

# COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

**DARREN BIRCH**  
GENERAL MANAGER

Club and AFL members received free entry to NAB Challenge matches and ticket prices for the Toyota AFL Finals Series were held at 2013 levels.

**S**eason 2015 was all about the fans, with the AFL striving to improve the affordability of attending matches and enhancing the fan experience at games.

For the first time in more than 10 years, AFL and club members received free general admission entry into NAB Challenge matches in which their team was competing, while the price of base general admission tickets during the Toyota Premiership Season remained the same level as 2014.

Fans attending the Toyota AFL Finals Series and Grand Final were also greeted to ticket prices at the same level as 2013, after a price freeze for the second consecutive year.

NAB AFL Auskick celebrated 20 years, highlighting the important partnership

with NAB and its continued support of the AFL's talent pathway.

The AFL welcomed four new corporate partners in CrownBet, Woolworths, McDonald's and 2XU to further strengthen the AFL's ongoing development of commercial operations.

AFL club membership continued to break records by reaching a total of 836,136 members nationally, a growth of 3.93 per cent on 2014.

In season 2015, the Marketing and Research Insights team moved within the Commercial Operations team, ensuring greater integration across membership, ticketing and corporate partners. The Research Insights team undertook more than 60 projects, allowing fans, via the 'Fan Focus' panel, to influence future strategic directions of the AFL. →

**PRIDE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**  
The Showdown rivalry between Eddie Betts' Adelaide Crows and Port Adelaide continued in 2015, with the round 16 clash drawing a record crowd of 53,518. The Crows won a thriller by three points.





## CORPORATE PARTNERS

The AFL continued to enjoy partnerships with several domestic and international companies in 2015, including prominent new relationships with CrownBet, Woolworths, McDonald's and 2XU.

The AFL would like to acknowledge the generous support of the following corporate partners in 2015:

### TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION AUSTRALIA

The 2015 season marked Toyota Australia's 11th year as the Premier Partner of the AFL. This enduring relationship is one of the most successful in Australian sport and includes naming rights to the Toyota AFL Premiership Season, Toyota AFL Finals Series, Toyota AFL Grand Final Parade and Toyota AFL Grand Final.

Toyota's passion for football inspires it to continue supporting grassroots clubs through the *Toyota Good for Footy Program*, celebrate the greats with the *Legendary Moments* campaign and deliver the excitement of "Big September" to regional fans through the Retiring Legends Lap of Honour, which culminated with retired Port Adelaide star Kane Cornes escorting the premiership cup on to the MCG at the 2015 Toyota AFL Grand Final.

**Toyota continued to bring its AFL partnership to life across a wide array of activations and initiatives, including:**

- Toyota Legendary Moments is one of the longest-running and most-loved advertising campaigns in Australian sport. This year Toyota took legends to new heights, recreating Michael Long's unforgettable dash down the wing in the '93 Grand Final in style with the help of Steve Curry and Dave Lawson and a vintage bi-plane.
- Toyota launched the Good for Footy Raffle to make it easy for clubs to raise money to grow the future of the game. Toyota donated three new cars to the prize pool and clubs got to keep 100 per cent of the proceeds from every ticket sold. A total of 249 clubs across Australia registered, raising more than \$387,000. This builds on the



## CORPORATE PARTNERS

These generous partners support Australia's Game

### PREMIER PARTNER



TOYOTA

### MAJOR PARTNERS



### OFFICIAL PARTNERS



### IN GOOD HANDS

Retired Port Adelaide star Kane Cornes was given the honour of escorting the premiership cup on to the MCG at the 2015 Toyota AFL Grand Final.





\$2.6 million that has already been raised by the Toyota dealership network through the Good for Footy Program.

- The Retiring Legends Lap of Honour returned to bring the excitement of Grand Final week to 11 regional towns across Victoria. Thousands of fans got the chance to see the 2015 AFL premiership cup up close, participate in football clinics and meet greats of the game.
- The Toyota AFL Grand Final Parade, presented by the City of Melbourne, attracted a crowd of more than 150,000, who cheered on the teams as they made their way to the Toyota AFL Live Site at Yarra Park.
- The Toyota AFL Live Site within the Foxtel Footy Festival gave hundreds of fans the chance to take on fun footy activities, meet their AFL heroes and score plenty of great giveaways.
- On Grand Final day, Toyota Premiership Cup Ambassador Kane Cornes led a procession of retiring greats on to the MCG for The Legends Lap of Honour – giving fans one last chance to say goodbye to some of the their heroes.

## CARLTON & UNITED BREWERIES

The 2015 season saw the launch of CUB's dual-code promotion My Footy Rewards, with thousands of AFL and NRL prizes on offer as part of a national on-pack and on-premise promotion. Prizes included up to 100,000 general admission tickets to MCG games throughout the season, exclusive AFL money-can't-buy experiences and AFL club-branded merchandise. CUB utilised AFL Ambassador Jonathan Brown to headline the promotion, with Brown featuring in print and television campaigns, as well as PR activities.

The My Footy Rewards program had more than 340,000 entries with 95,000 prizes won.

This year also saw the introduction of Carlton Draught Barrel Time, an at-match activation run at every Victorian Friday night game. Two pre-qualified kickers punted for their chance to win \$5000 cash for their local football club and also for themselves, as well as a trip to the US with a chance to join Nathan Chapman's Punting Academy, Pro Kick Australia. Trials were conducted across Victoria to identify a pool of 28 top kickers. The three biggest

punters of the year kicked for the major prize at quarter-time of the AFL Grand Final. The winner, Dane Roy, kicked a total of 73m. A landing page was created on [AFL.com.au](http://AFL.com.au) featuring weekly results, photos and highlight videos, and AFL Media's social channels provided support for Carlton Draught Barrel Time throughout the season, with more than 1.5 million impressions delivered across Facebook.

*Carlton Draught Friday Front Bar* was a major highlight in brand-funded digital content for AFL Media and CUB in 2015. Filmed at the All Nations Hotel in Richmond, episodes were released each Friday during the home and away season and averaged more than 17,000 views across AFL's digital platforms. The series culminated with a Grand Final episode filmed at the General Assembly at South Wharf, with more than 140 people attending.

The popular Carlton Draught Grand Final Front Bar returned in 2015 and was relocated within the newly developed Foxtel Footy Festival precinct in Yarra Park outside the MCG. Carlton Draught ran the event in partnership with the AFL this year and more than 2500 guests were given the opportunity to enjoy this private hospitality environment.

The Foxtel Footy Festival also welcomed the Strongbow Cider Garden, formed as part of the newly created Taste of Football experience within the precinct. The Strongbow Cider Garden was open from Wednesday, September 30, to Saturday, October 3, with more than 250,000 AFL fans visiting the Foxtel Footy Festival precinct over four days and nights.

## COCA-COLA

As the official soft drink partner of the AFL, Coca-Cola worked closely with the AFL to utilise and maximise available assets throughout the season. This included digital media opportunities, ticketing and hospitality, promotions and money-can't-buy experiences with a particular focus on the Toyota AFL Finals Series.

To celebrate the 2015 Toyota AFL Premiership Season launch, Coca-Cola and the AFL worked on a successful promotion across Caltex stores nationally that saw winners being treated to the Ultimate MCB AFL Experience with their chosen team. The AFL and its clubs supported the promotion via their Facebook posts

which greatly contributed to the success of the campaign. On Grand Final Day, Coke Rewards members and a select group of lucky customers were also provided with the opportunity to walk on to the MCG to watch the teams warm up.

The AFL community is grateful for the ongoing support of Coca-Cola South Pacific and Coca-Cola Amatil as highly valued corporate partners.

## NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK

The NAB Challenge heralded the return of AFL in 2015 and saw the game taken to iconic regional and suburban football grounds across Australia, with 27 games in 16 days.

Matches were played at historic AFL venues including Whitten Oval, the home of football in western metropolitan Melbourne, as well as non-traditional venues and communities not usually exposed to elite AFL matches such as Moreton Bay in Queensland, Mandurah in Western Australia and Port Lincoln in South Australia.

In total, 207,489 AFL fans attended NAB Challenge games, with the average attendance at regional games up 34 per cent year-on-year.

AFL fans were also watching games on television and online, with 1,768,424 people tuning into games on Fox Footy and 112,352 fans watching via the AFL Live App online.

The cumulative viewership total was 1,880,776, up one per cent year-on-year. There were 32 NAB Supergoals kicked with NAB donating \$15,500 worth of Sherrin footballs to AFL players' junior football clubs around the country and once again in 2015, NAB hosted a number of business networking breakfasts and lunches featuring CrocMedia and AFL talent.

NAB AFL Auskick clinics and grid games were also arranged at all NAB Challenge games, with a key objective of driving awareness and registrations of the junior development program.

For the first time in 2015, NAB utilised the Sydney Swans-Fremantle NAB Challenge match at Drummoyne in Sydney as a platform to promote awareness of its support of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community and engage the pride@nab program in the AFL.

The 2015 season marked the 20th year that NAB AFL Auskick has been running in every state and territory of

**TAKING THE GAME TO THE FANS**  
Adelaide skipper Taylor Walker leads his team on to the field for the NAB Challenge clash with North Melbourne at Centenary Park in Port Lincoln.



Australia. NAB AFL Auskick experienced a 2.5 per cent increase in participation in 2015 with 182,927 boys and girls from age five, taking part in the program through 2936 Auskick centres.

A total of 23,312 NAB AFL Auskicker of the Year entries were received, up more than 80 per cent year-on-year. Will Le Deux from Nagambie in Victoria was named the 2015 NAB AFL Auskicker of the Year.

The NAB AFL Auskick Free-Kick initiative ran for the second consecutive year. In total, \$30,889 was provided to Auskick centres and the program is set to be a big focus in 2016.

NAB's Local Activity Fund (LAF) saw \$101,647 provided to local NAB branches, enabling them to provide additional value to their local NAB AFL Auskick centre. A number of activities are supported through the fund, including clinics, weekly prizes and sausage sizzles.

The NAB AFL Under-16 and Under-18 Championships were dominated by

Victoria Country and Queensland. Vic Country took out the Division 1 title in both age groups and Queensland won the Division 2 title for both age groups. Not surprisingly, the NAB AFL Under-18 All-Australian squad was dominated with players from the Vic Country team, with eight of its young stars winning selection. Paul Henriksen, in his first year as coach of the Vic Country under-18 team, was named NAB AFL All-Australian coach, with Queensland's Adrian Fletcher the assistant.

Brenton Sanderson was named the senior coach of the NAB AFL Academy in January, taking over from Brad Johnson. Sanderson now oversees Level 1 and 2 Academy squads around Australia.

The NAB All-Star curtain-raiser game again took place before the 2015 Toyota AFL Grand Final. The match was played between the Australian under-17 team (selected from the NAB AFL Academy) and the Allies, a team made up of the best players from NSW/ACT, the Northern

Territory, Queensland and Tasmania who were eligible for the 2015 NAB AFL Draft.

The NAB AFL Rising Star function held at Crown Palladium saw Melbourne forward Jesse Hogan crowned the winner with 49 out of a possible 50 votes. Carlton's Patrick Cripps finished second with 41 votes.

The 2015 NAB AFL Draft Combine was held at Etihad Stadium in Melbourne between Thursday, October 8, and Sunday, October 11. In total, 85 potential draftees underwent medical and physical testing.

West Australian midfielder Josh Schoenfeld capped off a strong week at the Combine by setting a record in the 3km time trial, running the distance in 9min 15sec to eclipse the record set by Sydney Swans Academy player Jack Hiscox last year (9min 18sec).

With big names moving AFL clubs, there was no shortage of interest in the NAB AFL Trade Period. [AFL.com.au](http://AFL.com.au) provided extensive coverage across all



platforms, with the daily live blog, NAB AFL Trade Radio asset and daily social updates recording the greatest engagement. Across desktop and mobile, the NAB AFL Trade Hub attracted 582,000 unique visitors, with the live blog NAB Trade Talk being the dominant destination within the hub.

To round out the year, key defender Jacob Weir was crowned the No. 1 draft pick after being selected by Carlton at the 2015 NAB AFL Draft at the Adelaide Convention Centre on November 24.

His selection allowed the Brisbane Lions to pick key forward Josh Schache at No. 2 and the Sydney Swans catapulted into proceedings at No. 3, having matched Melbourne's bid for Swans Academy midfielder Callum Mills.

A total of 2200 tickets to the event were exhausted within 45 minutes of their release and on the night 145,261 viewers tuned into Fox Footy's Channels 503 and 504 to watch the event.

## GATORADE

Gatorade and the AFL continued to have a strong partnership in 2015, the second year of a three-year partnership.

The Gatorade Match Day Moments program ran throughout the year and encouraged and rewarded clubs for correct utilisation of Gatorade equipment and products in both match-day and training environments. In addition to the strong branding via the use of equipment on the field of play, Gatorade also secured signage rights for interchange benches at Etihad Stadium, Adelaide Oval, Gabba, Metricon Stadium, SCG, Spotless Stadium, Simonds Stadium, Domain Stadium and the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Two new Gatorade ambassadors – Sydney Swans' Dan Hannebery and Luke Parker – joined existing ambassadors Gary Ablett and Scott Pendlebury.

All ambassadors were engaged to drive the promotion of the partnership and provide links to teams within the three key states of Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales.

Hannebery and Parker were hosted during the pre-season at the Gatorade Sports Science Institute in Florida along with Joel Selwood and Tom Hawkins from Geelong, where the players gained access to the facilities and best sports science testing in the world.

Gatorade also utilised footage and imagery of its ambassadors for use on pack, in promotions and in television commercials.

Gatorade ran several promotions via its key customer channels to drive volume and promote awareness of the official partnership with the AFL. The main marketing campaign focused on 'fuelling the future', which included a television commercial featuring upcoming AFL players from the NAB AFL Academy program and current AFL stars Ablett and Pendlebury.

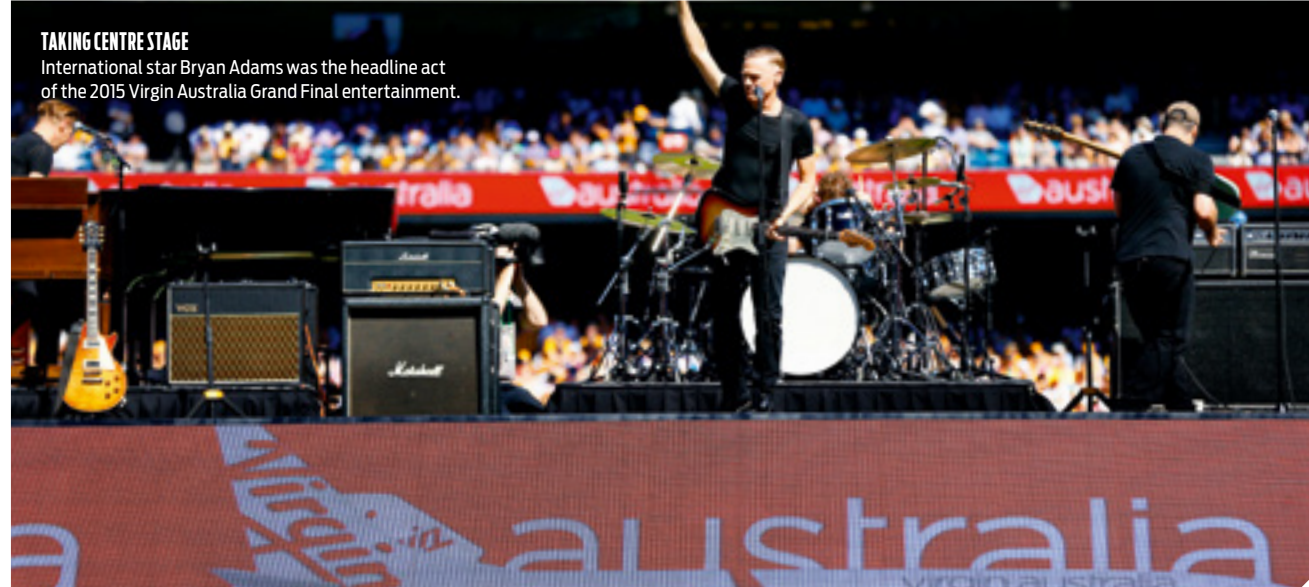
In addition to the promotional activity, Gatorade brought global ambassador and Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton to Australia for a week of immersion with Richmond.

Gatorade accompanied the International Rules team to New York at the end of the season where six players underwent GSSI testing before the International Rules training camp as part of a launch of customised hydration.

All 18 AFL clubs provided Gatorade with a number of player appearances and written testimonials regarding their experience with Gatorade.



**POWERED BY GATORADE**  
Retiring Hawthorn star Brian Lake drove off into the sunset after claiming his third consecutive premiership medallion.



**TAKING CENTRE STAGE**  
International star Bryan Adams was the headline act of the 2015 Virgin Australia Grand Final entertainment.

## VIRGIN AUSTRALIA

The partnership between the AFL and Virgin Australia – the AFL's official airline since 2011 – flourished in 2015. Virgin Australia successfully leveraged this integrated partnership through a number of activities.

The 2015 Virgin Australia Grand Final entertainment saw two of the world's biggest recording artists – Bryan Adams and Ellie Goulding – provide pre- and post-match entertainment for fans. The acts received extensive media coverage in the lead-up to and post the Grand Final, through social and traditional channels. Post-match, 20,000 fans attended the Virgin Australia Premiership Party which received a national audience of 187,373 across metro and regional markets.

The fly-over which saw a Virgin Australia aircraft fly across the MCG was also amplified in 2015 with the aircraft continuing a flight path that resembled the outline of the Premiership Cup. The flight path was shared on Virgin Australia and AFL social channels and quickly became a viral sensation with a reach of more than 1.5 million.

As the most sought-after party during Grand Final week, the Virgin Australia Grand Final Party was back again. More than 800 guests came together at Melbourne's newly renovated venue Alumbra.

Stars of the AFL, along with a number of celebrities and influences from around the world, were among the guests who enjoyed this year's theme of 'beyond your imagination', with guests treated to world-class cuisine and entertainment inspired by the Middle East.

It was the second year as the naming rights partner of the All-Australian Awards.

The Virgin Australia All-Australian Awards were attended by 250 VIP guests and provided Virgin Australia with a great platform for brand integration with a dedicated hub on [AFL.com.au](http://AFL.com.au) and the 'Pick Your Best 22 Competition', attracting more than 10,000 registrants. The awards also received strong broadcast, PR and social media coverage in the lead-up to and during the event itself. The 45-minute pre-event program on Fox Footy attracted a national average audience of 122,297. Fox Footy's daily program, *AFL 360*, broadcast live from the All-Australian event, attracted a national average audience of 99,712, while *On The Couch*, also broadcast live, attracted a national average audience of 73,480. The gross cumulative national audience for all three programs broadcast from the event was 295,489.

The 2015 Virgin Australia International Rules Test was played at Croke Park in Dublin. The Australian team made up exclusively of past and present All-Australian players also attended a pre-match training camp in New York.

To coincide with the Toyota AFL Finals Series, Virgin Australia launched a new national television advertising campaign to promote 'The Business', the new business class offering on board Virgin Australia's A330 aircraft. Highlighting Virgin Australia's partnership with the AFL, the series of four commercials centred around four of the leading coaches in the game: Adam Simpson (West Coast Eagles), Ross Lyon (Fremantle), John Longmire (Sydney Swans) and Damien Hardwick (Richmond).

The AFL's innovative Any Game, Anywhere travel platform was relaunched as AFL Travel – enabling AFL fans to

experience the best of the 'away game' destinations and enjoy match tickets, lounge access and match-day guarantee.

The AFL Golden Passport campaign was launched alongside the launch of AFL Travel to celebrate AFL's biggest footy fan. Across the year there was a strong focus on building awareness of the new branding and improved product offering.

As well as building on the AFL Travel database of 60,000-plus subscribers, there was also a big focus on club-specific creative utilising geo-targeted and audience-targeted display activity across the AFL and assets to provide tailored messages. The 2015 campaigns utilised club and AFL databases, reaching more than 600,000 AFL supporters and fans.

## CROWNBET

CrownBet was announced the official wagering partner of the AFL after launching in March 2015.

The partnership has helped CrownBet successfully carve out a top-tier market space within a competitive market. CrownBet brings professionalism, world-class customer experience, a category-leading native app interface and true differentiation through an unparalleled loyalty program, which has been utilised by a significant number of AFL fans.

In partnership with the AFL, CrownBet was successful in launching category-first initiatives such as a life-changing Round One Tipping Competition, Pick a Winner, The Crownlow and Game of Drones. CrownBet also revolutionised the AFL Match Centre by integrating live odds on the mobile platform for the first time.



**THE BIG APPLE**

AFL CEO Gillon McLachlan joins players and officials at Times Square during the Virgin Australia International Rules tour to New York.

## EVENTS AND HOSPITALITY

### MATCH-DAY FUNCTIONS

Throughout the 2015 Toyota AFL Finals Series and 2015 Toyota AFL Grand Final, more than 17,000 corporate guests were entertained at AFL events at venues such as the MCG and its surrounds, Domain Stadium, ANZ Stadium, Crown Palladium and the Royal Exhibition Building.

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull MP, Her Excellency The Hon Linda Dessau – Governor of Victoria, Federal Leader of the Opposition Bill Shorten MP, AFL Legends Bob Skilton, Ron Barassi, Kevin Bartlett, Kevin Murray, John Nicholls, Peter

Hudson and Leigh Matthews, actors Chris and Liam Hemsworth and former Australian cricket captain Ricky Ponting were among the guests who attended the 2015 Toyota AFL Grand Final Day Official Function.

### MAJOR EVENTS

Major events during 2015 included the Toyota AFL Premiership Season Launch, the Australian Football Hall of Fame Induction Dinner and the AFL Women's Industry Lunch. In a time when focus on the women's game continues to grow, the AFL Women's Industry Lunch continued to go from strength to strength and featured inspiring women within the AFL industry. Other key events included the NAB AFL Rising Star Award function, the Virgin Australia AFL All-Australian Awards, the Charles Brownlow Medal, the Virgin Australia International Rules tour to New York and Ireland and the NAB AFL Draft in Adelaide.

### TOYOTA AFL GRAND FINAL WEEK EVENTS

The Foxtel Footy Festival and Toyota AFL Grand Final Live Site moved to a new location outside the MCG in Yarra Park in 2015, attracting more than 350,000 fans to the site over four days.

The event was a celebration of all things football with children's activities, player and celebrity appearances, music and food. It also included the LifeStyle Taste of Football curated by Vue de monde chef Shannon Bennett, Presto Movies at the MCG, the Music Hub featuring the Antipodean Rock 'n' Roll Collective, the Carlton Draught Grand Final Front Bar and the Interchange.

In changing the traditional route to finish at the Yarra Park live site stage, the Toyota AFL Grand Final Parade, presented by the City of Melbourne, attracted 150,000 people starting at the Old

Treasury Building. Fans enjoyed the electric atmosphere in perfect weather on a newly installed public holiday in Melbourne.

The September Club provided first-class service and atmosphere to guests, with the hospitality precinct again the place to be on Toyota AFL Grand Final Day. More than 1850 corporate and broadcast partners, key industry stakeholders and VIPs enjoyed the best hospitality experience the AFL has to offer before and after the big match. Australian rock icon Diesel and other performers entertained guests late into the night.

The Centre Square precinct at Birrarung Marr underwent a significant facelift, with a more intimate and premium environment delivered for attendees. More than 3700 guests attended Centre Square across the Friday and Saturday and were treated to a high-quality hospitality experience, as well as enjoying reserved seating at the Toyota AFL Grand Final.

Those who attended the Final Siren post-game party were treated to Australian rock legends Daryl Braithwaite and James Reyne performing live.

The 2015 Virgin Australia Grand Final Pre-Game Show saw Bryan Adams and Ellie Goulding perform, along with Chris Isaak and Mike Brady, who sang *Up There Cazaly*. Australian songstress Kate Ceberano performed the national anthem.

Following the biggest match of the year, the Virgin Australia Premiership Party saw Adams and Goulding again perform to a crowd of more than 20,000 as part of a free concert held on the MCG, which included the presentation of Hawthorn's 2015 premiership team.

### AFL PREMIERSHIP CLUB

The AFL Premiership Club continued to grow, with more than 780 members. This year saw an increased level of engagement

with the membership base, with a number of non-AFL and non-game-day networking events hosted to drive greater opportunities for the businesses within the Premiership Club network. The Premiership Club continues to offer members access to the best seating, dining rooms and bar facilities at the MCG and Etihad Stadium throughout the Toyota AFL Premiership Season.

### AFL EVENT OFFICE

The AFL Event Office is the AFL's official destination for Toyota AFL Grand Final Day ticket and event experiences. In 2015, the AFL Event Office offered a range of new and refreshed package options, with the new Foxtel Footy Festival hugely popular with fans as part of their overall experience. There was an unprecedented demand for packages, with all sold out in early September for the first time.




# ATTENDANCES

A total of 6,351,578 spectators attended the 197 matches of the 2015 Toyota AFL Premiership Season, with average attendance per match on par with the previous season.

With a focus on scheduling blockbuster matches in the traditional Saturday afternoon timeslot, all three Victorian venues saw an increase in 2015, with the MCG recording a growth of three per cent year-on-year. The highlight was a crowd of 83,493 for the Carlton-Richmond match in the opening round, the third largest attendance for a round one match in AFL history. This growth was offset by drops of 9.6 per cent at ANZ Stadium, 4.7 per cent at the Gabba and 23.2 per cent at Metricon Stadium.

With an improved on-field showing, the GWS Giants increased their attendances by 16.9 per cent in 2015. The Giants hit record levels at Spotless Stadium when 19,507 attended the round 21 match against the Sydney Swans and again at Manuka Oval in Canberra when the club hosted Geelong in front of 14,667 fans.

 The AFL ensured ticket prices remained affordable

**SHINING BRIGHT**  
A record average of 44,623 fans attended matches at the new-look Adelaide Oval.

It was a record-setting year for attendances at Adelaide Oval, with the Showdown in round 16 recording the biggest crowd for an AFL match in South Australia. The two highest attendances seen at Blundstone Arena in Hobart were also recorded with 17,544 in round six and 14,346 in round 20.

Across the nine matches of the 2015 Toyota AFL Finals Series, crowds were down 8.9 per cent on 2014 with a total attendance of 519,008. The 2015 Toyota AFL Grand Final was attended by 98,632 fans, slightly down on the 2014 match attendance of 99,454.

Across all AFL matches, NAB Challenge, Toyota AFL Premiership Season and Toyota AFL Finals Series, crowds totalled 7,078,075.

| ATTENDANCE SUMMARY |           |           |          |       |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------|
|                    | 2015      | 2014      | Variance | %     |
| NAB Challenge      | 207,489   | 135,564   | 71,925   | 53.1% |
| Premiership Season | 6,351,578 | 6,384,742 | -33,164  | -0.5% |
| Finals Series      | 519,008   | 569,828   | -50,820  | -8.9% |
| TOTALS             | 7,078,075 | 7,090,134 | -12,059  | -0.2% |

GWS Giants recorded the biggest increase in home game attendances, averaging 10,786 fans in 2015, compared with 9226 in the previous season – representing a year-on-year increase of 16.9 per cent.

Richmond recorded the second highest rate of growth in 2015 with an increase of 15.5 per cent in home game attendances compared with 2014.

**The top five clubs in terms of average attendance per home game were:**

- Richmond 49,877
- Collingwood 47,259
- Adelaide Crows 46,487
- Port Adelaide 42,929
- Essendon 42,505

The average attendance per round was 276,156 (32,242 per game).

## ATTENDANCE BY VENUE

| Venue            | 2015 Games | Attendance | Average | 2014 Games | Attendance | Average | % Variance |
|------------------|------------|------------|---------|------------|------------|---------|------------|
| Adelaide Oval    | 21         | 937,090    | 44,623  | 22         | 999,254    | 45,421  | -1.8%      |
| ANZ Stadium      | 3          | 88,706     | 29,569  | 3          | 98,080     | 32,693  | -9.6%      |
| Aurora Stadium   | 4          | 55,402     | 13,851  | 4          | 55,299     | 13,825  | 0.2%       |
| Blundstone Arena | 3          | 43,901     | 14,634  | 2          | 21,343     | 10,672  | 37.1%      |
| Cazalys Stadium  | 1          | 9449       | 9449    | 1          | 9746       | 9746    | -3.0%      |
| Domain Stadium   | 22         | 794,167    | 36,099  | 22         | 771,414    | 35,064  | 2.9%       |
| Etihad Stadium   | 46         | 1,302,648  | 28,318  | 48         | 1,355,552  | 28,241  | 0.3%       |
| Gabba            | 11         | 206,911    | 18,810  | 11         | 217,178    | 19,743  | -4.7%      |
| MCG              | 45         | 2,174,807  | 48,329  | 45         | 2,111,768  | 46,928  | 3.0%       |
| Metricon Stadium | 11         | 135,966    | 12,361  | 11         | 177,017    | 16,092  | -23.2%     |
| SCG              | 8          | 258,029    | 32,254  | 8          | 260,461    | 32,558  | -0.9%      |
| Simonds Stadium  | 8          | 196,987    | 24,623  | 7          | 177,785    | 25,398  | -3.0%      |
| Spotless Stadium | 8          | 88,256     | 11,032  | 8          | 76,868     | 9609    | 14.8%      |
| StarTrack Oval   | 3          | 30,395     | 10,132  | 3          | 24,623     | 8208    | 23.4%      |
| TIO Stadium      | 1          | 11,873     | 11,873  | 1          | 9290       | 9290    | 27.8%      |
| TIO Traeger Park | 1          | 4866       | 4866    | 1          | 5655       | 5655    | -14.0%     |
| Westpac Stadium  | 1          | 12,125     | 12,125  | 1          | 13,409     | 13,409  | -9.6%      |
| TOTALS           | 197        | 6,351,578  | 32,242  | 198        | 6,384,742  | 32,246  | 0.0%       |

## HOME GAME ATTENDANCE BY CLUB

| Club              | 2015      | Average | 2014      | Average | % Variance |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|------------|
| Adelaide Crows    | 464,870   | 46,487  | 519,909   | 47,264  | -1.6%      |
| Brisbane Lions    | 206,911   | 18,810  | 217,178   | 19,743  | -4.7%      |
| Carlton           | 423,018   | 38,456  | 433,563   | 39,415  | -2.4%      |
| Collingwood       | 519,844   | 47,259  | 528,099   | 48,009  | -1.6%      |
| Essendon          | 467,552   | 42,505  | 495,741   | 45,067  | -5.7%      |
| Fremantle         | 398,307   | 36,210  | 395,238   | 35,931  | 0.8%       |
| Geelong Cats      | 325,403   | 29,582  | 373,068   | 33,915  | -12.8%     |
| Gold Coast Suns   | 135,966   | 12,361  | 177,017   | 16,092  | -23.2%     |
| GWS Giants        | 118,651   | 10,786  | 101,491   | 9226    | 16.9%      |
| Hawthorn          | 424,884   | 38,626  | 402,300   | 36,573  | 5.6%       |
| Melbourne         | 276,802   | 25,164  | 282,035   | 25,640  | -1.9%      |
| North Melbourne   | 282,417   | 25,674  | 268,661   | 24,424  | 5.1%       |
| Port Adelaide     | 472,220   | 42,929  | 479,345   | 43,577  | -1.5%      |
| Richmond          | 548,642   | 49,877  | 475,155   | 43,196  | 15.5%      |
| St Kilda          | 285,232   | 25,930  | 256,302   | 23,300  | 11.3%      |
| Sydney Swans      | 346,735   | 31,521  | 358,541   | 32,595  | -3.3%      |
| West Coast Eagles | 395,860   | 35,987  | 376,176   | 34,198  | 5.2%       |
| Western Bulldogs  | 258,264   | 23,479  | 244,923   | 22,266  | 5.4%       |
| TOTALS            | 6,351,578 | 32,242  | 6,384,742 | 32,246  | 0.0%       |

## TICKETING

In 2015, the AFL ensured ticket prices remained affordable while simplifying the ticket-buying process with the base general admission ticket prices remaining the same as 2014.

**2015 Toyota AFL Premiership Season – Base General Admission Ticket Prices**  
ADULT \$22  
CONCESSION \$13  
JUNIOR (under-15) \$3  
FAMILY \$44

The AFL removed the use of multiple configurations at the MCG and Etihad Stadium venues, with user-friendly maps implemented. The ticket-pricing strategy across the League delivered the best experience at the best value for members and fans, while elevating revenue and attendance for clubs.

For the second consecutive year, ticket prices for the 2015 Toyota AFL Finals Series, including the 2015 Toyota AFL Grand Final, were frozen, remaining unchanged from the previous year's prices. This was only the second time in nearly two decades that prices did not increase to attend the Grand Final.





CLUB MEMBERSHIP

AFL club membership continued to break records, reaching a total of 836,136 members nationally. This is a growth of 31,656 members (3.93 per cent) from 2014 and again the highest recorded figure in the game's history.

Port Adelaide, the Sydney Swans and the Western Bulldogs recorded double-digit growth and all but three clubs – the Adelaide Crows, Carlton and Collingwood – recording increases on their 2014 membership figures.

The Sydney Swans have led the clubs in membership growth with a 21.7 per cent rise thanks to a highly successful junior membership engagement program. The Western Bulldogs were second with an 11.68 per cent increase to 35,222 members and Port Adelaide continued its growth after its move to Adelaide Oval with membership growing to 14,219 members (36 per cent) in just two seasons.

Collingwood continues to be the largest-supported club in the competition with a total membership of 75,037, heading a list of eight clubs exceeding 50,000.

AFL MEMBERSHIP

AFL Membership posted strong results again in 2015, with a total of 55,301 members. This represented a slight decrease of 2.26 per cent on 2014. AFL Membership again had lower than industry churn rates of 3.71 per cent for Full members and 9.3 per cent for Silver members.

AFL Membership is made up of 31,017 Full members, 20,469 Silver members and 3270 Absentee members. With 49,239 members electing a club of support, AFL Membership accounts for 7.06 per cent of total club access members.

CONSUMER PRODUCTS

The Consumer Products program continued to perform strongly in 2015, with growth in on-field, gift and novelty and supporter apparel. The on-field program continued to expand, particularly for guernseys, with the injection of nine clubs producing Anzac Day round guernseys. Guernseys worn by players were retailed and auctioned with proceeds going to the RSL to support those who served. Additionally, trading and game cards continued to develop with a major expansion of the Select trading card app to incorporate digital card trading and the ability to buy packs online.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

| Club               | 2015    | 2014    | Variance | % Variance |
|--------------------|---------|---------|----------|------------|
| Adelaide Crows     | 52,920  | 54,249  | -1329    | -2.45%     |
| Brisbane Lions     | 25,408  | 24,012  | 1396     | 5.81%      |
| Carlton            | 47,305  | 47,485  | -180     | -0.38%     |
| Collingwood        | 75,037  | 79,347  | -4310    | -5.43%     |
| Essendon*          | 60,818  | 60,646  | 172      | 0.28%      |
| Fremantle*         | 51,433  | 48,777  | 2656     | 5.45%      |
| Geelong Cats*      | 44,312  | 43,803  | 509      | 1.16%      |
| Gold Coast Suns*   | 13,643  | 13,478  | 165      | 1.22%      |
| GWS GIANTS*        | 13,480  | 13,040  | 440      | 3.37%      |
| Hawthorn*          | 72,924  | 68,650  | 4274     | 6.23%      |
| Melbourne          | 35,953  | 35,911  | 42       | 0.12%      |
| North Melbourne*   | 41,012  | 39,060  | 1952     | 5.00%      |
| Port Adelaide*     | 54,057  | 48,968  | 5089     | 10.39%     |
| Richmond*          | 70,809  | 66,122  | 4687     | 7.09%      |
| St Kilda           | 32,746  | 30,739  | 2007     | 6.53%      |
| Sydney Swans*      | 48,836  | 40,126  | 8710     | 21.71%     |
| West Coast Eagles* | 60,221  | 58,529  | 1692     | 2.89%      |
| Western Bulldogs*  | 35,222  | 31,538  | 3684     | 11.68%     |
| TOTALS             | 836,136 | 804,480 | 31,656   | 3.93%      |

\*Record

With the introduction of the Foxtel Footy Festival, the Consumer Products division ran three major activations at the event, including the Women's AFL Style Lounge, with the key objective to increase the awareness of women's club merchandise.

The second was a ShopAFL pop-up retail outlet selling a wide range of the 18 clubs' merchandise through a collaboration with retail partner Infinite Retail. There was a Penguin reading corner placed within the wider Kids Zone.

Playcorp, the AFL's major supporter apparel partner, launched a new program focused on traditional 100 per cent wool knit guernseys, produced in conjunction with Australian Wool Innovations. The marketing and promotion surrounding the program was high, including television, radio, print and billboards and player ambassadorships and achieved media coverage valued at just under \$2 million across all platforms.

Since its launch in May 2014, ShopAFL has continued to grow. Comparing year-on-year statistics for the six-month period between June and October, online sales increased by 80 per cent. The number of orders and the quantity of units sold has seen a 50 per cent uplift, unique site visits have grown by 20 per cent and conversation rates are up by 30 per cent.

The merchandise operations model at Etihad Stadium changed for the 2015 season, with the rights awarded to the tenant clubs. The AFL Consumer Products department, together with Infinite Retail, worked alongside the clubs to ensure the merchandise offer was maximised and the fan experience improved from previous years.

AFL Stores also continued to deliver solid results across its 12-store footprint as well as its ecommerce site.

BEST OF BUDDIES

The Swans attracted a record average crowd of 48,836 a match in 2015.



ON THE WAY

West Coast midfielder Luke Shuey celebrates a goal during the Eagles' victory over North Melbourne in the second preliminary final at Domain Stadium.





The Sunday Funday campaign was launched to provide a targeted family product



#### RETURN OF THE FLOOD

Fans jumped at the chance for kick-to-kick after selected matches at the MCG.

## MARKETING & RESEARCH INSIGHTS

### RESEARCH INSIGHTS

The AFL's in-house research team undertook more than 60 projects in 2015. The 'Fan Focus' panel includes more than 11,000 fans, which ensures supporters have a voice in providing direct insights into the AFL's strategic direction.

Results from this research helped inform a number of fan-centric initiatives such as a focus on increased affordability at matches, a fan-friendly fixture to encourage strong attendance and a number of other fan initiatives, including Sunday Funday where children were admitted for free to games in Melbourne.

### MARKETING

The 2015 marketing strategy followed a business-wide focus on the fans and recognised their contribution to the game across all campaigns and activations. Key objectives were set to ensure marketing campaigns influenced the industry's positive results in brand health, reputation and attendances.

From NAB AFL Auskick to community footy, to the growing number of women playing the game and the passionate supporters who create the unique atmosphere at an AFL game, the AFL's 2015 marketing campaign focused on the fans.

This ensured connection with the heartland and showed appreciation for the people who make the game.

The You Make The Game campaign was well received by fans and non-fans alike with strong likability and increases in consideration to attend.

The Sunday Funday campaign was launched to provide a targeted family product with fans excited by the return

of kick-to-kick and strong feedback on 'kids in free' which saw a doubling of kids general admission attendances in Melbourne.

The reduction in food and beverage prices at selected stadiums as well as a bigger Woolworths AFL Playground ensured Sundays at the footy became an affordable day's entertainment for the whole family.

Australian media personality Mick Molloy was chosen to bring the campaign to life.

The season culminated with the All for the Finals campaign – a way for the AFL to acknowledge and celebrate the sacrifices and commitment our players (and fans) go to in order to get to the last month of the season and communicating that the AFL Finals is the premium sporting event of the year.

Key highlights of the campaign included an increased focus on unique digital content, with club finals vignettes receiving more than three million views through the partnership with Facebook.

#### READY TO ROAR

There were Lions big and small as Brisbane ran on to the field for the round 23 clash with the Western Bulldogs at the Gabba.

