

Exploring LGBT+ inclusion within Victorian Football



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Background to research project

Proud 2 Play conducted a mixed methods scoping research study to explore the current climate around LGBT+ inclusion for football in Victoria

- **Survey: 156 responses from range of stakeholders across community football and administration.**
- **Interviews: 10 individual interviews with a range of stakeholders**

Survey Results

Participants were asked about **homophobia in football** including whether they believed it was present, if they had experienced or witnessed it and where it occurs:

- 76.5% of LGB (sexuality diverse) participants
- 51.6% of non LGB (straight) participants
- Strong prevalence and reporting of homophobia in football.
- Understanding of attitudes that lesbian and bisexual women more accepted within football than gay and bisexual men, and trans people.
- Lack of knowledge and awareness amongst participants towards trans and gender diverse inclusion in particular, but also LGB inclusion.
- Appetite amongst survey respondents – 76% of people think more should be done to include LGBT+ people within football.

Interview Results: Key themes

There are four major themes to arise from analysis of the interview data. These are

- 1) ***Barriers and challenges*** – the challenges associated with doing LGBT+ inclusion from people within football. Mainly around sexuality.
- 2) ***Discrimination*** – experiences of homophobia/ biphobia/ transphobia within football and a culture which does not celebrate or tolerate sexual/ gender minorities.
- 3) ***LGBT+ diversity management*** – issues related to the management of this type of diversity, from players through to policing anti-vilification in community football.
- 4) ***Understanding LGBT+ inclusion*** – things associated with knowledge and awareness around what LGBT+ inclusion means, and how to enact inclusion across the organisation and within the sport.

Example Statements



*When asked about any experiences of homophobia:

“In lots of ways it was a real clash of cultures too. And there were incidents on the field, there was slurs and language, directed at different players. There was physical intimidation.”

*On discrimination and vilification, in online spaces

“Obviously if people are getting slammed on social media, or every time they go out, or when they have a bad game, or unfortunately from what I’ve seen on Twitter, when people don’t do well, people pick out their sexuality or their ethnicity. They’re the first couple of things that get picked at when they’re not at their peak performance.

*On using this research and project to drive changes within football:

“I’m optimistic with what we have, and I think we’ll gain momentum. If this project that we’re doing is a success, I think that could be a catalyst for more. And really having a sophisticated approach to having that change continue, to challenge ourselves. What’s next, how can we do it better, how do we build on the good work?”





The final results will be used to drive cultural change across football in Victoria at all levels.

Well done on initiating and taking steps to promote LGBT+ inclusion across football. Remember, this is a challenge for the sport sector as a whole, as will require a whole sector approach. FV will be a vital part of this work.