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# **OVERVIEW & IMPLEMENTATION**

# **NPL** Review

The purpose of this overview is to present the recommendations from the NPL Review and to outline the operational steps required for their effective implementation. It is intended to provide clarity, ensure alignment, and support strategic planning for the future of Capital Football's competitions and player development pathways.

Further context and justification for the recommendations are outlined in the full NPL Review. Where any inconsistencies arise, the NPL Review is to be regarded as the authoritative source.

#### **Review Committee**

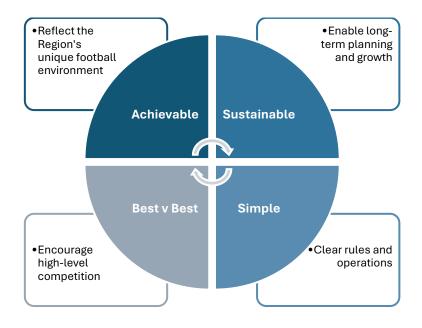
Gary Vandeburgt (Chair)	Tina McCleary
Steve Udjur	Steve Rohan-Jones

#### **Purpose of the Review**

Evaluate NPL and CPL competitions for improved structure and pathways.

#### **Key Principles**

The review was guided by four key principles designed to ensure a competition structure that is fit for purpose, sustainable, and reflective of Canberra's unique football landscape.



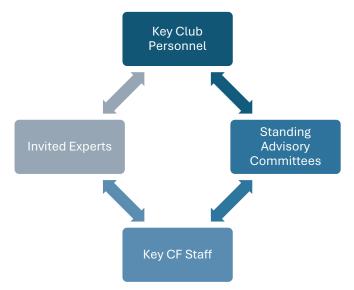
#### Risks

The review identified several key risks impacting the effectiveness and sustainability of the current competition structure, which the recommended changes aim to address.

Quality	Financial	Behaviours
• Overly complex structures lowered competition quality	• Spending misaligned with outcomes	<ul> <li>Transactional dynamics hindered growth</li> </ul>

#### Consultation

The Review Committee engaged a wide range of stakeholders to gather input and ensure a collaborative approach. This included direct consultations with Clubs, Standing Advisory Committees, as well as key Capital Football staff.

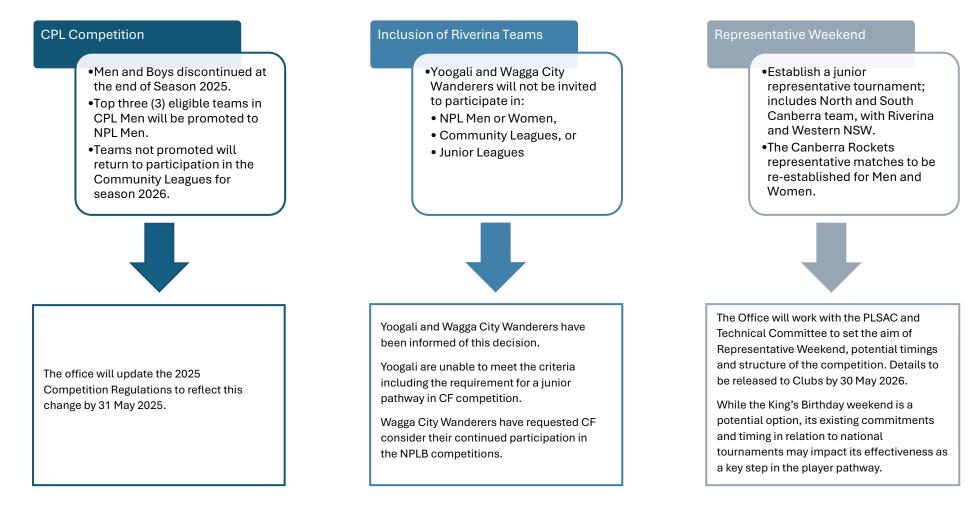


Key activities such as surveys, meetings with Technical Directors, and President's meetings were organised to facilitate meaningful discussion and feedback. To further validate the review committee's findings and proposals, a special "war games" session was held with a select group of club representatives

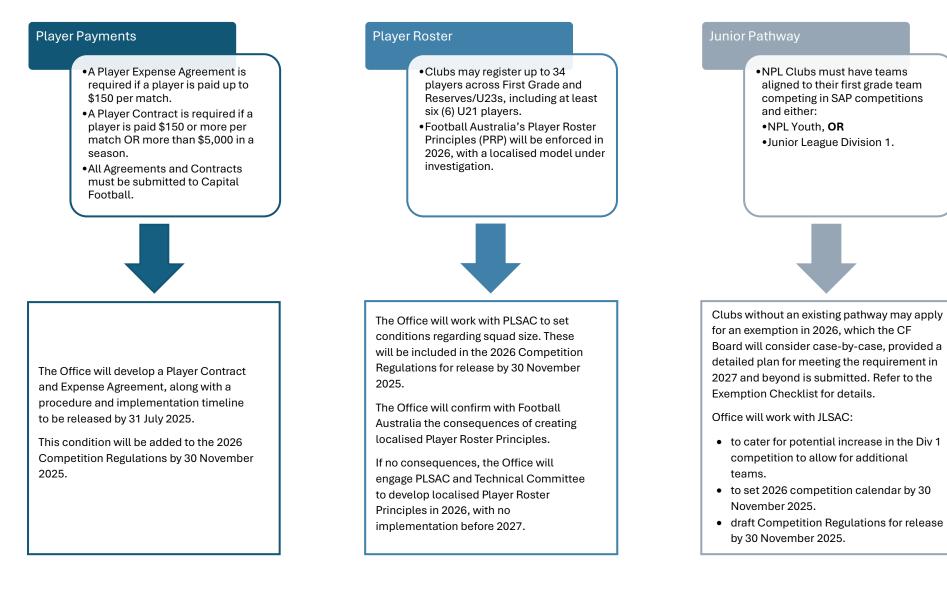
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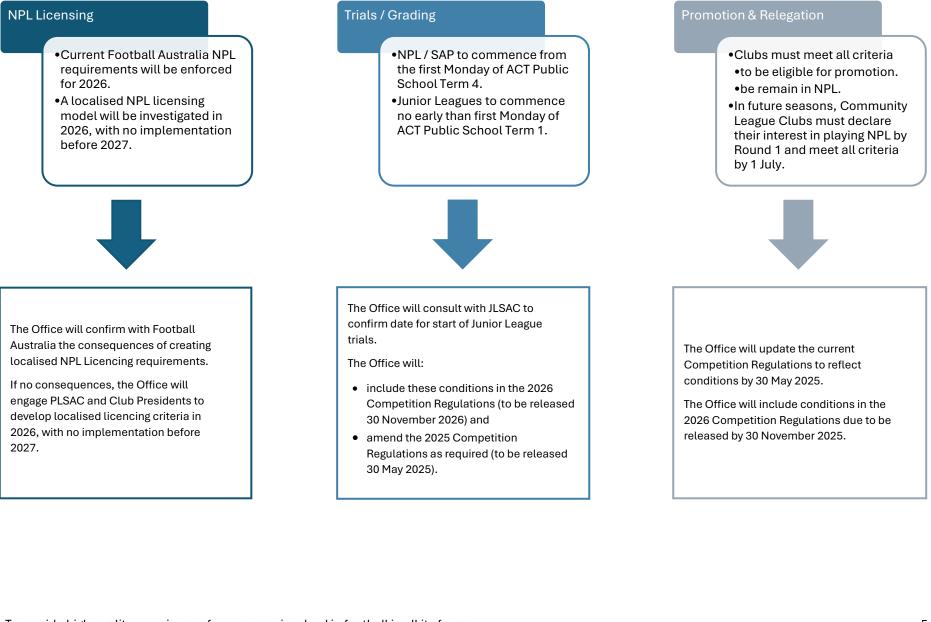
## **Competitions – General**



# Senior NPL – General Criteria



# Senior NPL – General Criteria (continued)



# NPL Men – Specific Criteria

10 teams. 18 matches. Six (6) team Finals Series,	Finals Series	Junior Pathway		
played over three (3) weeks. Max squad 34 players, including six (6) under 21. Football Australia's Player Roster Principles (PRP) will apply.	<ul> <li>1 and 2 have week off</li> <li>3 v 6 (loser eliminated)</li> <li>4 v 5 (loser eliminated)</li> <li>Week 2:</li> <li>1 v lowest ranked team to qualify for Week 2 (loser eliminated)</li> <li>2 v highest ranked team to qualify for Week 2 (loser eliminated)</li> <li>2 v highest ranked team to qualify for Week 2 (loser eliminated)</li> <li>Week 3:</li> <li>Winners Week 2 play off</li> </ul>	Club must field a team in every Boy's SAP Competition age group as well as either •NPL Boy's competition <b>OR</b> •JL Boy's Div 1 (U14, U15, U16, U18)	Promotion & Relegation No relegation from NPL at the end of season 2025. CPL clubs must declare their interest in promotion by 2 June 2025. The top three (3) eligible CPL teams at end of season 2025 will be promoted. All clubs intending to play NPL in 2026 must meet all Capital Football NPL criteria by 1 September 2025. In future seasons, Community League Clubs must declare their interest in playing NPL by Round 1 and meet all criteria by 1 July.	Preseason Cup

The Office will work with PLSAC:

- to set the 2026 competition calendar and Competition Regulations for release by 30 November 2025.
- a suitable structure and timing of a Preseason Cup for implementation in 2027, with details to be released by 30 May 2026.

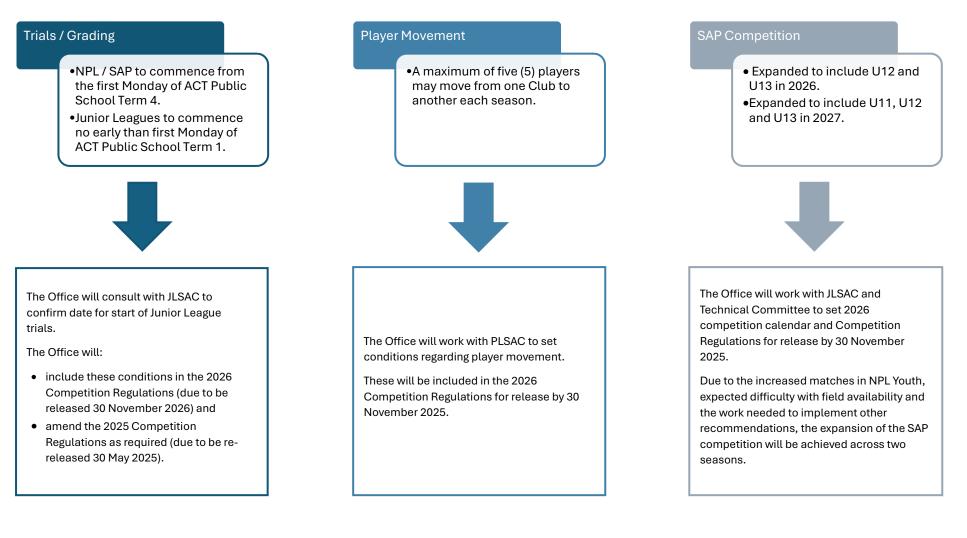
# NPL Women – Specific Criteria

Eight (8) teams.	Finals Series		
1 matches.			
Four (4) team Finals Series, olayed over three (3) weeks. Max squad 34 players, including ix (6) under 21 A maximum of five (5) players, along with one (1) coach, will be permitted to move from one team o another Club each season.	Week 1: •1 v 2 (winner straight to GF in Week 3) •3 v 4 (loser eliminated) Week 2: •(Loser 1 v 2) v (Winner 3 v 4) Week 3: •(Winner 1 v 2) v (Winner Week 2)	Club must field a team in every Girl's SAP Competition age group as well as either •NPL Girl's competition <b>OR</b> •JL Girl's Div 1 (U14, U16, U18)	Promotion & Relegation No change from current Competition Regulations, except aspiring NPL Clubs from Community Leagues Div 1 must declare their interest in promotion by 2 June 2025. All clubs intending to play NPL in 2026 must meet all Capital Football NPL criteria by 1 September 2025. In future seasons, Community League Clubs must declare their interest in playing NPL by Round 1 and meet all criteria by 1 July.

The Office will:

- work with PLSAC to set the 2026 competition calendar and Competition Regulations for release by 30 November 2025.
- consult Football Australia around consequences of creating localized licensing requirements by 1 August 2025.

# Youth NPL – General Criteria



# NPL Boys – Specific Criteria

	k 1:	Promotion & Relegation		
will be permitted to move from one team to another Club each	4 (loser eliminated) 3 (loser eliminated) k 2: nners Week 1 play off	The bottom four (4) clubs in the 2025 Club Championship will be relegated to Junior Leagues. No clubs promoted from Junior Leagues for 2026. All clubs intending to play NPL in 2026 must meet all Capital Football NPL criteria by 1 September 2025. In future seasons, Junior League Clubs must declare their interest in playing NPL by Round 1 and meet	SAP Competition Expanded to include •U12 & U13 in 2026 •U11, U12 & U13 in 2027	

#### The Office will:

- begin work with Sportsgrounds ACT to lock in required fields by 31 October 2025.
  - If Sportsgrounds ACT cannot allocate fields then a 21 round competition will be delivered in 2026, with a 3 week finals series (as per NPL Women).
- work with PLSAC, JLSAC and Technical Committee to set the 2026 competition calendar and Competition Regulations for release by 30 November 2025.

# NPL Girls – Specific Criteria

	Finals Series			
Eight (8) teams. 28 matches. Four (4) team Finals Series, played over two (2) weeks.	Week 1:	Promotion & Relegation		
A maximum of five (5) players will be permitted to move from one team to another Club each season.	<ul> <li>1 v 4 (loser eliminated)</li> <li>2 v 3 (loser eliminated)</li> <li>Week 2:</li> <li>Winners Week 1 play off</li> </ul>	No changes from current Competition Regulations, except aspiring NPL Clubs from Junior Leagues Div 1 must declare their interest in promotion by 2 June 2025. All clubs intending to play NPL in 2026 must meet all Capital Football NPL criteria by 1 September 2025. In future seasons, Junior League Clubs must declare their interest in playing NPL by Round 1 and meet all criteria by 1 July.	SAP Competition Expanded to include •U12 & U13 in 2026 •U11, U12 & U13 in 2027	

#### The Office will:

- begin work with Sportsgrounds ACT to lock in required fields by 31 October 2025.
  - If Sportsgrounds ACT cannot allocate fields, then a 21 round competition will be delivered in 2026, with a 3 week finals series (as per NPL Women).
- work with PLSAC, JLSAC and Technical Committee to set the 2026 competition calendar and Competition Regulations for release by 30 November 2025.

# **Promotion and Relegation**

This section is intended to provide further clarity to the high level details included above:

	From Season 2025 → Season 2026	From Season 2026 -> Season 2027
	There will be no relegation from NPL Men at the end of season 2025.	Aspiring NPL Clubs from Community League Division 1 must declare their interest in promotion to the 2027 NPL season prior to Round 1 of the 2026 season to Capital Football.
NPL Men	CPL clubs must declare interest in promotion to Capital Football by Monday 2 June 2025. The top three (3) eligible CPL teams at end of season 2025 will be promoted for season 2026.	To be eligible, Clubs must field teams in all boy's SAP age groups, and either NPL Boys or Junior League Boys Division 1 in U14, U15, U16, U18 and meet all Capital Football NPL criteria by 1 July 2026.
	All clubs intending to play NPL in season 2026 must meet all Capital Football NPL criteria by 1 September 2025 including the ability to field teams all boy's SAP age groups, and either NPL Boys or Junior League Boys Division 1 in U14, U15, U16, U18.	If the first-placed Club is ineligible, there will be no automatic promotion. However, if the second-placed Club meets the eligibility criteria, a one-legged promotion play-off will be held after the NPL Grand Final against the 10 <sup>th</sup> placed NPL First Grade team. If neither Club is eligible, no promotion or relegation will occur.
	There is no change to promotion and relegation as set out in current Competition Regulations, except aspiring NPL Clubs	Aspiring NPL Clubs from Community League Division 1 must declare their interest in promotion to the 2027 NPL season prior to Round 1 of the 2026 season.
NPL Women	from Community Leagues Div 1 must declare their interest in promotion to Capital Football by 2 June 2025. All clubs intending to play NPL in season 2026 must meet all	To be eligible, Clubs must field teams in all girls SAP age groups, and either NPL Girls or Junior League Girls Division 1 in U14, U16, U18 and meet all Capital Football NPL criteria by 1 July 2026.
	Capital Football NPL criteria by 1 September 2025, including the ability to field teams in all girls SAP age groups, and either NPL Girls or Junior League Girls Division 1 in U14, U16, U18.	If the first-placed Club is ineligible, there will be no automatic promotion. However, if the second-placed Club meets the eligibility criteria, a one-legged promotion play-off will be held after the NPL Grand Final against the 10 <sup>th</sup> placed NPL First Grade team. If neither Club is eligible, no promotion or relegation will occur.

From Season 2025 → Season 2026	From Season 2026 → Season 2027
e bottom four (4) clubs based on the NPL Boys Club Championship ndings at the end of season 2025 will be relegated to Junior Leagues.	Aspiring NPL clubs from Junior League Division 1 must indicate their interest in promotion to the 2027 NPL season prior to Round 1 of the 2026 NPL season.
e Club Championship standings will be determined by the cumulative nts total across all four age grades, with each grade's points being ually weighted.	To be eligible, clubs must meet all Capital Football NPL criteria by 1 July 2026.
ere will be no promotion from the Junior Leagues to the NPL Boys npetition for the 2026 season.	Promotion will be determined by the Junior League Div 1 Club Championship standings, whilst relegation will be determined by the NPL Club Championship standings.
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