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NATIONAL TEAMS
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SITUATION

Australia played its first international Football men’s match in 1922 and the first international women’s match in 1979. The Socceroos and Matildas have qualified for multiple FIFA World Cups and both National Teams have won the AFC Asian Cup. Australia competes internationally at under-age level, Futsal and Paralympic level with nine active National Teams in all. The “Green and Gold” colours are a unifying force for the game. In the modern era our National Teams are seen to represent Australia like no other national sporting selection can; our teams reflect the diversity of Australian society and play in all parts of the world. In recent times, our National Teams have embraced a distinctively Australian style of play which has resonated strongly with fans.

CHALLENGES

Australia’s National Teams face unique challenges in competing on the world stage;

Football is the most competitive sport in the world. To compete at the highest level our National Teams need a pipeline of technically gifted players who are able to come together from clubs at home and abroad and mesh instantly.

Unlike the majority of our rivals, Australian Football does not have a dedicated Home of Football facility where players and coaches can strive for excellence in technical, tactical and sports science development.

Australia’s distance from Football destinations and the crowded World Football schedule adds complexity to our National Teams program.

The resources required to support our nine National Teams are substantial. The National Teams program needs to be commercially viable to underpin the investment necessary for Australia to compete on the world stage.
TARGETS

AUSTRALIA’S NATIONAL TEAMS

In striving to make Football the largest and most popular sport in Australia, the game needs to make Football the sport of choice for Australian families and their children. A key driver must be positioning the Socceroos and Matildas as the natural representatives of all Australians and making selection the “childhood dream” of aspiring young players.

Our National Teams must be the role models that our children look up to and we will ensure National Team players represent themselves in a manner that inspires all Australians. There will be equal opportunities for all Australians to represent their National Team regardless of disabilities, gender or the format of Football that they play. Our National Teams will be seen as the “face of Australia” in all its diversity.

As identified in the player development section, Football must increase the number of elite youth players we produce. Part of this will include male and female representative teams throughout the elite player development pathway. Australia is competing in a global environment where our rivals have national representative teams at every age from 15 years and up. Football need to match this, so that our players are exposed to world class environments and opposition throughout the critical development years.

To ensure the National Teams are finding the best available talent, regular training camps will offer chances to players from across the elite player development pathway (Tier One, Tier Two and Tier Three club academies). This will allow young players to be immersed in the culture, to receive intensive technical and tactical development, and to create a cohesive bond that enables them to unite as they compete for major honours.

THE AUSTRALIAN STYLE

The National Teams should represent Australian characteristics in the way they play and the way they conduct themselves. These traits will allow our National Teams to build an affinity with all Australians, whether they are Football community members or not.

For Australia to compete on the world stage we need to produce world class players. The National Curriculum provides “The Roadmap for International Success”. The curriculum will deliver an Australian playing and coaching philosophy based on analysis of top Football and scientific research, taking the specific circumstances of Australian Football into consideration.
Australia will play a proactive brand of Football, based on effective possession with the cutting edge provided by creative individuals. Defensively the key components are quick transition and intelligent collective pressing. The playing style is underpinned by a strong “team mentality”, capitalising on Australia’s traditional strengths.

We are already starting to see the fruits of this philosophy, the dynamic style of the Socceroos at both the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2015 AFC Asian Cup have inspired a nation. Crucially, this National Curriculum needs to be disseminated across the player pathway to ensure that all future Socceroos and Matildas are well versed in the Australian way. It will also be necessary for all future Australian National Team coaches to be experts in the Australian style of play.

As the brands of the Socceroos and Matildas grow in profile and popularity, a long-term view will be taken to commercialise this success to ensure our teams are receiving the support they deserve.

**EVENTS**

Australia has a long history of putting on world class sporting events, a capability shown in hosting the 2015 AFC Asian Cup. Indeed, hosting the event provided a great platform for the Socceroos to go on and lift the trophy.

In collaboration with Government we will continue to look for opportunities to host major Football events. This will include bidding to host the Women’s FIFA World Cup as early as the 2023 edition. Hosting a FIFA Women’s World Cup would provide a great showcase for the women’s game in Australia and inspire a generation of women to take up Football.

**A HOME OF FOOTBALL**

Football needs a home for the National Teams. Currently, our National Team players are often required to train at multiple non-Football venues, while many of our elite youth players prepare for major tournaments in sub-optimal conditions.

An Australian Home of Football will provide a hub for all of Australia’s teams at all levels. It will act as the focal point for FFA’s coaching and player development work delivering thousands of courses a year, a centre for refereeing education and a world class sports science and medicine facility.
More than this, a Home of Football will allow Australia to look to the future, while also celebrating our Football history by encompassing a Football museum. It will act as a focal point for the whole Football Community.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

World class support services are imperative for our national teams to compete against the best in the world and to set best practice environments that attract the best young talent. Advanced performance analytics were a key ingredient to Germany’s 2014 FIFA World Cup successes and the Socceroos victory in the 2015 AFC Asian Cup. The need for world class support services is particularly relevant in Australia where we have players based in every corner of the globe and are implementing a high intensity style of Football. The National Teams will utilise the latest technology in sports science and performance analytics to give our teams the best possible opportunity to beat the world’s best.