



2032+ POWERED BY PURPOSE  
**WATER POLO AUSTRALIA'S  
STRATEGIC PLAN**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

WPA gratefully acknowledges the support of the Australian Sports Commission (ASC).

The ASC's world-leading system and financial support will accelerate the delivery of this Strategic Plan. The Australian Water Polo community is deeply appreciative of this partnership and remains committed to strengthening it into the future.



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

## FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

We are excited to present **2032+ POWERED BY PURPOSE** - Water Polo Australia's (WPA) refreshed Strategic Plan.

The development of this Strategic Plan was guided by an extensive stakeholder led review of the impact the 2020-2030 Water Polo National Strategic Framework had on WPA and the sport between 2020 and 2025. Our new strategy reflects a sharper focus on delivering a refreshed organisational purpose: To future-proof Water Polo in **Australia and empower our community to grow the game.**

2032+ POWERED BY PURPOSE is our blueprint for achieving this.

This is a pragmatic blueprint to guide our actions from now through to the 2032 Brisbane Games and beyond. Our plan centres on three strategic priority areas: **LEAD WELL, PLAY WELL, WIN WELL.**

We will report transparently on our progress in delivering 2032+ POWERED BY PURPOSE on a quarterly basis - internally, to our Member Organisations, and to the broader Australian Water Polo community. A formal review of this Plan will take place at the end of 2028, with any necessary updates made to ensure its continued relevance as we move toward the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games and beyond.

We are committed to fulfilling our role and working in partnership with the Australian Water Polo community to the best of our ability. We believe in our purpose, our strategic priorities, our success indicators, and the key initiatives outlined in this plan. Now, it's time to deliver.



**TRENT BIRKETT**

President



**TIM WELSFORD**

Chief Executive Officer



# WATER POLO AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

## 2032+ POWERED BY PURPOSE THE WATER POLO AUSTRALIA STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2032+

Our blueprint for how Water Polo Australia (WPA) will purposefully collaborate with our partners to future proof Water Polo in Australia and empower our community to grow the game.

### OUR PLAN WILL:

- Provide clarity of purpose to the WPA board, staff, Member Organisations, Australian Water Polo League clubs, community clubs, and partners.
- Ensure WPA remains focused on the priorities most critical to our current and future sustainability and success.
- Support the future capability and sustainability of Member Organisations, Australian Water Polo League clubs, and community clubs; and
- Future-proof Water Polo within a rapidly evolving Australian sport and active recreation landscape.

### OUR GOALS:



**20 MILLION**  
ANNUAL REVENUE



**30 THOUSAND**  
PLAYING MEMBERS



**02**  
MEDALS AT THE 2032 BRISBANE  
OLYMPIC GAMES

## OUR STRATEGIC PLAN ON A PAGE

### OUR VALUES

#### HIGH PERFORMING

We strive for excellence through innovation, accountability, and a growth mindset - always aiming to be better tomorrow than we are today.

#### 2-GETHER

We act with unity of purpose and integrity, we understand our roles and work as one team to support each other's success.

#### OPEN

We are inclusive, welcoming, and proud to say: there's a place for everyone in Water Polo.

### OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

#### LEAD WELL

Strengthening WPA's capability to achieve our purpose.

#### PLAY WELL

Supporting the water polo community to grow our game like never before.

#### WIN WELL

Enabling our national teams to Win Well when it matters most.

### OUR ENABLERS

2032+ POWERED BY PURPOSE is enabled by:

- The right people, in the right roles, at the right time.
- Safe, fun, and inclusive Water Polo environments.
- Positive, mutually beneficial relationships with Member Organisations, Australian Water Polo League clubs, community clubs, government, and commercial partners.
- Clear roles and responsibilities across the water polo delivery system.
- Smart, data-driven decisions.
- Athletes who inspire - winning well on the world stage when it matters most.
- A financially strong and sustainable business model.
- Digital systems which transform how we connect and operate.

# WATER POLO AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

## HOW WE WILL KNOW WE ARE WINNING

We'll know we're winning when we see the **success indicators** attached to our **LEAD WELL, PLAY WELL, WIN WELL** strategic priority areas are being achieved. This in turn will see us achieving our purpose:  
*To future-proof Water Polo in Australia and empower our community to grow the game.*

### WPA ROLE DESCRIPTORS

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>DRIVE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WPA holds primary responsibility for developing, delivering, and reviewing activities that achieve the identified success indicators.</li> </ul> | <p><b>SUPPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WPA supports Member Organisations, Australian Water Polo League clubs, community clubs, and partners in developing, delivering, and/or reviewing activities that contribute to achieving success indicators.</li> </ul> | <p><b>INFLUENCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WPA drives impact through advocacy and influence to help achieve success indicators.</li> </ul> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## LEAD WELL - Strengthening WPA's capability to achieve our purpose.

SUCCESS INDICATORS	OUR ROLE
<p><b>GOVERNANCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WPA achieves Australian Sports Commission governance maturity benchmarks expected of tier 1 National Sporting Organisations.</li> <li>WPA's organisational culture success metrics improve annually.</li> <li>WPA and our Member Organisations have aligned planning and reporting frameworks in place.</li> <li>WPA maintains a Sport Integrity Australia compliant National Integrity Framework, which is applied consistently across all levels of the sport.</li> </ul>	<b>DRIVE</b>
<p><b>FINANCIAL VIABILITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WPA achieves an annual turnover exceeding \$20 million by 2032.</li> <li>Less than 40% of total revenue is derived from government funding by 2032.</li> <li>Retain 30% of revenue derived from membership fees by 2032.</li> </ul>	<b>DRIVE / SUPPORT</b>
<p><b>DIGITAL SYSTEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fit-for-purpose digital systems enhance our organisational performance and that of the sport's delivery system.</li> </ul>	<b>DRIVE</b>
<p><b>MEMBER ORGANISATION SUPPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WPA has funded Memorandums of Understanding in place with each Member Organisation, enabling them to effectively deliver national priorities locally.</li> </ul>	<b>SUPPORT</b>

# WATER POLO AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

**PLAY WELL** - Supporting the Water Polo community to grow the game like never before.

SUCCESS INDICATORS	OUR ROLE
<b>DATA</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurate, real-time membership and participation data is used to promote water polo and its impact.</li> </ul>	<b>DRIVE</b>
<b>VISIBILITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased visibility of water polo across broader and more diverse audiences.</li> </ul>	<b>DRIVE / SUPPORT</b>
<b>MEMBERSHIP GROWTH AND DIVERSITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reached 30,000 playing members by 2032.</li> <li>Increased diversity within the organisation and across the sport.</li> <li>Expanded and strengthened national club networks.</li> </ul>	<b>SUPPORT / INFLUENCE</b>
<b>PARTICIPATION GROWTH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased engagement in participation programs.</li> </ul>	<b>SUPPORT / INFLUENCE</b>
<b>EVENTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased engagement with WPA-owned, managed and endorsed events.</li> </ul>	<b>DRIVE / SUPPORT</b>
<b>COACHES, REFEREES AND VOLUNTEERS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More trained, supported and rewarded coaches, referees, and volunteers to enhance the experience and grow the sport.</li> </ul>	<b>SUPPORT</b>
<b>FACILITIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An expanded and improved national facility footprint.</li> </ul>	<b>INFLUENCE</b>



# WATER POLO AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

**WIN WELL** - Enabling our national teams to Win Well when it matters most

SUCCESS INDICATORS	OUR ROLE
<p><b>HIGH PERFORMANCE TARGETS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LA 2028 Olympic Games: Ord Minnett Aussie Stingers = Podium, Ord Minnett Aussie Sharks = Top 8</li> <li>Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games: Ord Minnett Aussie Stingers = Gold, Ord Minnett Aussie Sharks = Podium</li> </ul>	<b>DRIVE</b>
<p><b>PERFORMANCE PATHWAY ENVIRONMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable environments are in place to ensure a strong pipeline of high-quality athletes is consistently ready for selection to the Ord Minnett Aussie Stingers and Ord Minnett Aussie Sharks.</li> </ul>	<b>SUPPORT</b>
<p><b>AUSTRALIAN WATER POLO LEAGUE (AWL)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The AWL is a high-quality, financially sustainable, national performance pathway competition - featuring both domestic and international teams - that significantly contributes to the identification and development of athlete, coach, and referee talent, while also connecting the sport with a broader audience.</li> </ul>	<b>DRIVE / SUPPORT / INFLUENCE</b>



# WATER POLO AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

## WHAT WE WILL DO TO BRING OUR PLAN TO LIFE

By effectively delivering the **key initiatives** within the Plan across its lifecycle, we will bring **2032+ POWERED BY PURPOSE** to life. These initiatives are in addition to the many business-as-usual activities of WPA staff, contractors and volunteers.

## OUR THREE PLANNING HORIZONS

We are taking a staged approach to how we plan for the thriving future of Water Polo in Australia, with our Strategic Plan spanning the LA 2028 and Brisbane 2032 Olympic cycles. **2032+ POWERED BY PURPOSE** will be delivered across 3 planning horizons:

**ENHANCE (2025-26)**

**PERFORM (2027-28)**

**EXCEL (2029-32)**

*Importantly, WPA will develop annual operational plans and budgets to guide the implementation and review of our Strategic Plan across its lifespan. Timeframes attached to the execution of key strategic initiatives are a guide and may change across the lifespan of the Strategy.*

## HORIZON MATRIX

The matrix below guides when WPA plans activate its key strategic initiatives.

KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	ENHANCE (2025-26)	PERFORM (2027-28)	Excel (2029-32)
2032 HP Strategy Execution	●	●	●
Governance Enhancement Plan	●	●	●
Member Organisation Partnership Program	●	●	●
Athlete Development Framework	●		
Cultural Blueprint	●		
Play Well Strategy	●		
Commercial Strategy	●		
Digital Strategy	●		
AWL Accelerator Program		●	●
Facility Strategy			●
Parliamentary Friends of Water Polo			●

# WATER POLO AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

## PROJECT MATRIX

The matrix below maps each of the key strategic initiatives to the success indicators they will contribute to, that are additional to the many business-as-usual tasks. This process ensures our work is always aligned to our Plan and emphasises how, as a small, vibrant organisation, we work collaboratively as one team, and how key initiatives contribute to the achievement of multiple, cross priority area success indicators.

OUR SUCCESS INDICATORS	OUR KEY INITIATIVES										
	Governance Enhancement Plan	Cultural Blueprint	Commercial Strategy	Digital Strategy	MO Partnership Program	Parliamentary Friends of Water Polo	Play Well Strategy	Facility Strategy	Athlete Development Framework	AWL Accelerator Program	2032 HP Strategy Execution
<b>LEAD WELL - STRENGTHENING WPA'S CAPABILITY TO ACHIEVE OUR PURPOSE</b>											
WPA achieves tier 1 ASC governance maturity benchmarks	●										
WPA's organisational culture success metrics improve annually	●	●									
WPA and our Member Organisations have aligned planning and reporting frameworks	●		●		●		●				
WPA achieves an annual turnover exceeding \$20 million by 2032			●		●	●	●				●
Less than 40% of total revenue is derived from government funding by 2032			●				●				
Retain 30% of revenue derived from membership fees by 2032			●								
Fit-for-purpose digital systems enhance organisational performance			●	●			●				
WPA has funded Memorandums of Understanding in place with each Member Organisation, enabling them to effectively deliver national priorities locally			●		●		●				
<b>PLAY WELL - SUPPORTING THE WATER POLO COMMUNITY TO GROW THE GAME LIKE NEVER BEFORE</b>											
Accurate, real-time data is used to promote water polo its impact			●	●	●		●				
Increased visibility of water polo across broader audiences			●	●	●		●				
30,000 playing members by 2032			●	●	●		●	●			
A growing network of clubs			●	●	●		●	●			
Increased membership diversity			●	●	●		●	●			
Increased engagement in participation programs			●	●	●		●	●			
Increased engagement with WPA-owned and managed events			●	●	●		●	●			
More coaches, referees, and volunteers			●	●	●		●	●			
An expanded and improved national facility footprint			●	●	●		●	●			
<b>WIN WELL - ENABLING OUR NATIONAL TEAMS TO WIN WELL WHEN IT MATTERS MOST</b>											
LA 2028: Stingers = Podium, Sharks = Top 8			●	●				●	●	●	●
A pipeline of high-quality athletes is ready for Sharks and Stingers selection for each BME			●	●	●			●	●	●	●
The AWL is a high-quality, financially sustainable, national performance pathway competition - featuring domestic and international teams			●		●			●	●	●	●

# WATER POLO AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

## OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

As we work together to deliver our 2025-2032+ Strategic Plan, we commit to strengthening the meaningful connection between water polo and all Australians.

It is important that our membership and delivery system reflect a modern, progressive, and diverse Australia.

We want all Australians to see themselves in our sport - a vision we believe will drive participation growth and expand our talent pool across both performance and development pathways.

We will continue to foster a more open and inclusive sport, with WPA leading by example and championing this commitment.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

WPA is committed to implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. We take seriously our responsibility to provide environments that are caring, nurturing and safe.

- ✓ We are committed to keeping children and young people safe.
- ✓ We encourage the involvement of children and young people in our sport.
- ✓ We involve families and the broader water polo community in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- ✓ We promote equity and respect diversity.
- ✓ We ensure that our people are suitable and supported to work with children and young people.
- ✓ We encourage reporting of all complaints and concerns.
- ✓ We provide our staff, contractors and volunteers with ongoing education and training.
- ✓ We maintain a Sport Integrity Australia compliant National Integrity Framework applied consistently across all levels of the sport.

## OUR CONNECTION TO AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In 2023 WPA took a key step on its journey of reconciliation through sport, with the launch of its **'Reflect' - Reconciliation Action Plan**.

WPA believes reconciliation is a vital component of our social impact responsibility, but more importantly acknowledges the potential to support the water polo community to have a greater connection with the history of our country, the lands and waters in which water polo is played and the cultures that can be learned from.

We welcome and will support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples into our great sport. We will work to connect Water Polo players, coaches and administrators to this ancient culture, and create more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to contribute to us achieving our purpose.

*We acknowledge the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of this nation, the traditional custodians of the lands and seas on which we live and play. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present, and emerging. Through this Strategic Plan, we are committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters, and seas. We recognise the outstanding contribution they make to sport in Australia and celebrate the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.*



**WATER POLO  
AUSTRALIA**

