return victorious from the National Inclusion Championships. A big congratulations goes to our team, coaches, assistants, volunteers, sponsors and supporters for the work you all put in and for the way the team has grown and developed over a very short period of time.

A new NT-based AFL Game agreement has been achieved this year and we look forward to continuing the Melbourne partnership in Central Australia and growing the newly-formed Gold Coast partnership in the Top End for the next five years.

It is great to see Gold Coast drafting Mally Rosas this year and to have four Territory women in the GCS AFLW inaugural team. This is something that we are looking forward to building on in future years.

Thank you to the NT Government for their continued belief and support of these games and to the AFL for recognising that our game is truly an Australian-wide sport.

We continue to grow our game with participation growth (up 9%) and have achieved 100% growth in participants learning and being active in programs provided through the MLLLC. In times when we all understand things are not at their best throughout the Territory it is pleasing to see that our great game of AFL still ties us altogether with all Territorians provided with the opportunities to participate in some shape or form.

What a great night it was at the Hall of Fame induction with 15 worthy recipients becoming members of the elite AFLNT Hall of Fame. Well done to the organisers a great night.

In closing I thank Stuart and his team at AFLNT for their resilience and commitment to ensure the best future success and development of Territory Football for all Territorians. We can only achieve all that we have with the support of our Clubs, Committees, Volunteers, Competitions and Supporters and to you all I say a big thank you.

My thanks to the AFLNT Board members for their ongoing commitment to ensuring integrity and governance remains the underpinning focus in their support of our great game and in particular of myself as Chairman. I take this opportunity to advise that I am stepping down as Chairman after some 8 years in this role. It has been an amazing journey. To reflect on achievements over the past two decades whilst I have been involved has been both fantastic and most gratifying. I have the utmost comfort in knowing that Sean Bowden as the incoming Chair will continue the growth and integrity of our great game of AFL in the Northern Territory.

*Stuart Totham*

# CEO'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I present my report for the 2018/19 year. Reflection is critical to being able to appreciate the journey you have been on. I feel pleased with some of our achievements and look back on some of the challenges and learning that you can take forward.

It has been a busy year with lots of change at AFLNT.

This year we delivered a new Strategic Plan that will guide and position the organisation across the next 5 years. The plan is deliberately designed to be aspirational and ensure that we are focussed on delivering strong outcomes across Community Football, Talent, Game Development and our outstanding Community Programs.

During the second part of the year we made the tough decision to not enter Thunder teams in the NEAFL & VFLW in 2020. The investment of dollars and time across our organisation was not providing the outcomes that we were after and what these teams were set up to achieve. This has allowed us to reinvest into community football and our talent programs. We are very focussed on making our community football clubs and competitions stronger and producing more talent ready to take on the AFL & AFLW.

As a result of this change in Thunder's operational focus, declining revenues and a desire to set up our organisation in the optimum way to achieve goals as outlined in our Strategic Plan, the organisation went through some significant change. This resulted in a new Executive Team structure and changes within work teams to support and focus our efforts. During this process we had two long term employees leave to explore new opportunities: A big thank you to Liz Cruse and Andy Hood for your contribution to AFLNT over extended periods of time and all the best for your next challenge.

The AFL games in Darwin and Alice Springs continue to be a great success and attract strong

community support. During the year we engaged in a collaborative way with the AFL, Northern Territory Government, Gold Coast Football Club & Melbourne Football Club to deliver AFL & AFLW games in the NT for 4 years – a fantastic outcome for Territory football and I thank the NTG, AFL and clubs for their ongoing support of football in the NT. We will be working closely with all stakeholders to make these games a success, build on them as key community events and ensure that they continue long after the current agreement expires.

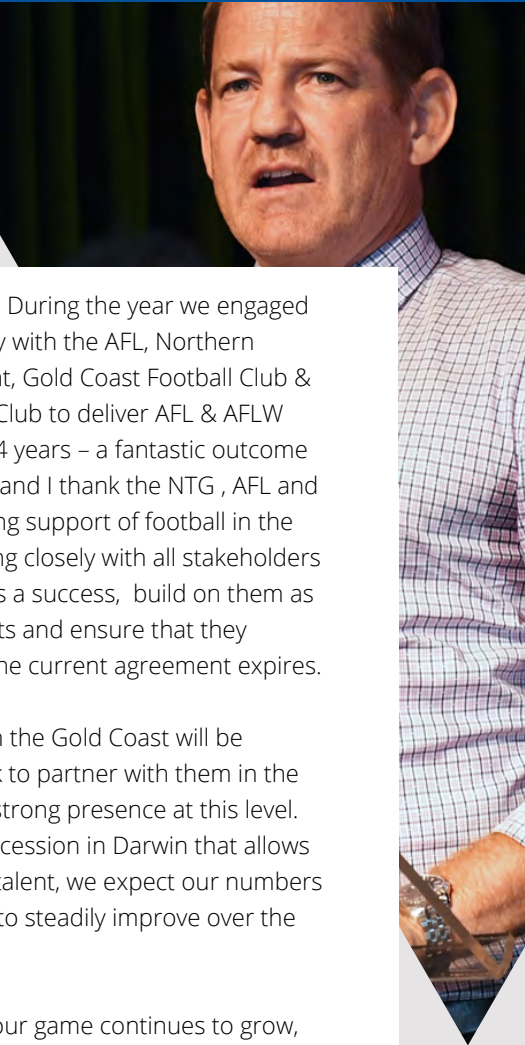
Our relationship with the Gold Coast will be important as we look to partner with them in the AFLW to continue a strong presence at this level. With a recruiting concession in Darwin that allows them to pre-list AFL talent, we expect our numbers on the Suns' AFL list to steadily improve over the coming years.

The participation in our game continues to grow, we grew a further 12% on our 2018 numbers to 53,865 people involved in our game as either registered participants or engaged in our programs. Female participation continued to grow with 18,487 participants, up 13% on 2018. This is an outstanding result on the back of a declining population and is a result of our focus on the Palmerston region and the fantastic work of the Game Development team.

Congratulations to the premiers across all grades in each of our community competitions that are detailed further on in this report.

A special mention and congratulations to Nightcliff Football Club who broke a 54-year premiership drought in the TIO NTFL. Nightcliff deserved the victory and should be congratulated not only on their success but the manner in which the club is governed, an outstanding example of a successful football club.

To TIO, a special thank you for their ongoing support of community football in the Territory through our partnership, which includes NTFL competition, TIO Stadium and Traeger Park.



The broadcast and social media reach of the game continues to grow. This year we saw the CAFL broadcast for the first time in many years with 10 games being broadcast. The NTFL season was broadcast across NITV, C7 and across AFLNT Live digital channels. AFLNT's social media audience continues to grow with nearly one million video views on Facebook. There was a massive increase of viewership on our Youtube channel, growing from 2.354 million minutes in 2018 to 4.891 million minutes in 2019.

Our Michael Long Learning and Leadership Centre programs continue to thrive with the number of students increasing from 220 in 2018 to over 400 across all of our programs.

Other highlights during the year include:

- We proudly became the focus of national attention during the year when Michael Long was recognised as the official Ambassador for the Sir Doug Nicholls Indigenous Round. This celebrated with a lap of honour at TIO Stadium during halftime of the AFL game
- Completion of \$2M TIO 2 Changerooms project
- Deloitte SROI report completion (to be released in first half of 2020)
- AFL Team Scoping report completion (to be released in first half of 2020)
- Stability across Remote Projects ie lowest staff turnover on record
- Strategies for all community football regions have been completed
- Malcom Rosas joining Gold Coast
- Gold Coast signing Taylor Thorne, Jordan Hickey, Jasmyn Hewitt & Sally Riley in their inaugural AFLW squad
- Sell out crowd in Alice Springs for the Melbourne v West Coast Eagles game
- For the first time in 5 years we inducted members into the AFLNT Hall of Fame. What a fantastic night and congratulations to all inductees, thank you for your contribution you have made to NT Footy
- NT winning the national inclusion carnival
- Successfully hosted the Quitline Regional Challenge

Our focus for 2020 will be on settling in our new structure, focusing on the delivery of the outcomes in our strategy, our people, building stronger internal/ external stakeholder relationships and after a challenging and disappointing financial result in 2019, ensuring that we exceed our budget and financial targets in 2020.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of our outgoing Chair Ross Coburn. Ross has been a significant contributor during his time on the Board and as Chairman of AFLNT. I thank Ross personally for his support and counsel and wish him all the best in the future.

A big thankyou to AFLNT Board, AFLNT Staff, Executive Team, AFL, the Northern Territory Government, corporate partners and all our stakeholders for your support of the game here in the Northern Territory.

See you at the footy!

Stu Totham





### Mr Ross Coburn, Chairman

- Bachelor of Business-Accounting (ASCPA)
- Diploma Australian Institute of Company Directors (FAICD)
- Australian Certified Practising Accountants (CPA)
- Executive Management – 17 years
- 2011 AIM Not for Profit Manager of the Year NT & South Australia (SA)
- Company Director/Secretary – 16 years
- Board Memberships – various 25 years
- Auskick Coach – 7 years
- AFLNT Board Member since 2002, Chairman since 2012



### Mr Sean Bowden

- Bachelor of Laws (with Honours)
- Partner, Bowden McCormack Lawyers & Advisers
- Former player Richmond Football Club (FC), Port Melbourne FC, Rovers FC (Alice Springs)
- VFA Representative player 1994, 1995
- Premiership Coach, Rovers FC, CAFL, 1996



### Mr Andrew Dillon

- Director AFL Sports Ready
- Director Champion Data Holding Pty Ltd
- Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Laws
- Former in-house Counsel of Village Roadshow Limited
- AFL General Counsel, Legal & Business Affairs
- Chairman AFL's List Establishment Sub-Committee for Gold Coast and Greater Western Sydney entry rules



### Mrs Dianne Borella

- Master of Public Health
- Diploma of Social Science and Management
- Company Director – Dianne Borella Consultancy Pty Ltd.
- Accredited Trainer – Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid
- Cert IV Mentoring Diverse Groups
- Life Member Nightcliff Football Club
- Past President Rotary Club of Darwin Sunrise
- Recipient of Paul Harris Fellow Award
- Recipient of Sapphire Paul Harris Fellow Award
- NT Thunder Football Club Volunteer of the Year Award
- Long Term Employee – Australian Public Service



### Ms Colleen Gwynne

- Northern Territory Children's Commissioner
- Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Graduate Certificate in Applied Management
- Graduate Diploma in Criminal Justice Education
- Former Coach and player in the NTFL
- Assistant Coach to the inaugural Adelaide Crows Women's Team

# AFLNT DIRECTORS



### Mr Edward (Ted) Liddy

- Highly respected Indigenous player of 272 NTFL games (St Mary's Football Club)
- NTFL Premiership player 13 times
- Played with Morningside FC (QLD) West Adelaide FC (SA)
- Coach of St Mary's FC – two seasons
- Life Member St Mary's FC and NTFL
- Won Club Best and Fairest award in QAFL (Morningside) & NTFL (St Mary's)
- Approximately 25 years' service as an Aviation Fire Fighter with Air Services Australia
- AFLNT Inaugural Hall of Fame Inductee



### Mr Lincoln Jenkin

- Regional Manager of Carlton & United Breweries NT
- NT resident for 40 years, 10 of those in Alice Springs
- Inaugural member and former Chairman, Northern Territory FC
- Board Membership – 10 years
- Has a strong NT football background having played in Central Australia (Federal FC and Wests FC) and Darwin (Wanderers FC and Banks FC) competitions
- Served on a variety of FC committees and coached at several levels, including premiership teams
- Has been involved with NT Masters AFL



### Ms Kathleen Cole

- Bachelor of Business – Major Accounting
- Graduate Diploma of Public Health – Indigenous Health
- Masters of Community Management
- Fellow of Australian Certified Practising Accountants
- Graduate of Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Chairperson Red Cross Northern Territory Advisory Board
- Deputy Chair Northern Territory Primary Health Network
- Independent Director Mala'la Health Services Aboriginal Corporation
- Independent Director of PKKP Native Title DMC
- Member of Waratahs Football Club 15 years



### Mr Thomas Wilcox

- Over 16 years' experience in legal and corporate governance roles in Australia and overseas, predominantly in the resources sector
- Most recently General Counsel & Company Secretary of ASX-listed Kidman Resources Limited
- Master of Laws (LLM); Bachelor of Laws (LLB); Bachelor of Commerce (BCom)
- Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD)
- Former captain, premiership player and Executive Committee member with the University Blues Football Club in the Premier Division of the Victorian Amateur Football Association



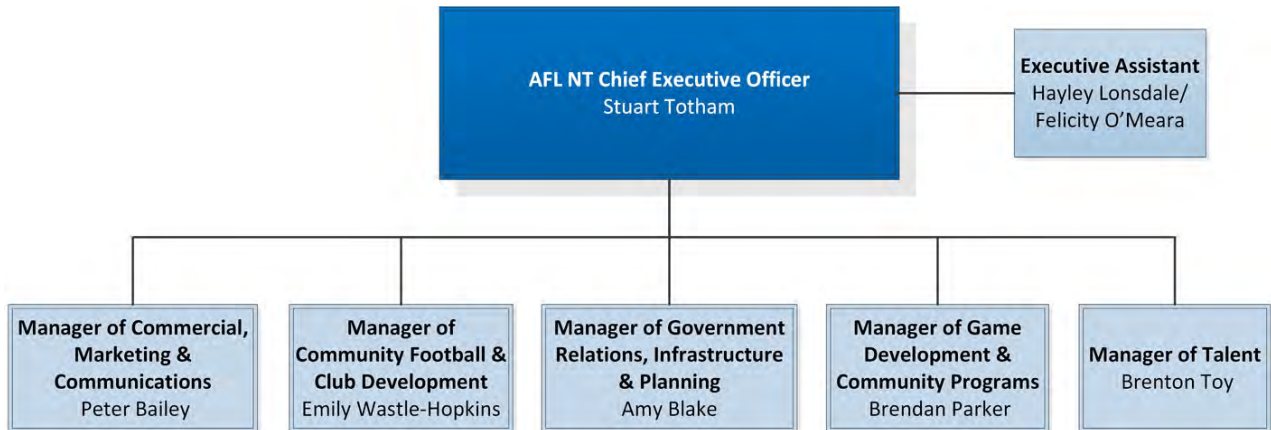
### Mr David Ross

- Director Central Land Council – 25 years
- Chairman Indigenous Land Corporation – 4 years
- Commissioner, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission – 4 years
- Committee Member Alice Springs Regional Council, (ATSIC) – 3 years
- Former Board Member, Imparja Television
- Former Member, Aboriginal Advisory Group, South Australian Museum
- Current Member, CAAC
- Current Board Member, Cenrcorp Pty Ltd
- Current Board Member, Centrefarm Pty Ltd
- Current Chairman, Anangu Communities Foundation

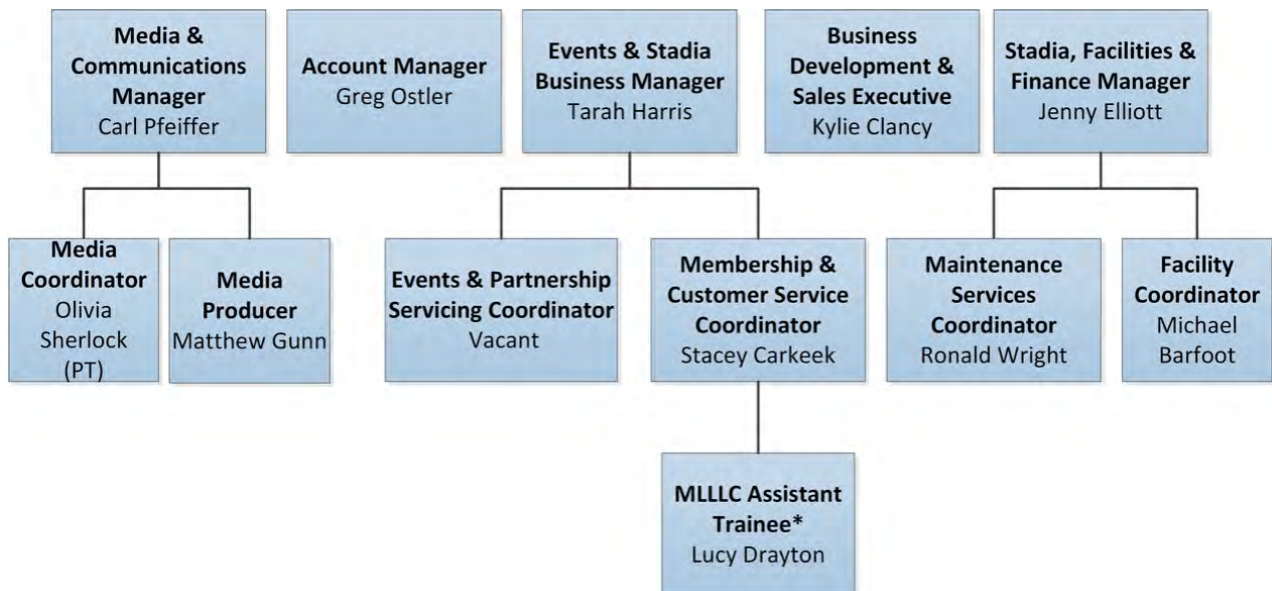
# AFLNT DIRECTORS



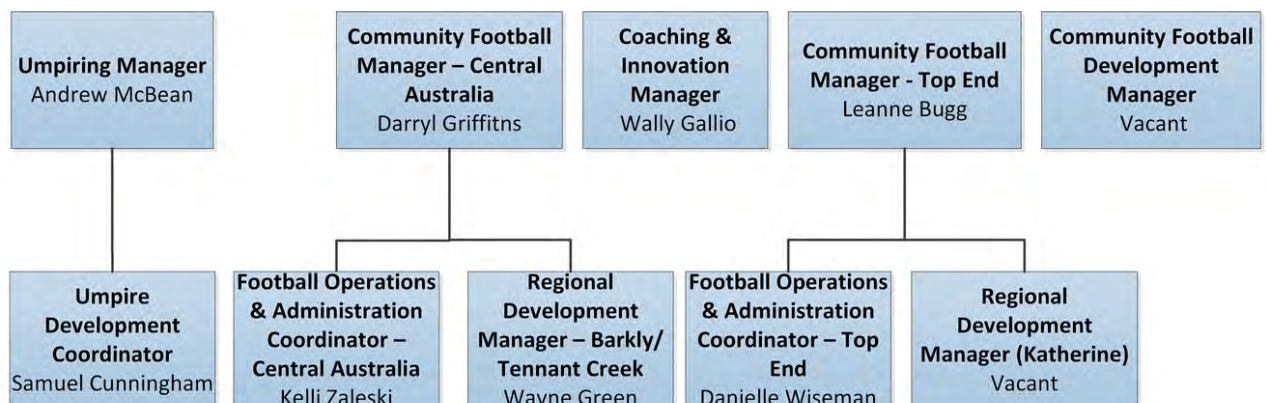
## EXECUTIVE TEAM



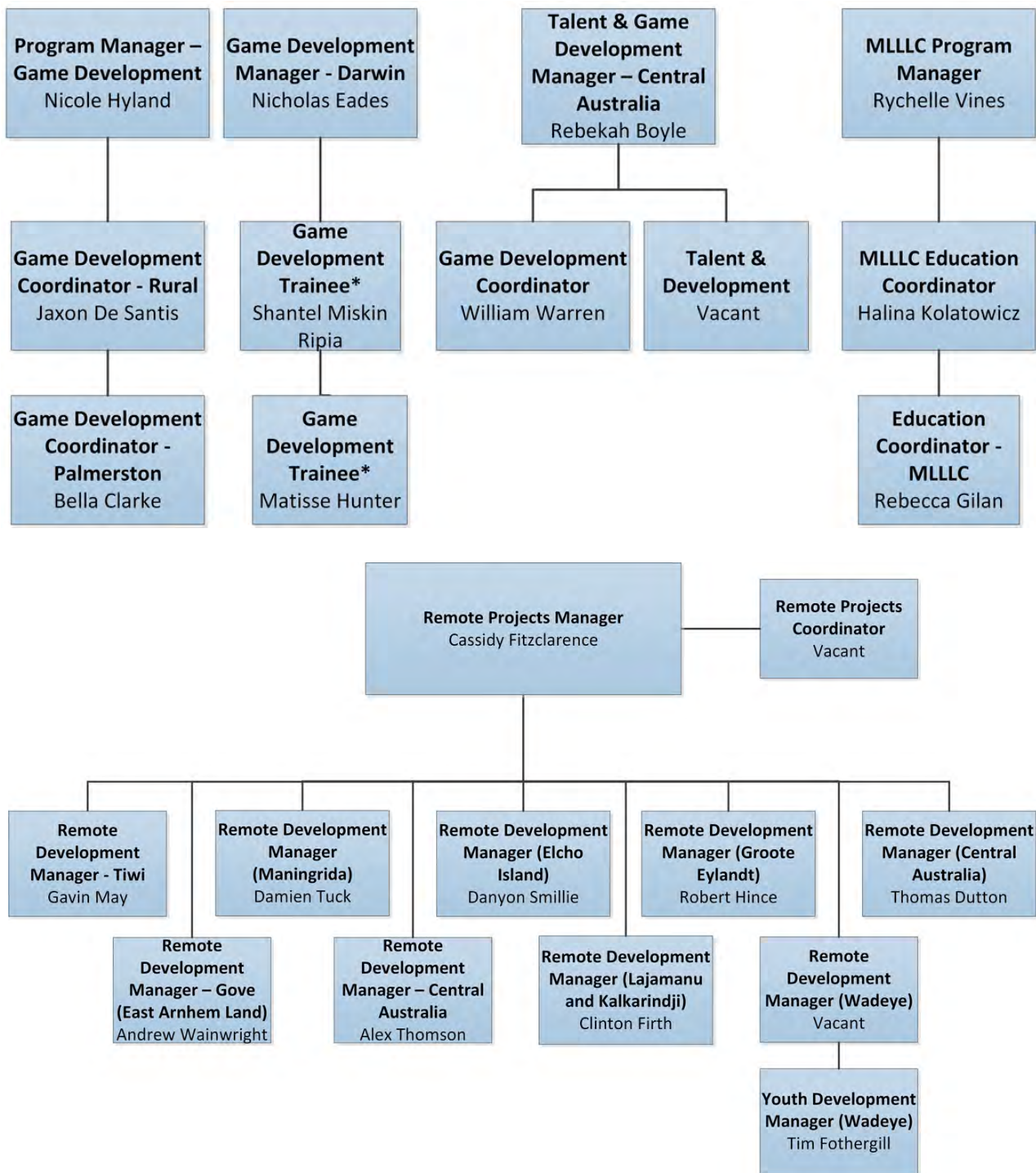
## COMMERCIAL MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



## COMMUNITY FOOTBALL & CLUB DEVELOPMENT



# GAME DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



## TALENT





**AFL Purpose:** Progress the game, so everyone can share in its heritage and possibilities

**AFLNT Vision:** Through access to football, unite and inspire the Northern Territory community

| Strategic Pillar |  | SUSTAINABILITY  | FOOTBALL TALENT   | GROWTH   | ENGAGEMENT  | COMMUNITY IMPACT  |                                       |                                      |
|------------------|--|---|---|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Aspiration       |  | A vibrant and sustained network of clubs, leagues and facilities across the territory   | More Territorians on AFL/AFLW lists   | Opportunities and access to football for all Territorians  | Highly engaged internal & external stakeholders   | A meaningful impact on the communities in which we work   |                                       |                                      |
| Priorities       |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish multi-year, multi-source funding for all programs</li> <li>Build capacity in all regions, leagues and clubs to be self-sustainable and well-governed</li> <li>Ensure a strong network of well-run, fit for purpose facilities across the NT that support growth</li> <li>Ensure a safe, enjoyable environment at football events/programs within the NT</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the exposure of &amp; development opportunities for the Northern Territory's talent</li> <li>Ensure the talent pathway is accessible for all players across the territory to reach their full potential</li> <li>Ensure AFLNT programs attracts the best people for roles who bring diverse perspectives to coaching and supporting our talent</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align the participation pathway to grow the game - All ages, all abilities, represented in all regions</li> <li>Maximise commercial return on controlled stadia, facilities &amp; programs through innovation</li> <li>Maximise reach across all media platforms</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a recruitment and retention strategy for coaches, umpires, volunteers &amp; administrators</li> <li>Establish strong internal &amp; external communications to ensure all stakeholders are well informed</li> <li>Ensure AFLNT attracts the best people for roles who bring diverse perspectives</li> <li>Provide access to development and wellbeing programs to ensure employees feel valued and rewarded</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MLLC education program to continue to expand and be recognised as an industry leader</li> <li>Establish a MLLLC type high performance &amp; education facility in Alice Springs to service Central Australia</li> <li>Continue to expand the remote projects and ensure football in remote communities become self-sustaining</li> <li>Drive diversity through inclusion and growth of Indigenous and Multicultural participation</li> </ul> |                                       |                                      |
| Enablers         |  | <b>Clubs</b><br>Commercial & Marketing  | <b>Players</b><br>Communication & Digital   | <b>Umpires</b><br>Football Operations  | <b>Volunteers</b><br>Game Development   | <b>Government</b><br>MLLC, Remote & Facilities  | <b>Community Groups</b><br>NT Thunder | <b>Partners</b><br>Talent & Pathways |
| Values           |  |   |   |  |   |   |                                       |                                      |

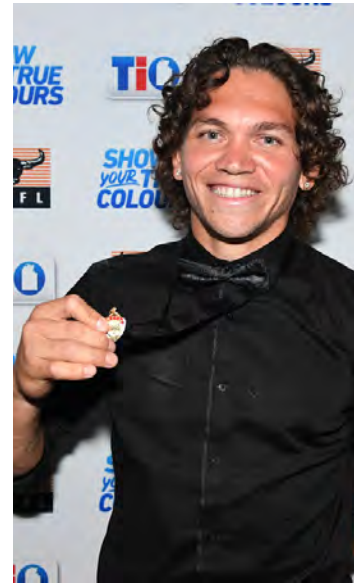
**AFLNT STRATEGIC PLAN 2019 - 2023**

# COMMUNITY FOOTBALL

## NTFL

The 2018/19 TIO NTFL Grand Finals did not disappoint this year with Nightcliff Football Club breaking a 54-year premiership drought in a historic 22-point win over Southern Districts at TIO Stadium. Tigers youngster Liam Holt-Filtz was named the Chaney Medalist for best on ground. Rounding out a successful Men's Premier League campaign for Nightcliff, the Tigers' own Phillip Wills was awarded his first Nichols Medal after a dominant season.

The Women's Premier League saw Waratah go back-to-back with a 3.3 (21) to 0.3 (3) win over Southern Districts in what were very trying conditions. A wild storm hit at half time and caused a delay in the third quarter, just as the Crocs were starting to get some run but it was all a bit too late, a goal on the final siren cementing Waratah's dominance of the women's competition. Waratah veteran Lisa Roberts was named best on ground in the Grand Final, whilst Palmerston youngster Janet Baird took out the 2018/19 Gwynne Medal.



The 2018/19 season also saw the introduction of the Statewide Super Club of the Year award which rewards clubs for their performance on the field including behavior, as well as off the field in areas focused around club development. Waratah were crowned winners in the Big Club division on 77.7 points, followed by Nightcliff (59.2) and Wanderers (48.4). Tiwi Bombers took out the Small Club division with an impressive 110 points, followed by Banks (61.7) and Big River Hawks (50.8).

## 2018/19 PREMIERS

|                               |                   |                           |                      |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Men's Premier League</i>   | Nightcliff Tigers | <i>Under 16 Leverance</i> | Nightcliff Black     |
| <i>Women's Premier League</i> | Waratah           | <i>Under 15 Girls</i>     | St Marys             |
| <i>Men's Division 1</i>       | Banks Bulldogs    | <i>Under 14 Gundersen</i> | Southern Districts 1 |
| <i>Men's Division 2</i>       | St Marys Sharks   | <i>Under 14 Lewfatt</i>   | Wanderers            |
| <i>Under 18 Boys</i>          | Wanderers         | <i>Under 12 Atkinson</i>  | Nightcliff Black     |
| <i>Under 18 Girls</i>         | Darwin Buffettes  | <i>Under 12 Deslandes</i> | Nightcliff Gold      |
| <i>Under 16 Hickman</i>       | St Marys          |                           |                      |



## BRFL

2019 was a big year in the Big Rivers Football League with two new teams joining the Men's competition. The Arnhem Crows entered into the BRFL for the first time since their 2011 premiership, while the newly formed Northern Walpiri Swans made the journey in from Lajamanu each week. Katherine Camels reigned supreme in the Men's competition taking out the Premiership 18.14 (122) to 9.6 (60) over Arnhem Crows. Now in to its second season, the Women's competition went from strength to strength with Eastside being crowned back-to-back premiers over Katherine Camels 8.6 (54) to 5.5 (35).

The 2019 Doug Kelly Medal ended in a tie between Josh Carlin of Katherine Camels and Jeffrey McDonald of Arnhem Crows, while Billie Byers of Eastside Blues took home the Women's Best & Fairest. There is no shortage of young up and coming talent in the Big Rivers region, with Angus Hodgson of Arnhem Crows and Charlie Simmonds of Katherine South, being named the Men's and Women's Emerging Players of the Year respectively. Off the field, Helen Lee of Arnhem Crows was named Volunteer of the Year, with Katherine Camels' Scott Bertus taking out Coach of the Year and finally, the Katherine Camels being named Club of the Year.

### 2019 Premiers

**BRFL Men** Katherine Camels  
**BRFL Women** Eastside

## BAFL

A year of consolidation of our junior competitions saw Spitfires crowned premiers in the U13's and Janapurlalki Eagles in the U15's. In seniors, we had two additional teams and saw the return of the Division 2 finals series. Canteen Creek were crowned Division 2 premiers with a 25-point victory over Ali Curung. In A-grade, the Spitfires secured premiership number 14 with a 32-point win over the Elliott Hawks.

Jobastin Priest (Spitfires) was named best on ground with a dominant performance that included three goals. Donovan Raymond (Elliott Hawks) became a six-time league best & fairest in being awarded the Patrons Medal. Ben Braun (YDU) won both the Under 15 Best and Fairest Medal and Under 15 Leading Goalkicker.

Visits from Collingwood FC were again a massive highlight of the year for the Barkly. Multiple community visits, the Barkly Magpies travelling to Darwin for the Michael Long Cup and the Empowered Pies female program amongst the activities.

### 2019 Premiers

|                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| <b>A-Grade</b>    | Spitfires     |
| <b>Division 2</b> | Canteen Creek |
| <b>Under 15</b>   | Eagles        |
| <b>Under 13</b>   | Spitfires     |

## CAFL

The CAFL kicked off in 2019 with the pre-season Country Clash AFLX Competition on Friday, 30 March with 11 teams competing across the weekend. Ltyentye Apurte (0.14.5.89) defeated Willowra (2.1.5.29) in the Grand Final of the tournament.

South Alice Springs FC introduced a women's team, increasing the competition to five teams and allowing the Women's competition to coincide with the men's for the first time. Willowra and Mt Allan were introduced to the Community Cup competition after Mulga Bore were removed from the competition at the end of 2018. This saw the Community Cup competition increase to six teams and eliminated the byes.

A total of 14 Country League and Community Cup matches were hosted in Community; each Country League team hosting an Under 18 and Senior match.

The TIO CAFL Men's and Women's Grand Finals were hosted in the evening where Pioneer E-Girls (8.6.54) defeated Rovers (5.4.34) in the Women's competition to reclaim the Premiership title and Rovers (15.10.106) defeated South Alice Springs FC (10.8.68) to win their third straight TIO CAFL Senior Men Premiership.

2019 saw the Community Grand Finals hosted on a standalone weekend, where the previously undefeated Minor Premiers Mt Allan (9.14.68), were defeated by Willowra (10.9.69) in the Community Cup and MacDonnell Districts (10.4.64) were defeated by Ltyentye Apurte (12.7.79) in the Country League Grand Final.

Darren Abbott (South Alice Springs FC) won the Minahan Medal with 16 votes, while Nicolette Dunn (Pioneer FC) won the Margaret Liddle Medal for the third time with 23 votes. Shoneeka Abbott (Alkamilya FC) became the first female to win the Rising Star Award.

The annual curtain raiser fixture between Centralian Redtails and Top End Storm was once again in the spotlight before the AFL Premiership Game on Sunday, 17 July between Melbourne and West Coast. The Redtails once again proved they're a force to be reckoned with, with a 25-point win over the Storm.

## 2019 Premiers

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| <b>TIO CAFL Senior Men</b>                  | Rovers          |
| <b>CAFL Senior Men Reserve Grade</b>        | Pioneer         |
| <b>CAFL Senior Women</b>                    | Pioneer         |
| <b>MacDonnell Regional Council U18 Boys</b> | Pioneer         |
| <b>CAFL Country League</b>                  | Ltyentye Apurte |
| <b>CAFL Community Cup</b>                   | Willowra Cats   |
| <b>CAFL Country League U18s</b>             | Yuendumu        |





## Umpires

2019 saw the release of the 5-year NT Future Directions of Umpiring Strategic Plan and we experienced new records set across the Territory in participation in umpiring. In 2018/19, there was a total of 490 registered umpires across the Territory, including a record number of female and indigenous umpires. Pleasingly, retention in umpiring also increased across the Territory by 4%.

In the BRFL, umpiring numbers increased by 90% and saw a remarkable milestone celebrated with John Robinson umpiring his 500th BRFL game. The development of young up and coming umpires in the CAFL is exciting for all, while out in our remote competitions we saw record numbers in umpiring groups.

From a talent pathway point of view, the NEAFL Umpires participated in a record number of games throughout 2019 Season, while Merlene Hutt represented the NT as a boundary umpire in the AFLW. Ten umpires travelled to Launceston and Perth for the School Sports National Championships, the second highest number, behind Victoria. While the rollup of the Thunder senior teams meant a change to the umpiring pathway, the AFL ticked off an exciting new Talent Pathway Program for umpires in the Northern Territory which will be rolled out in 2020 with new Umpiring Academies.

The latter half of 2019 saw much excitement heading in to the 2019/20 NTFL season with the number of registered umpires surpassing 300, including 100 new registered umpires as well as a visit from AFL umpire John Howorth which headlines a successful NTFL Community Umpiring Round.

In December 2019, NTFL Field Umpire Mark Noonan (pictured left) officially broke the previous record of number of NTFL Premier League matches umpired, surpassing Gary Turbill's previous record of 260 matches.

# GAME DEVELOPMENT & PARTICIPATION



The Game Development team achieved expansive growth of the game in all relevant metrics in 2019, surpassing all expectations. This ensures the foundations and health of the game across the Territory are strong and well positioned for sustained success.

- Participation hit 53,865, representing a 12% increase on 2018
- Auskick hit 5,510 participants, representing a 5% increase on 2018
- Female Participation soared to 18,487, representing an enormous 12.72% increase on 2018

Our Primary School Gala Day competitions went to a new level this year. Last year our popular all girls 'Pink Power Gala Day' was the largest Gala day ever run with 23 teams and over 270 participants. This year we expanded even further and ran a separate competition in Palmerston, increasing to 30 teams and over 370 participants overall for a 30% growth. We also saw 37 teams and over 430 participants in our lower primary 'Cracka Cup' Gala Day a massive increase 35% from 2018

The Inaugural NTLF Juniors U10's season was a key takeout of 2019, with U10's teams playing under club colours for the first time. We had great success with 10 clubs involved in the season, fielding 16 teams and 353 participants across Darwin, Palmerston and Rural regions. This has now created a clear pathway from Club Auskick onto NTLF Juniors and all the way through to Club football.



In 2019 the Northern Territory competed in the National Inclusion Carnival held in Blacktown, Sydney. The Northern Territory team was made up of 11 Darwin based players and six players from the Tiwi Islands. In just its third year of competition, the Northern Territory won the Division One Premiership defeating Victoria Metro by 5 points in an absolute thriller. Victoria Metro had not lost a game at the National Carnival in five years, with the pace and skills of the NT Thunder proving too good for the other states. From the National Carnival four players from the NT were honoured with All-Australian selection and for the first time, the All-Australian squad travelled to Brisbane to take part in two exhibition matches at the 2019 INAS Global Games in October showcasing their talent on the global stage. Held every four years, the INAS Global Games is the largest sporting event for elite athletes with intellectual disability, with more than 1000 athletes from across the world participated in the event.

2020 brings with it new challenges and opportunities. The major focus will be aligning Remote Programs, MLLC and Game Development under the same umbrella. This strategic shift recognises the interdependence of our portfolios and provides opportunity to ensure consistency, congruency and ultimately clarity for all stakeholders relative to programming and opportunities. It is hoped ultimately we can continue to drive increases in participation across the Territory at the same time as enhancing the experiences being encountered by all participants and volunteers.



# REMOTE PROJECTS



2019 has been an outstanding year for AFLNT's remote project team. Each of the eight 'remote projects' saw the highest degree of stability and program progression in many years. The significant funding contribution from the Federal Government's National Indigenous Australian's Agency (NIAA) of \$3.6M across each of the projects in late 2018 has been a major contributing factor to the stability and positive outcomes achieved throughout. The only staff turnover within this team occurred late in the year, which has contributed to a strong team environment and consistent program delivery throughout all locations. 2019 also saw the first full year of the newly created Youth Development Manager (YDM) position in Wadeye, which has achieved significant results and youth engagement within that community.

2019 saw the completion of the Deloitte Economic SROI project on the social and wellbeing impacts of the AFLNT Remote Projects. This report contains some wonderful insights in the positive social impacts of the remote projects, how the projects are perceived in remote communities and suggestions for how

the management of the projects can be improved. This report will be released externally by the AFL and used to secure further funding for the remote projects.

A pilot project was completed in the Western Desert Region of Central Australia throughout 2019. An AFLNT Remote Development Manager (RDM) was based in the community of Papunya for eight weeks and delivered regular youth focused, school-based football programs. This role supported the most ever CAFL games to be played in remote communities and delivered umpire and club development programs. This project was funded by Central Australia Youth Link Up Service (CAYLUS).

In 2019 the remote projects team hosted the first ever Quitline Regional Challenge as a means of celebrating remote community football throughout the broader NT football community. This carnival took place in conjunction with round one of the NTFL season and included eight remote community teams throughout the NT. The carnival was incredibly popular with all participants, spectators and sponsors and should return in 2020.



See below for a brief summary of the major outcomes achieved in each project:

**Wadeye** – The RDM and YDM worked closely to deliver wide ranging football programs and competitions for all sectors of the community including youth, senior men and women. The Wadeye football league introduced two new teams with Daly River and Emu Point becoming a true West Daly Region competition.

**Tiwi Islands** - The establishment of the first youth focused football program across the Tiwi islands which kicked off with primary school carnivals and senior school-based football competition.

**Maningrida** – Funding has been secured for two community-based trainee roles, which has significantly increased the program output and the introduction of outstation football clinics. The senior men’s competition saw huge improvements in governance and reduced instances of anti social behavior.

**Galiwinku** – The first full season of football was played in Galiwinku since 2017 for men and women.

**Gove** – The Gove project saw significant local sponsorship outcomes for the GAFL men’s and women’s competitions which both saw significant improvements throughout 2019. The expansion of programs into the Laynhapuy Homeland communities was also achieved throughout 2019.

**Groote Eylandt** – Funding has been secured for the first ever trainee position in Groote Eylandt which is assisting significantly with community engagement and program delivery. Plans for a Groote Eylandt representative team to join the GAFL have been developed and are ready for execution in 2020.

**Lajamanu** – The Lajamanu project saw great stability in 2019 which contributed to the Northern Warlpiri Swans rejoining the BRFL and completing the season.

**Central Australia** – The Central Australia remote project continues to go from strength to strength with interest and community engagement very high in 2019. The first youth specific AFL competition was created in Yuendumu which was very popular throughout the community and supported extensively by sponsors and supporting organisations.

# MICHAEL LONG LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP CENTRE (MLLLC)

Officially opened on 13 March 2015, the Michael Long Learning and Leadership Centre (MLLLC) is designed to harness the power of AFL football in the Northern Territory to give young indigenous Territorians the same opportunities as all Australians.

The Centre has a focus well beyond football, delivering education programs for indigenous students from remote areas. School attendance, engagement, good behaviour, completion of secondary education, work readiness and awareness of opportunities are some of the many outcomes the MLLLC education programs focus on improving.

In 2019, the MLLLC continued its rapid growth and success in educating and inspiring young indigenous people from more than 26 communities across the Northern Territory. 407 students participated in MLLC programs:

- 300 Students – Make your Mark Leadership Program
- 21 Students – Employment Pathways Program
- 86 Students – MLLLC/TSU Pre-boarding Program

Other notable highlights from 2019 included:

- Appointment of a second Education Coordinator, enabling increased delivery capacity and quality of programs
- Enhancement and updating of education resources
- Growth and development of our Employment Pathways program
- Engagement of 22 students from the Arnhem Land homelands, a region so remote it is often described as 'remote remote'.
- Development of AFLNT Work Experience immersions, supported with appropriate policies and procedures to support local schools and students.

As we head into 2020, the MLLLC will undertake a formal process of auditing the impact of our programs to support the ongoing process of enhancing the quality and delivery of programming.





# FACILITIES

2020 saw a number of key projects completed under the AFLNT facilities program, underpinned by the 2018 audit of all the grounds and facilities across the Territory. Without doubt the jewel in the crown of these developments was the TIO Oval 2 project to install new changerooms. Opened by the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Culture, Lauren Moss, the facility sees four new player changerooms and umpire changeroom, as well as a new kiosk/bar, ticket booth and separate rooms for timekeepers and media. The dual-gender changerooms meet the AFL's Preferred Facilities Guidelines which outlines best practice in the design of amenities for both male and female users.

AFLNT also invested \$200,000 into the infrastructure project, with the growth of female footy front of mind as numbers have increased by approximately 3 per cent each NTFL season for the past three seasons. Ultimately, utilising the ticket booth and a separate entrance, there could be an opportunity to separate TIO Oval 2 from TIO Stadium so that it can run as a standalone home venue, potentially benefiting clubs who don't have home grounds. The new changerooms formed part of an overall \$3m improvement program to TIO Stadium precinct, with much-needed upgrades to the stadium's bar and kiosk in time for the start of the 2019/20 TIO NTFL Season.

In addition, the long-awaited upgrades to the umpiring amenities were completed, with new separate female changerooms added as well as a facelift to the existing rooms. Remedial work also took place in the TIO2 interchange areas with new concreting stairs completed to make the area safer for players entering the arena. Upgrades to facilities in Central Australia focussed on new changerooms being installed at Jim McConville Oval, Albrecht Oval and Santa Teresa Oval regrassing project. There were some delays to key lighting projects, with both Gardens and Nightcliff Ovals lights postponed until the end of the 2019/20 TIO NTFL season.

# TALENT & PATHWAYS

In 2019 we saw Malcolm Rosas and Michaela Roberts find new homes at Gold Coast and Collingwood respectively. Brodie Lake was named All Australian after the National Under 16 Championships. Fourteen young Territorians represented the NT at National Under 18 AFL and AFLW Championships. Abraham Ankers was named in the NEAFL team of the year and had the honour of being made captain.

Our NT Thunder women's representatives - Ange Foley, Stevie-Lee Thompson and Danielle Ponter also helped the AFLW Adelaide Crows team to another premiership, with three goals in the Grand Final from Ponter (right) against Carlton in front of over 50,000 people at Adelaide Oval.



## NT Thunder

NT Thunder had its lowest finish in the 11 seasons since the club was formed, winning two matches and losing 16. Overall, injuries took its toll with 100 weeks of matches missed due to injury. Alice Springs player Abraham Ankers capped of a consistent year winning back-to-back NT Thunder Best and Fairest awards.

Seven NT Thunder Academy players made their debut for NT Thunder – Brandon Rusca, Joel Jeffrey, Jeffrey Simon, Tyson Woods (Alice Springs), Jeffrey Simon (Tiwi Islands), Joel Stevens, Joel Budarick (Katherine), Brendan Minkulk (Daly River region), Beau O'Connell and 16-year-old Ned Stevens. NT Thunder saw 23 new players join the team of which 13 have come through the NT Thunder Academy program. A total of 15 Regional & Remote players (7 Alice Springs, 2 Tiwi, 2 Katherine, 1 Tennant Creek) – 12 of those 15, played games.

## VFLW

NT Thunder had a very inconsistent season, winning five games and losing nine to finish 10th on the ladder. The team fielded a total of 53 players from the main list and played eight rookies in the 16-round season while also playing nine rookies from Academy lists each play 2 to 3 games, averaged 8 changes each week on list due to injury and AFLW player rotations. Pints utility player Katie Streader capped of a consistent year winning her first NT Thunder Best and Fairest.



## ***NT Thunder Academy***

NT Thunder Academy had a consistent year competing in the NAB League in five matches. Even though no wins were recorded the games were far more consistent and evenly performed over the five-match series. All games were played in Sydney and Melbourne. Five players were selected in the Allies to play in the Division 1 AFL Under 18 Championships - Joel Jeffrey, Malcolm Rosas, Ben Jungfer and Beau O'Connell. Brodie Lake was named All Australian at Under 16 level and he and Joel Jeffrey were selected in the NAB All Star game which played the curtain raiser to the AFL Grand Final.

Three players were selected in the revamped National Academy Allies Program – Joel Jeffrey and Tyrell Lui (Wanderers Football Club) and Brodie Lake (Southern Districts Football Club) with the Allies Academy that will be coached by Andrew Raines.

Malcolm Rosas was pre drafted to the Gold Coast Suns Football Club in the 2019 AFL Draft as part of the new relationship between the Suns and AFLNT as Darwin being an Academy region for the Suns.

Michaela Roberts was drafted by Collingwood Football Club in the 2019 AFLW NAB National Draft. Gold Coast Suns AFLW side signed Jordann Hickey (Alice Springs/Melbourne), Sally Riley (Tracy Village/Adelaide Crows), Jasmyn Hewitt (St Mary's/Adelaide Crows) and Tayla Thorn (Southern Districts Football Club).

Heidi Thompson coached the NT Thunder Academy and VFLW and was also selected to coach the Central Allies at the AFLW Under 18 National Championships which saw nine players representing the NT and Stephanie Williams being selected in the AFLW National Under 18 Academy Programs.

AFLNT had good representation at National Diversity Level in the Woomera's, Medley, Boomerangs and World teams. Selected from the Michael Long Cup which saw total of 224 players take part in matches over a weekend in Darwin held in April. In addition, the continued AFL Education/Player Well Being program has continued to grow with the NTFL Well Being Champion Program in 2019 which saw 80% of clubs having a Well Being Champion. This program is run in conjunction with HeadSpace NT which saw nominated club personnel educated in the well-being and mental health space.

AFLNT coach education grew with good numbers with 88% of coaches coaching throughout the NT being accredited on coachafl.com. Coach education continues to grow with new initiatives such as the Coach Developer Program, Coaching Seminars and Master Classes, Coaching Ambassador program, AFLNT Coaching Academies which will include Talent, Female, Diversity and Umpire Coaches and finally a Club Education and Resource program that will all be rolled out in 2020.



# COMMERCIAL & MARKETING

It was a year of ups and downs in the Commercial and Marketing division. The business unit is responsible for all events and functions, themed rounds and game day activations, customer and membership services in addition to all marketing and commercial activity. This includes building and maintaining key corporate partnerships across all key programs, venue signage, corporate boxes, apparel, merchandising.

Ultimately the business unit is focussed on implementing strategies to increase interest in AFL and to drive commercial growth across all business units.

On the upside, the new team that had been in place from the end of 2018 implemented a number of strategies in regard to customer service, membership and events. This was particularly successful in regard to the successful running of each event, which proved a year of “firsts” as the new team learned its way. There were also some highs in another significant crowd for the TIO Men’s NTFL Grand Final and this saw final revenue for the season up on the previous year.

Other notable events included a revamped Life Member’s Luncheon on NTFL Grand Final, partnered by Statewide Super – a lunch that was received very well by AFLNT life members and an opportunity to induct new Life Members. A record crowd also attended the Melbourne Demons v West Coast Eagles game in Alice Springs.

Co-ordinated visits by well-known football identities proved very successful, with former Sydney Swans great Michael O’Loughlin named as TIO NTFL Grand Final Ambassador, teaming up with former Bears and Lions player Richard Champion as the “host” of all official events in Grand Final week. This was added to at the end the year with Territorian and former St Kilda great Gilbert McAdam being invited back as the TIO NTFL Season Ambassador.

The downside was that sponsorship revenues were down, which was somewhat reflective of the NT economy as a whole. This was particularly the case for NT Thunder with numbers down in attendance, membership and sponsorship prior to the decision made in September not to enter teams in the NEAFL and VFL going forward.





AFLNT continues to enjoy a strong relationship with a number of major partners, led by Territory Insurance Office (TIO) – an association now in its 29th year.

During the year, the Commercial and Marketing team was responsible for the co-ordination of all the significant events held by AFLNT, including:

- NTFL Launch
- AFLW trial match and games in Darwin & Alice Springs
- NTFL Junior Presentation
- Nichols Medal
- TIO NTFL Grand Final
- Statewide Super Life Members Luncheon
- AFL game Melbourne Demons v Adelaide Crows in Darwin
- AFL game Melbourne Demons v West Coast Eagles in Alice Springs
- NT Thunder Launch (NEAFL / VFLW)
- NT Thunder Club Champs
- Hall of Fame

One of the highlights to end the year was the Hall of Fame event – heralded by those who attended as one of the best footy functions held for many years.

In addition to these events, TIO Stadium hosted the Overture to Peace (OTP) concert on Anzac Day Eve, which was successfully delivered against the strategy of increasing or attracting non-traditional events to the Stadium. For the first time, TIO Stadium also entered into a partnership with Melbourne Stadiums Limited (MSL) to successfully enter into an two-year arrangement to have sole event responsibility for the hosting of the National Rugby League (NRL) game.



# HALL OF FAME





# COMMUNICATIONS & DIGITAL



The Communications and Digital team had a successful 2019, with the continued growth of its digital and broadcast platforms being well complemented by the team's ability to establish relationships with national and international media outlets to deliver unique NT football content to a greater audience.

While the majority of the work completed was used to 'promote' AFLNT and its associated programs and work, there were instances where the team had to roll-out its crisis management policy to 'protect' the organisation, its people and strategy.



Twelve months of hard work came to fruition when AFLNT and the Indigenous Community Television Limited (ICTV) live broadcast consistent CAFL coverage for the first time in many years. Ten games of the 2019 TIO CAFL season, including seven Community Cup/Country League matches and three 'town' finals, went to air. In addition to ICTV broadcasting to 320,000 plus households in remote Indigenous communities via the VAST satellite, they also live broadcast the games into Alice Springs, Broome and Roeburne. AFLNT was able to deliver a concurrent live stream of the games across its YouTube platform, which led to an extra 8,684 hours (361) days of NT footy being consumed by fans. It also allowed us to deepen relationships with key sponsors in the region by associating them to the broadcast.

The 2018/19 NTFL season saw the team produce 2,110 pieces of content for the 14 clubs and umpiring groups (up from 1,441 the season prior). There was also just shy of one million video views on Facebook. In addition to this, 4.891 million minutes were watched via the AFLNT YouTube channel during the season (up from 2.354 million minutes in 2017/18).



Of this 4.891 million minutes, 2.887 million minutes were live views. The audience for NTFN and AFLNT content continues to spread, and at the end of 2019, the AFLNT and NTFN channels are the most popular in the NT as well as the most popular state-league body in Australia.

Significant events like exclusive-behind the scenes access to the NT girls at the AFLW premierships and access to the superstars like Daniel Rioli, or Cyril Rioli's return to footy continued to generate clicks and shares. The upgrade to Elliott Oval delighted, but the most popular piece of content across any of our channels in 2019 was the video of the Eagles men performing a dance for their female teammates at the Galiwinku Grand Final.

Until it folded, the NT Thunder channels continued to pull reasonable numbers, keeping consistent growth based on previous seasons. The 2019 NEAFL and VFLW seasons saw 240 videos produced for a total of 392,027 views and 10,729 hours (447 days).

A highlight of the season was the team's work in connecting with stakeholders. The first NTFN fan survey received 196 responses and provided valuable insight into the priorities and concerns of the community. New platforms and procedures were rolled out to better connect internal staff with news and major announcements, which led to an increase in the end of year engagement metrics.

The communications team also achieved great success by working with Fox Sports News and AAP to highlight NT Thunder and the MLLLC programs. A lot of cross-sharing of content made it to the front page of the AFL.com.au website and app platforms (NTFN uniqueness, Cyril Rioli and a future AFL team).

A special collaboration formed in 2019 will now see NT Indigenous football guernseys on permanent display/rotation at the Australian Sports Museum at the MCG, while a truly unique experience saw the remote Indigenous footy team at Lajamanu and the Yuendumu Football Carnival make the front page and a full photo spread of The New York Times.

# AFLNT FINANCIAL REPORT

*Year Ended 31 October 2019*

The audited financial statements of AFL Northern Territory Limited, for the year ended 31 October 2019 are attached for your perusal and adoption at this meeting.

The notes below should be read in conjunction with the Financial Accounts to understand the organisation's financial affairs.

## **Financial Position**

The Company has recorded a statutory loss of (\$421,690) for the year ended 31st October 2019, which has reduced the retained profits to \$92,069.

Key financial results for the 2019 Financial Year included:

1. Overall revenues increased by \$884k largely due to increased grants and investment from parent entity the AFL \$276k and funding for Remote and MLLLC \$253k. Commercial revenues continued to be difficult to secure across the Territory and were down on budget.
2. Employee expenses were higher than prior year and budget at \$6.2m. There were 51 full time staff employed at the end of the financial year (prior year: 49).
3. There was a continued focus on renewing and retaining key government and corporate support for our Remote Programs.

An expansive review of the AFL NT strategic direction was undertaken including the financial sustainability of programs within the organization, an assessment of talent pathways and teams within the NT, and the strategic alignment to the Gold Coast Suns. This included the decision to withdraw the NT Thunder from the second-tier competitions.

## **Acknowledgements**

The AFLNT would again this year like to thank our ongoing and loyal sponsors and supporters, the AFL for their guidance and support and to the NT and Federal Governments a big thank you for your ongoing contribution to AFL Football in the NT. To our many other AFLNT, NT Thunder, MLLLC and Affiliated Leagues, Club sponsors and supporters we appreciate all your support.

## **Motion of Acceptance**

It is my pleasure, to move the adoption of the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Statement of Financial Position, in conjunction with the notes and Auditors Report for the year ended 31 October 2019.

Ross Coburn  
Chairman – AFL Northern Territory

## AFL Northern Territory Limited

### STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2019

|  | 2019             | 2018             |
|--|------------------|------------------|
|  | \$               | \$               |
| <b>Revenue</b>                                   | 12,686,710       | 11,843,920       |
| <b>Expenses</b>                                  |                  |                  |
| Cost of goods sold                               | (404,755)        | (445,855)        |
| Depreciation and amortisation expenses           | (73,588)         | (62,423)         |
| Employee expenses                                | (6,271,860)      | (5,389,191)      |
| Travel expenses                                  | (1,527,754)      | (1,493,011)      |
| Football operations expenses                     | (2,174,409)      | (1,926,521)      |
| Game development expenses                        | (928,587)        | (896,067)        |
| Administration expenses                          | (511,156)        | (503,402)        |
| Other expenses from ordinary activities          | (1,216,291)      | (1,124,936)      |
| <b>Net Profit/(Loss) for the year</b>            | <u>(421,690)</u> | <u>2,514</u>     |
| Other comprehensive income for the period        | -                | -                |
| <b>Total comprehensive income for the period</b> | <u>(421,690)</u> | <u>2,514</u>     |
| <b>Assets</b>                                    |                  |                  |
| Cash and cash equivalents                        | 1,310,424        | 919,854          |
| Trade and other receivables                      | 687,068          | 1,860,063        |
| Inventories                                      | 38,700           | 39,445           |
| Prepayments                                      | 3,750            | -                |
| <b>Total current assets</b>                      | <u>2,039,942</u> | <u>2,819,363</u> |
| Plant and equipment                              | <u>217,040</u>   | <u>271,883</u>   |
| <b>Total non-current assets</b>                  | <u>217,040</u>   | <u>271,883</u>   |
| <b>Total assets</b>                              | <u>2,256,982</u> | <u>3,091,245</u> |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                               |                  |                  |
| Trade and other payables                         | 392,180          | 928,508          |
| Deferred income                                  | 1,351,384        | 1,332,710        |
| Provisions                                       | <u>320,924</u>   | <u>223,788</u>   |
| <b>Total current liabilities</b>                 | <u>2,064,488</u> | <u>2,485,006</u> |
| Provisions                                       | <u>100,426</u>   | <u>92,480</u>    |
| <b>Total non-current liabilities</b>             | <u>100,426</u>   | <u>92,480</u>    |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>                         | <u>2,164,913</u> | <u>2,577,486</u> |
| <b>Net assets</b>                                | <u>92,069</u>    | <u>513,759</u>   |
| <b>Equity</b>                                    |                  |                  |
| Retained Earnings                                | <u>92,069</u>    | <u>513,759</u>   |
| <b>Total equity</b>                              | <u>92,069</u>    | <u>513,759</u>   |

**AFL NORTHERN TERRITORY WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING  
KEY CORPORATE PARTNERS FOR THEIR ONGOING SUPPORT**

**PREMIER PARTNERS**



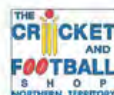
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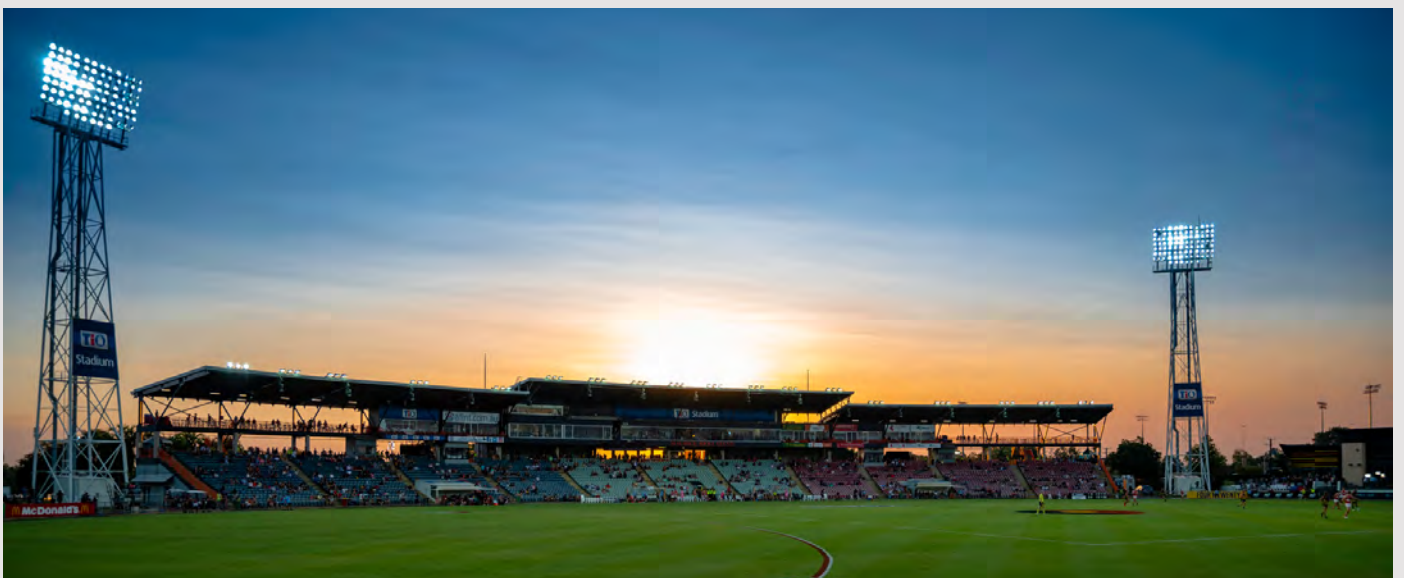


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