



INDEPENDENT SOCCER REVIEW



Report of the Independent Soccer Review Committee

into the Structure, Governance and Management of Soccer in Australia

APRIL 2003

CHAIRMAN: DAVID CRAWFORD



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INDEPENDENT SOCCER REVIEW

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7 April 2003

Senator the Hon. Rod Kemp
Minister for the Arts and Sport
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

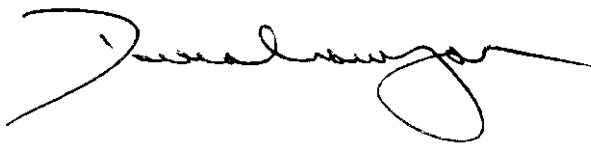
Dear Senator Kemp

On 2 September 2002 you announced the terms of reference for a review into the governance and management structures of soccer in Australia. It is my pleasure to forward the report of the Committee appointed to undertake this review.

The report's findings and recommendations are made after extensive consultation, accessing international advice and evaluating good practices. It recommends the need for major structural change at national and state levels.

In making our recommendations, the Committee acknowledges that some may find the recommendations confronting. Effecting change will require the resolve of all, including federal, state and territory governments.

Yours sincerely



David Crawford

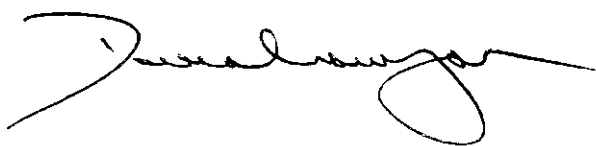
cc Soccer Australia
Australian Sports Commission



Acknowledgements

In submitting this report to the Federal Minister for the Arts and Sport and Soccer Australia the Review Committee encourages them to adopt a long-term view of the sport's development in Australia. We believe that the adoption and implementation of this report's recommendations will provide the foundation for success in national development, financial stability, stakeholder and public support, and international performances that have, on a consistent basis, eluded the sport in the past.

I thank the members of the Review Committee for their invaluable support; those stakeholders, members of the public and representatives from governments who contributed submissions or aided the Committee; our international contributors for their guidance and insights; the assistance received from Ernst & Young as the Committee's consultants, and the support and efforts of the Committee's secretariat.



David Crawford
Chairman



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Definitions and acronyms

The following definitions and acronyms are used in this report:

'Committee' means the committee responsible for preparing this report (refer to Appendix B)

'council', 'national council' and 'state council' mean the members of Soccer Australia and/or the members of a state member affiliate

'FIFA' means Federation Internationale de Football Association

'independent directors' means directors who, at the time of their nomination and election to the Board of Soccer Australia, do not occupy any official position with, or are an employee of, any other soccer organisation in Australia, and comply with accepted corporate standards relating to conflict of interest. The same expectations apply to persons nominating for, and appointed to, the board of a state member affiliate

'members of Soccer Australia' means a representative of each national standing committee, NSL and state member affiliates

'members of state member affiliates' means a representative of each state standing committee, and registered participants in that state

'NSL' means the National Soccer League

'players' means those players who have represented Australia within the last ten years

'president' means the person elected to chair the Board by the council of Soccer Australia or of a state member affiliate

'registered participants' means players, coaches and officials registered by a state member affiliate and whose fees or levies for the year are paid up.

'standing committees' means groups, each representing a special area of interest within soccer in Australia, formed to provide advice

'state' means all Australian states and territories

'state member affiliates' means those bodies recognised by Soccer Australia as a state member and to which existing state soccer federations and associations are able to merge

Part 1

Executive overview

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the independent Committee appointed to review the governance and management of soccer in Australia.

The Committee's terms of reference require it to prepare a report that includes:

- 1 a critical assessment of the existing governance, management and structure of soccer in Australia
- 2 solution-based recommendations to deliver a comprehensive governance framework and management structure for the sport that addresses the needs of affiliated organisations and stakeholders. These recommendations may include adjustments to existing governance systems and/or integration of activities and operations
- 3 identification of potential impediments to reform and strategies to overcome those impediments
- 4 a plan to implement the recommendations.

In submitting this report, the Committee is fulfilling the requirements of the terms of reference established by the Federal Minister for the Arts and Sport, Senator the Hon. Rod Kemp. The full terms of reference and members of the Committee are shown at Appendices A and B.

The Committee was made aware that over the past two decades, soccer in Australia has found itself addressing a series of crises evidenced more recently by: a) severe financial problems (members equity of Soccer Australia was a negative \$2.6 million at 30 June 2002); b) reduced staffing levels; c) political infighting; d) lack of strategic direction and planning; and e) mixed results on the field in the international arena.

Submissions made to the Committee provided evidence that many of the constituent bodies of Soccer Australia had similar problems, with organisations competing in some states in the administration and staging of soccer. This has resulted in a plethora of problems that can generally be defined as mistrust and disharmony, loss of focus, inappropriate behaviour, and concentration on local or factional issues rather than broad whole-of-sport development and 'bigger picture' issues. In addition, there are organisations not officially linked to Soccer Australia, for example, state women's soccer associations that are also involved in the staging of soccer.

The Committee is aware of previous investigations and reports into Australian soccer. As this Review is directed specifically to the existing governance, management and structure of soccer in Australia, it was not necessary to address the take-up of findings and recommendations from those reports.

In presenting its recommendations, the Committee is mindful of the many positives available to the administrators of soccer in Australia, including:

- a very strong participation base, particularly at junior and youth levels
- programs for developing talented athletes including state and territory-based national training centres and the Australian Institute of Sport
- the large number of elite players of international quality from which to select national teams
- strong growth in female participation
- passionate latent public support.

The Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) is the internationally recognised body for the development and control of the game of soccer. FIFA uses the term 'association football' to refer to the game in its various forms, specifically controlled by FIFA and regulated by the Laws of the Game. These apply to the forms of football for both men and women generally referred to in Australia as soccer, five-a-side (Futsal) soccer and beach soccer. The Committee views Soccer Australia, being the Australian body granted membership of FIFA, as the organisation responsible for the development of these forms of association football (hereafter referred to as 'soccer'), and any other forms that FIFA embraces from time to time.

The decision of FIFA to allow direct qualification to the FIFA (Men's) World Cup for the Oceania region presents a major promotional, marketing and financial opportunity for soccer in Australia and its elite male players. Oceania's new status should also open up improved opportunities for our other national teams, including women and Futsal, and enhance their prospects for future international success and lead to increased exposure of, and public interest in, the sport.

In delivering this report, the Committee undertook a program of national consultation, which included receiving over 230 written submissions, 32 meetings with stakeholders and 42 meetings with members of the public. In addition, the Committee conducted several meetings involving consultants Ernst & Young and international experts.

A list in alphabetical order of organisations or individuals making submissions or presentations to the Committee is shown in Appendix C. Excerpts from a range of submissions are shown in Appendix D.

Soon after its appointment, the Committee invited the then Board of Soccer Australia to meet with the Committee. Some of the directors and key management took advantage of that invitation. Those present expressly declined the Committee's invitation to provide a (unified) Board submission. In addressing the Committee individual directors stated that the views they expressed were personal views.

The Committee also issued an invitation to the current Board of Soccer Australia to meet with the Committee. A number of directors took up the invitation and subsequently a submission was received under the hand of the Chairman.

The Committee concluded that the current structure of soccer in Australia is ineffective, does not work and needs changing.

It is clear from the information made available to, and submissions received by the Committee that there is a need to implement changes that:

- 1 ensure the governing bodies are independent and capable of acting in the best interests of the sport as a whole
- 2 separate governance from day-to-day management by implementing an effective governance and management structure
- 3 ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to be heard, that is, change membership and voting structures at national and state levels
- 4 restructure the relationship between Soccer Australia and the NSL.

The Committee believes it is fundamental for the administration of soccer in Australia, through Soccer Australia, to have a truly independent board that has the responsibility to develop policies and strategies for the future of the sport and to contribute to international issues through FIFA. This will require the current constitution to be redrawn and a new Board to be appointed.

The Board of Soccer Australia should appoint an appropriately qualified chief executive officer to implement a management structure capable of achieving budget, business plans and strategic objectives, and to review and restructure the financial management of Soccer Australia. The management structure should address the key result areas of community soccer (game development and game operations), high performance soccer and corporate operations (commercial, financial and administration).

The Board of Soccer Australia should at all times be acting in the best interests of soccer in Australia. Board members should be independent of special interest groups and through strict adherence to appropriate governance principles free of any conflict of interest of a financial, personal or representational nature. This call for independence of Board members means they are to have no official position on another soccer body nor receive any direct or indirect material financial benefit from Soccer Australia in accordance with appropriate governance principles.

The Committee recommends that the Board of Soccer Australia should be appointed as a result of a voting mechanism that ultimately gives recognition to: a) the registered participants at grass-roots level through their respective state member affiliates; b) the NSL; and c) special interest groups such as women, Futsal, referees, players and coaches. The voting mechanism associated with this membership structure is detailed in Part 4.2, Issue 5: Voting structure – national.

The proposed membership structure at national level should in principle be replicated at state level. Details are contained in Part 4.2, Issue 6: Boards and voting structure – state member affiliates.

Complementary management structures to the national structure should be adopted by state member affiliates.

The Committee recommends the NSL operates as a separate entity under licence to Soccer Australia. This is discussed further in Part 4.2, Issue 9: National Soccer League.

Future governance, management and financial successes require a combination of factors to occur. A challenge of this Review has been to identify these key factors and to make recommendations accordingly. In doing so, the Committee has remained cognisant of the obligations of national associations to FIFA. The Committee's recommendations are listed in Part 3 and Part 4 of this report.

These recommendations are put forward in the hope that they will be embraced and adopted in accordance with the provisions of the current constitution of Soccer Australia, in order to clearly demonstrate that the current constituents of Soccer Australia are supportive of the changes proposed.

To bring about change in an expeditious and prudent manner, the Committee recommends immediately appointing an interim board of Soccer Australia for two years.

The Committee believes an interim board is necessary because:

- the present Board does not have the confidence of the majority of stakeholders and was elected in a time of upheaval within the sport
- to bring about change there is a need for appropriately skilled people to be appointed to positions of authority
- there is a need for a governance structure to be in place that is capable of dealing with the day-to-day issues confronting soccer while at the same time addressing the structural and constitutional reforms necessary for the future
- there is a need to revise the constitution of Soccer Australia. Considerable work will need to be done with the current members and non-members at the state level to implement structures, including standing committees, to enable the future Board of Soccer Australia to be elected in accordance with the recommendations contained herein.

The members of this interim board should be people who are independent, without any conflict of interest and who collectively bring a suitable blend of skills in management, administration, finance, and a knowledge of, and a desire to work in, the interests of soccer for the future. They must be capable of, and prepared to accept, the challenges necessary to implement the changes recommended in this report and address the many strategic and policy issues requiring urgent attention.

The Committee believes that membership of an interim board could comprise Mr Frank Lowy as Chairman and joined by Mr John Singleton and Mr Ron Walker. These people have indicated to the Committee that if requested they would be prepared to accept appointment subject to being satisfied as to the balance of membership of the Board and the financial arrangements to be implemented to enable the business of Soccer Australia to be continued.

The Australian Sports Commission has indicated to the Committee that if the recommendations of this report are adopted, resulting in an interim board comprising people such as those named above, it would be prepared, during the interim period pending appointment of a chief executive officer and agreement to a budget and business plan, to provide for ongoing management, administration and financial support.

Legal advice obtained by the Committee is that an interim board can be appointed by the current Board of Soccer Australia resigning or, if the Board is unwilling to do so, by the current members of Soccer Australia replacing the existing directors.

The Committee further recommends that the interim board, as a priority, undertake a revision of Soccer Australia's constitution and the development of a new strategic plan. The strategic planning process should ensure stakeholders participate in influencing the future direction of the sport.






Part 2

Methodology

The methodology employed in undertaking the Review in accordance with the terms of reference involved:

- 1 Meetings between the Committee (or members of the Committee) and key stakeholders. Thirty-two meetings took place
- 2 Submissions from stakeholders and members of the public addressing the terms of reference. Advertisements calling for submissions were placed in a selection of capital city and regional daily newspapers, the weekly soccer magazine and selected ethnic newspapers. Two hundred and thirty written submissions were received.
- 3 Meetings with directors of Soccer Australia
- 4 Meetings with representatives from other Australian sports (athletics, baseball, cricket and surf life saving)
- 5 Meetings between Ernst & Young and sports consultants at the Australian Sports Commission to examine other sports' structures
- 6 Discussions with the NSL and the Australian Professional Footballers' Association
- 7 Discussions with FIFA
- 8 Discussions with media organisations
- 9 Discussions with the English Football Association and the UK Sports Council
- 10 Briefings involving the former Chief Executive Officer of the United States Soccer Federation and the Head of Legal Affairs, FIFA Marketing
- 11 Public forums held in each state and territory capital city and in the regional centre of Coffs Harbour. Forty-two presentations were received
- 12 Analysis of submissions and presentations



13 Consideration of the findings and development of recommendations throughout December 2002, and January and February 2003

14 Production and promulgation of the Committee's report

Consultants Ernst & Young, with support from the Committee's secretariat, managed the public consultation process and analysis of submissions. Ernst & Young presented options for the Committee's consideration as part of the process to finalise recommendations.

Part 3

List of recommendations

That:

- 1 Soccer Australia recognise as its members: a) state member affiliates; b) representatives of standing committees; and c) the NSL
- 2 Soccer Australia replace its current Memorandum and Articles of Association with a new constitution.
- 3 Soccer Australia and its state member affiliates, standing committees and the NSL be inextricably linked through constitutional arrangements and mutual agreements. Soccer Australia develop model state constitutions and member agreements.
- 4 To ensure broad advice is available at the national level, standing committees be established by Soccer Australia for coaches, Futsal, players, referees and women.
- 5 Other than for the players' standing committee, each Soccer Australia standing committee to comprise one nominated representative from each equivalent state standing committee.
- 6 Membership of the players' standing committee comprise up to ten persons elected by players, including a minimum of two representatives each of men's outdoor soccer, women's outdoor soccer and Futsal.
- 7 The chair of each standing committee of Soccer Australia be appointed to vote at general meetings of Soccer Australia.
- 8 State member affiliates' standing committees be for coaches, Futsal, referees and women and, if required, other groups.
- 9 The chairman of each state standing committee be the designated member of the state member affiliate and be appointed to vote at general meetings of the state member affiliate.
- 10 Soccer Australia be governed by a board of six elected independent directors.
- 11 The position of 'Chairman' be renamed 'President' for international consistency.
- 12 The existing position of 'President' be abolished and replaced with a ceremonial/protocol position of 'Patron' at the invitation of the Board of Soccer Australia.

- 13 The Chief Executive Officer of Soccer Australia attend meetings of the Board but not be entitled to a vote.
- 14 Members and directors of Soccer Australia are entitled to nominate any number of persons for election as a director.
- 15 The President and all directors be elected by the national council. Voting entitlements of members may vary according to votes on a show of hands or by poll.
- 16 Directors be appointed for four-year terms and, subject to re-election, be eligible to serve for a maximum of eight consecutive years (a maximum of two four-year terms) and then be ineligible for re-election for a minimum of one half-term (approximately two years).
- 17 A director who is not elected to the position of President for more than one term within the eligible period of two consecutive terms may be eligible for election for a third consecutive term as President only.
- 18 Half-board elections be conducted every two years.
- 19 The position of President (if due for election) be determined first, followed by the remaining director positions to be elected.
- 20 Elections be conducted in odd-numbered years, so as not to coincide with the years in which the FIFA (Men's) World Cup is held.
- 21 The position of President be elected at the annual general meeting in the year following the year of each FIFA (Men's) World Cup.
- 22 The election of the President and directors of Soccer Australia be undertaken by the national council of Soccer Australia at annual general meetings.
- 23 The national council of Soccer Australia to comprise representatives of state member affiliates, standing committees of Soccer Australia and the NSL.
- 24 The voting structure of Soccer Australia's national council be as follows:
 - Each state member affiliate – one vote
 - For each state member affiliate with individual registrant numbers exceeding 50,000 – one additional vote
 - For each state member affiliate with individual registrant numbers exceeding 200,000 – one additional vote
 - For each state member affiliate with individual registrant numbers exceeding 400,000 – one additional vote
 - The representative of the coaches' standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the Futsal standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the players' standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the referees' standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the women's standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the NSL – one vote

- 25 Representatives on the national council of Soccer Australia be:
 - in the case of state member affiliates, the President (or President's nominee) of the state member affiliate
 - in the case of coaches, Futsal, players, referees and women, the Chair of the national standing committee elected from time to time by the members of the respective standing committee
 - in the case of the NSL, the Chair of the NSL.
- 26 The national council be empowered to replace individual directors or the President by resolution at a duly convened meeting.
- 27 Existing state soccer federations, associations and leagues, including those currently unaffiliated, undertake to amalgamate with Soccer Australia's recognised state member affiliate.
- 28 New state member affiliates, responsible for development and delivery in totality of all forms of soccer within their state, be constitutionally recognised by Soccer Australia.
- 29 State member affiliates adopt consistent constitutions and nomenclature to those developed by Soccer Australia.
- 30 Board composition and nomination, and election provisions be similar in state member affiliates to those of Soccer Australia.
- 31 Individual registered participants be recognised within the membership structures of state member affiliates.
- 32 Representatives of registered participants and standing committees form the council of the state member affiliate.
- 33 Representatives of registered participants on the state council be those persons elected by the registered participants.
- 34 Representatives of standing committees on the state council be those persons elected or appointed by the members of each standing committee from time to time as their chair.
- 35 Representatives on the state council exercise one vote each. The state member affiliate determines the number to serve on their council provided there are more members elected by the registered participants than members representing standing committees on the council.
- 36 A Board conflict of interest policy reflecting current corporate governance standards be developed and signed by each director on taking office.
- 37 Directors' duty statements be developed.
- 38 A 'directors' financial interest' register exist to record directors' financial interests in any business that does business with Soccer Australia.
- 39 Soccer Australia and each state member affiliate establish an audit committee that should report annually on the recorded personal financial interests of directors in any business that does business with Soccer Australia.
- 40 A clearer separation of the roles of boards and managements be established.

- 41 The management of Soccer Australia and state member affiliates be structured in a similar way for effective communication and effective delivery of programs on a national scale.
- 42 Soccer Australia establish agreements, including memoranda of understanding, with state member affiliates, outlining the obligations and commitments of each, including membership registration and servicing, development programs, high performance programs, marketing and sponsorship, competition scheduling and other areas of mutual interest.
- 43 Each state member affiliate of Soccer Australia adopt a management and operational structure that provides for effective coverage of soccer interests across the entire state.
- 44 Highly credentialed chief executive officers be employed to engage and lead management teams and be the respective 'public face' of Soccer Australia and state member affiliates.
- 45 The President of Soccer Australia be the principal delegate to FIFA and the spokesperson on FIFA matters.
- 46 Soccer Australia establish the NSL as a separate entity operating under a licence from Soccer Australia with a board comprised of independent directors elected by participating NSL clubs and with separate (from Soccer Australia) funding.
- 47 Soccer Australia assist the NSL through joint marketing, television rights agreements and sponsorships.
- 48 The Chief Executive Officer of Soccer Australia have observer status on the Board of the NSL.
- 49 Soccer Australia continue to impose annual membership/capitation fees on state member affiliates and individual registrants, as one means of funding national programs, in accordance with approved strategic directions, annual plans and budgets and member agreements between Soccer Australia and state member affiliates.
- 50 Soccer Australia maintain its status as the Australian national association of FIFA to control development and delivery of association football (soccer) in Australia including enforcement of FIFA statutes and regulations.
- 51 Soccer Australia and its state member affiliates' constitutions and governance structures reflect applicable statutes of FIFA.
- 52 The current Board of Soccer Australia, or failing their agreement to so act, the constituent members of Soccer Australia by way of voting at a specially convened extraordinary general meeting, appoint an interim board.
- 53 The interim board of Soccer Australia operate for a period expiring with the election in 2005 of a Board under the new constitution of Soccer Australia.

Part 4

Findings and recommendations

4.1 Critical assessment of the existing governance, management and structure of soccer in Australia

The membership of Soccer Australia currently comprises 12 state and territory-based associations, the Australian Soccer Referees Association and the 12 Australian clubs participating in the NSL.

The total number of votes available to be cast at general meetings is 61. Sixteen of these votes are allocated to the NSL clubs, to be distributed equally across them. However, as only whole number votes can be cast and there are 12 Australian clubs in the NSL, the total number of votes presently exercised by the NSL is 12 and the total able to be cast at a general meeting is 57 votes.

The number of votes allocated to each state and territory varies. The Committee has struggled to ascertain any clear basis for this variation, which appears to have been arbitrarily determined. For example, Soccer Canberra has more registered players than Soccer Tasmania, but exercises three votes against Tasmania's five votes. A number of junior or amateur associations with large registration numbers exercise one vote, compared with other state bodies with fewer registration numbers or financial contributions that might exercise four or more votes.

The voting structures employed within state federations and associations lack consistency. For example, some adopt a district basis to their voting structure; some give preference to premier and state league clubs; while others exclude, or heavily weight against, amateurs, women, Futsal, schools, etc. There is no consistent treatment of individual registrants within these voting structures. It is reasonable to conclude that, in terms of governance and management structures, there is no genuine commonality, or attempt at same, between any two states and territories.

Appendix E represents the Committee's understanding of the current voting structures of Soccer Australia and each state constituent body.

Submissions received by the Committee raised a number of concerns relevant to the Committee's terms of reference, with those predominant being:

- 1 poor governance and management practices within the sport
- 2 inappropriate conduct by directors including micro-managing day-to-day business at the expense of their broader strategic and compliance responsibilities

- 3 in-fighting between Soccer Australia and state federations resulting in an attitude of each protecting their 'own turf' at the expense of the broader interests of the sport as a whole
- 4 a lack of integration and mutual trust between Soccer Australia and its constituent bodies
- 5 malaise, lack of decision-making, poor financial management and lack of accountability within the sport
- 6 state and territory-based associations competing against one another
- 7 failure to translate the enthusiasm for junior soccer to senior soccer
- 8 slow response by Soccer Australia in addressing the interests of referees, women and indoor soccer
- 9 need for separate responsibility for the NSL.

A sample of excerpts from submissions that refer to these and other concerns appear at Appendix D.

The recommendations of this report address these concerns.

4.2 Solution-based recommendations to deliver a comprehensive governance framework and management structure for the sport that addresses the needs of affiliated organisations and stakeholders

To ensure all stakeholder voices are heard the Committee favours a more democratic and representative, rather than a mandated or dictated, approach to establishing the overall governance structure of the sport. This approach will help to truly align the states within a national structure, in both 'mind and matter', through consistent constitutions, election processes, governance and management arrangements and nomenclature.

Issue 1 Membership of the national body

The Committee reviewed a number of sporting organisations and their respective membership arrangements, as well as the current arrangements of Soccer Australia. It concluded that the current membership and resulting voting structures for Soccer Australia do not ensure that there is an equitable representation or voting arrangement for membership of the governing body by the stakeholders.

The role of the administrators of soccer is to advance and benefit soccer in totality. If participants pay registration fees they should be entitled to have a vote in electing the people to run the game in their state or region. In addition, there are particular groups that have an important role to play in determining the people to administer the sport. Those groups include coaches, referees, women, Futsal and players. The structure of soccer must ensure equitable representation of members and interest groups in voting for the people charged with the responsibility of running the game.

In proposing a new membership structure the Committee is also cognisant of FIFA Article 23 – Standing Committees and the importance FIFA places on a range of representational committees including Futsal, referees, women and technical (including coaches).

The Committee considers the appropriate representational structure for membership of Soccer Australia is a mixture of state bodies and special interest groups (referred to as 'standing committees'). The Committee also acknowledges the important role of the NSL as the pinnacle domestic national competition and that it should be a member of Soccer Australia.

The proposed membership structure has specifically provided for special interest groups such as women, Futsal, coaches, referees and others, to be separately represented to ensure their voices will not be lost among the more dominant elements of the sport.

State member affiliates of Soccer Australia need to be aligned with Soccer Australia to ensure effective communication, policy development and achievement of strategic outcomes and, accordingly, they should move to adopt a similar membership structure.

Recommendations

That:

- 1 **Soccer Australia recognise as its members: a) state member affiliates; b) representatives of standing committees; and c) the NSL.**
- 2 **Soccer Australia replace its current Memorandum and Articles of Association with a new constitution.**
- 3 **Soccer Australia and its state member affiliates, standing committees and the NSL be inextricably linked through constitutional arrangements and mutual agreements. Soccer Australia develop model state constitutions and member agreements.**

Issue 2 Establishment of standing committees

A critical element of the new membership structure for Soccer Australia and its state member affiliates is the recognition of standing committees representing special interest groups. These standing committees will perform the dual role of:

- 1 appointing a person to be the member to attend meetings of Soccer Australia and/or state member affiliates. That person shall be authorised to vote as a member of the respective body on all matters brought before the meeting including appointment of directors
- 2 providing advice and input on relevant matters to the Board of Directors of Soccer Australia and state member affiliates.

The Committee has responded to FIFA's articles in proposing a series of standing committees representing special interest groups in the sport. At the national level, standing committees should exist for coaches, Futsal, players, referees and women.

The Committee recommends where appropriate commonality between national and state standing committees to ensure stronger communication of interests and consistency of advice to both national and state boards. As a result, each national standing committee for coaches, Futsal, referees and women should comprise one representative from the corresponding state standing committee.

The Committee acknowledges, however, that there are some differences in the roles of national and state sports bodies, which create some differences in the strategic and policy focus of each. National bodies have roles and responsibilities more appropriately focused on matters relating to international obligations; national development and promotion of the sport; exploitation of the sport's intellectual property; protection of the integrity of the game; and strategic direction and growth. State member affiliates have roles and responsibilities consistent with national policies and directions but extending more to the delivery of competitions and provision of grass-roots member services.

The Committee is therefore of the view that standing committees for groups such as seniors (amateurs) and juniors are appropriate at state level but not at national level. On the other hand, the input of current and recently retired international players is important in developing policies for national high performance programs.

The range of standing committees for each state member affiliate should include women, Futsal, coaches and referees and, depending on the requirements of the state, could include other groups. This should be determined by Soccer Australia and the respective state, along with the method to be applied in ensuring standing committees adopt a whole-of-state representation.

Recommendations

That:

- 4 To ensure broad advice is available at the national level, standing committees be established by Soccer Australia for coaches, Futsal, players, referees and women.
- 5 Other than for the players' standing committee, each Soccer Australia standing committee to comprise one nominated representative from each equivalent state standing committee.
- 6 Membership of the players' standing committee comprise up to ten persons elected by players, including a minimum of two representatives each of men's outdoor soccer, women's outdoor soccer and Futsal.

- 7 The chair of each standing committee of Soccer Australia be appointed to vote at general meetings of Soccer Australia.
 - 8 State member affiliates' standing committees be for coaches, Futsal, referees and women and, if required, other groups.
 - 9 The chairman of each state standing committee be the designated member of the state member affiliate and be appointed to vote at general meetings of the state member affiliate.
-

Issue 3 Soccer Australia Board composition

There are mixed views about the appropriate governance structure that Soccer Australia ought to adopt. Some favour an imposed commission-type arrangement of independent persons who combine business and sport expertise. Some prefer a mix of elected people from soccer and business people seconded for their expertise. Others seek a representative structure, which enables the grass-roots participants to have a greater say in the running of the sport, in order to bring the 'top' and 'bottom' of the sport closer.

The Committee considered the composition of the Board of Soccer Australia in terms of what would benefit the game in the longer term.

The Committee's view is that the Board of Soccer Australia (and state member affiliates) should at all times be acting in the best interests of soccer in Australia. Board members should be independent of special interest groups and through strict adherence to appropriate governance principles free of any conflict of interest of a financial, personal or representational nature. This call for independence of Board members means that, at the time of nomination for appointment as a director and for the period of their directorship of Soccer Australia, they have no official position on another soccer body nor receive any direct or indirect material financial benefit from Soccer Australia (or a state member affiliate) in accordance with appropriate governance principles.

The Committee considers six directors, including the President, is an appropriate number of directors to ensure the Board maintains a focus on strategic and compliance matters. The Chief Executive Officer should be entitled to attend meetings of the Board but not be a voting member.

The Committee is not recommending Board members adopt particular portfolios or require specialist skills in order to be elected.

The Committee notes that the leader of FIFA is titled 'President'. This nomenclature is common in most national sporting organisations in Australia. It is therefore proposed that the current position of 'Chairman' be retitled 'President' and the current position of 'President', which is a ceremonial role, be known as 'Patron'.

Recommendations

That:

- 10 Soccer Australia be governed by a board of six elected independent directors.
- 11 The position of 'Chairman' be renamed 'President' for international consistency.
- 12 The existing position of 'President' be abolished and replaced with a ceremonial/protocol position of 'Patron' at the invitation of the Board of Soccer Australia.
- 13 The Chief Executive Officer of Soccer Australia attend meetings of the Board but not be entitled to a vote.

Issue 4 Nomination and election of the President and directors of Soccer Australia

The Committee proposes that the right to nominate persons for election to the Board be vested in members and directors of Soccer Australia.

Election to the Board will require the support of a majority of members present and voting in person or by proxy at a duly constituted meeting of members. A minimum number of three state members and two standing committee members must be present to form a quorum.

Each member of Soccer Australia is entitled to a minimum of one vote. Some state member affiliates may be entitled to more votes according to the number of registered participants that they represent. Members who control multiple votes may exercise these only in the event of a poll. Members exercise these votes through the national council of Soccer Australia in a general meeting.

The Committee considers the term for a director should be four years, with each director able to serve a maximum continuous period of eight years. In the case of a person occupying the position of President, this also should be for a maximum of eight years. However, the Committee proposes that a director who has not occupied the position of President for a full eight years can stand and be elected for a third consecutive term but only as President and may not serve for a continuous period exceeding 12 years.

Four-year terms reflect the timing of the FIFA (Men's) World Cup, and it seems appropriate that an incumbent President oversees the sport through each World Cup campaign, given this

is the pinnacle event for the sport. The position of President would therefore become vacant at the annual general meeting in the year following the FIFA (Men's) World Cup.

To ensure continuity within the Board, half-board elections should be conducted every two years. Elections would therefore take place each odd-numbered year, for example, 2005, 2007, 2009, etc.

Recommendations

That:

- 14 Members and directors of Soccer Australia be entitled to nominate any number of persons for election as a director.
 - 15 The President and all directors be elected by the national council. Voting entitlements of members may vary according to votes on a show of hands or by poll.
 - 16 Directors be appointed for four-year terms and, subject to re-election, be eligible to serve for a maximum of eight consecutive years (a maximum of two four-year terms) and then be ineligible for re-election for a minimum of one half-term (approximately two years).
 - 17 A director who is not elected to the position of President for more than one term within the eligible period of two consecutive terms may be eligible for election for a third consecutive term as President only.
 - 18 Half-board elections be conducted every two years.
 - 19 The position of President (if due for election) be determined first, followed by the remaining director positions to be elected.
 - 20 Elections be conducted in odd-numbered years, so as not to coincide with the years in which the FIFA (Men's) World Cup is held.
 - 21 The position of President be elected at the annual general meeting in the year following the year of each FIFA (Men's) World Cup.
-

Issue 5 Voting structure – national

In addressing how to best structure the governance of Soccer Australia, the Committee's views are influenced by the requirements laid down by FIFA.

FIFA Statutes, Articles 7.1, 7.2 and 7.4 are relevant to the governance structure:

- 7.1 states 'The executive body of the association shall be appointed only by means of election within that association. The statutes of an association shall provide for an election procedure that guarantees the complete independence of the electorate.'
- 7.2 states '(FIFA) shall not recognise the executive body of an association, even on an interim basis, if it has not been appointed in accordance with (article 7.1).'
- 7.4 states 'Leagues and other groups of clubs at association level shall only be permitted with the association's express consent and shall be subordinate to it'

Further to the voting provisions addressed under Issue 4: Nomination and election of the President and directors of Soccer Australia, the Committee also paid close attention to the views of stakeholders about the perceived impact of current voting arrangements within the sport. The Committee was unable to ascertain the rationale for the current allocation of votes to members of Soccer Australia shown in the following table.

Member body	Number of votes	Percentage of votes
NSW Soccer Federation	7	11.5
NSW Amateur Soccer Federation	1	1.6
Northern NSW Soccer Federation	5	8.2
Victorian Soccer Federation	7	11.5
Queensland Soccer Federation	4	6.6
Queensland Junior Soccer Council	1	1.6
Soccer Tasmania Limited	5	8.2
Soccer Administration of Western Australia	4	6.6
Junior Soccer Association of Western Australia	1	1.6
South Australian Soccer Federation Incorporated	5	8.2
Australian Capital Territory Soccer Federation	3	4.9
Northern Territory Soccer Federation Limited	1	1.6
Australian Soccer Referees Federation	1	1.6
NSL clubs	16	26.2
TOTAL	61	100

The Committee received many submissions calling for a one-state one-vote entitlement, which is the most common voting structure within Australian national sporting organisations.

The Committee determined, however, that such a proposal is unlikely to address the important concerns of special interest groups who, in the Committee's view, are justifiably concerned that their interests have been ignored or have not been satisfactorily addressed in the past.

The voting system favoured by the Committee provides for: a) geographical representation (each state); b) special interest group representation (each standing committee); c) the NSL; and d) individual participant representation (number of registered participants).

The Committee does not support the weighting given to the NSL clubs in the current allocation of votes. As discussed at Issue 9 below, the Committee proposes a different relationship between Soccer Australia and a separate NSL. However, the NSL is an integral component of the sport affecting the development of the game in Australia, and in the Committee's opinion, should be entitled to member status of Soccer Australia and a vote.

Recommendations

That:

- 22 The election of the President and directors of Soccer Australia be undertaken by the national council of Soccer Australia at annual general meetings.
- 23 The national council of Soccer Australia comprise representatives of state member affiliates, standing committees of Soccer Australia and the NSL.
- 24 The voting structure of Soccer Australia's national council be as follows:
 - Each state member affiliate – one vote
 - For each state member affiliate with individual registrant numbers exceeding 50,000 – one additional vote
 - For each state member affiliate with individual registrant numbers exceeding 200,000 – one additional vote
 - For each state member affiliate with individual registrant numbers exceeding 400,000 – one additional vote
 - The representative of the coaches' standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the Futsal standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the players' standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the referees' standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the women's standing committee – one vote
 - The representative of the NSL – one vote

25 Representatives on the national council of Soccer Australia be:

- in the case of state member affiliates, the President (or President's nominee) of the state member affiliate
- in the case of coaches, Futsal, players, referees and women, the Chair of the national standing committee elected from time to time by the members of the respective standing committee
- in the case of the NSL, the Chair of the NSL.

26 The national council be empowered to replace individual directors or the President by resolution at a duly convened meeting.

Issue 6 Boards and voting structure – state member affiliates

In considering the appropriate structure for state member affiliates, the Committee reviewed the appropriateness, practicality and workability of the current soccer structure against those of other Australian sports where most sports adopt a state or branch structure.

Soccer is not consistently structured in each state where there may be several bodies involved in delivering the sport. Some of these bodies may be a member of Soccer Australia in their own right, a member of the state constituent body of Soccer Australia only, or they may not be a member of either body. These confusing sub-structures have implications for effective communication and development within the game.

The voting structures for state bodies vary considerably, with no two state bodies adopting a common voting structure. The table opposite demonstrates the Committee's understanding of voting rights within the current member bodies of Soccer Australia. This is diagrammed further at Appendix E.

The table shows the number of votes by membership category for each state and territory constituent of Soccer Australia (as at November 2002). Membership categories are listed on the horizontal axis and constituent bodies on the vertical axis:

Each of the state constituent bodies of Soccer Australia appears to have developed its own constitution and rules. These lack consistency and commonality. There is little portrayal of a united sport under this approach. The Committee therefore proposes that Soccer Australia reconstitute its state member affiliates to ensure these bodies are representative of all elements of the sport and are linked back to Soccer Australia not only through voting rights but through consistency of constitutions and management structures.

The Committee acknowledges the impracticality of each state member affiliate adopting precisely the same voting structure. There are several factors to consider, the most notable being geographic. As a principle, the Committee believes each registered participant should be entitled to a vote on who represents them on their state council. In smaller states, this may mean direct election of all representatives. In larger states, this may mean dividing the states into regions and electing a representative from each region to the council.

	Senior Clubs	Junior Clubs	Junior Assoc.	Region/ District/Zones	Premier/ State Clubs	NSL Clubs	Referees	Coaches	Schools	Women	Men	Futsal	Amateurs
Northern NSW				11	22	1							
NSW Amateurs				44									
NSW Federation				5	102	18	1	1					
VIC Federation					90	30							
QLD Juniors				11									
QLD Federation			1	14	1	1	1	1	4	1			
SA Federation					24								1
WA Federation			2	2		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2			2
WA Juniors	72	13											
TAS Federation	27		3										
ACT Federation	19	19											
NT Federation	13			12			1						



Recommendations

That:

- 27 Existing state soccer federations, associations and leagues, including those currently unaffiliated, undertake to amalgamate with Soccer Australia's recognised state member affiliate.
 - 28 New state member affiliates, responsible for development and delivery in totality of all forms of soccer within their state, be constitutionally recognised by Soccer Australia.
 - 29 State member affiliates adopt consistent constitutions and nomenclature to those developed by Soccer Australia.
 - 30 Board composition and nomination, and election provisions be similar in state member affiliates to those of Soccer Australia.
 - 31 Individual registered participants be recognised within the membership structures of state member affiliates.
 - 32 Representatives of registered participants and standing committees form the council of the state member affiliate.
 - 33 Representatives of registered participants on the state council be those persons elected by the registered participants.
 - 34 Representatives of standing committees on the state council be those persons elected or appointed by the members of each standing committee from time to time as their chair.
 - 35 Representatives on the state council exercise one vote each. The state member affiliate determines the number to serve on their council provided there are more members elected by the registered participants than members representing standing committees on the council.
-

Issue 7 Conflict of interest management

The Committee received many submissions raising concerns about governance practices within the sport and questioning whether the governing body is genuinely acting for the benefit of the sport as a whole.

The Committee believes there is a need for strong and explicit governance guidelines for Soccer Australia relating to the roles and responsibilities of directors and addressing conflict of interest rules and sanctions.

Duties and responsibilities are imposed on directors of companies by legislation and common law. Most legislative duties are contained in the *Corporations Act*, in particular Chapter 2D.

In addition to the Chapter 2D general duties (that is, to act with care and diligence, in good faith and to not make improper use of position or information), and the duty to disclose material personal interests, the *Corporations Act* imposes various other responsibilities on directors.

For example, directors have duties in relation to:

- 1 maintenance of appropriate accounting records and registers
- 2 preparation and audit of financial statements
- 3 prevention of insolvent trading
- 4 related party transactions
- 5 holding of meetings and lodgement of information with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission.

To further strengthen the expectations of directors, the Committee recommends:

- 1 preparation of duty statements for directors
- 2 development of a Board conflict of interest policy which each director acknowledges by signing on appointment as a director
- 3 documenting directors' financial interests in any business that does business with Soccer Australia in a 'directors' financial interest' register.

The Committee also proposes that the Board appoint an audit committee that should *inter-alia* monitor and report annually to members on the recorded directors' financial interests.

Recommendations

That:

- 36 A Board conflict of interest policy reflecting current corporate governance standards be developed and signed by each director on taking office.
- 37 Directors' duty statements be developed.
- 38 A 'directors' financial interest' register exist to record directors' financial interests in any business that does business with Soccer Australia.
- 39 Soccer Australia and each state member affiliate establish an audit committee that should report annually on the recorded personal financial interests of directors in any business that does business with Soccer Australia.

Issue 8 Board and management roles

The role of the Board should be the development of strategy and policy and provision of guidance for soccer in Australia. It should oversee the health of the game in totality, both operationally and financially, including risk identification and management. It should monitor the financial and non-financial performance of the organisation.

Responsibility for administration of Soccer Australia and each of its state member affiliates, including policy implementation and day-to-day operations, should be delegated by the Board to the Chief Executive Officer and his/her management team.

While acknowledging the different focus of national and state boards, the Committee considers that management structures at each level should have some commonality to foster communications and provide for effective delivery of programs on a national scale. In some states, the mirroring of elements of this structure might be extended to a regional basis for effective program delivery within that region.

The Committee, in reviewing other sports, notes that some sports have established agreements between the national body and state bodies that outline their common and separate responsibilities within the sport. Such agreements are considered by the Committee as forming the basis for each body understanding its responsibilities and expectations within the national structure. The Committee believes soccer will also benefit from adopting this approach.

The Committee notes the past practice within Soccer Australia for a number of Board and staff members to speak on behalf of the organisation and sport. This practice is not favoured as it can lead to inconsistent messages and personal views being reflected rather than the views of the organisation. The Committee notes that in most major sports in this country, for example, AFL, ACB, ARL and ARU, it is the chief executive officer who speaks on behalf of the

organisation, that is, he/she is the public face of the sporting body. The Committee recommends this be adopted as the practice in soccer. Should the Board need to comment, this should be the responsibility of the President. In the case of Soccer Australia, where the President is the FIFA delegate, the President should be the spokesperson on FIFA matters.

Recommendations

That:

- 40 A clearer separation of the roles of boards and managements be established.
 - 41 The management of Soccer Australia and state member affiliates be structured in a similar way for effective communication and effective delivery of programs on a national scale.
 - 42 Soccer Australia establish agreements, including memoranda of understanding, with state member affiliates, outlining the obligations and commitments of each, including membership registration and servicing, development programs, high performance programs, marketing and sponsorship, competition scheduling and other areas of mutual interest.
 - 43 Each state member affiliate of Soccer Australia adopt a management and operational structure that provides for effective coverage of soccer interests across the entire state.
 - 44 Highly credentialed chief executive officers be employed to engage and lead management teams and be the respective 'public face' of Soccer Australia and state member affiliates.
 - 45 The President of Soccer Australia be the principal delegate to FIFA and the spokesperson on FIFA matters.
-

Issue 9 National Soccer League

Presently, the NSL sits within the structure of Soccer Australia. There are common employees of the NSL and Soccer Australia. Soccer Australia controls the operations of the national league, including influencing the league's development, funding, sponsorship, broadcast/media contracts, player availability for national teams and player transfers.

The Committee received numerous submissions proposing that the NSL become a separate entity to Soccer Australia. The rationale for separation includes:

- 1 Soccer Australia is not endowed with the expertise to operate a financially viable and successful national soccer competition of the nature of the NSL.

- 2 Soccer Australia is responsible for the financing of the NSL, including operational shortfalls.
- 3 There are competing interests between Soccer Australia and the NSL with respect to broadcast media/agreements, national sponsorships and player availability.

The NSL has been reported to be floundering through lack of financial resources, collapse or financial difficulties of clubs, reducing spectator numbers, lack of television exposure and an exodus of many of Australia's elite players to Europe and elsewhere to pursue their football careers. The NSL is understood to require considerable resources of Soccer Australia.

The Committee is aware of the significant work undertaken by the Australian Professional Footballers' Association in developing a new business case for the NSL, and of the decision of the Soccer Australia Board to set up another committee to examine the structure of the League.

The Committee considered a number of options for the NSL. Again FIFA articles influenced and supported the Committee's view. Article 7.4 states: 'Leagues and other groups of clubs at association level shall only be permitted with the association's express consent and shall be subordinate to it.'

The Committee believes the NSL has a better chance of success if it is allowed to operate as a stand-alone body with its own board and constitution, and able to set its own rules and regulations, with the NSL clubs as members. However, because Soccer Australia has responsibility for the wellbeing and development of the game at national and international levels, there is potential for overlap between the objectives of Soccer Australia and a stand-alone NSL.

These sorts of issues include ensuring Australian players are available when required for national representative duties. As Australia performs better in the international arena it will increase opportunities for national sponsorships and media. It is vital therefore for Soccer Australia and the NSL to work together and not against one another to maximise the value of these opportunities. Accordingly, in recommending that the NSL be reconstituted as a separate body, it is fundamental that the authority conduct its affairs subject to a licence from Soccer Australia.

The licence agreement would cover such areas as:

- formalisation of the relationship between the parties
- availability of players for national team duty
- contractual arrangements, including competition clauses for sponsorship, marketing, broadcasting and television rights and intellectual property
- protection of pre-existing intellectual property of the parties
- game development responsibilities
- funding, including assurances that the licensee is in a sound financial position and that the national body will not be called on to fund the competition
- revenue and expenditure responsibilities and sharing arrangements

- resource requirements, including administration and technology
- reporting requirements, including financial and operational
- strategic planning
- communication protocols
- conflict of interest management
- dispute resolution
- cross-representation on participants' boards
- other standard contractual terms such as insurance, indemnity, compliance with laws, etc.
- structural and governance matters.

Under such a licence, Soccer Australia can retain a level of influence in the NSL in those areas it deems important. This could include:

- availability of players for national teams
- media/broadcast agreements
- sponsorship and marketing
- funding
- game development.

This then enables Soccer Australia to focus on its core responsibilities of game development and national teams to meet the expectations of stakeholders.

Recommendations

That:

- 46 Soccer Australia establish the NSL as a separate entity operating under a licence from Soccer Australia with a board comprised of independent directors elected by participating NSL clubs and with separate (to Soccer Australia) funding.
 - 47 Soccer Australia assist the NSL through joint marketing, television rights agreements and sponsorships.
 - 48 The Chief Executive Officer of Soccer Australia have observer status on the board of the NSL.
-

Issue 10 Funding

The finances of the game and its governing body have been, and will remain, critical to the future of soccer.

Unlike some sports, soccer is not currently in a position to fund the sport from the top down. Like most of Australia's national sporting organisations, Soccer Australia must rely on a mix of income sources to fund the national programs for the sport. This is replicated at the state level.

In addition to government grants and sponsorships, the financial support provided by participants is a critical income source. This is usually collected by means of an annual subscription (capitation charge) that may include an allowance for contributions to national teams, administration, insurance, facilities development, research, etc. The charge needs to reflect the costs associated with implementing agreed strategic directions and budgets.

Recommendation

That:

- 49 Soccer Australia continue to impose annual membership/capitation fees on state member affiliates and individual registrants, as one means of funding national programs, in accordance with approved strategic directions, annual plans and budgets, and member agreements between Soccer Australia and state member affiliates.**

Issue 11 FIFA relationship and policy

The Committee has been cognisant of the requirements of FIFA insofar as they are specified for bodies that are registered as members of that body.

The recommendations herein are in accordance with those requirements and accordingly should meet the expectations of FIFA.

Recommendations

That:

- 50 Soccer Australia maintain its status as the Australian national association of FIFA to control development and delivery of association football (soccer) in Australia including enforcement of FIFA statutes and regulations.**
- 51 Soccer Australia and its state member affiliates' constitutions and governance structures reflect applicable statutes of FIFA.**

Issue 12 Implementing new governance and management structure

The implementation of the recommendations of this report will require a period of time to enable the governance and structural changes to be implemented, for example, constitutional reform and agreement to the creation of state member affiliates and standing committees.

It is essential that during this period the governing body be capable of both dealing with the day-to-day issues and managing/overseeing the structural/governance changes recommended herein. This will take some time and accordingly it is recommended that an interim board be appointed for a period of up to two years to implement this process with an election for a new board to take place under the revised constitution in 2005.

Recommendations

That:

- 52 **The current Board of Soccer Australia, or failing its agreement to so act, the constituent members of Soccer Australia by way of voting at a specially convened extraordinary general meeting, appoint an interim board.**
- 53 **The interim board of Soccer Australia operate for a period expiring with the election in 2005 of a Board under the new constitution of Soccer Australia.**

4.3 Identification of potential impediments to reform and strategies to overcome those impediments

The Committee's consultation process has highlighted almost unanimous support for structural reform and the adoption of best practice governance principles, so that soccer in Australia can achieve sustainable on and off field success yearned for by stakeholders for many years.

The recent decision by FIFA to grant direct World Cup qualification to Oceania only increases the importance of implementing a structure that facilitates stakeholder inclusion, appropriate governance practices for the administrative bodies that provide for transparency, accountability and success in financing the sport, and achieves developmental objectives and team results.

The Committee is concerned with not only recommending 'best practices' for soccer's structure, governance and management, but also with maximising the likelihood of prompt implementation through the existing governance structure.

However there may be difficulties in implementing the Committee's recommendations in the event that the current Board or the current voting members of Soccer Australia are not supportive of the recommended structural and governance changes despite the overwhelming support for change as evidenced in the consultation process.

It is clear that the smoothest path to implementation is to achieve the support of the current Board and the current, voting, members of Soccer Australia for the recommendations.

If the Board will not step aside, the Committee proposes the current voting membership replace the Board in accordance with the current Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Committee acknowledges that this, too, requires the current membership to acknowledge broader stakeholder interests in supporting the recommendations.

In the event that the current membership is unwilling or unable to commence the change process, it will be left to governments, collectively, to influence change within the sport. This can be undertaken with those stakeholders in favour of change but who are unable to influence voting under the current arrangements.

Some form of 'bridging' financial support will be required of government to continue the momentum for change and give the necessary degree of financial stability to attract desirable candidates to both the Board and management structure. The Australian Sports Commission has indicated to the Committee that if the recommendations of this report are adopted to the Commission's satisfaction, it would be prepared during the interim period, pending appointment of a chief executive officer and agreement to a budget and business plan, to provide for ongoing management, administration and financial support.

4.4 Plan to implement the recommendations

The role of the interim board is to oversee transition to the new structure, including to:

- assess and act on the current financial position of Soccer Australia
- introduce a new constitution
- conduct a national stakeholders conference and develop a new strategic plan
- engage a chief executive officer
- set up new standing committee terms of reference and election processes
- determine the policy on conflict of interest
- negotiate formation of new state member affiliates
- develop agreements between Soccer Australia and state member affiliates
- establish the NSL company and licence agreement
- conduct the business of Soccer Australia
- ultimately oversee the election of the next Board.

The Committee identifies the following issues as ones that need to be addressed in implementing the recommendations contained herein:

- immediate introduction of the interim board by a determination of Soccer Australia's current directors or, failing that, by an extraordinary general meeting to vote in the interim board

- review and adopt a new Soccer Australia constitution
- formalise new standing committees of Soccer Australia and make appointments pending formation of the standing committees of state member affiliates
- undertake a major planning process to develop a new national strategic plan and direction for soccer
- establish the NSL as a separate entity to Soccer Australia with its own board and financial arrangements
- develop a model constitution for new state member affiliates
- develop memoranda of understanding between Soccer Australia and each state member affiliate
- develop a national registration database
- set up new state member affiliates to Soccer Australia
- merge existing state and territory federations/associations with the newly recognised state member affiliates.

Committee members will brief stakeholders on this report's recommendations in the first instance following which, the Australian Sports Commission and each state and territory government's sports department is encouraged to provide the required guidance, advice and support.





Appendices

- A Terms of reference
- B Review Committee membership
- C Consultations and submissions
- D Stakeholder comments
- E Current voting structures within soccer – diagrammatic representation
- F Proposed voting structure within soccer – diagrammatic representation
- G Other relevant issues



Appendix A

Terms of reference

Soccer Australia whole-of-sport governance, management and structural review, August 2002

Introduction

The Review Committee, with the support of the Australian Sports Commission and Soccer Australia, is to undertake a comprehensive whole-of-sport review of the effectiveness and efficiency of the manner in which the sport of soccer in this country is structured, governed and managed.

The Review is to examine the structure, management and governance of soccer in Australia. It is to make recommendations for restructuring and improvement, and provide a plan for implementation of those recommendations.

In deciding to establish the Review, the Minister for the Arts and Sport, the Australian Sports Commission and Soccer Australia acknowledged that ineffective governance structures and practices can have a significant impact on the performance of a sporting organisation. Poor governance may have a variety of causes including director inexperience, conflicts of interest, failure to manage risk, inadequate or inappropriate financial controls and generally poor internal business systems and reporting.

Objective of the Review

The Review will establish a best practice management structure and governance framework for the sport of soccer in Australia, to enable the sport to maximise its potential at all levels from community participation to international performance.

Report of the Review Committee

The Review Committee will prepare a report for the Minister for the Arts and Sport, the Australian Sports Commission and Soccer Australia, which is to include recommendations relating to the objectives and an appropriate change management plan to give effect to its recommendations.

The report will include:

- a critical assessment of the existing governance, management and structure of soccer in Australia
- solution-based recommendations to deliver a comprehensive governance framework and management structure for the sport that addresses the needs of affiliate organisations and stakeholders. These recommendations may include adjustments to existing governance systems and/or integration of activities and operations

- identification of potential impediments to reform and strategies to overcome those impediments
- a plan to implement the recommendations.

Tasks of the Review Committee

Acting in the best interests of the future of soccer in Australia, the Review Committee will:

- review the governance, management and structure of soccer in Australia
- prepare a report and recommendations for the future structure, governance and management of soccer in Australia for the Minister for the Arts and Sport, the Australian Sports Commission and Soccer Australia.

In undertaking these key tasks, the Review Committee will:

- consult widely with the soccer community and other stakeholders
- ensure that the Review is conducted transparently and openly
- consider international aspects of the sport that impact on soccer in Australia
- ensure that the needs and issues of soccer at all levels are taken into account.

The Committee will meet as required during the Review period and may, where appropriate, invite individuals with specialist knowledge or expertise to attend its meetings and/or otherwise assist it in achieving its objectives.

Secretariat services for the Review Committee will be provided by the Australian Sports Commission. The Committee may seek the assistance of appropriately qualified consultants as necessary to inform its deliberations.

Appendix B

Review Committee membership

The independent Review Committee members are:

- Mr David Crawford (Chairman) – recently retired national chairman of KPMG and current director of several major companies including BHP Billiton, Foster's Group, Lend Lease, National Foods and Westpac Banking Corporation
- Mr Johnny Warren – former captain of the Socceroos and highly regarded soccer analyst and commentator
- Mr Bruce Corlett – Chairman of Adsteam Marine Limited and Servcorp Limited, current non-executive director of several companies including Trust Company of Australia Limited and Stockland Trust Group, and past chairman of Australian Maritime Safety Authority
- Ms Kate Costello – Lawyer and former academic, Chairman of Bassett Consulting Engineers, Chair of SAAB ITS and director of SAAB Systems, member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Education Committee and management consultant specialising in corporate governance
- Mr Mark Peters – Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Sports Commission and experienced national and international sports administrator. He has considerable experience in reviewing the structures and management of sports and national leagues

Secretariat services provided by Mr Stephen Fox and Mrs Jay Davenport.





Appendix C

Consultations and submissions

Consultations, contributors and submissions received

Alagich, Richard – Coach
Alexopoulos, Alex – Glen Iris
Allen, Ken – National Referees Commission
Armitage, Nick – Former General Manager, Northern Spirit Football Club
Athletics Australia
Attard, Chris – Mulgrave
Australian Baseball Federation
Australian Cricket Board
Australian Professional Footballers' Association

Ballarat and Districts Soccer Association
Barker, John – Former President, Soccer Tasmania
Battaerd, Cheryl – New South Wales Premier's Soccer Task Force
Bayliss, Professor Peter – Pearl Beach
Bee, Les – Victorian Institute of Sport
Bennett, Richard – Taroom
Binch, Wayne – West Tweed Heads
Bircher, Andrew and Bircher, Peter – Supporters
Bishop, John – Parent
Bolton, Nick – North Sydney
Bonnett, John and Poke, Robin – Involved in soccer for over 30 years
Bowker, Graeme – Former Independent Director, Soccer Australia
Bramis, George – Former player
Brisbane Strikers Supporters Association
Brown, Sean – Fawkner
Brown, Shirley – Former President, Women's Soccer Australia
Brusasco, Ian – Former Chairman, Soccer Australia
Buckley, Tony – Vice President, Brisbane Women's Soccer Association
Bull, Kevin – Queensland Christian Soccer Association
Bunn, James – Managing Director, Television Programming Pty Ltd
Burge, Trevor – Chief Executive Officer, Australian Indoor Soccer Futsal (Five-a-Side) Association
Burvill, Grahame – Ex-player, coach and parent

Canberra City Soccer Club
Carroll, Bryce – Soccer fan
Chebl, Michael – Supporter
Church, Dennis – Director, Futsal Australia
Connolly, David – Geilston Bay
Conti, Chris – Australian Schools Soccer
Cooperative Federation of Victoria Ltd

Cottrell, Matt – Parent, coach and fan
Crowle, Peter – Volunteer and coach
Crozier, Sam – Football Advocates' Network

Dedes, John – Prospect
Delaney, Andrew – Kilsyth
Demetriou, Stephen
Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs – Northern Territory
Department of Sport and Recreation – Western Australia
Dower, Fay – Administrator, Women's Soccer Queensland
Downes, Brian – President, Woodbridge Whalens Soccer Club
Dunkerley, Chris – Ex-player, fan, parent, accredited NSL media
Dye, Wendy – Soccer supporter

Easton, Keith – Merrylands
Ellul, Daniel
Endacott, David – Daylesford

Falkner, Barry – Coach and parent
Falvo, Mark and Sidis, George – Two passionate and concerned football fans
Fisher, Paul
Ford, Ian – Parent
Forero, Carlos – Coach
Fuller, Michael
Fusco, Lino – Linden Park

Gardiner, Neal
Grant, Larry – President, Southern Districts Soccer Football Association
Gray, Andrew – Launceston
Green, George – Committee member, Soccer Far North Coast
Greiner, Nick – Former President, Soccer Australia
Gympie and Districts Soccer Association Inc.

Hancock, Geoff – Parent and fan
Hanf, Zbysh – Ex-player, parent and supporter
Hanger, Warren – Secretary, Soccer Coaches' Association Queensland
Hanson, Patrick – Wilston
Hay, Roy and Murray, Bill – Authors, *The Social History of Soccer in Australia*
Henretty, Doug – Ex-player, coach and team manager
Hewitt, Roger – North Sydney
Hihimanis, Michael – Chairman, Collegiate Soccer League, South Australia
Hill, David – Former Chairman, Soccer Australia
Hill, Ray – Cheltenham
Hirst, Ralph – Player, club board member and supporter
Holiday Coast Soccer Inc.
Holy, Danuel – Ardent supporter
Hosking, Tony – Recent convert

Houston, Nick – Queanbeyan
Hudson, Chris – West Hobart
Hughes, Tony – Soccer development officer, club member and supporter
Hurst, John

Ikonomopoulos, Chris – Player and neutral sports observer
Ingram, Dr David – Parent
Ivanov, Boris – President, Melbourne University Soccer Club

Jaworsky, Markian – Supporter, volunteer and junior coach
Jenkins, Ben – Redland Bay
Jesson, Murray – Referee and soccer devotee
Joske, Mike – Claremont

Kanaef, Janet – Alstonville
Kapos, Andrew
Kendrick, Ken – Very passionate football fan
Keramaris, Leon – Passionate fan of Australian soccer
King, Chris – Modbury North
Koumoukelis, Frank – Keen follower of the game

Lamprinos, Sam – Padstow
Lankheet, John – Concerned parent
Leading Promotions
Lee, David – Coach
Lennie, Edward – Referee
Lewandowski, Bernard – Former player and current chairman, local state league club
Lewis, Ian – Putney
Libero Consulting

MacLennan, Iain – Former player, club president and board member, Victoria
Mah, Osama – Morley
Maindonald, Paul – Former player and NSL club administrator
Malafouris, Tim – Earlwood
Marchetti, George – Magill
Marcuccitti, Paul – Columnist
Masselos, James; Vlahos, Greg and Gledhill, Adam – Supporters
Maugham, Steven
Mavratzas, Dimitrios – West Lakes
McDonald, Tom – Junior soccer supporter
McFarling, Dr Bruce – Lecturer
McGachey, Neil – Former Director, South Australian Sports Institute and player
Merrick, Ernie – Head Coach, Victorian Institute of Sport soccer program
Mersiades, Bonita – Life-long fan, office holder, team manager and author
Michalakos, Con – Athelstone
Milin, Paia – Deer Park
Miller, Alistair – Chief Executive Officer, Queensland Futsal Association



Milne, Neil – Seven Hills
Mitchell, Rob – Inglewood
Monteleone, Con – Football Advocate Network
Morrison, Ashley – Mount Hawthorn
Mourtakis, Steven; Athanasiadis, Peter; Athanasiades George; Hatzoglou, Nick and
Kartsidimas, Peter – 'Advance Soccer' Group
Muir, James
Murray, Les – Head of Sport, Special Broadcasting Service
Muscat, Tony

New South Wales Amateur Soccer Federation
New South Wales Department of Sport and Recreation
New South Wales Premier's Soccer Task Force
New South Wales Soccer Federation
Nitz, Alistair and Catalano, Silvana
Nogarotto, Remo – Chairman, NSL
Northern New South Wales Soccer Federation
Northern Territory Soccer Federation

Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing – South Australia
Office of Sport and Recreation – Tasmania
O'Neill, Bradley – Huge soccer fan

Parry, John – Previous Chairman, Soccer Tasmania
Pierce, Keith – Player, parent, former coach, manager and club committee member
Pitman, Steve – Brisbane Strikers supporter
Pless, Walter – Soccer correspondent
Polich, Tom – Former player, club official and coach
Pope, Colin – Midland
Predny, Stephen – Player, coach, spectator and passionate supporter
Pulone, Domenic – Australian soccer supporter

Queensland Futsal
Queensland Junior Soccer Council
Queensland Soccer Federation
Quinn, Allan – Journalist and football fan

Ramsden, Byron – Player, coach, administrator and parent
Re, Julius – Former Director, Soccer Australia
Read, Richard – International broadcaster
Reid, Heather – Former board member of Women's Soccer Australia
Reid, John – Player and coach
Rickard, James – Player, parent and lover of the world game
Ridley, Andrew – Former player and avid spectator
Roberts, Brian – Chairman, Soccer Tasmania
Roberts, Michael – Scarborough
Robertson, Andrew – Parent

Robins, Fred – Coach
Robinson, Damian – Player
Robinson, Mark
Robinson, Nick – Hervey Bay

Sassinis, Dr Stephen – Supporter
Saul, Jeffrey – Women's soccer administrator, coach, referee and supporter
Scarsella, Basil – President, Oceania Football Confederation
Scott, Colin – Engadine
Seven Network Limited
Sharpe, Bevan – Player and fan
Sirianos, Vange and MacCallum, Marshall
Smith, David – Chief Executive Officer, Soccer Tasmania
Soccer Administration of Western Australia
Soccer Australia
Soccer Australia Referees (Western Australia)
Soccer Canberra
Soccer Far North Coast
South Australian Amateur Soccer League
South Australian Junior Soccer Association
South Australian Soccer Federation
Spanner, Brian – Coach, referee, club secretary and life member of local club
Sport and Recreation Australian Capital Territory
Sport and Recreation Queensland
Sport and Recreation Victoria
Stacey, Stephen – Former professional player, coach and administrator
Steel, Ken – Soccer administrator
Stefani, Julian – Adelaide
Stefanou, Kosta – Mulgrave
Sticca, Lou – Licensed player agent and concerned follower of Australian soccer
Surf Life Saving Australia
Swan Hill Junior Soccer League

Tanner, Chris – Licensed player agent, former club and state official
Teague, Alan – Caboolture
Thian, Chris – Player and avid fan
Thompson, Peter – Hobart
Thorne, Richard – Wallaroo
Thorpe, Tony – Macquarie United Soccer Club
Throssell, Paul – West Launceston
Toth, Erni – Newport
Traminton, Lou – Allenby Gardens
Tresoldi, Guido – Brunswick
Trinh, Peter

van Aken, Mark EJ
Vella, John – Illawong



Virag, David – Former player
Victorian Major Events Company
Victorian Soccer Federation

Walsh, Stephen – Player and former referee
Ward, Keith – Cronulla
Watson, Elaine – Women's soccer administrator, author and referee
Weigand, Scott – Fan
Welsby, Roy – Player, coach, manager and administrator
West Pennant Hills-Cherrybrook Soccer Club
Western Knights Soccer Club
Whitby, Mark – Allambie Heights
Whittaker, Lisa – Supporter – and Scicluna, Lorraine – Player
Wilson, Gordon – Petrie
Women's Soccer Canberra
Women's Soccer Queensland
Women's Soccer Western Australia
Wood, Anthony – Copacabana
Woodbridge Whalers Junior Soccer Club
Wright, David-Pierre – Concerned soccer supporter and ex-player
Wright, Terry – Referee
Wyllie, Alex – Former player and passionate follower of the game

Young, John – Sunnybank

Zaitman, Harry – Participant, spectator and administrator
Zipevski, Slavco

Additional consultations

Kennett, Jeff

Negus, George

Soccer Australia members of the Board and management: Ian Knop, Bill Walker, Graeme Bowker, Greg Bates, Alan Vessey, Remo Nogarotto, Les Avery, Robert Sestan, Stefan Kamasz

Notes The descriptors used are those given by the individuals making the submission. If no explanation was provided, the person's suburb has been used. If an email was submitted without specific address details, only the person's name has been acknowledged.

While every effort has been made to genuinely represent the contributors' details, no responsibility can or will be taken for any omissions or errors.

Appendix D

Stakeholder comments

Through an extensive consultation process the Committee assessed the views of stakeholders and the public concerned about the future of soccer in Australia. These views provide an insight into the confidence in, and capability of, the present governance and management structure to take the sport forward. While in no terms exhaustive, a selection of comments extracted from submissions that reflect the broad views expressed to the Committee follows. Permission to attribute these comments has been given by the person(s) or organisation(s) identified.

Alexander Alexopoulos

'Those assigned to positions of authority should be appointed based on their ability to remain impartial and not compromise their position through involvement in other aspects of the sport.'

Ken Allen

'The National Referees Commission has still not been incorporated [since 1996 agreement reached] into the Articles of Soccer Australia.'

Richard Bennett

'I feel that the problems start and end with the administration of the game at the highest levels and filter down to a disgruntled general football [soccer] community that is fast becoming apathetic. In other words how do you grow the game if the followers are jaded and frustrated with a catalogue of embarrassing mismanagement and in-fighting? Certainly the general sporting public sees the game as endemically mismanaged at all levels and the media only reports and reinforces these negative aspects.'

'I would like to comment that time is of the essence, and that commodity is fast running out. If the game is not prepared to be shaken out of its slumber then I can only see stagnation and more of the same tokenism and more wasting of resources leading to a football wasteland in this country.'

John Bishop

'One of the most important stakeholders – young players and their parents – are not consulted.'

John Bonnett and Robin Poke

'All too often it has appeared to us that talent has been overwhelmed by people with ambitions and hidden agendas which have clouded the objective of being involved ... the only issue that matters is development of the code itself, not the personal ambitions of those involved.'

'There is much good will towards soccer in the Australian community.'

'need people whose objective is the development of soccer, not self-aggrandisement.'

Graeme Bowker

'Soccer at a national level as currently configured has very limited or no ability to reform itself as:

- Soccer Australia and its federations do not represent significant elements of the soccer community;
- improving representation is a threat to current interests; and
- appointees to the Board of Soccer Australia are politically driven rather than skill/experienced based.'

George Bramis

'I am disheartened to see the constant undermining of the NSL by what I perceive as incompetent administration and poor management by Soccer Australia ... This is due in part to the unwieldy nature of Soccer Australia's structure and its constitution which allows politics to over-ride independent decisions relating to the NSL.'

'The petty politics of the state federations, particularly NSW and Victoria, tend to dominate the game and have led to decisions which pursue narrow sectional interests and individual's personal agendas. These personal interests are either monetary or based on maintaining power, control and authority within the organisation and border on corruption.'

'The National Soccer League should be independent ... and not influenced by marginalised sectional interests currently represented by the state federations.'

Brisbane Strikers Supporters Association

'We believe that the reform of Soccer Australia, or its replacement by another governing body or structure, is essential if soccer is to progress in Australia.'

'The Brisbane Strikers Supporters Association believes that in order for any national competition to succeed in Australia it must be freed from the day-to-day management of Soccer Australia.'

'By the very nature of the voting system during elections for board positions, the Board of Soccer Australia represents primarily the interests of the state federations ... It is desirable, or perhaps essential, that the NSL of the future be administered by a body separate on a day-to-day basis from Soccer Australia and the state federations.'

Sean Brown

'Soccer Australia seems to bow down to the will of the state federations when it should be the other way around.'

'It becomes plainly apparent that the electoral process for Board members is done more with a wink and a nod rather than administrative or managerial experience.'

James Bunn

'It appears that Soccer Australia management is granted little power to execute policies to the benefit of the sport unless Board approval is granted. In recent years this has been impossible to gain due to a preoccupation with political issues at Board level.'

Grahame Burvill

'Soccer Australia is a multi-million dollar business but it seems to be run by total idiots who seem to be more interested in looking after themselves ... The structure of the main board should cover areas needed and also have representation of all areas within soccer. We must not have people who are only looking after themselves.'

Bryce Carroll

'Soccer Australia must be disbanded and set up as an independent board to run the game.'

Michael Chebl

'I am of ethnic background and seeing teams playing in an Australian competition and having the support of small ethnic communities is something that should change.'

Dennis Church

'Soccer Australia's Articles of Association make no reference to Futsal!'

'Soccer Australia's strategy plan "Soccer 21" makes no reference to Futsal in the objectives to be achieved. As far as the [Soccer 21] report is concerned, Futsal might as well not exist!'

Chris Conti

'Soccer Australia has consistently paid lip service to the National Schools' Championships.'

Matt Cottrell

'The fact that Adelaide has only one team and that it is ethnically based is a problem here. While we have an Italian based side there will be no way any other people from other nationalities will follow this side ... For soccer to even get off the ground here in South Australia we need a state based team that has no allegiances to any ethnic background.'

Andrew Delaney

'Soccer Australia's recent history is not pretty. More to the point, their image has been tarnished by the turmoil of its infrastructure so badly that anything they do in the future will incur the "here we go again" impression. To get serious with a very discerning public, Soccer Australia must be disbanded completely.'



Fay Dower

'I have been involved [with soccer] since 1979 ... throughout this whole time women's soccer has had to fight gender inequality in the sport at club, state and national level.'

'The ideal structure of Soccer Australia needs to eliminate many of the individuals whose thirst for power over many years has "blinkered" them to the "big picture" of soccer and what is best for all.'

Brian Downes

'The problems facing Australian soccer now are not new and they are the symptom of many years of wrong decisions and blatant self interest.'

Chris Dunkerley

'Issue: Poor governance of the game, lack of wide stakeholder accountability and lack of clear vision and mission for the peak bodies ... There does not appear to be any comprehensive, coherent and relevant vision or mission guiding the game at national level.'

'Soccer Australia is faction riddled, unrepresentative of the true stakeholders, ie. players (and parents), fans, referees, sponsors, and media at all levels across Australia, amateur and professional (rather than Soccer Australia Board's electorate.)'

Wendy Dye

'Give the real stakeholders, the grass roots soccer folk including players/supporters/parents, a say in who manages the game and how it is managed in this country. Put in place a method of ensuring their decision is the one that is taken to Soccer Australia meetings/votes, not the decision of one or two state/organisation reps with their own personal agenda that can vote as they wish with disregard to their members' opinions.'

'Attract people who have no personal agenda and who have no attachment to state associations or NSL clubs liable to cause conflicts of interest ...'

David Endacott

'The code's governing body ... has been disastrous for the development of the code at all levels and has perpetuated the appalling situation of the governing body being an object of derision in both the football and general sporting world.'

Barry Falkner

'It is my understanding that the voting rights of clubs, coaches, referees etc need major overhauling as at present the interest of the Premier League/NSL clubs is the only agenda adopted as their voting rights outweigh all other clubs, coaches, referees etc combined ... While the voting rights are not equal it also means any changes implemented are not necessarily in the interest of the majority of soccer clubs, players, coaches etc.'

Mark Falvo and George Sidis

'We have no faith that the current administration and stakeholders can ever turn such a sad and sorry story around ... they are the same people that put the game where it is today and have spent 20 years keeping it there.'

'The placement of new, independent and highly skilled administrators at the top of the organisation with unlimited powers to grab the game by the scruff of the neck and lift it forward is the only possible method by which fans like us can ever be won back.'

'[There is an] over-elaborate and restrictive organisational structure of the national association including affiliated state federations.'

'Currently, there are multiple state and territory football associations (SASF, VSF, ST, SC, SAWA, JSAWA, QLDSF, QLDJSC Inc, NTSF, NNSWSF, NSWFS, SNWASF and AWSA). In addition there are state academies and institutes, PFA, ASC, FIFA, OFC, IOC and Soccer Australia itself ... Duplication of duties results in confusion over responsibilities and the incurring of unnecessary costs ... As state federations effectively elect the Board of Soccer Australia, the Board is elected on state platforms. This results in the lack of a holistic approach to the governance and management of the game of football in Australia.'

Football Advocate Network

'For far too long the lion's share of influence over the composition of the Soccer Australia Board and executive has been in the hands of marginalised sectarian interests currently represented by the state federations, in particular the NSWFS and VSF.'

'No other national sporting organisation in this country is controlled with so much incestuous power as soccer is by its state associations. And by the nature of the electoral process within the state federations, this means that the people who have the most say over who is represented on the board mainly come from the administrative committees of state league clubs. This problem is further compounded by the fact that the electoral process for the executive is a two-tier one, which also creates a climate that fosters corruption and insider dealing within the ranks of both the federations and the Soccer Australia Board.'

'The state federations deserve some input into the operations of Soccer Australia, but they do not deserve to have influence over and above the rest of the Australian soccer community.'

'Soccer has been described as the "sleeping giant" of Australian sport. This is an accurate description considering the long tradition of interest in international sport in Australia and the fact that it has the highest participation rates of all codes amongst juniors.'

'For decades the potential of soccer has been squandered by internal wranglings, petty politics and downright incompetence.'

Lino Fusco

'A restructure of soccer in Australia is long overdue. The current structure, governance and management have failed to produce satisfactory results. The key body [Soccer Australia] has a

track record of poor performance, poor decision making, bad financial management, factional infighting and suffers from a lack of transparency and credibility.'

'Much of the problems at Soccer Australia stem from the member selection process [which is] dominated by large blocks of votes held by the state federations and the NSL clubs ... The capability of the individual board members to perform their roles takes a back seat to the political manoeuvrings of the factions ... The factionalism deters qualified individuals from nominating for the board ... What professional person would want to be nominated for a position on a brawling board?'

'It seems the nominees have greater interest in getting elected for personal or factional reasons, rather than for furthering the game of soccer.'

'The current structure does not encompass all of the key stakeholders in soccer ... the board members of Soccer Australia are too far removed from these key stakeholders and therefore lack serious accountability.'

Neal Gardiner

'The Board of Soccer Australia should in essence control and direct all soccer in Australia. Soccer in Australia should not be subject to being run by one or two clubs or one or two state federations. The board should be elected by invitation and carry the responsibilities that all normal Australian registered companies or corporations carry.'

Nick Greiner

'Soccer Australia does not have a governance structure that works ... [rather it is] a series of independent fiefdoms with confused and confusing inter-relationships characterised by a marked lack of integration and an even greater lack of mutual trust.'

'At Soccer Australia level, the history has been characterised by a high level of politics and personality differences and almost complete lack of understanding of appropriate governance practices, massive confusion between directors and management roles and poor delivery to stakeholders both within and outside the sport.'

'At federation level ... there is a record of in-fighting, ill discipline and a general sense that the federations are the real source of power and that Soccer Australia is a necessary evil. The state federations consider themselves "bailing out" Soccer Australia and there is continuous squabbling based mostly on personalities and protection of one's own turf.'

'There can be no doubt that the Board of Soccer Australia needs to be entirely independent.'

Gympie and Districts Soccer Association Inc.

'Soccer Australia has forgotten the main purpose of promoting and developing soccer.'

'Soccer needs to improve its public image.'

'The poor management of Soccer Australia is the reason for not succeeding.'

Geoff Hancock

'It attracts a wide cross-section of the Australian people.'

Zbysh Hanf

'Soccer in Australia at grass roots level appears to be booming and is extremely popular with so many participants, etc.'

'Too many of the people in positions of power and responsibility of running the game, have in the past, first and foremost looked after their own personal interests and/or those of their own club, rather than the good of the game in general.'

'Perth Glory is a perfect example of a "multi"-ethnic club which attracts all kinds of Australians and reflects what's best about Australia – its rich multicultural ethnicity ... Mono-ethnic soccer in Australia, on the other hand, has in the past often had the opposite effect; dividing communities and contributing adversely to some of Australian soccer's uglier moments with inter-ethnic rivalry and friction. The only division and sporting rivalry between the national league clubs should be the geographic location they represent.'

'The time for a total overhaul and proper change is now ... Knowing that the situation couldn't get any worse, enforced change is inevitable (hopefully) and is at present our only consolation.'

Patrick Hanson

'The game's current structure is an amalgam of historical accidents that has created small sub-tribes operating for their own reasons and not necessarily for the good of the game.'

Roy Hay and Dr Bill Murray

'The current board is still elected by the stakeholders which include the state federations, the members of the national soccer league, the referees, and junior associations. It is generally agreed that this structure is unwieldy and does not inspire confidence in those who seek reform of the game or who might consider investing in it. But the stakeholders have shown little inclination to give up their ultimate control.'

'Soccer in Australia is at a crisis point and requires reform if it is to progress.'

'Rivalry, sometimes reaching the point of outright conflict, is endemic between the state federations, the major stakeholders in Soccer Australia, and Soccer Australia ...'

'There is an overwhelming need for transparency and honesty in administration ... The past track record of waste and accusations of corruption will not be easily overcome and any future policies must take these existing perceptions into account.'

'It would appear that the constitution of ... Soccer Australia should be rewritten and there should be a change in the basis of responsibility for the game.'



'People interested in the game have to have confidence that financial probity will be maintained and that there will be impartial and objective assessment of the options available to the organisation.'

Michael Hihimanis

'Soccer in Australia is in a desperate state of affairs for a myriad of reasons: A lack of communication between Soccer Australia and its membership/stakeholder groups; a lack of confidence from the various stakeholder groups in the operations of Soccer Australia; a lack of accountability of funds; a perception that Soccer Australia and the state and territory federations are a "law unto themselves" without a need to consult with their stakeholder groups on issues that affect the wider soccer community.'

'There has been a well-publicised disunity between the various stakeholder groups and between the individuals that compromise the hierarchy of Soccer Australia.'

Ralph Hirst

'Weaknesses in soccer: disastrous Soccer Australia finances and planning; paralysing political system of governance resulting in a lack of confidence in Soccer Australia; fractured administration between national, state, amateur and local levels.'

Holiday Coast Soccer Inc.

'The structure of soccer in Australia does not allow all members equality of representation at Soccer Australia, and in some cases at state or even local association level.'

'Governance of soccer in Australia appears not to be in the interest of the game and members rights to equal representation, transparency of decision making processes and accountability of management and committees [on boards] that are supposed to be administering soccer in Australia.'

Nick Houston

'The political structures of soccer are not adequate to unify supporters of the game behind the one leadership. There are too many groups who are unrepresented and who are therefore discontent with the policies and decisions of executive management. The problem is one of a lack of democracy that results in a lack of confidence in the leadership of the game.'

Chris Hudson

'There should be no person on the Board of Soccer Australia who is actively involved with any club, in any form of administration. The holding of two administrative positions could jeopardise decision making for the game in general and cloud the judgement "for the good of the game." It can be seen to be a conflict of interest and persons who are still actively involved in club administration should not be holding office on the board which is running the game.'

John Hurst

'I believe that the current way that soccer in Australia is administered is archaic and unworkable. Like the vast majority of soccer people in Australia I am embarrassed and disillusioned with soccer administration in this country.'

Boris Ivanov

'The current management have vested interests which prevent them from acting in the best interests of the game ... The current management is unrepresentative of the overall soccer community in Australia.'

Ben Jenkins

'The structure of state and territory federations seems to be illogical. Some states have one federation covering all soccer within that state while others have two or three split up into junior and senior or men's and women's. This can prove a hampering factor in the development of the game throughout the country.'

'Quite simply the problems with Soccer Australia have been down to the people running it. They have shown to be poor financial and public relations managers and many have had nothing but their own interests in mind ... If the people elected to the Board of Soccer Australia continue to look out for their own interests instead of those of the game then the Federal Government should intervene and appoint an Independent Commission to oversee the administration of the game.'

Murray Jesson

'In my 23 years here [in Australia] I have watched with sadness and dismay how state and national administrators have shot themselves and the game in the foot to advance their egotistical ambitions.'

Mike Joske

'Until the problem of mono cultural clubs is corrected soccer will continue to fail to gain mass support and the political infighting, corruption and incompetence will continue.'

Janet Kanaef

'Girls deserve a better deal in coaching and development.'

Ken Kendrick

'I find it very hard to believe that with hundreds of thousands of Aussie kids playing the game every weekend, and over 150 Aussies playing on the world stage, that the NSL (with all its mismanagement, infighting, petty squabbles and self seeking agendas) has managed to turn the world game into such an abysmal failure in Australia.'



Leon Keramaris

'Australian soccer will never succeed whilst decisions are being made on a political basis. Soccer Australia's board of directors must be independent and make the difficult decisions.'

Chris King

'It has been the same issues that have not been addressed. These issues have always had a great impact on the sport at all levels from the juniors right through to the top level. The ongoing division within the game is the killer of it ... because of power and the belief of those with it that they are doing the best for the game. People at all levels of the game find ways not to work together for their own self interests rather than go out of their way to find a means of working together for the betterment of the game.'

Frank Koumoukelis

'The board has been ineffectual mainly because it has been dominated by members with self and political interests, both of which are poison for any board.'

'The current Soccer Australia Board structure needs to be abandoned and replaced with an Independent Commission. A commission that would not be running on any personal or political agendas, but to work for the benefit of the game as a whole.'

David Lee

'The states are independent bodies with the states controlling 99 per cent of the players and NSW 70 per cent of that market ... NSW actually controls soccer in Australia.'

Bernard Lewandowski

'There is no uniform vision for the sport in Australia, which is exacerbated by poor leadership characterised by an inept management capability. The current organisation is riddled with incompetence, driven by individual conflicts of interest, lacks any semblance of commercial reality and professional excellence.'

'Australian soccer consists of numerous fragmented structures that lack any integration and coordination within a comprehensive national strategic framework. Each operates by its own rules.'

'The selection process to the Soccer Australia Board needs a dramatic overhaul to secure professional and competent members.'

Libero Consulting

'Soccer in this country has been hampered by a plethora of factors including its misunderstood ethnic tag, its inability to be administered effectively, and its lack of producing a viable product to engage the well-regarded Australian sporting public.'

'Soccer Australia as an organisation has been hamstrung by an ongoing experience where instability, politics and lack of funds, innovation and vision have prevented its flowering into a dynamic organisation which governs the sport in this country.'

Paul Marcuccitti

'It seems odd that in Australia the domestic governance of the world's biggest sport – governance that requires an international outlook – should be constituted in a way that empowers state federations. A removal of this anachronism is the first most important step in the revitalisation of Australian soccer.'

James Masselos, Greg Vlahos and Adam Gledhill

'Soccer Australia's stakeholders are dominated by the various state factions who dominate board representation and hinder any smooth governance ... These factions (are) constantly at war with each other.'

Dimitrios Mavratzas

'The state of the game of soccer in this country is at an all time low ebb. Soccer Australia is in public disarray; the national team with its full complement of players has not been seen in action for nearly a year [when written in November 2002]; the NSL stumbles along to ever decreasing crowds without a formatted sense of direction ... the financial affairs of Soccer Australia have been headlines in all sections of the media, further ridiculing the game of soccer here in Australia.'

Tom McDonald

'Little wonder there is an inquiry into the running of the game here, but I fear that it will not go far enough to achieve the changes required to fully realise the potential of the game in this country.'

Dr Bruce McFarling

'The national association is largely governed by the outcome of conflicts between narrow interests of individual state and national league clubs.'

Bonita Mersiades

'Soccer Australia and the state federations should have the same fundamental objectives (be rowing in the same direction in the same boat) however their structure allows them to do the opposite.'

Rob Mitchell

'For far too long selfish people have always tried to skim the cream of this great national game in order to satisfy their own greed and the instrument in this effort has always been the state federations.'



'The strategy [from the state presidents] ... is politically motivated and for very self serving reasons which is why soccer hasn't progressed to where it should be in Australia's sporting culture.'

Ashley Morrison

'For too long, at every level of the game, those on the governing bodies have had a vested interest in a certain club and have made decisions to favour those interests.'

New South Wales Amateur Soccer Federation

'The governance of the national body is unrepresentative.'

'A major problem is the factional culture of the state and territory federations in conjunction with a voting gerrymander which gives to a few states quite undue weight in the construction of the board.'

New South Wales Soccer Federation

'The recent directors of Soccer Australia have been preoccupied with the personalities rather than the development of the game.'

'The composition of the board should not be composed of people from stakeholder groups.'

'The current weighted voting structure is disproportionate to the number of members registered and paying the national registration fee.'

Northern Territory Soccer Federation

'Members need reassurance from Soccer Australia that our parent body has a vision ... During recent years long-term or forward-planning has not been apparent.'

Australian Professional Footballers' Association

'It is clear that Soccer Australia's decision making has failed the game for many years.'

Keith Pierce

'I found Soccer Australia was run by self-interest people for personal or their club gains. Soccer Australia had no power over the state bodies, within NSW there were 3 or 4 organisations doing their own thing and fighting each other.'

Steve Pitman

'It is sadly apparent to all except the most self-interested administrators that soccer in this country is in demonstrable need of an urgent overhaul in its administration.'

Tom Polich

'Each of these associations appears to be fiercely independent which seems to make coordinated progress very difficult ... There also appears to be a lack of direction by current associations towards the good of the game in Australia.'

'Soccer Australia must be run by independent successful business men and women with no club or association affiliation, as a board with power to rule for the betterment of the game.'

Colin Pope

'The NSL seems discarded with no promotion or marketing and limited media exposure. Futsal is a forgotten part of the sport. Juniors are catered for, but only because of the mums and dads who put the time and effort in for the children and not for themselves.'

'Clearly the structure is not working. A board that is there for the game and not themselves is needed. The fans and players are not truly represented. The state federations appear to have some similar problems as Soccer Australia, only not as big. The decisions are made along lines other than the best long and short-term interest of the game as a whole.'

'There is little planning currently evident to anyone outside Soccer Australia.'

Stephen Predny

'I have consistently been disappointed with the general malaise that has surrounded the game. Lack of decision making and accountability along with self interest have mired the game into which it has become a directionless entity.'

'The infighting and self interest that comes with small ethnic groups being represented not only at NSL level but also at state and local levels tends to hijack the game and concentrate it in minority groups.'

'It seems that the people in charge of soccer in Australia have been neglecting the sport and been more interested in playing politics. For too long soccer has been trying to reinvent itself with the documenting of different reports eg Bradley Report – the intention has been to change, but the will has been sadly lacking.'

Queensland Christian Soccer Association

'There are significant groups within Australia who are not directly aligned with their peak state bodies and that any review of soccer needs to be at least cognizant of this fact.'

Queensland Junior Soccer Council

'There appear to be no tangible guidelines for directors' operational procedures or efficient communications medium between the board and those responsible for implementing policy within the state and regional jurisdictions ... Individual directors use their position to champion the cause of the sector from which they emerged.'



'The state federations' isolation from the operational problems has facilitated an environment through which the flow of information to and from the Board of Soccer Australia and the grass roots becomes filtered and sanitised. Additionally, the respective sectors of the game are not fairly and equitably represented.'

'While the state federations have, in varying degrees, promoted and developed the game domestically, the "stranglehold" has produced an environment which has fed the ever increasing downward spiral of the game in the national and international arenas.'

'The current structure of Soccer Australia can be considered a major contributing cause for the company's unsavoury position.'

Allan Quinn

'It frustrates me to see, time and time again, the "governing" body of Soccer Australia move from one crisis to another. The body is moribund and corporately irresponsible. It must be, with the support of FIFA, dissolved immediately.'

Byron Ramsden

'Officials at both club and federation level have little if any morals and/or ethics and are far more interested in "what's in it for me" rather than how can this benefit the game and/or the players of the game.'

Heather Reid

'There is little evidence that individuals within Soccer Australia and some of its member associations are committed to changing the status quo in order to facilitate gender equity and embrace diversity in the future.'

'There is no obvious leadership or authority for women's soccer within Soccer Australia and this situation has presented problems at state level.'

James Rickard

'Soccer in Australia does have a future. It has passionate support. But it needs a vision and a rock-solid commitment to achieve that vision.'

'On behalf of the countless thousands of football fans who desperately want to see the world game flourish in Australia; for those lovers of the beautiful game who want it to be taken seriously by the nation's media and sporting public, please, please do something.'

Andrew Ridley

'The game is rife with nepotism and cronyism ... and every ten years people have talked about getting the game to reach its potential with no success ...'

'In this time of necessary transparency and scrutinised corporate governance it is amazing that this conduct is still apparent at Soccer Australia.'

'Factional regimes have chosen their own interests over the sport!'

'The financial situation is dire, marketing is virtually non-existent, the national competition is nearly dead, and the worldwide soccer community is laughing at our ineptness.'

Dr Stephen Sassinis

'One of the greatest problems for Australian soccer both today and in the past is the ethnic rivalries that still exist amongst many of our so called "Australian" NSL clubs.'

'Approximately thirty years ago ethnic based soccer clubs played a pivotal role in keeping soccer "alive" here in Australia. Over the past decade though it has become obvious to all that such ethnic based clubs have not only outlived their usefulness but have now become a major cause for the downfall of Australian Soccer today.'

'Migrants and their Australian born children have greatly contributed in many ways to the progress of this country. Justifiably this then poses the question, as to why the same excellent integration that took place in the Australian population can not also happen in Australian soccer?'

Bevan Sharp

'I am extremely keen to see massive reforms of an incompetent parasitic administration that is seemingly indifferent to the health of the sport they are in charge of and is only interested in their own selfish agendas. A complete overhaul of the game is long overdue and the sport will not move forward without one.'

David Smith

'I would like to envisage Soccer Australia as the head of the corporation and the states as its subsidiary companies ... the game as one, rather than the present 4 or 5 different factions pulling the plugs [as] we have at present.'

'The current Articles of Association are draconic and reek of poor governance.'

Soccer Far North Coast

'Soccer administration in general terms is similar to our national and state governments which in most circumstances duplicate services and essentially over govern the community. Soccer Far North Coast believes that soccer administration should be decentralised to the major regional centres. Affiliation to Soccer Australia should then be direct with a nominated representative delegated to represent the region at national level.'

'The way forward for soccer in Australia is to streamline the administrative structure and provide a more direct process where all participants are equally represented!'



Stephen Stacey

'The major problem was and still is the inability of existing clubs, many of which are oriented around the specific ethnic communities, to appeal to the wider community. The "wider community" is taken to mean, the strategic development of soccer in its global context.'

Lou Sticca

'The fundamental fault of Australian soccer is the voting structure. I do not know of any other progressive nation that has such a fragmented structure.'

'Whilst I could list hundreds of points to remedy Australian soccer; the fact is that everything else are bandaid solutions unless we fix the foundations of the sport.'

Chris Tanner

'The powerful states get more votes than the smaller regions; they band together and get what they want. No state body deserves more of a vote than another ... The game should come first, not the individual needs and wants of powerful federations, or their senior officials.'

Chris Thian

'It is important that the game is restructured to avoid potential conflicts of interest and to ensure that at all times decisions are primarily made in the best interests of the sport.'

'The current structure of the national league is unworkable and is a legacy of the past where clubs were based on ethnicity rather than locality.'

Guido Tresoldi

'Fans welcomed the announcement of the inquiry as a way to finally provide a circuit breaker to the self-perpetuating in-fighting and mismanagement of the game in Australia. Soccer Australia is likely to be very hostile to any meaningful change.'

Peter Trinh

'Unfortunately Soccer Australia is a foolhardy organisation.'

John Vella

'The huge problem that Soccer Australia has is that it is made up of the state soccer federations, who have always fought with each other for power ... The organisation has no grand vision; has no business nouse; has no idea how to tap into its richest source – the people involved at grassroots level.'

'It would not be good enough for this inquiry merely to make recommendations for what should be done. This inquiry should ensure that someone has the power to set up a completely new structure. If [you] merely make recommendations to Soccer Australia, nothing will be achieved.'

Victorian Soccer Federation

'The Victorian Soccer Federation Commission recommends a number of significant changes in the governance of Soccer Australia to address flaws in the current structure.'

'[A desired outcome is] the establishment of an independent Commission to govern our national body ... the key shift desired is to allow members of the Commission to act strategically in the interests of the game, after considering the views of stakeholders, rather than to deliver on "promises" or "expectations" which characterises current decision making at this level of the sport.'

Steve Walsh

'There is a lack of leadership, discipline and organisation. Instead of getting things in order and fixing the problems, there is too much in house fighting.'

'Too many associations and individuals have too much power and because of this there is an imbalance in the way soccer is structured and managed.'

'Overall with the current structure, governance and management levels that are in place it is amazing that soccer in Australia has survived at all ... Australian soccer has gone backwards.'

Keith Ward

'Soccer Australia should be rebuilt on solid foundations.'

'Soccer Australia needs to begin to address the intangible first. It must begin to focus on integrity and credibility.'

Elaine Watson

'The Australian Women's Soccer Association has been declared insolvent over unpaid debts and placed in liquidation a mere two years after Soccer Australia assumed responsibility for AWSA finances in what was to be a lead-up to full integration.'

'Change in the set-up of Soccer Australia is vital if the current scenario of power-broking, cronyism and patronage is to be replaced with an orderly structure in which all sectors of soccer are represented ...'

'The only resistance to [a revised] structure will come from those who will see it as an end to the power they currently enjoy or which they may enjoy in the future.'

Roy Welsby

'Soccer Australia, by its very name, generates a feeling of mismanagement, nepotism, possible corruption and total lack of credibility within the soccer and general community.'



West Pennant Hills–Cherrybrook Soccer Club

'It is the failure of the peak bodies to recognise the role played by grass roots soccer that is a fundamental cause of the problems soccer finds itself in.'

'There is broad acknowledgement that soccer has the largest participation rate at junior level of any other sport but the senior soccer administrators of this country have failed to convert this popularity to support at national level.'

'Grass roots soccer followers have many a reason not to trust its national leadership.'

'The current state of communication generally and internet connections in particular, between the four tiers of the sport is haphazard. Soccer Australia's website does not link to the state federations; state federations do not link with all the district associations; the district associations have many varied host servers and they rarely link to the clubs.'

'There is anecdotal evidence (newspaper reports, internet chat rooms etc) that some peak body board members are too closely associated with various commercial interests which receive business from soccer.'

Western Knights Soccer Club

'Soccer – the most popular game in the world – has not been embraced in Australia because of not only a lack of vision and foresight by soccer's administration but also a lack of competence, accountability and transparency in soccer's governing body in Australia and each jurisdiction.'

'The sport has gone backwards (particularly over the past decade or so) mainly due to the lack of competent management at the highest level and perhaps slightly due to the lack of government intervention thus far.'

'Whilst the current soccer environment is such that stakeholders are restricted in voicing their concerns for fear of repercussion (ie in future tribunal hearings, fixture deliberations etc) ... WKSC has been driven to put forward a submission to the inquiry out of sheer desperation at the current lack of an effective, transparent and competent soccer administration. ...Were it not for this very real fear of repercussions, it is likely that the Inquiry would have been absolutely inundated with submissions by stakeholders.'

'The management and administration of soccer, through its lack of foresight and professionalism, has actually hindered the growth of soccer in Australia.'

'Lack of adherence to its own governing regulations and by-laws promotes a lack of consistency, transparency and professionalism that does nothing to promote the game as a desirable sport.'

Lisa Whittaker and Lorraine Scicluna

'There is an urgent and important need for a program of cultural change within soccer in Australia. There is an observable culture of resistance to the pursuit of legitimate objectives by a broad range of those in positions of power in the soccer hierarchy.'

'Of importance is securing the future of women's involvement in soccer. This must extend to the highest levels of the sport.'

Gordon Wilson

'The national league is not covered by television and gets minimal press and television coverage in many areas. To the supporter and fan it is extremely difficult to escape the conclusion that, locally and nationally, it is badly managed with various "stakeholders" and other forces putting more effort into "position preservation" rather than enhancing the game at all levels.'

'The current national body appears to be an ever-shifting melange of alliances and "power plays" riven with intrigue and a general loss of focus on the promotion and best management of the game. The governing board of the overall national body should be freed ... from the competing interests that appear to apply at present ... Many of these interests appear to be inimical and not even neutral.'

Women's Soccer Queensland

'Soccer in Australia is in crisis. In the last several years the governance and structural arrangements have not permitted the sport to reach its potential ... Soccer has long been plagued by sectional interests that have choked the development of the game.'

'One of the key failures of the past has been a lack of capacity of soccer to differentiate between governance and management issues. Organisations are most effective when they have a governing body that articulates vision and direction for the organisation through a set of clear policies and when that governing body offers authority and responsibility to an effective management team.'

David-Pierre Wright

'Unfortunately while there is an ethnic intellect on all clubs in the national league, general supporters will stay away, either in protest or due to alienation as they are not of that persuasion and thus are not accepted.'

Alexander Wyllie

'There is no room in this game for politics of personalities, self-interest and greed.'

'It will take a commitment from all stakeholders to continue the momentum that has been constantly stalled by political infighting of Soccer Australia and self interested groups.'



Harry Zaitman

'This independent inquiry is long overdue and will hopefully bring about some structural changes well and truly necessary if the game is going to advance ...'

'Soccer Australia is too far removed from the grass roots of the game and too involved in internal politics that have very little to do with the game's success.'

'Soccer Australia has well and truly failed as an organisation at all levels of assessment.'

Slavco Zipevski

'[What Soccer Australia needs is] an independent board without the messy political factional voting system.'

The following extracts appear with the permission of the authors whose details are withheld by request:

'One reason there is so much egotistical subterfuge and Machiavellian politics in the game is because those in power positions are so close to IOC type positions with all the glamour and prestige associated with being in FIFA'

'Soccer Australia's management strategies appear to be totally non-existent and seem to suffer due mainly to the political infighting at board level. One might argue that personal profile and ambition coupled with an apparent sense of vindictiveness is more important to some of Soccer Australia's commissioners than the ongoing viability of the company.'

'The balance of representation on the Board of Soccer Australia is not reflective of the spread of participation in the game, nor is it representative of the varied sectors of the football community.'

'The current structure of stakeholder representation – 74% state and territory federations and 26% National Soccer League clubs is – outdated and has contributed to the politicisation of the game. Introduced by Bradley the 74/26% split, in my view an easy solution to the underlying problem, should be considered evolutionary. At best it was a much more difficult and still a short-term fix. The 74/26% split contributed to just that – a split between the two groups encouraging factional development and participation and the creation of individuals and organisations' power bases'

'One of the major problems ... is that the same people have been running the show for many years and ... in the end they build up an empire that is huge and impregnable. This generally results in jobs for the boys and bias for and against and possible financial mismanagement.'

'It is deplorable that the management of soccer at all levels in Australia leaves so much to be desired. As a parent, I very much welcome the inquiry and hope that it will bring great benefit to the game in Australia (and hence dramatic re-organisation of management and administration at all levels.)'

'At all levels the game seems to be riddled with nepotism and self-interest'

'From the media releases it would seem that the only organisations in NSW believed to be stakeholders in Soccer Australia are NSW Soccer Federation Ltd and the NSL clubs.'

'The necessary reforms needed for soccer to grow and be a force and positive benefit to individuals and the community may be many, but critically, credibility and viability has to be addressed and effective changes made.'

'Impediments to reform: Is the entrenched technical incumbents at Soccer Australia and their influence state by state throughout the nation. Investigation may find nepotism, cronyism and a self-serving system to protect the status quo, which does not serve soccer, or the coaching fraternity. Many coaches have left the sport disillusioned and frustrated in the last six or so years.'

'The current method of selecting ... directors (under the Constitution) usually results in the vested interests of NSL clubs and state and territory organisations overriding any impetus for change and Soccer Australia's objective of promoting Australian soccer as a whole and at an elite level.'

'The voting rights are not representative of the registered membership base of soccer players in Australia. If Soccer Australia is to truly represent its participant base, the voting rights should reflect this. Alternatively, if it is to be a true federation of the states, voting rights should reflect one state, one vote.'

'Clearly the structure must change. However my experience ... has been that the initial notion of change is accepted, at least in a public sense, until that change impinges or impacts on individuals and their power bases. You can then expect political input and interference and personal vitriolic innuendo and attack.'

'Soccer Australia and its structure as it stands today is clearly a relic of a bygone era ... Soccer Australia needs to abandon its current "stakeholder" voting structure.'

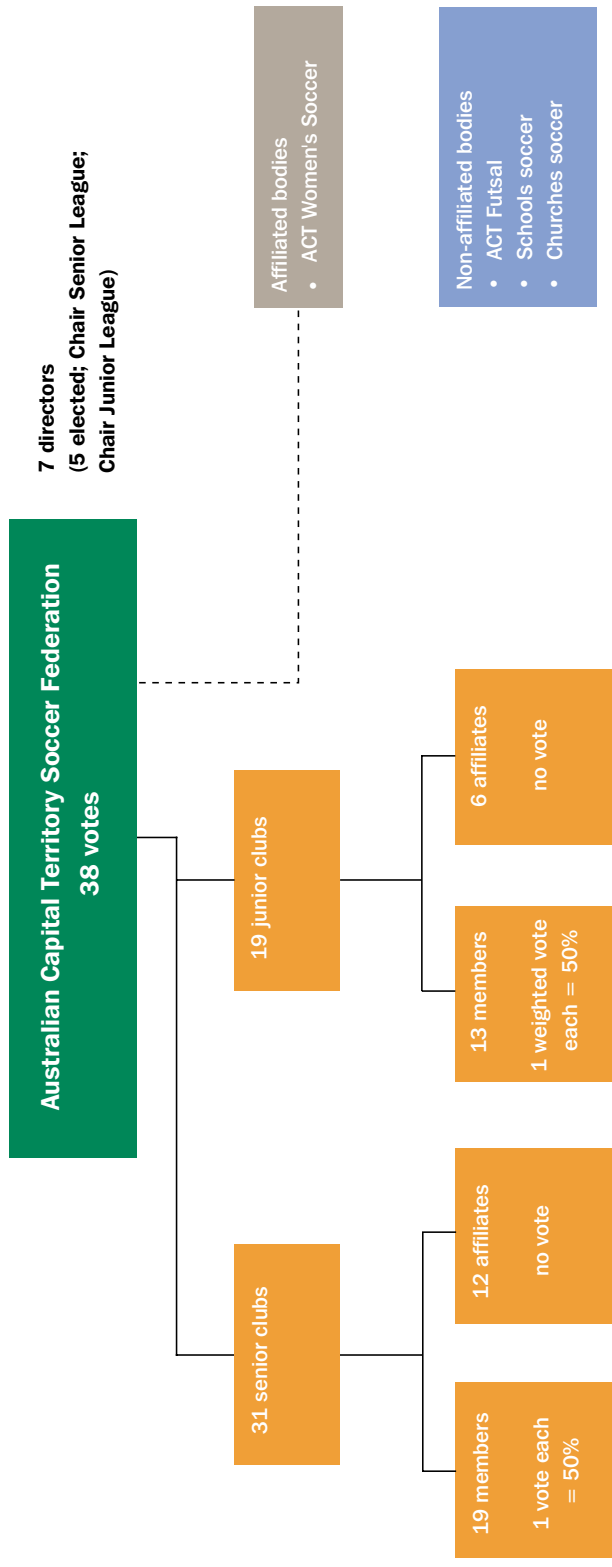
'The current formula for the determination of Soccer Australia stakeholder representation and voting rights [should] be discontinued. Representation to the Board of Soccer Australia [should] be reformulated to allow for a more equitable and fair representation.'

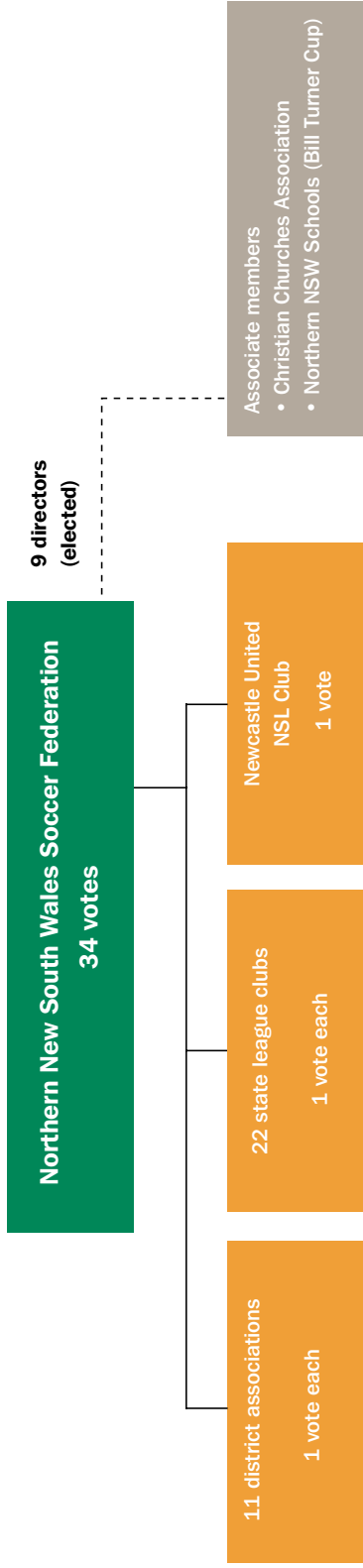
'Soccer Australia as a governing body is fractured politically ...'

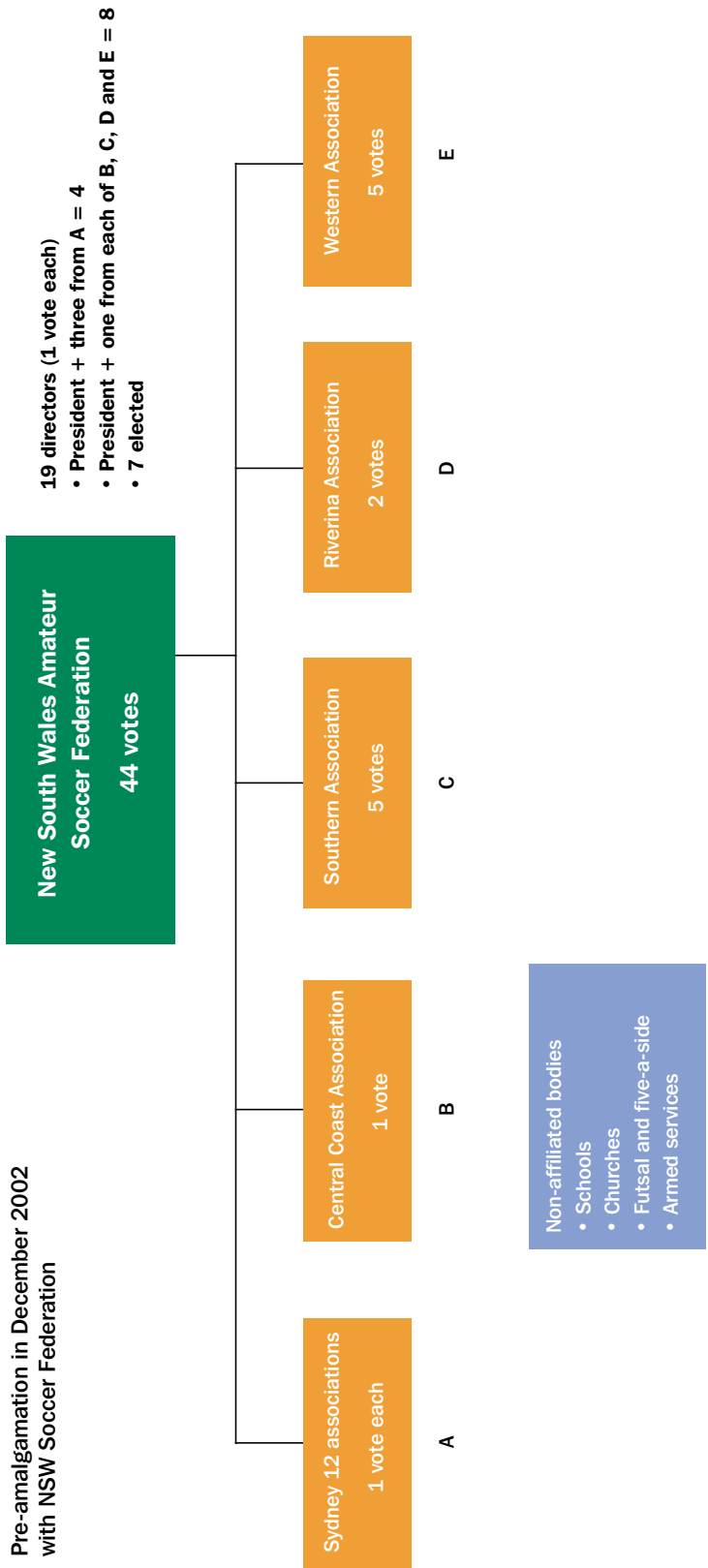
'Behaviour at Soccer Australia Board level was often outrageous, unacceptable and clearly worse than anything previously encountered. Factionalism was rampant, individualism regarded suspiciously and often attacked. It clearly highlighted the need for, and enhanced the role of the independent board members.'

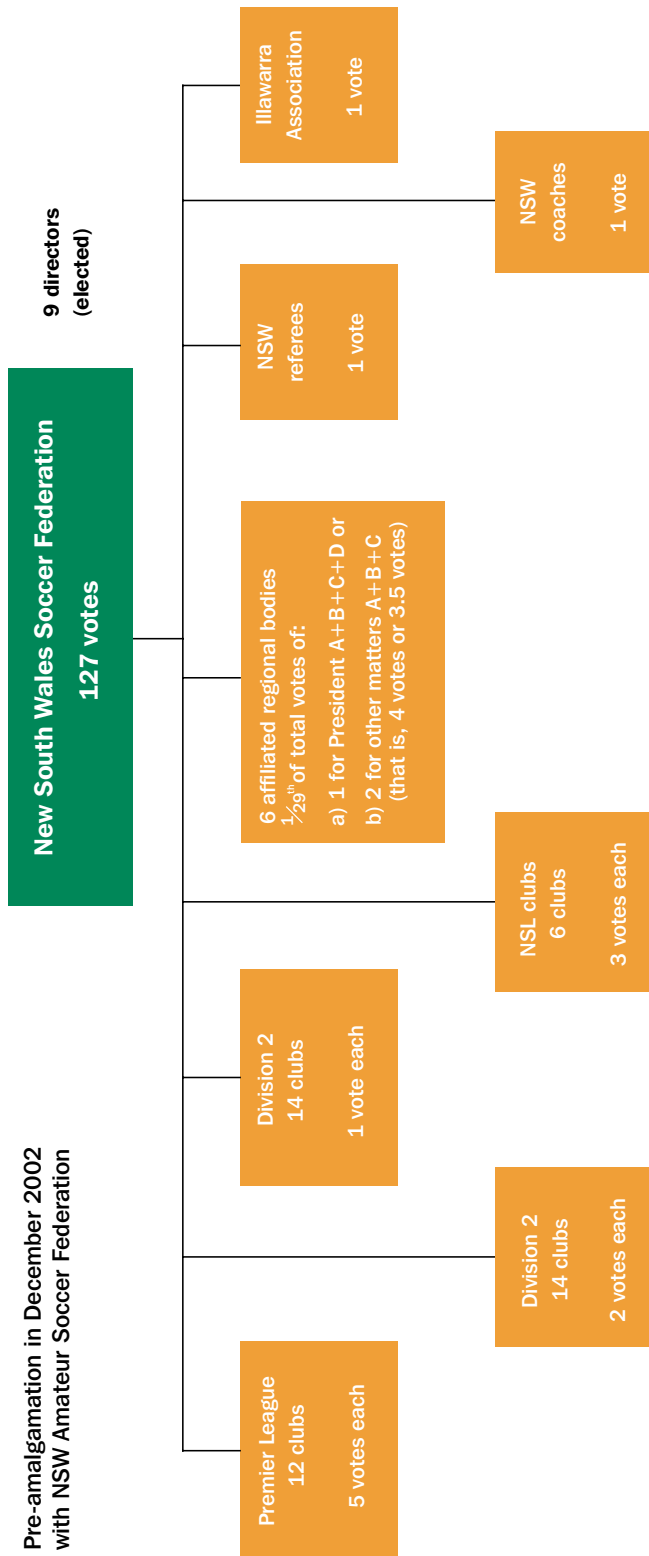








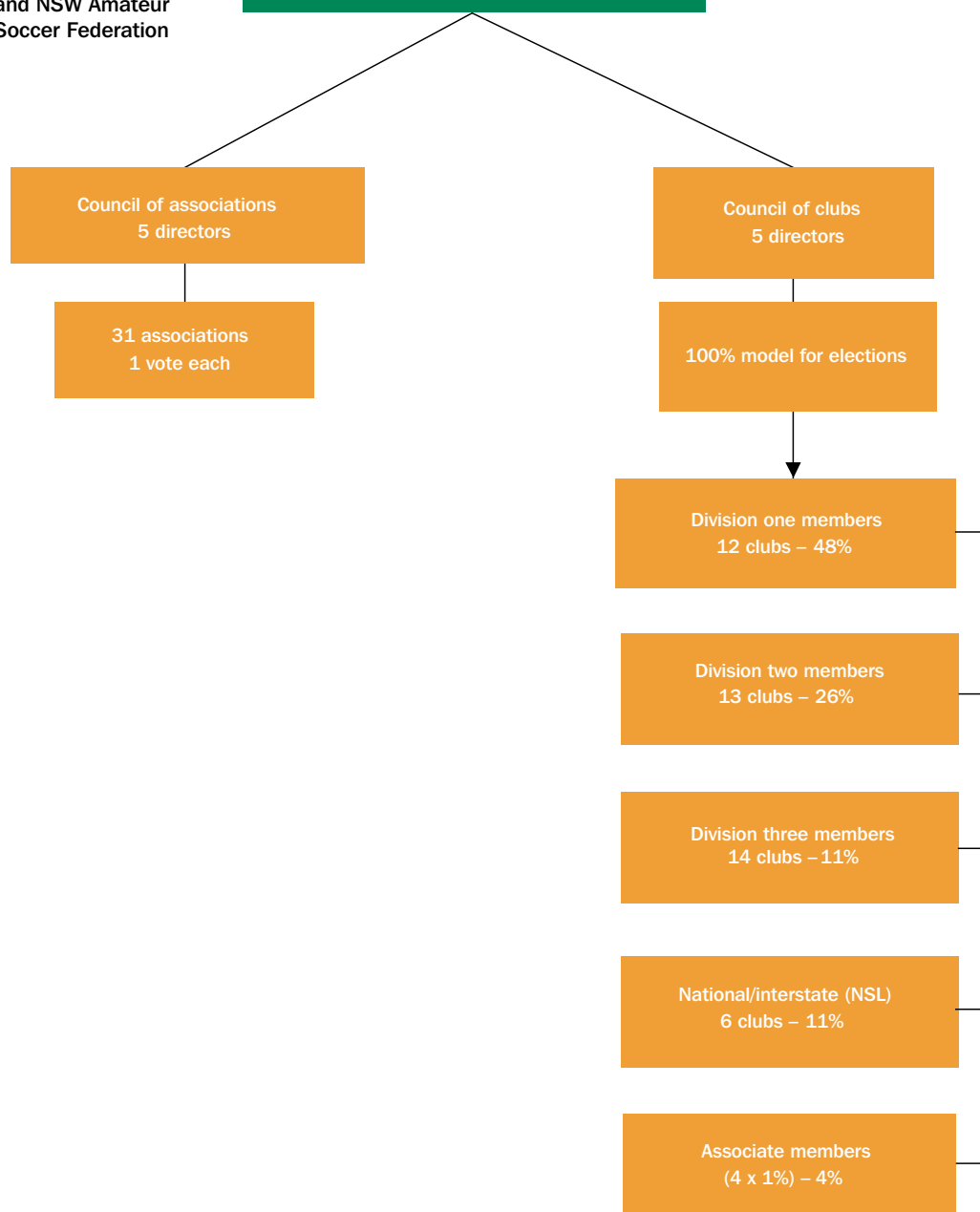


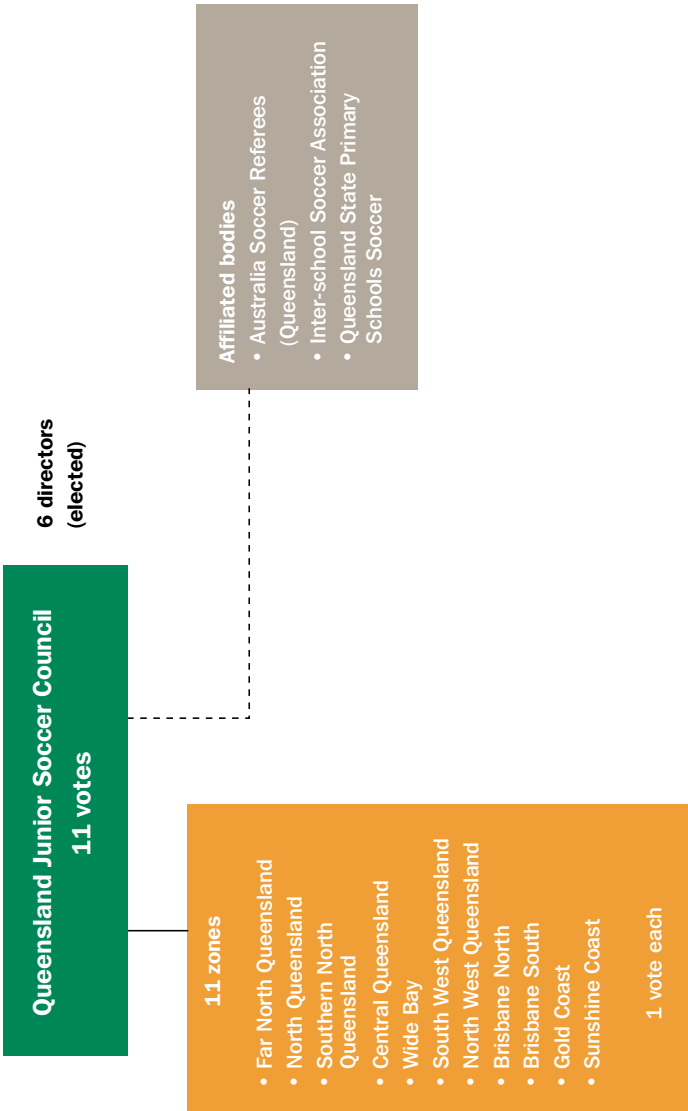


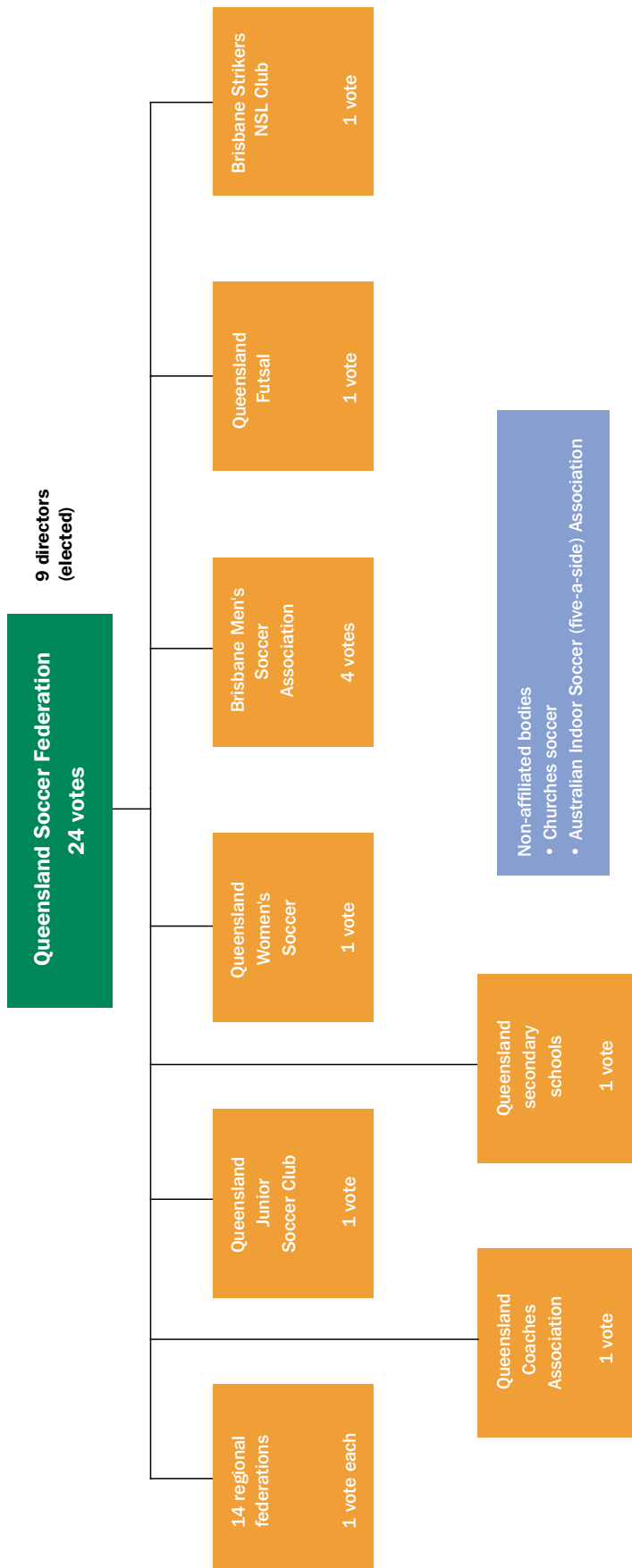
Post-amalgamation
December 2002 of
NSW Soccer Federation
and NSW Amateur
Soccer Federation

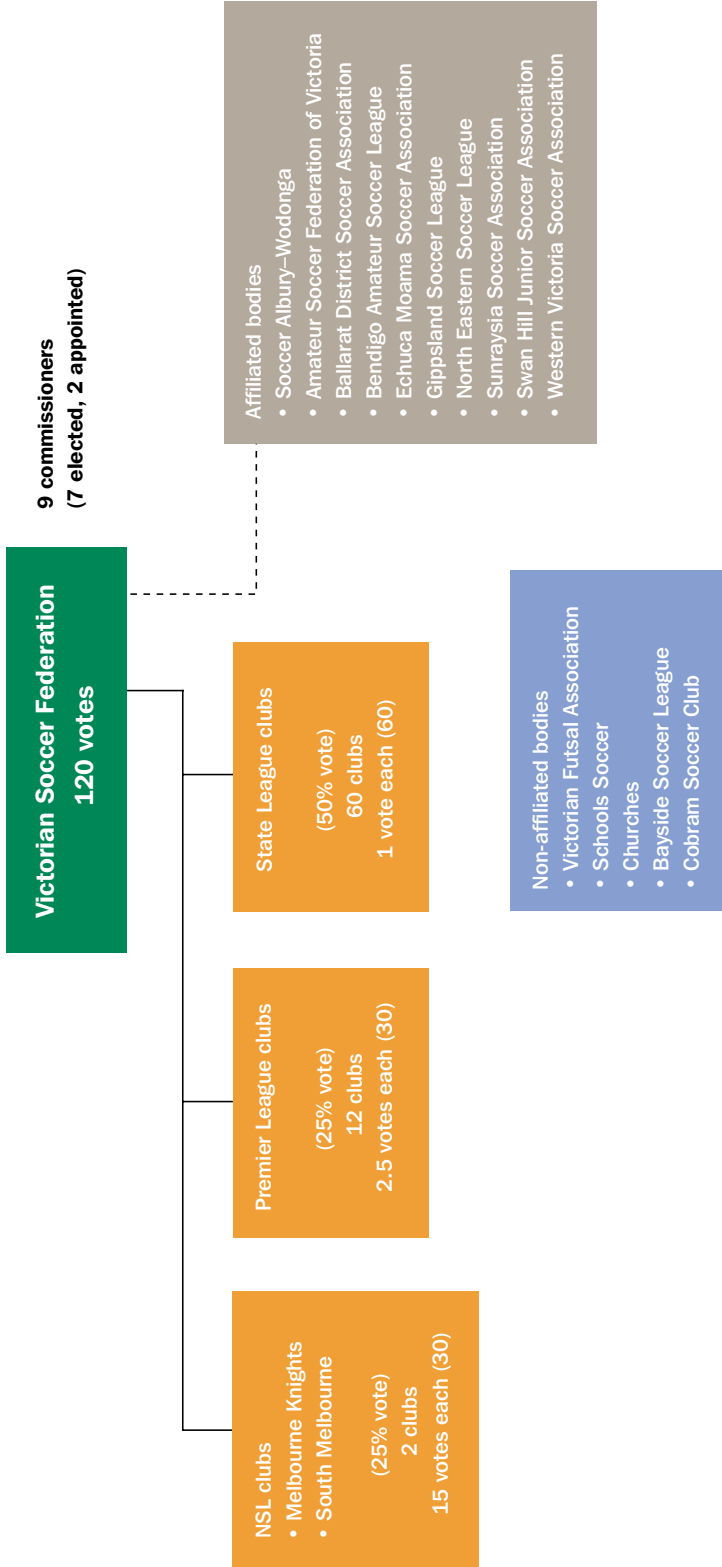
Soccer New South Wales

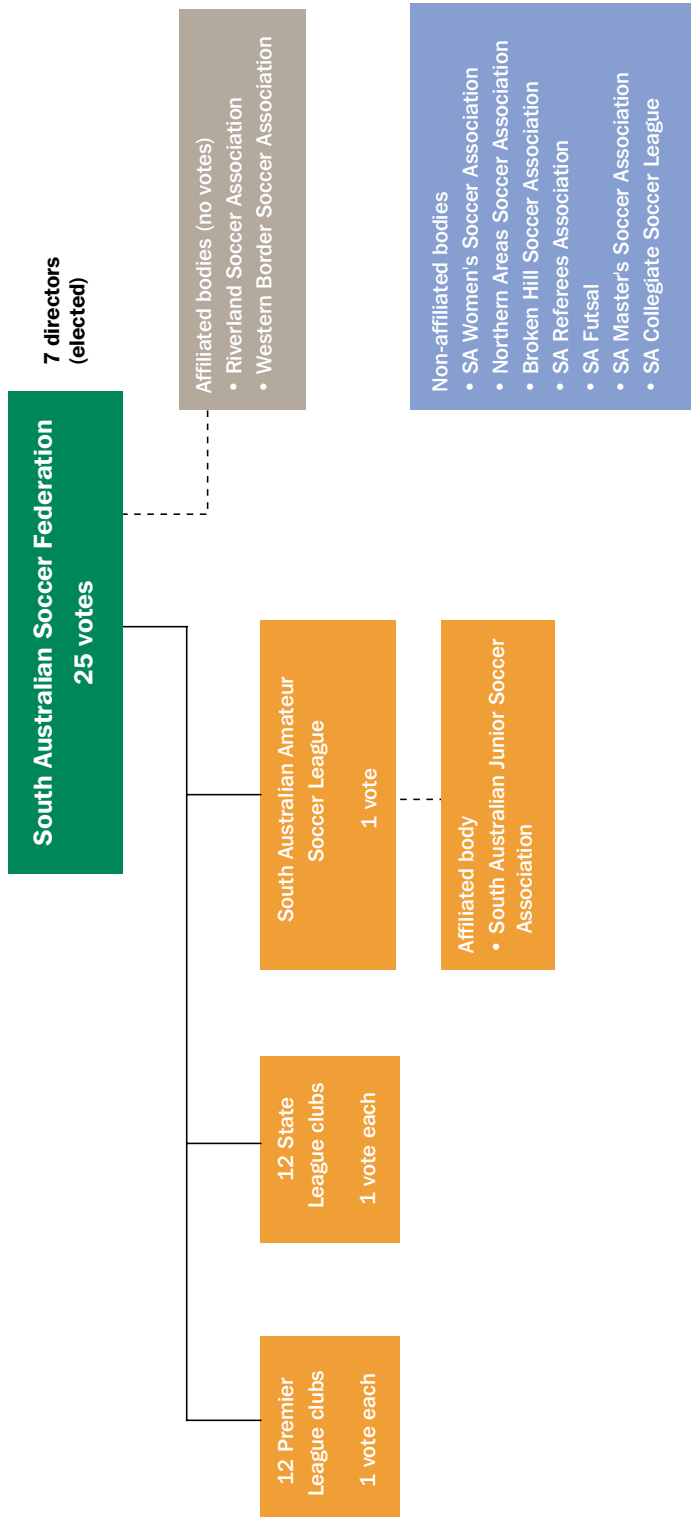
10 directors
(all elected)

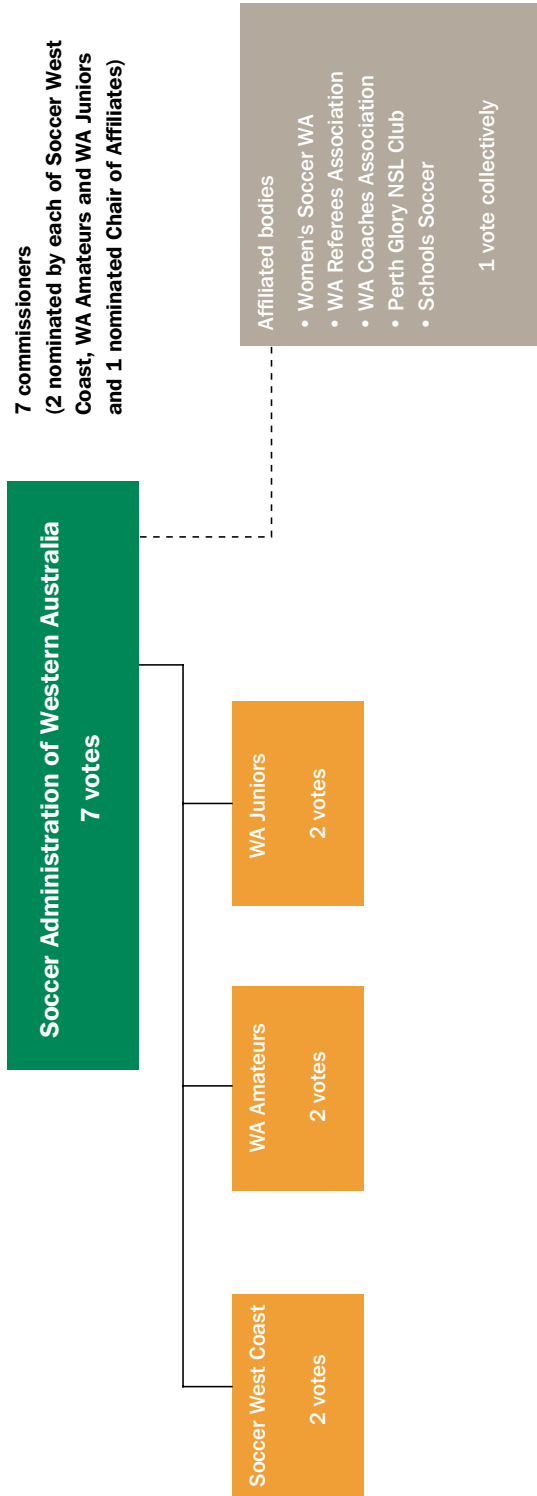


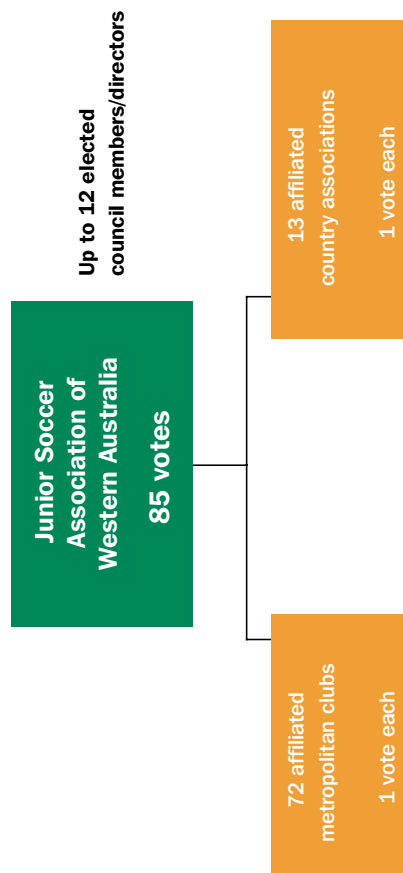


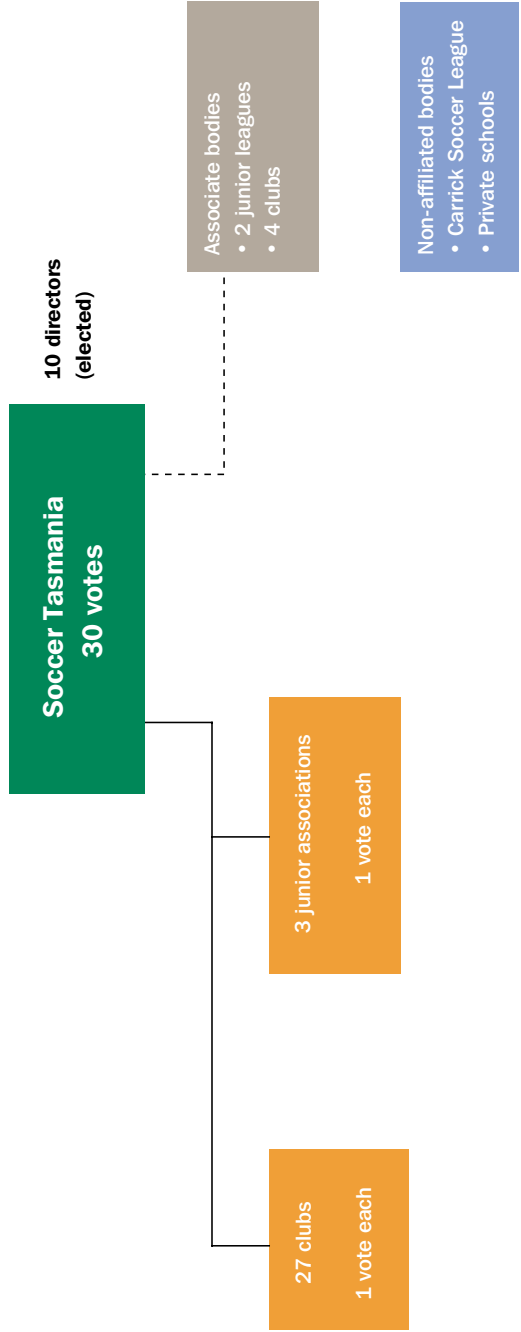


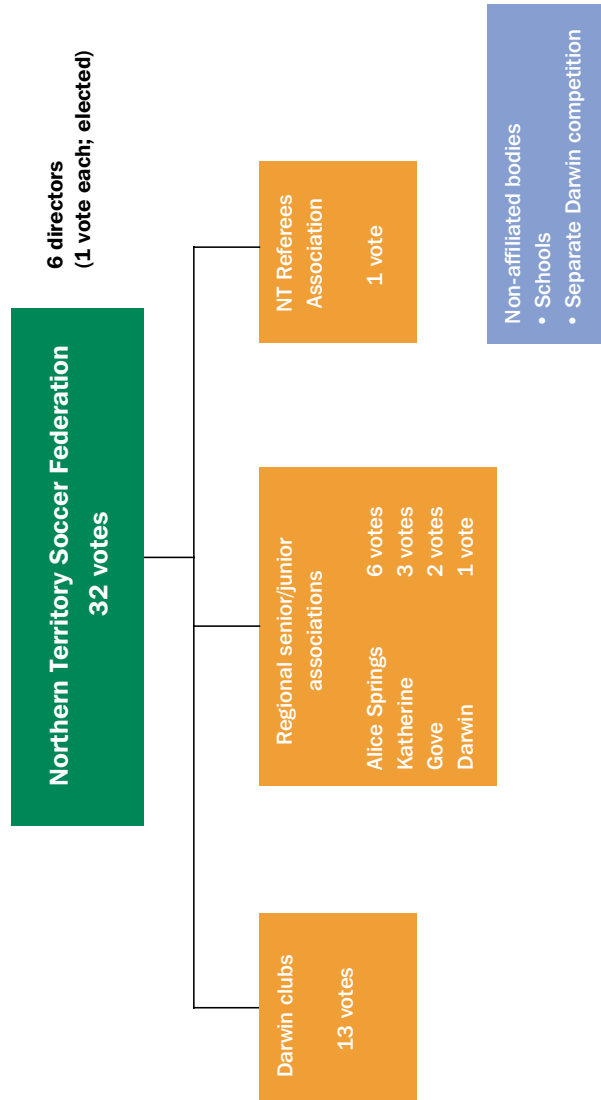






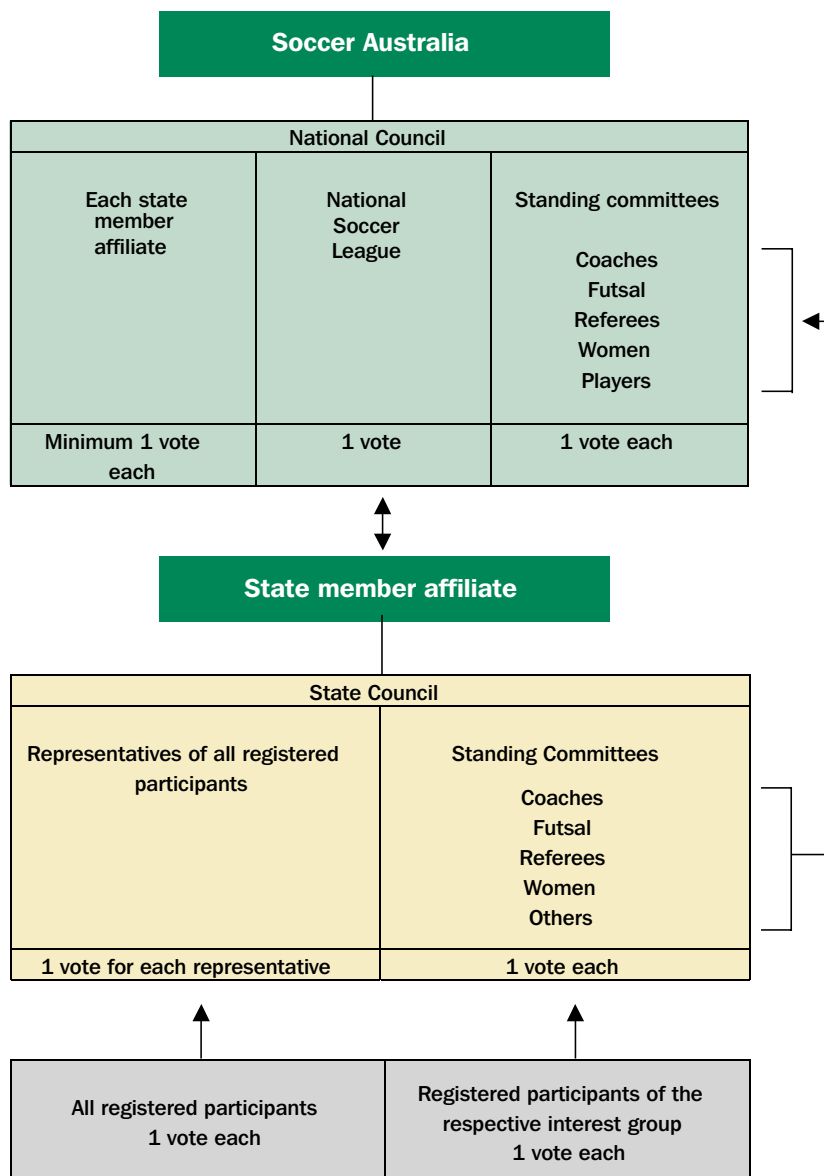


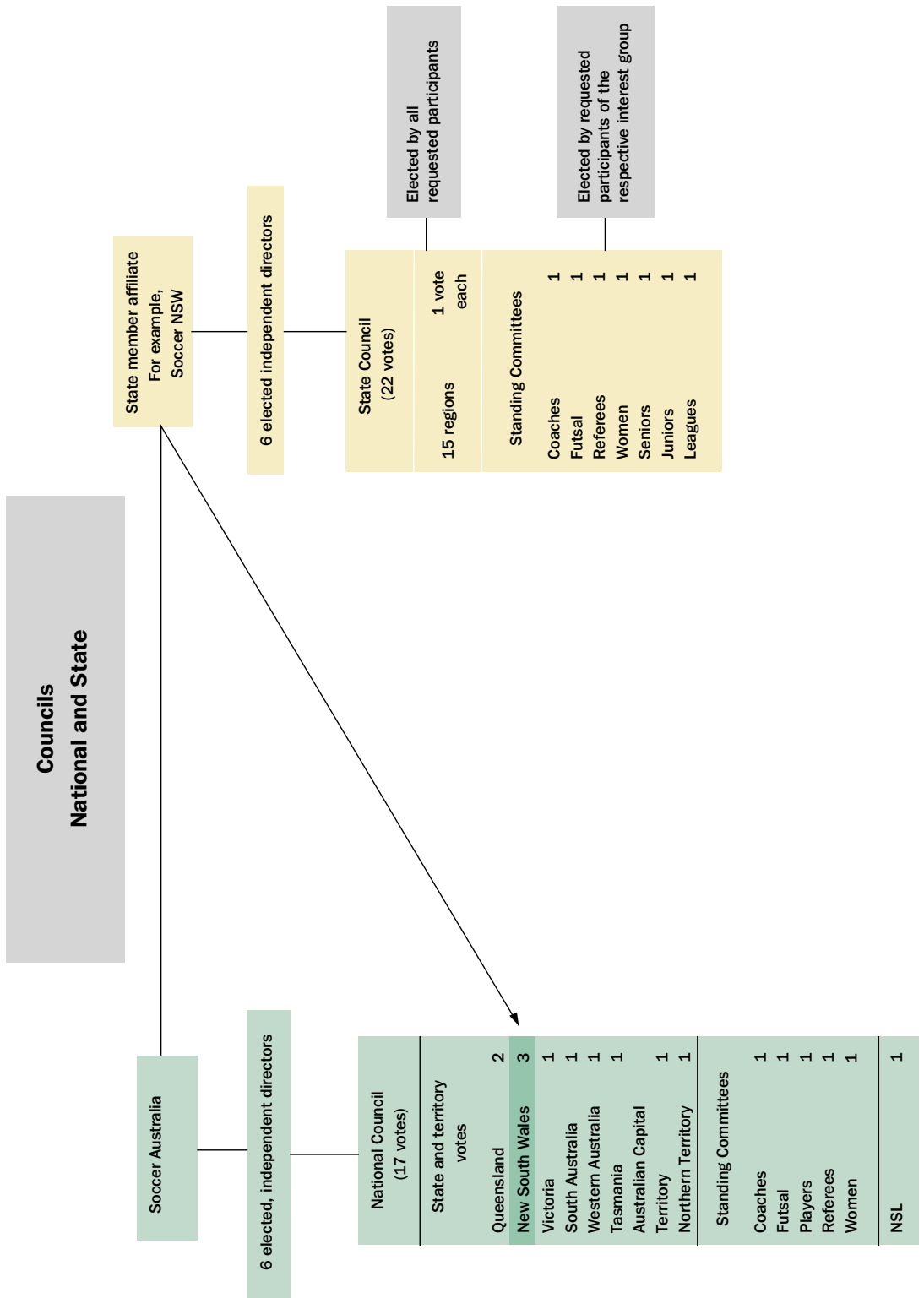




Appendix F

Proposed membership and voting structure





Appendix G

Other relevant issues

During the consultation process there were a number of issues brought to our attention that were not directly related to the terms of reference of this Review. These issues are identified here for the attention of the future Board and management of Soccer Australia to address at the appropriate time. It will be noted that a number of these issues are contradictory as a result of the differing views of the many participants.

National body issues

- Poor public perception of the game in Australia.
- Victorian Major Events Company and Soccer Australia have a Heads of Agreement, which concerns the staging of international games involving the national teams, with the primary goal to achieve the hosting of the FIFA World Cup by 2014.
- Contracting players to the national body.
- Lack of value for national registration levy and capitation fees paid by players and clubs to state and national bodies.
- Television Programming Pty Ltd's (NSL marketing rights) agreement with Soccer Australia to market and package the NSL appears to overlap with the rights provided to International Events Corporation.
- Soccer Australia should be able to claim a greater percentage of transfer monies for Australian players to contribute to game development.
- Appointment of an international football ambassador to promote Australian soccer and establish international contacts.
- Promotion of the women's game will also help to drive growth in the men's game.
- Standardisation of player registration fees throughout the country.
- Soccer bodies are disputing the collection of various levies, as delivery of services promised has not occurred.
- To collect any future levies (imposed at either national or state levels), the stakeholders would demand implementation timetables for delivery of programs, etc.
- The creation of a media strategy for the sport in terms of coverage and public relations.
- Soccer Australia has issued 150 player agent licences – causing environmental problems at the lower levels as young players now have agents and are being exposed to the commercial aspects of the game at an early age.

Grass-roots issues

- Significant reduction in participation rates from juniors to seniors.
- Lack of facilities at the grass-roots level.
- The national league to have rookie player contracts and commitments to grass roots.
- Lack of integration between schools and clubs.
- Cross-boarder policy regarding junior representative teams.
- French-style soccer academy to be developed for Australian juniors.
- Further promotion of the game to Indigenous people.
- High costs of talent identification and coaching courses appear to be roadblocks to the development of game.
- Club system to be fully integrated between juniors and seniors, and men and women.
- A compensation scheme for clubs (that is, grass-roots clubs) who develop players who are then transferred.
- Soccer Australia needs a long-term facilities plan for each state to harness the growth at grass-roots level.
- Improved links with the Australian Institute of Sport and state institutes of sport, regarding high performance programs for the sport.
- The commissioning of a development conference, say once a year, to investigate and discuss coaching, player pathways, high performance programs, junior programs, etc.
- The accreditation programs for coaches in Australia are seen to be too onerous and prohibitive.
- Ten per cent of transfer fees generated from the sale of NSL players should be returned to the game for further development.

National team

- National team based in Europe.
- Consideration of an academy to be established in Europe.
- Australia to be part of Asian Nations Cup and Asian Champions League (club soccer).
- National team to qualify for World Cup through Asia.
- Lack of national team games in Australia.


National Soccer League

- Many believe the NSL should operate independently of Soccer Australia.
- NSL clubs conflicted between own interests and that of the game as a whole.
- Unsustainable national competition.
- Player leakage to overseas.
- Consideration of the Australian Professional Footballers' Association plan for an Australian Premier League to replace the NSL.
- NSL needs more teams.
- State of origin concept to be developed.
- Exclusion practices of some NSL clubs.
- NSL to be decommissioned, with a return to state premier leagues.
- Poor links between Australia's international 'stars', and the domestic game.
- Allowances made for promotion and relegation at the national-league level.
- Reinstatement of a national cup competition.
- NSL to be 8, 10, 12, 14 or 16 teams.
- Consideration of equalisation policies for the national league such as a draft and salary cap.
- Racial issues within the NSL are the cause of a lack of broader public appeal for the competition.
- Encourage overseas teams to invest in NSL clubs and encourage Australian investment in English clubs, that is, Second and Third Division.
- NSL should be played in Australian winter because playing in summer is affecting the development of players.
- NSL should remain under the structure of Soccer Australia but the stakeholders should accept that the NSL will never be a successful flagship league. It should be used for the development of players, similar to the Pura Cup for cricket.

General

- Some believe that the Australian Professional Footballers' Association is no longer independent and representing all players.
- Ethnic elements remain prevalent in soccer in Australia.
- The Australian Professional Footballers' Association receives 5 per cent commission on all transfers, which deprives clubs of revenue.
- Many are of the opinion that the name 'soccer' should be replaced by 'football'.



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- Volunteer development, training and recruitment programs need to be introduced/enhanced.
 - Players at institutes of sport should return costs of training if they choose to play for another country.
 - Views that soccer's administrators at all levels should be enrolled in administration courses to ensure adequate skilling.