



# “Project 500” Umpiring Review – Northern Territory

Terms of Reference

October 2022





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## Background for review

Early in 2022, the AFL Northern Territory (AFL NT) executive launched “project 500” as a phrase to create awareness and momentum to review and plan the future strategy of umpiring in the Northern Territory. The figure 500 refers to the “north star” target to reach 500 umpires to adequately service umpiring demands across all formats of football in the Territory.

For our industry to service the future growth of our game across many formats, we need to prioritise the resourcing and support of AFL NT’s umpiring department. The Northern Territory, like the rest of Australia, has a significant shortfall of umpires to service all levels of football which has been placed on the national AFL agenda.

It should be noted that the Northern Territory faces many unique factors in comparison to other states and territories that should be considered when determining suitable recommendations. These factors are not limited to, but include the following:

- Approximately 30% growth in number of community football teams over the last three years.
- Extreme and varied weather temperatures across the Territory including heat, humidity and rainfall.
- High rates of diversity, including a high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.
- Significant geographical distances between urban settings and remote communities.
- Transient nature of the Territory’s population.

The following Terms of Reference (ToR) document has been compiled to outline the purpose and project scope of the review.



## Review objectives

The purpose of the review is to:

- **examine all (in scope) facets of umpiring;**
- **gather relevant information to analyse, prioritise, and determine recommendations for the AFL NT executive and board to consider for the future directions of umpiring.**
- **Ensure that the recommendations put forward are aligned to the purpose of guiding AFL NT to implement best practices in the recruitment, environment and development of umpires.**

To establish clarity for the review project, the following subject matters will be classified as either “in scope” or “out of scope” of the review process:

In scope:

- Coaching, upskilling and support of community football umpires and officials.
- Development and pathway opportunities for talented umpires and officials.
- Environmental mechanisms that foster greater diversity and inclusion in the community football umpiring programs.
- Recruitment of community football umpires.
- Retention of community football umpires.

Out of scope:

- Future facility needs of community football umpires (*note: this review will work in collaboration with AFL NT Participation & Facility Needs Assessment*).
- Governance arrangements with Umpiring Associations.
- Individual agreements with community football umpires.

For the avoidance of doubt, the review of umpiring will consider the following urban and regional competitions: Barkly Australian Football League (BAFL), Central Australia Football League (CAFL), Big Rivers Football League (BRFL) and the Northern Territory Football League (NTFL). *Note: umpiring support of remote carnivals and competitions will also be considered.*

The review will follow a simple and staged process to enable an organised and structured review procedure. The review will follow a reasonable timeframe to collate and analyse relevant information to determine recommendations for the AFL NT executive and board to ratify and endorse.

During the lifecycle of this review, we will critically gather and analyse data and trends of umpire registrations across the Territory over an extended period, formally consult relevant internal and external stakeholders, observe the umpiring environment, analyse best practice umpiring strategies and programs across Australia, and determine recommendations for the AFL NT executive and board to consider for the future directions in umpiring.

Please see below the review methodology flow chart which outlines and frames the review structure. The detail of the review phases and timeframes will be outlined on the following pages which will be governed by the review's steering group.



## Phases of review

The below four phases of the review will guide the activities to suitably gather and analyse all relevant information to determine recommendations that will enable future success in umpiring recruitment, environment and development in the Northern Territory for an extended period:

### Phase 1

- Research, gather and analyse historic and current umpiring registration data and trends.
- Research and analyse all relevant documentation and resources relevant to the recruitment, environment and development of umpires.

### Phase 2

- Formally consult with internal and external stakeholders through a variety of mediums.
- Engage AFL NT Board.
- Observe live umpiring programs across the Northern Territory.

### Phase 3

- Research and analyse best practice umpiring program models across Australia across all sports.
- Research best practice activities and structures related to the umpiring recruitment, environment & development of umpires.

### Phase 4

- Workshop and prioritise the key take away information from the initial three phases of the review life cycle.
- Formulate review recommendations to be considered and tested by AFL NT executive, followed by being endorsed by the AFL NT board.



# Review timelines & milestones

Please see below key 2022 timeframes and milestones to be achieved during the review.

The review steering group, which will be detailed in the next page, will play an integral role ensuring the review operates within the set time frame parameters outlined in the ToR.

If for any reason timeframes are required to be altered, this will be communicated to the AFL NT executive, board and relevant stakeholders.



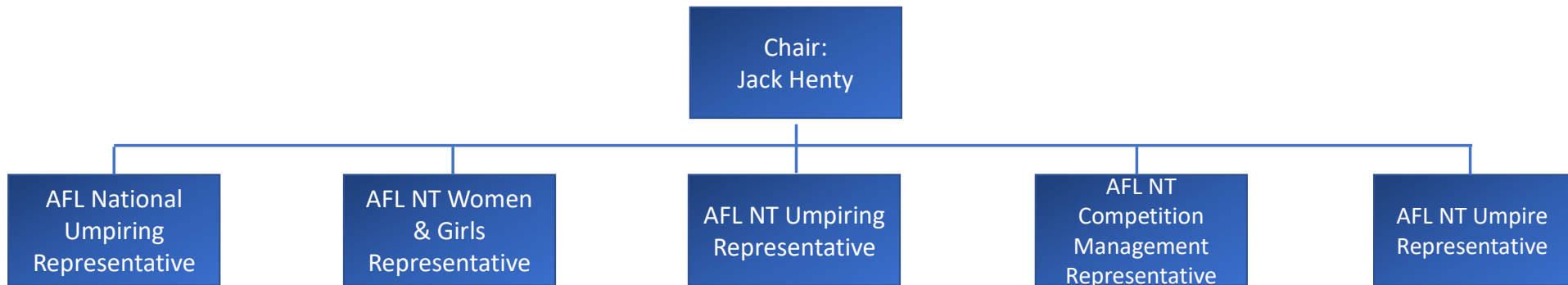


## Review steering group

The role of the review steering group will be to ensure that relevant AFL and AFL NT staff members from various streams and departments including umpiring, women & girls, competition management and facilities are represented in the lifecycle of the review process. The steering group will also ensure the review process is aligned to the objectives of the review, govern the timeframes outlined in the ToR and assist in the communication to stakeholders on relevant consultation activities and general review updates.

By way of governance practices, meetings of the steering group will take place every three weeks during all review phases 1-4 and all meeting minutes will be documented.

Please see below steering group personnel and structure:







## Stakeholders to be considered for consultation

### Internal:

- AFL Community Football department.
- AFL NT competition management, executive, facilities & government partnerships, remote projects and umpiring departments.
- AFL NT umpiring officials & umpires.

### External:

- AFL NT Community Clubs.
- AFL NT Umpiring Associations.
- AFL NT registered community football players.
- Previous AFL NT umpires.



## Relevant data & information

For the purpose of the ToR, please see below the sources of information to be collated and analysed as part of due process to determine lines of inquiry and final recommendations:

- AFL Community Football Umpiring Insights – 2021.
- AFL Participation census 2014 – 2022.
- AFL NT Future Directions Review of Umpiring 2019 – 2023.
- AFL NT & NTFL Umpires Association 2019 MOU.
- AFL NT & NTFL Umpires Association Affiliation Agreement 2022/2023.
- AFL NT umpiring registrations 2014 – 2022.
- AFL NT umpires survey – 2022.
- Desktop research.
- Observations of AFL NT umpiring programs' training and match day environments.
- Observations of other AFL and other sports' umpiring programs.
- Officials HQ.
- Stakeholder interviews, surveys & workshops.



## Close

In closing the ToR for project 500, the review will provide the AFL NT community the opportunity to contribute to and shape the strategic priorities for the future of umpiring. The industry will require AFL NT departments, community clubs, umpires, players and officials to all work together to create an environment that prospective umpires are attracted to, have a positive umpiring experience and can progress their umpiring if they wish to do so.

Should anyone who has read the ToR and has any questions regarding the review process, please do not hesitate in contacting Special Projects Lead – NT, Jack Henty on the following details: [Jack.Henty@afl.com.au](mailto:Jack.Henty@afl.com.au)

AFL NT looks forward to updating all stakeholders on key review updates prior to releasing the recommendations at the conclusion of the review.