

Victorian Football Umpires' Association



May Association Meeting

Join us after the Sir Doug Nicholls Round joint training session for your first VFUA Association Meeting of 2026!

Your Executive Committee will provide an update on the Fees & Conditions negotiation process and other Association affairs, with the opportunity for members to ask questions and have your voice heard.

Interstate and Life Members should use this meeting to record yourselves as 'attending' in order to be sent the Microsoft Teams link. Victorian members are asked to join us in person at Victoria Park or use this meeting to record your apology.

We look forward to seeing you there!

When 19 May 2026 at 07:30 PM

Location: Victoria Park, Lulie Street, Abbotsford VIC 3067, Australia

Chairperson Andrew Talbot

Minute taker Emily Jose

Present Shaylee Anderson , Wade Anderson , Nicholas Bahr , Kaitlin Barr , Rylan Bell , Emily Best , Darien Blair , James Brayshaw , Angus Cameron , Jack Cannon , Jonathan Clark , Jake Dennerley , Gavin Dore , Mitchell Dorling , Chris Doyle , Kyle Fisher , Cooper Geall , Luke Gonis , Olivia Grcic , Brady Gutbier , Ian Herman (Vice-President), Lachlan Higgs , Asha Hinton , Cassie Irvine , Emily Jose (Administrator), James Kandler , Brad Kellett , Jack Kennedy , Thomas Kreun , Ben Lefebvre , Madeleine Lum , Corey Malcolm , Aiden McDonald , Lucas McIntosh , Ben McShane , Christopher Menara , Benjamin Merrick , Will Merrick , Solomon Miesen , Greta Miller , Daniel Molino , Patrick Murphy , Elize Mwandu , Ben Myatt , Lachlan Perdon , Phillip Pettinella , Ryan Pulley , Bella Quin , Benjamin Rofe , Josh Rofe , Melissa Sambrooks , Patrick Sexton , Lachlan Smith , Jack Stelfox , Courtney Stelling , Andrew Talbot (President), Ben Tingiri , Cody Tuder , Zane White , Cameron Williams , Lachlan Wright

Apologies Michael Hammond , Lindsey Hardman , Anthony Kyrkou , Greg Russo

Minutes

1. Meeting Open

- Meeting opened at 7:31pm

2. Verify minutes of the previous meeting

 [2024_AGM_Minutes.pdf](#)

Decision

Minutes moved by Andrew Talbot, seconded by Chris Doyle, all in favour

3. Update on Association Activities

3.1. Strategic Plan update

- The 2026-28 VFUA Strategic Plan is being developed
- The timeframe has been decided to align with the declaration by the AFL that the structure of the VFL competition won't change for two years

3.2. New Members

- The First Year Member Induction was held on Thursday 19 March, with interstate Associate Members joining via Microsoft Teams

3.3. Travel Allowances

- It has been identified that there have been some discrepancies between the travel allowances noted in umpire contracts and the Admin Manual in recent years
- VFUA Executive have raised this with the UD to ensure that all travel allowances are honoured per the MOU
- Any shortfall in allowances paid to umpires would be back paid

3.4. Welfare Access

- The UD have asked for member feedback on any aspects of Converge that aren't suitable for a semi-elite athlete environment
- They are happy to explore engaging the services of relevant specialists that would support the unique circumstances of an umpire

3.5. Awards

- Currently, the VFUA present the Best First Year Umpire (Development) and Most Improved Umpire (Senior) awards
- The UD present the Rising Star award from both the Development and Senior squads of each discipline
- The VFUA have proposed an alignment with the UD to award the Best First Year and Rising Star Umpire Awards (Development), and the Most Improved Umpire (Senior)
- The VFL present the Umpire of the Year awards to a recipient from each discipline, which will continue unchanged

3.6. Windy Hill

- There is currently no known date for the move to Windy Hill for SL&TP Training
- If a move is to take place in 2026, the UD would provide plenty of advance notification and conduct surveys to gauge the impact of this move on each umpire

3.7. National Championships

- Currently, Victorian SL&TP umpires have National Championships match fees stipulated in our MOU but other SL&TP Associations do not
- VFUA Executive have agreed to refer coordination of all National Championships arrangements to the AFLUA to negotiate collectively nationwide

3.8. Annual Ball

- The 2026 Annual Ball will be held at Rydges Melbourne, who currently have a sale on accommodation that represents better value than the promo code we will be offered as events guests
- Matthew Mahoney has proposed increasing the Ball deficit in 2026 by a further \$10,000, with a view to continuing this over the next 3-5 years
- If all other Association activities continue operating at neutral cost, the Association cash reserves would reduce to \$50,000-\$70,000
- The suggestion is that the funds would be used to improve the value of the ticket, rather than subsidise the cost, as our event is already more affordable than similar events hosted by football clubs
- **Motion:** that the budgeted loss of the 2026 Annual Ball is increased by \$10,000

Decision

Moved by Andrew Talbot, seconded by Mitch Dorling, all in favour

4. Fees and Conditions

- An overview of the high, medium and low priorities that have been tabled by the VFUA in Fees and Conditions negotiations were presented
- Some of the feedback raised by squads but not addressed in the negotiations was touched on to explain the Association position on these items

5. Events

- The Mid Season Squad Functions will be held on the following dates:
 - Field: Sunday 7 June
 - Boundary: Sunday 7 June
 - Goal: Sunday 28 June
- The budget for these events was reduced from \$1,000 to \$500 per discipline on account of poor attendances at recent Season Launch events
- The Life Members' and Past Presidents' Dinners have been combined in 2026 and will be hosted on Sunday 12 July
- The viability and necessity of a Season Launch function may be re-evaluated going forward
- The 2025 Member Survey indicated that most members support the SL&TP Induction and VFUA AGM being held on the same night
 - The Constitution mandates that the AGM must be held within 5 months of the end of the financial year (September 30)
- There is potential for the AGM date to be advertised earlier, but the Association is bound by contract release dates as set by the UD

6. Milestones

- Congratulations to the umpires who were appointed to the Gather Round State Games:
 - Sam Whetton, Sam Ferguson, Mitch Dorling, Kaitlin Barr, Tayla Manning, Sam Ritchie, Emma Stark, Emily Best, Courtney Stelling
- Congratulations to the umpires celebrating the following milestones:
 - 50 Coates Boys: Lachlan Flinn, Ian Herman Brady Gutbier
 - VFL debut: Gen Rouskas, Alysha Ramsay, Will Robertson, Mark Holmes, Philip Pettinella
 - 50 VFL matches: Connor Hawes, Melissa Sambrooks, Lachlan Wright, Kaitlin Barr
 - 100 VFL matches: Lewis Spiker, Lachlan Higgs, Joshua Hickman

7. General Business

- 70% of interstate SL&TP contracted umpires have taken out VFUA memberships, which includes four members who have purchased full memberships
 - The Victorian squad with the lowest membership rate is at 82%
- The Fees and Conditions negotiated by the VFUA will apply to all SL&TP competitions, including those with matches played interstate, but they have no bearing on community competitions in Queensland or New South Wales
- The Association is requesting a staggered and sustainable approach to rolling out the 4 umpire system for Boundary umpires in all appointments, while considering umpire fitness and UD budgeting
- The Association is looking for improved commitments to providing personnel to support boundary and goal umpires who are only required at Victoria Park once per week, with goal umpires training on Wednesday nights

8. Meeting Close

Meeting closed at 8:17pm

End of minutes.

Summary of matters arising are tabled on the following page.

Minutes of May Association Meeting on 19 May 2026

Summary of Matters Arising

Decisions

Item	Decision
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2.	Minutes moved by Andrew Talbot, seconded by Chris Doyle, all in favour
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3.8	Moved by Andrew Talbot, seconded by Mitch Dorling, all in favour
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Summary of Attachments

Attachments

Item	File Name
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2.	2024_AGM_Minutes.pdf
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Attachments can be found under your TidyHQ admin account at:
Storage > Meetings > [May Association Meeting](#)