



AFL BARWON MEDIA RELEASE

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AFL BARWON BELLARINE FNL NEW CLUB ENTRY PROCESS UPDATE

May 22, 2024

The AFL Barwon Commission delivers this release, to provide an update for all interested parties within the Football & Netball communities of the Barwon region, with particular emphasis on the future of the Bellarine FNL.

In-line with the New Club Entry application process that closed on 24 April 2024, AFL Barwon firstly received an application from Surf Coast FNC for entry into the Bellarine FNL. As part of an extensive review of Surf Coast FNC's application, several face-to-face engagements have transpired, with one final engagement scheduled to take place on Monday night (May 27).

All Bellarine FNL Clubs have been invited to attend a meeting with AFL Barwon on Wednesday 29th May to be provided with a secondary consultation opportunity (following the most recent on April 22), following the conclusion of AFL Barwon's engagement with Surf Coast FNC. This opportunity for Bellarine FNL Clubs to be engaged is pivotal to the success and future of the League, and AFL Barwon is looking forward to this evening.

As part of the New Club Entry application process that closed on 24 April 2024, AFL Barwon also received a second application from a Club within the AFL Barwon region. As part of an extensive review of this Club's application, including several face-to-face engagements, the Club has opted to withdraw its application for entry into the Bellarine FNL for 2025. AFL Barwon is supportive of this withdrawal noting the Club did not meet all four pillars of entry criteria – *Facilities, Financials, Participation and Club Development*.

Following this withdrawal, the Club has requested continued confidentiality noting the public significance and attention with originally expressing an interest in moving leagues, within the local community. AFL Barwon respects this request and will continue to honour this, noting the conclusion of their application process.

AFL Barwon looks forward to concluding the New Club Entry application review process for Surf Coast FNC, to provide certainty and a future for their Football & Netball programs, as well as certainty on the future of the Bellarine FNL. Any change is significant and the AFL Barwon Commission is grateful for the ongoing engagement of all stakeholders, in ensuring that equitable opportunities for participation and sustainability continue to be prioritised within the Barwon region.

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