



FOOTBALL OPERATION & CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

WAFL FUTURE DIRECTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. District Centre of Excellence

The Centre of Excellence is the foundation for the WAFL's future and a key to our push into the future. The aim is for all players coming through the WA development system to have the same development opportunities to maximise their potential.

This will produce:

- Higher quality WAFL players.
- Greater numbers of draftable players to the AFL.
- Higher quality of community level players
- Higher quality of educated parents for future generations

It is dependent upon:

- The availability of skilled staff at WAFL clubs to make their services available to assist in the development of players in their district.
- The availability of the WAFL club facility for the development of all district players.

All of the following recommendations stem from the District Centre of Excellence concept.

How do we grow this concept?

1.1 Centre of Excellence

The concept of WAFL Clubs as a "Centre of Excellence" for the District is the foundation of future growth and prosperity. It has been endorsed by the AFL, WAFC and all WAFL Boards. For the model to continue to grow there needs to be a close synergy between the WAFL Club and its District. WAFL Boards need to be continually appraised of developments within the District. Acceptance of the role of the WAFL Club by the District stakeholders is also paramount.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

- Each WAFL Club Board should be guided through the concept with an opportunity to ask questions and comment on ways to improve the concept.
- Each District Chair be included as an ex officio member of their WAFL Club Board.

1.2 Administration

1.2.1 The Football Manager has to develop a more strategic role within the organization and be responsible for the Football side of the club.

1.2.2 The Football Manager has to take a managerial role with the PDO and the regional staff to oversee the WAFL club football pathway.

- 1.2.3 The Football manager has to develop a strong co-operative relationship with the District Manager to jointly develop the facility and to maximize the opportunity for district use of the facility.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

That the role of the Football Manager be developed into a more strategic and managerial position within the club.

1.3 Sharing Knowledge

What can WAFL Clubs do to make better use of their knowledge base for their district stakeholders?

District Manager/Football Manager. These staff must meet to discuss how and when the club knowledge can be shared within the district.

- **Coaching:** Determine the strategic use of coaches within the district. This may mean increasing the contractual obligation of coaches/staff at the club towards the district.
- **Administration:** An action plan and timeline for the use of administrators to teach district administrators.
- **Trainers:** The WAFTA has initiated a plan of action for each club to hold a trainers course each year for district trainers. Plan for the use of expertise for the treatment of district injuries in the club facilities.
- **Umpires:** An action plan and timeline for the use of coaches to assist in umpire development and training.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That the District Manager/Football Manager, through the WAFL Board and the DFDC, develop a timeline for the conduct of development courses for each of the following:

- Coaching
- Administration
- Injury treatment
- Umpiring

1.4 Sharing Facility

What can WAFL clubs do to make better use of their facility for their district? stakeholders?

RECOMMENDATION 4:

That the WAFL Clubs together with the DFDC investigate ways in which the WAFL Club's facilities may be better utilised within the District.

2. Coaching

2.1 Professional Development

If the WAFL coaches are our best coaches what training should we offer them to assist them to develop their abilities?

2.1.1 Special WAFL coaching sessions available only to WAFL coaches?

- Annual session with John Worsfold or Mark Harvey run by the respective AFL club?

2.1.2 Level 3 courses here in WA for our coaches and include WAFL coaches.

2.1.3 University students to spend time at WAFL clubs developing and teaching the use of video editing and stats analysis. This would be coordinated by the WAFC.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

That specific football development courses for WAFL coaches be developed in conjunction with our States AFL Clubs.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

That WAFL coaches have the opportunity to complete level 3 coaching accreditation annually in WA.

RECOMMENDATION 7:

That WAFL Football departments use university students with the specific skills to assist in the delivery of the football program.

2.2 Match Day Coaching Facilities

As technology has improved and the numbers involved in coaching on match day increase what are the changes required from a facility point of view? The Football Managers and coaches themselves are the best placed to determine what these facilities should be into the future. The integration of game day statistics and vision is a key ingredient for future player development.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

That a subcommittee of Football Managers and coaching staff develop a plan of minimum requirements for a Match Day coaching facility for the future.

2.3 Coaching Technology

What technology is the minimum for coaches on match day and for player feedback post game?

2.3.1

- **Vision.** A feed from the cameraman direct to each coaches box? Clubs could then obtain a live copy for use during the game if required.
- Should we move to a second camera for behind the goal vision?
- **Statistics.** Stats going to a live website will enable not only coach access at the game but also public/media access. Coaches then need the ability to manipulate these data into meaningful (for them) forms.
- Include interchange data on the website for player game time for the coaches' use.

2.3.2 The same group should also look at Player Feedback

- All Clubs to develop substantial post game player feedback systems within each club.
- This could be extended to password protected sites where players could have information posted.

RECOMMENDATION 9:

That a subcommittee of Football Managers and coaching staff develop a plan of minimum requirements for coaches to use match day statistics and vision to provide players with effective post game feedback on their performance.

2.4 Full Time Player Development Officers

There has been widespread praise of the Player Development Officer (PDO) and the impact of this position at each club. As well as the obvious benefits that this position provides it also assists the Football Manager to better run the football operations of the Club.

RECOMMENDATION 10:

That the role of the PDO be endorsed as a full time position for all WAFL Clubs

2.5 Full Time League Coach

Some Clubs also have the benefit of a full time League Coach. Given the finite resources of all WAFL Clubs and the undoubted value of high profile coaches it is imperative that they be fully utilised in areas as well as team performance. These may include input into the Club District and contribution to Club marketing, sponsorship and promotion.

RECOMMENDATION 11:

That as part of their contract full time coaches should be assessed on their overall contribution to the activities of their Club.

3 Competition

3.1 Draft Age

The WAFL will continue to push for an increase in the AFL draft age to the year a player turns 19. This will provide the AFL with a more mature player better equipped to step into the National competition and also provide the AFL clubs a little more certainty in selection.

RECOMMENDATION 12:

That the WAFL recommend to the AFL that the AFL draft age be increased to the year a player turns 19 years of age.

3.2 Competition Equalisation.

The past two Future Direction reports have included a major section on competition equalisation. They produced a number of initiatives aimed at maintaining an even competition. The latest initiative was the points system for recruiting that was introduced as a part of the revamped salary cap and this combined with allocating the AFL players from interstate to the bottom 5 clubs and fixturing so that the bottom clubs play each other three times in a year (where possible), has led to a close competition in 2009. While competition equalisation is seen as beneficial to all it was decided that the current initiatives need a little time to test their effectiveness. For this reason there are no further recommendations in this paper with respect to competition equalisation.

3.3 Reserves Competition

It was determined by the committee that the reserves competition had a valuable place as a part of the development structure provided the players in the competition were legitimate potential league players.

The reserves competition should consist of primarily young players on the way up but also have places for experienced players who form a vital part of the league group.

RECOMMENDATION 13:

That the reserves competition remain as a part of the WAFL structure.

3.4 Colts' Competition – Maximum Age

By reducing the maximum age of colts players this will mean that Clubs will need to push young players into the reserves thereby aiding their development.

This may inhibit the development of some players, especially tall. This needs to be considered as part of this change.

RECOMMENDATION 14:

That the colts competition maximum age be reduced to the year a player turns 18.

RECOMMENDATION 15:

That the WAFL should also investigate, as part of this change, a mechanism for tall developing players to play in the colts beyond the maximum age if circumstances suggest that this would be better for players development.

3.5 Colts Squads

The underlying principal of District boundaries is that WAFL clubs have exclusive access to all players less than 19 years of age. This should not change but in assisting players to fulfil their dreams at a WAFL club transfers should be encouraged if a player does not make the colts squad at his zoned WAFL club. For this reason it is suggested that there be a limited number of players on the clubs colts squad list. If players are not on this list and at the upper end of the colts age then they should be able to transfer to another club without refusal.

RECOMMENDATION 16:

That the WAFL investigate the implementation of a list of 18/19 year olds for each Club.

3.6 WAFL Colts – Second Team

Should WAFL clubs have a second short term colts' competition involved in the pre-season and first few rounds (up to the start of the WAAFL games) to give more boys an opportunity at WAFL level? Many WAFL clubs have big numbers of colts' age players trying out in the pre-season. This second team and the games provided not only give these players a game in the period prior to community football starting but also provides opportunity for greater scrutiny for WAFL clubs who may have to allow some players to transfer to other clubs.

RECOMMENDATION 17:

That WAFL Clubs field two colts teams during practice games and the in-season games prior to community football commencing.

3.7 Country Sports Enrichment Scheme

All agree that these games are good for football on all levels. They are endorsed by the Department for Sport and Recreation and also by the WACFL whose leagues host these games. It is important that all of these games maintain a high standard of presentation and that while WAFL clubs understand that they have a role in their zone investment the cost to the local leagues and to the WAFL need to be kept to a minimum.

RECOMMENDATION 18:

For all WAFL CSES games

- Games are selected on the basis of neighbouring zone rather than on gate optimization.
- Games to be played in school terms to maximize U16 attendance.
- The preceding week the home clubs visit every school and junior club with incentives to attend the game.
- That adequate funding is obtained to ensure that the cost to the local WACFL's and the WAFL clubs is kept to a minimum.

4 Game Attendees

It is clear game attendee's and club membership are vital for a WAFL clubs existence. This is a key financial driver of the club through gate, bar and catering, sponsorship, merchandise and fundraising. All clubs must ensure good facilities for game attendees with maximum opportunity for these attendees to spend at the club.

- 4.1 Club Members: Considering membership fees, ground admittance fees and members facilities, what can be offered to members to make it more valuable?

- 4.2 Visiting Club Members: As above should these people get something at other clubs eg special seating, undercover seating?
- 4.3 Non Members: What should all clubs provide as a minimum to any WAFL attendee to ensure that the day at WAFL football is a good one?
- 4.4 What opportunities to spend are offered to these attendees?

RECOMMENDATION 19:

That the WAFL investigate for each WAFL facility

- 17.1 A plan to provide a determined number of designated undercover seats with bar and catering facilities for members.
- 17.2 A plan for all WAFL clubs to provide a determined number of designated undercover seats for opposition members.
- 17.3 A way for all clubs to budget for some spends on facilities in conjunction with the local council. Perhaps a % of gate should be set into a facilities fund for each club.

4.5 Facilities for Media, Coaches etc.

The media carries the WAFL message to the masses and has been particularly effective in promoting the game in recent years.

Visiting coaches, stats groups and umpires' coaches also need to be adequately accommodated.

Facilities should be clean, with adequate power, protected from the public and with easy access.

Ideally these facilities should be placed high and central to the game and be of equal level of appointment.

RECOMMENDATION 20:

That every WAFL Club adequately caters for visiting media, coaches, statisticians and umpires' coaches.

5 Umpiring

The WAFL accepts its responsibility to provide the best training and coaching for the WAFL umpires. There have been a number of significant improvements in umpire development over the past few years. Just as WAFL Clubs seek to improve each year then so must we seek to improve the standard of umpiring.

5.1 Coaching

Given the level of assistance provided to WAFL coaches what can be provided to umpires' coaches to ensure the best possible instruction is available?

5.2 Umpires

A culture map undertaken with the umpires to determine their perspective of where they stand and any perceived deficiencies.

5.3 WANFLUA

The Umpires' Association to be consulted regarding their perception of umpiring standards and facilities.

5.4 Training Facilities

A review of umpires' training facilities to determine if they adequately compare with those at WAFL Clubs.

5.5 Coaching Facilities

Facilities available to umpires' coaches to compare with those available to WAFL coaches.

5.6 Dressing Rooms

Given the increase in numbers of umpires and mixed genders are current WAFL facilities adequate?

RECOMMENDATION 21:

That the WAFL conducts a review of all aspects of umpiring.