



Graham Annesley MP

Minister for Sport and Recreation

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW STADIA STRATEGY TO GROW MAJOR EVENTS AND TOURISM

Minister for Sport and Recreation, Graham Annesley, today announced a new stadia strategy which will help guide future development, planning and investment in NSW major sporting venues.

“The NSW Stadia Strategy focuses on major outdoor stadia some of which are owned or leased by the NSW Government while others are owned by local councils and sporting clubs,” Mr Annesley said.

“Historically the NSW Government has received ad-hoc and often competing requests for significant support to redevelop existing stadia and develop new venues.

“For the first time in NSW we now have a strategy which will be used to guide future planning, and provide the framework for government policy and investment decisions,” Mr Annesley added.

Independent consultants KPMG assisted with the development of the strategy and extensive consultations with stakeholders.

People who use the venues, including sporting clubs and event organisers, venue hirers, local councils, and the entertainment industry were involved in the consultation process.

“The role of Government in determining where and when tax payer dollars are invested must be based on a strategic framework which is why the stadia strategy was developed.

“The NSW Government cannot, and would never attempt to dictate to sporting organisations where they should play, but they need to be armed with information about the priorities for Government investment so they can properly plan for the future.

“The Stadia Strategy will assist the NSW Government respond to stakeholder expectations, better address community access to government owned venues and meet key objectives for growing major events and tourism in NSW,” Mr Annesley said.

STADIA

STRATEGY



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Cover
Sound Relief
 Sydney Cricket Ground

Above
**Sydney Roosters vs
 St George Illawarra Dragons**
 Sydney Football Stadium

Below
The Ashes 2011
 Sydney Cricket Ground



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MINISTER'S INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to present the NSW Government's Stadia Strategy, which is the outcome of an extensive consultation process which included major sporting organisations, teams, stadia owners and operators, event promoters, industry groups and local government.

This is the first time a NSW Government has sought to provide a vision for the future of stadia, free of political influence, and offering stakeholders a 'road map' for the future.

The devised Stadia Strategy provides clear direction that future capital investment is prioritised to NSW Government owned or leased stadia to ensure:

- Facilities for participants and spectators are improved;
- Venues cater for multi-purpose sport and community use;
- NSW becomes Australia's preferred location for major national and international events.

The implementation of the Stadia Strategy is integral to ensuring NSW keeps pace with the evolution of sport both in Australia and around the globe.

Sport, as an industry, is a significant contributor to the NSW economy.

Together with the ever changing landscape of sporting organisations, it is imperative NSW be positioned to maximise its value to the sporting community and take advantage of every opportunity.

Spectators today expect more from the match day experience, especially in major international and national competitions. Stakeholders interviewed overwhelmingly agreed the current model of stadia provision is not sustainable.

Sporting infrastructure established in the lead-up to the 2000 Sydney

Olympics is now ageing, and in coming years will need upgrading and in some cases replacing.

The post-Olympic NSW Government infrastructure investment strategy was at best ad hoc, with minimal consideration given to ensuring long-term sustainability.

Current economic times demand the right decisions be made for the future of NSW and the Stadia Strategy ticks that box.

Funds will always be limited and it is essential future investments are planned.

Review of stadia has identified the number of current venues requiring ongoing maintenance and or upgrading is financially unsustainable.

Most stadia are state or local government venues, with a small number in private ownership.

Belief the NSW Government has an overriding responsibility to ensure all sporting infrastructure is maintained and upgraded is inaccurate.

The important link between multi code usage and professional sport tenancy is seen as a determining factor in implementing future stadia investment, with the desired outcome being to ensure facilities are maintained to a superior standard to maximise spectator and promoter attraction.

Similarly the review has identified the merit in matching stadia investment with population growth patterns to ensure regions, such as Western Sydney, are catered for, both in the immediate and long term.

The importance of stadia is recognised in the Government's ten-year plan, *NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One*, with key performance objectives being to; improve community access; increase multi-purpose usage; improve



facilities; and make NSW more competitive in its ability to host major sporting events.

In developing this strategy, the needs of both the sports industry and the wider community have been considered.

Stadia play a vital role within our society, promoting a healthy and active lifestyle, fostering a social network and creating an emotional experience which when combined deliver major economic benefits to the NSW economy.

The NSW Government is committed to maintaining and providing world class stadia infrastructure in line with a financially responsible strategy.

As the Minister for Sport and Recreation I am delighted to join the Premier in releasing the NSW Stadia Strategy which will provide a framework for NSW Government planning, policy and investment for many years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham Annesley". The signature is stylized and includes a large flourish at the end.

The Hon. Graham Annesley MP
Minister for Sport and Recreation



1 INTRODUCTION

Sporting and recreational facilities contribute to stronger, more vibrant communities and provide important economic benefits. NSW has a range of facilities that host international, national, state and local community events. The majority are owned by the NSW or local government, with a small number being privately owned.

The NSW Government receives frequent and competing requests for funding to upgrade facilities even when they are not owned

by the NSW Government. This is likely to increase as venues age and competition for events increases. To date, NSW has not had a clear strategy to guide NSW Government stadia planning and investment.

The NSW Stadia Strategy provides a framework for NSW Government investment and aims to achieve an optimal mix of venues to meet community needs and to ensure a vibrant sports and event environment in NSW. It has been developed in response to the

Government's commitment outlined in *NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One* to:

- Provide the community with increased access to stadia;
- Encourage multi-purpose usage of stadia;
- Improve facilities for participants and spectators; and
- Improve the competitive position of NSW when attracting major events.

The focus of this strategy is outdoor stadia that can be used by multiple sporting codes for national and



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international competitions. The strategy recognises the business of sport is changing and the NSW Government must have a plan to ensure its major stadia are competitive with those in other states. This must balance the ability for NSW to host major events such as the ICC Cricket World Cup and the AFC Asian Cup, both in 2015, as well as weekly sporting events.

The strategy is a long term vision for stadia in NSW and acknowledges spectators now expect more of the match day experience, including

access by public transport and a range of pre-and post-match entertainment within the same precinct. The first phase will be to implement the Government's framework and seek to improve usage of stadia, noting the opportunities for new government investment are limited in the current environment. In the longer term, strategic decisions will be made around additional investment in stadia as opportunities arise.

Left
Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Football Stadium

Below
Function Room Hunter Stadium



© Venues NSW/Arrow Photography



© Hindu Council of Australia

Above
Deepavali Fair
Parramatta Stadium

Right
Super X
Parramatta Stadium

2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE NSW STADIA STRATEGY

The development of the NSW Stadia Strategy has included a review of current stadia in NSW, stakeholder consultation and supporting analysis. This analysis has covered a range of areas including benchmarking to other states, demographic and future demand analysis, the consideration of the value of major events and review of risks.

DEFINING STADIA

The focus of the NSW Stadia Strategy is multi-use, outdoor stadia with a total capacity of at least 10,000.

This means it focuses on venues that can be used by multiple sporting codes and does not include single-use facilities such as hockey and softball fields.

Similarly the focus on venues with more than 10,000 capacity means the strategy does not focus on smaller district and local level facilities.

However, it is acknowledged these smaller facilities perform an important role in the provision of sporting infrastructure across NSW.

2.1 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Stakeholders include sporting teams and organisations; tourism and events organisations; local government; and stadia operators and owners. Consulting with stakeholders to understand their requirements has been critical to the development of the strategy and together with the supporting analysis, has highlighted concerns including:

Evidence suggests there are too many stadia in NSW, particularly in Greater Sydney. NSW has a disproportionately high number of venues compared to other mainland states. These venues are highly decentralised. Many sporting teams have their own home stadium and some also play out of additional stadia.

Stadia are underutilised and community access is often limited.

Local stadia can be too expensive for non-professional sporting groups, and concern about turf and ground quality can restrict their use.

The quality of NSW facilities is perceived as inferior to those available in other states. National and international sports organisations have minimum requirements relating to corporate, media, player and spectator facilities, which provides an ongoing challenge in meeting expectations across a large number of venues.

Many stadia are compromised by poor public transport. Stakeholders noted that public transport accessibility is important to the success of stadia and this is difficult with a large number of decentralised venues.

Spectators consider the match day experience in NSW inferior. Local grounds in residential areas cannot compete with specialised sporting and entertainment precincts.

Government investment has been ad hoc, leading to inequities in stadia provision and quality. Over the last 10 years, the NSW Government has committed in excess of \$300 million to the re-development of stadia, however this has not been guided by a long term plan with linkages to transport planning.





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ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF SPORTS EVENTS

Sporting events can be a significant contributor to economic activity. Ticket sales, television and broadcast rights, advertising, sponsorship and the sale of merchandise contribute directly to the economy, including providing job opportunities. Events can also promote interstate, intrastate and international tourism, and increase spending by local residents.

For example, it is estimated that the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne increased Victorian Gross State Product (GSP) by around \$1.6B over a 20 year period, delivering approximately half of the impact in the year of the Games. The 2003 Rugby World Cup is estimated to have increased Australian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by \$289M, with a \$218M increase to NSW GSP.

The maintenance of stadia is becoming unaffordable for many venue operators. While the NSW Government has responsibility for the maintenance of NSW Government owned venues it cannot support the increasing costs associated with other venues across the state.

It is important to maintain the competitiveness of NSW when bidding for major events. If NSW does not demonstrate vision with its stadia investment, events and spectators may move to other destinations, impacting a significant source of economic benefit for the state.

There is general agreement amongst stakeholders that the current state of stadia provision in NSW is not sustainable and a strategy is required to inform future NSW Government investment.

2.2 REVIEW OF EXISTING STADIA

In order to develop a workable strategy it is important to understand what stadia are currently available in NSW. A register of stadia was developed as part of the strategy and found that there are at least 40 stadia across NSW.

Of the 40 stadia, 26 (65%) are in Greater Sydney. Most (68%) are rectangular in configuration, only five (12%) are oval and eight (20%) are multi-purpose, meaning they can be used in either configuration.

NSW Government venues include the Sydney Cricket Ground, Sydney Football Stadium, Wollongong Stadium in the Illawarra, Hunter Stadium in Newcastle, and Parramatta Stadium. Stadium Australia is due to return to the NSW Government at the end of current contractual arrangements in 2031, and the head lease for the Sydney Showground Stadium is with the NSW Government (99 year lease with the Royal Agricultural Society with an option for a further 99 years). Local governments own most other stadia.

Stadium usage is mixed. Although many sporting teams play from their home stadium, some also use other stadia. For example, the St George Illawarra Dragons play home matches at both Jubilee Oval in Kogarah and Wollongong Stadium and the Wests Tigers play home games out of three venues namely the Sydney Football Stadium, Campbelltown Sports Stadium and Leichhardt Oval.

2.3 CLASSIFICATION OF EXISTING STADIA

Stadia can be classified into three 'tiers', based on their capacity, facilities and nature of events.

STADIA CLASSIFICATION

Tier 1

Seating capacity greater than 40,000; regularly host international sporting events; offer extensive corporate facilities, including corporate suites, open-air corporate boxes, and other function/dining facilities; may be the home ground for sporting teams playing in national competitions.

Tier 2

Total capacity of between 20,000 and 40,000; some corporate facilities; home grounds for sporting teams playing in national competitions.

Tier 3

Total capacity of at least 10,000; limited or no corporate facilities; capable of hosting exhibition or pre-season matches for sporting teams playing in national sporting competitions.

NSW Tier 1 Stadia

NSW has three Tier 1 stadia, all located in Greater Sydney:

- Stadium Australia
- Sydney Football Stadium
- Sydney Cricket Ground

The Sydney Football Stadium is rectangular in configuration, the Sydney Cricket Ground is oval and Stadium Australia is multi-purpose. National and international sporting competitions and events are well served by these large stadia and stakeholders have indicated that the individual capacity of these venues is sufficient to meet growth in demand. However, there are opportunities to further focus on transport connectivity, the surrounding entertainment precinct and contemporary standard facilities in future planning.

NSW Tier 2 Stadia

NSW has eleven Tier 2 facilities. Of these, eight are in Greater Sydney, and the remaining three are in Newcastle, Wollongong and Gosford. All are rectangular in configuration with the exception of the Sydney Showground Stadium which is oval.

Sydney stadia classified as Tier 2 are:

- Brookvale Oval
- Campbelltown Sports Stadium
- Endeavour Field, Woolooware
- Jubilee Oval, Kogarah
- Leichhardt Oval
- Penrith Stadium
- Parramatta Stadium
- Sydney Showground Stadium

Regional NSW Tier 2 stadia are:

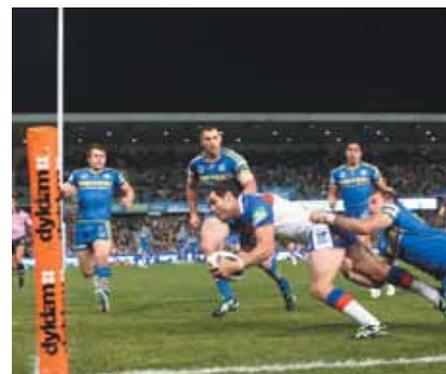
- Central Coast Stadium
- Hunter Stadium
- Wollongong Stadium

Stakeholders have suggested that there are too many Tier 2 stadia in Greater Sydney, and the present decentralised approach leads to underutilisation of venues.

There has been significant investment across a range of Tier 2 stadia in recent years, however this has not been linked to a long term plan. In addition, owners and users have indicated that some stadia need major upgrades before they can meet the expectations of spectators and sports organisations in terms of facilities and access.

Left
Sydney Showground Stadium
Sydney Olympic Park

Below
Parramatta Eels vs Newcastle Knights
Parramatta Stadium



© Venues NSW/Phil Carrick



© SCG Trust/Hamilton Lund

Above
2006 A-League Final
Sydney Football Stadium

Far right
Hunter Stadium
Newcastle

NSW Tier 3 Stadia

There are at least 26 Tier 3 facilities across NSW. Of these stadia over half are in Greater Sydney and are typically the home ground for second and third grade sporting teams.

LOCAL AND DISTRICT LEVEL FACILITIES

While the NSW Stadia Strategy does not focus on smaller district and local level facilities with a capacity of less than 10,000, it is noted that these facilities perform an important role in the wider spectrum of sporting infrastructure across the state.

One example of the importance of these facilities, and their interaction with larger stadia, is the Blacktown Local Government Area. It is typical of a major urban area with a range of outdoor multi-purpose sporting fields for its estimated population of over 300,000 residents. The majority

cater for sporting clubs playing in district or local level competitions with the Blacktown International Sportspark (Tier 3) catering for events at regional, state or national level.

Another is Coffs Harbour on the NSW north coast, a vibrant community with an estimated population of over 70,000. It has 30 multi-purpose outdoor sporting facilities, including one Tier 3 stadia, the Coffs Harbour International Stadium, with the remainder typically providing district and local level facilities.



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2.4 BENCHMARKING TO OTHER STATES

When compared with other states, NSW has a significantly higher number of Tier 2 stadia. In Melbourne two stadia host a total of nine AFL clubs, with the Geelong Cats remaining at Geelong's Kardinia Park. In comparison nine Sydney stadia host nine NRL home teams.

The high number of stadia in NSW compared to other states can be illustrated by comparing stadia capacity to population (See Table 1).

NSW has the highest stadia provision per capita in mainland Australia. NSW stadia provision per capita is estimated at 5.7% compared to 3.8% in Victoria and Queensland.

It has also been noted that NSW Tier 1 stadia host a significantly lower number of regular sporting season events than venues such as the MCG and Docklands Stadium in Melbourne.

Table 1: State stadia comparison - Post redevelopment of Adelaide Oval and Perth Major Stadium

		NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TOTAL
International Level Stadia Tier 1	Oval	1	1	1	1	0	4
	Rectangular	1	0	1	0	0	2
	Multi	1	1	0	0	1	3
	Capacity	173,771	156,347	94,500	51,500	60,000	536,118
National Level Stadia Tier 2	Oval	1	1	1	0	1	4
	Rectangular	10	1	2	1	1	15
	Multi	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Capacity	242,489	57,050	78,900	16,500	40,000	434,939
National Sporting Franchises	AFL	2	10	2	2	2	18
	NRL	10	1	3	0	0	14
	A-League	4	2	1	1	1	9
	Super15	1	1	1	0	1	4
	Cricket	3	3	2	2	2	12
Total Franchises		20	17	9	5	6	57
Total Stadia		14	4	5	2	3	28
Total Capacity		416,260	213,397	173,400	68,000	100,000	971,057
State Population*		7,287,600	5,605,600	4,561,700	1,654,200	2,331,500	21,440,600
Capacity % Population		5.7%	3.8%	3.8%	4.1%	4.3%	4.5%

*Estimated resident population at March Quarter 2011, ABS Catalogue 3101.0





© Sydney Olympic Park Authority/Paul K Robbins

2.5 STADIA STRATEGY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The development of the NSW Stadia Strategy has also been informed by the following design principles that ideally Tier 1 and Tier 2 stadia should meet:

- 1 Multi-tenant, multi-use:** all stadia should host the majority of home matches for at least two national sporting teams.
- 2 Utilisation:** greater use of Tier 1 stadia will be prioritised. The aim will be to have an increased number of sport or entertainment event days held at stadia included in the strategy.
- 3 Capacity:** seating capacity should be sufficient to meet current and short to medium term requirements. Tier 2 stadia should have the capacity to expand to accommodate future demand.
- 4 Quality of facilities:** all stadia should meet the current requirements of key hirers and, through continued investment, have the potential to meet future requirements, including facilities for players, media and broadcasting.
- 5 Transport connectivity:** all stadia should have good public transport access and appropriate parking capacity.
- 6 Entertainment precinct:** stadia should be surrounded by a vibrant entertainment precinct to enhance the match day experience.

2.6 MODELS FOR THE STADIA STRATEGY

Two options were considered in developing the strategy:

- Do nothing
- A 'hub/precinct' stadia model

Do nothing

Analysis of current stadia provision and consideration of stakeholder comments make it clear that 'doing nothing' is not a sustainable model for NSW. Concerns have been raised about current stadia provision and use including:

- Having a large number of stadia means costs are spread across a large number of venues and it is difficult to find the money to maintain all to contemporary standards;
- Venues will continue to age impacting on venue quality for teams and spectators;
- Low usage rates result in poor financial returns which in turn limits the funds available for maintenance. It also does not provide the best financial or community benefit return for the NSW Government when requests for funding are being considered;
- Maintaining and improving stadia presents a challenge for local governments that face competing requests for funding;
- Requests for NSW Government funding to upgrade facilities are likely to increase as venues age and competition for events increases;
- There has not been a clear strategy in place to guide NSW Government stadia planning and investment.

The hub/precinct model

A model generally regarded as leading practice for stadia provision comprises a small number of high quality, centrally located and adequately sized stadia with good transport access and a surrounding entertainment precinct, creating a quality spectator experience and

Left
ANZ Stadium
Sydney Olympic Park

Below
ARL Test Match
Hunter Stadium



© Venues NSW/Arrow Photography



© SCG Trust/Hamilton Lund

Above
Sydney Swans vs Hawthorn
Sydney Cricket Ground

Right
Wollongong Stadium

year-round use. This hub/precinct model is used in Victoria.

These stadia are supported by smaller decentralised venues that provide dedicated elite training facilities and allow for the intersection of elite sport and community use.

THE VICTORIAN HUB/PRECINCT MODEL

Since the late 1980s, Victoria has worked towards a 'hub' model of stadia provision to improve spectator experience, increase attendance, and provide better financial returns. As a result, the AFL moved games away from the traditional home grounds of Melbourne teams to the state's two Tier 1 stadia - the MCG and Docklands Stadium. With good public transport links, facilities of a high standard, and numerous post-match entertainment options, attendance has significantly increased. AFL membership increased to over 600,000 compared to 90,000 in the mid 1980's VFL competition (which expanded to become the AFL in 1990).

Docklands Stadium is the home stadium for AFL clubs Carlton, North Melbourne, St Kilda, Essendon and Western Bulldogs and the Melbourne Renegades (T20 Cricket). The MCG is the home of AFL clubs Hawthorn, Richmond, Collingwood and Melbourne, as well as the Victorian Bushrangers cricket team and the Melbourne Stars (T20 Cricket). A recently developed Tier 2 stadium, the Melbourne Rectangular Stadium, is home to the Melbourne Storm (NRL), Melbourne Victory and Heart teams (A-League) and the Melbourne Rebels team (Super 15). The other Tier 2 stadium providing a home ground for a national sporting team is Kardinia Park, home to the Geelong Football Club (AFL).

The review found that key elements of the Victorian model can be tailored to develop a "hybrid" model that suits the environment in NSW. This acknowledges that there are differences between the two states. For example, Sydney's population is far more spread out than Melbourne's, with on average 323 residents per square kilometre compared to 478.

In addition it is important that the population centres of Wollongong, Newcastle and Western Sydney are appropriately considered in a NSW strategy.

For NSW this means a more decentralised approach to stadia provision while retaining a workable number of stadia. This hybrid approach provides an opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the hub/precinct model in a way that is tailored to the needs of NSW.



© Venues NSW/Dee Kramer

3 THE NSW STADIA STRATEGY

3.1 THE STRATEGY

The NSW Stadia Strategy focuses future NSW Government investment on NSW Government venues, including those that will return to government or have a head lease with the NSW Government.

The strategy includes seven stadia, comprising three Tier 1 and four Tier 2 venues, in two international sporting hubs and other venues in the population centres of Wollongong, Newcastle and Western Sydney.

Sydney Olympic Park

Sydney Olympic Park has been developed into an important home of sport and entertainment. The precinct is part of the Olympic legacy and is located in the geographic centre of Sydney.

The Sydney Olympic Park hub includes two stadia – Stadium Australia (Tier 1) and the Sydney Showground Stadium (Tier 2).

The inclusion of the Sydney Showground Stadium reflects the Government's commitment to the Sydney Olympic Park hub and recognises that it is the only medium-sized oval venue in NSW.

Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Football Stadium

This hub has been hosting a wealth of sport and entertainment for over 150 years. It is located close to the central business district and is adjacent to the bars, restaurants, cinemas and shops of the Entertainment Quarter.

The Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Football Stadium are both Tier 1 stadia.

Regional NSW

The Government recognises that stadia with substantial capacity are required to service the major regional centres in Newcastle and Wollongong. Hunter Stadium and Wollongong

Stadium (both Tier 2) service large populations and have also received significant investment over the last five years.

Western Sydney

In addition, the strategy includes another Tier 2 stadium in Western Sydney. Further consideration of the options for this stadium is required and could include redeveloping an existing stadium or developing a new stadium in a strategic location.

SEVEN GOVERNMENT OWNED OR LEASED STADIA INCLUDED IN THE STRATEGY

- Sydney Cricket Ground
- Sydney Football Stadium
- Stadium Australia
- Sydney Showground Stadium
- Hunter Stadium
- Wollongong Stadium
- Western Sydney – either a redevelopment of an existing stadium or a new stadium



WESTERN SYDNEY

Population growth projections indicate that Western Sydney and particularly South-Western Sydney are the key growth areas within Greater Sydney. By 2036 51% of the city's population will be in Western Sydney.

Looking to the future, the NSW Stadia Strategy proposes further consideration of options to increase capacity in Western Sydney to meet future demand.

3.2 WHAT THE NSW STADIA STRATEGY DELIVERS

The strategy provides for the concentration of national and international games into a smaller number of Tier 1 and Tier 2 stadia (seven rather than 14), leading to higher utilisation rates, increased efficiencies, and more focused investment. Analysis shows that these seven stadia can accommodate all national sporting organisations and regular season event days and also meet current projected growth.

The strategy provides an opportunity to deliver:

- A more focussed approach to NSW Government investment to improve facilities, transport access and develop entertainment precincts;
- Increased utilisation which will improve financial and community returns;
- Provision for all NSW sporting organisations;
- Improved venues for players and spectators;
- Better coordination of event days across NSW; and
- Investment targeted to improve the competitiveness of NSW.

3.3 SUPPORTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

By establishing the NSW Stadia Strategy, the NSW Government will ensure that future capital investment is strategic and delivers the best outcomes for NSW. This strategy recognises that given the large number of Tier 2 stadia, it is challenging to maintain current stadia at the level required to host elite competition.

As stadia age without major capital redevelopments, they increasingly will not meet spectator and player expectations.

Sporting organisations consulted agree that NSW has too many small, under-equipped stadia. However, it is acknowledged that for some spectators, seeing their team play on their current home ground will always be more important than up-to-date facilities.

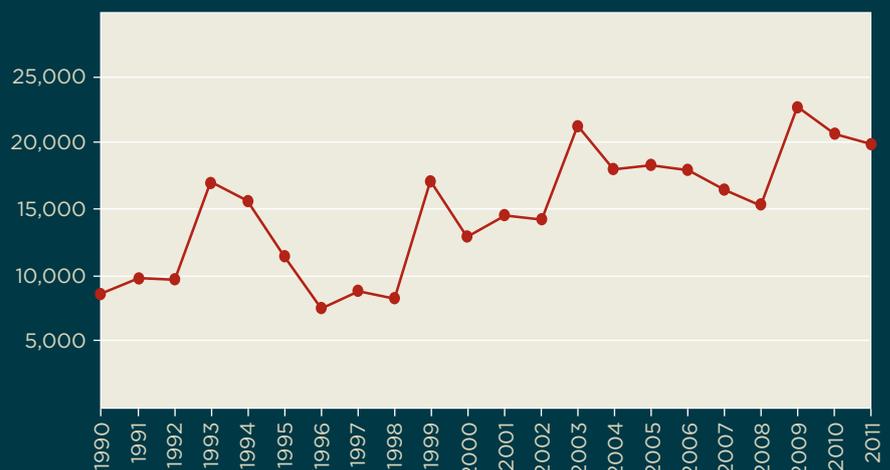
BELMORE SPORTS GROUND AND THE BULLDOGS

Located in the City of Canterbury, Belmore Sports Ground had a capacity of 25,000, including 9,000 seats, and had been the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs Rugby League Club's home ground since 1935. However, to play at a stadium with improved facilities and to increase membership, the Bulldogs decided to move home matches to Stadium Australia following the end of the 1998 season. The result has been increased attendances (an average of 17,600 compared to 10,700 in the last 9 years at Belmore), better facilities for players and spectators and improved revenue. Playing at a larger venue provides opportunities to increase revenue by, for example, offering memberships with

reciprocal rights to away games with other teams at their stadium.

In 2010, federal, state and local government funding enabled the Bulldogs to redevelop Belmore Sports Ground to provide an elite training facility and administration centre. In so doing, capacity was reduced and local access was significantly increased. Belmore Sports Ground is both an elite and community sporting hub, with a busy event calendar including Bulldogs pre-season and training matches, home matches for the Sydney Olympic Football Club, second tier Bulldogs matches, junior Bulldogs representative training and matches, local rugby league grand finals and a range of other community based activities.

BULLDOGS AVERAGE REGULAR SEASON ATTENDANCE





© South Sydney Rabbitohs

3.4 TIER 2 STADIA NOT INCLUDED IN THE STRATEGY

While the Stadia Strategy aims to prioritise capital investment into a targeted number of NSW Government venues, it also seeks to maximise community and multi-purpose use. For example, Tier 2 venues that fall outside the strategy, could be given a new life as elite training facilities and used to host lower drawing professional games, pre-season matches, junior competitions and community events.

Belmore Sports Ground and Redfern Oval provide case studies of how a venue can be redeveloped to maintain the link between elite sport and community engagement.

The strategy proposes that the NSW Government work with local government and private operators to explore ways to provide increased community access. A range of options to be considered for these stadia include:

- Becoming training grounds and administration centres for their 'home' teams;
- Hosting exhibition events;
- Hosting pre-season events;
- Providing playing fields for junior games
- Providing sports facilities for local communities and schools; and
- Replacing turf with all weather synthetic playing surfaces to enable greater usage over an extended period of time.

The strategy foresees continuing discussion with stadium owners, operators, and sporting organisations, about the future direction of their grounds. At present, the experience of Victoria, Redfern Oval and Belmore Sports Ground, indicates that a policy of moving games away from smaller, suburban venues to venues with better facilities and good transport will be of longer-term benefit to sporting codes, teams and fans.

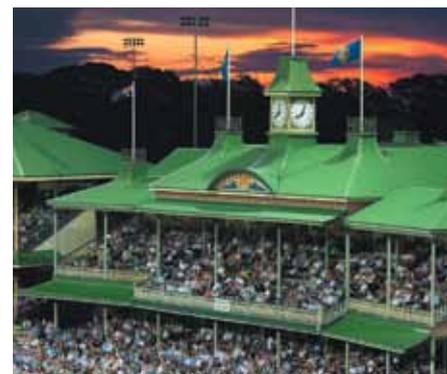
REDFERN OVAL AND THE RABBITOHS

One of Australia's oldest rugby league clubs, the South Sydney Rabbitohs, played home matches at Redfern Oval from 1948 – 1987. Since this time the Rabbitohs have played home games at the Sydney Football Stadium and Stadium Australia, both Tier 1 stadia. The Rabbitohs have experienced an increase in membership numbers, with total membership at 20,181 in 2011.

Redfern Oval has been redeveloped to provide training facilities for the club, including a new grandstand and state of the art playing field. The sports field surrounds are accessible to the public and the field is available for hire by local community sports teams and organisations. The Redfern Oval redevelopment was funded by the City of Sydney Council.

Above
Redfern Oval

Below
**The Members Pavilion
Sydney Cricket Ground**



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Above
Parramatta Stadium

Right
ANZ Stadium
Sydney Olympic Park

Back Page
Wollongong Stadium

4 ACTION PLAN

With the release of the NSW Stadia Strategy, focus turns to implementation of the strategy and undertaking more detailed work regarding community sport and recreation facilities.

This work will include:

- Communicating the outcomes of the strategy;
- Continuing discussions with sporting bodies regarding stadia provision, facilities and future match scheduling;
- Developing or updating master plans for Tier 1 stadia and their precincts covering transport, integrated ticketing, spectator experience, facilities for players, media and corporates and restaurant and entertainment provision;
- Developing or updating master plans for Tier 2 stadia and their precincts, again looking at transport, spectator experience and facilities;
- Considering options for the Tier 2 stadium in Western Sydney to meet future demand;
- Talking to the community and to local government about what role they see for the multi-use Tier 2 stadia that fall outside the stadia identified in this strategy;
- Undertaking more detailed work regarding community sport and recreation facilities in NSW.



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