

Regional Review Recommendations

Frequently Asked Questions



**FOOTBALL
VICTORIA**

Regional Review Recommendations - FAQs

The Regional Football Review - initiated by FV - aims to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of football administration, development, and overall experience across Victoria. FV have been conducting this review over the course of 18 months, engaging a significant number of key Regional stakeholders and presenting findings to:

- Regional Association Executive Committee Members & Staff
- Regional Club Presidents, Secretaries & Committee Members
- Regional Zone Representatives
- Regional Coaches, Referees & Participants
- Regional Sports Assemblies & Regional Sport Victoria
- FV Staff & Board Members

The following summarises a number of key questions that were common across the review process and the recommendation presentations in each of the regional Areas.

The review process itself was conducted in collaboration with independent organisation – Solucio – and incorporates analysis of previous reports, the current operating model, stakeholder feedback, best practice governance models in sports, and the current regional football experience in order to produce the best operating model for regional football participants moving forward.

Q1: What are the main changes proposed under the recommendations?

A: The Regional Review flags a gradual transition of responsibilities for the management and delivery of regional football from the independent Regional Associations (current) towards a unified model with Regional Advisory Committees within Football Victoria (future).

This transition will see FV assume responsibility for the management and delivery of all aspects of regional football – guided on local nuance and knowledge by representatives of Advisory Committees in each region.

The Regional Advisory Committees will be comprised of Club Delegates, and a Deputy Chair, and Chairperson (who may be independently appointed) - noting existing independent Association Executives will have first preference for nomination and election into these roles in the first instance.

Additionally, FV will introduce standardised Rules of Competition, Discipline & Tribunal processes, etc, that provide consistent football experiences and a higher level of service delivery across Regional Victoria.



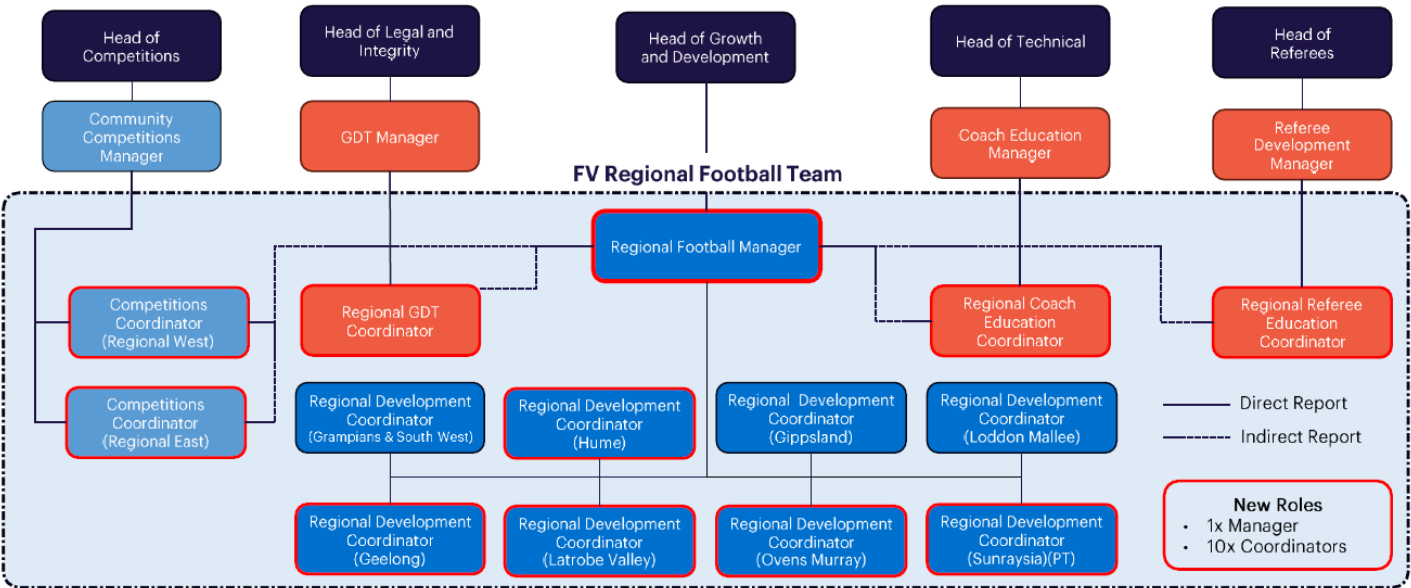
Under the above, as FV will become the organisation responsible for football across the entire state, FV will replace all current Association fees charged to regional participants with a consistent FV Regional Registration Fee Component across all regions – at a reduced rate of the FV Registration Fee Component currently in place for Metropolitan participants.

All additional revenue will be reinvested into Regional Football, specifically enabling greater resourcing, and a greater investment in regional staff and service delivery to support the significant number of clubs and participants in regional areas.

Q2: What staff and resourcing will be put in place to ensure regional clubs and participants receive a better service from FV?

A: The organisation chart below provides an indicative structure for how FV could structure a “Regional Football Team” to improve servicing to regional stakeholders. This includes the creation of new full time Competition Coordinators, Discipline, Coach & Referee Education roles specifically to support the delivery of regional football.

Central to this team is a Regional Football Manager who will oversee the strategic implementation of key initiatives in regional Victoria, manage the “on the ground” Development Coordinators who will support regional clubs, and facilitate cross department collaboration with regionally focused staff in other departments to ensure a successful transition.



Overall, this structure would increase FV Regional resourcing by 11FTE, acknowledging there would need to be a staged implementation of each role. Total staff could increase further with additional participation growth in regional Victoria, however the implementation of a structure such as the above will only be possible if there is a complete unification of the game across regional Victoria and existing revenues are able to be invested into these roles.

Q3: Won't these changes take more money out of regional football? Will it cost more to participate under the new recommendations?

A: The recommendations derived from Solucio's independent review of regional football focus on the consolidation of the existing 11 separate legal entities into one unified football body, and streamlining administrative effectiveness and advocacy.

Solucio and FV have undertaken a significant level of financial modelling across a number of scenarios for implementing the new governance structure and operating model to ensure this staffing structure is affordable and sustainable while increasing support to regional football.

The new FV Regional Registration Fee will finalised alongside Regional Advisory Committees in 2025, and provided at a discounted rate of FV Metropolitan Community Competitions to align the cost of participation all regional areas.

This would replace the current fragmented model where Regional Associations collect a varied level of fees (some high, some low) and deliver a varied level of service (some high, some low), while some collect and maintain high cash balances, whereas others re-invest all funds into delivery of the game.

Importantly, all revenue generated by Regional Football is re-invested into this unified structure. It is important to note that these regional registration fees will be reviewed annually – which is consistent with all fees.

Under the modelled fee structures flagged for 2026, MiniRoos participants will benefit from an overall reduction in average fees collected by governing bodies, while Junior participant fees will see minor fee relief or remain consistent. Senior participants will see a slight fee increase; however, these cost increases will allow for dedicated resources to support all levels of Regional Football.

Category	Average Potential Change in Governing Body Fees*	% of Total Regional Participants
MiniRoos	30% - 35% Decrease	49%
Juniors	5% Decrease – No Change	32%
Seniors	10% - 15% Increase	19%

**Governing body fees in this example are those fee components paid out to FV and the relevant Regional Associations from within your overall registration fees paid to your club.*

For example, John's parents pay Regional Stars FC \$300 to play Under 11s – in 2024 averages, approximately \$75 of these registration fees were paid to FV (\$29.50 Fixed) and Regional Associations (Varied across each Association), while the remaining \$225 is retained by Regional Stars FC to cover operating expenses.

Under the new operating model in 2026, this would decrease to approximately \$50 paid solely to FV, allowing for a cost saving to be passed on from Clubs to parents and players.

Removing a level of administration and governance will create major economies of scale and efficiencies across regional Victoria, allowing all revenue will be directly invested back into regional football via an increased FV regional workforce to provide an improved level of service delivery in regional Victoria.

Q4: Regional Players already pay a fee component to FV. Why don't they receive these services from the current amount?

A: While FV collects a small fee component from each regional player, these funds are currently directly expensed through significant insurance costs, and investment into the regions via the 3 current paid staff as Regional Development Coordinators.

The Member Federation's component of the Player Registration Fee funds a comprehensive suite of insurances, such as Player Insurance, Public Liability Insurance, Professional Indemnity Insurance, etc, which manage risk and protect the game's stakeholders from litigation. A significant percentage of the money collected from regional players is used to pay these essential insurance premiums.

For clarity, given FV's standing as a non-for-profit entity, the FV regional football department operates at a neutral position.

Under the new structure, an alignment of resources across football allows for increased service in the regions due to increased efficiencies, while ensuring all revenue generated by Regional Football is re-invested into this unified structure. FV has also specifically reiterated its renewed commitment to regional football in its [2024-2028 "Our Football" Strategic Plan](#).

***Q5: What about the fee component players pay to FA (The National Registration Fee – NRF)?
What does FA do with the money collected from the NRF?***

A: Football Australia, as Australia's FIFA member, is responsible for overseeing football throughout Australia. FA employs professionals who lead the growth, development and promotion of the game nationally and internationally. The NRF supports the participation of the Socceroos, Matildas and other national teams at both senior and junior level on the world stage. FA also leads player, coach and referee development, club development, player development opportunities (Eg. National Championships), Sporting Schools delivery, and inclusion and diversity programs nationally.

Q6: What happens to the income generated from each region/competition under the structural changes?

A: In principle, as a not-for-profit entity, the model being proposed aims to reinvest all revenue generated into Regional Football each year. The proposed changes flag the income generated from regional competitions to be reinvested into increased regional staffing and service delivery.

Under a consolidated regional department budget line, excess funds will be reinvested into each region and/or key regional initiatives (Eg. Country Champs, Development Initiatives, etc.).

Q7: Why does the game need to change the way it is administered?

A: While the perception may be that competitions are being run effectively, the role of an association should extend well beyond administering competitions (Eg. Growing and developing football, safeguarding, marketing, non-traditional programming, policies & procedures, etc.).

A combination of one-on-one stakeholder interviews and community survey responses show that there is a level of dissatisfaction in the current regional environment and/or desire for positive change via increased involvement from Football Victoria.

There are several positive benefits regional stakeholders can experience under a unified structure, including (but not limited to):

- Major economies of scale and greater full-time resourcing for Regional Football
- Reduction in volunteer burden across Association and Club volunteers
- Increased volunteer hours available at Club level
- Improved access to subject matter experts
- Maintained unified voice and input into FV functions via Regional Advisory Committee

- Greater objectivity in football delivery (Eg. Competition Management, Dispensation, Discipline & Tribunal Processes, etc)
- Easier transition between competitions to ensure participation for all (Eg. Region to Region)
- Potential for greater cross-regional collaboration (Eg. Competitions, Strategic Implementation)
- Consistent participant experience across all regions
- Greater risk management across all of football delivery.

Q8: When will these changes take place? And why?

A: There is a phased implementation plan flagged for the Regional Review recommendations to support regional stakeholders in the transition period.

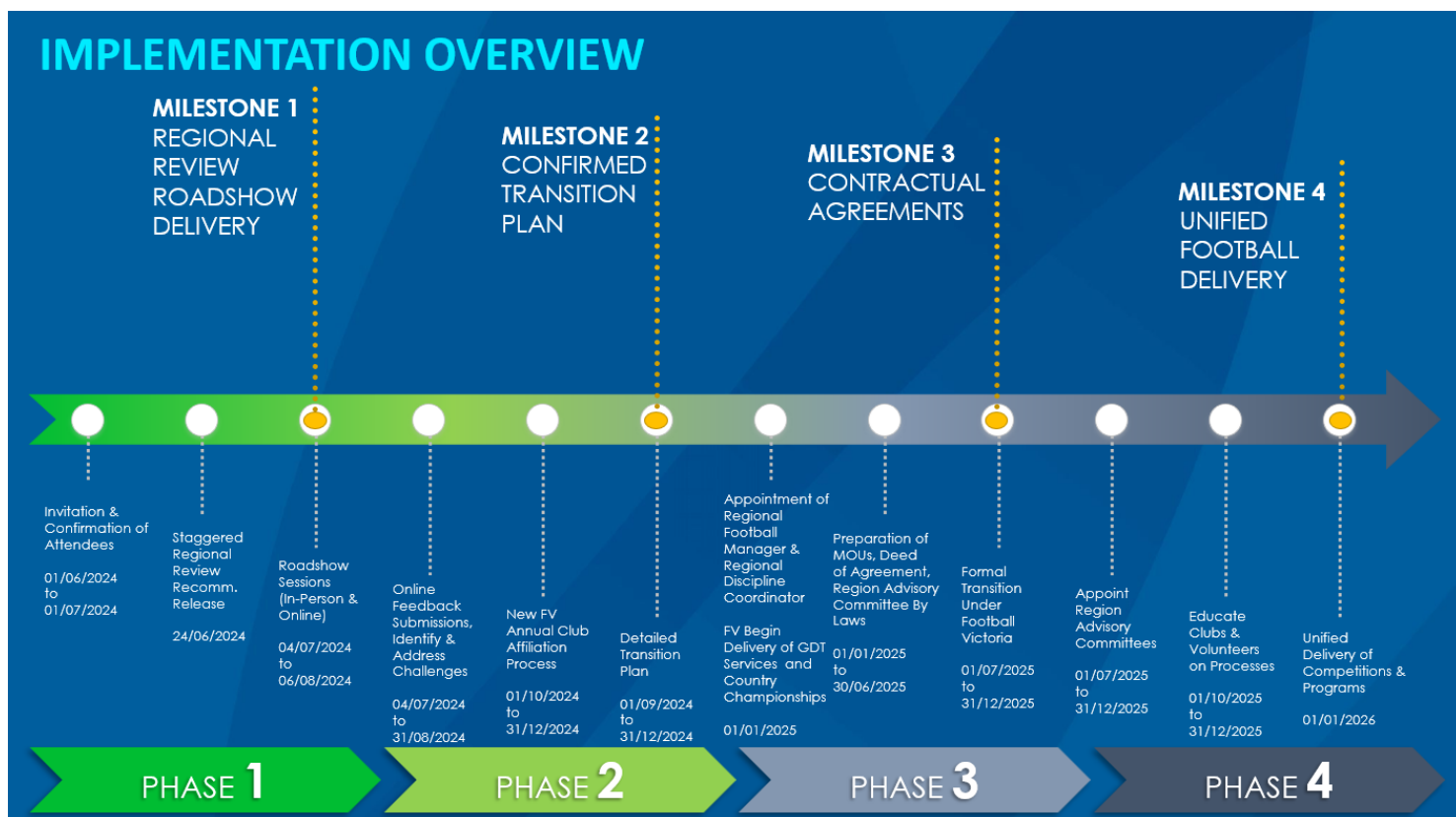
Following the successful delivery of 10 information sessions during a significant Regional Roadshow presenting the recommendations and answering questions from approximately 200 stakeholders, FV has flagged assuming responsibility for all Regional Associations Grievance, Discipline & Tribunal (GDT) processes, and delivery of the Country Championships tournament commencing in 2025.

FV will show its commitment to this transition and regional football by completing the recruitment of the Regional Football Manager and Regional Discipline Coordinator (positions shown above) to commence in 2025. This will be completed without changing fee structures to the new uniform FV Regional Fee Component in order to begin executing the transition process alongside regional counterparts.

Simultaneously, FV will continue engagement and communication with stakeholders to identify and resolve any potential barriers to a smooth transition process while keeping Club and Association stakeholders informed via established communication channels.

Across 2025 FV will engage with all Regional Associations to prepare MOUs, legal agreements, establish Regional Advisory Committees, etc., to begin a formal transition of all responsibilities. FV is intentionally taking a measured and methodical approach to this transition across multiple years to gradually support regional stakeholders with the changing structures.

The final transition piece will be completed late in 2025 when Advisory Committees are appointed, Clubs and Volunteers are educated on new processes, etc, for FV to commence unified delivery of all Regional Football from the beginning of 2026.



Q9: What if our Club or Association doesn't want to wait until 2026? Is this possible in 2025?

A: Feedback from several Clubs and Associations across the 10 Information sessions questioned whether this is possible on a shorter timeframe for those regional stakeholders who believe this is the best way forward for the game and are really excited by this change.

FV has taken considerable time and care to execute this project in the appropriate manner, including a measured timeline to deliver a smooth transition. However, FV are open to further discussion with Clubs/Associations that wish to become early adopters of this model in 2025 and will work through this on a case by case basis.

It is important to note that the full staffing structure will not be achievable until 2026 when all Associations transition to the unified model, however FV will explore staged introduction of relevant roles across 2025 should regions wish to commence next year.

Q10: What is a Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) - Who is on the RAC? How do they get appointed? And how do they operate to ensure regional stakeholders are heard by FV?

A: Regional Advisory Committees will be introduced by FV in each region to ensure that regional stakeholders maintain input and guidance on local competitions, nuance, etc.

Each Regional Advisory Committee will consist of a Club Delegate from each club, with the ability to also appoint an independent Chair & Deputy Chair (if desired), and will be established under a By Law that sets the framework for the Committee's relationship with FV.

As an example, under the new governance and operating model, the current Ballarat & District Soccer Association (BDSA) Clubs would form the members of the new "Ballarat Region Committee" – under a By Law to be created with the Regional Football Manager alongside these stakeholders in 2025. A separate process will also be undertaken to establish baseline service levels heading into 2026.

The Geelong Region Football Committee (GRFC) is a live example that has been operating under this governance framework with FV for more than a decade, with a current version of the [Geelong Region By Law](#) available for view.

Q11: What services, resources, and support do Regional Associations and Clubs currently receive from FV?

A: Football Victoria (FV) provides access to full-time, dedicated subject-matter expert staff for support including club development, grant writing support, government advocacy and facility development.

Regional associations and member clubs receive access to online systems (Play Football, GameDay, Schedula, Go Football) and associated resources.

Football Victoria also provides an extensive insurance policy that covers all aspects of community football (public liability, professional indemnity, molestation).

Under the new unified structure, FV can deliver the required level of operating efficiency, subject matter expertise, and on the ground support for Clubs in a financially responsible manner that will unlock the future growth of our game in Regional Victoria.

Q12: Regional Associations have existing assets and equity. How will these be protected or maintained?

A: The recommendations outline that any existing assets will be quarantined by FV via the creation of individual protected funds accounts for each region that are only available to the region and clubs that generated them.

These funds will only be accessible via nominated signatories of each account when accompanied by supporting motions from the relevant region's Advisory Committee approving any expenditure.

Q13: Regional Associations have had growth and success without Football Victoria's help. Why do regional areas need this support? Why should they transition and unify with FV?

A: The popularity of football in Australia is rapidly growing and participation continues to grow organically right across Victoria.

We acknowledge and appreciate the work done by regional associations to date - and will extend this by recognising the history of these efforts - while expanding the servicing of local football needs.

We will retain local knowledge and expertise via the introduction of regional advisory committees, ensuring local history, traditions and values are maintained, and regional voices are key in decision making for regional participants.

A unified football model is better optimised to ensure best practice principles, processes and procedures are in place to provide a consistent football experience across regional Victoria.

Case studies from regional clubs and associations show that some areas far out-perform others. When delving into the detail, strong growth numbers are often attributed to those Associations and Clubs who have strong collaboration with FV to support growth initiatives, strong government relations that unlock facility investment/development, and high-level strategic direction.

The alignment of resources collectively - instead of under 10 different independent organisations - allows for greater efficiencies across all elements of the game, and therefore greater investment can be applied for the betterment of football in regional Victoria overall.

FV is more committed than ever to service and support regional football, given the substantial growth opportunities for the game in regional areas. With a new executive and strategic direction, FV has a renewed commitment to servicing the entire Victorian community to grow and prosper.

Q14: How do these changes support Women & Girls football? And participation in general?

A: The report's recommendations and changes to the governance model allow football to provide a significantly greater level of support to female participants across regional football.

Under a unified model, FV are able to support Clubs strategically strengthen competitions and leagues outside the traditional parameters and borders of Associations.

For example, Club A may have the only U13 Girls team under Association A without an U13 Girls competition to play in, while neighbouring Association B has a flourishing U13 Girls competition. Currently there is a level of red tape and barriers preventing Club A entering their U13 Girls team into Association B's U13 Girls competition and Club A's team would be forced to enter a Boys Competition in Association A or disbanded and potentially lost to the game.

Under the new operating model, these barriers and red tape are removed and an easier transition is available to ensure Club A's U13 Girls team can compete in the neighbouring regions U13's Girls competition.

This common sense approach to supporting participation opportunities and ensuring we are building women and girls competitions, alongside overall participation will deliver fantastic benefits to regional participants and the overall growth of the game.

Q15: How will FV respect and retain the history of Regional Associations?

A: The report's recommendations and FV strongly acknowledge and respect the importance of retaining local history and traditions.

There are several key initiatives and actions outlined for FV to carry forward the history of those regional stakeholders that carried the game until now.

This includes recognizing contributions for Regional Association Life Members as Football Victoria Life Members, continuing with the naming conventions for local award winners, cup competitions, etc.

Q16: Regional Associations have unified with FV before, why do it again?

A: FV acknowledges that in the early 2000's there had been attempts to align football across Victoria, with three individual Associations to varied levels of success.

Since this period, the expectations and demands of community sport have undertaken a significant shift – with more burden placed on fewer volunteers than ever before – triggering a need to re-visit the optimal model for regional participants.

Based on feedback from the community, it is time for both FV and its Regional stakeholders to look forward to the future for the betterment of regional football.

Recent success with the unified delivery of football in Geelong, and interim measures in the Latrobe Valley, provide a roadmap of the benefits for football when all parties are aligned and unified.

Acknowledging unprecedented participation growth in recent years, changes in technology, increased compliance requirements, regulation, liabilities, decreasing volunteerism, leads us to a path where a unified football model provides the best opportunities for the growth of our game.

Formally, we now also see an increased representation of regional football within FV via the constitutional change in FV membership where there is a direct club vote (one vote per club) provided to all regional clubs, and the importance of Regional Football within the [2024-2028 “Our Football” Strategic Plan](#).

Q17: FV has traditionally focused on Metropolitan clubs and competitions. Why is this transition being considered now?

A: FV is more committed than ever to service and support regional football, given the substantial growth opportunities for the game in regional areas. With a new executive and strategic direction, FV has a renewed commitment to servicing the entire Victorian community in the best way possible.

Since 2022, FV has made several investments in regional football, including the hiring of Regional Development Coordinators, a constitutional change to further recognise regional clubs as FV Members, enhanced club support, and the commissioning of an independent review of regional football.

More recently, FV’s commitment to regional football has been highlighted in the [2024-2028 “Our Football” Strategic Plan](#).

Ultimately, the new structure will provide an increased level of dedicated regional resources, reduce the burden on volunteers that often represent at both Club and Association level, and provide a greater football experience for Regional Victoria.

Additional benefits for FV include greater consistencies between regions, fewer bespoke knowledge requirements, a clearer development pathway and greater input into regional football development and delivery.

Q18: Historically, there has been a lack of visible FV presence in regional areas. How will this change?

A: Despite current resourcing, the 3 dedicated FV regional staff engage with a significant number of stakeholders (Eg. Associations, Clubs, Council, Regional Sports Assemblies, etc.) across multiple regional areas, to the point where it is difficult to service all parties in person without proactive engagement from stakeholders.

The alignment of funds and redistribution of resources under the proposed structure allows FV to expand its staffing levels to a total of 14 in the regional team, and have more dedicated regional staff on the ground in each region, which enables more points of contact and a greater quality of service to regional Victorian participants, coaches, referees, and clubs.

Q19: If Regional Associations are dissolved or wound up, we will not be able to apply for grants or keep the sponsors we've worked hard to attract?

A: FV acknowledges and appreciates the local partnerships Regional Associations have developed over time, however, the current model demonstrates an under utilisation of funding available across Regional Associations and Clubs. Financial modeling shows that it is more beneficial to adopt the recommendations than continue the current model.

Additionally, greater resourcing within Regional Football will lead to a better level of support for clubs with grant applications and partnerships, with additional opportunities to leverage FV's corporate relationships.

Where possible, FV will also look to continue partnership/sponsorship arrangements held by Associations whilst ensuring all new sponsorship leads have a statewide approach. Ultimately, this allows for a greater overall increase in funding available to use within the game.

Q20: There is a concern that Football Victoria's Grievance, Discipline & Tribunal (GDT) would not work in Regional Victoria.

A: FV understands this will be a significant change from the status quo, however, substantial feedback provided throughout the review from stakeholders demonstrated a clear need for a consistent GDT to be developed for Regional Victoria.

Feedback was clear that current regional GDT processes are inadequate, untimely, inconsistently applied, inconsistent between regional associations, lack perceived independence and lack the required expertise to have it applied effectively. This exposes football to serious reputational risk.

As this is such a complex and sensitive area, it also may create more risk for participants. FV is best placed to have a unified approach to GDT and member protection issues across the state, and to elevate the level of protection and equity for our participants.

The appointment of a dedicated Regional GDT Coordinator will alleviate some of the issues faced above.

A consistent statewide GDT framework will allow for increased timeliness, increased consistency within and between regions, enhance independence, and will be delivered by subject matter experts.

Q21: The Country Championships are an important tournament in our calendar. How do we know you will keep running it? Why don't we see more from Football Victoria in the planning and delivery of the tournament?

A: The Country Championships are an important and historically significant event on the football calendar, run independently by the Country Leagues Football Association (CLFA) - a combination of all Regional Associations.

As highlighted by Solucio, under the recommendations and new governance/operating model there was significant risk that the Country Championships might not continue if the CLFA no longer have the required members to meet minimum requirements under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and would be forced to wind up.

The Recommendation regarding Country Championships delivery specifically holds FV accountable to continue the Country Championships tournament and enshrine this in yearly operations – a responsibility that is taken very seriously. This includes retaining the representative program structure, including the current forecasted host regions, maintaining low cost fees, rotation around regional host locations, etc.

FV will continue supporting this annual tournament that allows regional stakeholders to unite and support local talent. Furthermore, this tournament is an exceptional opportunity for talent identification, as well as coach and referee development via frequent and high-quality educational offerings.

In the preparation for previous Country Championships tournaments, FV staff have proactively reached out to support the planning and operation of the tournament but there has been a sustained view to continue coordinating this event independently.

Despite the success of the tournament being in FV's and football's best interests, there has been limited engagement or collaboration to support the delivery and expansion of the event to provide the best participant experience possible.

Under the new operating model, FV will be in a position to support a more consistent and aligned approach to Representative Squad programs (Eg. When trials are conducted, length of program, etc) that allow the best development opportunities for regional players and in turn raise the overall on-field experience at the Country Championships.

FV will also be able to explore commercial avenues that allow further reinvestment into regional football, while further expanding the event as a development opportunity for all coaches, referees, and players.

FV is excited at the opportunity to utilise our staff and resource to reduce the onus placed on volunteers to run the Country Championships, while still providing an opportunity for host regions to unlock significant revenue, and growing the overall offering the Country Championships provides each year to Regional stakeholders.

Q22: There is a perception that player talent in regional Victoria is neglected. How will this improve under the proposed changes?

A: FV recognises that there have been historic challenges in servicing Regional players within the talented player pathways, and the challenges of geography and travel are an inherent consideration for regional footballers. The implementation of the recommendations will allow for a greater allocation of resources to regional areas, as well as increased local knowledge via enhanced coach development.

A revamped Country Championships and increased focus on other local talented player development opportunities may provide more opportunities for regional footballers to progress through the FV talented player pathway.

FV's commitment to talented player development is demonstrated in the recent appointment of an Executive Manager of High Performance & Pathways, and separation of our Performance and Pathways out of the broader Football Operations, into its own area of focus.

This continues the work implemented in 2024 to ensure regional representation across all levels of the Victorian teams sent to National Championships, including players, coaches, team managers, etc from regional areas.

Q23: What if Regional Associations refuse to adopt the recommendations?

A: FV's [new strategic plan](#) calls for a unified approach to football in Victoria that is best practice for the game and all its participants. By formally bringing Regional football into the umbrella, we can aim for better outcomes for all participants, and a stronger, more robust and equitable game.

Under FV's new constitution, only Regional Clubs who are part of the transition will receive direct membership under Football Victoria, access to registration and competition management platforms, insurance for clubs, competitions and participants and access to talented player pathways. This will ultimately be a club decision, both individually regarding their relationship to FV, and as members of their respective Associations – noting that FV prefers to collaborate with all regional areas to deliver the best experience to all participants at all levels of our game for the most effective cost price and in accordance with a unified model. We need to level the playing field for all competitors.

FV is currently exposed to significant and frequent examples of unmitigated risk under the current structure with independent associations, which cannot continue. For legal and risk reasons, FV's insurance and other forms of support will not be able to be provided to any associations who sit outside the FV structure.

Should any region opt to respectfully decline the recommendations and elect to stand independently as an Association, then that Region would need to independently source all of the elements required to operate an Association outside the umbrella of the State Sporting Association, which would significantly increase the costs of participation.

This includes independent insurance for clubs and players, staff resourcing, digital platforms such as registration and competition management, and all other forms of support which will not be provided outside the formal FV framework and structure.

Non-affiliated clubs and associations should also be aware that this will also effect eligibility for and access to player pathways as unaffiliated entities/players, and it may be more difficult to obtain facility

investment and grant funding because government funding is often difficult to access without the recognition and acknowledgement of affiliation with the State Sporting Association.

After a lengthy review process to determine a best practice solution, this is the only governance and operating model being considered by FV moving forward, and to date we have received an overwhelmingly positive response from Regional Clubs and Stakeholders.



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