

## **MEDIA RELEASE FROM THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

### ***Laguntas program to strengthen Indigenous participation***

The AFL is pleased to announce the establishment of the Laguntas Indigenous Tigers program from 2013, proudly supported by AFL Victoria and the Korin Gomandji Institute.

The aim of the program is to support the pathway to the AFL competition while providing training and education to support the off field development of 50 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders annually.

- 40 young Indigenous men will be engaged in a high performance football development program to provide them with improved access to the AFL talent pathway in Victoria.
- 10 Indigenous staff will be provided career pathway opportunities in team support roles to facilitate the management and administration of athlete preparation, education and coaching.

AFL National Community Engagement manager Jason Mifsud said the AFL is focused on increasing Indigenous participation in the game at both the elite and community levels and is investing in the Laguntas program as part of this.

“The Laguntas program aims to grow participation levels of young Indigenous people in AFL Victoria’s talent pathway including the TAC Cup competition.

“We believe that the program will address the current talent pathway gap that exists for Indigenous players aged between 16 and 19.

“The program will help to retain Indigenous players, as well as coaches, trainers, support and administration staff who begin in our KickStart program at Under-15 level and will aim to provide career transition opportunities into State League and AFL industries for Indigenous people over 18 years of age,” said Mr. Mifsud.

AFL Victoria general manager Grant Williams said the Laguntas program will see the creation of an all-Indigenous Under-18 team.

“The Laguntas Indigenous Tigers will participate in a select amount of games incorporated in to the AFL Victoria’s talent pathway program match schedule.

“Indigenous players already participating in AFL Victoria’s talent program will remain with their current TAC Cup side, however, if not selected; they will have the opportunity to play with the Laguntas team and continue to participate in the development program.

“All players representing the Laguntas team will be aligned to their respective AFL Victoria talent region which is determined by place of residence.

“The team will utilise the Korin Gamadji Institute facilities based at Richmond Football Club where it will train at the elite facilities of the Richmond Football Club while at the same time

participating in accredited education and training facilitated by AFL SportsReady,” said Mr. Williams.

The Korin Gomandji Institute was established in 2011 by the Richmond Football Club in conjunction with the Federal Government.

Richmond Football Club CEO Brendon Gale said the Richmond Football Club is proud of its involvement in the institute which delivers an innovative, educational experience, providing leadership and accredited training outcomes to transition young Indigenous people into the workplace.

“The KGI is about creating opportunity for young Indigenous people and it makes perfect sense for it to become the base for this program.”

“Everything we do in the Indigenous community is about facilitating opportunity and this program achieves that on two levels – it increases the preparedness of young Indigenous talent to enter the elite pathway while providing valuable educational outcomes at the same time,” said Mr. Gale.

Ends.



**Amy Hattam**  
**Community Media Manager**  
AFL HOUSE | 140 Harbour Esplanade | Docklands VIC 3008  
GPO Box 1449 | Melbourne VIC 3001  
Ph: (03) 9643 1783 | Fax: (03) 9643 1875 | Mob: 0423 505 083  
**Please consider the environment before printing this email**