



Australian Cricket Player Wellbeing Strategy

2024 - 2028



About this Strategy

Development

This strategy has been developed as part of a collaborative effort led by Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) and Cricket Australia (CA) in consultation with States & Territories.

It is intended as a player wellbeing strategy for, and on behalf of, Australian Cricket*.

* "Australian Cricket" refers to Cricket Australia, States/Territories in collaboration with Australian Cricketers' Association.

Player Wellbeing

Why this, why now?

- **Wellbeing correlates with performance.**
Extensive evidence¹ demonstrates that wellbeing plays a critical role in **sustaining peak performance**. To sustain performance on the field, we need an integrated approach that supports and nurtures all elements of wellbeing off-field.
- **Wellbeing has become broader.**
There are multiple components of wellbeing. We're evolving our collective understanding of wellbeing to encompass **all elements of wellbeing, beyond mental health**.
- **Wellbeing components are interconnected.**
Providing holistic, integrated wellbeing support will **equip players to show up as their best selves** for off-field responsibilities and **prepare players for life alongside cricket**.
- **We (Australian Cricket) genuinely care about our players.**
We want players to have a **positive experience**, **develop lifelong skills** and **thrive as humans** in cricket and in life.
- **We want this strategy to set a new global standard for player wellbeing.**
This strategy provides an opportunity to **redefine how player wellbeing is supported** within professional sports – taking a whole-of-cricket* approach to providing integrated, holistic support that results in **measurable sustained improvements**. Impact that lasts.

¹ Reference list of evidence available upon request.

* "Whole of Cricket" means exactly that. For this strategy to be delivered, we need everyone from Boardrooms to change rooms, Australian Cricket High Performance, Commercial, People & Culture, Comms and beyond engaged and involved.

What We Mean by 'Wellbeing'

Our shared definition of success

To deliver this strategy, there is a need to have a **clear and consistent definition of wellbeing** across Australian Cricket.

Wellbeing is a broadly used term that can mean **different things in different settings**.

In Australian Cricket, we focus on **7 core elements** of holistic wellbeing which, when **integrated effectively**, give individuals the inputs required to **sustain performance in cricket and in life**.

Whilst this strategy is exclusive to players, importantly these core elements **can equally be applied to sustain performance in all roles** across Australian Cricket, from Boardrooms to change rooms.

Aligning this to related strategies and initiatives that support non-player roles will be critical to achieving a whole-of-cricket shift.



Our Ambition

What we (Australian Cricket) are trying to achieve

“A whole-of-cricket** approach to wellbeing that supports and empowers players to build a lifelong capacity to thrive.

* “Australian Cricket” refers to Cricket Australia, States/Territories in collaboration with Australian Cricketers’ Association.

** “Whole of Cricket” means exactly that. For this strategy to be delivered, we need everyone from Boardrooms to change rooms, Australian Cricket High Performance, Commercial, People & Culture, Comms and beyond engaged and involved.

Australian Cricket* takes its responsibility for the wellbeing of our players seriously.

We envision a future where player wellbeing is not just a priority, but a cornerstone of Australian Cricket. We are committed to setting a new global standard for how player wellbeing is supported, cultivated and celebrated across cricket and professional sports.

This strategy recognises that wellbeing encompasses more than just mental health; it encompasses multiple elements that are integrated and plays a critical role in helping athletes be at their best and sustain performance in both cricket and in life.

Our ambition is to provide a whole-of-cricket approach to player wellbeing that supports and empowers our players to build a lifelong capacity to thrive.

We will achieve this by fostering a culture that embeds holistic wellbeing; provides personalised support for players and amplifies wellbeing support in the moments that matter throughout a player’s career. This strategy will also be underpinned by a comprehensive framework that measures and evaluates its impact.

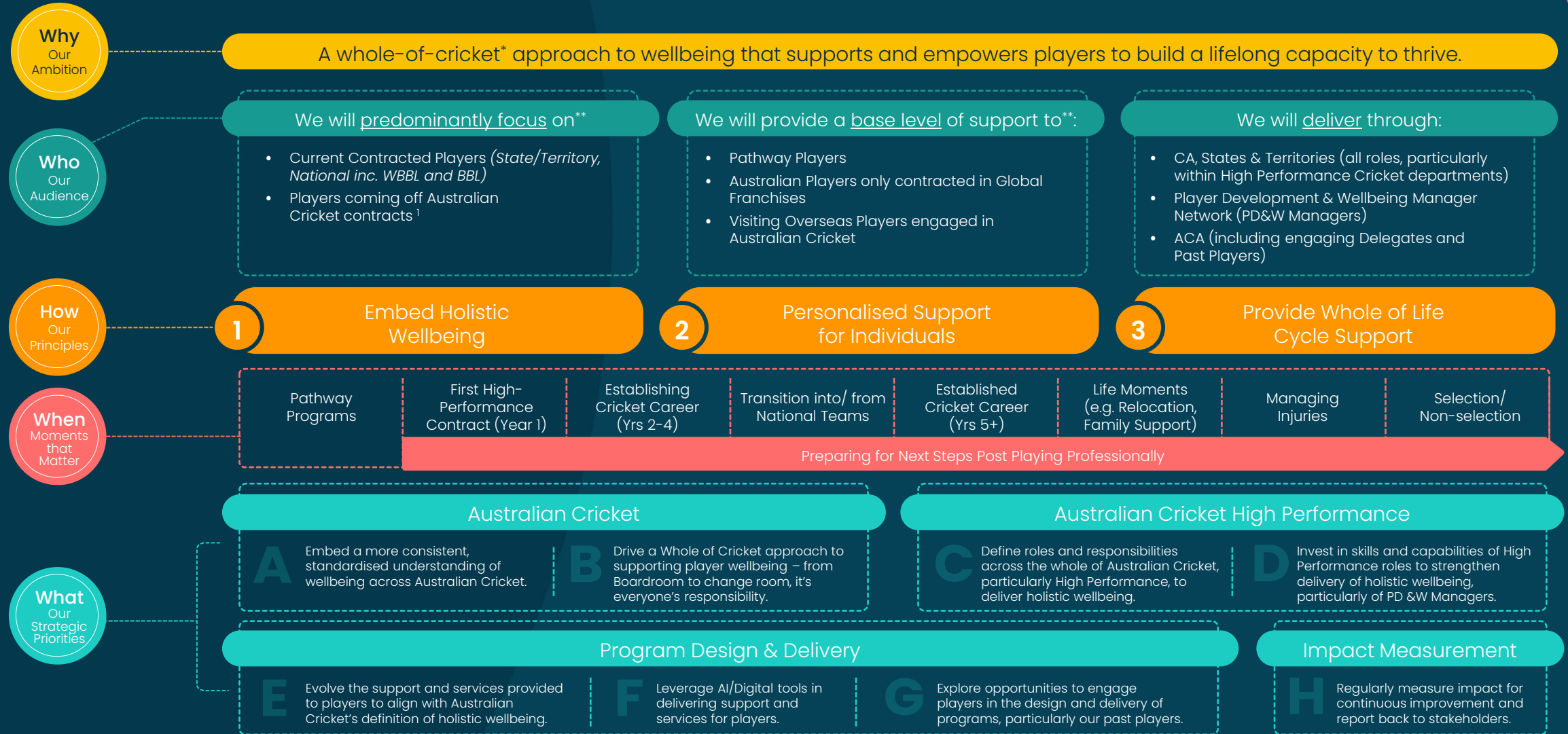
We will work collaboratively with players, coaches, high performance staff as well as engaging departments outside high-performance to ensure that this strategy delivers tangible benefits for all. We also recognise the opportunity to engage past players to share their invaluable experiences of a career in cricket and acting as mentors and role models for current players as part of the delivery of this program.

By prioritising player wellbeing, we will not only create a more fulfilling and sustainable environment for our players but also build a stronger, more resilient sport that can continue to achieve sustained success on the world stage.

Note: The development of this strategy follows a thorough consultation process of Australian Cricket HP stakeholders undertaken through a joint ACA & CA Player Needs Analysis (2024) – the findings of which have been integral to this document. The core principles outlined here will need to align and be integrated with other related strategies within Australian Cricket (e.g. Australian Cricket Mental Health Strategy; HP Strategies, Action Plans etc.)

Our (Australian Cricket) Player Wellbeing Strategy

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* "Whole of Cricket" means exactly that. For this strategy to be delivered, we need everyone from Boardrooms to change rooms, Australian Cricket High Performance, Commercial, People & Culture, Comms and beyond engaged and involved.

** Further work to be done to clarify cohorts and duty of care responsibilities in scope

¹ <3 Years transition support post State/Territory & National Contracts & W/BBL Contracts

Appendix

Further details to
bring this strategy to life

What | The 8 Priorities: We (Australian Cricket) have chosen

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Australian Cricket

A Embed a more **consistent, standardised understanding of wellbeing** across Australian Cricket.

For this strategy to be effective, **the whole of Australian Cricket**** needs to be on the same page about wellbeing. This means having a shared, consistent understanding of Australian Cricket's definition of wellbeing (refer pg. 5). It goes beyond mental and physical health.

We will also **be explicit** about the support that **different cohorts** of contracted players can expect (e.g. pathways, contracted players, visiting overseas players etc.)

B Drive a **Whole of Cricket** approach to supporting player wellbeing – from Boardroom to change room, **it's everyone's responsibility**.

We need to **join the dots** so that we all understand that from Board rooms to change rooms across Australian Cricket, it's **everyone's responsibility** to create safe environments where players can thrive.

We also need to communicate how everyone in Australian Cricket can **collectively contribute** to the execution of this strategy and seek to align with other related strategies. **We are only as strong as our weakest link.**

Australian Cricket High Performance

C Clearly **define roles and responsibilities** across the whole of Australian Cricket, particularly High Performance to deliver holistic wellbeing.

We will drive a clear and consistent understanding of **role accountabilities and responsibilities** across Australian Cricket High-Performance to support individual player experiences.

We will also particularly **clarify accountabilities of Player Development & Wellbeing Managers (PD&W Managers)** and other key HP Staff (e.g. Coaches, Psychs, Doctors, SSSM etc.) to support the delivery of this strategy.

D **Invest in skills and capabilities** of High Performance roles to strengthen delivery of holistic wellbeing, particularly of **PD & W Managers**.

We will invest in skills and capability development of all High Performance roles to deliver holistic wellbeing.

We will particularly invest in **PD&W Manager development** to ensure they are set up for success in navigating the complexity of their role with the core purpose of building authentic relationships to support, influence and empower players (people) build a lifelong capacity to thrive.

Program Design & Delivery

E **Evolve** the support and services provided to players to **align with holistic wellbeing**.

We will **evolve programs** available to players to **align with holistic wellbeing** and ensure that services and support are delivered in an **integrated approach** within the **HP Environment**. The goal of this evolution is to have players **build a lifelong capacity to thrive in cricket and in life**.

This includes, but is not limited to, existing player wellbeing programs, SSSM support, Marketing, Media as well as Integrity education.

F Leverage **AI/Digital tools** in delivering support and services for players.

Times are changing – players are increasingly mobile, and learning is consumed differently.

We need to meet players where they're at – leveraging the latest technologies and platforms to enhance the player development experience (e.g. evolving existing digital learning platforms, exploring apps, gamification and other technologies).

G Explore opportunities to **engage players** in the design and delivery of programs, particularly our past players.

We recognise the lived experience and immense value players **themselves** can bring to this strategy.

We want to leverage this by providing **current players opportunities to engage** in the design and delivery of this strategy, particularly with how we better provide tailored, individualised programs and support.

We also want to provide opportunities **for past players to support and mentor** current contracted and transitioning players. A similar approach may be taken for current and transition players to support and mentor current pathway players over 18yrs old.

Impact Measurement

H **Regularly measure impact** for continuous improvement and report back to stakeholders.

We will **more regularly measure** the effectiveness and impact of our efforts for continuous improvement.

This includes providing all stakeholders regular opportunities to provide feedback whilst **collectively enhancing** the mentality that the 'player voice' remains at the centre.

How | Principle 1

Embed Holistic Wellbeing

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What we mean

For this strategy to be effective, from Boardrooms to change rooms, we all need to be on the same page about what wellbeing means and how it is nurtured.



Strategic initiatives

Priority A. B.

To embed a more consistent understanding and drive a whole-of-cricket approach to wellbeing, we will engage, raise awareness and drive alignment by:

- Developing a stakeholder map to clarify accountability and responsibility, communication and engagement.
- Developing a suite of resources and education to raise awareness and embed a consistent understanding across Australian Cricket.
- Reviewing existing strategies and plans to identify opportunities for integration and alignment.

Priority C.

We are making significant changes to the way we enable and engage all roles across Australian Cricket High Performance to deliver holistic wellbeing.

- This involves developing a capability framework to standardise expectations of all roles within High Performance environment, particularly GMs of HP, Coach, PD&W Managers & SSSM Staff in how they integrate holistic wellbeing principles into their role.
- We'll also particularly clarify the roles/responsibilities and invest in developing the skillset of PD&W Manager capabilities whilst also identifying opportunities to strengthen the skills of other roles.

Priority E.

We will review and evolve current structure and content of programs to align with Australian Cricket's definition of holistic wellbeing.

Specific actions

1

Develop stakeholder map and engagement plan inc. understanding current needs/ gaps of each stakeholder group.

2

Develop a suite of education and communication resources to raise awareness and embed the shared ambition/philosophy re: Holistic Wellbeing (i.e. the 'Wheel'), housed centrally.

3

Conduct a desktop review of existing strategies and plans to identify opportunities to align and integrate player wellbeing/holistic wellbeing principles.

4

Develop a capability framework for holistic wellbeing to define accountabilities/ responsibilities across Australian Cricket, particularly High Performance.

5

Clarify roles and responsibilities, particularly of PD&W Managers (PD, capabilities, onboarding).

6

Design and deliver an ongoing PD&W Manager capability development program and identify opportunities to integrate into general PD development.

7

Review and evolve wellbeing program content in line with evolved definition of wellbeing.

How | Principle 2

Personalise support for individuals

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What we mean

For wellbeing support to be valuable and relevant it needs to meet individuals where they are at.

A core principle of this strategy is that we will customise programs, resources and content to meet the unique needs of players and the context of the environment they are in. We will also evolve to be more inclusive and responsive to the needs of players from diverse backgrounds and minority cohorts, including different approaches to conceptualising wellbeing (e.g. Indigenous Wellbeing)

This will involve a base-layer of foundational support to start, and tailoring support as players progress their careers.

This recognises that every player has their own path to take – and that, as they become more self-aware, they can determine their own support which PD&W Managers can facilitate accordingly.

PD&W Managers, Coaches, High Performance staff and GMs of High Performance will collectively enable integration to provide a player-centred approach. PD & W Managers will be particularly critical in identifying the unique needs of a player and facilitating this personalised support within HP.

It is imperative that PD&W Managers are well equipped and capable to make the right decisions locally, and access support models for different player cohorts to guide this.

Strategic initiatives

Priority C.

To ensure personalised support for individuals, we will:

- Define the 'typical' support model per player cohort.
- Define what level of support means for each playing group, diverse backgrounds and minority cohorts.
- Continuously evolve the program content to meet the needs of players now and in the future.
- Explore options to leverage AI/Digital tools to support delivery.

Priority D.

Priority E.

We will also need to:

- Review and continuously evolve program content to meet the unique needs of diverse players now and in the future.
- Explore options to leverage AI/Digital tools to support delivery.

Priority G.

Additionally, we will activate a network of willing and able players (both past and current) to assist with program delivery and mentoring.

Specific actions

1

Develop case studies and storytelling to demonstrate where the program meets players needs, and identify opportunities for further improvement.

2

Identify and develop standardised support model (service map) for players.

3

Define what base level of support means for pathway players, Australian players only contracted in global franchises, and visiting overseas players.

4

Identify and provide opportunities to strengthen skills and capabilities of staff to continue to deliver support that is player-centred and inclusive.

5

Review and evolve the program to embed inclusion and better meet the unique needs of different playing groups.

6

Explore ways to evolve how programs and support are provided including via digital tools/AI, or co-delivery with past (or current) players who could support and evolve program delivery.

How | Principle 3

Provide whole-of-lifecycle support

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What we mean

Providing whole of lifecycle support involves amplifying wellbeing support in the moments that matter throughout a player's career.

We know players experience multiple transition points throughout their journey where support needs to be increased.

These include (but are not limited to):

- Pathway Programs
- First High Performance Contract (Yr 1)
- Establishing Cricket Career (Yrs 2-4)
- Transition Into/From National Teams
- Established Cricket Career (Yrs 5+)
- Life Moments (e.g. Relocation, Family Support)
- Managing Injuries
- Selection/Non-Selection

Strategic initiatives

Priority E.

We will:

- identify and validate the needs in the moments that matter (i.e. key transition points) across the lifecycle of a professional cricketer.
- Develop a suite of guides, tools and templates to provide structured support around the moments that matter.

Priority E.

We will explore opportunities to leverage digital tools and develop partnerships to ensure consistent quality of support across Australian Cricket.

Priority H.

Underpinning everything is an impact measurement framework which seeks 'live' feedback from players and stakeholder for continuous improvement.

Specific actions

1

Identify and validate key moments that matter (transition points).

2

Develop a suite of guides, tools and templates to structure support around transition points.

3

Define guidelines for delivery of support model in key moments that matter in alignment with other existing strategies (e.g. AC Mental Health Strategy; AC Clinical Governance Framework; HP Strategies; SSSM Plans etc.).

4

Evolve existing learning platforms, exploring apps, gamification and other technologies/ exploring opportunities for better knowledge/ data sharing (whilst considering privacy implications).

5

Develop measurement framework and listening/ feedback mechanisms linked to key transition points for continuous improvement.

6

Develop a governance reporting framework that identifies the cadence of reporting back progress and impact.

Implementation | Roles & Responsibilities

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	Leadership & Governance (Priorities A & B)	High Performance (Priority C)	Player Development & Wellbeing Manager Network (Priority D)	Program Design & Delivery (Priorities E, F, G)	Measurement & Reporting (Priority H)
Stream Lead Facilitate and ensure the execution of projects/initiatives across stakeholders.	- ACA CEO - CA CEO	CA Chief of Cricket	ACA PD&W Network Manager	ACA GM Player Development & Wellbeing	- ACA GM Player Development & Wellbeing - CA Head of National Development
Accountable Ultimately accountable for success and has strategic decision-making authority.	ACLT	- HPLT - ACA GM Player Development & Wellbeing	- ACA GM Player Development & Wellbeing - HPLT	- ACA GM Player Development & Wellbeing - CA Head of National Development	- ACA GM Player Development & Wellbeing - CA Head of National Development
Responsible Responsible for day-to-day execution of projects/initiatives impacted by stream and inputs into strategic decisions.	- HPLT - CA Head of National Development - ACA GM Player Development & Wellbeing	- HPLT - ACA GM Player Development & Wellbeing - CA Head of National Development - CA & ACA Comms - ACA PD& W Network Manager - HP Network Leads	- ACA GM Player Development & Wellbeing - ACA Player Development & Wellbeing Team - CA Head of National Development	- ACA Player Development & Wellbeing Team - CA Head of National Development - CA Integrity - CA SSSM Network Leads	- ACA Player Development & Wellbeing Team - CA Performance Systems & Analysis Specialist
Consulted/ Informed Consulted for advice and perspective as key stakeholders whose needs and experiences inform strategic decisions..	- ACA Board - CA, State / Territory Boards - Australian Cricket Executive Teams	- Australian Cricket PD&W Manager Network - Players (ACA Delegates + Playing Groups) - ACLT - HP Staff (e.g. Coach, SSSM Manager)	- Australian Cricket PD&W Manager Network - Players (Delegates + Playing Groups) - HPLT - Line Managers of PD&W Managers	- Players (ACA Delegates + Playing Groups) - HP Staff (e.g. Coach, SSSM Manager) - Agents - External Subject Matter Experts	All stakeholders

ACLT – Australian Cricket Leadership Team (CEOs)

HPLT – High Performance Leadership Team (GMs High Performance)

Implementation | Roadmap Snapshot FY25-FY28

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High-level sequencing over the next four (financial) years



Leadership
Governance



High
Performance



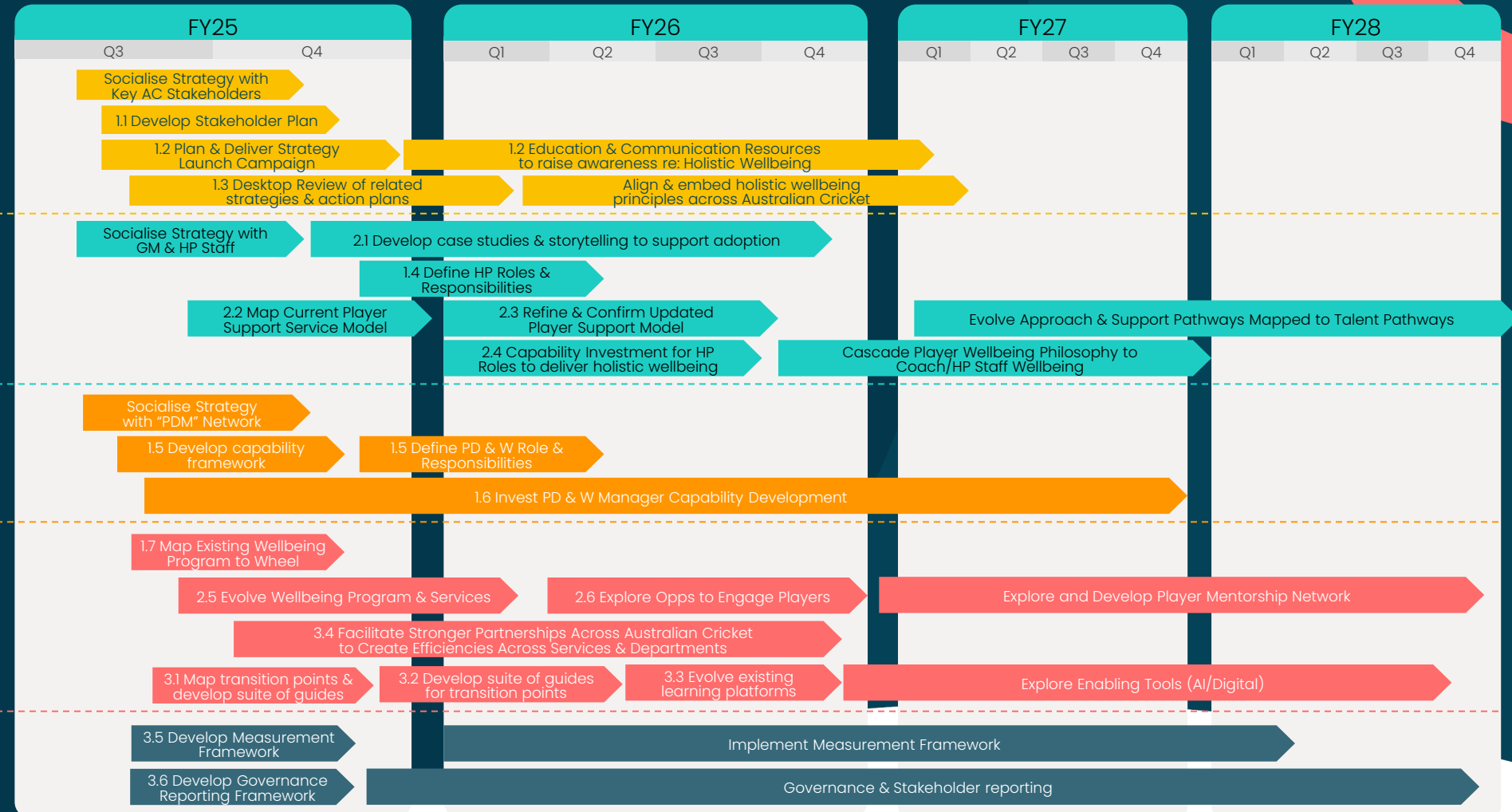
Player Development
& Wellbeing (PD & W)
Manager Network



Program Design
& Delivery



Measurement &
Reporting

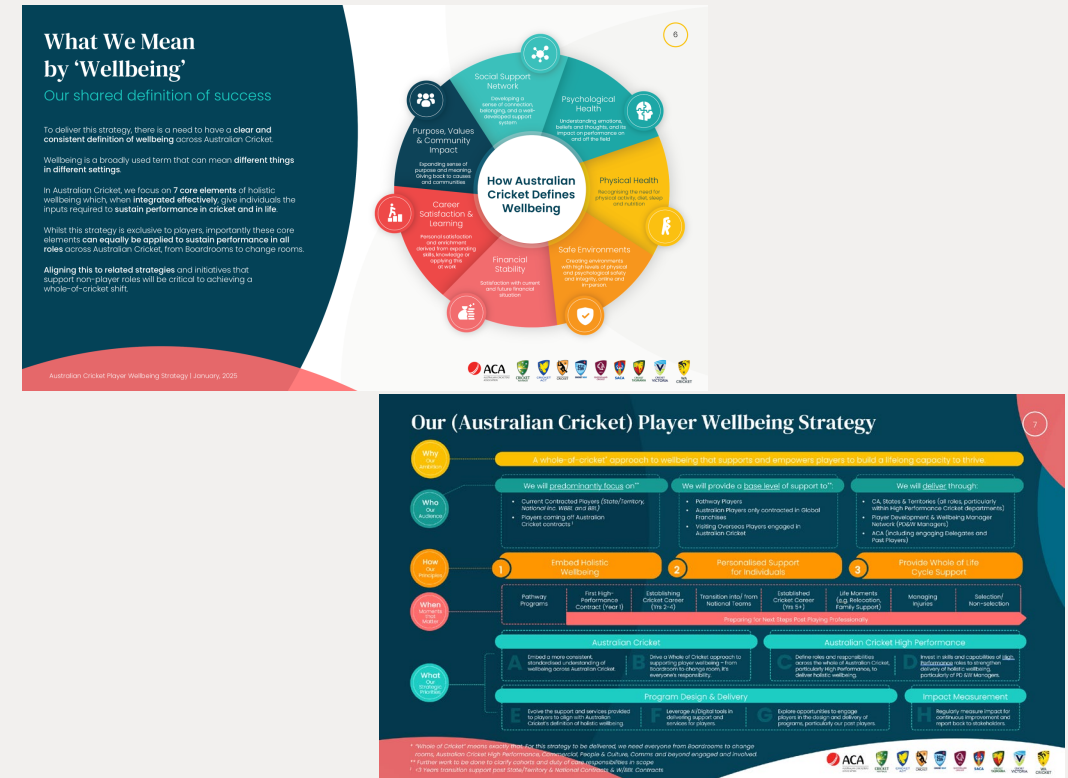
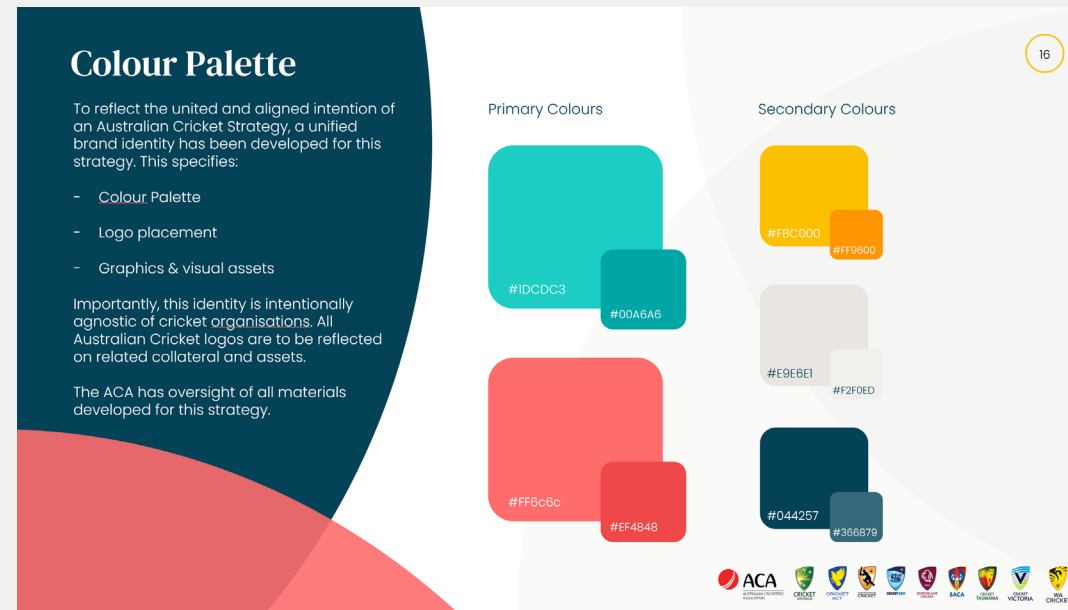


Brand Identity | A united and aligned ‘Look & Feel’

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To reflect the united and aligned intention of an Australian Cricket Strategy, a whole-of-cricket brand identity has been developed for this strategy specifying colours, graphics / visual assets and logo placements.

It is intentionally agnostic of cricket organisations. All Australian Cricket logos are reflected on related collateral and assets. The ACA retains oversight of all materials developed as part of this strategy.



Evidence Base | Reference List

Sustaining Peak Performance by focusing on Wellbeing:

- Australia's 2032 High Performance Strategy
- International Olympic Committee consensus statement on youth athletic development (2015)
- An evidence-informed framework to promote mental wellbeing in Elite Sport (2022) – [Read here](#)
- A survey of elite and pre-elite athletes' perceptions of key support, lifestyle and performance factors – [Read here](#)
- Risk and protective factors for mental health in elite athletes: A scoping review (2020) – [Read here](#)

Holistic Wellbeing – more than just physical and mental.

- What works for mental health in sporting teams? An evidence guide for best practice in mental health promotion and early intervention (Orygen x AFL)
- Exploring the experiences and wellbeing of Australian Rio Olympians During the Post-Olympic Phase: A Qualitative Study (2021) – [Read here](#)
- A survey of elite and pre-elite athletes' perceptions of key support, lifestyle and performance factors – [Read here](#)
- Case Report: An application of Wellbeing Science for the Development of Adolescent High-Performance Athletes in the Australian Football League (2022) – Frontiers | Case Report: An Application of Wellbeing Science for the Development of Adolescent High-Performance Athletes in the Australian Football League

Additional Research & Evidence-Based Models:

- Carol Ryff's model of Psychological Well-Being (PWB) highlights six components—autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. This framework provides a theoretical grounding, showing that well-being is more than subjective happiness; it encompasses meaningful growth and functioning – [Read here](#)
- The wellbeing wheel often draws on early frameworks such as Hettler's Six Dimensions of Wellness (social, occupational, spiritual, physical, intellectual, and emotional), which emphasise interconnected domains for balanced living. These dimensions are rooted in psychological and health research, emphasizing that wellness is multi-faceted and dynamic – [Read here](#) – this article also references a lot of other research.
- The Wheel of Wellness counseling for wellness: [Read here](#).
- The PERMA model by Martin Seligman (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment) informs many wellbeing frameworks, including the wheel. It underlines the importance of measurable elements that contribute to flourishing and sustainable happiness – [Read here](#)