



## Water Polo Australia Strategic Plan 2014 -2018

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*Growing and Strengthening Water Polo in Australia*

April 2014

## Message from the President

*On behalf of the Board it is with much pleasure that I present the Water Polo Australia 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. As the Plan details, the 4 Strategic priorities for the sport of Water Polo in Australia over the next 4 years are in the areas of:*

- Governance & Management*
- High Performance*
- Sport Development &*
- Business Development/ Commercial Growth*

*The development of the Plan has been a consultative process, enabling input from WPA's member States. This is entirely appropriate, as, while WPA is the custodian of the strategic direction of Australian water polo, the States are delegated the responsibility of organising and delivering our competitions. It is essential that there remains a strong unity of purpose between these 2 roles.*

*The Plan has also benefited from the input of the Australian Sports Commission. The guidance provided by the ASC's 'Winning Edge' strategy has heavily influenced our thinking in determining our mid term priorities.*

*Thank you to all those who assisted in the production of the Plan and a thank you in advance to all of you that will assist in its realisation.*

*Phil Garling  
President  
Water Polo Australia  
April 2014*

## Background

Water Polo Australia Ltd (WPA) is the national governing body for the sport of water polo in Australia. It is charged with the development of water polo players, officials, coaches and volunteers throughout Australia and with the conduct of competitions and championships for all levels of participation. Water Polo Australia's purpose is *"To facilitate and grow the sport of water polo, thereby increasing participation at all levels and achieving sustainable success at the elite level"*

The sport's membership currently comprises approximately 12,000 registered participants, with another 16,000 playing competitively in schools and domestically, but not registered with WPA.

Nationwide competitions conducted are the National Water Polo League (club based), Junior (20s) National Championships (state based), Youth (18s) National Championships (state based), 18s National Club Championships, 16s National Club Championships, 14s National Club Championships and in the coming year a 12s Festival of Water Polo will be added to the calendar.

The voting members of WPA are the states and territories which elect four Directors and the President to the Board. In addition to these five Directors, the Athletes Commission nominates a Director and the Board may appoint an additional two Directors. The CEO directs the day-to-day activities of WPA through a national office based in Sydney.

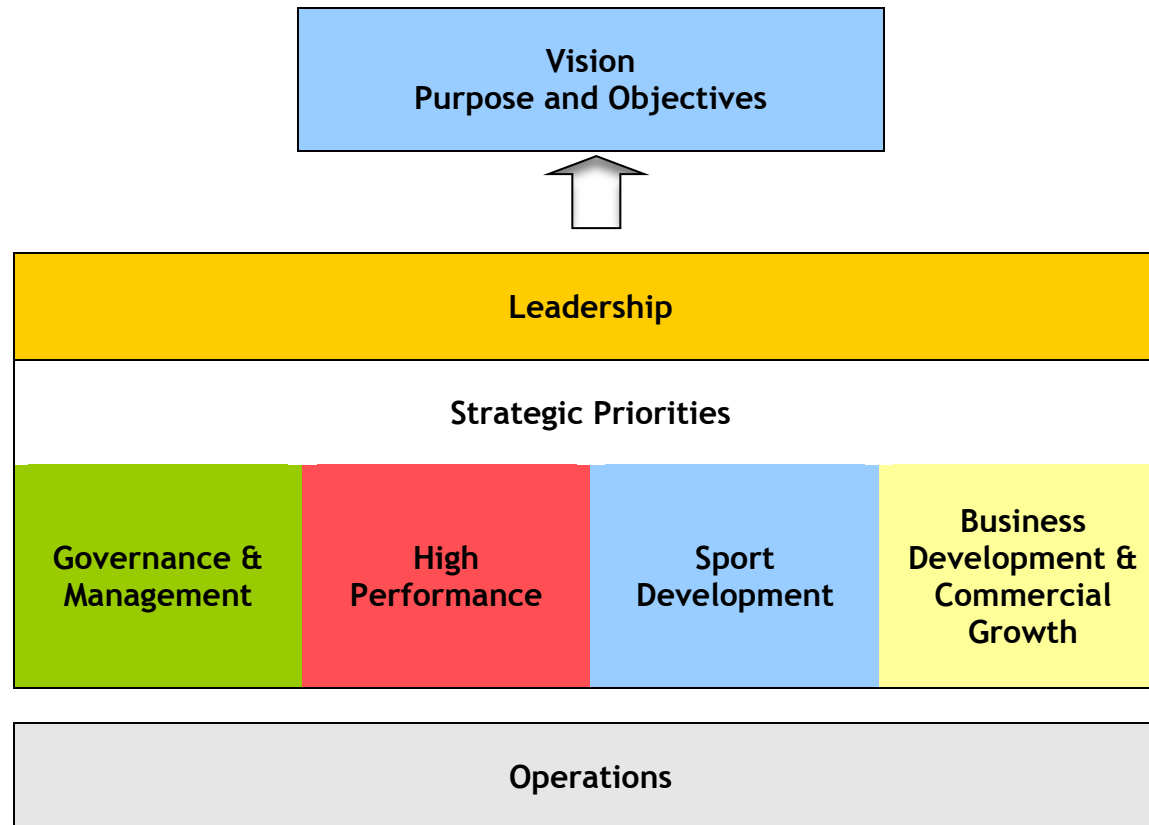
The development of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan has identified four Strategic Priorities as the key pillars on which the future will be built:

- 1) **Governance and Management** - ensuring we are structured and resourced appropriately to best deliver on our goals and objectives
- 2) **High Performance** - under the *Australia's Winning Edge* strategy, WPA has developed its *High Performance Plan 2013-2020* outlining its objectives and strategies to deliver success at the elite level of the sport
- 3) **Sport Development** - WPA's *National Participation Strategy* provides a major focus in growing and servicing the sport at the grass roots level.
- 4) **Business Development and Commercial Growth** - optimising our commercial potential to deliver sustainable income to the sport thus making us less reliant on government funding

The Strategic Plan 2014-2018 will form the basis of the agenda for the Board and will guide all decision-making. The plan will be monitored regularly and will be reviewed and updated annually.

## The Strategic Framework

The key elements of the Strategic Plan are represented in the framework below:



The strategic plan is a rolling plan, is focused on the future, and takes into account the changing physical and economic environment, challenges and opportunities, as well as emerging trends in Australian sport.

## Our Vision

Water polo to be regarded as a clean, safe, fun sport with an identified and supported pathway to elite success.

## Our Purpose

To facilitate and grow the sport of water polo, thereby increasing participation at all levels and achieving sustainable success at the elite level.

## Our Objectives

- Ensure growth and sustainability of our participation base
- Ensure regular podium performances at the elite level
- Diversify our income streams
- Increase the security of our government funding
- Develop the structure of our sport in Australia
- Build capacity and organisational excellence and ensure alignment of strategy & operations with our Members
- Improve our communication with Members and other stakeholders
- Increase the awareness of our sport through branding and marketing
- Ensure ethical behaviour in all aspects of our sport
- Ensure our technical delivery of coaching and officiating is best practice
- Work collaboratively to preserve our relevance as an Olympic sport
- Develop our leadership role in the Oceania region

## Our Values

- Engagement
- Excellence
- Consistency
- Balance
- Integrity
- Innovation

## Our Stakeholders

- Athletes and Participants
- Coaches and Officials
- Parents and Volunteers
- Members
- Schools and Universities
- Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and Australian Institute of Sport (AIS)
- FINA and International Federations
- State Departments of Sport and Recreation
- State Institutes and Academies
- Government - Federal, State, Local
- Sponsors, Commercial Partners and Suppliers
- Strategic Partners
- Facility Operators and Event Hosts
- Media

## Leadership

In leading and guiding the sport of water polo we will:

- Provide leadership to the whole sport to improve structure, culture and awareness by the broader community
- Ensure we have a clear direction and agreed priorities with a focus on organisational excellence
- Establish and support the Leadership Group headed by the WPA CEO and made up of the state Executive Officers to ensure a consistent approach to delivery of strategies across the country
- Facilitate the alignment of state strategic plans with the national plan to promote consistency and unity of purpose
- Work collaboratively to preserve our relevance as an Olympic sport and develop our relationship with like-minded sports such as swimming
- Develop our leadership role in the Oceania region
- Proactively explore innovative opportunities to ensure water polo evolves to meet the needs of its stakeholders

## Strategic Priorities

The initiatives and activities, priorities and performance measures for each of the Strategic Priorities are set out below:

<b>Strategic Priority 1 - Governance and Management</b>	
<b>Goals</b>	To adopt best practice governance principles and work with the Members to ensure consistency in governance & management approaches

	<b>Initiatives and Activities</b>	<b>Priority and Timeline</b>	<b>Success Indicators</b>
1.1	Review our constitution and associated by-laws, policies and guidelines in line with best practice	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Constitution adopted by 2014 AGM</li> <li>• ASC supportive of changes</li> </ul>
1.2	Build on our relationship with our members, improve our communication and review the tools and processes we need to do this	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member survey results</li> <li>• Communications plan to be developed</li> </ul>
1.3	Improve our financial management for accuracy and timeliness of reporting	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right people in place, strengthen Board financial skills</li> <li>• KPIs for accuracy &amp; timeliness of reporting to be implemented</li> </ul>
1.4	Ensure our risk management policies and practices are satisfactory	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WPA's Risk Management Plan to be reviewed annually</li> </ul>
1.5	Promote alignment of national and state strategic plans	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WPA &amp; Members strategic plans are aligned</li> </ul>
1.6	Ensure the Board sets, leads and oversees the priorities of the Strategic Plan and has oversight of all aspects of the business	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance Board Reporting</li> <li>• Set Board &amp; CEO KPIs</li> </ul>



## Strategic Priority 2 - High Performance

<b>Goals</b>	To ensure success at the elite level through the establishment of a nationally led efficient, effective and holistic high performance training environment, including athlete and coach development pathways, competition opportunities and sports medicine & science support.
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	<b>Initiatives and Activities</b>	<b>Priority and Timeline</b>	<b>Success Indicators</b>
2.1	Implement the <i>High Performance Plan 2013-2020</i> which is aligned to the Australian Winning Edge (AWE) strategy	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement of Bench Mark Events (BME) results</li> <li>Reported success of WPA from the AIS against AWE mandatory KPI's</li> </ul>
2.2	Ensure the HP plan is disseminated to States, SIS/SAS, athletes and coaches	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership and Relationship ratings of WPA from key stakeholders meet expectations or better</li> <li>All revised HP Planning documents and key decisions are inclusive of and communicated to key stakeholders</li> </ul>
2.3	Improve opportunities and mechanisms for regional and rural athletes and coaches to engage in the HP pathway and take part in competition opportunities such as the Country Nationals	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phase 3 of the Talent Program rolled out focusing on identifying, educating and development of potentially talented athletes and coaches</li> </ul>
2.4	Better facilitate Athlete Welfare and Career Management	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Joint HP and Athletes Commission Project providing enhanced support to our elite athletes</li> </ul>
2.5	Develop and implement a national under 12 event for younger athletes and coach development	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include in Events and Competitions KPI's</li> </ul>

<b>Strategic Priority 3 - Sport Development</b>	
<b>Goals</b>	To grow participation in water polo through greater engagement and exposure of the sport, and building the capacity of our clubs, coaches and officials

	<b>Initiatives and Activities</b>	<b>Priority and Timeline</b>	<b>Success Indicators</b>
3.1	Implement the National Participation Strategy focusing on Flippa Ball, Schools, Transition to Clubs, Safety, Masters, Universities and Social Sport.	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase our participation/membership numbers.</li> </ul>
3.2	Develop a facilities strategy to identify existing facilities across the county including their current usage and condition as well as identifying gaps where potential water polo activity may be enhanced by new facilities.	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop database of all water polo capable facilities.</li> </ul>
3.3	Engage a National Pathway and Participation Manager and work with the national development network to provide a coordinated approach to delivery of programs and services.	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop job description &amp; employ WPA National Pathway &amp; Participation Manager</li> </ul>
3.4	Develop a National Competition and Events Plan that ensures continuous improvement to maximise commercial opportunities as well as provides integration and alignment with the national calendar.	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement national competitions and events plan and 5 year calendar</li> </ul>
3.5	Strategically locate events/championships to maximise regional engagement, buy-in and beneficial returns to the sport	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the benefit of Increasing the number of tournaments allocated to regional areas</li> </ul>

**Strategic Priority 4 - Business Development and Commercial Growth**

<b>Goals</b>	To diversify our sources of income and deliver sustainable financial returns to the sport, thereby reducing our reliance on government funding.
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	<b>Initiatives and Activities</b>	<b>Priority and Timeline</b>	<b>Success Indicators</b>
4.1	Produce a Business Development Plan that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying core business and new opportunities</li> <li>• Assessing and valuing our assets and products ready for packaging and selling to appropriate sponsors and partners</li> <li>• Branding, marketing and promotional activities</li> <li>• Merchandising and licensed products</li> <li>• Explore group buying power opportunities and mechanisms</li> <li>• Package our events to maximise commercial leveraging opportunities and legacy</li> </ul>	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure expert assistance, and develop and implement business development plan within approved budget</li> <li>• Increase commercial funding as a proportion of WPA total funding</li> </ul>
4.2	Refine our Communication Strategy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise our media strategy and relationship with broadcasters</li> <li>• Ensure our website and other traditional and social media tools are relevant and engaging</li> </ul>	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the media exposure of water polo via all media channels.</li> </ul>

### **Operations**

An Operations Plan will be developed that will provide the actions, timelines and quantified measures of success that will be adopted in delivering the above Initiatives/Activities and Success Indicators. In addition while not strategic in nature, the following issues shall be addressed in the Operations Plan

- Ensuring we have satisfactory systems, processes, policies and financial management
- Ensure our records management is fit for purpose
- Developing, managing and promoting a corporate calendar

### **Review Mechanisms**

- The strategic plan and its priorities will shape the agenda for the Board and guide all decision-making.
- The plan will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Board. The rolling plan will be formally reviewed and updated annually.
- The plan may be adjusted to take into account changing operating environment or the identification of new opportunities