



# **FCA Communication Strategy**

## ***2019/2020***

# Football Coaches Australia

## Communication Strategy

**The overall objectives of this communication strategy are:**

- To increase public interest and awareness of all elements of football coaching, with a focus on education, industrial rights, networking, health, well-being and solidarity.
- To promote the events and public activities of the Association, inclusive of achievements of its male and female members.
- To create awareness of FCA's projects and advocacy on behalf of coaches, inclusive of any relationships, agreements, research, assessments and analysis.
- To advocate for better standards and treatment of coaches, as well as to bolstering recognition of FCA's true value among other stakeholders in Australian football.
- To celebrate the role of coaches in football and to educate the public on why coaches are so vital to the footballing ecosystem.

# FCA Communication Strategy

## Introduction

This document sets the strategic direction for internal and external communication of FCA in an effort to accurately reflect its main priorities and to support the Association's key function as the representative body of Australian coaches.

The implementation of the Communication Strategy is facilitated by FCA's Communications personnel in cooperation with those performing Secretarial duties.

This Strategy responds to the needs of FCA following the formalisation of the Association's operating structure and its goal of becoming a full Member of Football Federation Australia. It currently holds the status of "Qualifying Member" (November 2018).

Streamlining the communications process will ensure an up-to-date, more efficient FCA in both internal processes and in external relations. Such communications, until this point, have largely been carried out by volunteers on an ad-hoc basis.

FCA's external communication activities will take into account the developments within the wider sphere of coaching, including happenings within the Association itself.

Communication efforts may also be executed in cooperation with other organisations committed to advancing the status of football in Australia.

Ultimately, FCA will be successful in its communications provided the Association can express itself in the public space whilst remaining aligned to its core goals, values and members' interests.

As identified in the Association's Strategic Planning workshop, FCA is committed to:

- 1. Defining the Role of the Coach**
- 2. Coach Well-being and Support**
- 3. Community Coaching and Network**
- 4. Handling Difficult Situations**
- 5. Stakeholder Management**

The FCA communication activities will stay in harmony with the agreed goals and policies and further support their fulfilment.

## 1. The overall goal of communication

- 1.1 The goal of FCA communication is to promote the awareness of FCA as a “champion” of coaches’ interests around Australia. FCA communication will strategically support FCA’s key function in providing reliable and timely information on matters relating to coaching in Australia.
- 1.2 All communication activities will reflect the current FCA priorities and aim to reach the intended audiences.

## 2. Communication objectives

- 2.1 The **overall objectives** of the FCA communication activities are:
  - a) to increase awareness and public interest in coaching, coaches’ rights and to demonstrate coaches’ desire to be a more prominent stakeholder in the sport.
  - b) to increase awareness of and access information about the progress of FCA’s programs, causes, applications and projects, both ongoing and completed.
  - c) to facilitate a sense of unity and collectivism among coaches, and knowledge that their interests are being simultaneously being promoted and protected in the public space.

## 3. Target audiences

- 3.1 Engaging the appropriate target audiences will ensure that the main goals and objectives of FCA communication can be met. Beyond the immediate coaching fraternity, the target audiences include the following:
  - a) The wider Australian football community
  - b) Key stakeholders in the sport
  - c) Other coaching associations (domestically, internationally)
  - d) General public

## e) 4. Key themes

4.1. FCA's main and supporting themes are based on FCA's key objectives and vary from informative to educational to aspirational, seeking to address common information gaps and misconceptions that may act as obstacles for a positive and accurate impression of coaches. The main themes and accompanying supporting themes are as follows:

**a. "Understanding what coaches do and why their role is critical if football is to succeed in Australia".**

- Supporting theme: FCA has a unique role for promoting how coaches are critical to bringing through the "next generation" of Australia's best players.

- Supporting theme: FCA may be a relatively new organisation but we have often overlooked the role coaches have played in developing the sport to where it is today.

- Supporting theme: In order for the sport to reach its full potential in Australia, investing in coach well-being and education must be considered an absolute priority.

**b. "Coaches deserve the same level of respect, rights and support as any other employee".**

- Supporting theme: Coaching may have a reputation as an unstable profession, but that doesn't mean that coaches should suffer improper employment practices.

- Supporting theme: FCA is developing mechanisms to support and protect the rights of coaches, before they join clubs, while they are employed, and when their employment is concluded. These standards are long overdue.

- Supporting theme: There is no place in Australian football for clubs and businesses who refuse to play by the rules and do not follow agreed standards or contracts.

**c. "Improving standards of education is at the core of making better coaches and players".**

- Supporting theme: FCA is determined to make education more accessible than ever before, with the aim of improving standards at all levels of the game.

- Supporting theme: FCA is wants to make access to licence acquisition fairer and simpler for all coaches at all levels.

- Supporting theme: FCA is determined to host events and conferences that will help facilitate networking and improve the flow of information and ideas.

**d. "Professional support and networking opportunities".**

- Supporting theme: FCA understands that coaching is a stressful, often lonely profession and is committed to aiding the mental well-being of its members.

- Supporting theme: FCA is determined to host events and conferences that will help facilitate networking and improve the flow of information and ideas.

- Supporting theme: Coaches have a much stronger bargaining position when they collectively work together and have solidarity.

**e. "Australian coaches should be regarded as pioneers of the past and innovators of tomorrow"**

- Supporting theme: Our coaches should be celebrated for what they brought to Australian football over recent decades. Many have been given inadequate recognition.

- Supporting theme: FCA will seek to build narratives around telling the story of our coaches, be they of the past, present and future, men and women alike.

- Supporting theme: FCA wants to actively identify prospective coaches and work with them to advance their coaching knowledge.

**(internal communication) “FCA continues to kick goals for coaches”**

- Supporting theme: An efficient and proactive Secretariat has been able to cope with the new status of the organisation and is well placed to handle whatever challenges are ahead of FCA.

- Supporting theme: Enormous progress has been made in a short space of time and it is important to keep that momentum going by staying united and committed.

## **5. Methods and Tone**

- 5.1 For the message of FCA to be delivered effectively, depending on the objective, audience, timeframe, etc., a mix of both modern and well-established communication channels, tools and materials will be used. These include the website, social media, press releases and newsletters, PR events and campaigns, involvement of mass media (print, television and radio where applicable).
- 5.2 Consistency of branding, fonts and language is critical. Use of graphics and imagery should be of a professional standard. All text-based communications should be checked thoroughly for errors. An in-house font and “style guide” should be agreed upon as part of a communications template.
- 5.3 Controversial football topics should be avoided unless they directly affect or involve coaches, in which case efforts should be made to make contact with the affected coach first, before any comment, if any, is made.
- 5.4 Comment on troubling issues in the sport may be made but only following approval from senior members of the Association.

## **6. Coordination and partnerships**

- 6.1 Comment on troubling issues in the sport may be made but only following approval from senior members of the Association.
- 6.2 From time to time, when joint partnerships are struck - for example, with other stakeholders in the sport, locally, nationally and internationally - there will be opportunities for co-ordinated approaches to communications. These should be signed off upon by both parties before moving to publish.

## 7. Implementation

- 7.1 Primarily, press releases may be issued when there are announcements or alerts to be made. They may also be issued in response to issues that affect coaches or may generally concern the state of football or its stakeholders.
- 7.2 Social media posts should be carried out on a regular basis. Ideally, communication in this space should highlight the good work being achieved by coaches and also act as an informative tool to educate the public about the important role that coaches play in football.

## 8. Initial Campaign – First Quarter 2019

- 8.1 The ongoing campaign is about building the narrative around “Coaches Matter”. It is proposed to launch a particularly visual campaign that delivers key messages in a concise and affirming matter. The campaign should focus on well-known coaches who are prepared to speak in depth about three key things:
  - a. Their journey as a coach and what drives them.
  - b. The problems that have faced coaches in the past and continue on today.
  - c. Why membership of FCA is so vital.
- 8.2 Although it is tempting to launch an all-out “membership drive” alone, in isolation it will not be effective. We need to create a broader narrative for FCA first drives awareness. The two should be performed in conjunction with one another.
- 8.3 A series of professionally made videos with high production values (shooting, editing, graphics, audio) should be the cornerstone of the campaign. This is the fastest, easiest and most effective method of demonstrating to a mass audience that FCA is a legitimate stakeholder in the sport and intends to uphold best practice principles.
- 8.4 These videos can be made of interviews, historical clips, explainers (the history of coaching unions worldwide, etc.) and should aim to celebrate coaches and educate the public about why coaching is so important.
- 8.5 The campaign should be co-ordinated across multiple forms of social media, with attention to Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook. It should also be announced via press release. Key figures within FCA should be made available to interview

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