



United States Australian Football League

A 501(C)3 Not-For-Profit Organization

9160 Hwy 64, Suite 12, #205, Lakeland, TN 38002

Tel. +1 872-22-USAFL (+1 872-228-7235)

www.usafl.com | info@usafl.com

Dear Presidents,

At this time, many States are beginning to lift restrictions and re-open to some extent. While this is very encouraging, caution and safety should remain at the forefront of our minds. Clubs are reminded to continue to follow requirements of their local authorities to ensure the safety of their members as they consider returning to football activities.

To facilitate a safe return to football activities, the USAFL has recently developed the framework to provide guidance for clubs to get back to playing footy safely through a phased approach. The goal of this document is to provide guidance on how clubs can meet local regulations and restrictions with our sport specifically in mind. Thank you to all Clubs who provided feedback on the draft. The Board is editing the final document that incorporates input from the Clubs. A final version will be distributed league-wide on June 6.

The information provided is a guide only – clubs must adhere to local requirements and ordinances and to the CDC guidelines, whichever is more comprehensive and lead to safest outcomes, when considering any return to football activities.

We expect States to progressively return to normal activity over different timeframes and with different requirements within their jurisdiction. Clubs will be required to designate a Safety Officer as a single point of contact regarding implementation of Return to Footy Safely guidelines. Clubs' adherence to local policies and league safety guidelines will be essential to an eventual safe return to interclub play, which remains on hold at this time. Through diligent attention to safety and a measured progression through these phases, competitive games and tournaments may still be considered in the coming months.

USAFL Committees

As we approach returning to Football activities together, the Board will resume the USAFL Committees this month with participation from those who provided expression of interest earlier this year. Due to the current circumstances, the Committees focus has been adjusted to support the league returning to operations successfully and safely. Specifically, we have initiated the creation of a Safety Task Force. This group will continue to gather, review, and evaluate information regarding COVID-19. Based on their findings, they will update guidelines and provide recommendations to facilitate a continued safe return. The four Committees include:

Safety Task Force:

Overall focus: To ensure the Return to Footy Safely guidelines incorporate the latest information and are practical for clubs to implement.

General Role:

- Develop standards and recommendations to clubs for issues such as concussion management, injury prevention, etc.
- Be a source of advice for the Board and the UA when considering rule changes or clarifications that could impact players' safety.



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COVID Specific Role:

- Continue to develop safe Return to Footy recommendations, share resources with clubs such as useful drills and any changes to official guidance.
- Consult with the Club Safety Officers on a regular basis to confirm recommendations are being followed, get feedback, provide clarifications and advice, etc.

Personnel:

- Board lead: Provide overall guidance; establish goals and deliverables liaise with USAFL Board.
- Medical consultant(s): 2-3 people with medical or training experience who can advise on medical topics and/or conduct any necessary research on topics.
- Policy lead(s): 1-2 people who will lead any writing of policy and compile documents to be distributed to clubs and players, liaise with USAFL Media team.
- Umpire and Women's Reps: Individuals from UA and WA to help guide conversations from respective organization's experience.

Membership: (With Focus on 2020 and 2021 Season) Evaluate the USAFL fee and membership structure and provide recommendations to the Board for structure and administration to maximize participation.

Competition: (With Focus on 2020 and 2021 Season) Review and develop means to maintain competitive balance and consistency throughout the USAFL; provide recommendations for improvements to the Board. Guide projects that support local Footy's safe return and growth in 2020.

Development: Develop a framework and plan to increase participation, quality, and safety of Australian Football played in the USA by improving the knowledge and application process for running a football club in the USAFL.

Coaches Association:

The Coaches Association (CA) will also resume with emphasis on Safety and Safe Return to Footy.

A key objective for the Coaches Association will be getting ALL USAFL coaches (and prospective coaches) Level 1 accredited through CA, and continue developing the Level 2 program for specific candidates. Additionally, the CA will create a forum for open dialog between coaches to share ideas, challenges and learnings.

Nationals 2020 – Ontario, California

Many of you have inquired about the status of Nationals 2020 in Ontario California. In the interest of making a measured and well informed decision, the Board will spend the coming weeks soliciting and reviewing input from the Safety Task Force and member Clubs on the topic. The goal is to decide under what criteria a Nationals Tournament may or may not be possible in 2020 and what Club participation could be expected to be.

We will also be evaluating possible alternatives to a single, large-scale tournament, such as a more focused support of Metro competitions, and Regional or Sub-Regional end of season tournaments.

Our aim is to provide an update on the status of Nationals and possible alternatives by July 15th (or earlier). We, as a Board, do not take this decision lightly and recognize the importance of input from experts and stakeholders including member Clubs.



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In the meantime, we do acknowledge that Clubs are planning their seasons with some uncertainty and will seek to provide timely updates and transparency as much as possible. For now, our collective goal is to return safely to training in regions where that is possible. Your patience and engagement during this time is essential and will be key to a successful 2020 season, whatever form that may take.

Financials & Adjustments

In regards to the USAFL Financial status, we have made some significant progress over the past 3 years to strengthen our financial position and build an emergency fund. Overall, we are in relatively good shape financially with our operations budget financed for the year 2020. All fixed expenses are covered and we will manage all variable expenses according to participation and tournaments we can support.

Please note that detailed 2019 Financials are posted on the USAFL website: [USAFL 2019 Annual Report](#)

Tournaments and participation are the biggest variables and we will manage accordingly with participation driving the scale and budget of those events. We are fortunate as an organization that most of our costs are variable which allows for greater flexibility when dealing with any financial situation or decision.

The USAFL Board has been working over the last few months to adjust the original 2020 budget to account for the current economic situation and to provide multiple options for the remainder of 2020. The planned 2020 budget was built around IC 2020, 3 Regional Tournaments and about 1,300 members.

The Board has made the following adjustments:

- Cancelled Regional Tournaments and replaced with Sub-Regional tournaments with savings up to \$19,000
- Re-allocated unused funding for IC2020 with savings of \$26,000
- Change Insurance Scheduled Payments for 2021 with deferred cost of \$8,100
- On-going review of 2020 Nationals Expenses with various participation projections
- Reviewing 2021 Regionals Tournaments and Nationals options with cost containment measures

We have received the AFL Grant of \$110,000 AUD for 2020. We are in constant communication with the AFL about 2021 grant status. The AFL will further advise on the amount of the 2021 grant later this year so we will be able to set the 2021 budget accordingly.

Regardless of how the remainder of 2020 plays out, we are expecting to finish the year with either a balanced budget or a manageable loss, much like many other years. Despite the fact that the USAFL 2020 season has been disrupted and Nationals are certainly at risk, we have the funds to cover all fixed expenses.

All remaining variable expenses are based on the Sub-Regional tournaments and Nationals taking place and payment will only be required if the events happen. The only financial outlay we have had to this point is a \$5k deposit for the Nationals venue (which we would roll over to reserving our dates for 2021 should Nationals be impacted).

The Board is taking a very conservative financial approach and ensuring the long-term financial stability of the league. Projected Cash Position December 2020: Between \$63,000 and \$95,000



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The USAFL 2021 season is likely to be impacted as well. We are working toward entering 2021 in a strong cash position to provide maximum flexibility for the league. The season may look different and we will all adjust as needed.

2021 Considerations:

- Regional Tournaments review, modifications to Sub-Regional
- Nationals review (Location, City/County grant option, Streaming, Labor)

Our next official league-wide notice is scheduled for July 1, with Regional VPs looking to maintain ongoing dialogue with clubs throughout the coming months through Regional calls and discussions. In the meantime, please continue to communicate with and support one another and do not hesitate to contact your RVP with any questions or concerns.

Thank you, again, for your patience and understanding during this time. We look forward to seeing each of you on the field again in the future and wish you safety during this time.

Very Sincerely,

Seb Aguiari

President, United States Australian Football League

