

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Touch Football Australia respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which we live and work. Touch Football is played in communities across Australia, and we acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we play, and recognise the significant contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to our game.

We pay our respect to Elders past, present, and emerging; commit to working respectfully to honour their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to this country; and recognise the role and value of culture in all our communities.



#### TOUCH FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA

Suite 1/18 Napier Close, Deakin ACT 2600 www.touchfootball.com.au
ABN 55 090 088 207

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION

Continuing to drive Australian sport forward is at the heart of everything we do at the Australian Sports Commission.

We want to bring out the best in everyone involved in sport because that's how we will become the world's best – by working together and bound by a common purpose.

We encourage and help Australians of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities to get involved in sport, and we advocate for sport and the positive influence it has on the nation.

As we look towards next year's Milano Cortina Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, Los Angeles 2028 and Brisbane 2032, our vision is for sport to be safe, fair, accessible and inclusive.

Every athlete will be supported to reach their full potential with the Australian Government's record \$385 million investment package for sport, ensuring Australians have world-class pathways and support at all levels of sport from participation to high-performance.

This includes a record \$54.9 million for Para sport – doubling previous funding – ahead of Brisbane 2032.

Our grant programs support athletes, coaches, officials and organisations, while our Sporting Schools program is helping more children access free and fun sporting activities than ever before.

Work is also underway to upgrade the AIS Campus in Canberra so it is once again modern and world-leading.

The AIS Podium Project will deliver three new facilities, including a new multi-story and para-accessible accommodation, a Testing and Training Centre, and an indoor Sport Dome.

Construction will commence later this year with the AIS

Podium Project being the first stage in delivery of the broader AIS Campus Masterplan – the ASC's long-term vision to ensure the AIS Campus continue to evolve as Australia's world-leading high-performance sport precinct.

As Australian high-performance sport continues to win well and build sustainable success towards Brisbane 2032 and beyond, we're also addressing the barriers people tell us they face participating in sport, so all Australians that want to be involved can be involved in sport. This is how we will play well.

I know success will be greatest when every part of the system is able to perform their role at their best, and I'm confident that the actions we take now will create a lasting legacy for Australian sport that will benefit us all for years to come.

#### **Kate Jenkins AO**

Chair

**Australian Sports Commission** 





#### NRL TOUCH FOOTBALL \*\*\*\*

## TEACHAIR REPORT

Dear Members,

I am pleased to present this report on behalf of the Board of Touch Football Australia (TFA), reflecting on a year of significant achievement and strategic transformation for our sport.

#### **A Year of Progress**

The past twelve months have been defined by success both on and off the field. Our international campaigns delivered outstanding results, with the Athelite Australian Emus dominating at the FIT World Cup and across multiple Trans-Tasman encounters. These performances showcased the talent and dedication within our sport and reinforced Australia's position as a global leader in Touch Football.

Equally significant has been the renewal of our sport's leadership. With a reconstituted Board and new executive team in place, the leaders of our sport have been collaborating to continue to lift governance standards, establish unifying sport values, and develop our new strategic direction: 'The Next Play'. Central to this has been the appointment of AFL legend and sporting administration leader, Marcus Ashcroft, as Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Marcus has brought strategic clarity and operational excellence to our organisation at a critical juncture. We will launch 'The Next Play' in late 2025, and we are pleased to share in this report that the strategy will emphasise grassroots participation growth, innovation in how we deliver the game, and nurturing the sport's foundations so that Touch Football continues to thrive for generations to come.

As we look forward to this exciting next phase of our journey, it is fitting to acknowledge the significant contributions of former Chair Erin Taylor and departing Directors Andrew Hill, Anita Hagarty, and Stuart Geros. Their service during pivotal times has helped shape the organisation we are today and positioned us well for this next chapter. We thank them and acknowledge their positive contribution.

#### Meeting New Challenges Head-On

During the year, we have continued to grow; however, like all sports across Australia, we face headwinds. Declining volunteerism threatens the sustainability of community competitions. The growing trend towards informal sports participation challenges traditional club models. Competition from emerging sports intensifies the contest for participants' time and attention. Rising governance expectations from

stakeholders demand greater professionalism and accountability in everything we do.

We have responded through new Board appointments – Brad Fittler, Danielle Smith, John Mouawad, and Sharyn Williams. These new Directors have joined continuing Directors Craig Lowe, Kate Jones, and myself, and our new Board brings together strong legal, finance, commercial, and governance capabilities, complemented by high-performance sporting expertise spanning Touch Football, rugby league, netball, rugby union, and AFL – with these diverse backgrounds bringing fresh ideas and perspectives. The Board and leadership team possess the capabilities to set bold new direction, effectively manage the risks our sport faces, and drive the unifying culture that our communities expect.

Rather than shy away from these realities, we are tackling them head-on. Our response includes an expanded partnership with the National Rugby League (NRL) and NRL clubs to drive sustainable growth in key markets, more resources in Alliance states, piloting innovative formats such as indoor Touch, and adapting to changing participation preferences whilst maintaining the essence of our sport.

We are continuing to invest in governance and organisational capability to meet contemporary expectations. Most importantly, through 'The Next Play', we are taking a new approach to how Touch Football engages with communities to ensure we remain relevant and accessible.

#### **Delivering on Our Commitments**

I am pleased to report that we have successfully completed all strategic initiatives committed to at the beginning of the year. This achievement reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and the broader Touch Football community. From governance reviews, event reviews, more local resources, and new policies, each commitment has been fulfilled, strengthening the foundation upon which we continue to build.

#### **Strategic Partnerships**

Our partnership with the NRL continues to strengthen and evolve. I extend our sincere gratitude to Peter V'landys, Andrew Abdo, and John Wilson for their ongoing support and commitment to Touch Football. Their backing of and investment in growing participation demonstrates the NRL's recognition of Touch Football's vital role within the rugby league family. This partnership, combined with our largest-ever





## TEACHAIR REPORT

Australian Sports Commission (ASC) funding agreement, positions us on a strong forward trajectory. We are grateful to both the NRL and the ASC for their ongoing support.

#### **Acknowledgements**

To our members, volunteers, officials, coaches, and players – thank you for your continued passion and support. To all Directors who have served throughout the year, your dedication has been instrumental in our on-field success and period of renewal.

To our staff who work tirelessly throughout the year for the enjoyment of our communities – thank you. Together, we are building a sustainable and exciting future for Touch Football in Australia.

To all of the passionate community members who attended our new community updates, thank you for contributing to our culture of collaboration. To our experienced community members who contributed to our event reviews and new policies – thank you for helping shape our future whilst honouring our legacies.

I would also like to acknowledge Greg Denny, CEO of Queensland Touch Football, for his contributions as interim CEO of TFA in early 2025, supporting TFA in the initial stages of our strategic transformation.

We look forward to ongoing collaboration with the Boards of NSW Touch Association and Queensland Touch Football, led by Anthony Dudeck and Mat Gilbertson, respectively, and our State and Territory Advisory Council leaders.

#### **Christian Frost**

Chair

Touch Football Australia





### NRL TOUCH FOOTBALL

## TEACEO REPORT

Dear Members,

The 2024/25 reporting period has been a pivotal and transformative year for Touch Football Australia (TFA), with the Board overseeing several key initiatives aimed at shaping the sport's future. TFA remains firmly committed to demonstrating leadership in sporting governance, reflected in our focus on transparency, accountability, and strategic direction to elevate Touch Football at every level across the nation.

#### **Leadership and Governance**

I would like to acknowledge Jamie O'Connor, who concluded his tenure as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the end of 2024. Over his six years in the role, Jamie contributed significantly to the organisation, helping to position TFA for its next strategic phase. I also wish to recognise former Chair Erin Taylor and departing Board members Andrew Hill, Anita Hagarty, and Stuart Geros for their service to the organisation.

Over the past year, TFA has welcomed new leadership and commenced a period of organisational renewal. The Board has worked collaboratively to ensure the organisation's focus remains on operating under strong governance practices, as well as remaining responsive to the evolving needs of the sport and its participants. I extend my thanks to Christian Frost, who has assumed the role of Chair of the Board, and our newly appointed Directors — Brad Fittler, Danielle Smith, John Mouawad, and Sharyn Williams — whose skills and experience have supported the ongoing development of the sport.

More recently, following a review of our operating model, four long-serving members — Wayne Grant, Brian Carroll, Brad Mitchell, and Tian Huang have concluded their roles at TFA. I sincerely thank them for their contributions and wish them well in their future pursuits.

#### Strategic Planning for the Future

Looking ahead, we are nearing completion of our new Strategic Plan, which will guide the sport's direction through to 2032. I am grateful to all members of the Touch Football community who have contributed their insights and aspirations throughout the consultation process. This engagement has provided TFA with a deeper understanding of the national landscape, ensuring our plan reflects the needs and ambitions of everyone involved in the game. I look forward to sharing the finalised plan in due course.

#### **Major Events and International Success**

On the field, our major domestic events were once again a great success, and I would like to thank our Strategic Sponsor, the NSW Government and Destination NSW, as well as City of Coffs Harbour, for their ongoing support. Coffs Harbour continues to hold a special place as the spiritual home of Touch Football, hosting both the DoorDash National Youth Championships (NYC) and The Championships during the reporting period. The 2024 NYC, held on the Mid-North Coast after a decade-long stint in Queensland, saw 120 teams compete in a showcase of rising youth talent, with history made by New South Wales Schools teams reclaiming the coveted 18s divisions. Although severe weather forced the postponement of The Championships from March to May, the event ultimately delivered a thrilling week of competition featuring some of the sport's finest athletes. Thank you to all our dedicated staff, referees, team officials, and volunteers for their tireless efforts in ensuring these events continue to set the standard for excellence within our community.

Although recognised in last year's annual report, it would be remiss not to again acknowledge the remarkable achievements of our Athelite Australian Emus, whose dominant performance at the FIT World Cup in Nottingham, England, marked a highlight of the early 2024/25 reporting period. Securing twelve of thirteen gold medals, the Emus were crowned World Champions in a resounding testament to the strength of our high-performance program — congratulations to all involved. The international game has continued to thrive in 2025 with strong Australian performances at both the 2025 Open Trans-Tasman Series in Christchurch and the Asia Pacific Youth Touch Cup in Redcliffe. I look forward to building on the momentum of the game's growth, beginning with a return to Redcliffe in 2026 for the Asia Pacific Opens Touch Cup.

#### **Partnerships and Commercial Support**

We remain privileged to enjoy the steadfast support of our valued partners, including the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), state and territory governments, and the National Rugby League (NRL). Our appreciation goes to ASC Chair, Kate Jenkins AO, CEO Kieren Perkins, Australian Rugby League Commission Chair, Peter V'Landys, and NRL CEO, Andrew Abdo. Your commitment to Touch Football continues to strengthen our ability to deliver meaningful outcomes for the community. With the largest ASC funding agreement in our history in place, as well as a growing NRL partnership building





## TEACEO REPORT

towards an Olympics bid, the future is bright for the sport.

Our commercial program continues to flourish, headlined by welcoming New Balance as our official apparel and footwear partner in late 2024. The exciting partnership with the global sportswear giant adds to our family of commercial partners, and I look forward to working more closely with New Balance and Belgravia Sports Apparel for the next few years. I'd like to also extend my thanks to principal partner DoorDash, major partner Athelite, and all our official, event, and broadcast partners for investing in us so our sport continues to succeed at all levels.

#### **Financial Performance**

The 2024/25 financial year recorded a significant financial loss in what was a pivotal period of transition for TFA. While a loss was reported, it is important to emphasise that TFA remains in a strong financial position, supported by substantial reserves, robust equity, and healthy cash holdings.

The key factors contributing to this outcome included major investments in the FIT World Cup program, the prudent recognition of provisions for aged debts, and an updated approach to stock management. Additionally, there were human resources-related costs such as recruitment expenses and the implementation of legacy bonus structures.

Looking ahead, TFA has implemented a detailed budget for the 2025/26 financial year, with a clear focus on returning the organisation to surplus. Enhanced spending controls, system improvements, and strengthened reporting frameworks have been introduced to ensure ongoing financial discipline, and these foundations position the sport for a sustainable future.

At the time of preparing this report, results for 2025/26 are already tracking ahead of expectations, and we anticipate this positive momentum will continue throughout the year.

#### **Acknowledgements**

Finally, I extend my appreciation to all TFA staff across the country, as well as to the Boards and staff of NSW Touch Association (NSWTA) and Queensland Touch Football (QTF), NSWTA General Manager, Dean Russell, and QTF CEO, Greg Denny, whose collaboration and commitment have been instrumental in driving progress throughout the year.

On behalf of everyone at TFA, I also wish to express heartfelt thanks to our broader community – especially our passionate and hardworking volunteers – whose ongoing commitment and energy continue to bring our sport to life and ensure its enduring success for years to come.

#### **Marcus Ashcroft**

Chief Executive Officer
Touch Football Australia







## LEADING THE WAY FORWARD

#### **A Message on Our Commitment to Excellence**

Touch Football Australia (TFA) is committed to leading the way in sporting governance, upholding the highest standards of transparency, accountability, and ethical leadership. Our governance framework is not simply about compliance — it reflects the trust you, our members, place in us to steward this great sport with integrity and vision.

Over the past year, the Board has undertaken a focused program to further strengthen our governance practices. We have welcomed talented new Directors, enhanced our leadership capabilities, and implemented comprehensive and continuous improvement initiatives that are positioning TFA among Australia's best-governed sporting organisations.

#### **An Independent View of Our Progress**

In our commitment to objective assessment and continuous improvement, TFA engaged Elevate Governance Pty Ltd, led by an award-winning Company Secretary, Zoheb Razvi, to independently evaluate our governance practices against the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) Sports Governance Standards and, aspirationally, the ASX Corporate Governance Principles.

This external review provided an invaluable independent benchmark and motivated us to accelerate our improvement journey. We are pleased to say that in 2025, we improved on our 2024 result, and TFA now places above the national average, positioning us among the leading National Sporting Organisations in governance performance.

Notably, we achieved scores of 4.00 out of 4.00 across five of the seven governance principles assessed. The Board is committed to achieving a 4.00 rating across all governance principles.

#### **Our Performance Against ASC Sports Governance Standards**

Governance Principle	National Average	2025 TFA Reported to ASC
Values-Driven Culture	2.67	4.00 √
Collaborative Governance	2.99	4.00 √
Clear Vision & Strategy	3.02	3.00
Diverse Board	2.53	3.33
Documentation of Roles	2.88	4.00 √
Accountability & Transparency	2.47	4.00 √
Risk Management	2.99	3.33
Continuous Improvement	2.58	4.00 √

#### **Advancing our Governance Framework**

Building on our existing foundation, the Board endorsed a comprehensive action plan in March 2025, designed to embed best practices across every facet of our operations.

#### **Completed Initiatives**

#### **Board Excellence**

- Developed and published a comprehensive Board Charter that clearly defines our governance framework.
- Implemented a formal Director Induction Program to ensure all Board members are equipped for success.
- Conducted Board performance evaluations to drive continuous improvement.
- Established clear Letters of Appointment for all Directors.

#### **Enhanced Oversight**

- Reviewed and strengthened our Nominations Committee
   Charter, achieving 50% female representation.
- Refreshed our Finance, Risk and Audit Committee Charter with enhanced diversity commitments.
- Created a formal Conflict of Interest Register for complete transparency.





• Developed a Risk Appetite Statement to guide strategic decision-making.

#### **Operational Excellence**

- New financial and non-financial delegations throughout the organisation.
- CEO goal-setting and performance review processes aligned with strategic priorities.
- Developed succession planning frameworks for executive and critical positions across the organisation.
- Approved a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategy.

#### **Strategic Direction**

- Values Review: Engaged the entire Touch Football community in refreshing our operating principles and values.
- Strategic Refresh: Completed a consultative strategic review to guide our future direction.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Enhanced our communication and engagement plan to better serve our community.

#### **Work in Progress**

Our commitment to excellence continues with several important initiatives underway:

- Constitutional Review: Modernising our Constitution
- Governance Education: Ensuring all Directors complete comprehensive governance training

#### **A Culture of Continuous Improvement**

Governance excellence is not a destination – it is an ongoing commitment to doing better every day. The progress we continue to make demonstrates the Board's resolve to lead with integrity, embrace accountability, and earn the trust of everyone involved in our sport.

We are grateful for the support and partnership of the ASC as we continue this important work. Together, we are building a governance framework worthy of this great sport and the passionate community that sustains it.

TFA is also investing in leadership development, with Sally

Irwin (State and Advisory Committee Chair, Western Australia) and Lauren Moran (NSW Touch Association Director) completing formal governance training through the ASC Diploma of Governance, equipping them to further enhance leadership across the Touch Football community.

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NRL

The progress reflected in this report is built on the contributions of everyone involved with TFA – from our dedicated volunteers and administrators to our athletes, coaches, officials, and members. Your engagement, feedback, and commitment drive us to continue improving and delivering more.

By maintaining a focus on governance excellence, TFA ensures that affiliates and members can rely on a framework that is fair, transparent, and designed to support the growth of the game into the future.

#### **Director Profiles**

#### **Christian Frost - Chairperson & Elected Director**

- Appointed: 18 November 2023
- Qualifications: GAICD (AICD), MBA (Deakin University),
   Graduate Certificate in OHS Management (UNSW),
   Graduate Certificate in Commerce (UNSW), Bachelor of
   Science in Psychology, Safety, Human Resources (UNSW).
- Contribution to Board: Christian exemplifies the intersection of technical excellence and sporting passion. With over twenty years of strategy development and governance experience across major infrastructure and media organisations, he brings sophisticated executive leadership to the Board. His lived experience in Touch Football as player, referee, administrator, coach, and Australian representative provides an invaluable grassroots perspective alongside boardroom expertise. Christian's unique blend of credentials, psychology background, and governance qualifications strengthens the Board's strategic direction and duty of care frameworks.





#### Craig Lowe - Elected Director

- Appointed: 18 November 2023
- Qualifications: BCom (Honours) in Marketing & International Business (University of Otago), Board Governance, NFP, Community & Sports (AICD).
- Contribution to Board: Craig, an Indigenous Māori leader, brings substantial international, cultural, and sporting experience and connections to the Board. Craig's twenty-five-year commercial career, currently as General Manager at Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, brings essential business acumen and member-focused governance expertise. His longstanding Touch Football involvement across multiple roles player, referee, selector, and coach ensures decisions remain grounded in community needs. Craig's international business perspective and marketing expertise support the Board's growth and engagement strategies, while his NFP governance training aligns perfectly with TFA's organisational structure.

#### **Kate Jones – Appointed Director**

- Appointed: 28 March 2024
- Qualifications: Masters in Environmental Law (ANU),
   Bachelor of Arts in Journalism (QUT).
- Contribution to Board: Kate represents the gold standard in Australian sports governance. As a National Rugby League (NRL) Commissioner and Paralympics Australia Director, she operates at the pinnacle of sporting administration. Her role with Experience Gold Coast, securing funding for national sporting bodies, demonstrates proven capability in stakeholder engagement and resource mobilisation. Kate's legal and journalism background provides critical skills in regulatory compliance, public affairs, and strategic communications. Her appointment strengthens TFA's connections within the broader Australian sporting ecosystem.

#### John Mouawad - Elected Director

- Appointed: 30 November 2024
- Qualifications: Bachelor of Commerce & Law (UNSW).

DOORDAS

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• Contribution to Board: John's expertise in corporate restructuring and governance as a Partner at KordaMentha brings sophisticated financial and operational oversight capabilities. His experience with ASX-listed companies and complex commercial transactions ensures robust financial governance and risk management. John's dual commerce and law qualifications provide essential expertise for contract negotiations, regulatory compliance, and strategic partnerships. His appointment significantly strengthens the Board's financial literacy and governance frameworks during a period of organisational growth.

#### **Brad Fittler – Appointed Director**

- Appointed: 29 March 2025
- Qualifications: Extensive experience in elite rugby league.
- Contribution to Board: Brad is a legendary figure in Australian rugby league whose appointment strengthens TFA's strategic alignment with the NRL. His current employment with the NRL provides invaluable insights into elite athlete development, high-performance programs, and professional sports administration. Brad's understanding of player pathways, coaching methodologies, and the professional sporting landscape enhances the Board's ability to develop Touch Football's elite programs and expand participation at all levels. His profile also elevates TFA's public visibility and credibility.

#### **Danielle Smith – Elected Director (Casual Vacancy)**

- Appointed: 1 May 2025
- Qualifications: GAICD (AICD), Chartered Accountant (CAANZ), Bachelor of Commerce (Monash University), Bachelor of Arts (Monash University).
- Contribution to Board: As CEO of Exercise & Sports Science
   Australia, Danielle brings cutting-edge expertise in sports
   science, health promotion, and national sporting
   organisation leadership. Her chartered accountant
   credentials and governance qualifications (GAICD) provide





#### NRL TOUCH FOOTBALL \*\*\*

## LEADING THE WAY FORWARD

 sophisticated financial oversight and strategic planning capabilities. Danielle's experience leading a national professional body demonstrates proven capability in member services, advocacy, and stakeholder management. Her appointment strengthens the Board's understanding of evidence-based practice, athlete welfare, and professional development frameworks.

#### **Sharyn Williams – Elected Director (Casual Vacancy)**

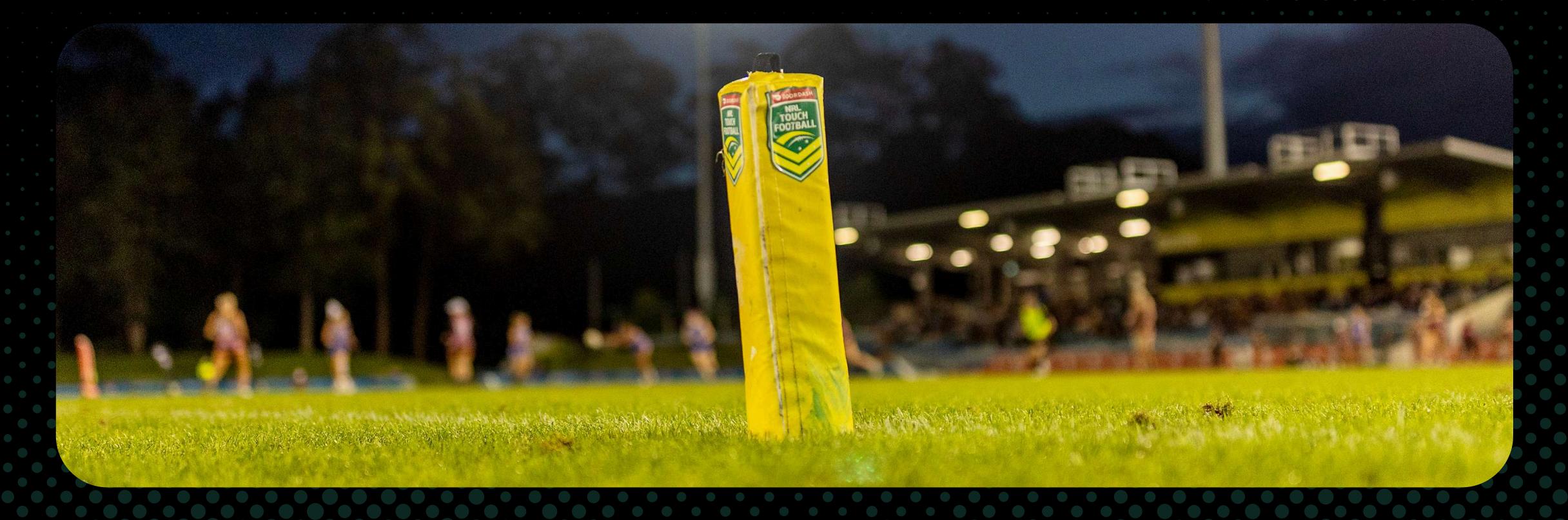
- Appointed: 1 May 2025
- Qualifications: MBA (University of Queensland), Master of Finance (Kaplan), FGIA (Governance Institute), Fellow Chartered Accountant (CPA Australia), GAICD (Governance Institute), Bachelor of Business in Accounting/Management (QUT), Bachelor of Education (QUT).
- Contribution to Board: Sharyn represents exceptional governance expertise, holding fellowship status with the Governance Institute of Australia the highest professional recognition in governance practice. Her chartered accountant credentials, combined with an MBA and dual Bachelor's degrees, create a powerful foundation for financial oversight and strategic decision-making. Sharyn's educational background brings a valuable perspective on community engagement, capability building, and organisational development. Her appointment significantly strengthens the Board's governance framework and financial management capabilities during TFA's evolution.

• In addition to her governance credentials, Ms Williams brings a distinguished playing history in Touch Football, having captained Australia's Women's Open team and earned induction into the TFA Hall of Fame.

#### **Former Directors**

The Board thanks the following Directors for their service and contributions to TFA in the 2024/25 reporting period:

- Erin Taylor served as Director and Chair, concluding her term in November 2024.
- Anita Hagarty served as Director and former Chair, concluding her term in December 2024.
- Stuart Geros served as Director, concluding his term in November 2024.
- Andrew Hill served as Director, concluding his term in December 2024.







## TFA DIRECTORS BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE

The table below sets out the Directors of the Company and their attendance at Board meetings during the 2024/25 financial year ended 30 June 2025.

Director	Board Meetings Eligible	Board Meetings Attended
Christian Frost (Chair)	8	8
Craig Lowe	8	8
John Mouawad	5	5
Sharyn Williams	1	1
Danielle Smith	1	1
Brad Fittler	1	1
Kate Jones	8	8
Former Dire	ectors	
Anita Hagarty *	3	3
Erin Taylor **	3	3
Andrew Hill **	3	3
Stuart Geros **	3	2

<sup>\*</sup> Director term ended on 20 December 2024, aligning with ASIC records.

At times, Directors also attend meetings of Committees of which they are not a member. This is not reflected in the attendance table above.

#### **Company Secretaries**

Zoheb Razvi (appointed 26 June 2025). Tian Huang (resigned 26 June 2025).



<sup>\*\*</sup> Director term ended on 30 November 2024, aligning with ASIC records.





## HIGHLIGHTS SNAPSHOT

#### **TOTAL UNIQUE PARTICIPANTS**

160,717

(+1.79%)

#### **TOTAL PARTICIPATION**

629,870
(+4.16%)

#### **FOOTPRINT (AFFILIATED COMPETITIONS)**

297 (+1.36%)

#### NATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

**3** 43 M

#### NATIONAL BROADCAST REACH

**3 557,156** 

#### **UNIQUE EDM SUBSCRIBERS**

**204,508** 

#### COURSE PARTICIPATION

#### REFEREES

2,622 (+17.79%)

#### COACHES

(+18.11%)

#### **DIVERSITY**



FEMALES
69,634
(43.33%)



CALD
20,711
(12.89%)



INDIGENOUS
14,331
(8.92%)



ALL ABILITIES
1,634

(1.02%)









## ON-FIELD HIGHLIGHTS

#### **DoorDash National Youth Championships (NYC)**

The 2024 edition of the NYC saw us return to Coffs Harbour after a decade-long stint on the Sunshine Coast, welcoming back the nation's best young players to the Mid-North Coast. After 120 teams competed over four days, the event's return to NSW coincided with new winners in the coveted 18s divisions, with NSW Combined Independent Schools and NSW Combined High Schools winning the Boys and Girls divisions respectively – both against Queensland Representative School Sport, who were aiming for a three-peat in both divisions.



Team Numbers by Division								
12s Girls	12s Boys	14s Girls	14s Boys	16s Girls	16s Boys	18s Girls	18s Boys	Total
16	15	16	15	17	14	14	13	120

Participants	Attendees	Broadcast Views	Digital Reach		
2,237	6,807	27,338	6.51M		

#### **Touch Football All Stars**

In a triple-header alongside the NRLW and NRL All Stars, the annual Touch Football All Stars returned to CommBank Stadium in Sydney, where we witnessed the largest combined scoreline since the concept's inception between the Indigenous and Māori sides. The Māori All Stars were victorious 12-11, in a week where the Indigenous side were integrated with NRLW and NRL teams in a camp to celebrate culture and showcase pride. Broadcast on Channel Nine, Gem, Fox Sports, Kayo, and Sky New Zealand, this year's fixture attracted over 180,000 viewers.





## ON-FIELD HIGHLIGHTS

#### **Open Trans-Tasman Series (OTTS)**

Marking the start of a new World Cup cycle, Touch New Zealand (TNZ) hosted the OTTS in Christchurch, as the Athelite Australian Emus and New Zealand Touch Blacks competed in Men's, Women's, and Mixed Opens divisions. A dominant Emus contingent won eight of nine games played, reinforcing their position as the benchmark of international Touch Football. The OTTS was live-streamed on TNZ's YouTube channel, attracting over 100,000 views.



#### **Asia Pacific Youth Touch Cup (APYTC)**

Celebrating the next generation, TFA acted as host nation for the APYTC's return to the Touch Football calendar, in conjunction with the Federation of International Touch. Ten nations from across the South Pacific converged on Kayo Stadium in Redcliffe, with the Athelite Australian Emus crowned Champion Nation. The Emus won four of six divisions across Mixed, Girls, and Boys 18s and 20s – all against the New Zealand Touch Blacks, reigniting the fierce Trans-Tasman rivalry.























Team Numbers by Division							
18s Mixed	18s Girls	18s Boys	20s Mixed	20s Girls	20s Boys	18s Girls	Total
3	5	4	5	5	3	3	23

Participants	Attendees	Broadcast Views	Digital Reach		
557	2,283	96,879	6.3M		



## ON-FIELD HIGHLIGHTS



#### **The Championships**

The event's postponement from March due to severe weather conditions did not diminish the exciting Touch Football on display at Coffs Harbour, with over 150 teams across twenty-three divisions going head-to-head. A trio of enthralling Opens grand finals capped off the national event, with all three sides going back-to-back in strong tournament runs – the Hunter Western Hornets in the Men's, the UQ Rebels in the Women's, and the Southern Rebels in the Mixed. The event's focus on mass participation saw affiliate sides win six division titles, while the South Queensland Sharks were awarded Champion Entity for their overall performance, having won five divisions.

#### National Indigenous Touch Football Knockout (NITFKO)

An annual highlight in the Touch Football calendar, the NITFKO was hosted in Dubbo, with the two-day tournament welcoming thirty-seven teams — almost doubling 2023's participation count. The NITFKO continues to play a crucial role in TFA's Reconciliation Action Plan, promoting participation, health, and fitness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a social and inclusive environment.



Team Numbers by Division												
MOA	MOB	WOA	WOB	XOA	XOB	M20	W20	W27	M30	SX	M40	W40
9	2	8	2	10	3	11	14	6	8	7	6	5

MX	M45	W45	M50	W50	M55	M60	M65	AAT1	AAT2	Total
5	6	4	9	6	7	2	4	3	14	151

Participants	Attendees	Broadcast Views	Digital Reach		
2,924	4,291	78,126	5.88M		



### OFF-FIELD HIGHLIGHTS

#### **Referee of the Month**

We launched the Referee of the Month initiative to celebrate and recognise the amazing contributions referees make to our sport. Referees were profiled on our social channels and awarded with prize packs from our partners.

#### **Touch Football Australia Partnered with New Balance**

At the start of 2025, we welcomed New Balance – an iconic international brand – as our official apparel and footwear partner for four years. The global sportswear giant continues to supply high-performance gear and merchandise for players, referees, and supporters across our game – including fitting out our national team, the Athelite Australian Emus.

#### **DoorDash Footy Cash**

For yet another year, we collaborated with principal partner, DoorDash, to give back to and empower local Touch Football communities – with \$100,000 in grant funding presented to twenty-four clubs around the nation.



#### **Community Club of the Year**

In partnership with Red Rooster, we continued to recognise and reward the contributions of Touch Football affiliates throughout Australia – offering \$10,000 in cash and prizes across eight State winners. Joondalup Jets Touch Football Association, from Western Australia, were selected as the Community Club of the Year.

#### Leadership Changes and Strategic Transformation

After six years as CEO, Jamie O'Connor stepped down in November 2024, paving the way for significant executive changes ahead of our next strategic cycle. In early 2025, Christian Frost was appointed Chair, and Marcus Ashcroft was named CEO, joined by new Directors John Mouawad, Danielle Smith, and Sharyn Williams, each bringing fresh perspectives to grow the sport. Brad Fittler also joined as an NRL-appointed Director, strengthening the strategic alignment between TFA and the NRL in our shared push for Olympic inclusion.

#### Digital Engagement and Enhanced Profile

We achieved significant growth in digital metrics across our channels, surpassing 3.5M and 16M in website sessions and views, respectively, as well as over 43M in total social media reach in the reporting period – supported by the 2024 FIT World Cup. Touch Football also enjoyed a marked increase in earned media, with regional and metro networks profiling our sport more than ever, including the ABC, Seven, Nine, NBN News, Sky News, 2GB, The Daily Telegraph, Wide World of Sports, and Australian Associated Press.



#### Gold Status at the Australian Pride in Sport Awards

For the third consecutive year, TFA achieved Gold Status under the Pride in Sport Index (PSI) – marked as one of the top three rated national sporting organisations within the PSI for our initiatives in the diversity and inclusion space, as we continue to create welcoming environments and make Touch Football accessible to everyone.



## NATIONAL PARTICIPATION

2024/25

#### **Touch Football Australia Participation 2024/25**

Participation Category	2023/24	2024/25	Change From 2023/24
Total Unique Participants *	157,893	160,717	+1.79%
Total Participation **	604,714	629,870	+4.16%

The Touch Football Australia (TFA) Board has recently approved a new policy for capturing and reporting on participation data. This policy provides clearer definitions for participation categories and several new verification processes. As a result, comparisons made to data in previous reporting periods are inherently limited. Moving forward, all participation data reported by TFA will be done in line with this new policy and will allow for year-on-year trend analysis. The new policy is available on the TFA website under 'Policies and Frameworks' and is <u>accessible here.</u>

<sup>\*\*</sup> Total participation is comprised of several categories of participation, including total full active members, program participants, event participants, school-managed competitions and programs, and accredited volunteers. This number is a mixture of substantiated membership data and self-reported data from several states.

	State Distribution of Unique Participants						
State	2023/24	2024/25	Change from 2023/24				
ACT	2,824	2,610	-8%				
NSW	78,161	79,050	+1%				
NT	1,604	1,530	-5%				
QLD	60,288	62,167	+3%				
SA	1,593	1,438	-10%				
TAS	2,709	2,762	+2%				
VIC	3,433	3,084	-10%				
WA	7,281	8,076	+11%				



















<sup>\*</sup> A unique participant is someone who could participate multiple times but is only counted once in the reporting period, whereas a non-unique participant could play multiple times.



## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY REPORT

#### **Participation**

The 2024/25 reporting period saw an 8% reduction in overall unique participation for Touch Football ACT (TFACT). There were steady numbers in our summer competition, while, encouragingly, our autumn competition (previously winter) recorded a slight increase.

This period also saw adjustments to our Season One and Two competitions, including changes to scheduling, payments, and mandated team numbers. Season One had a change of dates to miss the worst of the cold weather, and, for the first time since COVID, participation increased.

Beach Touch was added to the calendar in January and, although there were small numbers, all participants enjoyed the experience.

As in recent years, the growth of other football codes in the ACT, especially in the female space, has had an impact on participation, with several female players moving to other sports that offered paid contracts.

#### **Schools and Juniors**

TFACT staff, field officers, and NRLW players delivered school and holiday programs to 2,261 children through the First Try Program – an increase on the previous reporting period. 1,519 students also participated in our school gala days.

TFACT continues to collaborate closely with School Sport ACT to support the development of Touch Football in the region. Representative teams competed at the School Sport Australia championships in Cleveland, Queensland, finishing third in three divisions and fourth in the remaining division.

#### **Performance**

Numerous ACT athletes proudly represented the Emus during this reporting period. Trung Lee, Dean Taylor, Todd Mills, Steve Hughes, Anthony Hofmeier, Rebecca Hawke, Dee Smith, Kerrie Rendell, and Rachel McVicar competed at the 2024 FIT World Cup, while Simon Croft and Michael Halling were selected as part of the Australian referee contingent. Notably, Dee Smith and Kerrie Rendell were the top try scorers in their respective age divisions, both securing Gold Medals.

Keesha Kapea was selected for the Australian Mixed Open side in the Open Trans-Tasman Series in March, while Lily Quigley made her national debut in the Girls 18s side at the Asia Pacific Youth Touch Cup (APYTC). Chris Tarlinton was also appointed assistant coach of the Boys 18s team for the APYTC.

The Super Series was introduced this year, providing high-level competition for top-tier and emerging players across four male and four female teams. The format successfully balanced talent, youth, and experience, and also attracted several returning players to the sport.

Five ACT Raiders teams travelled to Coffs Harbour to compete at the 2024 DoorDash National Youth Championships (NYC), with team numbers down on the previous reporting period, notably in the Boys divisions. Strengthening the Boys program has been identified as a focus for the coming year.

Seven teams then competed at The Championships, including a Women's 20s team and a Men's Open B team for the first time. The ACT Raiders won two division titles, with our Women's 45s team going back-to-back and the Men's Open B team winning in their introduction at the event.

#### **Events**

NAIDOC Week once again drew capacity participation, with Federal Government teams competing in the ACT NAIDOC Touch Carnival at Deakin Playing Fields. The event celebrated and acknowledged the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

TFACT also supported a multi-sport Touch of Pride event at Duntroon Playing Fields, providing skill sessions and games designed to promote inclusion.

The ACT Capital Territory Cup adopted a new two-day format for the first time, running across Saturday and Sunday. The event proved highly successful, with demand exceeding capacity.

TFACT also hosted the 2024 UniSport National Touch Football Championships, showcasing high-quality competition featuring universities from across Australia.





## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY REPORT

#### **Partnerships**

TFACT continues to work closely with the Canberra Raiders, achieving mutually beneficial outcomes. NRLW ambassadors Grace Kemp and Sophie Hollyman supported several gala days and NAIDOC Week, while TFACT provided ongoing employment opportunities for NRLW players.

The Raiders actively promoted TFACT competitions through their social media channels and provided our Athelite Australian Emus players the opportunity to fundraise at a home game at GIO Stadium. Many of our junior male and female players also represented the Raiders in both Touch Football and rugby league.

TFACT also continues to work with Physio and Walking Clinics, who support domestic competitions as well as national events – The Championships and the NYC.

#### **Education**

During this reporting period, twenty-one referees and two coaches were newly accredited, while seventeen ACT referees received upgrades. As in previous years, junior referees made up the bulk of new accreditations and continue to play an important role in supporting gala days and grassroots competitions.

#### Inclusion

TFACT remains committed to inclusion through initiatives such as NAIDOC Week, the All Abilities Cup, and Touch of Pride. The All Abilities program continued to grow, supported by dedicated volunteers, with two ACT Raiders teams participating in The Championships.

The second All Abilities Cup was held over a weekend in October, and we thank the Vikings who generously provided their facilities for the event. ACT and regional teams engaged in skills sessions and a round-robin competition, both of which were thoroughly enjoyed by participants and spectators.

TFACT also successfully delivered its first All Abilities Sporting Schools program at Black Mountain School.

#### **Human Resources**

TFACT welcomed Jared Mathie as Competitions Coordinator, where he has done an outstanding job in the competitions space through the introduction of new initiatives.

In February, Justin Oag was seconded to State Manager for Touch Football Victoria for a three-month period while Claudia Davey was on maternity leave. He subsequently returned to the ACT, assuming the role of State Manager from mid-May to cover my three-month-long service leave, until his resignation in June. During Justin's absence, his role was filled in a part-time capacity by Ella Kelly and Lahni Hall.

During this reporting period, the office implemented a range of operational changes, including adjustments to competition dates, fees, and mandated team numbers. TFACT remains committed to new initiatives, growth, and the retention of players within the ACT.

#### Closing

I extend my thanks to our State and Territory Advisory Committee (STAC) members: Sarah Rodrigues, Mike Kenderes, Mat Maclay, Erin Taylor, and Wayne Grant. Sarah Rodrigues resigned at the beginning of 2025, while Erin Taylor departed from her role as Chair of the Touch Football Australia (TFA) Board in late 2024, as well as Wayne Grant, who concluded his time with TFA in June.

My gratitude also goes to Jared Mathie, Ella Kelly, and Lahni Hall for their dedication to new initiatives and growth in the ACT.

Finally, I would like to thank the TFACT community – including referees led by Mike Kenderes and Peter Gunning, coaches led by Chris Tarlinton, as well as volunteers and members – for their guidance and support. Together, we continue to strive for growth, enjoyment, and sustainability both on and off the field.

#### **Gabe Hodges**

Australian Capital Territory State Manager





## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY REPORT









## NEW SOUTH WALES TOUCH ASSOCIATION REPORT

We are pleased to report that the New South Wales Touch Association (NSWTA) has continued its strong growth throughout the 2024/25 reporting period, building on the momentum of the past few years.

#### **Participation**

The sport continues to grow across the state, with overall participation again on the rise. Unique participation increased by 1%, while we recorded a 3.4% increase in full active senior members and an impressive 11.9% increase in full active junior members, bringing full active unique players to 30,006 adults and 48,424 juniors. These results demonstrate the continued appeal of Touch Football and the tireless work of our affiliates, regions, and volunteers in creating engaging and inclusive programs for participants of all ages.

Our development initiatives, combined with strong regional and affiliate leadership, have continued to deliver participation growth and opportunities for our athletes, referees, selectors, and coaches. The ongoing success of our major events and competitions continues to play a pivotal role in driving the sport's visibility and accessibility across NSW.

#### **Operations**

A significant focus for the 2024/25 reporting period was the Governance and Operating Model Review undertaken by McLauchlan Sports Consultancy. This comprehensive review examined the structure and operations of the organisation to ensure that NSWTA remains contemporary, efficient, and positioned for future success. The NSWTA Board accepted all recommendations from the review and will now commence planning the staged implementation of these recommendations. This process represents a critical step forward for the Association and will ensure that our governance and operations continue to reflect best practice across the sporting sector.

#### **Performance**

Our representative program again showcased the very best of NSW Touch. We congratulate and thank all our NSWTA State of Origin (SOO) representatives, who once again ensured that NSW retained the SOO shield. This year was particularly special

as NSW claimed victory in all three Open divisions, a remarkable achievement that reflects the talent, dedication, and teamwork of our players, coaches, selectors, and support staff. We also recognise the significant efforts and achievements of our referees who participated in the SOO event. All their efforts continue to inspire our broader Touch Football community.

#### Governance

The 2024 AGM marked significant transitions within the NSWTA Board. After ten years of dedicated service, including his term as Chairperson, Mark Hearnden stepped down from the Board. We thank Mark for his exceptional leadership, guidance, and contribution to the growth and stability of NSWTA during his tenure.

We also acknowledge Ian Matthew, who stepped down from his role as Technical Director after an extraordinary twenty-two years of service on the Board. Ian's commitment to technical excellence and the development of our game has left an enduring legacy.

Our sincere thanks also go to Sharnie Ramunno, who concluded her term as an Independent Director. Sharnie's expertise and contribution were greatly appreciated. Following Mark's departure, the Board elected Anthony Dudeck as the new Chairperson. We congratulate Anthony on his appointment and look forward to his leadership as NSWTA continues to evolve and implement the outcomes of the Governance Review.

#### **Events**

All NSWTA events across the year were delivered with great success and have continued to show strong growth in participation and engagement. From the Junior State Cup conferences and State Cup to regional and affiliate competitions, our events continue to highlight the depth of talent and passion within the NSW Touch community. These events not only showcase elite performance but also strengthen the connection between grassroots and representative pathways, ensuring a vibrant and sustainable future for the sport.



## NEW SOUTH WALES TOUCH ASSOCIATION REPORT

#### **Acknowledgements**

The achievements of 2024/25 are a direct result of the collective efforts of our community. We extend our deepest gratitude to our staff, whose professionalism and dedication underpin the Association's success, and to our volunteers, who remain the lifeblood of Touch Football across the state. Their commitment at the grassroots level is vital to the ongoing growth and success of our sport. We also thank our affiliates, partners, and sponsors for their continued support and collaboration in delivering programs and opportunities that drive participation and excellence throughout NSW.

The year ahead will see NSWTA focus on implementing the recommendations from the Governance and Operating Model Review, strengthening our strategic foundations, and continuing to grow participation and performance outcomes across all levels of the game.

With strong leadership, engaged members, and a united vision, NSWTA is well-positioned to build on the success of 2024/25 and continue leading the sport nationally.

#### Dean Russell

General Manager NSW Touch Association









## NORTHERNITERRITORY

### REPORT

#### **Participation**

Overall participation across the Northern Territory declined during the 2024/25 reporting period, with unique participation decreasing by 5%. This reduction can be attributed in part to lower registration numbers across several affiliates, including the Katherine Touch Association, which operated only one season during the period. It can also be attributed to a lack of official registrations, which will be corrected in the new reporting period.

Touch Football Northern Territory (TFNT) acknowledges that the delivery and promotion of junior competitions and programs have been inconsistent in recent years and is developing strategies to deliver better opportunities in the new year to create more sustainable opportunities for young participants across the Territory.

Despite the challenges, there are encouraging signs of growth in junior event participation. The introduction of an under-14 Mixed division at the 2025 NT Titles proved highly successful and will continue as a regular feature of the program moving forward.

School programs and school-delivered programs have also declined across the Territory during the reporting period and will be a key area to address heading into 2025/26.

#### Schools

TFNT delivered school programs to eighteen schools, engaging 4,776 students across the Territory. The team also hosted the SSENT Selection Development Camp at TRL Stadium and conducted programs in Katherine, Gove, and the Tiwi Islands, further extending the reach of Touch Football in regional and remote areas.

#### **Performance**

TFNT proudly fielded an under-14 Girls team at the 2024 DoorDash National Youth Championships (NYC), with Jordan McDonald and Wayne Lo also representing the Northern Territory as part of the referee contingent.

Referee Darcy Lawrence continued to excel on the national and international stage, officiating at both the 2024 FIT World Cup

and The Championships in 2025. He was again recognised as Top Referee at the NT Titles and was named a finalist at the NT Sports Awards as Official of the Year.

Byron Goodwin received a special commendation from the NT Titles Referee Panel for his outstanding development and commitment to refereeing.

#### **Events**

TFNT continued to deliver and support a range of successful events for the Touch Football community, including Bali Vibes Beach Touch, which was once again held with a strong turnout and has been confirmed to return in 2025.

The 2025 NT Titles recorded an increase in participation, highlighted by the introduction of a new under-14s division and the inclusion of an under-18s team from Kununurra. The tournament was livestreamed for the first time in recent memory and was widely regarded as a great success.

#### **Funding**

TFNT continues to receive significant support from the Northern Territory Government through the Office of Sport and Recreation Tier 1 Funding and the Remote Sports Voucher Scheme.

During this reporting period, TFNT was also successful in securing grants across the MacDonnell and Barkly regions. These grants will enable the delivery of Touch Football programs to up to nine remote communities, supporting regional development initiatives and competitions between 2025 and 2029.

#### **Education**

At the 2024 NYC, Jordan McDonald successfully achieved his Level 3 referee accreditation. While no referee upgrades were processed at the NT Titles due to changes in the referee accreditation platform, five referees advanced from Level 1 to Level 2 during Darwin Season 2 (2024).

A Foundation Coaching Course was also delivered at the NT Titles, accrediting six new coaches, including two from Alice Springs, one from Gove, and three from Darwin, strengthening





## NORTHERN TERRITORY

## REPORT

the coaching base across the Territory.

#### **State and Territory Advisory Committee (STAC)**

President Tim Pearson and member Michael Flemming have continued to provide valuable guidance and support to TFNT management, assisting Tyson and Michael as they transitioned into their roles. Their contribution has been instrumental in sharing historical knowledge, offering operational insights, and supporting the successful delivery of TFNT events, including the NT Titles.

#### **Human Resources**

The past twelve months have seen several staff changes within TFNT. Former State Manager Temieka McAlpine relocated to Queensland, where she has taken on the role of Schools Engagement Coordinator. Tyson Blanco joined TFNT as State Manager in September 2024, bringing renewed leadership to the Territory.

Michael Crowe commenced in August as Sports Operations Coordinator, providing consistency and passion across the competition space. Kieren Crowe continued to deliver effectively in the schools and junior portfolio, supporting TFNT's ongoing focus on youth development and participation growth.

#### **Tyson Blanco**

Northern Territory State Manager









## QUEENSLAND TOUCH FOOTBALL REPORT

The 2024/25 year has been one of the most transformative in Queensland Touch Football's (QTF) forty-five-year history. Guided by our vision to Unite, Inspire, and Grow, we delivered record-breaking events, launched game-changing initiatives and again achieved record participation growth. We also strengthened strategic partnerships that will shape the future of our sport.

These achievements reflect the passion and commitment of our affiliates, regions, volunteers, referees, and staff, whose tireless efforts continue to drive the success of our sport across Queensland.

#### **Celebrating Forty-Five Years of Touch Football in Queensland**

In 2024, we proudly celebrated forty-five years of QTF, reflecting on our beginnings with the formation of the Queensland Touch Association on 20 January 1979 by a small group of passionate foundation members. From those early days to today's thriving statewide community, our journey has been shaped by inclusion, innovation, resilience, and a shared love for the game. This milestone was a chance to honour our pioneers, recognise our volunteers, and showcase how Touch Football has grown into a sport for all Queenslanders.

#### **Strategic Highlights and Milestones**

- QTF introduced the One Fee Membership Model on 1 July 2024, a significant step toward transparency and simplicity for participants – reducing administrative complexity and streamlining access.
- The year also saw the expansion of QTF's regional alignment, welcoming North Queensland Touch Association in July 2024 and Sunshine Coast Fraser and Burnett Districts Touch Association in January 2025 under a QTF Management Agreement. These partnerships ensure consistent governance and operational excellence across the state.
- In partnership with Redland City Council and Redlands
   Touch Football, QTF hosted a successful 2024 Junior State
   Cup the largest in history, with 259 teams and over 4,000
   players, coaches, and referees representing twenty-nine
   affiliates across three action-packed days.

- QTF-QRL Memorandum of Understanding commenced in September 2024 with the aim of strengthening our collaboration with Queensland Rugby League to enhance pathways, participation, facilities and infrastructure, and partnerships.
- Talent Pathways Review Recommendations were launched in October 2024, enhancing our talent pathways for players, coaches/selectors, and referees, led by the appointment of Tristan Mana as Pathways and Performance Manager in November 2024.
- Inaugural QTF Hall of Fame inductees were inducted at the QTF Awards Night in December 2024, as part of our 45th Anniversary celebrations. Nine of our greatest players, coaches, and referees were recognised for their exceptional sporting achievements – the highest honour in QTF.
- With significant governance reforms undertaken by Touch Football Australia (TFA), the QTF Chief Executive Officer (CEO) served as Acting TFA CEO from January to March 2025. A special thanks to the entire QTF staff who stepped up during this time to ensure business as usual continued without disruption.
- 2025 marked the 30th anniversary of the State of Origin (SOO), held at C.ex Coffs International Stadium in June. Congratulations to all the players, coaches, managers, and referees who proudly represented Queensland. A spirited 'Maroons' performance across eighteen fiercely contested divisions in one of the most competitive series to date. Queensland dominated day one, but New South Wales fought back on day two, winning the final four games to tie the series 9-9 and retain the coveted SOO shield. The closest finish in State of Origin history a fitting way to mark the thirty-year milestone.

#### **Participation Growth**

Participation across Queensland continued to exceed record levels:

- 14% increase in total participation.
- 7% increase in junior full active members.
- 5% increase in unique adult and junior members.
- 3% increase in full active members adults and juniors.





## QUEENSLAND TOUCH FOOTBALL REPORT

- 84% increase in program participation and 11% increase in event participation.
- 5.4% increase in junior teams and 4.7% increase in adult teams.
- 14% increase in combined schools and junior participation.

#### **Events and Competitions**

Our flagship Touch Football events continued to thrive across Queensland:

- The 2024 Junior State Cup attracted the largest participation in history, with 259 teams and over 4,000 players.
- The 2024 Gold Coast Titans All Schools was the biggest yet, hosting 550 teams and over 2,000 games.
- The 2024 QLD Primary All Schools Touch hosted 283 schools, the biggest Primary All Schools ever.
- The 2024 QLD State Cup hosted the largest event to date, with 133 teams, including six international teams, despite the ordinary weather.
- The 2025 Bundaberg Cup hosted a record-breaking number of seventy-six teams and introduced young Touch Footballers with the inaugural Bundaberg Cup Development Clinic.
- The 2025 Junior State Cup was the largest to date, with 109 teams (originally 115), despite a date change due to monsoonal rains.

#### Closing

QTF remains committed to a bold vision, strategic partnerships, and community-driven growth. These priorities will continue to strengthen our position as a leader in sport delivery. Together, we will continue to Unite, Inspire, and Grow Touch Football for generations to come.

QTF acknowledges the ongoing support of our partners, including Queensland Government, Local Government, corporate sponsors, and those whose contributions enable us to grow the game across Queensland.

Finally, we gratefully extend our heartfelt thanks to our affiliates, regions, volunteers, staff, administrators, coaches, and referees across Queensland, and QTF Staff and Board for

their unwavering commitment, passion and dedication, which is the foundation of our success.

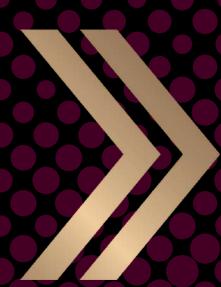
#### **Greg Denny**

Chief Executive Officer

Queensland Touch Football









## SOUTH AUSTRALIA REPORT

#### **Participation**

Adult and junior participation numbers across South Australia experienced a slight decline overall; however, several locations achieved localised growth. With traditional weekly competition numbers experiencing a decline, reversing that trend will be a key focus for Touch Football South Australia (TFSA) heading into the next reporting period.

TFSA extends its gratitude to all volunteers, coaches, and referees at the affiliate level for their passion and commitment to growing Touch Football across the state. We look forward to building on these efforts and working with affiliates to increase participation in 2025/26.

Season 2, 2024 marked the welcome return of the Whyalla Touch Football Association, which resumed operations following a two-year hiatus – a fantastic achievement made possible by a highly motivated committee.

The Adelaide University Touch Club introduced a new competition during the traditionally quiet autumn period – the Challenger Touch Series – which included a female-only social division not seen in Adelaide for several seasons.

#### **Schools and Juniors**

Growth in school-based competitions has been particularly pleasing, with strong participation across:

- Catholic Schools Championships
- SSSA Years 7/8, 9/10, and 11/12 Events
- SAAS Touch Football Competitions (Term 1 and Term 4)
- SACSA Touch Football Competitions
- Catholic School Girls Saturday Morning Competition
- IGSSA Competitions

Additional engagement also occurred through ACHPER PE Week, the SAPSASA Tea Tree Gully Carnival, and the SSSA Reynella East Carnival.

Sporting Schools and stand-alone school sessions continue to grow annually, with twenty-nine schools participating in 2024/25 – a testament to the dedicated team of Field Officers. Many schools continue to return annually, having had consistently positive experiences.

#### **Performance**

The SA Heat was represented by three teams at the 2024

DoorDash National Youth Championships (NYC) in the under-18 Girls, under-18 Boys, and under-16 Girls (the latter competing for the first time). Unfortunately, not all games were completed due to the unfavourable weather conditions. Amanda Sheeky attended as a Referee Coach, continuing to build her skills to benefit South Australia's referee community.

#### **NYC Awards:**

- Under-18 Girls: MVP Simone Logan, Players' Player –
   Aizure Clarke, Coach's Award Ella Timmis
- Under-18 Boys: MVP Maurice Beasy, Players' Player –
   Oscar Leeson, Coach's Award Cohen Hansen
- Under-16 Girls: MVP Darcey Timmis, Players' Player –
   Matilda Barrett, Coach's Award Alessia Giglio

At The Championships in 2025, the SA Heat was represented in the Men's Open B division, coached by Grant Richards. Due to the event's postponement caused by severe weather, the Women's Open team was unable to attend. TFSA thanks all players, coaches, and staff for their commitment to the representative program. This event also marked the debut of an Indigenous New Balance uniform, designed by Benjamin Gardiner Williams – a proud Bundjalung and Gumbaynggirr man – which received very pleasing feedback.

The Championships Men's Open B Awards:

- MVP: Joel Nolan
- Players' Player: Laine Alexander
- Coach's Award: Jayden Chambers
- Special Coach's Mention: William Hutton
- Referees: Jon Hall and Amanda Sheeky

South Australia also fielded four teams at the School Sport Nationals in Cleveland, Queensland – congratulations to all coaches and participants involved.

South Australia was also proudly represented at the FIT World Cup in Nottingham, England, with Amanda Sheeky and Deirdre Morrow achieving outstanding success.

Deirdre's Women's 40s team won Gold for Australia, while Amanda was recognised as the top female referee at the tournament and officiated the Women's Open Grand Final – remarkable achievements by both women.





## SOUTH AUSTRALIA REPORT

#### **Events**

The Globe Cup was held in January in Mount Gambier, featuring fourteen teams from across South Australia and Victoria. Run by affiliate volunteers, the event showcased excellent community engagement – offering members both sporting and social connection opportunities.

The 2024 TFSA League season was once again tightly contested, with many players and referees experiencing the competition for the first time. The season concluded with three thrilling Grand Finals hosted at Campbelltown Memorial Oval by the Botanics and Demons Touch Football Associations. Eastern Stingrays and Northern Vipers tied for the Mitchell Cup for overall permit honours, highlighting the even standard across all divisions.

**Grand Final Winners:** 

Mixed Open: Northern Vipers
Women's Open: Eastern Stingrays
Men's Open: Northern Vipers

Individual Awards:

Rising Referee: Ailene HiebnerReferees' Referee: Jon Hall

Referee of the Series: Amanda Sheeky

Women's Open MVP: Ailene Hiebner (South West Wolves)

Men's Open MVP: Lachlan Wilson (Eastern Stingrays)

Mixed Open Male MVP: Lachlan Organ (Northern Vipers)

 Mixed Open Female MVP: Trinity Mitchell (Eastern Stingrays)

#### Inclusion

2024 saw the launch of a NAIDOC Touch Football event, delivered in partnership with the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Taxation Office. Although small in scale, the event was a great celebration of culture, presenting an opportunity to connect with government agencies on a larger scale moving forward.

Term 2 also saw the first delivery of an ongoing All Abilities program at Thomas More College, with plans in place to engage further schools to develop the program.

#### **Technical and Education**

Participation in technical courses increased throughout the

reporting period, with many volunteers completing Level 1 Referee and Foundation Coach accreditations.

In a first for the Alliance states, Tony Trad visited Adelaide to deliver a Talent Coach Course alongside an open coaching workshop for players, referees, and coaches. The sessions catered to participants across varying experience levels, ensuring all attendees gained valuable insights.

#### **Human Resources**

TFSA welcomed Ashlee Gould to the role of Sports Operations Coordinator in March 2025, while John Potter continued in his role as Ground Controller at City Touch.

During this period, two staff members departed their roles – Andrea van Metzinger and Isabella Sedgeman. TFSA thanks them both for their dedication and significant contributions to the development of Touch Football in South Australia, as well as their positive impact on the wider community.

#### **Acknowledgements**

TFSA extends its thanks to State and Territory Advisory Committee (STAC) members: Deirdre Morrow (Chairperson), Stuart Geros (Touch Football Australia (TFA) Board Member), James Sharp (TFA Representative), Megan Elliott (General Member), and Amanda Sheeky (General Member) for their contributions to the sport of Touch Football in South Australia.

TFSA also acknowledges the contributions of affiliates, volunteers, participants, NRLSA staff, and TFA staff for their support and guidance throughout the 2024/25 period and would like to also give thanks to the Office of Recreation, Sport and Racing for their ongoing funding support to deliver the sport of Touch Football in South Australia.

#### Renée Bryant

South Australia State Manager





## SOUTH AUSTRALIA REPORT









## TASMANIA REPORT

#### **General**

Touch Football Tasmania (TFT) continued to focus on the growth and sustainability of grassroots participation through an emphasis on increasing its presence in local schools and expanding the base of referees and coaches within affiliate competitions.

The reporting period also featured several notable highlights. Two young Tasmanian referees, Bayley Aziz and Kodey Prendergast, were selected to officiate at the 2024 FIT World Cup in Nottingham, England – a significant achievement for both individuals and the state. Additionally, TFT's All Abilities Tier 2 team delivered an outstanding performance at The Championships in 2025, being crowned national champions in their division.

#### **Participation**

Overall, unique participation across Tasmania increased slightly by 2%. Notably, there was a 32% increase in participants involved in school-delivered programs compared to the previous year.

These increases in school engagement are expected to translate into higher junior participation across affiliate competitions in future seasons.

#### **School Programs and Competitions**

The Statewide School Series experienced significant growth in 2024, featuring eighty-six teams from sixteen schools, up from sixty-two teams from seven schools in 2023. The State Finals Day was held in Launceston, with the following winners:

- Girls 7/8: Riverside High School defeated Scotch Oakburn College
- Boys 7/8: St Patrick's College defeated St Virgil's College
- Girls 9/10: St Patrick's College defeated Riverside High School
- Boys 9/10: St Patrick's College defeated Clarence High School

A continued focus on school-based programs, including Sporting Schools initiatives and TFT-delivered sessions, resulted in a significant increase of 2,248 participants across 2024/25 – up from 1,706 in 2023/24, representing a thirty-two per cent increase. This growth underscores TFT's ongoing commitment to growing the sport through junior systems across Tasmania.

#### Performance

TFT proudly fielded eight teams at the 2024 DoorDash National Youth Championships (NYC) in Coffs Harbour, competing across all divisions (under-12, under-14, under-16, and under-18 Boys and Girls).

A total of 107 players and twenty-six staff represented Tasmania as part of the Tasmania Thunder contingent. The official jersey presentation was held at the University of Tasmania in Launceston before the NYC, attended by 250 guests, providing well-deserved recognition for all selected players and staff. TFT also sent eight referees and a referee manager to the event.

TFT was also pleased to re-establish a presence at The Championships in 2025, represented by the Tasmania Thunder All Abilities Tier 2 team. Our Mixed Open team was also scheduled to participate; however, due to the event's postponement, the team was forced to withdraw from the revised date.

The All Abilities Tier 2 team enjoyed an exceptional event, finishing the tournament undefeated and being crowned champions in their division – an extraordinary achievement in their first attempt. We are incredibly proud of the team and hope to return in 2026 to defend our title.

TFT extends its gratitude to New Horizons Tasmania for their incredible support of the All Abilities program. The partnership between the two organisations continues to strengthen, and the work of CEO Belinda Kitto and Sport Coordinator Tom McIntee was instrumental to the team's success. TFT looks forward to continuing this collaboration to deliver ongoing opportunities for our All Abilities program in the future.

#### **Events**

#### **Cold Climate Classic**

The Cold Climate Classic was successfully delivered in a revised format following its relocation to Launceston, after the conclusion of the previous funding agreement in Devonport. Seven teams competed, including two from the SEQ Defence Force, alongside local Tasmanian teams.

A new Fast 4s format was also introduced and was well received by participants. Congratulations to the Magpies, who were the winners of the main event in the Mixed Open division.





## TASMANIA REPORT

#### **Junior and Senior State Cup**

The Junior and Senior State Cup events were combined over the same weekend in February and returned to a true representative format, with teams competing on behalf of their regions or affiliate competitions.

Although participation numbers were slightly lower, the combined event created space in the calendar for future club-based pathway and participation events to be held during the October to November period. The carnival atmosphere across the weekend was exceptional, with non-stop action culminating in thrilling Grand Finals on Sunday afternoon.

Participation summary:

Junior players: 247Senior players: 137

Coaches: 38Referees: 37

• Game day volunteers: 10

Launceston Touch Association claimed victory in the Junior State Cup, while Southern Touch Association took out the Senior State Cup. Southern Touch Association was also crowned overall champion of the combined Junior and Senior divisions, narrowly edging out Launceston Touch Association.

TFT extends its thanks to Jason Martin and Ken Golden, who attended the event to mentor coaches and referees. Ken Golden also awarded several referee upgrades:

- Mac Broad: Level 2 to Level 3
- Kaleb Reid: Level 2 to Level 3
- Rhys Skelly: Level 1 to Level 2

#### **Technical**

During the 2024/25 reporting period, thirty-seven new Level 1 referees were accredited, along with three upgrades (as listed previously). In addition, nine new Foundation Level coaches were accredited during the reporting period.

TFT extends thanks to its Referee and Coach Coordinators and Assessors – James Anderson, Bayley Aziz, Des Fogarty, Mick Eddleston, and James Dowling – for their continued support of these courses.

#### **Kim Williams**

Tasmania State Manager









## VICTORIA REPORT

#### **Participation**

Unique participants declined by 10% from the 2023/24 to the 2024/25 reporting period for Touch Football Victoria (TFV). Junior State Cup participation remained steady, while school-managed competitions continued to grow annually, reflecting the increasing inclusion of Touch Football in competitive school sport programs.

A further growth is anticipated for school-managed competitions in 2025/26 as Girls Sport Victoria introduces Touch Football as an official school sport offering. School-delivered programs also experienced a significant uplift in comparison to 2023/24, largely driven by an increase in Sporting Schools bookings.

Looking ahead, adult participant retention has been identified as a key focus area for the coming year. A major initiative to support this will be the introduction of Division 3 in the Victoria Touch (VT) League, designed to expand opportunities for adult and regional participants. This addition aims to engage more young adults in the tournament structure while also supporting the ongoing retention of Masters participants.

#### **Schools and Juniors**

Through Sporting Schools, TFV continued delivery of the DoorDash First Try program, recording strong growth with 9,680 participants, a 29% increase compared with 2023/24. A further 2,662 participants took part in school-managed competitions, including those conducted by the Associated Grammar Schools of Victoria and the Associated Public Schools of Victoria.

#### Performance

At the 2024 DoorDash National Youth Championships (NYC), Victoria was represented by nine teams comprising 144 players across the under-12, under-14, under-16, and under-18 divisions. The Victoria Storm fielded under-12 Boys and Girls teams for the first time in many years, and an under-16 Girls team for the first time ever.

Eight state teams, as well as one affiliate team from Moorabbin, also competed at The Championships in 2025. Although the event was postponed due to severe weather disruptions in March, TFV players and volunteers showed great resilience in ensuring all scheduled teams were represented.

#### **Events**

#### **Junior State Cup**

The 2025 TFV Junior State Cup was a big success, with twenty-eight teams and approximately 300 players competing in March. The event highlighted the depth of junior talent and passion for the game across Victoria, with players competing in a full day of spirited competition. Champions were crowned as follows:

Under-10 Mixed: Harlequins/Shepparton Touch

Under-12 Boys: Galaxy Touch Melbourne

Under-12 Girls: OutKast
Under-14 Boys: Burners
Under-14 Girls: OutKast
Under-16 Boys: OutKast
Under-16 Girls: OutKast
Under-18 Boys: Burners

Under-18 Girls: Melbourne University Touch Football

#### **VT League**

The 2024 VT League competition was held across three venues: Seabrook Reserve in Broadmeadows (the home of Touch Football in Victoria), Comley Banks Reserve in Officer, and Russell Square in Ballarat for a regional round. The Melbourne City Lions once again claimed the Club Championship award. Division champions were as follows:

Division 1 Men's: Phoenix Division 2 Men's: Galaxy

Division 3 Men's: West Victoria Warriors
Division 1 Women's: Melbourne City Lions
Division 2 Women's: Melbourne City Lions
Division 3 Women's: Melbourne City Lions

#### **Partnerships**

TFV continues to collaborate with the Melbourne Storm, delivering activations at AAMI Park home matches. Initiatives included family days promoting Touch Football on Gosch's Paddock and a live pre-game interview on the stadium's big screen.

During this reporting period, TFV significantly strengthened partnerships with local and state governments. These relationships have expanded opportunities for new clubs,



## VICTORIA REPORT

affiliates, and participation initiatives that will be realised in 2025/26. They have also led to one-off event opportunities, including come-and-try days, women and girls' participation days, and All Abilities sessions coordinated by local councils to showcase multiple sports to their communities.

#### **Education**

TFV delivered a coaching course to Girls Sport Victoria schools in preparation for Touch Football's introduction as a school sport in 2025/26.

A foundation coach workshop was also delivered at Caulfield Grammar School to upskill school coaches in Touch Football. Two additional foundation coach workshops were run for the TFV community, complemented by multiple affiliate and representative referee courses.

In line with the NYC, all under-16 and under-18 players were required to complete the foundation referee coaching accreditation, adding to their knowledge of Touch Football in preparation for the event, while also upskilling them to contribute as referees within their affiliates and school competitions.

#### Inclusion

In 2024, Melbourne University launched its All Abilities program, which proved highly successful and is set to continue annually. TFV also recorded increased special schools bookings through the Sporting Schools program, including three returning schools. These schools have since been linked to Melbourne University's All Abilities program, supporting a transition into a club environment.

#### **Footprint**

TFV focused strongly on regional growth during this reporting period, establishing three new regional affiliates in Moama/Echuca, Warragul, and Shepparton. Melbourne University also became an independent affiliate, following several successful seasons in both VT League and centrally managed competitions.

#### **Human Resources**

The TFV office farewelled Brandyn Grenfell in November, and we thank him for his contributions throughout his time with TFV. Following his departure, we welcomed Chloe Scott as Sports Operations Coordinator.

In addition, Scott Glover joined the team as Regional Development Coordinator, a position established through TFV securing a significant state government grant under the Sustainable Volunteer Workforce Program. Both new staff members have transitioned well into their roles and are actively growing community engagement and participation while improving systems and processes across Victoria.

Throughout the reporting period, TFV also hosted four university students from Victoria University and Deakin University, who supported the delivery of the Junior State Cup, VT League, and centrally managed competitions. Their involvement provided valuable support while offering them practical industry experience as part of their career pathways.

### **Claudia Davey**Victoria State Manager







## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### REPORT

#### **Participation**

The 2024/25 reporting period saw continued growth in junior participation, increasing by 21%, marking the fifth consecutive year of junior participation growth. Senior participation also rose slightly by 13%, the first increase in four years. Consequently, in a fantastic result, overall unique participation increased by 11% compared to the previous reporting period.

Touch Football Western Australia (TFWA) extends its gratitude to all affiliates and volunteers who deliver competitions and programs across metropolitan and regional areas.

#### **Schools**

TFWA delivered a wide range of school programs, engaging 14,189 students through face-to-face clinics and sessions. This slight decline from previous years reflects the growing number of trained teachers now independently delivering Touch Football programs within their own schools.

TFWA staff and field officers continue to deliver programs across both metropolitan and regional areas, with plans to expand delivery as demand for Touch Football in schools continues to grow.

An all-girls Indigenous Gala Day was held in Perth in partnership with the STARS Foundation, attracting 100 Indigenous girls and providing a fun and inclusive sporting experience.

School competitions engaged 1,402 students, representing a 15% increase on the previous year. School Sport WA (SSWA) also represented the state at the School Sport Australia Championships in Cleveland, Queensland, where the teams achieved the following results: under-15s Boys (third), under-15s Girls (fourth), under-12s Boys (fourth), and under-12 Girls (third).

#### Events

#### 2024 LiveLighter Super League Series

The 2024 LiveLighter Super League Series featured nine rounds plus finals, with twenty-five teams competing across Open divisions — an increase of six teams from the previous

year. Champions were crowned as:

Men's Champions: Perth Brothers Women's Champions: Perth Brothers Mixed Champions: Tompkins Park

#### **Junior State Championships**

The 2024 Junior State Championships, presented by Fuel to Go and Play, were an outstanding success. A record 102 teams competed across age groups from 8s to 17s, up from ninety-six the previous year. Held at UWA Sports Park, the event featured Friday night matches under new lights to ease scheduling and enhance the atmosphere.

The event showcased the enthusiasm of affiliates, parents, officials, and players, and welcomed new regional teams from Exmouth and the Goldfields.

#### **Senior State Championships**

The 2025 Senior State Championships, presented by LiveLighter, attracted sixty-eight teams, an increase of nine from the previous year. Teams from Broome, Busselton, Geraldton, and Karratha made the trip to Perth to compete.

First-time affiliate Kwinana Titans made a strong debut, entering five teams and securing the Women's Open Division title. TFWA also welcomed four visiting teams from Singapore, whose unique playing style added a fresh dynamic to the competition.

Congratulations to Perth Brothers, who claimed the Champion Affiliate title for the third consecutive year. Sincere thanks go to the referees, tournament panel, and all volunteers for their contributions to another highly successful event.

#### **ANZAC Challenge**

The 2025 ANZAC Challenge saw the Perth Kiwi teams victorious in both the Men's and Women's matches, with a particularly close finish in the Men's game. TFWA thanks NRL WA for their continued collaboration in delivering the combined tackle and touch format as part of this commemorative event.





### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### REPORT

#### **North-West Carnival**

The North-West Carnival was held in Broome in May 2025, featuring teams from Broome, Exmouth, Geraldton, Hedland, Karratha, Newman, and Tom Price. Karratha claimed the senior title, defeating Hedland White in the Grand Final, while Broome emerged as the Junior champions.

TFWA extends sincere thanks to the Broome Touch Association, Matt Corpus, and all referees and volunteers whose efforts ensured a successful and enjoyable weekend. The 2026 North-West Carnival will be incorporated into the Country Championships, to be hosted in Exmouth.

#### **Funding**

TFWA acknowledges and thanks the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) and Healthway for their continued funding and support for Touch Football.

DLGSC maintained its regional servicing funding commitment and has confirmed support for the 2025-26 period. A new two-year funding agreement has also been signed with Healthway, extending through to 2027 and promoting the 'Fuel to Go and Play' messaging.

#### Education

TFWA conducted referee and coaching courses across metropolitan and regional locations, accrediting 159 referees and thirty-seven coaches during the reporting period.

#### **Human Resources**

TFWA extends its appreciation to its dedicated staff for their commitment throughout the 2024/25 reporting period. We farewelled Jeremy Wallace, who departed to pursue a teaching career, and we thank him for his valuable contributions during his time with the organisation.

Sara Rubinetti and Tallas Williams worked tirelessly across events, high-performance programs, school initiatives, and regional servicing, achieving exceptional results across their portfolios. We also welcomed Michael Cox, who has settled seamlessly into his role and made an immediate positive impact.

#### Closing

TFWA extends sincere thanks to our State and Territory Advisory Committee (STAC) members – Sally Irwin (Chair), Lauren Norris, Matt Cooper, Luke Saldern (Touch Football Australia (TFA) National Referee Program Manager), and Craig Lowe (TFA Board Member) – for their continued leadership, support, and strategic guidance.

We also thank our referees for their professionalism and dedication throughout the year, particularly those who took on additional responsibilities to ensure the smooth delivery of tournaments and competitions.

Our gratitude extends to the many affiliates, committee members, and volunteers who deliver and grow the game of Touch Football across Western Australia.

Your ongoing dedication, feedback, and support are deeply appreciated.

#### **Warren Smiles**

Western Australia State Manager



## THANK YOU TO TFA'S VALUED PARTNERS

#### PRINCIPAL PARTNER



#### **MAJOR PARTNERS**



























#### **EVENT PARTNERS**















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Sport and Racing









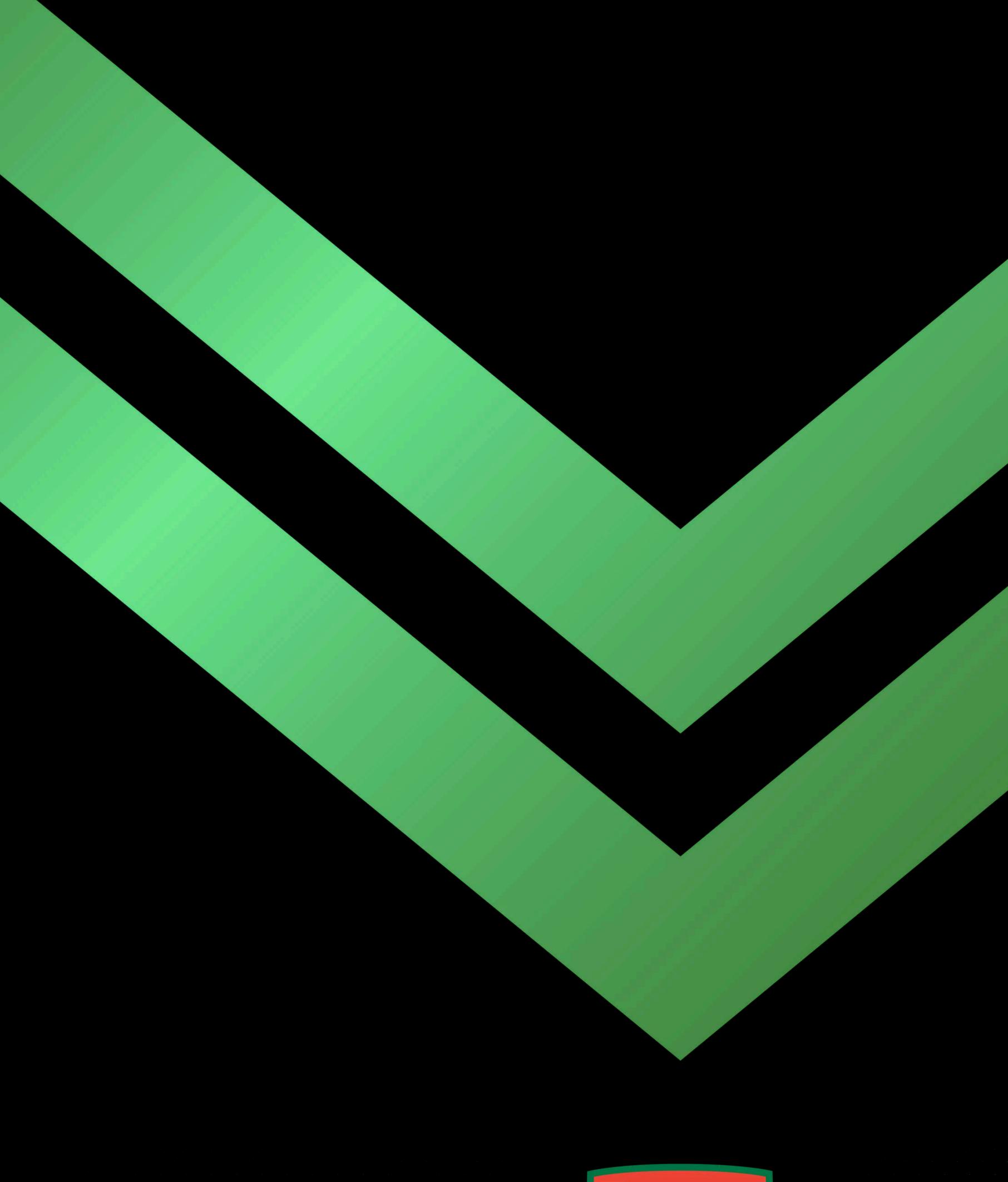
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#### TOUCH FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA

Suite 1/18 Napier Close, Deakin ACT 2600 www.touchfootball.com.au ABN 55 090 088 207