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FACILITIES
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SITUATION

Footballers need space to play. Whether it’s a full-sized synthetic pitch, a rooftop Futsal court or a local park for social games, facilities are fundamental to Football’s future health and popularity.

The provision of good quality facilities to Football’s participants will be a critical focus. Facilities are central to the following outcomes:

- Enjoyment of Football by two million players in 2015 is in part determined by the standard of facilities. Retention of over 600,000 registered club participants is dependent upon facilities.

- Growth and popularity of Football in the decades ahead will be dependent on increasing and improving the facilities base.

- Technical development and skills acquisition for elite players, young and old, is affected by the standard of facilities and thereby affects national performance.

By way of illustrating the deficit of facilities, the 2010 National Facilities Audit commissioned by FFA found that of 562 Local Government Areas across Australia that were contacted, a total of 162 reported as having no facilities to support the training and/or playing of football.
**CHALLENGES**

Football faces a severe deficit of good quality facilities, based on existing research and feedback from the Whole of Football Plan forums and online portal. The challenges facing Football in 2015 are stark:

- 56% of participants say their current facilities are not up to scratch.
- The majority of clubs do not have enough facilities and are turning people away.
- Most state and territory Member Federations have no permanent Home of Football to provide a hub for the community and to help develop elite players.

The problem is becoming more acute as Australia’s capital cities are expanding at an ever increasing rate. Both Sydney and Melbourne are expected to reach over five million residents within the next 20 years. Much of this population growth will be accommodated through increases in the urban density and space for new Football facilities will be at a premium. Furthermore, sport is becoming more and more personalised as people want exercise that fits in with their busy daily routines, so a greater number and variety of facilities will be required.

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**DEFINITIONS**

**TRADITIONAL FACILITIES**

Traditional facilities are outdoor grass or synthetic full-sized pitches that are laid out to accommodate 11-a-side Football. This is where the majority of Football’s 600,000 registered participants currently play Football.

**ALTERNATIVE FACILITIES**

Alternative facilities refer to all facilities that are “non-traditional” in size or surface, for example, Futsal courts, urban facilities such as rooftops, shared facilities with other sports such as tennis, basketball and netball, and beaches. In the future, alternative facilities will represent a significant number of Australia’s overall Football facilities.
TARGETS

TRADITIONAL FACILITIES

Football will commit to develop a National Facilities Strategy. The focus of this plan will be twofold. First, the game will conduct a detailed needs analysis identifying both the state of facilities and where the gaps in our facilities are. Secondly, the strategy will direct Football towards the smarter use of available resources.

Member Federations will continue to be at the forefront of facilities provision. Every Member Federation will have a facilities strategy that supports the local community. This will include every Local Government Area having access to some kind of Football facilities.

Football will engage stakeholders across the game to develop an online Facilities Resource that will clearly detail the expected standards of every kind of Football facility. This resource will act as a guide to the Football Community detailing lessons learned and providing templates for practical applications, such as, business plans, permits and funding.

Football will change the way it engages with key decision makers in Government. It will be the role of the FFA, Member Federations, and Zones and Local Associations to work together to engage with various levels of government and help them fund and provide the Football facilities this nation needs.

In order for Football to deliver the best possible facilities it needs to partner with adjacent stakeholders. This will include working with schools, property developers and complementary sports to open up access to more facilities for our players.

Every Member Federation in Australia must have a Home of Football to support Football in that region that acts as a community hub and supports the development of elite players. Likewise, we believe Australia must have a National Home of Football.

A Facilities Fund must be established for the grassroots. As Football starts to receive the kind of funding enjoyed by many of Australia’s other codes, this fund will provide a focus for governments and stakeholders. Football will provide expert advice on funding options, planning and financial management.
ALTERNATIVE FACILITIES

The guiding principle of “Anytime, Anyhow, Anywhere” will drive the policy towards alternative facilities, based on the following:

- Football is the simplest of all sports, and as such it can be adapted to the changing face of Australia’s cities and society like no other sport can.
- Football is the most flexible of all sports. It can be played on any surface, from floorboards to sand, and it can be played on any size pitch.
- Football is a great form of exercise. It provides a high intensity workout which is safe and accessible to everyone.

In response to changing participation habits Football will utilise existing urban facilities and foster the development of more urban sports spaces. Further, Australia is blessed with the most beautiful beaches in the world, so why not use them? These types of facilities will provide the kind of playing experience that Australians will demand. As a sport we need to:

- Embrace all forms of Football, with a focus on Futsal, and recognise their importance to participation and to developing world class players.
- Help Football access alternative facilities. This will include school facilities, existing community spaces and unused urban spaces.

In the future Football will be recognised across Australia as an enjoyable, safe and accessible form of exercise for everyone.