



AUSTRALIAN CROQUET ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

16 September, 2014 to 31 December, 2018





Croquet West

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Australian Croquet Association Inc

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ABBREVIATIONS/DEFINITIONS

AC	Association Croquet
ACA	Australian Croquet Association Incorporated*
ASC	Australian Sports Commission
ASF	Australian Sports Foundation
ASPR	Australian Sports Process Review
Croquet	use of the word 'croquet' = 'mallet sports' and includes – Association Croquet Aussie Croquet Gateball Golf Croquet Ricochet
GC	Golf Croquet
HP	High Performance
NSO	National Sporting Organisation
WCF	World Croquet Federation
WGU	World Gateball Union

* Note ACA trades as both Croquet Australia and Gateball Australia

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Australian Croquet Association Inc (ACA) is an association formed by a union of State Associations to act as the peak body for croquet and other mallet sports in Australia. On the national level, ACA speaks for the sport to the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and other funding bodies. ACA has in place policies and programs which helped it to achieve recognition by the ASC as a 'National Sporting Organisation' (NSO). This recognition has not yet been extended to 'funded' status which would allow ACA to access grants available to NSOs.

In this coming strategic period, positioning ACA to attain 'funded' status is key to achieving the corporate goals identified for the immediate future and to meeting the strategic challenges facing the sport in the longer-term. ASC has published, or provided access to, standards and guidance documents on governance, financial accountability and workforce management for funded NSOs. These documents can provide a frame of reference for corporate reviews of the constitution, financial practices and resource capacity.

Strategic Plan September 2014 – December 2018

The strategic challenges to the sport– recruitment of participants from a wider demographic profile, establishment of pathways of excellence for players, officials and coaches, accommodation of new forms of the game, and increased visibility for the sport – are not so easily met. These challenges can only be addressed through a coordinated strategic approach entailing innovative programs, adequately resourced, that have been developed in consultation between ACA and State Associations working through their appointees and designated representatives.

This strategic plan maps the direction for the ACA over the next four and a half years and the focus is on five key result areas -

- Governance and Management
- Marketing and Promotion
- Funding and Sponsorship
- Participation Development
- Sport Development

This is the first strategic plan developed by a working group of state representatives in consultation with the ACA Executive. The plan is a flexible, living document, subject to ongoing review and amendment. While its perspective is necessarily national in scope, it was conceived with the aim of informing the planning processes of State Associations.

PROFILE

- ACA, trades as Croquet Australia and is the national peak body for croquet in Australia.
- Croquet Australia is a full member of the WCF and affiliated with the WGU.
- Members of ACA are the six State Associations –
 - Croquet New South Wales Incorporated (includes the ACT)
 - Croquet Association Queensland Incorporated
 - South Australian Croquet Association Incorporated
 - Tasmanian Croquet Association Incorporated
 - The Victorian Croquet Association Incorporated
 - The West Australian Croquet Association Incorporated
- The organisation is administered by an Executive consisting of six volunteers and supported by a part-time employee.
- In addition to the Executive, there are four national committees with a total of 18 members and 19 Appointed Officers.
- At the end of 2013 there were 8,856 registered players in Australia.
- Players range in age from high school students to retirees and seniors; predominantly the sport attracts people over 50.
- The sport relies heavily on volunteers at every level of the game.
- Croquet Australia has established well-developed accreditation programs for coaching and refereeing for both AC and GC.
- Australia has a number of players who are at the elite level and compete internationally either individually or as part of a representative team – Australia has won the past two Trans-Tasman Series against New Zealand.
- In 2013, an Australian player, at the age of 20 became the youngest World Champion in AC.

VISION

Croquet – the growing national sport.

MISSION

To operate as a national peak body in Australia.
To demonstrate best practice governance and delivery of services in supporting State Associations.
To administer and develop the sport of croquet.
To promote and improve the image of the sport for all ages and abilities.

OUTCOMES

Provide appropriate leadership and unified direction for the sport across Australia by:

- Adopting a modern, sound, practical and effective governance structure and constitution.
- Reviewing and modernising the organisation's policies and procedures.

Improve the image and enhance the profile of the sport by:

- Developing a new brand to embrace a national, state, regional and club identity.
- Achieving recognition and sponsorship.
- Improving the results of Australian croquet players at nominated international events.

Increase participation across all forms of croquet and build capacity and capability by:

- Investigating and if validated, adopting other forms of club membership.
- Developing a program to target working-age people and a program to target juniors and increase membership in these categories by 500.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1	GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT	To provide leadership and direction as the recognised national peak body for croquet through ASC 'best practice' governance.
2	MARKETING AND PROMOTION	To improve the image and enhance the profile of croquet.
3	FUNDING AND SPONSORSHIP	To achieve ASC 'funded' status and attract sponsorship for sport development and events.
4	PARTICIPATION DEVELOPMENT	To increase the number and diversity of people participating in social and competitive croquet.
5	SPORT DEVELOPMENT	To build capacity and performance within the sport through clear pathways for players, coaches and officials.

1.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Strategic Priority	To provide leadership and direction as the recognised national peak body for croquet through ASC 'best practice' governance.
Objective 1.1	Provide appropriate leadership and direction to the State Associations and engage with key stakeholders to provide a unified direction for the sport across Australia.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve agreement across State Associations for the new Croquet Australia strategic plan. • States to utilise contents of the Croquet Australia plan to create alignment between the national and state strategic directions. • Use the strategic plan to drive Executive meetings and measure the success of the organisation annually as part of the AGM reporting process to members.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder agreement on Croquet Australia strategic plan by 15 September 2014. • Alignment between Croquet Australia and State plans by 31 December 2016. • Achievements within strategic plan reported to members annually. • Achieve at least 80% of strategic priorities by 31 December 2018.
Objective 1.2	Adopt a sound, practical and effective governance structure and constitution to ensure compliance with ASC Governance Principles.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Constitution Review Committee to align Croquet Australia governance structure with ASC principles for federated associations as delineated in the ASC Constitution Template. • Establish a By-Law Review-Committee to ensure Croquet Australia By-Laws and/or Policies provide clear guidance to the Executive and its committees.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution Review Committee established by 30 September, 2014. • Constitution based on the ASC Constitution Template to be agreed and voted on at the AGM (23 March 2015). • By-Law Review Committee established by 31 December, 2014 to progressively deliver its recommendations to the Executive. • Executive to have clearly defined roles and responsibilities by 23 March 2015.

Objective 1.3	Establish a database of registered members as required in the ASC Constitution Template and develop it as a service delivery point for members.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive to establish the member database in consultation with the State Associations so that the details of all members are registered and recorded. Executive to evaluate the concept of a Croquet Australia hosted website that provides an online portal for the State Associations.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Croquet Australia member database online by December 2015 to facilitate applications for Federal funding (ASC/ASF). Croquet Australia website hosts member portal, club information and service delivery functions by 31 December 2016.
Objective 1.4	Review policies and procedures to ensure legal compliance and effective and responsible NSO management.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing governance policies and procedures. Review existing financial policies and procedures.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Croquet Australia's policies and procedures reviewed by 31 December 2016. Croquet Australia has a 12-month agenda plan with review dates for policies and projects established by December 2014.
Objective 1.5	Review Croquet Australia capacity to manage organisation effectively.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that appointed positions and committees have clearly defined roles and delegated responsibilities and authorities with position descriptions and terms of references. Assess staffing capacity to improve support to members and maintenance of online services. Develop a method of feedback from members, staff and appointees.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position descriptions and terms of references developed for all positions and committees by 31 December 2015. Communication between Executive, appointees, staff and members is consistent and effective as reported by stakeholders as at 31 December 2016.
Objective 1.6	Establish strategic partnerships and alliances to enhance sport and facility development opportunities.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Partnership Committee to build strategic alliances with Government, community groups and allied sports. Committee to identify sport development and facility development opportunities to be achieved through partnerships.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership Committee established by 31 December 2016.

2.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Strategic Priority	To improve the image and enhance the profile of croquet.
Objective 2.1	Identify the specific target market and develop a new brand.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and brief (on methods of delivery) a Marketing and Promotion Committee composed of state representatives to drive improved marketing outcomes at both national and state level. • Conduct market research in determining the desires and needs of different demographic groups to attract new players to the game. • Develop a new brand, logo and slogan with the assistance of a consultant. • Develop marketing plans. • Provide marketing templates through State Associations for Clubs to use in creating signs, flyers and other advertising material.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing and Promotion Committee established by 30 September 2014. • Research completed and marketing plan provided to Croquet Australia by 28 February 2015. • New brand, logo, slogan and promotions templates developed for Croquet Australia by 1 May 2015. • Devolve the marketing brand to all State Associations by 30 May 2015.
Objective 2.2	Establish new marketing communication methods with key stakeholders.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a communications plan to allow effective communication between Croquet Australia and its key stakeholders. • Revise the current Croquet Australia website to achieve greater functionality, service delivery, visual appeal and member usage. • Expose the sport to radio, television, print and social media. • Develop an online version of the Croquet Australia quarterly magazine to complement its printed counterpart.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications plan developed by July 2015 (for Council Meeting in September 2015). • Update Croquet Australia website by 31 December 2015. • Develop online version of the Croquet Australia quarterly magazine by 31 August 2016. • Facilitate 5 exposures of the sport per annum by way of radio interviews, television coverage, press articles, YouTube, Facebook.

Objective 2.3	Use national and state sporting associations, local councils, and corporate sponsors to assist with promotions.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish relationships with key NSOs to help promote the sport. • Encourage State Associations to establish promotional relationships with allied state sporting associations. • Provide guidelines through State Associations for Clubs to establish or enhance relationships with local councils and corporate sponsors.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional relationships created with 2 NSOs by 31 March 2016. • State Associations to have established promotional relationships with allied state sporting associations by 31 March 2016. • Guidelines to State Associations for Clubs to establish or enhance relationships with local councils and corporate sponsors by 30 September 2015.

3.

FUNDING AND SPONSORSHIP

Strategic Priority	To achieve ASC 'funded' status and attract sponsorship for sport development and events.
Objective 3.1	Achieve official recognition and funding from the ASC.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit application to ASC for higher level recognition based on evidence of 'best practice' governance. • Participate in the federally funded Australian Sports Process Review (ASPR) process (or its equivalent). • Explore funding opportunities with the ASC and Australia Sports Foundation (ASF). • Work closely with the ASC liaison officer to identify strategies and opportunities for funding.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit application for ASC recognition by 31 December 2014. • Submit application for inclusion in the ASPR process (or its equivalent) by 31 December 2015. • Achieve funding from the ASC by 31 December 2016.
Objective 3.2	Increase funding and sponsorship levels.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Grants and Sponsorship Committee. • Source external expertise to identify grant opportunities and potential sponsors. • Develop a grants and sponsorship Plan.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants and Sponsorship Committee established by 31 January 2017. • Grants and sponsorship plan developed by July 2017. • At least 5 potential sponsors approached by 30 June 2018.
Objective 3.3	Secure a major sponsor for national teams as well as national and international events.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing membership records to identify potential sponsors. • Review other sports for possible sponsorship opportunities. • Approach past and present regional and state sponsors to offer national exposure.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event sponsorship plan developed and potential sponsors approached by 31 December 2017. • Event sponsor secured for at least one Croquet Australia tournament by 31 December 2018.

Strategic Priority	To increase the number and diversity of people participating in social and competitive croquet.
Objective 4.1	Increase overall croquet participation.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the strategies from the Croquet Australia marketing plan to grow participation. • Encourage flexibility in the delivery of the sport according to the target group of participants. • Investigate a flexible membership category to capture unaffiliated/social croquet groups. • Develop national resource kits that provide guidance for modifying the sport and the facilities to meet the needs of the targeted participants.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase registered players by at least 10% by 31 December 2018. • Temporary membership category investigated by 31 July 2015. • Junior membership category investigated by 31 July 2015. • Resource kits developed and delivered to State Associations by 31 March 2017.
Objective 4.2	Promote regeneration strategies to increase participation in the game.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose Players to both AC and GC – as a matter of coaching policy (techniques and strategies). • Internal marketing of benefits of both codes to membership. • Expose croquet players to the game and requirements of Gateball.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation in national and state events by 10% by 31 July 2017. • Increase the number of Gateball players and venues by 5% by 31 December 2018.
Objective 4.3	Increase participation by working-age and junior participants.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a national program to introduce working-age people to croquet, in particular, by way of social programs and subsequent competitive opportunities. • Develop a national after-school program. • Develop strategies to provide structured opportunities for family participation.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National promotion program targeting workers developed by 31 December 2015. • Working-age membership increased by 10% by 31 December 2018. • Junior program developed and implemented by 28 February 2017. • Increase in junior membership by 5% by 31 December 2018.

Objective 4.4	Increase participation by under-represented groups.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and align with ASC <i>Play by the Rules</i> and the <i>Seven Pillars of Inclusion</i> strategies. • Develop strategies to recruit and retain participants from under-represented groups, for example - people with disabilities.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to align with at least 3 NSOs that cater for under-represented groups by 31 December 2017. • Brand association with <i>Play by the Rules</i> devolved to the State Associations by 31 March 2015.
Objective 4.5	Implement a national volunteer management program for Croquet Australia.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all volunteer positions are covered by policies and procedures. • Develop strategies for support and recognition of volunteers. • Encourage ownership of the sport through volunteer activities.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer management program developed by 31 December 2017. • Annual survey of volunteers on the quality of their experience by 31 December 2016. • Increase of 10% in volunteer recruitment and retention by 31 December 2018.

Strategic Priority	To build capacity and performance within the sport through clear pathways for players, coaches and officials.
Objective 5.1	Increase the quantity and quality of players, coaches, officials at all levels.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a working group of National Directors to coordinate the development of an overall framework and resources for a nationally delivered education and training program. • Investigate the feasibility of establishing a national Croquet Academy at an existing venue to deliver programs (through enrolment) for coaches, officials, and players as an adjunct to state delivery. • Establish a graduated system for referees in AC and GC. • Develop a plan to establish mentoring programs for coaches and referees at all levels in each state.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework and curriculum for nationally delivered education and training program completed by 31 July 2015. • Resources for nationally delivered education and training program developed incrementally and completed by 31 December 2016. • Feasibility of national Croquet Academy decided by 31 December 2014. • National Croquet Academy trialed beginning 1 September 2015 with limited course offerings (if deemed feasible). • Mentoring programs established for coaches and referees in each state and nationally by 31 December 2015. • Number of Level 1 practicing Referees in each code increased by 20% by 31 December 2018. • Number of Level 1 practicing Coaches in each code increased by 30% by 31 December 2018. • Number of Level 2 practicing Coaches in each code increased by 10% by 31 December 2018. • Number of referees qualified, suitable and available for national and international events increased by 10% by 31 December 2018.

Objective 5.2	Establish a High Performance (HP) program with clear pathways.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, document and deliver HP programs with pathways for athletes to progress from state to national level performance. • Identify and develop 'fundable' HP initiatives and seek support for programs and participants through external funding. • Achieve greater levels of success and 'podium' finishes at international events.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HP programs developed and documented by 1 January 2015. • HP pathways developed with National Directors of Coaching beginning 1 July 2015. • Success in attracting external resources to assist the development of HP participants by 31 December 2018. • At least 4 athletes in top 20 world rankings in AC and GC by 31 December 2018. • In top 2 for AC Australian Team in international events by 31 December 2018. • In top 8 for GC Australian Team in international events by 31 December 2018.
Objective 5.3	Work with the States and WCF/WGU to deliver quality national and International events.
Method of Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of international events held in Australia. • Develop guidelines and resources on best practice tournament and venue management. • Advocate for international standards on equipment and surface conditions.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of international events held in Australia increased to 2 by 31 December 2018. • Positive responses from members in event surveys conducted annually beginning 1 January 2015.

APPENDIX 1 – References and Links

Australian Croquet Association Handbook

<http://www.croquet-australia.com.au/Governance/Documents/Handbook/ACA%20Handbook%20-%20Amended%20as%20per%20AGM%2025%20March%202013.pdf>

Australian Sports Commission Governance Principles

http://www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/file/0010/485857/ASC_Governance_Principles.pdf

Australian Sports Commission Mandatory Sports Governance Principles

http://www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/531165/ASC_Mandatory_Sports_Governance_Principles.pdf

Australian Sports Commission National Sports Organisation Funding Constitution Template

http://www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/484555/Template_Constitution.pdf

Australian Sports Commission National Sports Organisation Funding 2013-2014 (as at 5 June 2014)

http://www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/539573/NSO_NSOD_2013-14_Funding_for_web_5_June_2014.pdf

Australian Sports Commission Annual Sport Review Process

http://www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/funding/system_partners/national_sporting_organisations

Australian Sports Foundation (ASF)

<http://www.asf.org.au/>

Croquet Academy (located at Sussex County Croquet Club, UK)

<http://www.thecroquetacademy.com/>

Play by the Rules

<http://www.playbytherules.net.au/>

Play by the Rules – Australian Sports Commission

http://www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/integrity_in_sport/about/play_by_the_rules

7 Pillars of Inclusion

<http://www.playbytherules.net.au/latest-hot-topics/1373-7-pillars-explained>