



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Touch Football Australia Commits To Improving LGBTIQ Participation

Touch Football Australia (TFA) has become the newest member of the Australian Pride in Sport program, committing to further develop and enhance the inclusion of LGBTIQ participation in the sport of touch football.

Run by ACON, Pride in Sport is Australia's first and only sexuality and gender diverse sporting inclusion program. It is specifically designed to assist National and State sporting organisations and clubs with the inclusion of LGBTIQ employees, players, coaches, volunteers and spectators.

Being a Pride in Sport member means changing practices and working towards a more inclusive, safe and healthy sporting environment for people with diverse sexualities and genders.

Jamie O'Connor, CEO of TFA, is excited about the opportunity that Pride in Sport will provide when helping promote positive messages and examples around LGBTIQ inclusion.

"Touch Football Australia is pleased to have partnered with Pride in Sport," said O'Connor.

"It's part of TFA's strategy to make Touch Football a completely inclusive sport that everyone feels welcome to play. We aim to provide a place on the field for everyone, so Pride in Sport's values really align with those of our sport."

Data from the *Out on the Fields* study showed that 80% of people have either witnessed or experienced homophobia in sport, with 75% believing that an openly gay person would not be safe as a spectator at a sporting event.

Data from the National LGBTI Health Alliance also shows that LGBTIQ young people aged 16 to 27 are five times more likely to attempt suicide compared to the general population, with transgender people aged 18 and over nearly eleven times more likely.

Beau Newell, National Program Manager of Pride in Sport, said actual and perceived social exclusion is a leading cause of preventable death in Australia, and creating a much healthier and safer sporting culture for LGBTIQ people has never been more important.

"By joining Pride in Sport and working with ACON, Touch Football Australia is showing the community that they care about the health and wellbeing of their players and members," Newell said.

"Congratulations to Touch Football for leading the way in changing Australia's sporting culture, to be more inclusive."

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ABOUT PRIDE IN SPORT

Pride in Sport is a national not-for-profit program that assists sporting organisations and clubs with the inclusion of LGBTIQ employees, players, volunteers and spectators. It is part of ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs, which provides a range of services to employers, sporting organisations and service providers with support in all aspects of LGBTIQ inclusion. All funds generated through membership and ticketed events go back into the work of Pride in Sport, actively working alongside sporting organisations, clubs and participants to make Australian sport inclusive of LGBTIQ communities. For more information, visit the Pride Inclusion Programs website [here](#).

ABOUT THE PRIDE IN SPORT INDEX

The Pride in Sport Index (PSI) is an independently administered benchmarking system that provides the opportunity for all national and state sporting organisations to have their LGBTI related initiatives, programs and policies reviewed, measured and monitored. An initiative of the Australian Human Rights Commission, the Sport Australia (prev. Australian Sports Commission) and a legacy of the Bingham Cup Sydney 2014 (the world cup of gay rugby), it was developed alongside an advisory group that includes representatives from the National Rugby League (NRL), the Australian Football League (AFL), the Australian Rugby Union (ARU), Football Federation Australia (FFA), Cricket Australia, Swimming Australia, Water Polo Australia, Basketball Australia and Golf Australia. For more information, visit the Pride in Sport website [here](#).

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