



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE (draft)

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POWERING FORWARD ON INDIGENOUS JOBS – THE POWER SIGN UP TO 50,000 JOBS CHALLENGE

The Port Adelaide Football Club is leading the way in Indigenous employment, becoming the first AFL club to join the challenge to help find 50,000 sustainable jobs for Indigenous Australians.

Australian Employment Covenant CEO Rhonda Parker recently joined with Port Adelaide Football Club CEO Mark Haysman to sign an employment covenant. This jobs commitment will build on the Power's success in Indigenous school completion through the Aboriginal Power Cup program.

"The Power is already kicking goals in Indigenous school attendance, along with the AEC's P Plate program, through schools involved in the Aboriginal Power Cup," Ms Parker said.

"The AEC values the Club's additional commitment to Indigenous employment by signing to provide five indigenous jobs across the club."

Mark Haysman said that it was important for the club to strive to win "grand finals" in its community as well as on the field.

"We are really proud of the success we've had in Indigenous school attendance and completion through the Aboriginal Power Cup. We've gone from 130 students to 330 students involved and school attendance has increased to 90%, well above the average attendance for Aboriginal students."

"Signing an employment covenant helps complete the jobs puzzle for us. We want students to finish school and we want them to have real job opportunities– whatever their aspirations might be. So we support Indigenous students who have a passion for football but also those looking for other jobs."

"We are looking to offer five jobs to young people who successfully complete the Aboriginal Power Cup program. Of course other participants can now work toward the range of jobs the AEC routinely has available from other AEC employers."

The South Australian Government recently announced it will provide another three years of funding to support the Aboriginal Power Cup.

"We know that staying in school and continuing with education is a critical factor in providing young people with better opportunities while reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. This program works," South Australian Attorney-General John Rau said.

"The Power is to be commended for offering jobs to some of the young people who complete the program, so there is a connection between completing school and getting work."

Rhonda Parker said this partnership was an example of how the Australian Employment Covenant can help join the dots between the commitment of employers – like the Power – programs like the Aboriginal Power Cup and P-Plate to get Indigenous Australians into real jobs.

Mark and Rhonda challenged other AFL clubs to keep up with the Power on Indigenous programs that actually help kids finish school and provide real jobs.

“Through our player development, the Aboriginal Power Cup and the Australian Employment Covenant, the Port Adelaide Football Club is committed to supporting Indigenous Australians at all levels of the club as well as the wider community,” Mark said.

“We hope other clubs and more employers can kick goals, just as the Power is - on and off the paddock. What is happening here is truly inspirational,” Rhonda Parker said.

Attached Photo: The AEC P-Plate Manager (SA) Paul Vandenberg, PAFC CEO Mark Haysman, AEC CEO Rhonda Parker and participants in the Aboriginal Power Cup

ENDS

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BACKGROUND

The AEC www.fiftythousandjobs.com.au

The Australian Employment Covenant (AEC) is a national, industry-led initiative aimed at securing the commitment of sustainable jobs for Indigenous Australians. The vision is to bring Australians together to break the vicious cycle of unemployment, hopelessness and poverty that exists among many Indigenous Australians. It has set an ambitious target of creating demand for 50,000 Indigenous Jobs.

The AEC has now secured over half the commitments in its quest for 50,000 jobs with employers signing to provide over 26,000 jobs so far. The AEC has already placed 3,200 people in jobs and routinely has around 500 job vacancies from AEC employers on its on-line jobs board.

The new AEC South Australian State Manager is Paul Vandenberg. A Wirangu man, whose family come from the West Coast of South Australia, Paul is also a former NBL Basketball player and has been committed to the AEC's P Plate program for young people at school - and now the need to find real, sustainable jobs for Indigenous Australians. The AEC's P-Plate program works with schools to show Indigenous school leavers pathways to employment and further study options.

The Aboriginal Power Cup www.aboriginalpowercup.com.au

The Aboriginal Power Cup engages Aboriginal Students through sport and encourages them to continue with their schooling and make positive lifestyle choices. It is a partnership between the Port Adelaide Football Club, the SA State Government, the SA Aboriginal Sports Training Academy, SANFL and private sector sponsors.

The number of participants has increased from 130 to 330 boys and girls over three years, from 21 schools across the State. The AEC's P-Plate program works at the school end of the partnership and the Power players visit schools that are involved to cover a range of educational exercises with participants such as leadership, goal setting and career choices.

The exercises align with the State curriculum and can provide a unit credit toward the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

At the end of the semester, the Aboriginal Power Cup Grand Final is played as a curtain raiser to a Power game at AAMI stadium, between the two male and two female teams that perform best in all aspects of the competition – not just football.

Last year the team that won the most football matches was not in the final, but the team which collectively completed all of its curriculum requirements did compete.

In its first year the program contributed to a 23% increase in school attendance from participants. Last year attendance for participants reached 90%, and of the 18 Aboriginal students who completed year 12 in South Australia, 13 were Aboriginal Power Cup participants.