



**AUSTRALIAN WEIGHTLIFTING FEDERATION LIMITED**

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2015-2018**

## BACKGROUND

### History

Established in 1947, the Australian Weightlifting Federation Limited (AWF), is recognised by the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), Australian Sports Commission (ASC), Australian Commonwealth Games Association (ACGA) and the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) as the national sporting organisation responsible for the governance, coordination and delivery of weightlifting in Australia. The AWF is a financial and full voting member of the IWF, Oceania Weightlifting Federation and the Commonwealth Weightlifting Federation. The AWF's constitutional owners comprise the eight State Member organisations.

### Context

#### *International competition landscape*

Despite the organisation and sport's relative size, weightlifting has remained a strong and consistent contributor to Australia's medal performance at Commonwealth Games events. At the most recent 2014 Glasgow Games, weightlifting contributed three medals, meeting ASC expectations.

Recent international events have seen the emergence of new weightlifting-strong nations. India, Canada and PNG were particularly successful at the recent Commonwealth Games, and at other international events, China, Korea and Eastern European nations such as Kazakhstan have shown dominance. To remain competitive on the world stage, the AWF recognises the need to be proactive, strengthening and innovating all aspects of its high performance program.

#### *Government expectations*

The ASC's funding of National Sport Organisation's (NSOs) has changed in recent years. The ASC has rationalised investment and more clearly defined measurable targets around performance expectations at benchmark events. For the AWF to achieve its targets, and at the same time, build grassroots participation and high performance pathways, strong investment is required. This will only be possible if the AWF leadership drives new strategies to grow the sport's membership base and attract revenue from non-traditional sources.

#### *Sport, fitness and health industries*

Weightlifting is a lifelong sport that enables people of all shapes, sizes and ages to participate. In response to the public's obsession with health, body image and wellbeing, the fitness industry is experiencing unprecedented growth with the emergence of a multitude of strength/power based fitness activities. Movements like CrossFit have doubled in participation year on year. This is reflected in the number of CrossFit Open Competitions in the Australian region that have jumped from just over 5,000 in 2012 to almost 11,000 in 2013<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://games.crossfit.com/article/crossfit-goes-global>

The AWF can improve commercial outcomes by playing a stronger role in supporting this, and other aspects of the recreation and fitness industries. Many of these pursuits could benefit from weightlifting's expertise in correct lifting techniques and effective training regimes to maximise strength/power outcomes within a safe environment. In addition, the AWF could learn from the sense of tribalism/community that CrossFit creates. People show up to train determined, self motivated and ready for a hard, punishing workout.

### *Sports marketing*

Sport, entertainment and new media are inextricably intertwined as can be seen by the games and the finals series of the football codes. Sports are fighting harder to increase their public profile in a crowded social media marketplace. Modernising the theatre and image of weightlifting, especially at national events, will be necessary to attract and continue to engage spectators and participants in a very competitive marketplace.

The information that follows provides a refreshed AWF Strategic Plan that is positioned to respond to changing environment described above.

## ASPIRATIONS

### Vision

The AWF Vision has been modified to better reflect both high performance and participation outcomes derived from engagement in weightlifting programs and services.

*Weightlifting; everywhere, every sport, every medal*

The AWF will know it is successful and is making strong progress towards its Vision when the following are achieved:

- Medals in multiple categories at benchmark events;
- Government and the community acknowledge weightlifting's contribution to Australia's sporting success;
- Weightlifting takes place anywhere, anytime, at any age;
- Australians enjoy the physical, mental and social benefits of weightlifting;
- People want to be part of the weightlifting community;
- AWF is financially independent and commercially sustainable; and
- Weightlifting has a strong supporter base who regularly attend events.

### Values

The AWF will demonstrate the following values when conducting its business, especially when working with partners:

- Supporting a performance-based culture that is built on the foundation of hard work and accountability;
- Providing a healthy, safe, welcoming environment;
- Demonstrating transparent governance;
- Only recognising pure performance; and
- Always acting in the best interests of others, appreciating and acknowledging the input of AWF Staff, AWF Board, State Member personnel and dedicated volunteers.

### Key Performance Indicators

The AWF will measure the effectiveness of its Strategic Plan by tracking the following indicators:

- 2 female weightlifter qualify for the 2016 Olympic Games at the World Weightlifting Championships 2014/2015
- 1 male weightlifter qualifies for 2016 Olympic Games at the Oceania Championships
- At least 4 medals at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games
- \$1m annual revenue by 2018 from AWF education courses, from other sports and the fitness industry
- 1000 spectators at any national AWF event

- 1800 platform competitors by 2018
- 40 independent course presenters by 2018

## **Partners**

Delivering the AWF Strategic Plan will require strong collaboration with AWF members and the following organisations:

- State Member Organisations
- Clubs
- ASC
- Australian Commonwealth Games Association
- Australian Olympic Committee
- International Weightlifting Federation
- Oceania Weightlifting Federation
- Commonwealth Weightlifting Federation
- State Institutes/Academies of Sport
- Sponsors.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The AWF will focus on four strategic priorities into order to deliver its aspirations.

### **High performance success**

1. Structure and invest in initiatives that deliver sustained high performance outcomes

### **Grow the AWF Community**

2. Conduct more live, virtual and non-traditional events to grow participation
3. Deliver entertaining, leading edge national and international competitions

### **Commercial growth**

4. Capitalise on the growth and commercial success of the fitness and health industries and other sports

## IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

#### Structure and invest in initiatives that deliver sustained high performance outcomes

- 1.1 Review the athlete and competition pathways of leading/comparable weightlifting countries and other Olympic sports, and based on these findings, create the preferred AWF high performance model
  - Identify successful, comparable weightlifting countries and understand their high performance system
  - Identify key sports which have leading edge high performance programs
  - Meet with countries, sports and state institutes to understand the key levers that differentiate leading edge high performance programs and that could be used to strengthen the AWF elite athlete pathway
  - Create the preferred high performance model for the AWF
- 1.2 Implement the preferred high performance model
  - Determine the resources required to fully implement the model
  - Identify opportunities for shared arrangements to increase access to support services
  - Develop a staged implementation plan to reflect current and projected resources
- 1.3 Create an AWF structure that delivers better high performance results
  - Design a new AWF structure
  - Restructure the organisation and resources
  - Create clear KPIs for all managers
  - Establish a reporting system that is focused around performance athletes and program performance
- 1.4 Increase the recruitment and retention of junior/youth and emerging high performance athletes
  - Develop relationships and potentially co-invest with key Olympic sport talent identification programs to select athletes more suited to the weightlifting pathway
  - Conduct research to identify the key reasons junior athletes leave the sport and strategies for retention
  - Based on the research findings, implement specific strategies to better attract and retain junior athletes
  - Assist States to develop a targeted schools strategy to attract athletes earlier into the sport
- 1.5 Grow the current and next generation of coaches
  - Identify the current and next generation of high performance coaches
  - Create individual development and performance plans
  - Transfer knowledge through an established mentoring program

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2**

### **Conduct more live, virtual and non-traditional events to grow participation**

- 2.1 Understand the infrastructure required in each state to conduct successful traditional and non-traditional events
  - Scope what the AWF will offer in terms of live, virtual non-traditional and talent identification events (e.g. a competition with one referee)
  - Determine the minimum requirements for each (e.g. a competition with one referee)
  - Identify key event positions and responsibilities required to deliver the new range of events e.g. technical delegates, event managers and show directors
  - Audit the infrastructure, systems and processes in each state (facilities, coaches, technical officials)
  - Cost and make recommendations to address gaps
- 2.2 Create the systems to consolidate competition results in real-time
  - Determine the software and people capability
  - Choose and invest in the preferred information technology solution
  - Implement the solution across all national and state competition events
- 2.3 Introduce and commercialise *TechnoLift*
  - Scope the concept of an ongoing virtual weightlifting competition which can be accessed online by all recreational weightlifters
  - Determine the technology requirements to establish the application and the administrative and technical resources to conduct the competition
  - Pilot the competition and seek feedback from participants
  - Based on the feedback, modify the application and competition format and approach
  - Launch and widely promote *TechnoLift* on the web



### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3**

#### **Deliver entertaining, leading edge national and international competitions**

- 3.1 Create a minimum specification for an entertaining, contemporary weightlifting competition
  - Make immediate changes to national events including:
    - A doctor available at each event
    - Improved structure of event (timing)
    - Professionalise loaders
    - Other efficiencies
  - Identify elements of other sport's competitions that could be introduced to weightlifting to improve the competitor, official and spectator experience
  - Based on the above, develop a protocol and process for delivering all AWF competitions that are entertaining and on schedule
  - Review the policy for the selection, hosting and managing of major weightlifting events in Australia
  - Develop an implementation plan to support State Members to deliver competitions and build local capacity
- 3.2 Introduce the IWF system to national events in 2015
  - Determine the criteria and infrastructure requirements to allow the full functionality of the IWF system
  - Ensure the IWF system is fully implemented at all national and international championships events conducted in Australia
- 3.3 Conduct invitational events that attract high profile overseas lifters
- 3.4 Look into the feasibility of obtaining TV coverage for AWF events

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4**

### **Capitalise on the growth and commercial success of the fitness and health industries and other sports**

- 4.1 Strengthen the partnership between the AWF and CrossFit affiliates
  - Create a specific marketing campaign to promote AWF coaches and athletes to build on the knowledge and skills over and above those in the CrossFit level 1 course
  - Implement the campaign to increase participation numbers at AWF coaching courses
  - Create a package for CrossFit competitions where State Members negotiate with affiliates to manage the officiating, technical and other aspects of a competition
  - Support State Member organisations to meet with key CrossFit affiliates and promote the CrossFit competition package
  - Link AWF coaching course participants with the State Member organisation for mentoring and further coaching (formalise next steps)
  - Conduct technical workshops, Master Classes and Webinars
- 4.2 Promote Fitlift as an alternative fitness product for schools, personal trainers and other fitness providers
  - Launch and promote the *Fitlift* accreditation course to personal trainers
  - Conduct Fitlift training in all States
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of the Fitlift offer and modify if required
- 4.3 Strengthen the partnership between the AWF and health practitioners
  - Understand how AWF can add value to physiotherapy treatment and rehabilitation
  - Create a physiotherapy-specific course
  - Promote the course in all States
  - Conduct physiotherapy-specific courses in all States
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of the physiotherapy-specific course offer and modify if required
- 4.4 Promote to sports the performance benefits of weightlifting and market sport-specific CEP programs
  - Create a list of AWF presenters and CVs emphasising their relevant background sport's experience
  - Identify sports where weightlifting could have the biggest impact on improving performance e.g. AFL, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Soccer, Rowing, Track and Field, and Netball
  - Approach peak bodies and clubs to include weightlifting into their existing coaching courses
  - Position AWF coaches as the recognised experts in Olympic weightlifting movements
  - Launch and promote Sport Power Coach Level 3

- 4.5 Increase the number and depth of AWF course presenters
  - Conduct an annual course presenter workshop to grow the number of Level 1 and 2 presenters
  - Fast-track high potential presenters to increase the number of Level 2/3 capable presenters
  - Establish a mentoring program for coaches
- 4.6 Expand the AWF merchandise range
  - Work with our partners to increase and diversify merchandise products and ensure a contemporary look and feel