

TAL KARP

Reason for standing

Football has been a huge part of my life and of my identity. As a former player and coach at both elite and community levels, football has provided me with incredible opportunities, skills and friendships. I am passionate about giving back to the game and consider myself well placed to do so, given my experience as a former Matilda, Melbourne Victory W-league captain, AFC 'B' coaching licence holder and former FFV Tribunal member. As a senior lawyer and advocate, with significant administrative and commercial law experience, I bring a unique combination of skills and knowledge to the position of Director.

Goals

- ***Stakeholder engagement*** – prioritising deliberative engagement with stakeholders to ensure FFV remains responsive and accountable to its constituents.
- ***Addressing barriers to participation*** – identifying and addressing barriers such as accessibility and affordability, in order to capture new audiences, retain current membership and provide pathways for players, coaches, referees and administrators (at all levels), regardless of location, gender or economic status.
- ***Growing and strengthening the women's game*** – increasing female participation and retention in all areas of the game and improving talented development pathways.
- ***Oversight and accountability*** – pursuing proper governance through accountable and transparent decision-making, with particular attention to risk management.
- ***Creating new partnerships*** – strengthening FFV's networks, government relationships and access to resources.

Football experience

I have been fortunate to experience football as a player at all levels – through participation in local community leagues, talented development programs and competition at the national and international level.

Like many women of my era, I grew up competing in local boys teams. I have since played football in both women's and men's leagues across the country, in Western Australia, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria, and have competed for each of those states and territories in national competition. My experience playing at these varied levels and locations has given me insight into different models of football delivery and their comparative effectiveness. I have also developed an understanding of barriers to participation across jurisdictions, and those unique to football in this state.

As a former Matilda, World Cup and Olympic ambassador, Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) scholarship holder and former AIS Athletes Commission member, I have had unique access to clubs, schools and players of all levels. In these roles, I have had the honour of conducting coaching clinics and delivering speeches to young people across the country. By engaging with both community-level and talented pathway players and their families across the state, I have developed an understanding of the gaps in equity of participation, particularly in regional communities; and the importance of strengthening engagement with schools to increase and retain membership, and to maximise best use of resources.

I have a particular interest in how football can build community and can engage youth in education and productive pursuits. I have volunteered and acted as ambassador with varied organisations to pursue those purposes – including the ‘Active Youth Development Program’ delivering football programs in regional areas; the Whitelion Role Model and Mentoring Program delivering programs for disadvantaged youth; as an ambassador for Mildura United SC, mentoring Indigenous soccer teams; and as a volunteer at the Right to Dream Football Academy, coaching disadvantaged youth in Africa.

Additionally, I have coached youth development and local teams in Victoria and the ACT, and have obtained my AFC ‘B’ coaching licence. My coaching and volunteering work has impressed upon me the importance of making the game accessible and affordable – both for the enormous benefits of simply participating, and in facilitating the development of talented players.

Importantly, I have also experienced football at an operational and disciplinary level, as a former FFV Tribunal member, and as a Project Manager/Legal Officer at FFV. In these roles I have developed a greater understanding of the types of legal issues FFV faces and the particular concerns of stakeholders.

Professional experience

While competing for Australia, I pursued a career in the law, graduating from the Australian National University with a Bachelor of Laws (First Class Honours and the university medal for research), and a Bachelor of Arts (High Distinction average).

My legal skills are evidenced in my selection to highly competitive legal roles, including Associate to Justice Hayne of the High Court of Australia, lawyer at top-tier firm Mallesons Stephen Jacques (now King and Wood Mallesons), and more recently as Civil Advocate at Victoria Legal Aid.

In my current role, I appear in courts and tribunals throughout Victoria in complex civil and criminal matters. My role requires high-level communication and negotiation skills, a capacity to grasp legal issues quickly and the ability to formulate and advocate strategies on behalf of disadvantaged clients. I believe my breadth of legal expertise, including in administrative law, tribunal and appellate work, will be of significant benefit to the Board. So too, will be my experience in strategic thinking.

A significant focus of my current role is strategic advocacy – that is, developing solutions to systemic difficulties in the Victorian justice system. Strategy development, system-wide reform, and the ability and commitment to engage with stakeholders on controversial subjects have also been critical to other roles I have held, including as Senior Innovation and Strategy Adviser at the Department of Justice and as Legal Policy Officer at the Sentencing Advisory Council. I have supplemented my skills in these areas with specialist training in collaborative decision-making, strategic project planning and policy development.

Additionally, I developed familiarity with the duties and responsibilities of directors, corporate governance and financial decision-making during my time working in commercial law (in particular, as part of the mergers and acquisitions and taxation law teams at Mallesons) and as a former university tutor in business law.

To conclude

I believe the unique combination of skills and knowledge I have acquired through my diverse legal and football career are highly relevant to the Board, and will assist in ensuring proper governance, effective and deliberative engagement with stakeholders and a firm foundation for the development and implementation of FFV's next strategic plan.

