

AUSTRALIAN FENCING FEDERATION LTD

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 TO 2020





AUSTRALIAN FENCING – STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 -2020

On behalf of the AFF Board of Directors, I am pleased to present our Strategic Plan for 2017 to 2020.

Over the past four years, we have made good progress in implementing some key initiatives, including transitioning to a company limited by guarantee, consolidating our financial position and further developing our structured, team-based national high performance program.

However, there is much work still to be done in order to ensure the long-term and sustainable growth of our sport in Australia in all areas of activity. To that end, our Strategic Plan identifies the following five key strategic imperatives:

- 1. Increase participation**
- 2. Improve elite performance**
- 3. Raise profile**
- 4. Act professionally**
- 5. Be positive**

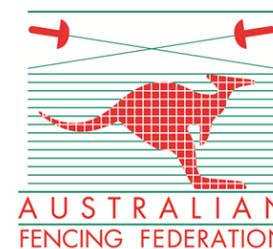
Each of these strategic imperatives is supported by a range of initiatives which we aim to implement over the coming four year period.

We are excited by the direction we have agreed to take as an organisation and look forward to working collaboratively with the States and members of the broader fencing community to achieve our goals.

We strongly believe that every member of the community has an opportunity to contribute to the continued growth and development of Australian fencing. Only by harnessing the skills, expertise and enthusiasm of our people will we be able to achieve lasting change.

**President
Australian Fencing Federation Ltd**

STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE 1: INCREASE PARTICIPATION



Key strategic objectives:

1. Significantly increase the number of people participating in a 'fencing experience'
2. Materially increase the conversion of fencing participants to active members

Strategy delivery:

Implement a co-ordinated national participation and development strategy to deliver fencing programs to grassroots participants through a variety of platforms. Implementation will be managed by the AFF's National Development & Marketing Manager, working collaboratively with the State Development Officers.

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
Design new participation offerings to meet consumer preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a simplified AusFence 'fencing experience' program using modified equipment to be run in primary and junior secondary schools over a single term • Design and implement tailored programs for adult beginners wishing to participate in fencing on a one-off or short-term basis • Identify and introduce programs offering adult fencers the opportunity to participate in fencing as a social activity (eg inter-club social leagues) • Develop strategies to encourage women of all ages to participate in fencing • Build capability to undertake co-ordinated marketing campaigns – eg by leveraging off entertainment industry events (such as Star Wars release)
Develop new channels to deliver participation programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue inclusion in ASC's Sporting Schools program (or implement co-ordinated nationwide delivery of schools-based participation programs through • Design and implement fencing programs designed to target specific community groups (eg Muslim Girls Fence program delivered by British Fencing)

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore ability to partner with Government funding bodies and philanthropic organisations to deliver fencing programs to targeted minority groups • Establish ongoing wheelchair fencing programs in each State
Expand capability to deliver participation programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise AusFence Facilitators (Level 0) course + obtain recognition / CPD accreditation from State education departments • Expand group of coaches / facilitators available to deliver participation programs (eg by targeting veteran fencers, primary carers looking for part-time work etc) • Explore potential to train non-fencers to deliver participation programs (eg school PE teachers, gym instructors etc)
Increase conversion of fencing participants to active members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop capabilities and competencies to encourage development of new clubs and expand membership of existing clubs through provision of dedicated training and resources (eg annual one day seminar for clubs to share ideas and develop new skills) • Pilot ideas to bridge the transition gap from schools-based programs to local clubs and implement successful programs on an Australia-wide basis • Ensure clubs have access to available funding opportunities for equipment needs • Attract past fencers back to the sport (eg through promoting participation in veterans events) • Encourage hands-on participation by 'fencing parents' (eg as social fencers, casual club coaches or fencing facilitators) • Maximise measures (eg social media, email marketing) to strengthen connections with participants and encourage conversion to active members / supporters

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
<p>Effectively capture and report participation data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing membership category framework to ensure it provides a realistic and reliable participation profile aligned with participation objectives • Develop and introduce mechanisms to accurately capture and report participation data at all levels (eg through the use of technology such as mobile phone apps which can be easily adopted at club level) • Expand categories of data collected to enable a more accurate understanding of participation rates among different demographics.
<p><u>Measuring success (targets to be achieved by 2020):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs delivered to over 20,000 participants annually (in 2020) • Over 5,000 active members (in 2020) • Inclusion in Sporting Schools (or establishment of alternative framework to deliver fencing programs to school-age children) • Development and delivery of at least two tailored programs targeted towards specific minority groups • Increase in % of female members and female participants to 40% • Establishment of active wheelchair fencing program • Co-ordinated national systems in place to accurately capture detailed membership and participation data 	

STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE 2: IMPROVE ELITE PERFORMANCE



Key strategic objectives:

1. To produce fencers who are capable of winning medals at the highest international level
2. To strengthen the development pathways for future generations of Australian fencers
3. To build on our existing capabilities in the areas of coaching and high performance support services

Strategy delivery:

Implement a co-ordinated high performance program to be managed by the National High Performance Manager and delivered by the National Weapon Coaches (NWC), working closely with the Assistant National Weapon Coaches (ANWCs) in each State.

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
Enhance quality of existing HP programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver structured, team-based national high performance program which is capable of producing long-term, sustainable international success – triple-tier program comprising Australian Fencing Team (AFT), Australian Fencing Squad (AFS) and Talented Fencer Program (TFP) • Structure program to require AFT fencers to commit to the minimum training and competition program required to achieve high level international success • Maximise opportunities for HP athletes to train together in a structured, team-based environment, through conduct of regular AIS-based camps • Implement a consistent and co-ordinated approach to elite development at State level to ensure a high quality Daily Training Environment (DTE) through NWCs working collaboratively with ANWCs in all key training hubs • Maximise opportunities for HP athletes to gain exposure to high level international training and competition environment (eg annual Junior European tours), including be building on formal and informal relationships with overseas HP programs

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to retain elite athletes by providing assistance to enable them to balance their sporting and education / career goals (eg through mentoring programs, closer engagement with universities & employers etc) • Regularly review and refine existing HP programs to identify areas for continuous improvement
Source HP funding from external sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve inclusion of fencing in ASC's Australia's Winning Edge program • Fully investigate external funding opportunities (corporate sponsorship and private donors) for high potential teams • Establish projects through Australian Sports Foundation to facilitate tax-deductible donations to fund high performance programs • Ensure athletes are aware of and maximising access to available funding at State and local levels (through provision of information and training) • Encourage and support AFT athletes in undertaking targeted sponsorship pursuits
Strengthen development pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide junior athletes with clear development pathways, which provide access to appropriate, graduated training and competition opportunities • Identify and implement measures to actively support the development of a team-based culture typified by a strong work ethic in a mutually supportive (but highly competitive) environment • Maximise the quality and quantity of Australian national circuit events (eg by attracting fencers from the Oceania and South-East Asian regions) • Explore strategies to increase participation in State-based competitions • Pursue opportunities to host appropriate international events in Australia • Explore opportunities to participate in talent transfer programs (eg ASC Sports Draft) where appropriate

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
<p>Strengthen coaching expertise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the skills and experience of the current and next generation of high performance coaches through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ a uniform national accreditation framework, supported by the annual delivery of Level 1 courses in each State + annual delivery of Level 2 course (including a residential-based practical component) ➤ exposure to ongoing professional education and development (through national & international courses, ASC coaching programs etc) ➤ opportunities to accompany Australian teams on international tours • Provide regular opportunities for coaches to network and exchange ideas and experience in an informal setting to build trust and co-operation • Identify and encourage high potential ex-athletes seeking to pursue a coaching career on a full-time or permanent part-time basis • Encourage more women to pursue a high performance coaching career
<p>Enhance officiating expertise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the skills and experience of the current and next generation of elite referees through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ a uniform national accreditation framework, supported by the annual delivery of refereeing courses at club, State and national level; ➤ exposure to ongoing referee education and development (through national international training courses, international accreditation etc) ➤ opportunities to accompany Australian teams on international tours • Develop the skills and experience of the current and next generation of tournament management personnel, through exposure to appropriate national and international opportunities • Encourage more women to pursue a refereeing career

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
<p>Increase access to external expertise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on existing initiatives to introduce dedicated, fencing-specific support services for HPP athletes in areas such as physiotherapy, strength & conditioning, sports psychology, biomechanics and video analysis • Explore potential to partner with SASI network (including AIS Combat Centre) and/or university sector to draw on sports science expertise • Provide opportunities to share the knowledge and experience of elite international fencers resident in or visiting Australia • Build relationships with other Australian NSOs to benefit from high performance knowledge and expertise
<p>Improve access to facilities and equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire additional equipment (pistes, boxes and spools) to enhance quality of training environment at AIS-based training camps • Ensure States are maximising access to available opportunities for funding facilities and equipment • Assist States seeking to establish a permanent training venue to enhance quality of DTE for high performance athletes
<p><u>Measuring success (targets to be achieved by 2020):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two athletes qualified for 2020 Olympics (target qualification through world ranking not zone qualification competition) • Top 8 result in a team event at 2020 Olympics (or World Championships) • Double the number of athletes ranked in senior World Top 32 and World Top 64 • At least one athlete ranked in junior World Top 16 plus several in World Top 32 • External funding obtained for 50% of costs of international training and competition program for team in leading • Participation in Australian national circuit competitions increased by 25% • At least two international events hosted successfully in Australia 	

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
<p><u>Measuring success (targets to be achieved by 2020):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in number of Level 2 and Level 3 accredited coaches • Increase in number of coaches participating in international professional development opportunities • Increase in number of women coaching at elite level • Increase in quantity and quality of nationally and internationally accredited referees • Increase in number of women refereeing at national level • Introduction of dedicated, fencing-specific sports science services for HPP athletes • Increase in networks, partnerships and knowledge sharing opportunities with external bodies • Improvement in facilities and equipment for national HPP camps and State-based DTEs 	



STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE 3: RAISE PROFILE

Key strategic objectives:

1. Recognition of Australian fencing as a visible, credible and capable participant in the sporting landscape – by key stakeholder bodies, the media, potential sponsors and the community as a whole

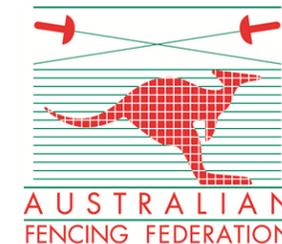
Strategy delivery:

Implement a co-ordinated national media and communications strategy to be managed by the AFF’s National Communications Manager and Social Media Manager, working collaboratively with the State Marketing & Communication Officers.

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
<p>Increase media profile</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) to effectively deliver information within the fencing community • Distribute regular media releases to attract interest from local State and national media organisations prior to and during major domestic and international events • Develop a range of multimedia resources for use by States and clubs to promote upcoming events • Conduct media training sessions for athletes and administrators to upskill and workshop ideas for generating additional media coverage
<p>Establish and leverage recognisable brand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt new, modern logo • Explore potential to harmonise branding at State and national level • Develop and market range of Australian fencing merchandise • Develop marketing strategy for Australian representative teams • Explore sponsorship possibilities at whole of organisation and project level

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
<p>Enhance relationships with key bodies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen relationships with key bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ASC, AOC, FIE, OFC, CFF, other NFs; ➤ APC, other NSOs, State & Federal Governments (DFAT, Health, Education etc) • Actively engage with key bodies, seek representation on committees (where appropriate), increase quality and quantity of formal and informal contacts • Participate in programs and opportunities and develop strategic partnerships to establish joint projects etc
<p><u>Measuring success (targets to be achieved by 2020):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% year on year increase in social media followers, hits and reach • Regular coverage of fencing in local, State and national mainstream media • Increase in MoUs with NFs from 2 to 5 (priority to be given to NFs in Asian region) • Ongoing review and evaluation of all opportunities available through external bodies which may benefit Australian fencing • Increased participation in projects and initiatives arranged by or with key external bodies 	

STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE 4: ACT PROFESSIONALLY



Key strategic objectives:

1. Achieve best practice corporate governance for an Australian NSO of equivalent size and resources
2. Strengthen the skill sets, structures and support networks underlying the operation of fencing in Australia, to maximise the use of limited resources

Strategy delivery:

Implement measures to further strengthen governance and financial arrangements, improve operational efficiencies and minimise duplication.

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
Achieve best practice corporate governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise transition to new corporate structure (including compliance with Corporations Act financial and reporting requirements for first full year of operations) • Progressively adopt ASC Mandatory Corporate Governance Principles (to the extent appropriate) • Identify and recruit appropriate candidates for appointed director positions and undertake succession planning (given prospective board changes)
Undertake strategic financial planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further refine and implement detailed budgeting process (forecast and YTD) • Ensure available funds are appropriately invested in projects to develop future capabilities (particularly in the areas of coaching and participation)
Ensure alignment of activities at State and national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance co-ordination between national manager and State counterparts in each key area of operations to effectively implement programs and pursue funding opportunities • Review KPIs and conduct regular performance reviews for all contracted positions

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider appointment of paid CEO / Operations Manager position (subject to detailed cost/benefit analysis)
Enhance infrastructure to maximise efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop communication mechanisms to ensure all information is provided to relevant recipients promptly, clearly and efficiently Maximise use of online portal and membership database for transactional and data collection purposes at national, State and club level Maximise use of online platforms (eg Moodle) to deliver training courses
Implement measures to ensure ongoing integrity of the sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place to maintain integrity (key areas include child protection, member protection, anti-doping obligations, codes of conduct etc) Adopt a leadership role in ensuring high standards of behaviour are maintained in all areas of the sport
Mobilise volunteer resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop skills matrix documenting areas of professional knowledge and expertise within the Australia fencing community and identify specific opportunities for members to contribute to the future development of Australian fencing
<p><u>Measuring success (targets to be achieved by 2020):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full compliance with corporate financial and reporting requirements Adoption of all ASC Mandatory Corporate Governance Principles (subject to size and resource constraints) Ongoing financial stability including maintenance of prudent level of financial reserves Active engagement between national and State contractors in all key areas of operations producing practical outcomes Full suite of policies and procedures regularly reviewed and updated Communications and IT infrastructure operating effectively to support operational objectives 	

STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE 5: BE POSITIVE



Key strategic objectives:

1. Develop a positive, cohesive and collaborative culture within all levels of Australian fencing, reflecting the mentality that – “The only time we compete is on the piste”

Strategy delivery:

Enhance engagement with States, clubs and the broader Australian fencing community to encourage unified behaviours, positive contribution and a mutually supportive approach

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
<p>Engender positive culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build stronger relationships to enhance trust and co-operation at all levels, through both formal and informal mechanisms • Implement regular, broad-based communication strategy regarding key elements of strategic plan (eg through ‘town hall’ meetings) • Encourage participants at all levels (fencers, coaches, officials and administrators) to exchange ideas and information, learn from each other’s experiences, support each other and celebrate each other’s successes • Support innovation by identifying and investigating all opportunities, in order to exploit those which have the greatest potential to deliver practical outcomes • Demonstrate zero tolerance for behaviours which are inconsistent with agreed values
<p>Encourage diversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place programs to identify and encourage participation by talented women and members of minority groups in areas such as coaching, officiating and administration

Lead initiative	Supporting initiatives
<p><u>Measuring success (targets to be achieved by 2020):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular Presidents' Forums and 'town hall' meetings• Ongoing communication and collaboration at the State/State and State/National level• Improved feedback from participant surveys• Increased diversity in coaching, officiating and administrative roles	