



FOOTBALL COACHING AUSTRALIA POLICY POSITIONS

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1.0 - Employment-related issues

1.1 - Standardised contracts at all levels

All coaches involved in the Australian Professional Leagues, National Youth League, and National Premier League should have the right to access a Standard Coaching Contract approved by FCA in coordination with the relevant club bodies.

Standardisation will help coaches and clubs to understand exactly what their legal obligations are for the duration of the agreed term. The failure to adopt consistent standards has led to a rise in confusion and disagreements, as well as an industry trend of coaches not being paid their full contractual entitlements.

A standard termination clause guaranteeing full payout should be incorporated into all coaching agreements.

Standardisation would reduce the need for litigation as a means to settle disputes.

1.2 - Termination clauses for all National Team coaches

FCA believes all coaches directly employed by Football Australia for all National Team positions should have an agreed process regarding the premature termination of their contracts.

Presently, coaches are having their contracts being terminated without a consistent process, largely on a case-by-case basis. This provides them with a lack of stability and awareness about any subsequent processes.

1.3 - Standardised employment dispute and grievance procedures

FCA believes all coaches subject should have the right to access a standard employment dispute and grievance procedure.

This procedure, established as private arbitration, should be run through the auspices of the FA (for Australian Professional Leagues, National Youth League, and National Premier League coaches), and the relevant state federation for National Premier League coaches.

This procedure should comply with the requirements (i.e. clubs and coaches have equal bargaining power in appointing arbitrators) in FIFA Circular 1010 to ensure that Australian law is respected.

This will prevent the current inadequacy where Australian coaches are required to litigate disputes in Australian court, whereas foreign coaches have the option of litigating disputes at the relevant FIFA body, as opposed to an Australian court.

The PFA has already established (with the FA and clubs) a similar-type National Dispute Resolution Centre for player and club disputes.

1.4 - Foreign coaches in Australian football

FCA believes that the coaching fraternity is a worldwide collective.

However, where possible, we would like to see Australian coaches entrusted – where they are the right fit and the appropriately qualified candidate – with as many positions of responsibility in Australian football.

FCA will not support (via visa letter) the hiring of foreign coaches (without the right to live or work in Australia) at Youth League or National Premier League level.

These positions should be available exclusively to Australian licensed coaches.

1.5 - HR processes for workplace-related matters

FCA believes coaches should have agreed HR processes for workplace-related matters that are stipulated in their contracts.

This enables a degree of clarity when matters of dispute arise and also in regard to administrative matters.

2.0 - Domestic Football Issues

2.1 - International windows during A-League season

FCA believes that, with the internationalisation of the A-League, it is imperative that the Australian Professional Leagues follows the mandated International Windows.

The A-League has been too often disrupted by the failure of the competition to adhere to FIFA international windows. Teams have lost players at crucial stages of the season when they have left to play for their national team.

We want to promote our league as being a premium quality product and this means we need the league's best players playing as often as possible.

2.2 - Expanding the A-League

FCA is wholly supportive of Australian Professional Leagues (Men and Women) expansion.

We encourage any developments that boost the number of full-time positions available for our members in a sustainable fashion.

2.3 - Second division and promotion/relegation

FCA is wholly supportive of both a national Second Division and promotion and relegation.

There is clearly a huge demand among the footballing public for a Second Division and we believe the game is mature enough to support a promotion and relegation.

We encourage any developments that boost the number of full-time positions available for our members.

2.4 - Salary cap and transfer system

FCA supports scrapping the Australian Professional Leagues salary cap and implementing a transfer system similar to that found in the vast majority of the football world.

It is time for the Australian football economy to mature and form part of the global football economy.

3.0 - Qualifications and Knowledge Sharing

3.1 - Access to coaching qualifications

FCA supports an updated, reworked process for coaches to acquire licenses and take refresher courses at all levels.

The current method for obtaining coaching qualifications is clunky and unsophisticated. Information is difficult to access, unclear and poorly maintained.

3.2 - Cost of coaching courses

FCA believes the cost of FA coaching courses is out of reach for many coaches and that fairer pricing structure would encourage more prospective coaches to undertake more courses.

The cost of coaching courses in Australia has been a frustration for many prospective and current coaches. It is unclear why the courses are so expensive, when some of the best nations in the world have much cheaper courses.

3.3 - Access to world-leading knowledge

FCA is committed to staying abreast of all the latest developments in coaching from around the world.

We aim to stage conferences, networking events, lectures and round-table discussions with some of world football's most important leaders on a variety of subjects that affect coaches.

4.0 - Coaching Behaviour

4.1 - Respect between coaches and referees

FCA believes that respect between coaches and referees is essential and needs to be improved.

Better relations between the two parties should be considered a priority at all levels of the game. FCA advocates moving towards a relationship grounded in understanding, mutual respect and goodwill.

4.2 - Respect between coaches and players

FCA believes that respect between coaches and players must be sought at all times.

Players should respect that the coach's role is to manage the squad as a whole and issue instructions as per their duty, while coaches should endeavour to respect the player's role as a professional.

4.3 - Coaches being able to make public observations

FCA believes a "common sense" approach should be undertaken with regard to how coaches' comments are considered, especially post-match.

Media are often looking to interview coaches at their most emotional point. Whilst not objecting to media access per se, it is important that all governing bodies recognise that comment is being sought from coaches when they are at their most emotionally vulnerable. We do not want a situation where coaches feel scared to offer honest feedback.

5.0 - Women Coaches

5.1 - Pay for women's coaches

FCA believes that all clubs, federations, academies and associations should take affirmative action to raise the salaries to women coaches.

We recognise that progress has been made in these areas in the past decade but that more needs to be done if we are to complete the circle of a world-class women's football ecosystem.

5.2 - Number of women coaches

FCA is deeply concerned at the lack of qualified female coaches and believes much more should be done to encourage women to undertake coaching courses.

Whilst the number of qualified coaches continues to grow each year, we believe that more should be done in this space, both at junior and senior levels. As we aspire to have a world-leading Women's National Team for decades to come, it is imperative that we build a world-class coaching culture around the women's game.

6.0 - Indigenous and Minority Coaches

6.1 - Number of Indigenous coaches

FCA strongly believes that more can be done to encourage Indigenous Australians to become qualified coaches.

At the moment, there are very few Indigenous coaches in the Australian football ecosystem. This is a concerning reality and one we would like to address in the coming years. We hope to commence a discussion on how to bridge the gap between the existing coaching fraternity and the Indigenous community.

6.2 - Number of Minority coaches

FCA believes that coaches have an important role to play in helping bridge the gap between our mainstream football community and those from newly arrived backgrounds.

As Australia's population continues to grow, football will be a vital way to aid in the integration for new migrants. A critical part of this will be allowing them to access all of the coaching knowledge that exists here and assisting their coaching journey.

7.0 - International Relationships

7.1 - Connections to broader coaching fraternities and instructions FCA is committed to establishing relations that extend into the international coaching space.

As part of Football Coaches Australia's aim to furthering the knowledge and exchange between coaches, we believe it is in our best interests to establish working relationships with other coaching advocacy groups from abroad. In particular, we hope to help facilitate the growth of an Asian coaches' body.

8.0 - Stakeholder Relationships

8.1 - Relations with governing bodies, media and fans

FCA believes that coaches should aspire to have strong relationships with all stakeholders and is eager to play a role in facilitating this.

We realise that coaches do not exist in a 'bubble'. Coaches are part of a broader ecosystem, where a variety of stakeholders have a role in the sport. FCA believes that all coaches should aspire to be seen in a positive light by others in the sport.

9.0 - Health and Wellbeing

9.1 - Improved support for coaches

FCA is committed to facilitating a plan that will help to offer support for coaches who find themselves in distress as a result of their work.

Football Coaches Australia recognises that coaches find themselves under an inordinate amount of stress in the course of their working lives. Coaches experience prolonged periods of scrutiny and are the focus of attention and judgement in a way that many ordinary employees in other walks of life are not.