



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



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CHAIRMAN REPORT

In the last twelve month period, the great game of AFL football has continued to strengthen and grow in the Northern Territory.

Today, we have the highest AFL participation rate in the nation, and participation for women and girls in the Territory is over twice the national average. In regional and remote areas AFL continues to be played at incredible rates and, on any given day, in any given community of the Northern Territory there is AFL taking place.

The brand of football being played at all levels, and in all competitions, is exciting and bold, and whilst the action is on the field our competitions and clubs are community facing. More and more the football club is a place where Territorians can stay fit and healthy, do something they love, bond with friends, and support the game they love. And this extends to the growing team of umpires and match managers who are integral and critical to everything that takes place on a football weekend.

The TIO NTFL Premier League continues to draw a high calibre of players and coaches with over 25 ex-AFL players either playing or coaching in the NTFL last season and many more highly talented and dedicated footballers showing their skills in the men's and women's competitions. As we enter the final's series NTFL is being broadcast widely and continues to grow its standing in the Australian football community.

This would not happen but for the exceptional work of our Clubs and their members, the umpires, and the match managers. Again in 2022/23 right across the Territory our Clubs, the committees, members, and volunteers have worked tirelessly in their roles, fielding teams, and game support, nurturing their players and their families from the u/10's to the Premier League.

To indicate the challenge of this task our biggest clubs have over 20 teams competing from men's and women's premier league to boys and girls in the u/10's. And the umpires and match managers are needed to match this growth and to go out there week in week out and officiate the games. The growth in our game has created positive energy and activity in the competitions but has also presented AFLNT, the Clubs and umpiring brigade with growing pains.

Infrastructure is one of the greatest challenges we have in football with discussions around infrastructure deficits being ongoing and urgent. There is no question that we need more lights at grounds for night football, and we need more grounds to cater for the games being played and we need more change rooms to cater for the players, especially our female participants who deserve equal access and equal amenity.



In the remote regions we continue to work towards a situation where remote teams can play on surfaces that are safe and have the basic facilities that are enjoyed by all other Australians, starting with access to power and water.

In Central Australia we have continued to work with all stakeholders to build a pathway to stronger competitions and pathways, including in relation to junior competitions. This work will be a focus of the next 12 months with the Central Australian Football League being critical to our work as we build stronger competitions and better talent pathways.

Barkly and Big Rivers put on magnificent competitions again this year, and the remote football everywhere was exciting and brilliant. In the AFL Team Taskforce, we are now nearing an important milestone and there will be important announcements made in the near future.

As co-Chair of that Taskforce I know that one thing is clear – we will need the Territory community working with us hand in hand if we are to one day realise a dream of a Territory Team in the AFL. And the tide that will rise if an AFL Team becomes a reality must lift everyone throughout the Territory.

As all of this takes place there has been a steady and determined effort yet again by the AFLNT Executive and team led by Sam Gibson. I am witness to the incredible work that is done and I thank Sam and his team from all of the Board. I thank my fellow board members Lincoln Jenkins, Kathleen Cole, Josie Douglas, Nigel Brown, Di Borella, Tom Wilcox and Rob Auld. I also want to thank the AFL Commission and Executive who continue to invest in the Territory to the tune of over \$5 million in 2022/23. For another year it has been a privilege and an honour to be a part of Territory football. Thank you to everyone who has supported our game, and been a part of our community.

S. Bowden

SEAN BOWDEN
CHAIRMAN OF AFLNT BOARD

HEAD OF AFLNT REPORT

2022/23 was another year of significant progress and growth for football across the Northern Territory.

Throughout the year, through the hard work and commitment of many, football continued to have a profound impact on communities across the Territory. The outcome of this hard work is that all Territorians continue to have the chance to engage in our game and that we celebrate all the amazing things that people experience and achieve through football.

For many years, the work led by AFLNT in remote areas of the Territory has been a flagship component of our business. The continued connection with more than fifty remote communities throughout 2022 / 23 shows both the positive impact football can have, as well as the standing our game has in all pockets of the Territory. 2022 / 23 also saw a major announcement regarding our Indigenous Engagement Programs with the Federal Government extending and expanding their investment in AFLNT's programs.

The \$4.7m (over 2.5 years) invested collectively by the National Indigenous Australians Agency and Australian Sports Commission will see a particular focus on both youth engagement and opportunities for women and girls and importantly will see thousands of people engaged regularly in remote areas. 2022 / 23 also saw Michael Long Learning and Leadership Centre (MLLLC) programs continue to be highly impactful. Around twenty remote schools engaged in the programs during the year with a staggering 98% positive feedback.

We also saw a range of innovative programs commence in the MLLLC with likeminded organisations engaging in the curriculum in different ways. Moving forward, we will continue to ensure that these programs are accessible and meeting the needs of the community.

Community Football remains at the heart of NT football with continuing to inspire communities across the Territory. Be it the NTFL in the Top End, or regional and remote competitions across the NT, community football brings out the best of communities.

During 2022/23 the TIO NTFL was again a huge success with increases in numbers of those playing the game and captivating football played throughout. Fittingly the season culminated in a great Grand Final day with PINT a deserved Women's Premier League winner and Waratah breaking their premiership drought to take home the Men's Premier League title.



With an increase in teams playing in the competition, highlighted by the continued growth of women and girls, and an ever-growing country wide audience, the competition has a strong base to grow from. Across other competitions we continued to see the importance of structured competitions in all major centres. Whilst this part of our business is not without its challenges, year in year out we see how important this space is to all involved. To this end it is important to note the contributions of the clubs, coaches, communities, umpires and AFLNT staff who are pivotal in delivering our game twelve months a year.

Whilst on the surface we see the great games and many highlights that come from our competitions, we must not lose sight of the mass of volunteers that make the game tick on a daily basis. There are thousands of volunteers across the NT all of whom commit countless hours to the game. Without this commitment the game would not be what it is today so on behalf of AFLNT I would like to thank everyone for their passion and desire to give everything you give to our game.



Facility development remained a key priority in 2022/23, driven by the growing demand for playing and training spaces. With generous support from the AFL, we have made significant investments to enhance our facilities, guided by data-driven strategies and a forward-looking approach.

This has included AFLNT taking the lead in investing and driving a number of community facing projects that will not only see football opportunities realised, but also serve a broader community benefit. Of particular focus again in 2022 / 23 was our focus on remote infrastructure. The deficit that exists in remote infrastructure is well known so it is pleasing to see progress in this space during the year, particularly in Central Australia.

2023 season saw an exciting line up of AFL games in the Territory, including a double-header in Darwin and a match in Alice Springs. Territorians again relished the opportunity to witness elite-level football in their own backyard with the Gold Coast Suns taking on the Western Bulldogs and Adelaide, and in the red centre Melbourne taking on GWS.

Watching the community embrace these fixtures is always a highlight, particularly this year in Alice Springs where a strong crowd braced challenging weather conditions at Traeger Park. In the Top End we again saw the Gold Coast / Territory Suns continue their strong connection in the NT, both on and off the field. This partnership is one of great value to the football community.

Continuing to grow participation in our game was a renewed focus in 2022 / 23 and will continue to be an area we focus on into the future. We are fortunate to have a raft of great programs that provide all Territorians with an introduction to the game and with a strong focus on innovating through new ways to play the game, I am confident that we will see even more people enjoying our game in the future.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all who support football in the NT, without whose support a lot of what we do would not be possible. Firstly, the AFL for their ongoing leadership and investment which is unrivalled.

In addition to this the ongoing and considerable support from the Commonwealth and NT Governments. We are also fortunate to enjoy incredible long-term partnerships with key stakeholders such as TIO, Cazalys Palmerston Club, MACC and INPEX, all of whom contribute to our game and the community more broadly.

I wish to express my appreciation to the AFLNT Board of Directors, led by Chairman Sean Bowden, for their dedication. My gratitude also extends to AFLNT's leadership team and staff for their tireless efforts in advancing our sport. Lastly, to the broader football community, your unwavering passion is the foundation of our success, and I thank you for your continued commitment.

As we look ahead, our focus remains on driving community football, advocating for improved facilities, expanding opportunities in regional and remote areas, and nurturing talent pathways across the NT. Together, we will continue to build upon the rich legacy of football in the Northern Territory.

S. Gibson

SAM GIBSON
HEAD OF AFL NORTHERN TERRITORY

AFLNT BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Mr Sean Bowden - Chairman

- Bachelor of Laws (with Honors)
- Partner, Bowden McCormack Lawyers & Advisors
- 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 Rob Auld

- AFL Executive General Manager - Game Development
- Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Accounting
- 15-year career with Lion, working across finance, logistics and sales in winery and dairy business units
- Joined the AFL in 2016 as CEO of AFL Tasmania
- 2018 was appointed to Head of Game Development
- 2020 was appointed General Manager of AFL competitions including umpiring, competition management, game analysis and player movement
- 2021 was appointed as Executive General Manager Game Development, which includes responsibility for all participation and programs including the portfolios of Auskick, Schools, Diversity and Inclusion, as well as Community Football governance and facility development



Mrs Dianne Borella

- Master of Public Health and 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 and Past President Rotary Club of Darwin Sunrise
- Recipient of Paul Harris Fellow Award and Recipient of Sapphire Paul Harris Fellow Award
- NT Thunder Football Club Volunteer of the Year Award
- Long Term Employee – Australian
- Public Service with experience in Education, Employment, Training, Youth affairs, Aboriginal Health, Law & Order
- Member of well-respected local sporting family



Mr Lincoln Jenkin

- Regional Manager of Carlton & United Breweries NT
- NT resident for over 4 decades, one of those in Alice Springs
- Inaugural member and former Chairman, Northern Territory FC
- 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
- Is involved with NT Masters AFL
- Is a lifelong Essendon Bombers supporter

AFLNT BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Mr Nigel Browne

- Current CEO of the Larrakia Development Corporation, serving as a Director from 2005 and Chair from 2010 to 2013
- Bachelor of Laws
- Crown Prosecutor (ODPPNT),
- Aboriginal Lands (SFNT)
- Policy Adviser (Chief Minister's Office)
- Director The Healing Foundation and Director Indigenous Land & Sea Corporation
- Director Aboriginal Area Protection Authority(NT)
- Director Menzies School of Health Research and Director National Centre for Indigenous Excellence
- Served as a Patrolman with NORFORCE and is a serving Legal Officer (RANR)
- 2011 National Indigenous Legal Professional of the Year
- Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors



Ms Kathleen Cole

- Bachelor of Business – Major Accounting
- Graduate Diploma of Public Health – Indigenous Health
- Masters of Community Management
- Fellow of Australian Certified Accountants
- Executive Management within NT 15 years
- Member of Waratahs Football Club 12 years
- Executive officer Miriam Rose Foundation
- Independent non-executive director for Perpetual Trustees
- Chairperson of NT Australian Red Cross Advisor Board
- Lived in the Northern Territory for 38 years
- Graduate of AICD



Dr Josie Douglas

- Executive management experience at the Central Land Council and Central Australian Aboriginal Congress.
- A long-time advocate for social justice and policy development in Indigenous Affairs.
- Extensive background working for the Aboriginal community-controlled sector.
- Has held senior research roles at CSIRO and Charles Darwin University.
- Josie is an award-winning researcher, including the recipient of the prestigious W.H. Stanner Award (2017)
- Ministerial appointments at the Commonwealth and NT level
- Community volunteer



Mr Thomas Wilcox

- Over 20 years of experience in legal and corporate governance roles in Australia and overseas, predominantly in the resources sector
- Currently the Vice President Legal & Sustainability for Sibanye-Stillwater Limited, a multinational mining and metals processing group
- Former captain, premiership player and Committee member with the University Blues Football Club in the Premier Division of the Victorian Amateur Football Association
- Master of Laws (LLM); Bachelor of Laws (LLB); Bachelor of Commerce (BCom)
- Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD)

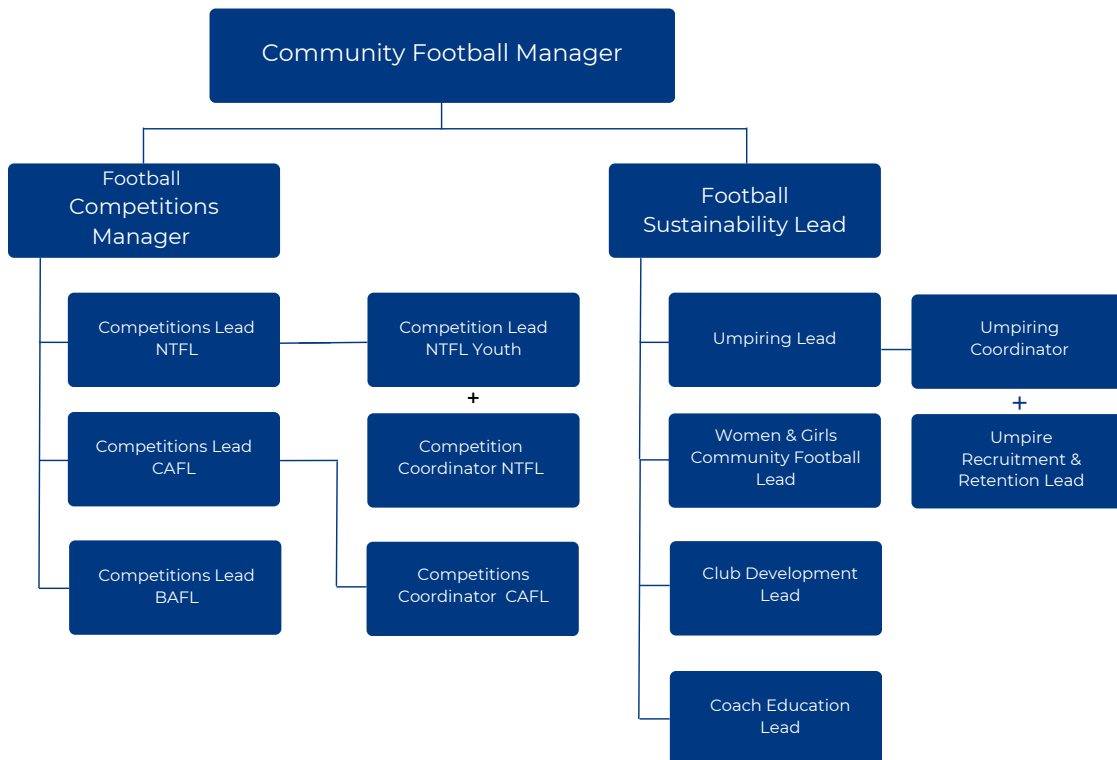
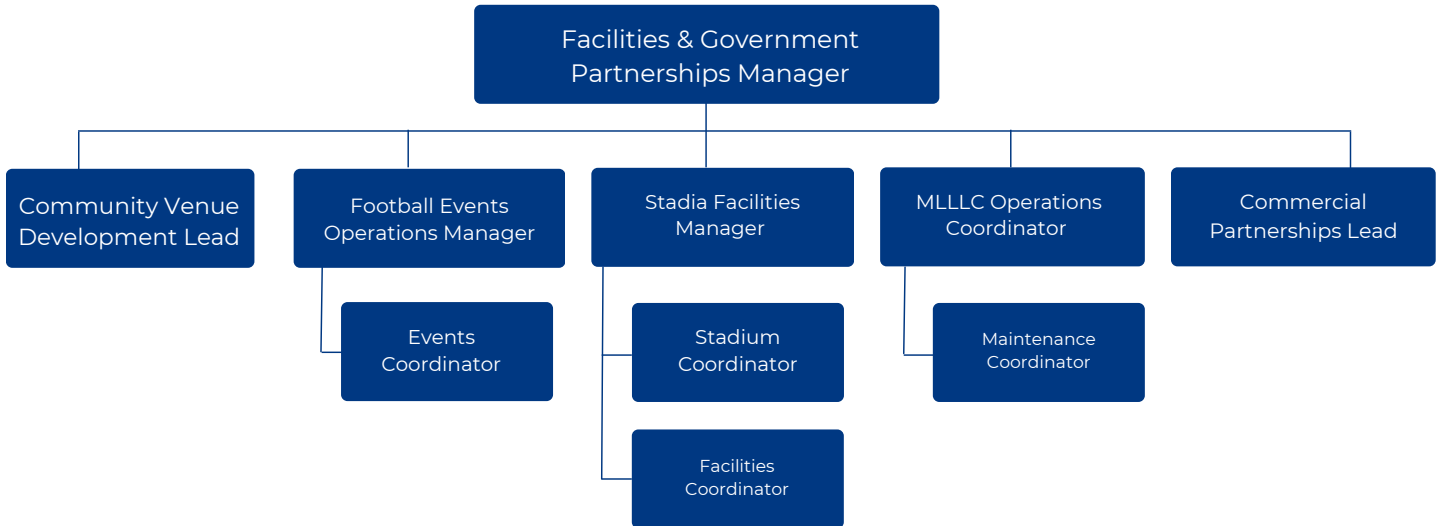
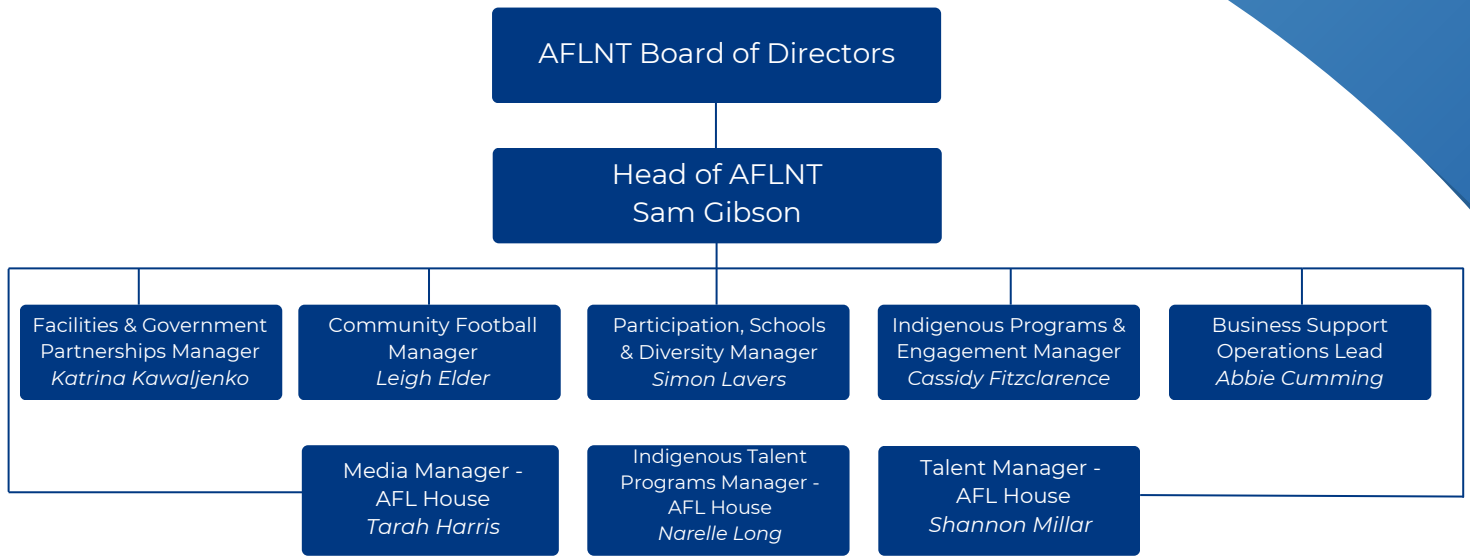
AFL NORTHERN TERRITORY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-23

AFLNT Strategic Priorities 22/23

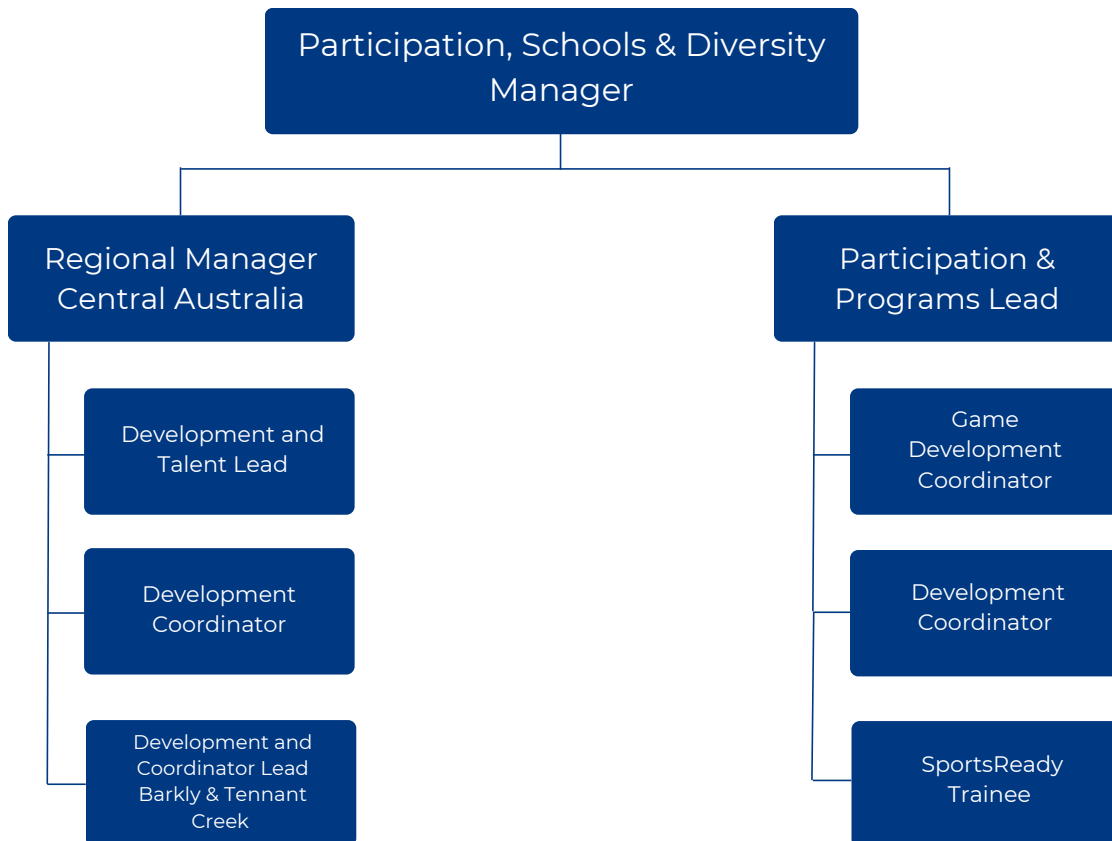
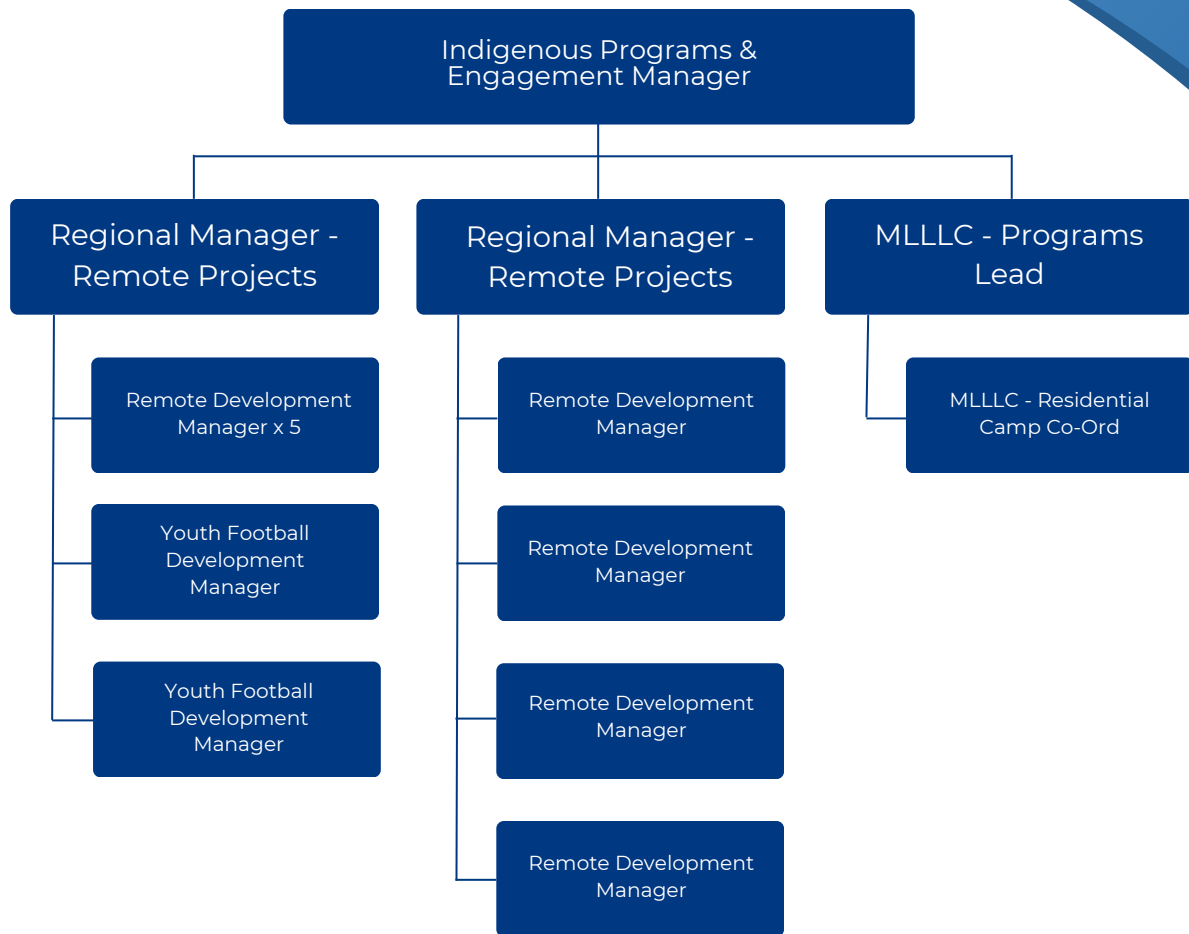


Key Business Areas	COMPETITIONS & CLUBS	PARTICIPATION & PROGRAMS	REMOTE PROGRAMS	FACILITIES & GOVERNMENT	STADIUM & EVENTS	TALENT PATHWAYS
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTFL - the premier sporting competition in the NT. • Efficient and effective governance models, providing greater support to competitions across the NT • Sustainable pathways for players, coaches, umpires and administrators, with a focus on Women and Girls. • Create positive game environment strategies. • Enhance Coach Education across all competitions. • Long-term sustainability for competitions & clubs • Create strategies to recruit and retain umpires. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position AFL as the #1 sport for introductory programs through both Auskick and School programs • Increase the transition of junior participants from introductory programs to community football • Embed diversity and inclusion within all participation programs • Drive growth through different formats that align with consumer needs • Enhance the capacity of the delivery network to cater for increased interest and demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong bounce back from COVID-19 • Long-term sustainability for AFLNT remote projects & MLLLC programs • Deliver quality football based programs that lead to greater community outcomes • Establish the future direction of MLLLC programs • MLLLC to lead all AFL focussed Indigenous education and leadership programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the development of remote facilities based on community need, accessibility and sustainability • Drive a national strategy around remote facility standards and operations • Manage a hierarchy of facilities that are fit for purpose and meet growing consumer needs • Drive greater investment in new and existing facilities that cater for medium – long term growth • Foster strong relationships across the three tiers of Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver high quality marquee events including AFL Games • Drive sustainable operating models at TIO Stadium and the MLLLC • Support the delivery of activities and events across the business that promote AFL, including through the NTFL • Enhance the consumer experience to enable greater accessibility and patronage • Maximise commercial return on AFLNT managed facilities and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively to identify talent early across the NT • Support fundamental skill development throughout youth football • Design and deliver programs that enable connection between players in remote, regional and urban settings • Deliver high quality performance programs for u16 and u18 age groups across the NT • Drive greater engagement with key stakeholders including NGA's, coaches and service providers

AFL NORTHERN TERRITORY ORGANISATIONAL CHART



AFL NORTHERN TERRITORY ORGANISATIONAL CHART





NORTHERN TERRITORY FOOTBALL LEAGUE

The 2022/23 Northern Territory Football League (NTFL) season was marked by significant growth in both Junior and Senior participation, and the introduction of new Premier League sides and two new senior divisions. The Men's Premier League Reserves and Women's Division 2 were introduced to the league, which will set the NTFL up for an increase in the number of senior teams and players in future as our ever increasing junior player numbers graduate to playing senior football.

The Tiwi Bombers entered the Women's Premier League competition, while PINT was elevated to the Men's Premier League. PINT also became the largest senior club in the league. This created a nine-team competition in both Premier League competitions with a bye returning to the Men's PL and all sides were able to play each other twice. Both PINT (men) and Tiwi Bombers (women) finished just out of the top 5 in their first season.

Banks and Jabiru both entered their first women's teams in Women's Division 2, with Jabiru making the finals and Banks winning the premiership. Waratah broke their Men's Premier League 23-year premiership drought by defeating Southern Districts by 18 points. PINT won their 2nd Women's Premier League Premiership by defeating Waratah by 40 points.

Dylan Landt of St Mary's was the runaway winner of the Nichols Medal with 23 votes, 8 ahead of his nearest rival. Molly Althouse of Darwin Buffaloes dominated the Women's Best & Fairest count, becoming the third player to go back-to-back. The Dennis Dunn MPL Leading Goal Kicker award was won by Jackson Calder of St Mary's, while the WPL Leading Goal Kicker went to Centralian Kaitlyn Armstrong of St Mary's.

A full list of awards and winners at the 2022/23 Nichols Medal, presented by Cazalys Palmerston Club:

Men's Division 1 Lancaster Medal

Simon Crowden, 16 votes – Jabiru Bombers

Men's Division 1 Leading Goal Kicker

Aaron Knapman, 30 goals – Banks Bulldogs

Men's Division 2 Best and Fairest

Thomas Harvey, 15 votes – Southern Districts

Men's Division 2 Leading Goal Kicker

Mathias Liddy, 22 goals – St Mary's

Women's Division 1 Best and Fairest

Jaden Croker, 9 votes – Nightcliff

Women's Division 1 Leading Goal Kicker

Sarah Singh, 18 goals – PINT

Women's Division 2 Best and Fairest

Sasha Byrnes, 14 votes – Jabiru Bombers

Women's Division 2 Leading Goal Kicker

Madison Ludwig, 17 goals – St Mary's

Nichols Medal

Dylan Landt, 22 votes – Nightcliff Tigers

Women's Premier League Best and Fairest Medal

Molly Althouse, 28 votes – Darwin Buffaloes

Men's Premier League Leading Goal Kicker

Jackson Calder, 51 goals – St Mary's

Women's Leading Goal Kicker

Kaitlyn Armstrong, 50 goals – St Mary's

Men's Premier League Reserves Mitch Lee Medal

Matt Duffy, 17 votes – Southern Districts

Men's Premier League Reserves Leading Goal Kicker

Lewis Stanton, 60 goals – Waratah

Small Club of the Year

Jabiru Bombers Football Club

ABC Umpire of the Year

Mark Noonan

Towards Zero Volunteer of the Year

Kathryn Stanislaus

Big Club of the Year

PINT Football Club

ABC Player of the Year

Reni Hicks – PINT

NT News Men's Rising Star

Peter Politis – Nightcliff Tigers

NT News Women's Rising Star

Tatyana Perry – Palmerston Magpies

NT News/De Silva Hebron Player of the Year

Jarrod Stokes – Darwin Buffaloes



The 2023 (76th) TIO CAFL Season was a lively one, culminating in several thrilling finals matches in both Town and Community Competitions. 39 teams put on over 250 games to entertain the region.

The Community competition had a new look. Of the eight home and away rounds played, four were held in Alice Springs and four were held on the communities. Ltyentye Apurte, Ntaria, Yuendumu, Ti Tree, Mutitjulu and Arlparra all hosted matches. Of the ten teams that played in 2022, two (Engawala and Plenty Hwy) dropped out and were replaced by Arlparra and Ti Tree.

Areyonga renamed themselves Mutitjulu. After two dynamic preliminary finals played at TIO Traeger Park before big crowds (Papunya 83 def Arlparra 81 and Western Aranda 105 def Ti Tree 102), Papunya triumphed in the grand final over Western Aranda (81 to 48) at Traeger Park, shown live on ICTV.

The Under 15 and Under 18 Men's competitions were played on a Friday night, moving from Wednesday (U15) and Saturday (U18) in 2022. This created a big night of junior footy which saw increased player involvement, significant drop in forfeits and solid crowds. The Under 15 Men's competition culminated in a cracking grand final in which Rovers kicked three goals in the last 90 seconds to snatch victory over Federal (51 to 46). Pioneer were undefeated in the U18 competition but had to jag a last kick win in the grand final, defeating South (62 to 58).

The Alkamilya Under 16 Women's team won the flag, going back-to-back. They beat South (55 to 35) in a hard fought match.

In the Senior Men's Reserve grade, Federal were dominant in the grand final over a plucky West (64 to 22). The Men's Reserve grade competition was played with an enjoyable, social flavour all season.

Federal went undefeated in the Senior Men's grade. The grand final was a first – the first ever Federal v South Grand Final. South led by 4 points at three quarter time but Federal ran it out with a five goal last quarter to win their first flag (86 to 64) since their 2015-16 wins.

In another first, the final match of the Town season was the Senior Women's Grand Final between Alkamilya and West. West kept Alkamilya scoreless in the last quarter but Alkamilya toughed it out and won (32 to 29).

Alice Springs again hosted the Melbourne Demons men's AFL side in an AFL premiership match. The Demons went down 5.15.45 to GWS 7.5.47 in near freezing, wet conditions before a hardy crowd of three and half thousand footy fans at Traeger Park.

Abraham Ankers (Federal) won his third Minahan Medal after his success in 2016 and 2020. Libby Taylor (Federal) won the Margret Liddle Medal. The Kevin Prior Rising Stars were Kaleel Ross (Pioneer) and Danika McDonald (Federal).

Walter Gallio won his second consecutive TIO Golden Whistle Award as the best Umpire. Wally's effort on and off the field with the umpires was pivotal as the competition looks to build umpiring stocks.

AFLNT extends its gratitude and thanks to all volunteers for their considerable contributions throughout 2023. We acknowledge the ongoing contributions made by so many people, including our Life Members, contributions that have allowed the CAFL to prosper for 76 years. We look forward to welcoming everyone back to a bumper 2024 TIO CAFL Season!

BARKLY

Season 33 of the Barkly Australian Football League saw the return of the Elliott Hawks who were represented in both the Men's and Women's competitions - for their Women's team it was their inaugural season.

7 teams vied for the men's title and 5 for the Women's. In the Men's, it came down to Elliott and Ali Curung in the decider with Elliott prevailing by 10 goals. Spitfires and Elliott met in the Women's Grand Final and it saw Spitfires claim their maiden premiership, winning by 8 points. Kurt Raymond (Elliott) was awarded Best on Ground in the Men's and Delaicee Hansen was awarded Best on Ground in the Women's.

Elijah Baker from Spitfires and Kayla Hooker from Elliott were the leading goal kickers in their respective competitions. The Patrons Medal for Men's League Best and Fairest went to Matthew Downey for Eagles and the Women's Best and Fairest Medal was won by Delaicee Hansen from Spitfires.

AFL Community Camp returned to the Barkly in February and saw several schools in the Barkly engage with Collingwood AFL players. Collingwood again supported the Barkly in the Michael Long Cup held in Darwin.

In the representative space, Elijah Baker, Stanley Waistcoat and Andrew Green represented at NT Academy level.

BIG RIVERS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

The BRFL continues to provide competitive football opportunities for men and women across the length and breadth of the Big Rivers region from Ngukurr in the east to Lajamanu in the west and Barunga in the south to Daly River in the north, as well as the Katherine based teams.

The 2023 season kicked off relatively unchanged from the previous year with all 8 teams returning in the Senior Men's competition and 5 out of 6 Senior Women's teams competing, with only the Katherine Camels taking a hiatus.

Throughout the course of the year, the league and all its stakeholders were met with multiple hurdles, with certain grounds becoming unavailable for use. But this ended up being a blessing in disguise as it resulted in more football being taken out to remote communities. Although this was met with initial hesitancy, the feedback from clubs and individual participants was mostly positive and the BRFL will look to carry on with taking the game to the people in 2024. A special thank you to the communities of Nauiyu, Barunga and also Kalano Community and the Katherine High School for hosting footy.

Both Senior competitions were exciting and closely fought affairs. The Women's competition was a case of musical chairs for top spot with the Arnhem Crows holding the minor premiership at seasons end. In the Men's grade, it was the Ngukurr Bulldogs who took the bragging right of first place heading into finals, just nudging out Eastside who had a considerable undefeated streak throughout the year but were weakened late in the season by some untimely injuries and suspensions.

The 2023 finals series was also a tightly fought battle in both grades. It all culminated on a predictably hot and dry Katherine day where in front of a large but passionate and well behaved crowd. It was the Arnhem Crows who got the better of Ngukurr to take out the Senior Women's grand final. The good vibes of the day continued well into the afternoon with the Ngukurr Bulldogs ending their premiership drought with a comprehensive win against Katherine South.

A huge thank you to all AFLNT staff who put so much time and effort and all the community stakeholders and programs who come together to ensure that all 2023 finals were held in a safe but fun environment. A huge congratulations to Jenna Singh-Lippo from Arnhem Crows and Cedric Robertson from the Ngukurr Bulldogs who were judged best on ground for their performances on the day.

There were multiple other award winners who were also recognised throughout the 2023 season.

Billie Byers – Senior Women's Best and Fairest
Will Robinson – Doug Kelly Medal
Donna Capes – Volunteer of the year
Denisha Koimala – Women's leading goal kicker
Liam Holt-Fitz – Men's leading goal kicker
Jessica Head – Golden Whistle award
Ngukurr Bulldogs – Club of the year

We move on to season 2024 with a focus on continuing to grow numbers, with increasing women's and junior participation being a core part of our goal. We also look to continue the growth within football clubs where we hope to push further education on how clubs can better set themselves up for success.



REMOTE PROJECTS

The AFLNT Remote Projects team returned to full strength in 2023 with AFL programs and competitions resuming in most remote Aboriginal communities throughout the NT. With an impressive team of full-time staff and local casual employees a range of ground breaking outcomes were achieved.

The most notable of these outcomes was the commencement of the first ever Tiwi Islands Women's competition and the significant expansion of the funded Auskick centers throughout the Northern Territory.

Senior men's AFL competition also returned to many regions that suffered community interruptions and significant social challenges since the spread of Covid-19. The first full season of men's football was completed in Maningrida since 2019, which also saw the first ever structured women's competition.

In 2023 the Tiwi Islands Football League (TIFL) men's competition was shifted to a dry season period for the first time since its inception over fifty years ago. The decision to move to the dry season was to allow improved transport between communities due to ongoing wet season road closures.

The opportunity to provide young men a meaningful activity throughout the dry season and the chance to prepare Tiwi footballers to play for the Tiwi Bombers in the NTFL competition.

The shift was a resounding success with an increase in player participation, improved standard of matches due to the availability of high-quality players and less forfeits due to accessibility. Regular senior football games also returned in the community of Wadeye for the first time in many years.

The Gove and Galiwinku Men's AFL competitions continued as the premier AFL events throughout East Arnhem land in 2023.

Players and families regularly travel throughout the East Arnhem region to participate in these competitions. Social AFL Nines was also introduced to the Gove peninsula as a healthy post GAFL season AFL activity with seven mixed gender teams competing in the inaugural season.

Senior women's AFL continued to flourish throughout remote Aboriginal communities in 2023 with the establishment of two new competitions. The first full season of women's AFL was completed in Maningrida with 6 teams and 230 women engaging in the competition.

The Galiwinku Women's competition also continued as a mainstay on the football calendar throughout East Arnhem land.

REMOTE PROJECTS

The first ever Tiwi Islands Women's Competition was established in 2023 with an exciting 7 team competition. Plans to develop this competition have been underway for some time but they became a reality when 50 Tiwi women came together to lock in the competition structures early in 2023.

With an incredible display of leadership and independence the Tiwi women decided they wanted the competition to be lead by female coaches, umpires, and administrators. Later in the season over 30 Tiwi women attended and completed their AFL Foundation Coaching course delivered by AFLNT Talent and High-Performance Lead Shannon Millar. This is the first female AFL coaching course delivered on such a scale throughout remote Aboriginal communities, which will inspire further coach development courses in other regions throughout the NT.

The inaugural TIFLW Grand Final was played in front of over 1000 passionate supporters with the Muluwurri Magpies taking the honors over the Tapalinga superstars. Subsequent media coverage of the game saw over 1 million people engage in the story through ABC and AFL coverage.

AFL Auskick also saw a huge expansion throughout remote Aboriginal communities in 2023. Through strong working relationships with local partner organisations AFLNT was able to secure funding to support the establishment of 7 new fully registered Auskick centres. This funding enabled AFLNT to register 312 male and female participants, an increase of 237 more than 2022 that supported the highest ever Auskick registrations for AFLNT. The expansion of Auskick throughout remote Aboriginal communities also saw AFLNT's rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island participation rate increase to 42%, the highest of all AFL states and territories. With newly formed centres in most regions AFLNT plans to continue to expand this reach to further communities in 2024.

2023 also saw the commencement of an exciting new funding package to support AFL in First Nations communities throughout the Northern Territory. Through ongoing engagement with various Federal Government agencies, funding was secured in 2023 through a joint Government initiative between the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and the National Indigenous Australian's Agency (NIAA). This joint funding package is focused on First Nations Women and Girls and Youth at Risk and includes an expansion of programs from remote Aboriginal communities for servicing First Nations communities in regional and urban environments.

A range of specific AFL themed programs aligned to this funding kicked off in July 2023 with strong engagement and outcomes in the first six months of the project. This funding package will be expanded in 2024 with plans underway to expand programs and improved reporting methods that demonstrate the significant impact AFL has on First Nations communities throughout the Northern Territory. AFLNT is thrilled to secure this funding and excited about the outcomes that will be achieved through this new focused strategy.



MICHAEL LONG LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP CENTRE

The Michael Long Learning and Leadership Center (MLLLC) returned to a full year of program delivery in 2023. For the first time since 2019 programs were delivered throughout all four terms with 18 remote community schools and 239 students completing the programs. Schools from throughout the Northern Territory engaged in the program with 11 major Aboriginal language groups travelling over 28,000kms to attend camps in Darwin via airplane, bus, car, and ferry.

Many of the schools returned to the MLLLC while the Narwarddeken Academy, Numbulwar and Wooliana community schools engaged in their first ever MLLLC programs. AFLNT also hosted some bespoke camps in 2023 for specific schools and partner organisations. In term four AFLNT students from the Tiwi Island communities of Pirlangimpi and Milikapitii who have been identified by the NT Department of Education, Transition Support Unit (TSU) who are making the transition into boarding in 2024. This camp had a specific schedule to replicate life at boarding school while also preparing the students for life in Darwin. The students were also presented with an opportunity to meet Collingwood AFL players and hold the AFL premiership cup. The NPY Women's Council also completed camps at the MLLLC in 2023 for their junior staff from Central Australia, with camps having a leadership and professional development focus.

The MLLLC camps also saw a range of positive changes to the student activities that have all added great value to the overall programs. In 2023 the MLLLC students completed session with Combat Therapy, Balanced Choice, the Aboriginal Bush Traders, and the Surf Life Saving Northern Territory while at camps in Darwin. All new programs were introduced to provide opportunities for experiential learning focusing on building teamwork, self-confidence, and leadership. All external program providers were delivered by First Nations staff who provide students with real life examples of employment pathways they can follow upon completion of school.

The remote homeland community school of the Narwarddeken Academy in West Arnhem Land were rewarded with a student camp while the Gold Coast Suns were in Darwin between their two scheduled AFL matches. This was an incredible experience for the students who were able to engage with the players, learn what it is like to be an AFL player and participate in special match day activities like the guard of honors and GC Sun's mascot.

A highlight of the MLLLC camps occurred during the Borroloola school's camp. While completing the tour of the Haileybury Rendall school the students were greeted by a former student who showed the students throughout the school but also informed us she enrolled at Haileybury due to her experience at the MLLLC camp in 2018. Ochre enrolled as a year 7 student in 2019 and is now in year 11 and plans to complete school at Haileybury Rendall school.

Ochre described her own boarding journey, "I was at MLLLC for a school excursion with Borroloola school. We visited 2 schools St Johns and Haileybury Rendall School boarding house. When I got back home to (Borroloola) school, I said to my parents I want to go to HRS and boarding house. My friends in class were also talking about going to HRS".

Feedback from all camps was extremely positive 98% of the students letting us know they enjoyed the 'Make Your Mark' program and 97% of the students letting us know they were proud of themselves for completing the program.

The MLLLC programs were again supported by key industry partners in 2023 notably INPEX, MACC Road Safety and INTRACT. The funding and resource support from these organisations is invaluable for the MLLLC programs and ensures the students have a unique and exciting time while in Darwin. Regional partners also play a key role in supporting the travel costs of students into Darwin to complete camps.

There are already many remote community schools excited to engage in the MLLLC programs in 2024 with in term and school holiday camps already locked in to be delivered.

COACH EDUCATION

The Coaching Department of AFL Northern Territory (AFLNT) has made significant strides this past year, with notable achievements and initiatives contributing to developing coaching skills and promoting the sport across the Territory. A major highlight was the delivery of Foundation Coach accreditation sessions in Katherine and Tiwi Islands, marking the first instance of such sessions being held in these locations. Expanding our coaching accreditation program underscores our commitment to developing local coaching talent and fostering Australian Rules football in remote and regional communities.

Further enhancing our communication and engagement with coaches, the department launched a monthly newsletter. This initiative has greatly improved the flow of information, providing coaches with regular updates, resources, and opportunities for professional development. This step towards better communication is a testament to our commitment to support and inform our coaching community effectively.

A standout achievement this year has been the notable increase in female coach representation within the Northern Territory, positioning us as national leaders in this area. The introduction of the "She Can Coach" program has been instrumental in this success, attracting 45 registrations. This program empowers female coaches and promotes diversity and inclusivity in Australian Rules football coaching. The enthusiastic response to this initiative highlights women's growing interest and participation in football coaching roles, an area we proudly champion.

Additionally, we witnessed the return of the Level 2 coaching accreditation in Darwin. This program, attended by 20 participants, was further enhanced by the involvement of guest presenters from Leading Teams and Brendan McCartney from Melbourne. Their expertise and insights provided an invaluable learning experience for all attendees. We also facilitated a Q&A session with coaches from the Gold Coast Suns during the AFL matches in Darwin, offering a unique opportunity for local coaches to gain insights from professionals at the sport's highest level.

In summary, the Coaching Department of AFLNT has had a year marked by expansion, inclusivity, and enhanced communication, laying a strong foundation for the future growth and development of Australian Rules football coaching in the Northern Territory.



CLUB DEVELOPMENT

The Club Development Department of AFL Northern Territory (AFLNT) has had a substantial and impactful year, focusing on supporting clubs to create inclusive, safe, and enjoyable environments for all participants.

Our priorities have been centered around enhancing the capability of club committees, developing the volunteer base of community football, and aligning game development programs with club football offerings. These priorities have been pivotal in strengthening the foundation of our community clubs across the Territory.

One of our key achievements this year was the release of bespoke licence agreements within the Northern Territory Football League (NTFL). These agreements are tailored to our clubs' unique needs and circumstances, ensuring a more effective and collaborative relationship between AFLNT and its NTFL member clubs. This initiative represents a significant step forward in professionalising and streamlining our club operations.

The successful implementation and delivery of the NTFL Calendar, for both Off-Season and In-Season development opportunities and meeting models has been another major accomplishment. This initiative has provided clubs with a clear and structured framework for their activities, facilitating better planning, preparation, and engagement across the league. The introduction of this model has been instrumental in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of our clubs during the critical off-season period.

Our commitment to regional development was highlighted through the successful delivery of two Regional League Roadshows which have focused on development of content in conjunction with the Regional Competition Leads, in order to deliver content specifically relevant to each of the unique regional environments.

The past year also saw the introduction of the Inaugural Junior Conference, to compliment the Senior NTFL conference, leading in to the launch of the NTFL season. The addition of the Junior conference has allowed both events to provide a more targeted approach to support and resources for our NTFL clubs, along with fostering a greater sense of community and collaboration across the league.

Moreover, implementing a Territory-wide Recognition & Reward program for volunteer retention has been a cornerstone of our efforts to develop the volunteer base of community football. Recognising the invaluable contribution of volunteers, this program aims to acknowledge, celebrate, and retain the individuals who are the lifeblood of our sport at the community level. This initiative not only boosts morale but also encourages the continued involvement of volunteers, which is essential for the sustainability and growth of community football in the Northern Territory.

In conclusion, the Club Development Department of AFLNT has demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting and enhancing the capabilities of our clubs and volunteers. Through strategic initiatives and targeted support, we have laid a solid foundation for club football's ongoing development and success in the Northern Territory.



UMPIRING

The AFL Northern Territory (AFLNT) has witnessed a dynamic evolution in its umpiring landscape, reflecting a commitment to continuous improvement.

The 2023-24 season set the stage for progress, with the number of registered umpires growing from 172 in 2021-22, to 191 2022-23. The increase in female umpire participation highlights AFLNT's focus on inclusivity as the Northern Territory leads all other states with 23.6% female, transgender, and non-binary representation.

Despite the post pandemic challenges AFLNT Umpiring had to contend with, the dedication and commitment of the umpires remained outstanding. The resilience and adaptability of the umpiring programs across urban and regional regions has again delivered high quality umpiring to all the Northern Territory Leagues and laid a strong foundation for future growth. AFLNT would like to sincerely thank all of those that have adjudicated in many games across Northern Territory competitions.

The NTFL Visiting Umpire program continues to play a critical role in servicing the NTFL and saw 49 umpires visit or relocate to Darwin for the 2023-24 NTFL season. This successful initiative not only delivers support for the NTFL competition, but it also provides a unique opportunity for visiting umpires to experience the culturally rich community and passionate football landscape. The visiting umpire program also created much cross border knowledge sharing and skills development opportunities through coaching and mentoring.

The AFL NT Umpire Mentor Program has emerged as a cornerstone in the Umpire Development Pathway, demonstrating its success through active mentoring of 39 junior field and boundary umpires during all their matches. The program has been instrumental in providing a structured platform for formal and consistent performance and development feedback. This emphasis on mentorship aligns with AFLNT's Umpiring goal to provide a nurturing culture of continuous improvement within the umpiring community. The success of the AFLNT Umpire Mentor Program will be integrated into the education and development programs going forward, reinforcing its vital role in shaping the future of umpiring in the Northern Territory.

As we look to the future, AFLNT remains committed to the sustainability and growth of umpiring in the Northern Territory. The implementation of 'Project 500' recommendations and the creation of new roles within the Umpiring department, including Umpiring Lead Martin Oosthuysen and Umpiring Recruitment & Retention Lead Kylie Podlaha, signify a strategic approach to addressing the unique challenges of the Territory. The increased investment in the umpire training programs, with additional coaches and a strength and conditioning coach, aligns with the long-term vision for recruitment and retention.

In 2024, AFLNT will continue to invest in the development of umpire coaches, supporting a safe, inclusive, positive, and vibrant culture, strengthening available resources to drive recruitment and retention strategies, a reinforced and clear pathway for aspiring umpires, and fostering strong relationships with the umpire communities.

AFLNT anticipates a strong conclusion to the 2023-24 NTFL season and looks forward to supporting regional and remote competitions throughout the dry season of 2024.

EVENTS

The 2022/23 Nichols Medal presented by Cazalys Palmerston Club returned to its in-person glory after being held in 21/22 online due to COVID. The sold-out event was held at Mindil Beach Casino and hosted by Katie Woolf. The TIO NTFL Grand Final on 18 March 2023 was attend by 6712 footy fans and the day was also host to the tradition 2022/23 Life Member Induction Luncheon.

For the second year in a row, three AFL Premiership games were hosted in the Northern Territory across Darwin and Alice Springs. The Gold Coast Suns cemented themselves as Territory Suns by calling the Territory home for the second year in a row for ten days. Their busy schedule saw them not only play and win two games, but visit the Tiwi Islands, tourism attractions, various schools, engagement with MLLLC education programs, Auskick launch and an inclusion clinic. GCS also brought with them for the second year in a row a large business delegation who were treated to a true Top End experience.

The Territory Suns took on Western Bulldogs in round 11 and was attended by 9316 people with a VFL Curtain raiser between GCS and Footscray Bulldogs. This allowed GCS VFL and AFL teams to travel together for the NT experience.

Round 12, GCS took on Adelaide which saw more than 10000 people in attendance. A curtain raiser between NTFL 2022/23 Premiers and a Central Australian Football League (CAFL) representative side, was a hard-fought competition showcasing the talent in both the centre and top end. The half time entertainment saw an all-girls Auskick showcase, a true testament to the strong growth in junior girls' football in the NT. Over the two AFL games, the concourse was activated by Darwin Festival and Power and Water Corporation, two new partnerships formed this year.

Round 16 Melbourne Demons vs GWS Giants with almost 3500 patrons braving the cold and very wet conditions at Trager Park. Unseasonably wet and bitterly cold weather greeted the two teams, which provided difficult conditions in the lead up for preparation of the ground. It was great to still see the faithful fans turn up the day prior to an open captains run and on game day.

The AFLNT Hall of Fame was hosted at TIO Stadium under light with 250 guests on Saturday 12 August. The night saw 14 Hall of Fame inductees including the AFLNT's first women side and Russell Jeffrey elevated to Legend status. Guests hosted by Amy Culpitt, MC and entertained by Yirrma and his band whilst in town for the Darwin Festival. This was a wonderful evening celebrating the greats of the game at the Top End home of AFL for what will be remembered as an iconic evening.

The events team also supported our regional competitions to host their best and fairest and Grand finals. This saw the 2023 CAFL Minahan Medal exceed capacity with 90 persons attending, with representatives from all clubs and more than 3500 people attend the 2023 TIO CAFL Town Grand Final over the Friday and Saturday. In Katherine support was provided for the 2023 Doug Kelly award with more than 50 attending including Doug Kelly and his family. The BRFL grand final saw 1400 people in attendance, which was a successfully run event at the Katherine Showground. This model for cross collaboration and support between teams will continue for 2024.



COMMERCIAL AND PARTNERSHIPS

In the past twelve months AFLNT has seen continued growth with our partnerships across the NT Community, working collaboratively with the private, non-government and government sectors for the benefit of football and our community.

In February the first Local Government Forum was held by AFLNT in partnership with the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory. This was an opportunity to educate on what AFLNT does across the NT from football, programs, and infrastructure & platform to plan infrastructure advocacy plan for remote parts of the NT. The event was attended by 40 delegates from various local councils and land council across the NT and support by expertise from AFL House, Rob Auld and Shayne Ward.

TIO continues to be our Naming Rights Sponsor for TIO Stadium, the TIO NTFL and TIO CAFL Competition. This long standing and mutually beneficial relationships is in its 32nd year, and we look forward to many more years of our partnership. Our long standing relationship with Cazaly's Palmerston Club continues with support provided across AFLNT's core business. This partnership, which extends to support given to NTFL clubs, plays a crucial role in the continued development of football in the Top End.

This year we welcomed the Power and Water Corporation, who came on board to support the launch of our Women's and Girls Programs and match day activations.

The AFLNT has sponsorship collaborations with 66 NT businesses, spanning box holders, signage, naming rights, media partners, and in-kind suppliers. Each partnership is integral to the continuous success of football in the NT, and we remain dedicated to nurturing these relationships while actively seeking out fresh and innovative partnerships.

TIO STADIUM

This has been a significant year for TIO stadium with many significant changes to operations, aesthetic changes and cricket being held for the first time in over a decade.

Over the NTFL 2022/23 Season the stadium seats were replaced by the Northern Territory Government. Instead of opting for like to like, AFLNT negotiated for an Indigenous design by local Larrakia artist Trent Lee to be projected across the seats with the assistance of Smartform Architects. The results is not only visually pleasing but acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners, the Larrakia people.

After more than 20 years as the TIO Stadium Caterer, Karen Sheldon Catering advised they would be vacating permanently in mid 2023 along with Saltbush whose administrative operations were based at TIO Stadium. This saw the end of a very long-term relationship between the two organisation and goodbye to the beloved KSC pies and sausage rolls.

This end of an era provided an opportunity to review food and beverage operations at TIO stadium that saw the beginning of a partnership with Delaware North Company and AFLNT. From Round 1 of the 2023/24 season (DNC) commenced operations of the public bar, member's bar and kiosk at TIO Stadium and Gardens. Allowing AFLNT staff to focus on the core business of football operations. This partnership will be reviewed at the conclusion of the NTFL 2023/24 season.

Venue Agreement in place with NT Cricket that has seen a turf drop in wicket installed for first time 15 years. TIO Stadium hosted U19's ICC qualifiers and Strike League through July and August.

MLLLC

Bookings for the lecture theatre and accommodation have been consistent throughout the year, including 10 new organisations.

We continue to work on driving more use / engagement through the centre to assist with maintenance and operation costs in addition to community engagement.

The Gym and recovery centre were utilised by Talent , visiting and local football clubs and hosted other sports and visiting competing teams including the Australian Wallabies on their way to the World Cup. Work will continue on venue improvement as the facility ages and opportunities to connect with other sports and community groups.

FACILITIES

In 2022-23 AFLNT along with the AFL invested heavily in the development of facilities across the NT to address the ongoing need for additional ground capacity to meet the needs of our game's growth. This investment included the addition of a new position to support the AFL's Towards 2030 strategy and continue projects already underway.

This year saw the completion of several planning projects including the AFLNT Facility Needs Assessment, that identifies the current and future facility needs in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs; and the Cazalys and Garden's Oval Venue Improvement Plans.

These projects will provide valuable information to lobby for investment into facilities to support our sport with a focus on more lights, better amenities for Women and Girls and maximising the potential of our current facilities.

In addition to this, the AFL's Breaking New Ground Programs is being utilised to identify and fund the planning, design, and development of AFL related facilities on school and other innovative sites to meet the increasing need for further facilities. Over the past year this has included working in partnership with Nightcliff Middle School for potential future investment.

AFLNT has also supported our clubs through the Australian Football Facilities Fund for planning works to identify their current and future needs; and development of advocacy document.

AFLNT has also invested in a robotic line marking machine to increase efficiency when line marking for the NTFL season. This has increased the capacity to line mark more ovals which has increased over the year to accommodate additional teams and has also enabled AFLNT to support other codes on a weekly basis to line mark their fields.

In July 2023 the Central Australia Infrastructure Working Group was established to provide strategic direction and leadership to the development of sustainable football and associated community infrastructure in remote communities in Central Australia. The AFL provided \$140,000 of funding to assist the Working Group.

The Working Group is tasked with developing a plan for the establishment of four community hubs in remote Central Australian communities that will address current infrastructure deficits and provide for regular and sustainable community use. The plan will include infrastructure that not only supports football, but also other community priorities such as spaces for service providers (health, NDIS), employment and economic development.

The Working Group is Chaired by AFLNT, with membership from:

Central Land Council
Central Desert Regional Council
MacDonnell Regional Council
Northern Territory Government (DIPL and Territory Families)
Power and Water Corporation
Office of the Central Australian Regional Controller

Stage one of this project has commenced, with Wallbridge Gilbert Aztec (WGA) engaged to assess the 7 nominated communities (Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa), Mutitjulu, Papunya, Ti Tree, Yuendumu, Atitjere (Harts Ranges) and Nataria (Hermannsburg) to determine the best location for these 4 community hubs based on a set of key metrics such as existing infrastructure (including power, water, sewage), land tenure road access etc. The preferred 4 hub locations will be signed off by the working group and stage 2 will commence.

Stage 2 will require the engagement of an external agency to work collaboratively (including required community consultation across the 4 identified hubs) with the working group, utilising an agreed methodology that will effectively take the project through more detailed design and operating requirements.

CAZALYS NT TALENT ACADEMY

The 2023 Talent season kicked off with the Academy's very first High-Performance camp in January.

Over 90 players from across the Territory came to Darwin to participate in the camp which included high performance testing (Yo-Yo, agility, vertical jump and 20 metre sprint). We had specialist coaches including Cameron Joyce Head Coach Gold Coast AFLW attend the camp offering players first hand what training is like at the highest level.

NT competed in the Under 16 girls National Championship in April on the Gold Coast. Shakaila Gardener-Dunn was the MVP for NT throughout the carnival. We were lucky enough to also give four Under 18 female players (Annabel Kievit, Kierra Zerafa, Rhanita Hewitt, and Sophie Berry) the opportunity to train for the week with the Gold Coast Suns AFLW team.

The AFLW held an Autumn series throughout May and five NT Under 18 players were given the opportunity to take the field with the Gold Coast Suns AFLW team. Annabel Kievit (played 2 matches), Kierra Zerafa (played 1 match), Rhanita Hewitt (played 1 match), Sophie Berry (played 1 match) and T'Sharni Graham (played 1 match). 2023 saw the NT have three players selected into the National Academies. T'Sharni Graham (AFLW), Kyanne Campbell (AFLW) and Orlando Turner (AFL.)

Under 18 male team completed in the Coates Talent League, playing three matches throughout April. High performances and interest from recruiters were Will Rowlands, Orlando Turner and Calvin Peris Chong. Will Rowlands was drafted to Gold Coast Suns in the 2023 Rookie draft. Patrick Snell was also drafted to Sydney Swans this year.

Under 18 female team also completed in three Coates Talent League games in Melbourne.

NT had four male players selected into the National Allies squad:

- Stanley Waistcoat – Tennant Creek
- William Rowlands – Darwin
- Orlando Turner – Alice Springs
- Clay Shadforth – Darwin (Borrooloola)

The Allies for the first time in the Under 18 Nationals history won all matches comfortably and becoming the National champions.

NT had six female players selected into the National Allies squad:

- Sophie Better – Darwin
- T'Sharni Graham – Darwin
- Kyanne Campbell – Alice Springs
- Rhanita Hewitt – Darwin
- Tatyana Perry – Darwin
- Maria Rioli – Darwin (Tiwi)

Sophie Berry captaining the team for their last game of the series.

The NT sent a team to the Gold Coast for the Under 16 male National Championships in July. Competing in three matches against Tasmania, GWS Giants Academy and Brisbane Lions Academy. Taj Murray was a standout receiving the NT MVP award and was selected in the All-Australian Team of the Tournament.

This year we held the biggest Michael Long Cup in history with 13 teams competing from across the NT: seven male teams and six female teams. 299 Under 15-year-old players participated across the two days. Each region across the NT was represented Darwin and Palmerston, Tiwi and West Arnhem, East Arnhem, Barkly, Big Rivers and Alice Springs. The program consisted of each team playing a minimum of three games (25 games in total played throughout the tournament), High performance session and well-being sessions. A Team of the tournament was selected for both male and female, these athletes will be invited to the Academy camp in January 2024.

Tournament winners for the male division was Tiwi and West Arnhem and the female winners were Darwin Red.





COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL

It was more important than ever to promote and share all the remarkable activities across our competitions and programs, with the department providing regular updates and information to all fans, members, partners and stakeholders, working with our clubs and leagues around the Northern Territory.

2022/23 another year of substantial audience growth and increased engagement across the media landscape in the Northern Territory and across Australia.

The team continued to package feature stories for AFL.com.au, Womens.afl, Channel 7 with and expanded packaging offers to news outlets ABC News, Nine News and Fox Footy

The Digital and Communications team continued the strong relationship with NITV's Yokayi Footy, providing wrap up segments on the 2022/23 TIO NTFL Finals Series, during their 'State Scoop', and a complete wrap up of the double header AFL Premiership Matches in Darwin and Alice Springs.

In addition to NTFL broadcast arrangements, AFLNT broadcast the 2023 Tiwi Island Football Grand Final between Tuyu Magpies vs Pumarali Lightning, broadcast live from Wurrumiyanga Oval, with the AFLNTv YouTube stream viewed over 6,800 times.

After success in its previous years, AFLNT and the NT News came together for the third season in a partnership to live stream Men's and selected Women's Premier League games for the 2022/23 TIO NTFL season.

Long-term broadcast partner, ABC Radio Darwin made a landmark move to broadcast one Women's Premier League match per round on ABC Grandstand. The new SEN partnership, saw broadcast one Men's Premier League Match per week nationally via SEN116.

For the first time NITV came on board to broadcast Under 18 Male and Female matches per week.

AFLNT Partnered with Kayo Freebies to broadcast the NTFL Men's and Women's Premier League Grand Final's, resulting in over 18,000 added views on the platform – highlighting the game to a national audience.

Numbers post season reflected, over 700,000 viewers across all broadcast platforms.

The partnership between AFLNT and ICTV continued for another year, which saw the TIO CAFL Central Desert Community preliminary and grand finals broadcast live into remote communities as well as Alice Springs and other Indigenous towns via ICTV, these broadcast matches attracted over 40,000 views across the two weeks, on streaming platforms alone.

The streams broadcast via ICTV Facebook and via the AFLNTv YouTube Channel ensured it was accessible to watch both nationally and internationally.

The Digital and Comms team continued to deliver high-quality content for fans of all ages across all social platforms.

All platforms experienced consistent audience growth from 2022 with a reach of over 920,000 users on the AFL Northern Territory Facebook page, and an increased total of 17,700 followers on Instagram, with reach of 350,000 users, an increase of 176% year on year.



PARTICIPATION

In 2023, the Game Development team soared to new heights, marking an outstanding year through growth and enthusiastic participation across our programs.

Auskick, the core of grassroots engagement, set the stage for our successful year. Surpassing all previous records, the program witnessed an astounding 1084 registered participants spread across the Northern Territory. The addition of two community run centers and particularly the Southern Districts centre boasting 88 registered participants, became the largest center in the NT.

Our commitment to community integration was represented by the Gold Coast FC's collaboration with Bagot Community, Moil Primary School, and Karama Primary. Through mall activations featuring free tickets and the Auskick launch, the initiative finished in a captivating mixed group participating in the halftime show during the first AFL game. A highlight was the thrilling all-girls halftime Auskick, with over 60 excited participants stealing the spotlight.

The NTFL U10 competition continued its impressive rise, welcoming 26 teams, including 6 all-girls sides. As the premier entry point into the game, the competition's growth trajectory is set to skyrocket, fuelled by the inclusion of AFL Superkick, setting an opportunity for AFLNT to exceed our ambitious growth expectations in the coming years.

AFLNT proudly fielded a team at the AFL National Inclusion Carnival, a testament to our commitment to diversity and inclusion. Eight dedicated players, after 16 weeks of rigorous pre-training, showcased their skills in 12 matches over 5 days. The standout performances of Isiah Keegan, making the All-Australian team, and Josheph Gibia, earning the Spirit of the Carnival award, added a touch of excellence to our participation.

The inaugural AFLNT Wheelchair Competition made history, drawing 30 participants over a thrilling 4 week period. Transitioning to the National competition, our local players, including MVP Zarra Chapman and All Australian Team member Weston Tedcastle, brought honor to our team's competitive spirit.

We launched the first all-girls Auskick program in the territory, spanning from Muirhead Community Park to Traeger Park in Alice Springs. With over 40 girls actively participating, this milestone not only establishes a new standard for inclusivity and diversity in our programs but also marks a significant stride toward fostering a more inclusive sporting community.

Darwin took centre stage by hosting the largest dry season AFL Nines's competition in 2023, featuring 22 teams across three divisions. This massive event not only showcased the vibrancy of our programs but also laid the foundation for potential expansion into regional and remote competitions.

Our commitment to AFL schools programs remained steady, with a nationwide push to involve every school in Australia. As we look ahead, 2023 has set the stage for the future for the Game Development team in the NT, marked by the delivery of new programs and the renewal of existing ones.

The year ahead brings opportunities for increased delivery, community engagement and participation right across the Northern Territory.

AFLNT FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023

The audited financial statements of AFL Northern Territory Limited, for the year ended 31 October 2023 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 profit of \$20,000 for the year ended 31st October 2023, which has decreased the retained profits to \$148,817. Key financial results for the 2023 Financial Year included:

Overall revenues increased by \$1.6m largely due to commercial and government revenues derived from hosting three AFL matches.

Accordingly, operating expenses increased by \$1.6m to enable match day costs, event costs, and game development.

The AFL continues to provide AFLNT with financial backing through State grant funding of \$3.27m (up from \$2.39m in 2022). There was a continued focus on renewing and retaining key government and corporate support for our Remote Programs.

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, 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 2023.



SEAN BOWDEN

*Chair of AFLNT
Board of Directors*

STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue	3	10,774,147	9,176,557
Expenses from operating activities	4	(10,754,147)	(9,137,759)
Net Profit/(Loss) for the year		20,000	38,798
Other comprehensive income for the period		-	-
Total comprehensive loss for the year		20,000	38,798

AFLNT FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	10(a)	38,618	26,776
Trade and other receivables	5	1,371,866	2,210,155
Other assets		10,147	34,757
Total current assets		1,420,631	2,271,687
Total assets		1,420,631	2,271,687
Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	6	236,302	540,116
Provisions	8	-	144,000
Deferred income		1,035,512	1,436,717
Total current liabilities		1,271,814	2,120,833
Total liabilities		1,271,814	2,120,833
Net assets		148,817	150,855
Equity			
Retained earnings	9	148,817	150,855
Total equity		148,817	150,855



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

PREMIER PARTNERS



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THANK YOU



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