

January 16, 2026



To the President, Vice President and members of the Kyneton Women's Football Club,

I write on behalf of AFL Victoria to address the ongoing correspondence and public commentary in relation to the Kyneton Women's Football Club (KWFC) and provide further clarity and certainty for members.

To be clear, the decision by the AFL Victoria Appeal Panel to uphold the appeal lodged by Riddell District Football Netball League (RDFNL) preventing KWFC's entry into the Central Victoria Football League (CVFL) for the 2026 season is final.

I note KWFC's concerns that it was not party to the appeal process.

Under the AFL Victoria Affiliate Regulations, applications are led by Affiliate Leagues, not the proposed clubs, and impacted leagues only may appeal to an independent AFL Victoria Appeal Panel.

Accordingly, the Panel undertook a comprehensive review of the submissions by the RDFNL and CVFL and upheld the appeal.

The reasons for that decision have been communicated to your Club and were made solely in accordance with AFL Victoria policies.

For reference, key findings of the Panel included:

- Lack of demonstrated need - evidence did not support a requirement for an additional club in the Kyneton region, with the proposal relying predominantly on the redistribution of existing participants rather than sustainable growth in a limited population base.
- Existing capacity - participation opportunities exist within the region.
- Pathways - concerns regarding the impact on existing junior development programs and player pathways.
- Facilities - lack of confirmed/secured appropriate facilities.

AFL Victoria reiterates that the Panel's process followed, and was made in line with, AFL Victoria policies and the decision centred on the four points outlined above.

We share your Club's commitment to a safe and inclusive playing environment, particularly for women and girls.

Through ongoing investment and education, AFL Victoria in partnership with Affiliate Leagues are supporting the growth of women and girls' football right across the State with participation levels now at over 35,000 players in over 900 clubs.

Participation opportunities for women remain available at a number of existing clubs located within the broader Kyneton region.

It is noted that in 2025 the majority of KWFC players registered and competed within an existing league structure, achieving Premiership success at Gisborne FC.

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An additional matter raised by your Club relates to work conducted in 2025 by the AFL's General Manager First Nations Engagement and Inclusion.

For clarity, this work was focussed on understanding opportunities for improvement in governance to prevent similar disputes in future. It was not a fact-finding mission for judgement or sanctions, but a catalyst for systemic improvement.

The outcomes of this work have been shared with the KWFC President and a group of members. AFL Victoria will work with clubs and leagues to improve resources, training and education for club and league officials on matters of vilification, discrimination, and dispute resolution.

This work is ongoing and AFL Victoria is committed to continuously improving its processes, and the playing environment for women and girls across the State.

Separately, it is open to the KWFC to direct any other complaints in relation to alleged Code of Conduct breaches by individual participants to the AFL Integrity Department. Any such matters will be dealt with accordingly.

AFL Victoria acknowledges both the passion and effort of the KWFC, and we trust this correspondence provides clarity and certainty for players who seek to play in the 2026 season.

Please ensure this letter is shared with your stakeholders, and particularly the players whose participation in community football is supported and welcomed by AFL Victoria. AFL Victoria will similarly make this letter available in response to any stakeholder enquiries.

Regards,

Greg Madigan
Head of AFL Victoria