



## STRATEGIC PLAN

2014 - 2018

For athletics to be the foundation sporting activity of choice for all children within the Australian community.

Date: March 2018

## FORWARD

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This Strategic Plan sets out the strategy and direction for the future of children's athletics in Australia. Recent discussions with, and reports from, both Athletics Australia and Gemba Group confirm the high regard in which Little Athletics is held both as an organisation and a brand. This Plan seeks to build on those strengths to ensure the future of family, fun and fitness through athletics based activities across Australia.

I endorse this Plan and look forward to implementing the many strategies identified within.

Signed

The LAA Board of Directors

Dereck Fineberg OAM, President

Melanie Woodward, Interim Finance Director and Independent Director

Andrew Duncan, Competition and Standards Director

Martin Stillman, Chief Executive Officer

Andrew Pryor, Director (ACT)

Craig Scott, Director (NSW)

Donna Smith, Director (QLD)

Andrew Gosling, Director (SA)

Rhonda O'Sign, Director (TAS)

Colin Segota, Director (Vic)

Teresa Blackman, Director (WA)

Simone Pearce (Independent Director)

## OVERALL GOALS, STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Goal	Strategy	Action	KPIs	Who	When
Grow Membership	Standardise age groups across country Resolve transition age groups with AA Improve retention of existing membership Increase attraction for new membership	Marketing plan to help drive growth at National and State level that can be rolled out for Centres focused on kids and parents Establish MOUs with other sports and disability organisations Standardise age groups across country Resolve transition age groups with AA	Increased registration numbers by 10% from the corresponding year in the previous 4 year Olympic cycle	National draft State implementation	Report annually
Build and maintain strong Brand and Reputation	Increase and maintain awareness of LAA Maintain a high safety record Strong, well implemented risk management processes	Promote LAA through high level sponsorship partnership driven advertising and PR to raise awareness and secure market position Lobby Government to understand the vision and role of LAA Ensure directors understand their corporate governance role and that the organisation supports the highest levels of corporate governance Review governance structure Develop and maintain safety and risk management guidelines, policies and procedures	90% consumer awareness Reduced pressure to merge Regular board review processes Low incident rates Risk management strategy	National	Report annually  2015
Drive skill progression	Establish programs and policies to ensure the continued growth in numbers and skill levels of members, volunteers, parents and coaches	Consider joint venturing skills delivery Make skill progression programs both at Centre/Club level and in primary schools throughout Australia compulsory	Increased numbers of coaches and officials Move to mandate for every Centre to have coaches	States	Report quarterly on progress

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>KPIs</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
Develop and maintain operational viability	Ensure sources of income are diverse, stable, reliable and more than adequate in meeting our expenditure needs. Attract, retain and grow strong skilled staff to build sport nationally	Determine a level of reserves that ensures financial stability Commit to using excess reserves to deliver growth and other strategic initiatives Develop and deliver improved sponsorship arrangements Budget for and deliver staff benefit packages and support programs	2 years' income in reserve Equivalent of National HO costs in sponsorship nationally and at state level Low staff turnover	National	Report annually
Develop and maintain strong relationship with AA	Ensure a high level of communication and co-operation with AA Strong and effective relationship with ASC that enables mutual achievement of differing visions	Clarify roles and responsibilities Create pathways from Little Athletics through to Senior Athletics for U14 – U17 age groups. Formalise programs for U14 – U17 age groups to facilitate transition to Senior Athletics. Agree branding with Athletics Australia for U14 – U17 age groups. Lobby Government to understand the vision and role of LAA	Growth in dual registrations by 5% from the corresponding year in the 4 year Olympic cycle	National	Start immediately
Develop and capitalise on effective relationships with Schools	Increase awareness of LAA at school levels to improve retention and growth against peer pressure	Conduct research to understand what schools want that LAA can provide Adapt or develop programs to meet school needs Develop and leverage relationships with schools for improved retention and growth Run national incentive for LAPS	Develop process to track move from LAPS to LAA	States	Report quarterly on progress

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>KPIs</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
Develop and provide optimal delivery mechanisms	Review and assess delivery mechanisms beyond current Centre Structure	Encourage more fun oriented programs for the U 6 to U 8 age groups. This may involve competitive and/or non-competitive modified activities. Develop 2 hour program and implementation plan Encourage shorter time frames for all age groups State Associations to review and identify education improvements required and implement remedial measures.	Every state to have some centres running 2 hour programs per age group by 2018 Programs available for all ages in each state	National States	Start immediately
Expand LAA programs	Promote the values and benefits of Little Athletics throughout Australia, and <u>where opportunities arise</u> , such as in New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Canada and the USA	Develop plan for NT Develop an “Introduction to Little Athletics” package, including guidelines on how to run a Centre or Club, for LAA to promote and deliver to organisations within and outside Australia.	Plan for NT	National	Start immediately

## Background

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### Purpose

This Strategic Plan establishes the vision, mission and strategic goals of Little Athletics Australia, at the national level, understanding that the delivery of the core athletics programs will occur at the state and local levels.

The Plan will be reviewed regularly by the LAA BoM and changes communicated to stakeholders where necessary.

### The Little Athletics Community

Each part of the Little Athletics network is critical in determining the success or failure of LAA achieving its long-term objectives and goals.

### Stakeholders

Stakeholders are those individuals or organisations who can influence the success of LAA or who are, in turn, influenced by LAA. These include but are not limited to:

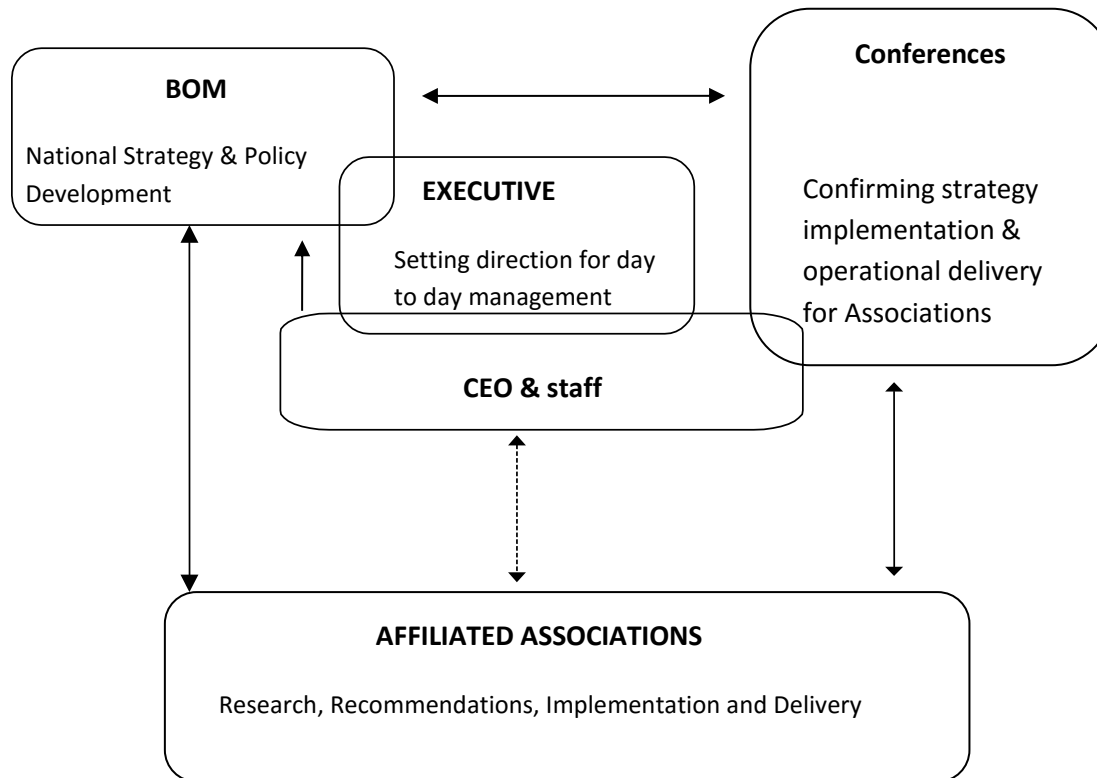
- Members
- Parents
- Volunteers
- Coaches
- Member State Associations
- Athletics Australia
- Senior Athletics State Associations and Clubs
- State Association Member Centres and Clubs
- Primary and Secondary Schools
- LAA and State LA Association Employees
- Local, state and Federal Governments
- Australian Sports Commission
- Federal and State Departments of Sport and Recreation
- Sponsors
- Community
- Media
- Facilities
- Owners

## Governance & Structure

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### Governance Structure of LAA Management

The current structure of the LAA is shown in below:



## **Governance of the LAA**

The governance of the LAA is vested in:

The Conference/Annual General Meeting (AGM)/Extraordinary Meeting (EM) comprising:

- The Executive, and
- Either one (1) or two (2) delegates, representing each of the affiliated Associations and so delegated by each of those affiliated Associations (it is preferable that the Chairman/President/Managing Director of each affiliated Association be one (1) of the delegates from that affiliated Association).

The Board of Directors (BOD) comprising:

- The Executive, including the CEO,
- The Chairman/President/Managing Director of each Association.

It is the responsibility of these two bodies to govern the Association. These two bodies have fiduciary responsibilities to act honestly, in good faith, and in the best interest of the Association as a whole. They also have a duty to act with care and due diligence in making informed decisions, after reviewing carefully the risks and opportunities associated with an initiative or activity under consideration.

The roles, responsibilities and authority of each of these bodies are set out in the LAA Constitution.

## **Operational Management of the LAA**

The operational management of the LAA is vested in:

The Executive, comprising:

- President;
- Administration and Finance Director,
- Competition and Standards Director, and
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

It is the responsibility of the Executive, including the CEO, to manage the day-to-day affairs of the LAA, including the implementation of agreed strategies and policies in the national environment. The roles, responsibilities and authority of the Executive are set out in the LAA Constitution.



### **LAA Boundary of Operations**

The LAA boundary consists of those areas administered by its member State Associations. At present, all States and Territories, except the Northern Territory, are members of the LAA. However, it is an objective of this Plan for that boundary to extend across all Australian States and Territories.

It is not intended that LAA operations extend beyond Australian recognised Territory.

### **The Financial Environment**

The LAA is in a financially strong position and has sufficient reserves to sustain itself for approximately three years should financial support from its current suite of sponsors suddenly cease. The ramifications of such a situation occurring would require a review of current revenue streams to determine the best available options to remain financially viable.

The LAA operates its finances under full accrual accounting processes with all assets being depreciated annually, has a registered ABN and provides quarterly Business Activity Statements as required under the GST Legislation.

### **Public Image**

The public image of the LAA is strong with local communities throughout Australia, as is the rapport between State Associations and local education institutions. Our organisation is seen to be well organised, professionally run and popular with its members. Local State Government Sport and Recreation Departments perceive Little Athletics to be a stable organisation and actively support plans to expand into new areas and improve facilities for our members.

The Federal Government through the Australian Sports Commission regards LAA well but recommends it should only cover 5 -12 year olds and should be a single body with AA.

### **Legal Environment**

The LAA is a fully incorporated body registered in the ACT, and as such is required to operate within the requirements of the Corporations Act and other legislation of the ACT.

## **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

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### **Vision**

For athletics to be the foundation sporting activity of choice for all children within the Australian community.

### **Mission Statement**

To provide leadership, guidance and strategic direction for the development of children of all abilities, by promoting positive attitudes and a healthy lifestyle through family and community involvement in athletic activities.

### **Core Values**

We always behave with honesty and integrity;  
We work together, respect each other and value our diversity;  
We strive to deliver outstanding service;  
We are committed to creating a sustainable future; and  
Our positive and determined approach ensures success.

### **Desired Attributes**

We must be caring, friendly, approachable, dedicated, inspirational, and progressive/innovative, be seen to provide fun and participation in a safe environment and being seen to be enjoyable. We need to be contemporary, efficient and organised.

## ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

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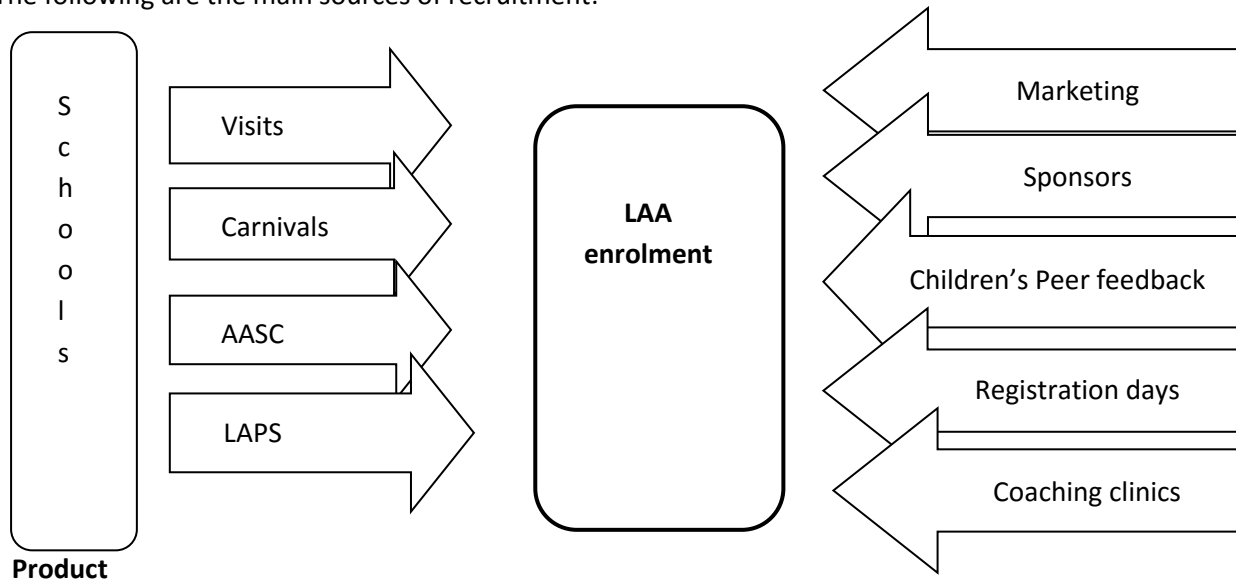
### Core Business and Target Market

Our Core Business is U6 to U15. Programs may also be offered by Little Athletics in some States or in conjunction with other organisations for 3 and 4 year olds (Tiny Tots) and U16 to U17 age groups. Demographically, we cater for children from all walks of life, irrespective of religion, ethnic background, athletic capability or capacity. At present, we do not specifically cater for athletes with a disability. However, where practicable, athletes with a disability are not excluded.

We cater for:

- The Social athlete who comes for interaction with friends
- The Athlete with potential but who is not interested in taking athletics further
- The Talented Athlete who will progress to the elite level.

The following are the main sources of recruitment:



The product that LAA delivers varies according to the stakeholders concerned as follows:

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>What they want</b>	<b>What LAA provides</b>
Parents of 3 to 4 year olds (Tiny Tots)	Play Activities Co-ordination training	Activity based play
U6 – U8 year old members	Social interaction Fun Fitness Physical co-ordination Competition	Social interaction Fitness Skills development Competition
U9 – U17 year old members	Fitness Social interaction Competition Physical co-ordination Relaxation Sense of achievement	Social interaction Fitness Skills development Talent Identification Competition
Parents	Opportunities for their children to grow into adults well prepared to deal with the challenges of life. The opportunity to be involved in their children’s physical activity Maximum activity, minimum time Safe environment Pathways to other sports	Parents are encouraged to participate in all activities in some shape or form, whether in a supervisory, official, coaching, support or administrative role from Centre to National level. Social interaction and inclusion
Volunteers/Participants	The need to feel wanted, appreciated and to feel that they are making a worthwhile contribution to the Little Athletics community.	Training towards some level of qualification Feedback on their contribution
Coaches	Opportunities to coach young children “grow” through expanding their knowledge and experience Skills development	Training towards some level of qualification Feedback on their contribution

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>What they want</b>	<b>What LAA provides</b>
Athletics Australia	To have LAA as the grass roots in “junior” athletics, and the need to have as many as possible graduate from Little Athletics into senior ranks. The likely source of future champions.	Want kids skilled and delivered Potential champions identified Pathways to adult competition Development opportunities such as state squads and national talent camps Delivery in schools
Senior Athletics State Associations and Clubs	Flow-on graduation of young athletes continuing into senior athletics. Strong national brand and promotion	Want kids skilled and delivered Pathways to adult competition
Schools	Healthy safe activity for kids Skills training for kids Training for teachers Provision of coaching staff Help with competitions?	Coaching skills for teachers Skills development for kids Competitions through State Associations
Member State Associations	Communication with other States Learning about industry best practice; Sense of belonging; National body leadership, Consistency in the application of policy and direction in a number of areas; Effective and efficient management National marketing campaign	Policies, processes, sponsorship, leadership Opportunities to get together, learn, discuss and plan
Member Centres and Clubs	Flow on of benefits that may accrue from having a National body; Opportunity for their members to compete at a National level.	Policies, processes, leadership, competitions Communication from LAA about what we do
LAA and State LA Association Employees	Job security; Career opportunities in sport and recreation.	Job security; Career opportunities in sport and recreation.
Federal and State Government ASC	Healthy activities for children Pathways for talented athletes Single athletics body	Healthy activities for children Pathways for talented athletes

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>What they want</b>	<b>What LAA provides</b>
State Departments of Sport and Recreation	Provide guidelines and legislation on how we conduct the community based activities Avenues for major capital investment.	Suitable policies and guidelines Compliance with guidelines/legislation Identification/coordination of projects for major capital investment
Sponsors	Good “corporate citizen” public image through sponsorship arrangements; Possible gains in sales through sense of loyalty of sponsored organisation; Direct access to potential customers through membership database. Business opportunities, business sustainability.	Access to highly recognised brand Access to children and adults in their target audience for direct activation Access to database
Community	Choices and opportunities for activity	Healthy activities for children Advice on the creation, maintenance and/or use of facilities for community use
Media	Good news stories, successful athletes; any newsworthy story	Pipeline of stories Better access to athletes
Facilities Owners	Business opportunities, business sustainability, facilities and equipment safety, useability and currency.	Use and promotion of their facilities Successful and sustainable multi-use facilities

## **Price**

Little Athletics continues to provide great value for money as a children's activity. Flexibility is provided to Centres to (within a range) charge what their local community considers appropriate and should include built in increases for CPI to ensure costs can be met. Recent research indicates there is some room for movement in the price of Little Athletics without loss of members.

## **Market Share**

Numbers continue to be maintained between around 90,000 and 100,000 members, which reflects the confidence held by the public in Little Athletics as a safe and rewarding environment within which their children can participate.

However, these numbers have been static for more than 5 years. Little Athletics is being passed by other sports with higher overall numbers and better growth rates. Other sports are extending their traditional seasons and higher profile sports are conducting strong marketing campaigns.

Registrations are still strong but churn is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Reducing numbers will see a decline in income but also a decline in the attractiveness of the LAA brand for sponsors.

## **MONITOR AND REVIEW**

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### **Monitoring Progress**

The LAA BOM will be responsible for monitoring progress against the objectives and goals of this Strategic Plan at each meeting.

### **Amendments**

Upon endorsement of the Strategic Plan by BOM, the LAA BOM will have the authority to adjust the Business Plan as necessary during the year to respond to opportunities and developments in the internal and external environment consistent with achieving the LAA Mission.

Where such amendments significantly change the scheduled achievement of an objective or goal of the Strategic Plan, these amendments will be drawn to the attention of members.

However, no strategies that change the strategic direction of the organisation are to be implemented without first obtaining the approval of LAA members.

### **Reports**

A report is to be submitted by the President to Conference on the progress, achievements and any significant changes during the previous twelve months.