



**BASKETBALL WA**

# **NBL1 West Licence Application Procedure**

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# NBL1 West Licence Application Procedure



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# NBL1 West Licence Application Procedure



## 1 Overview

Basketball Western Australia (BWA) is responsible for the management and administration of the NBL1 West competition under its Program Agreement with the National Basketball League (NBL).

The NBL1 West Licence Agreement sets out the legal and operational framework between BWA and each participating Licensee.

This Procedure outlines the process for assessing, approving, and onboarding Associations seeking to obtain an NBL1 West Licence.

It ensures that any new Licensee meets the financial, operational, and governance standards required to sustain participation in a semi-professional league that represents the peak of the Western Australian basketball pathway.

## 2 Scope

This Procedure applies to:

- Any existing BWA Affiliated Association seeking to add NBL1 West teams.
- Re-applying associations following a lapse, termination, or withdrawal from the competition.

It does not apply to existing Licensees renewing their participation under a continuing Licence Agreement.

## 3 Aim

To provide a transparent, robust, and equitable process for evaluating and approving new NBL1 West Licensees that:

- Ensures long-term sustainability and professional standards.
- Aligns with BWA's strategic and high-performance objectives.
- Protects the commercial, reputational, and operational integrity of the NBL1 West competition.
- Complies with all relevant clauses of the NBL1 West Licence Agreement, Rules of Operation, and Compliance Matrix.

## 4 Document Author and Approving Authority

The BWA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the approver of this procedure. Suggestions for updates or improvements must be submitted to the Chief Basketball Officer (CBO), who will consult with the appropriate stakeholders and present to the CEO for review and approval.

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The CBO is responsible for maintaining, reviewing, and implementing this Procedure, ensuring it remains consistent with the current Licence Agreement, Rules of Operation, and BWA strategic priorities.

### 5 Definitions

Defined terms have the same meaning as in the Licence Agreement, unless otherwise defined in clause 5.

**“Affiliated Association”** means an association that has registered and paid affiliation fees with BWA in accordance with its constitution, and where BWA has accepted its affiliation.

**“Applicant”** means a BWA-affiliated Association submitting an Expression of Interest of Application for a Licence.

**“Licence Agreement”** means the NBL1 West Licence Agreement executed between BWA and each Licensee, including any schedules or annexures, however described.

**“Provisional Licence”** means a conditional licence issued for an initial period (normally two seasons) prior to a full licence being granted, subject to compliance.

**“Open Championship”** means any competition labelled by BWA as the underpinning competition that acts as the step-below NBL1.

**“Compliance Matrix”** means a matrix developed annually by BWA that sets the conditions NBL1 West Clubs must satisfy to meet minimum standards to operate in the League.

### 6 Licence Approval – Governance Pathway

The following governance framework outlines responsibilities and decision points throughout the NBL1 West Licence Application process.

#### 6.1. Stage Responsibilities

Stage	Accountable Party	Function / Key Decision
Stage 1 – Expression of Interest (EOI)	Chief Basketball Officer (CBO)	Receives and acknowledges EOIs and assesses eligibility to proceed to formal application stage.
Stage 2 – Formal Application Submission	Applicant Association	Submits full documentation in line with section 7.
Stage 3 – Due Diligence Assessment	CBO and BWA Leadership Team	Conduct detailed review of financials, governance, venue, and compliance readiness. May engage independent assessors.
Stage 4 – Consultation & Recommendation	NBL1 West Commission / CBO	Reviews findings and oversees consultation with existing NBL1 West Clubs (minimum 28 days for feedback). Commission provides formal written recommendation to the CEO via the CBO. The CBO is responsible for consolidating findings and the submission to the CEO.

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Stage 5 – Licence Approval	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	CEO reviews submission. Considers recommendations, and determines to (1) grant a Provisional Licence; (2) defer to further information; or (3) decline.
Stage 6 – Provisional Licence	CBO	CBO determines readiness for stage 7.
Stage 7 – Provisional to Full Licence Transition	CEO	After two seasons and successful annual reviews (Clause 17.5 of Licence Agreement), CBO recommends conversion to Full Licence (or not) for CEO approval.

### 6.2. Procedural Fairness

- All applicants receive written feedback outlining assessment outcomes and rationale.
- Applicants may request a feedback meeting with the CBO but have no right of appeal once the CEO's decision is communicated.
- Applicants may re-submit an application no earlier than 12 months after the initial submission date.

### 6.3. Reporting and Transparency

- Approved licence outcomes are reported to the NBL1 West Commission and existing clubs at the next scheduled forum.
- Financial details (EG use of Licence Fee income under Clause 6 of the Licence Agreement – Surplus Income) are included in the annual post-season report.

## 7 Licence Pathway

The NBL1 West Licence Application Procedure follows seven stages as outlined below. Each stage must be completed in sequence unless waived by the CBO in writing.

### 7.1. Stage 1 – Expression of Interest (EOI)

**Purpose:** To identify eligible and strategically aligned Associations interested in joining NBL1 West.

- Association EOIs must be submitted **no later than 31 March at least two years prior** to the intended season of entry. This time period may be waived by the CBO in limited circumstances, and must be appropriately justified by the prospective Association.
- Associations must have a membership base (measured by BWA registration fee-paying members) of at least 1,500.
- EOIs must be addressed to the CBO and include:
  - Association details, key contacts, and governance summary;

- Detailed outline of the strategic intent for NBL1 participation; and
- Venue access statement and capacity outline.

### **Progression and Approval:**

- The CBO reviews all EOIs for eligibility and alignment with BWA's strategic priorities.
- The CBO may request additional information or clarification.
- Eligible EOIs are endorsed in writing by the CBO, inviting the applicant to submit a Formal Application (Stage 2).
- Unsuccessful EOIs receive written feedback explaining non-progression.

## **7.2. Stage 2 – Formal Application Submission**

**Purpose:** To confirm the Applicant has the strategic, financial and operational capacity to deliver an NBL1 West program.

Applicants invited to proceed must submit a comprehensive NBL1 West Application Pack, demonstrating both strategic intent and operational capacity – this includes:

- **Strategic Planning**
  - A current Association Strategic Plan (minimum three-year horizon) endorsed by the Board or equivalent governing body.
  - A complementary NBL1 Program Strategic Plan outlining:
    - Vision, mission, and alignment with BWA's Performance and Pathways strategy.
    - Objectives and KPIs across performance, commercial growth, community engagement and governance.
    - Annual review process and performance measurement indicators.
- **Organisational Governance**
  - Association Constitution and organisational chart.
  - Board or Committee structure, including key sub-committees relevant to NBL1 governance (EG Finance, Risk, Commercial, etc).
  - NBL1 Program Governance Framework detailing:
    - Clear reporting lines between club board/committee, NBL1 program leadership and operational staff.
    - Key policies and procedures (Eg finance, coach selection, recruitment process, athlete/coach on-boarding process, etc).

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- **Minimum Staffing Requirements**

- Each NBL1 West club must demonstrate the capacity to employ or formally engage the following minimum personnel, with variations for regional clubs subject to CEO approval:

Core Role	Minimum Requirement	Notes
General Manager / CEO	1 FTE	Accountable for all club operations, responsible for commercial operations, and key liaison with BWA.
NBL1 Administrator / Head of Basketball Operations	0.5-1 FTE	Specifically responsible for operational requirements for NBL1. This may be fulfilled by the GM/CEO initially if appropriately structured.
Finance Officer / Bookkeeper	0.5 FTE or externally contracted	Responsible for budgets, invoicing and financial reporting.
Game Day Manager	Casual or existing staff	Manages match-day logistics and compliance.
Media & Comms Coordinator	0.5 FTE of externally contracted	Responsible for social and digital media, as well as club communications.

- **Operational & Sustainability Plan**

- Should integrate all relevant aspects of the Association's NBL1 operations – including finance, staffing, commercial, community and venue planning, to demonstrate the ongoing viability of the program. It is intended as an operational synthesis of the documents required in this stage, not a separate plan.
- Examples of inclusions below:
  - Three-year (minimum) NBL1-specific operational budget covering revenue, expenses, staffing, and contingencies.
  - Evidence of forecast income sources (commercial, ticketing, sponsorship) – including assumptions.
  - Risk management framework with mitigation strategies.

- **Commercial & Sponsorship Plan**

- Comprehensive sponsorship strategy consistent with any NBL1 West Commercial guidelines or Licence requirements.
- Ticketing, membership, and merchandise revenue forecasts.

- **Venue Plan & Audit**

- Compliance with minimum facility standards (Rules of Operation Appendix 3)
- Confirmed venue access for home games and training.
- Evidence of broadcast, lighting, and seating capacity consistent with NBL1 West requirements.

- **Development Frameworks**
  - Player, coach and referee development frameworks aligned with BWA's Performance and Pathways Strategy and/or equivalent frameworks.
  - Demonstrated future integration between NBL1, WABL (including open championship) and grassroots programs.
  - Annual review mechanism and coach education plan.
- **Community Engagement Strategy**
  - Defined culture and behaviour framework promoting integrity and respect.
  - Community outreach and schools engagement plan.
- **Operational Readiness Plan**
  - Game-day operations plan, emergency procedures, volunteer structure, and security (if applicable).
  - Ticketing, marketing, and communications workflows.
  - Livestream and broadcast operational readiness checklist.
- **Pre-Entry Checklist**
  - Completed readiness assessment drawn from the NBL1 West Compliance Matrix domains (governance, finance, facilities, commercial, community, and staffing).

### **Progression and Approval:**

- The CBO reviews each submission for completeness and compliance.
- Applications that meet minimum documentation standards to progress to Stage 3 (Due Diligence).
- Incomplete or insufficient applications are returned with guidance for resubmission within a defined timeframe (typically 30 days).
- The CBO confirms progression in writing once an application meets readiness requirements.

### **7.3. Stage 3 – Due Diligence Assessment**

**Purpose:** To verify the accuracy and viability of the information submitted.

- Conducted by the CBO with BWA Leadership Team (finance, governance, facilities).
- May include site visits, interviews, or independent review.
- Evaluates financial capacity, venue compliance, governance maturity, and strategic alignment.

### **Progression and Approval:**

- A Due Diligence Report summarising findings and risk rating is prepared by the CBO.

- The report and supporting documentation are submitted to the NBL1 West Commission for formal review.
- The CBO notifies the Applicant in writing that the application has advanced to Stage 4 (Consultation and Recommendation).

### 7.4. Stage 4 – Consultation and Recommendation

**Purpose:** To ensure transparency and key stakeholder input before a licence recommendation is made.

- Existing NBL1 West Clubs are notified and provided a minimum 28-day consultation period to provide feedback.
- The NBL1 West Commission reviews all submissions and determines whether the proposal supports competition balance and sustainability.

**Progression and Approval:**

- The Commission finalises a written recommendation (support, conditional support, or non-support).
- The CBO consolidates all findings and submits a Licence Proposal Pack to the CEO for Stage 5 (Licence Approval).

### 7.5. Stage 5 – Licence Approval

**Purpose:** To make a formal determination on the issuing of a new NBL1 West Licence.

- The CEO is the final approving authority for all new licences.
- The CEO considers:
  - The Commission's recommendation;
  - The CBO's summary report;
  - BWA's strategic and financial capacity to expand the league; and
  - Any risks that any approval may create for BWA or its participating clubs.

**Progression and Approval:**

- The CEO may:
  - Approve a provisional licence (subject to conditions);
  - Defer the decision pending additional information; or
  - Decline the application.
- The CEO's determination is communicated in writing to the Applicant and the NBL1 West Commission.
- Approved applicants advance to Stage 6 (Provisional Licence).

### 7.6. Stage 6 – Provisional Licence (Two Seasons)

**Purpose:** To provide a structured transition into NBL1 West competition under defined conditions.

A Provisional Licence provides conditional entry for a minimum of two seasons, subject to:

- Participation in the Open Championship (Men’s and Women’s) in at least two seasons preceding entry;
- Compliance with the Pre-Entry Checklist and annual Compliance Matrix;
- Demonstrated capability in finance, commercial operations, and game-day delivery; and
- Annual reviews under Clause 17.5 of the Licence Agreement.

**Progression and Approval:**

- At the end of each provisional season, the CBO conducts a compliance review.
- Findings are reported to the CEO and the NBL1 West Commission.
- After two seasons, the CBO determines readiness for Stage 7 (Full Licence Transition).

### 7.7. Stage 7 – Transition to Full Licence

**Purpose:** To confirm long-term suitability and elevate the Licensee from provisional to full status.

- The CBO conducts a full review covering financial sustainability, governance standards, compliance performance, and cultural alignment.

**Progression and Approval:**

- The CBO provides a formal recommendation to the CEO based on Clause 17.5 of the Licence Agreement.
- The CEO may:
  - Grant a Full Licence;
  - Extend the Provisional Licence for one additional season with defined targets; or
  - Terminate the Licence in accordance with Clause 22 of the Licence Agreement.
- All outcomes are documented, communicated in writing, and recorded by BWA.

## 8 Fees and Licence Conditions

- **Licence (Buy-In) Fee:** An amount recommended by the CBO to the CEO for approval. Applied under Clause 6 (Surplus Income) of the Licence Agreement to benefit the league.
- **Licence (Annual) Fee:** Levied under Clause 7.4 of the Licence Agreement, in addition to the annual levy. Applied under Clause 6 (Surplus Income) of the Licence Agreement to benefit the league.

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### 9 Transitional and Fast-Track Provisions

- Existing WABL Clubs that have recently (within 24 months) provided BWA with documentation, may have a waiver applied to providing duplicate documentation.

### 10 Governance and Review Cycle

- The CBO reviews this Procedure biennially or as required.
- Licence holders remain subject to annual reviews under Clause 17.5 of the Licence Agreement.
- Revocation, suspension, or withdrawal of a Licence is governed by Clauses 5, 17.5 and 22 of the Licence Agreement.

### 11 Appendix One – Pre-Entry Checklist (Summary)

Category	Key Criteria	Evidence Required (Examples)
<b>Governance</b>	Association is an active BWA-affiliated body with a compliant constitution, clear board structure, and defined NBL1 program oversight.	Constitution, organisational chart, governance framework, board/committee procedures/process.
<b>Finance</b>	Demonstrated financial sustainability and risk management. Three-year audited financials and NBL1 program budgets must be provided.	Audited accounts (each year over three yrs), NBL1 budgets, cash-flow projections, risk register.
<b>Venue</b>	Venue complies with Appendix 3 of the NBL1 West Rules of Operation.	Venue audit form, photos/video, booking confirmation letters.
<b>Development</b>	Player, coach, and referee pathways align with BWA's Performance and Pathways Strategy, or have developed their own, and are reviewed annually.	Pathway documentation, coach development plan, education calendar.
<b>Commercial</b>	Comprehensive commercial and sponsorship plan consistent with NBL1 West guidelines, including sustainable revenue targets.	Sponsorship deck, forecast revenue model.
<b>Community and Culture</b>	Documented community engagement strategy; clear club culture and behaviour framework.	Community engagement plan, and cultural statements.
<b>Game-Day and Media</b>	Operational readiness for livestream broadcast, ticketing, and presentation standards; compliance with BWA media requirements.	Game-day plan, livestream test results, staffing roster, safety plan.
<b>Staffing</b>	Minimum staffing levels met (per Section 7 – Stage 2). Regional equivalents approved if applicable.	Evidence of employment, position descriptions.
<b>Compliance &amp; Reporting</b>	Ability to meet BWA Compliance Matrix obligations and participate in annual reviews.	Completed Pre-Entry Checklist, signed declaration.