



FIRST NATIONS STRATEGY

2026 - 2027

AFL PLAYERS' ASSOCIATION

Experience. Connection. Support. Advocacy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The AFL Players' Association acknowledge and pay respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, as the traditional owners of the lands we live, work and play.

We also acknowledge the significant contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFL and AFLW players have had on the game of Australian Rules Football.

We acknowledge and thank AFLPA Member, Aliesha Newman, for her artwork which is contained in our logo and this strategy.





01

CONTEXT

OUR VISION, JOURNEY AND THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE STRATEGY.

VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

The AFL Players' Association envisions a nation where reconciliation is lived through action as well as words.

We strive for a future where the rights, cultures, and voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are acknowledged, respected, and celebrated, and where equality is achieved through understanding, truth-telling, and our shared history.

Reconciliation for the AFLPA and players means closing the gaps that exist in our industry, creating a culturally safe workplace environment where Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander players feel supported, heard, and empowered. It is about respecting that we are not all the same, recognising past and present injustices, and remedying them through continuous effort.

Unity is fundamental to our strength as a players' association who represents the collective current and past players in the game. Through genuine relationships, mutual respect, and unwavering advocacy, we aim to ensure the AFLPA is a trusted space for all players, and that our actions advance reconciliation so that, one day, true equality is achieved.

Until then, we are committed to listening, learning, and leading with purpose...

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

10+

YEARS ON THE
RECONCILIATION JOURNEY

4

RECONCILIATION ACTION
PLANS COMPLETED

The AFLPA has a long history representing our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members and supporting their football journeys as well as into retirement. We consider the health, wellbeing and interests of our members the most important aspect for the industry and believe the diversity of Australian cultures provides great opportunity to improve the industry for all people.

The AFLPA reconciliation journey formally began through a Statement of Commitment more than a decade ago, with the Association completing four Reconciliation Action Plans since.

Pleasingly, our RAP journey unearthed many positive aspects for the AFLPA and highlighted work we have imbedded within our organisation that reinforced the strength of our intentions, actions, and habits.

Throughout this journey, alongside consultation with our Advisory Board, the AFLPA will move away from another RAP cycle to a more bespoke and targeted strategy. It is the belief of the AFLPA's leaders that, to continue to grow in its support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members, the organisation must expand beyond the confines of a RAP to drive more relevant and impactful outcomes.

RECONCILIATION WORKING GROUP

The development of this strategy has been led by the AFLPA’s internal Reconciliation Working Group, consisting of a wide range of committed staff including:

- 01

Chief Operating Officer

EXECUTIVE SPONSOR
- 02

GM Communications and Commercial

EXECUTIVE SPONSOR
- 03

Head of Communications

PROJECT LEAD
- 04

Executive Assistant

PROJECT LEAD

- 05

Indigenous Relationship Manager
- 06

Regional Manager - WA
- 07

Wellbeing Coordinator
- 08

Accredited Agents Manager

OVERVIEW

FOUR PILLARS TURN INTENT INTO ACCOUNTABLE ACTION.

OVERVIEW

01 MEMBER EXPERIENCE

02 MEMBER CONNECTION & SUPPORT

03 ADVOCACY

04 GOVERNANCE

This strategy and the deliverables contained within it deliberately focus on the sphere of the AFLPA’s influence as it relates to our members. The strategy will focus on four strategic pillars – member experience, member connection and support, our advocacy for our members and good governance – to ensure we remain accountable to ourselves and, ultimately, to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members.

This strategy complements and supports the AFLPA’s 2025–2027 strategy, which specifically focuses and advances the AFLPA’s role in increasing the **Wages, Workplace and Wellbeing** outcomes for current and past AFL and AFLW footballers.

THE STRATEGY ALSO CONSIDERS

- Actions determined by the AFLPA through its Indigenous Advisory Board and Human Rights Steering Committee
- Current and Past Player insights determined through AFLPA member surveys
- Recommendations from the AFLPA’s Insights and Impact Report.

OUTCOMES & MEASURES

STRATEGIC PILLAR

OUTCOMES WE WILL DELIVER

KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS

01 MEMBER EXPERIENCE

- Increased understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFL/W player experience drives measurable improvements in workplace culture
- Increased support for current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFL/W players in the club environment is provided
- Increased industry alignment and action on the issue of racism leads to less incidents, including online

- Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workplace Culture measures
- Increased player view of effectiveness of club support
- Less players reporting incidents of racism

02 MEMBER CONNECTION & SUPPORT

- Stronger relationships between the AFLPA of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander AFL/W players leads to increased levels of support being provided
- Increased connection exists between Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander current and past players
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFL/W members are increasingly connected to AFLPA programs and services

- Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander current and past player AFLPA Effectiveness Scores
- Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander current and past player AFLPA Satisfaction Score
- Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander current and past players' level of comfort in raising issues with AFLPA

OUTCOMES & MEASURES

STRATEGIC PILLAR

OUTCOMES WE WILL DELIVER

KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS

03 ADVOCACY

- Delivery of the AFLPA's First Nations strategy increases Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFL/W player experience, connection, support and advocacy
- Current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFL/W players have increased voice in the industry on all matters pertaining to them
- The 2027 CBA increases the wages, workplace and/or wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFLPA members

- First Nations Strategy delivered
- CBA outcomes increase the wages, workplace and/or wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFLPA members

04 GOVERNANCE

- Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFL/W players are represented in AFLPA Board, Delegate and staff succession plans and appointments
- Strong governance and accountability leads to increased outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFLPA members
- Increased engagement with industry stakeholders leads to increased outcomes for AFLPA members

- Increased representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFLPA members in AFLPA roles
- Increased wages, workplace and/or wellbeing outcomes exist for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AFLPA members

