



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Women lead the way growing AFL in NSW/ACT**

More people are playing Australian Rules Football than ever before with the AFL announcing earlier this week that total participation had reached 1,404,176 across Australia in 2016.

In NSW/ACT, total participation reached 237,549, an increase of 10.4% from 2015. This growth was driven by a 23% increase in women participating in AFL from 2015. Ahead of the launch of AFLW in 2017, 85,919 females participated in AFL in NSW/ACT this year, five times the number of women who participated in 2010.

Other drivers of participation growth in 2016 include:

- NSW/ACT have more children participating in Auskick than any other State or Territory. In 2016, participants totalled 61,037, an 18.24% increase from 2015.
- NSW/ACT are leading the way in McDonald's AFL 9's with 7,347 people playing in 2016, an increase of 12.2% from 2015. (AFL 9s is the non-contact social format of AFL)

AFL NSW/ACT CEO Sam Graham said, "We're incredibly pleased to see the growth of AFL right across the country, but particularly here in NSW/ACT. It's a great endorsement for the code expansion in the region and in particular the strong year on year growth in female participation is fantastic. From the huge number of kids playing Auskick right across the state, through to the success on the field of our AFL teams the Swans and the GIANTS, it's a great result for the AFL in 2016."

At the elite level, Sydney's two AFL clubs, the Sydney Swans and the GWS GIANTS had very successful seasons, both finishing in the top four of the competition. This was reflected in club memberships increasing by 14.7% and crowd numbers in Sydney and Canberra surpassing 620 000 attendees during the Toyota AFL Premiership Season for the first time.

This news comes ahead of a huge weekend for the AFL in Sydney, with the inaugural McDonalds AFL 9's Classic and the NAB National AFL Draft both being held across the weekend.

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