Leading a strong, vibrant and growing sport
Message from the President and CEO

Athletics Australia in consultation with its Member Associations and other key stakeholders has developed a strategic plan to lead and guide the sport of athletics in Australia.

In developing this strategic plan we have built on the previous plan (2009 - 2012) and researched, analysed and discussed extensively what we needed to change, add or improve to make this plan relevant for the period 2013 - 2016.

We make special mention of the ongoing support and direction from the Australian Sports Commission as part of this process. Athletics Australia is in a sound financial position with a strong platform of programs and resources to take on the many challenges and opportunities that we face over the next four year cycle.

We are very conscious of our responsibilities to lead the sport from grassroots through to elite level.

We have identified four Key Pillars that form the basis of our all our Strategies:

- Participation
- High Performance
- Competition
- Commercial

We have made huge inroads in our High Performance program aligning very closely with the Australian Institute of Sport and the State Institutes of Sport/SAS network in providing the best possible financial support and services for our elite athletes. Our performances at the Olympics, Paralympics, Commonwealth Games and World Championships provide an inspiring showcase for our sport, and demonstrate the success of our High Performance Program.

Competitions are an essential part of our sport from Clubs, Little Athletic Centres and Schools right through to our National Series, allowing athletes of all levels to reach their full potential.

Our Participation Plan, which forms an integral part of our overall Strategic Plan, focuses on five key priorities:

- Club Capability
- Junior Programs (U/ 14-20)
- Joint Venture with Little Athletics Australia
- Recreational Running; and
- Targeted groups i) Athletes with a Disability ii) Indigenous Australians (Outback Programme)
Within this Participation Plan we will continue to develop our Australian Coaching Framework and focus on our new Australian Officials Framework.

We acknowledge the need to manage the sport as a business, to adopt best-practice processes and to undertake commercial initiatives in order to deliver a healthy and sustainable sport. The 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast gives us a great opportunity to take advantage of the many benefits this will bring the sport of athletics in this country.

Our vision is to deliver athletics as a strong, vibrant sport and we look forward to working with our major partners, the Australian Sports Commission, Members Associations and other key stakeholders in taking on the challenges and maximising the opportunities.

Rob Fildes
President & Chairman of the Board

Dallas O’Brien
Chief Executive
Introduction

Athletics Australia is the peak body for athletics in Australia and the Member Associations are its members. There is currently a membership base of 17,100 athletes in 308 clubs, 3530 registered coaches and 1911 officials, as well as the hundreds of volunteers supporting the sport. The sport provides;

- competitions through clubs and State Associations for able bodied and athletes with a disability
- summer and winter competitions, (eg. cross country)
- Schools and Junior competitions
- Recreational running (eg. iRun)
- Athletics Play (AASC) and
- Transition programs

Over 350,000 recreational runners have been captured through the Running Australia program and approximately 8200 participate in our school competitions. The Member Associations are working in collaboration with Athletics Australia in the recruitment and retention of members.

One of the major challenges in growing the sport is the capability of clubs and State Associations to:

- welcome and service new members
- deliver new programs
- provide necessary infrastructure, and
- Provide necessary supporting resources such as facilities, coaches and officials.

Athletics Australia will provide leadership and work with the Member Associations in providing a strong national participation plan that will enhance work already being done in the states.

Recently, Athletics Australia and Little Athletics Australia (LAA) have entered into a joint venture arrangement with support from the Australian Sports Commission (ASC). The joint initiative has the goal of increasing participation in athletics by improving the athletics pathway from Little Athletics Australia to Athletics Australia and developing an improved alignment between the two organisations. Pilot programs are taking place in New South Wales and Victoria. If successful these will be expanded to other states.
In the high performance area, Athletics Australia, in collaboration with the sports institutes system, is the standard bearer of elite athletics in Australia, and with this mantle comes an exceptional level of responsibility, accountability and expectation. It is time to widen and deepen the networks, both within the sport and throughout the broader community. At the same time it is necessary to break down any barriers in communication and information delivery, and to address and embrace the values and principles of elite sport via a whole sport philosophy. Our high performance plan will focus on developing talent and skills in athletes and coaches for Rio (2016), with long term planning for the 2020 Olympics & Paralympics.

In essence, we need to create ‘whole system’ thinking. This approach encompasses a clear operating purpose for all stakeholders, streamlined channels for the delivery of the high performance model, and minimal duplication across all sport partners. With strong leadership from Athletics Australia it will produce an inclusive and integrated system for athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers and administrators.

Commercially, Athletics Australia needs to harness business development opportunities reflecting the true value of its properties and assets, in order to provide tangible financial benefits and growth for the sport and the development of its members. This will be supported by effective marketing plans and communication strategies.

The Athletics Australia Strategic Plan 2013-2016 has been developed with this environment in mind. The plan will be underpinned by detailed operational plans that will ensure the accountability and focus to successfully achieve our vision.
Vision

“Athletics is a strong, vibrant and growing sport”

Purpose

“Leading, fostering and encouraging participation in athletics in Australia and promoting excellence in performance”

Values

In delivering the strategies of this plan, we will conduct our activities in accordance with the following values:

- Leadership
- Respect
- Integrity
- Inclusion
- Fairness
- Excellence
- Accountability & transparency
- Commitment
## Pillars of the Strategic Plan

The 4 Key Pillars of the Strategic Plan form the strategic priorities for the Sport. Leadership and a strong foundation will facilitate the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>High Performance</th>
<th>Competition</th>
<th>Commercial</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide clear direction and efficient communication. Demonstrate strong leadership and governance. Develop a culture of success within the athletics community.</td>
<td>Increase participation in athletics by delivering vibrant, best practice participation programs that support the athlete and coaching pathways across the sport.</td>
<td>Provide a stable and unified pathway for Australian high performance athletes and coaches involving talent identification, development, and elite performance leading to National and International success.</td>
<td>Provide competitions that enhance participation and performance opportunities for the development of athletes, coaches and officials at all levels of the sport.</td>
<td>Provide a stable and viable organisation through effective business practices and sound financial management to increase the commercial value of the sport.</td>
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Leadership

Provide clear direction and efficient communication. Demonstrate strong leadership and governance. Develop a culture of success within the athletics community.

Governance

• Provide sound governance and strong leadership in guiding the sport
• Ensure a focus on strategic planning and policy development, and ensure alignment of the plans and policies of Athletics Australia and Member Associations
• Develop further the strategic relationships with peak bodies and government agencies
• Provide advocacy to Government (Federal, State, Local) in areas such as health, community services and education promoting the benefits of athletics and the need for engagement within their areas of influence
• Successful delivery of the goals and objectives of the strategic plan, and alignment of Athletics Australia and Member Association plans and policies
• A national approach to strategic direction and policy development and implementation

Communication

• Foster a strong working relationship among the stakeholders that will ensure buy-in by all to a shared vision in which the best interests of the sport define the key criteria in decision making
• Enhance stakeholder relationships through effective communication and close engagement
• Ensure effective engagement and regular two-way communication between Athletics Australia, Member Associations and key stakeholders
• Under the principle of ‘national direction, local delivery’, provide national templates and resources to stakeholders but allow for and acknowledge local innovation and regional differences, as well as differing needs and priorities within the states

Culture

• Unified leadership at all levels fostering and encouraging participation and promoting excellence in performance
• Best practice management structures providing accountability and transparency
• The overall Athletics brand to be regarded as strong, vibrant and successful
• As custodians of the sport Athletics Australia and Member Associations are to display strong leadership
• To be inclusive of all stakeholders and respect the tradition and history of the sport
Strategic Initiatives

• Implement the National Participation Plan which includes 5 key priorities:
  1. **Club Capability**: recruit, develop, retain and recognise coaches, officials and administrators in the club environment
  2. **Junior Pathway**: increase the quality of competition for juniors, schools and clubs
  3. **Athletics Australia and LAA Joint Venture**: focus on recruitment, retention, participation and transition of 5-20 year olds
  4. **Recreational Running**: engage social and recreational runners in Athletics Australia activities and events
  5. **Targeted Groups**: provide opportunities, support and pathways for Athletes with a Disability and Indigenous Athletes

Actions

• Develop innovative products, programs and services that will enhance interest in the sport and growth in participation
• Build further the capability of clubs to accept new members and provide a welcoming environment.
• Coordinate competition structure to maximise participation for all ages and performance levels
• Increase in participation levels of all athletes of abilities through supportive centres and clubs, quality coaching and officiating, and clear transition pathways
• Work effectively with Member Associations utilise Running Australia & iRun programs to recruit more recreational runners, and conduct events around the country
• Provide more opportunities for Athletes with disability and Indigenous people in the sport
• Develop the Athletics Australia Coaching Framework

Success Indicators

• Percentage of clubs that have completed the club health check by 2013
• Increase in numbers of accredited and skilled coaches and athletes
• Increase in the quality and numbers in the junior competition pathway, including club and schools competitions
• Increase in Member Association registrations across all ages and participation groups
• Increase Dual Membership (LA & Athletics Australia) numbers, and improved transition from LA's to MA's clubs
• Increase in national recreational running (Running Australia/iRun) membership
• Increase in numbers of athletes with disability (AWD) and Indigenous athletes within our athlete and coaching programs

*To be read in conjunction with the Participation Plan*
Pillar 2: High Performance

Objective: Provide a stable and unified pathway for Australian high performance athletes and coaches involving talent identification, development, and elite performance leading to National and International success

Strategic Initiatives

• High Performance Plan
  • Athletes: provide a world best approach to identification and preparation of athletes (including AWDs) to achieve World Class standards
  • Coaches: recruit, develop, retain and support coaches to deliver medal outcomes
  • Environment: provide a well integrated high performance environment including Athletics Australia pathways, including all Event Groups
  • Competition: providing quality competition supporting development, and international competition (including Olympics, Paralympics, Commonwealth Games, World Championships, World University Games)
  • Operational support: ensuring quality management structure, budgets, support systems and management of resources with our partners
  • Junior High Performance: ensure high performance depth through TTP and development squads and Junior International Teams
  • Elite Athlete support packages to provide linkage with athlete obligations to team selection, domestic and international competition opportunities

Actions

• Increased integrated support to be provided to potential medal athletes
• Improve accountability, responsibility and integration to national program goals and AIS/SIS/SAS engagement
• Introduce system measures including daily training environment capacity building, medical injury and well being measures, planning measures for coaches, coach performance measures, service provision measures
• Increase the number of and level of support provided to coaches for medal outcomes
• Ensure that all target coaches have individual development plans involving AIS/SIS/SAS
• Align AIS/SIS/SAS resourcing for High Performance medal outcomes
• Ensure communication channels between Athletics Australia & AIS/SIS/SAS are open and transparent
Success Indicators

- Medals achieved: Olympic medals (3-5) Paralympic medals (25-30) in Rio 2016
- Australia to be rank in the Top ten countries in international athletics
- Continued improvement of system measures including daily training environment capacity building, medical injury and well being measures, planning measures for coaches, coach performance measures, service provision measures
- Improvements in pathway system measures including athlete numbers and progression from the pathway into national teams; coach development and engagement via pathway programs, daily training environment monitoring, competition performance of pre-elite athletes, and capacity building of the system as a whole
- Provide ongoing funding support to our elite athletes and coaches through to Rio 2016

*To be read in conjunction with the High Performance Plan*
Pillar 3: Competition

Objective: Provide competitions that enhance participation and performance opportunities for the development of athletes, coaches and officials at all levels of the sport

Strategic Initiatives

• Recruit, develop, retain and recognise coaches and officials to enhance the competition and participation pathways
• Provide clear development pathways for athletes, coaches, officials and administrators
• Ensure national competition programs supporting participation growth, talent development and high performance
• Further develop the partnership between Athletics Australia and Member Associations in delivering the National Series and Championships
• Establish a nurturing environment for emerging athletes
• Maximise commercial opportunities and benefits for Athletics Australia competitions and events
• Research & develop new and exciting competition products with the aim of attracting greater participation numbers

Actions

• Implement a National Series/Australian Athletics Tour of the highest quality in partnership with the Member Associations
• Increase quality of competition available throughout the states and territories for existing members and attract new participants to our sport
• Provide a range of competition products across Australia that will allow athletes to participate at their desired level
• Keep our junior athletes within the system though strengthened junior competitions that include Australian Juniors, Schools Knockout, State Junior Championships and The Australian All Schools

Success Indicators

• National Series implemented with support of Member Associations
• More officials recruited and developed nationally through the Officials Development Framework
• National competition structures across the country supporting talent identification, development and pathway progression
• National Series/Athletics Australia Tour attracting sustained commercial support, brand recognition, media coverage and spectator attendance
Pillar 4: Commercial

Objective: Provide a stable and viable organisation through effective business practices and sound financial management to increase the commercial value of the sport

Strategic Initiatives

• Implement the communication and public relations strategy (including media management) promoting the Athletics brand
• Continue to develop commercial partnerships, sponsorship acquisition and servicing
• Focus on commercialising assets and properties at all levels of the sport (e.g. High Performance, Participation and Competition). Maximise funding and resources to support growth of the sport, including ongoing fundraising and promotion of the Athletics Australia Foundation
• Continue to refine the National Marketing Strategy in relation to the National Athletics Series/Australian Athletics Tour

Actions

• Grow funding from both government and corporate sectors to allow the development of participation and excellence in performance
• Provide resourcing (both human and financial) of new activities, as well as servicing a larger membership base through policies, communication and education, and supporting infrastructure and systems
• Coordinate national marketing, communication, public relations and brand promotion
• Obtain long term sponsors and commercial partners, and commercialise and protect the assets of Athletic Australia
• Increase the promotion of athletics and our events to the general public

Success Indicators

• An increase in Government funding
• An increase in total sponsorship and commercial income
• The Athletics brand is nationally recognised and valued as one of the premier Olympic/Paralympic Sports
• Implementation of the Athletics Australia Foundation
Communication

• Clarify and communicate Athletics Australia aspirations to all our Stakeholders
• Develop a systematic approach of communicating with our Stakeholders within the athletic community
• Quality use of social media to improve our communication
• Improve two way communication between Athletics Australia and its Stakeholders
• Maintain a strong focus on communication with coaches, especially at junior and elite levels
• Continue to provide digital technology development and support to the Member Associations

Information Technology

• Complete the Digital Review and structure to improve website and CRM systems across the whole sport
• Improve delivery mechanisms for newsletters, Athletics Australia newsletters and iRun
• Be at the forefront of new media and technology to further enhance the sport
• Ensure IT infrastructure is in place to support growth of the sport

Operational

• Operational support – ensure quality management structure and support systems within Athletics Australia to engage and develop a strong staff unit, and build beneficial partnerships with the AIS/SIS/SAS network and Member Associations
• Continue to develop and maintain sustainable budgets and align Athletics Australia & Member Associations’ financial templates
• Provide a robust system to work with our Key Stakeholders

Foundation

To deploy people, and provide processes, and sustainable systems as a platform for success
Review Mechanisms for the Strategic Plan

- The Strategic Plan will be monitored regularly as part of the agenda at each Board meeting
- The Strategic Plan will be formally reviewed annually and may be adjusted to take into account changing environment or new opportunities
- The Strategic Plan will acknowledge that preparation for the 2018 Commonwealth Games will begin within the lifespan of the plan

Supporting Plans and Structures

- The Strategic Plan will be supported by the High Performance Plan, National Participation Plan and Commercial Development Plan
- Athletics Australia management and staff will develop supporting operational plans outlining tasks and activities, timelines, key performance indicators and resources required
- Athletics Australia will ensure its committees and commissions, operating structure and position descriptions reflect the goals, priorities and success indicators of the Strategic Plan
- Athletics Australia will develop partnership agreements with the Member Associations outlining alignment of plans and systems, roles and responsibilities, resources and performance indicators in delivering the goals and priorities of the Strategic Plan

Future Opportunities

The Recreation-Participation-Performance Continuum recognises a continuous pathway and the benefits that flow in both directions between recreation and sport. It allows Athletics Australia to test where its programs currently fit in the pathway and where opportunities lie to enhance other programs, or develop new ones, in the future:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation/Participation-Performance Continuum</th>
<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Community Sport</th>
<th>Competition</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>High Performance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athletics Australia Current Programs</td>
<td>Recreational Running Indigenous Programs</td>
<td>AA &amp; LAA JV Schools</td>
<td>Club Competition</td>
<td>National Athletics Tour/ AA Tour</td>
<td>International Junior Teams</td>
<td>National Teams (Flame)</td>
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<td>Junior Pathway</td>
<td>AWD Athletes Talent ID (TPP)</td>
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<td>Coach &amp; Official Frameworks</td>
<td>State Championships</td>
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<td>Masters</td>
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<td>University Sport</td>
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<td>Athletics Australia Future Opportunities</td>
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<td>Targeted Populations</td>
<td>CALD Communities</td>
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### Appendix

#### Our Key Stakeholders

| Athletics Community | Members, Athletes, Coaches, Officials, Volunteers  
|                     | Member Associations, Clubs  
|                     | Staff, Committees  
|                     | Parents, Supporters  
|                     | Past members, athletes, coaches, officials and award recipients  
|                     | Spectators and people in the wider community who are interested in athletics but do not fit in any of the above categories  
| International       | IAAF, OAA (Oceania), IOC, IPC  
| Government          | Federal – ASC, Other Government Agencies (Heath, Education)  
|                     | State Government Event Corporations – eg Events WA, Destination NSW  
|                     | State – Departments of Sport and Recreation  
|                     | State Sport Trusts – eg SOPA, Venues West, SSCT  
|                     | Local – Councils, Venue Managers and Operators  
| Peak Bodies         | AOC, APC, ACGA  
| NIN                 | AIS, State Institutes & Academies, Regional Academies  
| Sport Partners      | Australian Track and Field Coaches Association, Little Athletics Australia and Centres, Running Australia, Australian Masters Athletics, Australian Federation of Race Walking Clubs, School Sport Australia, Australian University Sport, Athletics International  
| Commercial Partners | Sponsors, Providers, Suppliers  
|                     | Media (print, radio and television) and Broadcasters  
| Education           | Universities and Tertiary Institutions  
|                     | Primary and Secondary Schools  
|                     | School Associations - GPS, APS, CHS  
| Service Providers   | WADA, ASADA  

Appendix

Athletics Australia Commisions and Committees

Athletes’ Commission
Athletes with a Disability Advisory Committee
Coaching Advisory Committee
Distance Running & Walking Advisory Committee
Facilities and Equipment Advisory Committee
International Tours Advisory Committee
Officials Advisory Committee
Selection Committee
Track and Field Advisory Committee