



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**

2016

ANNUAL

REPORT

CHAIRMAN'S OVERVIEW

As we sign off on 2016, we take a moment to stop and appreciate that we were part of history. It was a Centenary season to celebrate and be proud of, a real privilege to bear witness to and the Team of the Century gala dinner was like no event we had ever seen before. Since 1916 we have been the number one sport in the Territory, the most significant recreational activity and more importantly AFL football for a century has been the social fabric of the community. And now we stand on the precipice of a new century of Territory football, amazed at what has been achieved to-date and inspired for what is to come. We will also pay homage to 70 years of the Central Australia Football League. There is no footy like that played in the heartland of our great country, built off the backbone of hard working Australians and boundless talent. In 2017 we will get to honour this great occasion also.

The new-look AFLNT executive structure has acted swiftly and efficiently in reconfiguring all facets of the business to ensure that AFLNT continues to administer football in the NT for the benefit of all Territorians. While there have been some staffing changes and some shuffling in departments, the executive has mostly stayed constant with the exception of the Chief Operating Officer role. In October we farewelled long-serving and loyal servant to AFLNT, Stephen Nugent who left to follow his passions and take up an advisory role with the new Territory Labor Government. The highly qualified and former NT Thunder CEO, Stuart Totham, replaced Stephen. Stu has a deep understanding of Territory business and administration and has already hit the ground running.

Once again participation grew by 10% in 2016, which was largely in part to a 133% increase in the female club participant space and a further 23% in total female participation. No doubt it was aided by the decision by the AFL to award the Adelaide Football Club, who is in partnership with AFLNT, a license for the inaugural AFL Women's Competition.

And did we make a mark! Thanks to the tireless work and ambition of many, especially the AFLNT High-Performance program and leaders, we had two players from the NT signed up before the National Draft and a further seven that did all the hard work at training and earned themselves a spot on the coveted list. Add to it two experienced and successful NT coaches and the team certainly have the Territory look, feel and values embedded. We look forward to supporting them on their journey and are grateful to the NT Government and local businesses that have backed all of us in.

The TIO NTFL season was one to remember with a couple of thrilling grand finals. In the women's division, Waratah won its fifth consecutive premiership, holding off a skilful Wanderers outfit. And on the men's side of the draw, the Wanderers looked to go back-to-back, but the might of the St Mary's Football Club stood in their way and with one of the last kicks of the game, clinched the 2015/16 Premiership by two points.

The Michael Long Learning and Leadership Centre continued to thrive. There were 230 students from remote regions who participated in the one-week education program based on the AFL values. Many of the students were in the program as they had been identified as good role models in their community by the AFLNT remote projects staff that works closely with the local schools to use football as a vehicle to improve attendance. In 2016 AFLNT had 10 staff engaged in eight regions across the Northern Territory. They also facilitated community football competitions and carnivals and helped identify aspiring footballers for the various AFLNT and national football carnivals and programs.

The Centre is also home to NT Thunder Football Club, which remained dedicated to generating positive outcomes for Indigenous Territorians, which made up more than 60 per cent of the team in 2016. Under the guidance of Head Coach, Xavier Clarke and his qualified assistants, NT Thunder looked to back-up from its glorious 2015 NEAFL Premiership win. They played finals for the third consecutive year but fell short of the ultimate glory. Players were drawn from right across the NT, including the remote regions of Lajamanu, Tenant Creek, Katherine and Croker Island and fan engagement, led by revamped digital platforms grew drastically. After three years in charge, Xavier was recruited by the Richmond Football Club as a development coach. In 2017, AFLNT State Academy coach and Adelaide Football Club women's senior assistant coach, Andrew Hodges, will coach NT Thunder FC. Andrew is no stranger to success and will solidify the team and its values.

Football at the highest level continued to cultivate right across the Territory. A new deal was reached between the NT Government and the AFL, which sees the Melbourne Football Club continue to play two games a year in the NT for the next two years.

Three NT players were drafted to AFL clubs: Ben Long (St Kilda), Brandan Parfitt (Geelong Cats) and Willie Rioli (West Coast Eagles), and the future looks bright! Six NT players were selected for the Allies program in the AFL Division One U18 Championships and three NT players were selected into the AFL NAB National Academy Programs: Level 2 - Domonic Grant, Level 1- Michael Mummery and for the inaugural Women's U18 Academy - Danielle Ponter.

A digital revolution has well and truly come to AFLNT. Investments in the communications and digital media space are paying off. Fan engagement is at an all-time high, with all three major channels; AFLNT, NTFL and NT Thunder attracting more than 28,000 Facebook fans, a growth of more than 55% year on year. Other platforms, namely Twitter and Instagram continued to skyrocket and more than 15,500 hours of video content was consumed across our YouTube platforms, with a further 461 videos created for social media, which attracted more than 1 million views. The NT Thunder website was revamped to work across all devices and platforms, with the AFLNT website not far behind. In great news for footy fans, a deal was brokered with NITV to get NTFL back on national TV every Tuesday night, and interest from Southern Cross looks set to take-off for Darwin and regional Australia in 2017.

We are very pleased with what AFLNT and its associated programs and clubs achieved in 2016 and look forward to another successful, hard-working year in 2017. As always, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all our valued partners and sponsors whose support allows us to do the work we do and to our fans for making it all worthwhile. Thank you.



Ross Coburn
Chairman – AFL Northern Territory

CEO's OVERVIEW

In the future I will look back on 2016, my first full year as CEO of AFLNT, with great pride and honour that I was there for the centenary celebration of AFL football in the Northern Territory. It was also a year of exciting opportunities, significant growth and positive outcomes for the organisation. The business as a whole worked tirelessly to achieve the accomplishments the Chairman has detailed in his end of year report. The inception of the Crows women's team, coupled with the growth in overall participation and the joyous response to the drafting of three young Indigenous boys is proof that Australia's game is alive and well in the Territory.

TIO came to the party again, renewing the naming rights of the stadium through to 2026 for \$1 million. NITV signed its first official NTFL broadcast agreement, and with SCTV and NITV on board for 2017 it is solidifying my belief that football is a way of life for Territorians. There really is no better or more unique place to be a custodian of our game than right here, in the NT.

At times our team acted as agents of change and not all decisions we made were popular, but they were made with a view to make AFL more accessible, more attractive and more family and spectator friendly. In particular, updates to the NTFL By-Laws were made so the look and feel of the game would be more attractive to a broadcast partner.

Post the 2016/17 season there will be an opportunity for key stakeholders, especially clubs, to take part in an NTFL season review. We can work hard to procure the Northern Territory Government in funding upgrades to change room upgrades, new light towers and more AFL games but it will be to little fruition if we do not secure long term sustainability at club land.

In 2017 we will also focus more closely on the Michael Long Foundation and procuring DGR status so that tax benefits to corporate businesses directly feeds into the future funding and continued success of the Michael Long Learning and Leadership Centre and its remote programs.

We are in a period of continued growth, with the executive due to have an offsite meeting in the coming months to finalise the five year strategic plan and clearly set out the direction in which the organisation will move. The basis of our plan will have input from all levels of the business and will be shaped by our continued commitment to protect and nurture the game.

Lastly, I would like to echo the words of the Chairman and thank our sponsors, Government partners and all others involved whose level of financial support allows us to do what we do.



Michael Solomon
Chief Executive Officer AFL Northern Territory

AFLNT FINANCIAL REPORT

Year Ended 31 October 2016

The audited financial statements of AFL Northern Territory Limited, for the year ended 31 October 2016 are attached for your perusal and adoption at this meeting.

The accompanying notes form part of the accounts and should be read in conjunction with them to understand the Organisation's financial affairs.

Financial Position

The Company has recorded a statutory profit of \$5,200 for the year ended 31st October 2016, which was up from the net loss in the prior year of (\$108,685).

The 2016 financial year included the first full year of operations of the Michael Long Learning & Leadership Centre (MLLLC), which opened in March 2015. The net loss in the prior year was mainly attributable to an extra one-off (\$121,163) spend on the completion of the Centre.

Key financial results for the 2016 Financial Year included:

1. A significant downside in corporate sponsorship for both AFL NT and NT Thunder. Down (\$142,000 from prior year).
2. The above downside was offset by savings in staff salaries (not all positions were filled for the full 12 months of the year) and staff leave provisions.
3. A major reduction in NTFL Club debt owing to AFL NT after the introduction of a new debt recovery policy.
4. The introduction of a new Communications & Digital department.

There was also a continued focus on renewing and retaining key government and corporate support for our Remote Programs. Total revenues and expenses remained the same as in 2015, approx. \$1.5m invested, as we look to secure more long term partners for the benefit of our programs and staff retention. Full time employee numbers at year end were 40, the same as this time last year.

Given all of the above the end of year results are very pleasing and all departmental managers and the CEO of AFLNT should be congratulated for these results.

The Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) is still strong with the current assets exceeding the current liabilities by \$489,056 which enables all accounts to be met as they fall due which is a very healthy position to be in.

Acknowledgements

The AFLNT would particularly this year like to thank our ongoing and loyal sponsors and supporters, the AFL for their guidance and support and to the NT and Federal Governments a big thank you for your ongoing contribution to AFL Football in the NT. To our many other AFLNT, NT Thunder and Affiliated Leagues, Club sponsors and supporters we appreciate all your support.

Motion of Acceptance

It is my pleasure, to move the adoption of the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Statement of Financial Position, in conjunction with the notes and Auditors Report for the year ended 31 October 2016.



Ross Coburn
Chairman – AFL Northern Territory