



# The Hon Graham Annesley MP

Minister for Sport and Recreation

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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Wednesday 29 June 2011

# Western Sydney kicks Giant goal in securing 2011 NAB AFL Draft

New South Wales Minister for Sport and Recreation, Graham Annesley, and AFL CEO Andrew Demetriou today announced the 2011 NAB AFL Draft will be held in Western Sydney on Thursday November 24.

“This is another major events win for Sydney and NSW. The NAB AFL Draft is the main recruitment opportunity for AFL clubs to select elite and talented junior players and as such attracts Australia wide attention,” Mr Annesley said.

The AFL's 18th club - the Greater Western Sydney Giants - will join the competition for the 2012 season and Minister Annesley said he was excited the Draft, which will welcome the bulk of the new talent to the game's newest club, will be held in the club's back yard.

“I was privileged to be invited to do the coin toss at a recent Giants trial game and was impressed with both the structure and plans that AFL has for Western Sydney and the game,” Mr Annesley said.

“The AFL have made a substantial investment in Western Sydney and the arrival of the Greater Western Sydney Giants will see increased participation and competition between all sporting codes, and deliver greater opportunities and entertainment for fans,” Mr Annesley added.

Mr Demetriou said he was delighted the NSW Government and Events NSW had chosen to support the placing of the 2011 NAB AFL Draft in Western Sydney, as one of the major events within the AFL competition.

“The GWS Giants have been preparing for their AFL entry for more than two years, under the leadership of Tony Shepherd and Dale Holmes, and the decisions the club will make at the 2011 NAB AFL Draft will be pivotal to the club's future over the next decade,” Mr Demetriou said.

“When the Giants take their place in our competition alongside the Sydney Swans, who have been a wonderful club in the state for nearly thirty years, AFL football will finally be played in NSW for every week of our premiership season,” he said.

Mr Demetriou said the decision to place the draft in NSW this year reflected the desire of the AFL to further build its talent pathway in the state.



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“While there are now nearly 20 players across the competition who list NSW as their original state, we are determined to uncover more NSW talent for our competition,” Mr Demetriou said.

“Western Sydney has always proven to be an excellent breeding ground for quality athletes across all sports, and the AFL has clearly recognised the potential of the region,” Mr Annesley added.

“Pursuing major events is a key part of our strategy to rebuild the NSW economy and securing key sporting events such as the AFL Draft is a vital part of building Australia’s leading Events Calendar.

“Securing the 2011 AFL Draft is a major coup for the NSW Government and again highlights our commitment to kick goals for the people of this state,” Mr Annesley concluded.

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