



**Little
Athletics**
Victoria

Little Athletics Victoria Strategic Plan

20/21 to 22/23

April 2020

Contents

Background	3
Vision & Mission	4
Strategic Priorities Summary	6
Strategic Priorities Detail	8

Background

Little Athletics Victoria ("LAVic")

LAVic, is a not-for-profit, membership based organisation providing modified athletics competition for 16,000 children at 101 locations across Victoria. Nationally, the program attracts almost 95,000 athletes, making it one of the largest organised sporting codes in Australia.

LAVic is governed by a Board of seven elected, and two appointed Directors. It is formally affiliated with Little Athletics Australia along with other State Little Athletics member associations.

The sport is administered by the LAVic staff of 9 based at Lakeside Stadium, Albert Park. Victoria is segmented into seven Regions, each with their own committees (extensions of the LAVic Board), that assist with the administration of the program.

This plan seeks to set out the key strategic objectives and directions for Little Athletics Victoria for the period 20/21 to 22/23.

Vision and Mission

Vision Statement for LAVic:

To be an innovative champion of children's athletics and a prominent and respected leader in Victorian sport.

Purpose for LAVic:

Through participation in athletics, develop positive attitudes and a healthy lifestyle for our children, families and the community.

Motto

Family Fun Fitness.

Core Values

We will always:

- Provide leadership
- Be open, honest, transparent and accountable
- Value diversity and inclusivity
- Act with respect and integrity
- Be innovative
- Promote fun

Unique selling points of Little Athletics:

- Little Athletics teaches fundamental movement skills that assist children excel and enjoy a wide variety of sports and activities.
- As an individual sport, Little Athletics teaches self reliance and independence.
- Little Athletics provides families with flexibility without the encumbrances and restrictions of a team sport schedule.
- Little Athletics teaches children that the better they train, and the more they persevere, the better the results.
- Little Athletics celebrates personal bests over placing in events.
- Little Athletics strongly encourages involvement of family, and the development of friendships by athletes, parents and siblings.
- While principally an individual sport, Little Athletics also provides team sport experiences for athletes.
- Little Athletics provides athletes with annual opportunities to represent their club, Centre, Region and State.

Strategic factors

The Little Athletics program was devised and launched in 1964 as a modified program of athletics competition tailored to the needs of young athletes. While the model has benefitted from continual and incremental improvement over 50+ years, it has served the sport well – and continues to do so - in a largely unaltered state.

Little Athletics faces challenges on several fronts. Participation numbers in the formative years escalated rapidly and peaked in the mid 1980s at over 36,000. Since this time, the program has experienced a gradual decline in participation of approximately 50%, save for temporary spikes in numbers coinciding with Olympic and Commonwealth Games years. Participation is currently at 16,000 and the long term trend of slow decline, should all factors remain the same, can be expected to continue.

Macro-environmental contributing factors include:

- Increased competition for kids' time and attention: kids these days have many more locally accessible sporting and recreational options to choose from to fill their leisure time. Competition, particularly from online gaming and commercial sporting interests, is intense.
- Preference for shorter, time-defined, low voluntary sporting/recreational activities: parents tendency to choose sport/recreation options that are shorter in duration, have a predictable duration, and require little or no voluntary contribution.
- One Athletics: a national movement for the closer alignment of Little Athletics with senior athletics.

Other significant strategic factors are addressed in this plan.

Fundamentally, Little Athletics activities remain inherently attractive to children. Children love to run, jump and throw and the Little Athletics product provides the opportunity for children to do so.

By successfully addressing the issues in the plan, Little Athletics can turn around 30+ year trend of slow decline and experience sustainable growth for the long term.

Strategic Priorities Summary

Strategic priority	Objectives
<p>1. Grow the sport</p>	<p>1.1 Grow Centre Committee capabilities 1.2 Increase the number of active coaches in Victorian Little Athletics Centres 1.3 Rebuilding the Regions 1.4 Recruit competitive members 1.5 Establish new Centres 1.6 Encourage and support existing and new pathways into helping with Centre activities 1.7 Assist Centres improve the quality and consistency of competition programs across the Association</p>
<p>2. Governance & Management</p>	<p>2.1 Implement Privacy policy 2.2 Clarify Membership types 2.3 Trial a franchisee Centre management model 2.4 Continually improve child safety settings 2.5 Implement member protection framework 2.6 Implement grievance & dispute resolution policies & procedures 2.7 Manage risk effectively 2.8 Finances 2.9 Human Resources 2.10 Respecting Honorary Members 2.11 Upgrade the membership database 2.12 Marketing 2.13 Sponsorship 2.14 State Competitions 2.15 Connecting with Little Aths coaches 2.16 Increase the pool of active Officials 2.17 Education 2.18 Multi-class competition 2.19 Ensure business continuity during and post COVID-19 restrictions</p>

	2.20 Board continuity
3. One Athletics	3.1 Contribute to, and influence, OneAthletics activities led by LAA 3.2 Progress OneAthletics matters with AV regarding State-based matters 3.3 Keep key stakeholder groups fully informed about OneAthletics activities.

Strategic Priorities detail

Objectives	Method	What does success look like		
<p>1. GROW THE SPORT</p> <p>Help Regions and Centres thrive and excite our athletes and families about Little Athletics. Improve the Little Athletics experience for athletes, families and volunteers.</p>			Priority	Year
<p>1.1 Grow Centre Committee capabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a Centre audit of key features of Centre operations, governance & competitions to inform Development Officer priorities. • Provide Centres advice, support and resources regarding Centre governance. • Provide tools to assist Centres plan and deliver committee succession from year to year. • Support for grievances / complaints. • Conference session. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher levels of Centre governance literacy across the Association. • Enhanced management and planning of committee continuity by Centres. • Reduced incidence of 'catastrophic' committee turnover at Centres. • Reduced reliance on LAVic for Centre governance matters. • No Centre failures. 	1	1 - 3
<p>1.2 Increase the number of active coaches in Victorian Little Athletics Centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping record of our coaches and the Centres they are attached to. • Provide Centres advice, support and resources regarding attracting and retaining Coaches. • Influence where possible national coach accreditation frameworks for the betterment of Little Athletics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More coaches in more Centres. • Better trained, more satisfied athletes in more Centres. • Higher athlete retention. • Better communications with the LAVic Coaching community. 	1	1 - 3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating position statements about the requirement for Coaches at Centres. • Conference session. 			
1.3 Rebuilding the Regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement recommendations of Region Review. • Implement effectual RAC meeting structure. • Implement centralised financial management. • Execute signed Delegation of Authority instruments. • Trial Development Officers to undertake Centre support activities on behalf of Regions. • Conduct a formal review of Region Boundaries. • Develop Region resource pack. • Promote Region events to maximise entries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable, vibrant, well run Region committees. • Enhanced Competition quality at Centre & Region level. • 20/21 aside, growing Region event entries, year on year. • Improved oversight of week to week Centre competition and related Centre issues. • Increase in the number of Region & State-qualified Officials. • Closer relationships with Centres. 	1	1, 2
1.4 Recruit competitive members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Centres to promote Little Athletics in their communities. • All Centres to undertake member recruitment activities. • All Centres to undertake member retention activities. • LAVic to develop Centre marketing position statement emphasising the importance of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20/21 aside, membership increase, year on year. • 20/21 aside, retention to increase, year on year. • Increased member satisfaction, year on year. 	1	1 - 3

	Centre member recruitment and retention activities.			
1.5 Establish new Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential locations to establish new Centres. Develop a Centre establishment plan. Develop a 'How to Establish a New Centre' resource kit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of Centres. 	3	2
1.6 Encourage and support existing and new pathways into helping with Centre activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run a campaign to explain why parent volunteers are required, the importance of this, and where it can lead to. Provide Centres advice, support and resources to encourage parents to volunteer and obtain officiating skills. Promote and encourage alternate delivery of traditionally voluntary Centre roles & activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased pool of individuals delivering volunteering activities at Centre level. Increased pool of Officials at Centre level ready to step up to Region level. 	2	2, 3
1.7 Assist Centres improve the quality and consistency of competition programs across the Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a set of templated Centre competition programs. Encourage Centres to reduce programs to 90 min Development Officers to support Centres with governance, competition and operations matters. Encourage Centres to hold weekly training sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centres delivering a quicker, better competition experience for athletes, families & volunteers. Centres providing a better 'club' experience for athletes, families and volunteers. High degree of consistency across LAVic Centres with the 	1	1 - 3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage clubs to develop a vibrant social calendar. Test the idea of having paid Centre Competition Directors. 	delivery of the competition program.		
--	---	--------------------------------------	--	--

Objectives	Method	What does success look like	Priority	Year
2. GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT				
Continually improve sound governance & management structures				
2.1 Implement Privacy policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out Privacy Policy at 2020 Conference & support with online tools. Incorporate Photography of children with Privacy policy & Regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent Privacy settings across the Association, with Centre & Region practices aligned with LAVic, in turn aligned with the Privacy Act. 	2	1
2.2 Clarify Membership types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise/re-draft Regulation 11 to clarify Associate membership, including trial membership, parents, coaches, Officials, volunteers etc & associated responsibilities. Revised Regulation 6 Terms of Affiliation for Centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity around the definitions and responsibilities for all membership types. 	1	1
2.3 Trial a franchisee Centre management model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trial a franchisee-run Centre (with LAVic as the franchisor) Assess the success of the model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple Centres taking up franchisee-management models/ 	3	3

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Franchisee-run Centres experience membership growth. Franchisee-run Centres operate on a sustainable basis. 		
2.4 Continually improve child safety settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain up to date knowledge of child protection legislation; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure parity with other sports with respect to child protection procedures. Reduced risk of child protection issues arising. 	2	1 - 3
2.5 Implement member protection framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a Member Protection policy. Implement down to Centre level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member protection policy implemented. Alignment with Victorian State Government. 	3	1
2.6 Implement grievance & dispute resolution policies & procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft requisite Regulations, policies & procedures. Elevate grievance & dispute resolution responsibilities into Finance, Governance & Risk Manager role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear grievance and dispute resolution pathways created. More efficient resolution of matters. 	2	1
2.7 Manage risk effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elevate risk responsibilities into Finance Governance & Risk Manager role. Maintain & enhance risk register. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in claims. Improvement in LAVic risk exposure. 	1	1 - 3
2.8 Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periodic reporting. Business is managed to budget. Annual audit with no qualifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAVic has a level of financial sustainability to be around for the members over the long term. 	1	1 - 3

2.9 Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial the Development Officer role. • Hire a data entry assistant to ease transactional workload on Finance, Governance & Risk Manager role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective deployment of resources to areas where they are required most – Finance, Membership support; Region support. 	2	1
2.10 Respecting Honorary Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage more submissions for honorary membership. • Establish a coterie group run by Honorary Members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of honorary members. • Honorary Members engaged in meaningful activities with purpose for Little Athletics. 	3	2
2.11 Upgrade the membership database/CRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek expressions of interest from database providers. • Select replacement database/CRM. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New, higher functioning database implemented. • Improved record keeping and communications with Officials and Coaches. 	1	1
2.12 Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramp up word of mouth marketing & social media engagement. • Promote Little Athletics' unique selling points: self reliance; flexibility; PBs, train hard/see improvement, perseverance etc. • Develop a marketing activity schedule. • Solicit testimonials to use in attracting new members. • Leverage 2021 Tokyo Olympics marketing opportunity, in conjunction with LAA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execute marketing schedule of activities. • Increased competitive member registrations (20/21 aside). • Increased public profile of Little Athletics. 	1	1 - 3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools – lobby Government for fundamental motor skills to be part of the Victorian curriculum. 			
2.13 Sponsorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach target organisations for partnership/sponsorship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional revenue and/or in-kind support secured. More effectual marketing outcomes, improved image, credibility & prestige. 	3	2 - 3
2.14 State Competitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual improvement in event management, equipment & promotion of State Events. Join Sports Environment Alliance. Develop inclusive streams, such as multi-class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement of athlete, family & volunteer experience, year on year. Environmental sustainability of State events improved. Growing multi-class participation at Centre, Region & State levels. Managed to budget. 	2	1 - 3
2.15 Connecting with Little Aths coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify active coaches in Little Athletics. Capture details of coaches active in Little Athletics on database. Communicate regularly with coaches. Create an activity vehicle – function, working group, event etc involving expressly Little Athletics coaches, possibly in conjunction with AV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year growth of active coaches in Little Athletics. Year on year increase in the number of Centres with active coaches. Improved coach retention. Growth in female coach numbers. 	3	1 - 3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage female coach involvement. Establish a 'Female Coach Academy'. 			
2.16 Increase the pool of active Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential Officials at Centre & Region level. Identify Officials with potential for development undertake training/mentoring. Succession plans developed for key and/or critical roles at State & Region levels. Creating position statements about the requirement for Officials at Centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in Centre, Region & State Officials to assist run competitions at all levels, year on year. Improved officiating standards at all levels of competition. 	1	1 - 3
2.17 Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring new means of delivery of Officiating & Coaching development resources courses with technology. Trial new means of course delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluated trial of new course delivery means. Increased number of course attendees, year on year. 	2	2, 3
2.18 Multi-class competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build the capacity of Centres to effectively coach multi-class athletes; Build the capacity of Centres & Regions to effectively officiate multi-class competition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth in the number of multi-class athletes at Centre, Region and State levels. Increase in multi-class capable officials, year on year. 	3	1 - 3
2.19 Ensure business continuity during and post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft 20/21 budget to reflect 'worst case scenario'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No losses of Affiliated Centres. 	1	1

COVID-19 restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post COVID-19 themed conference to provide Centres with as best support possible to launch into season 20/21. • Keep stakeholders well informed. • Re-assess AGM timing for best strategic effect. • Operational requirements continually assessed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full calendar of standard LAVic activities (competition, clinics, programs, events) • Retention of key staffing capability. • 20/21 membership to exceed 12,500. 		
2.20 Board continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan ahead for Board succession. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth and effectual Board functioning. 	1	1-3

Objectives	Method	What does success look like	Priority	Year
3. ONE ATHLETICS Playing our role towards a brighter future for athletics				
3.1 Contribute to, and influence OneAthletics activities led by LAA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement in LAA One Athletics activities where required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAVic influencing One Athletics outcomes for the benefit of LAVic stakeholders. 	2	1 - 3
3.2 Progress OneAthletics matters with AV regarding State-based matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement in LAA One Athletics activities where required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAVic influencing One Athletics outcomes for the benefit of LAVic stakeholders. 	3	2, 3
3.3 Keep key stakeholder groups fully informed about OneAthletics activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate One Athletics developments with key stakeholders, including VAL. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders fully informed on One Athletics issues; Stakeholders aligned with LAVic on One Athletics matters. 	3	1 - 3