

Football West JUNIOR FOOTBALL REVIEW Implementation June 2024

Executive Summary

Elite Business Performance (Consultant), was contracted by Football West on 26 February 2024 to investigate and establish how the recommendations contained in “The 2023 Junior Football Review” Report of August 2023 (August 2023 Report) could be implemented.

A series of workshops/consultation forums were conducted with Football West staff and key stakeholders to explore the options for implementing the recommendations in the August 2023 Report for the 2025 season (Project).

The Project produced the following:

- A statement on the guiding principle and outcomes underpinning the proposed 2026 competition structure. “Simplicity” being the guiding principle.
- A new regular season structure which was presented to all stakeholders. Core components of the structure included:
 - It is team based.
 - 10 teams per division.
 - 18 games per season.
 - The top Divisions stand alone and then the competition splits into North and South, community football Divisions.
 - Minimal criteria for teams to be involved.
 - Promotion and relegation system to be introduced.
- The concept of a Development Competition that involved the holistic development of players, coaches and other personnel. Core components of the Development Competition included:
 - It is Club based.
 - A whole of Club criteria would be used for the selection of the Clubs eligible to compete.
 - A competition structure that would see approximately 8-10 additional games being played.
 - Players, coaches, officials and clubs would be provided with broader holistic development opportunities than just playing.
 - May take place prior to, mid and/or post regular season.
- The proposed structure for the regular season and the concept of a Development Competition was supported in the workshops although it was felt that the concept was vague and required more detail.

It is recommended that this Report be used to inform the decision-making processes with respect to the implementation of the Football West Junior Competition structure(s) for the 2025 season and beyond.

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1. Introduction

Elite Business Performance (Consultant), was contracted by Football West on 26 February 2024 to investigate and establish how the recommendations contained in “The 2023 Junior Football Review” Report of August 2023 (Report) could be implemented.

The Elite Business Performance team that undertook the work comprised:

- Rick Smith (Elite Business Performance Pty Ltd)
- Greg McLennan (McLennan and Associates)

2. Background and Context

During 2023 Football West commissioned a review process to carry out a review of the following two key areas of the Football West Junior Competition (Review):

Competition Structure & Format

Analyse the Junior Competition format and structure through:

- Understanding its limitations;
- Critique the developmental pathway opportunities created by the Competition Structure and Format;
- Critique regulations in Junior Competitions that support/hinder football development;
- Evaluate changes made in recent years to the Junior Competitions, for improvement.

Junior Development

- Assess the accessibility and inclusivity of existing junior development programs;
- Evaluate the point of success and failure of existing identification pathways. (including NPL Juniors), for future improvement.

Recommendations from the Review

The Review made a number of recommendations. These recommendations can be found at **Appendix 1**.

The Review was a key input into the establishment of a strategic framework for the development of all junior football in Western Australia for the 2025 to 2030 period.

3. Scope of Work

As mentioned in the introduction, the Consultant was engaged to investigate and establish how the recommendations of Stage One - “The 2023 Junior Football Review” could be implemented.

More specifically, the scope of work for which the Consultant was engaged was as follows:

- meet with relevant Football West staff;

- conduct workshops with staff to assist in the design and implementation of the 2023 Junior Football Review recommendations for the 2025 season;
- prepare for and facilitate a number of stakeholder workshops;
- collate and report on the outcomes from the meetings with Football West staff and various workshops.

In undertaking the scope of work, the Consultant sought to achieve a general consensus from stakeholders as to the competition and development frameworks of the Football West Junior Competition.

4. Methodology

The following methodology was used.

4.1 Document Review

Recommendations from the Review contained within the Consultants August 2023 Report were reviewed.

4.2 Briefing and Workshops with Football West Staff

An initial briefing and two workshops were conducted with the staff of Football West to explore the competition structure and junior player development options.

4.3 Consultation Forums

Competition structure and junior player development options were discussed and workshopped with the following key stakeholder groups:

- Game Development Committee
- Technical experts and coaches
- Standing Committees
- Clubs – (3 x 2-hour workshops)
 - Northern workshop (Wednesday 15 May).
 - Southern workshop (Wednesday 29 May).
 - Central workshop (Wednesday 12 June).

Notes from the above workshops can be found at **Appendix 2**.

4.4 Report to Stakeholders

Competition Structure(s) will be presented to stakeholders by the end of July 2024, to enable implementation in the 2025 season.

5. Guiding Principle and Outcomes

The following Guiding Principles and Outcomes were developed.

Guiding Principle – SIMPLICITY

Any new competition structure must be easy to understand and importantly easy to implement and manage.

Outcomes

The outcomes to be achieved from any new competition structure to be implemented were as follows:

1. **Player Development** – it's about the players.
2. **Like for Like** – based on proven ability, the best play against the best etc.
3. **The competition be accessible and inclusive** – an opportunity for all to play.
4. **Standards should apply and be enforced** - including quality coaching and minimum Club requirements.
5. **Pathways** – opportunity for players and Clubs to advance to higher levels of competition.

6. Findings

Options were developed for the regular home and away season and the establishment of a Development Competition focussed on the development of players, coaches and other identified participants, and the Clubs themselves.

6.1 League Structure (Regular Season)

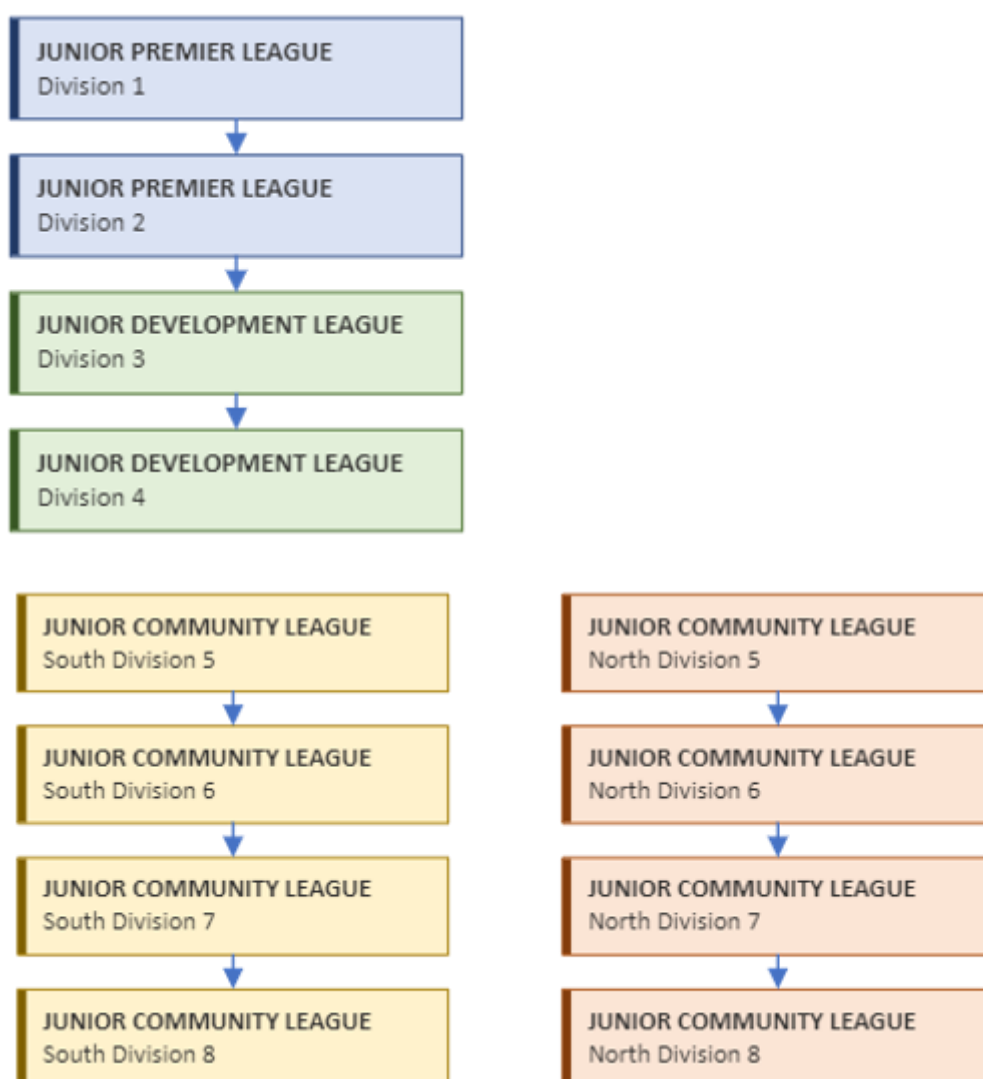
Finding 1 – Starting in 2025, a league structure with team-based criteria - where “like plays like” be implemented for the regular season. The key characteristics of the preferred option were:

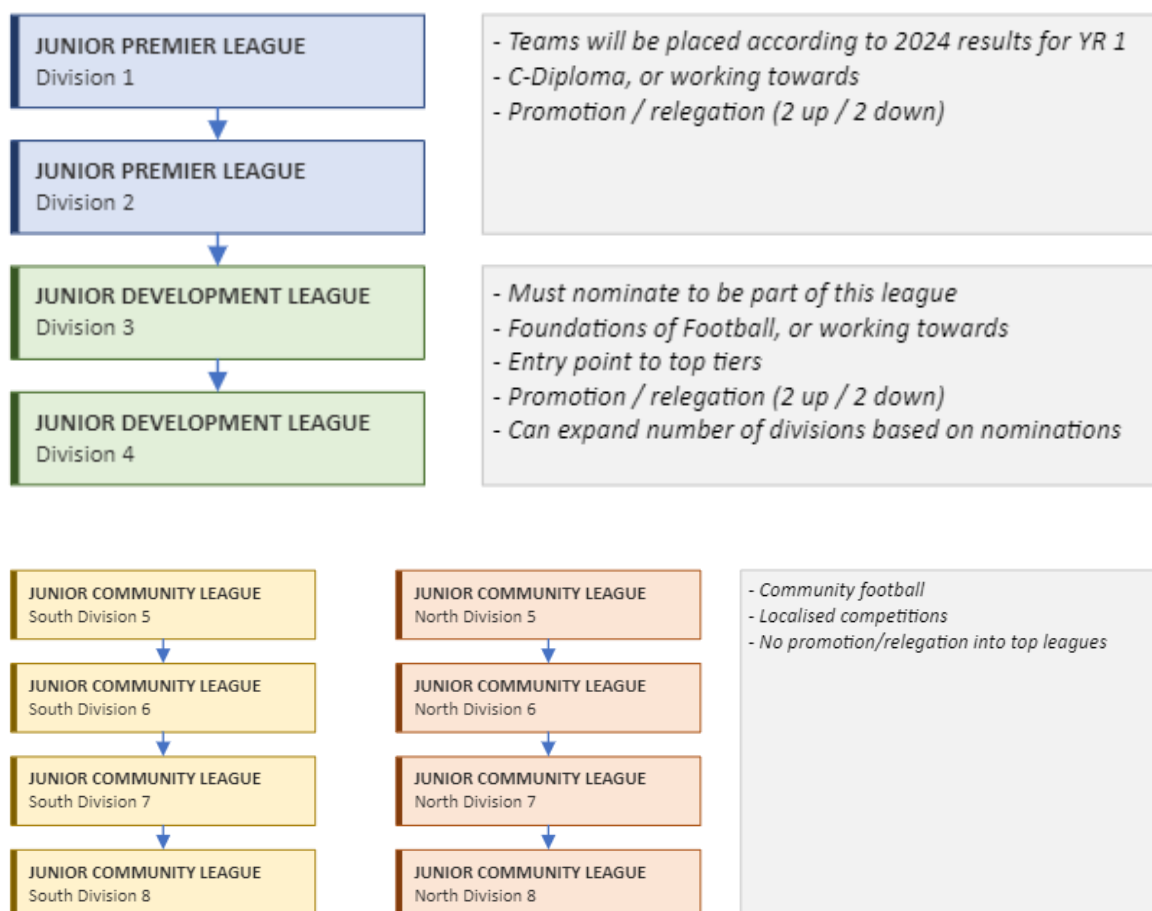
- Team-based minimum eligibility criteria (versus Club based criteria)
- 10 teams per division
- 18 game regular season (to be complimented by additional Development Competition and Cup opportunities)
- Two top-tier divisions (Junior Premier League – working name only)
- A number of subsequent divisions- by nomination (Junior Development League – working name only)
- Promotion / Relegation (2 up / 2 down, mid-season shuffle for first season)

- Community Divisions (Junior Community Leagues, North & South)
- Mid-season re-fixturing (9+9, to accelerate where teams should be in early stages)
- Allocation for 2025 based on results from 2024 placings.
- Minimal criteria to be used in allocation to the Divisions within the leagues. This criterion is:
 - For Division 1 and Division 2 - C Diploma or working towards.
 - Division 3 and below - Foundations of Football or working towards.

The following explanatory diagrams were presented at each workshop:

Boys U 13 to U 16





Girls U 13 to U 16



Boys U 18 and Girls U 17



Promotion and Relegation within these leagues

Finding 2 - A promotion and relegation system (2 up 2 down) should be adopted. This provides clubs with a development opportunity in the short and long term and facilitates the “like v like” outcome sought to be achieved.

The concept of promotion and relegation was heavily supported in the workshops.

Promotion and relegation would occur in the 2026 season.

A teams-based criteria system would simply see teams promoted or relegated based upon;

- meeting the coaching criteria
 - Division 1 and Division 2 = C Diploma or working towards;
 - Division 3 and below = Foundations of Football or working towards; and
- performance in the previous year’s regular season competition.

It should be noted that consideration was given to various ways in which promotion and relegation could work including:

- 2 up 2 down each year on ranking
- 1 up 1 down each year on ranking
- 3 up 3 down each year on ranking
- 2 up and 2 down each year based on the team who were first and last would automatically go up and go down and there would be a “play off” between the team that ranked 2nd on the lower Division and the team ranked 9th on the higher Division.

6.2 Development Competition(s)

Finding 3 – Starting in 2025, a Development Competition(s) with attached Club-based eligibility criteria be implemented to provide additional games for players and provide development opportunities for other football personnel.

The Development Competition would be open to clubs that wanted to develop players and other key staff. Club based criteria would be developed that would ensure those clubs taking part would provide an environment where players, coaches, officials and the clubs generally participated and promoted whole of Club development opportunities.

There was a consensus that any proposed Development Competition needed more detail relating to how it would be implemented and operate. There was discussion with regard to the potential use of a “District” based structure as part of any Development Competition(s).

Key elements should include:

- A “holistic” development approach taken that includes other aspects of player development than just simply playing.
- A “Club” based criteria approach would be used for the selection of the Clubs eligible to compete.
- This competition will:
 - Incentivise, recognise and reward Clubs that promote holistic player development and pathways.
 - Provide more match minutes.
 - Provide opportunities for talent identification.
- *Possible* format and delivery structure:
 - Pre-season / during season / post-season matches.
 - Potentially played across hubs.
 - Multiple smaller tournaments, or season long.
 - Incorporate coach, official and club personnel education and development.
- *Possible* criteria for this competition that clubs would need to meet on application:
 - Coaches of each team would need to hold a current C Diploma.
 - Assistant coaches of each team would need to hold a Foundation Coaching accreditation or provide evidence of moving toward gaining this accreditation.
 - The Club has teams in the 13-16 Boys Competition
 - The Club has teams in the 13-16 Girls Competition
 - The Club has a “Technical Director” (TD) (B Licence)
 - TD and coaches must attend Coaching State Conference
 - There is evidence of coach professional development and whole of club development (governance, education etc).
 - Club must have appointed Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)
 - The Club has in place and provides a copy of their Youth Plan, Female Development Plan and their Organisational Structure to Football West. These could and should be part of the Club’s planning process and documentation.
 - A staged approach to the implementation of this criteria be developed to allow Clubs to plan to meet the criteria.

6.3 General Comments

- **Overall Support** - There was general support at each of the stakeholder workshops for this league structure and agreement that it was an improvement on the existing NPL Junior Competition structure.

- **Cost to Clubs/Players** - Critical concerns raised with regard to costs were:
 - The potential cost to clubs/players within these new structure(s). A financial model needs to be developed as soon as possible detailing the associated cost to clubs. Consideration will need to be given to whether there is a standard cost to each player throughout the leagues or will costs be different based on the league a player participates in.
 - The cost of and access to coaching courses.
- **Teams per Club per Division** - There was some support for having one team per club in Divisions 1 and 2 and thereafter more than one team per division. There was discussion on the advantages (like v like and merit based criteria) and disadvantages (strong clubs get stronger, no ability for weaker clubs to progress).

7. Recommendations

Recommendation 1

That this Report be used to inform the decision making processes with respect to the implementation of the Football West Junior Competition structure(s) for the 2025 season and beyond.

8. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – August 2023 Report Recommendations
- 7.2 Appendix 2 – Workshop Notes

APPENDIX 1

Football West Junior Football Review – Stage 2 – Implementation August 2023 Report Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Abolish the current Junior NPL competition structure and introduce a simple Divisional Structure within the Junior competition. This means that there would be no distinction between the current Junior NPL and the Community competitions. The new structure should be phased in over the next 2-3 years allowing clubs to adapt accordingly.

Recommendation 2

Introduce an appropriate number of top Divisions and teams per Division based on an estimate of the number of “quality” teams able to be fielded by clubs that will be competitive at this level. (Eg Two top divisions with 8 teams). The number of Divisions should be increased over time commensurate with the ability of clubs to field competitive teams.

Recommendation 3

Any competition structure should provide the opportunity for talented players to play the recommended minimum number of games (30) for developmental purposes. This could be a mixture of regular competition matches, Cup games and any post regular competition matches.

Recommendation 4

There should be the opportunity for movement of teams between Divisions at every level from U13-U18. This should be based on one or a number of the following:

- Internal club assessment and nomination to a particular division.
- Finishing position in the last season of competition.
- The adoption of a “grading system” during the first 5 to 7 games of the season.

Movement between Divisions would provide an incentive for clubs to remain in the top Divisions and for aspiring clubs to retain their players and coaches and progress through to the top Divisions.

Recommendation 5

The current Mini-roo’s competition meets the needs of players and should be continued substantially in its present form.

Recommendation 6

Football West should consider introducing rules and regulations similar to FQ in terms of game time, “touches”, field size, squad size and number of on ground players per team (for certain age groups) that by design enhances the playing experience.

Recommendation 7

Should it be determined that due to the Western Australian football environment, female participants should be given specific consideration with respect to competition structures and development initiatives, Football West may consider it appropriate to undertake further consultation and engagement in this area.

Recommendation 8

Licensing criteria should be simplified and made achievable by Clubs and should focus on:

- the coaching quality afforded by the Club given the importance of coaching in player development. (eg a “C” class coaching qualification to coach at the top levels).
- the need to provide an appropriate standard of facility however it is recognised that Club’s may not have control over their facilities due to local government ownership.

Recommendation 9

Clubs and teams would need to meet the any licensing criteria in order to nominate to the top Divisions and/or each Division prior to the start of each season. Clubs/Teams that meet the licensing criteria would then be assessed based on previous year’s performance and any known player data and if appropriate provided with the opportunity to be included in the Division nominated for.

Recommendation 10

Grading at the beginning of the season should be undertaken in the first 5-7 rounds to determine the appropriateness of teams in particular Divisions and appropriate adjustments made in an attempt to ensure competitive games each week.

Recommendation 11

Consideration should be given to running a “development league” in the “off” (summer) season that features opportunities for players to play at an advanced level and be subject to advance coaching (as in the South Australian model).

Recommendation 12

Football West should develop a strategy to forge good ongoing links between regional clubs/associations and Perth metropolitan clubs to enhance the player pathway.

APPENDIX 2

Football West Junior Football Review – Stage 2 – Implementation Workshop Notes

Staff Workshops – 7 March and 27 March 2024

Consolidated Notes from the facilitated workshops held at the Sam Kerr Football Centre with Football West Staff on the above date as follows:

1. Guiding Principle - SIMPLICITY

It was agreed that the guiding principle of simplicity be used, when implementing any Competition Model. The Competition Model needed to be simple and easy to implement and understand from both a Club level and also at the Football West level.

2. Outcomes

Outcomes to be achieved from any Competition Model implemented, in order of priority, were agreed as follows:

1. **Player Development**
2. **Like for Like** – based on proven ability, the best play against the best etc.
3. The competition be **Accessible and Inclusive** – an opportunity for all to play.
4. **Standards/Quality Control** apply and be enforced - including quality coaching and minimum Club requirements.
5. **Pathways** – opportunity for players and Clubs to advance to higher levels of competition.

3. Divisional Structure

It was agreed that:

1. a Divisional Structure be established for the regular season Competition with **10 teams per division**;
2. there would be **two regular season competition rounds – 18 games played** by each team.

[Discussion notes: - The options discussed for the regular season were as follows:

- *8 teams in each division that would play 3 rounds = 21 games. Start just after Easter and finish mid-September (could have a bye in July)*
- ***10 teams** per division that would play 2 rounds = 18 games. Start just after Easter and play until the end of August (could have a bye mid-season). This would allow for some flexibility and allow time for the top teams to play in a “Development Competition” either prior to or post the regular season.*
- *12 teams in each division that would play 2 rounds = 22 games. Start just after Easter and finish mid-September (could have a bye in July).*

It was noted that Easter dates moved from year to year, and this would need to be considered in any fixturing.]

4. Allocation of Teams to Divisions and Criteria

A critical element that emerged from discussion was whether the Allocation of teams to Divisions should be based on a **Team's** based entry/criteria system, or a **Club** based entry/criteria system.

There was considerable discussion with regard to the criteria to be used. Whether the criteria be Team or Club based, Football West would set some minimum criteria in order for Teams or Clubs **to be eligible for entry** into particular Divisions. The **minimum criteria** would depend upon whether the criteria was Team or Club based. Football West would need to advise Clubs well in advance of the minimum criteria to be met in order to be eligible to nominate for a particular Division.

It was **agreed that a teams based approach be used to allocate teams** to the regular season Competition.

The minimum criteria Teams would need to meet to be eligible to nominate for the Top 3 Divisions was agreed as follows:

- a. Coaches of the team would need to hold a current C level accreditation and
- b. Assistant Coaches would need to hold a Foundation Coaching Accreditation or provide evidence of moving toward gaining this accreditation

Allocation to Division

- Each eligible team would then be assessed based on performance - where they finished in the previous year's regular season competition as well as any other sanctioned competition Football West deemed be used for assessment purposes. (For example a pre-season competition)
- After the first round was played a "grading" of teams would be carried out and re-allocation of teams would be undertaken for the second round. (This effectively means that the regular season could be split into two).

Note: Under this approach:

- An assessment of the Club regarding its operations, facilities and the like, would not be considered.

5. Promotion Relegation – 2026 Season

It was agreed that a promotion and relegation system be adopted. A promotion and relegation system (2 up 2 down) provides Clubs with a development opportunity in the short and long term.

Promotion and relegation would occur in the 2026 season.

The agreed Teams based criteria system would simply see teams promoted or relegated based on:

- Meeting the coaching criteria; and
- Performance in the previous year's regular season Competition.

6. Development Competition

It was agreed that:

- A Development Competition(s) designed to give the more talented players more games along with coach education and training should be introduced;
- A “Club” based criteria approach would be used for the selection of the Clubs to play (as these competitions are development in nature);
- A Club based criteria approach would ensure that “club development” was part of the development initiatives of Football West (a Club Rating system could be developed over time – eg Gold, Silver Bronze);
- The criteria for entry to the Development Competition(s) would include the following:
 - a. Coaches of each team would need to hold a current C level accreditation;
 - b. Assistant Coaches of each team would need to hold a Foundation Coaching Accreditation or provide evidence of moving toward gaining this accreditation;
 - c. The Club would have a “Technical Director”;
 - d. A first aid officer would be present at all home games;
 - e. The Club would need to provide adequate playing facilities for home games. (What was adequate would need to be determined);
 - f. “Game day” staff (type and amount to be determined) would need to be provided by the Club;
 - g. The Club would need to have in place and provide a copy of their Youth Plan, Female Development Plan and their Organisational Structure to Football West. (These could and should, be part of the Club’s planning process and documentation);
 - h. A commitment by the Club to undertake a “holistic” approach to developing Club members (including players, officials, administrators and coaches be evident (this could include Football West and the Club implementing initiatives in leadership and resilience which focus on broader self-development for all involved.
- Each eligible Club would be assessed based on its performance as a Club against the stated criteria.
- The size, structure and timing for the Development Competition needed to be explored further. It was suggested that the following be considered:
 - A pre and post regular season Development Competition be held.
 - Entry into the Development Competitions (pre and post regular season) would be compulsory for the Clubs that are to play in the Top 2 Divisions in that year provided they met the Club criteria.
 - The competition format be a “round robin” in nature and ensure that each team plays 6 games.
 - The nature of the competition be flexible in its rules and format to allow player development strategies such as “early and late” developers to be targeted and catered for.
- Discussion also took place on;
 - the concept of having the Development Competitions “geographically” based (South West, South East, North West, North East) that could ensure better accessibility for Clubs.
 - having some regional Clubs taking part upon invitation.

Note: With the suggested regular season Competition structure, Development Competition(s) and Night Series Competition, players could play up to 36 games per season.

7. Male and Female Competitions

It was agreed at the first workshop that the preferred Competition Model should ideally apply to both Male and Female Competitions however the lack of numbers of female players may make this difficult.

8. Age Groups

It was agreed at the first workshop that the current age groups would remain however it was noted that FA was moving toward a 9's format for Under 13.

9. 2025 Season

The Consultants suggested that some **model draws be prepared** based on both Team and Club eligibility criteria so that the consequences of each could be assessed.

Standing Committees Workshop - 1 May 2024

The following aspects were raised/discussed in the Standing Committees Workshop on 1 May 2024:

- Development league - 10 plus games required
- Coach accreditation – when an accredited Coach of a team that is in Division 1 or 2 leaves a club at the beginning of the season and the club can't get another one that is accredited what happens then?
- Need to refine the “club” criteria – possibly have essential and desirable.... the clubs have a history of not meeting criteria and FW must be able to monitor and take action against clubs that default. Setting clubs up to fail is not smart. FW must have criteria that can be enforced.
- Cost to clubs to participate in the normal season and the development competition needed to be determined and advised to clubs.
- U/18's competition has some issues. How does it relate to the senior U/18's competition.
- There is an issue in the transition from juniors (u/18) to seniors....junior clubs say goodbye to a lot of players when they are no longer eligible to play because they are too old. Must be a better pathway. Senior clubs need to recruit from the juniors
- The naming of the competitions needs to be looked at (Premier and Development causes concern)
- When players move from u/12's to u/13's how will it be determined what Division the teams play in? Probably the previous seasons results and nomination process.
- Can there be multiple club teams in the same division? Maybe 1 per division?
- Glory should be treated just like any other club.
- The “poaching” of teams by clubs will be a problem. A coach does not like the division they have been put in and then moves the team to another club which play in a division

they want to play in. Not a good thing to happen but this has always happened and really cannot be stopped.

- First year – 2025 – adopt a 9/9 games shuffle – 2 seasons in one but will sort the chaff from the hay.
- A package for the clubs explaining all the structure and process of nomination must be with the clubs by mid-August if it is to start in 2025.

Northern Workshop – 15 May 2024

The following aspects were raised/discussed in the Northern Workshop on 15 May 2024:

Regular Season

- ***The suggested structures for both the regular season and development competition were supported.***
- How many club teams will be allowed in each Division – 2, 3? Structure allows for an even playing field for clubs.
- Why the split into North and South after Div. 4?
- If a team finishes the bottom of Division 4 – does it go down to Division 5 in the North and South Divisions. Where does it go if anywhere?
- Appears to need promotion and relegation between Division 4 and Division 5 North and South
- U/13's How are you going to select teams into the Divisions
- U/18 – what is the relationship between the senior U/18 comp and the Junior u/18's comp?
- The pathway for clubs could be confusing with teams in different divisions.
- Income stream for clubs is important – what the impact of this new structure?
- Prom/relegation fully supported
- Will FW have regs specifying how much a club can charge in fees in this new structure? FW will not be getting involved in the fee structure that clubs charge.
- The new structure allows for aspirational thinking by clubs....this is a good thing.
- Players will follow coaches – can't really stop that....a club issue.

Development Competition

- Issue of having playing facilities available.
- Will there be a Junior Cup?
- Copy the senior comps in development – night series etc..
- How many teams/clubs will possibly enter? If a lot of clubs will need to “band” comp to cater.
- Grading at 6 weeks is not a good thing.
- Needs to cater for coaches and other club people as well
- Can be pre/post/middle of the regular season.
- How and where do the “academies” fit into this? Current they provide what the clubs don't especially during the summer.
- Need to consider a “Districts” model as that was successful in the past, especially for talent Id.
- Will the clubs have enough vols and staff to cater for the need of the comp?

- Will State Teams remain and how do the comps align with the State Team concept? Role of the Glory, academies and clubs – need a clear pathway.

Southern Workshop - 29 May 2024

The following aspects were raised/discussed in the Southern Workshop on 29 May 2024:

Regular Season Competition

- Split into North/South a good idea – consider a central zone – depends on the critical mass of players to make it viable. “Districts” model has been considered – resource heavy though.
- Women’s comp has a central zone.
- U/13 – how will teams be allocated into these Divisions? Merit on 2024 results - Two seasons in one-year 9/9 for 2025 to regrade.
- Can a team be promoted without meeting the coaching criteria. Need more options for accessing coaching courses. The cost of courses is high and therefore restrictive.
- Can clubs know who does the coaching courses so they can possibly recruit coaches that don’t belong to a club?
- Promotion and relegation system supported. Why 2 up 2 down? – should consider 1 up 1 down or even 3 up and 3 down. Some concern on where teams “land” in the competition the following year. Consideration should be given to 1 up, 1 down then a “play off” between second place in the lower division and ninth place in the division above. Teams/clubs will have the option of moving up if they win.
- Girls have many new players so this will impact on the number of Divisions created.
- Question – how many club teams can be in the same Division. Support for more than one in the top four divisions – BUT the consensus seemed to be 1 team per club for Division 1 and 2 then more than one from Division 3 down.
- Question re u/12’s playing up into u/13’s – reason is that they can “blood” the good players so they can fit in the following year.
- Where is Perth Glory in all this?
- What are the costs to the clubs associated with the new structure?
- Concern that Football West may see an opportunity to increase fees.
- Can all fees be the same for all teams regardless of what Division they are in?
- Will clubs need to supply a list of players per team at the beginning of the season. Minimum of 16? Envisage a roster-based system?

Development Competition

- Not clear on the structure of the competition and how it would work. Needs more work for the clubs to understand what it means for them.
- Can player “development” be standardised because some clubs do their own thing now. Centralised curriculum would be applicable.
- Cost of coaching courses needs looking at. Restricts clubs and individuals.
- Need more “foundation coaching” courses if possible. Make the 4 C class coaching courses more accessible.
- There could be an issue of individual players playing for 2 clubs – one in the regular season and one in the development comp. Players might switch clubs to play in both comps.
- Talent Identification could be left to u/16’s? FA talent window is u/15’s and u/17’s

- Why not consider having a development squad of the best players in a particular area that trains and gets development and plays against other development squads on a regular basis. In the past this was how FW picked their State Teams?
- Cost to players is a real issue. Some clubs struggle with the fees associated with the competitions and the criteria.

Need to consider a staged approach for the criteria in this competition – e.g. C license for coaches only in the top divisions to start with. Develop a “Gold, Silver, Bronze” accreditation system for clubs to work through.

- Can clubs be given the responsibility for coach “verification” – would save time and money?
- The current thinking behind this competition is “wishy washy” and requires more thought and content on what it is.

Overall

- Regular season structure is good. Needs more detail in some areas. Implement in 2025 then refine and change as needed in 2026.
- Development competition needs more work. If work done could be ready for 2025 – then refine and change for 2026.

Central Workshop – 12 June 2024

The following aspects were raised/discussed in the Southern Workshop on 12 June 2024:

Regular Season Competition

- Foundation of Football course – availability and cost? Need more courses
- Girls structure – what will it look like?
- How many teams per division? 1 in Division 1 and Division 2 after that, possibly more.
- Why only 18 games...need more (Note: regular season has 18)
- What will the fees be? Will every player pay the same no matter what division?
- Will there be enough referees to officiate in the new structure? More referee courses being run and a new system of game allocation coming in.
- A communication problem is evident especially in regard to who is allocated games as a referee.
- How will the promotion and relegation system work between Division 4 and the North/South Division 5 (Note: By nomination)
- Will U/13's move to 9 a side? Need to if possible but probably not in 2025. The U/13's game needs to be modified – smaller goals.
- Consider splitting the U/13's into 2 leagues – one for older players and one for younger (those born in second half of the year).

Development Competition

- Is it an optional competition?
- Criteria needs to be flexible. Needs a staged approach to allow clubs to work towards achieving the criteria.
- Is club facility provision part of the criteria?
- Does a club have to have a team in each age group to be part of the competition (Note: could penalise those Clubs that are growing and may only have one age group with no team).

- When are the applications (licensing) called for 2025 comp?
- How will players be registered for all comps? Will it be a “single” registration system? Needs to be if possible because there needs to be some restriction on players moving clubs.
- The competition could have more than 1 team per division per club
- In coaching and talent ID more use of technology should be encouraged. Software is available.
- Is Talent ID part of this competition Should be. Need a big network for Talent ID.
- How will State teams be selected – from this competition?
- Need to consider making this competition regionally based. Worked in the past. (District Model).
- Are U/18 boys and U/17 girls included?
- There needs to be some incentives for clubs to meet the criteria and take part in the development competition.
- Incentives required to get coaches accredited.