

**Australian Calisthenic Federation Coaching Committee
Level Two Survey Report**

The Australian Calisthenic Federation Coaching Committee (ACFCC) undertook a survey on the current Level Two Coaching Program. The aim was to evaluate the perceptions of coaches and to gain insight into the role of Level 2 in Coach Education. The ACFCC endeavour and continue to update and evaluate the current coaching programs to improve and develop quality coaching in Calisthenics.

The current Level 2 program was established in 1998 to build on the knowledge and skills gained through the Level 1 program. It is accredited by the Australian Sports Commission and is reviewed every four years. Level 2 provides an avenue for ongoing professional development for our coaches and will assist in maintaining the highest standard of coaching for our sport. For professional development to be effective it must cover technical components, theoretical modules and an understanding of sports administration - elements of which have all been included in the Level 2 Calisthenic Coaching Course. The course has been designed with no restriction on time for completion, enabling coaches to undertake modules as their individual circumstances allow. There are currently seven sports specific modules and a general principles course to be completed for Level 2. The general principles course is designed to improve coaches skills and knowledge while also addressing strategies of instruction, essential coaching skills of planning, management, safety, learning and teaching processes.

All accredited Calisthenics coaches in Australia were invited to participate anonymously and comment on their perceptions and reasons for, or against, commencing the Level 2 program. The major aims were to discover what coaches enjoy about Level 2 and to understand the reasons why a large number of Level 1 coaches have not commenced the Level 2 program. The survey was developed by the ACFCC committee and was conducted in 2005. It consisted of 18 questions covering the major topics of: demographics about the coach, Level 2 coaching history, perceptions on Level 2, reasons preventing commencement of Level 2 and what changes could be made to the Level 2 coaching program.

Surveys were sent out to all of the currently registered coaches in 2005 in Australia. Of the 1027 surveys sent out, 208 completed surveys were returned and analysed. This demonstrated a 20% response rate and all results and comments in this report are from the 208 coaches that responded. Results were tabulated and means were derived and graphed as percentages or number of coaches. Comments were categorised and generalised as the perception of coaches' comments.

RESULTS

A total of 208 surveys were returned from across the nation and Figure 1 demonstrates the demographics of the coaches who responded to the survey. Calisthenics is conducted in all states except Tasmania and coaching numbers differ considerably in all states with Victoria having the majority of coaches and 54% of the respondents to this survey came from Victoria.

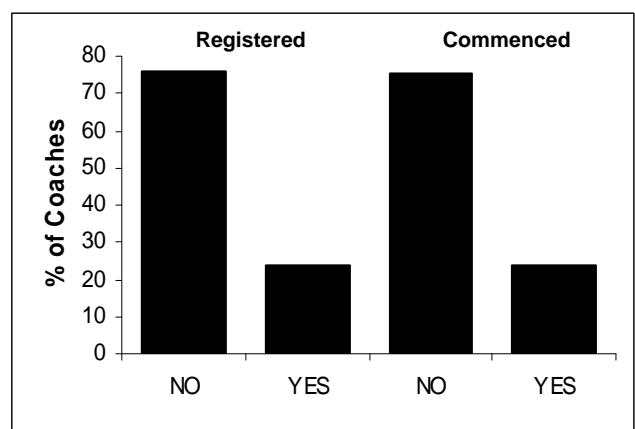
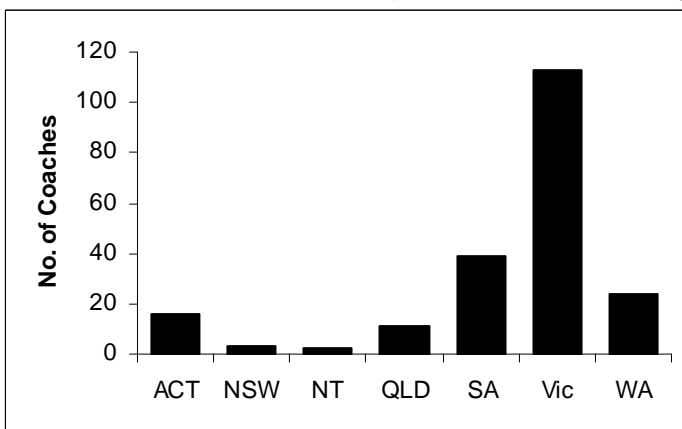


Figure 1: Demographics of coaches that responded to survey.

Figure 2: Coaches that have registered or commenced Level 2.

Only 24% had registered and commenced to undertake the Level 2 program (Figure 2). Figure 3 demonstrates that nearly 90% of coaches who had registered for Level 2, had completed between one and seven sports specific modules with 35% of coaches completing all seven sports specific modules. That is, only 10% of Level 2 registered coaches had not yet completed a module (i.e. zero modules completed).

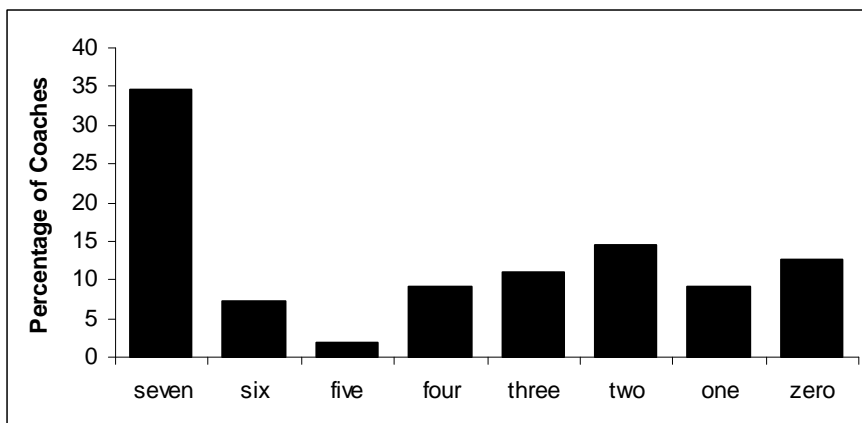


Figure 3: Number of modules completed by registered Level 2 coaches.

The General Principles module consists of course based work covering the theory behind many aspects of coaching. As shown in Figure 4, over 70% had either not commenced or had commenced but not completed the general principles course. A total of 55 coaches have registered for Level 2 but only 16% (9 coaches) of those registered had finished Level 2 as demonstrated in Figure 5. The nine coaches who have completed Level 2 came from South Australia (1), Victoria (6) and Western Australia (2).

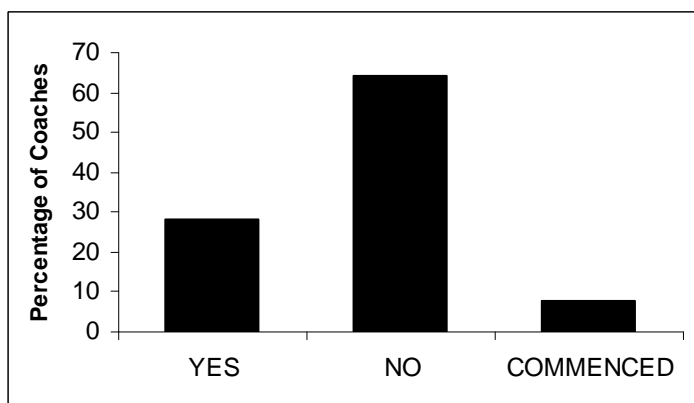


Figure 4: The percentage of Coaches that have undertaken the General Principles Module.

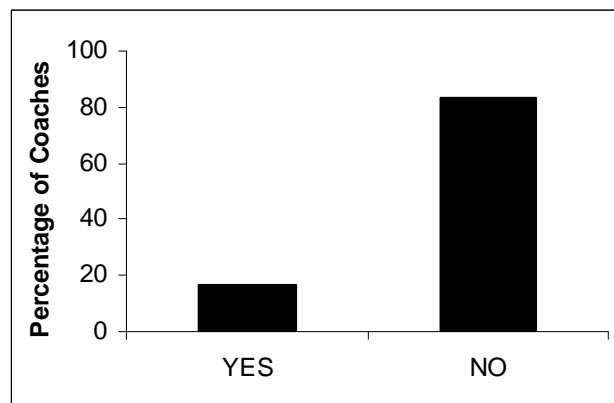


Figure 5: Percentage of registered coaches that have finished Level 2.

The next part of the survey consisted of eight questions and coaches were asked to indicate what they thought about a particular aspect of Level 2 and state whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement. Please refer to Figures 6-13.

- Fig 6. 65% agree or strongly agree that Level 2 is important for calisthenics coaching.
- Fig 7. 57% believe the requirements to commence Level 2 are appropriate, 30% were neutral.
- Fig 8. Majority of coaches believe the length of modules which is four hours is appropriate.
- Fig 9. Over 75% found that the cost of Level 2 is pertinent considering length of modules and expertise of presenters.
- Fig 10. Over 80% were either neutral, agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that availability of seminars precludes them from participating.
- Fig 11. Holding modules at the ACF nationals was not necessarily the best time to hold Level 2 sports specific modules as 23% disagreed and 32% were neutral.
- Fig 12. The outcome of whether Level 2 takes too long to complete was overall neutral with some agreeing and some disagreeing.
- Fig 13. Surprisingly 38% are not likely to commence the Level 2 coaching program.

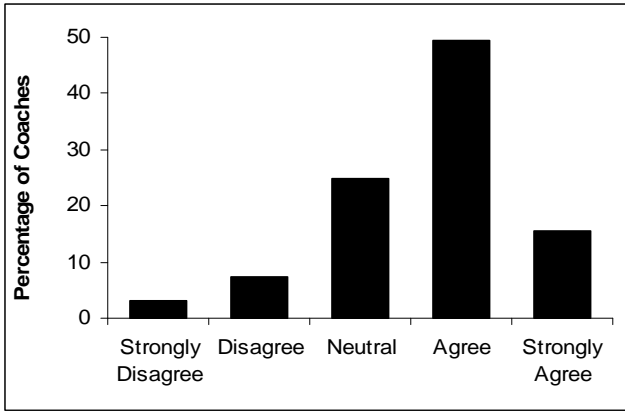


Figure 6: Level 2 is an important part of Calisthenic Coach Education.

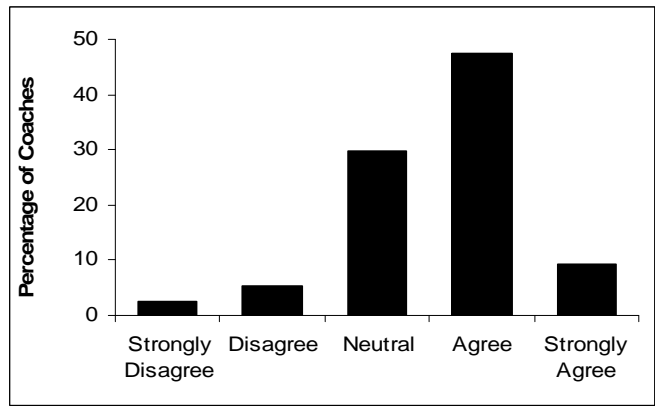


Figure 7: Level 2 requirements are appropriate for this standard of Coach Education.

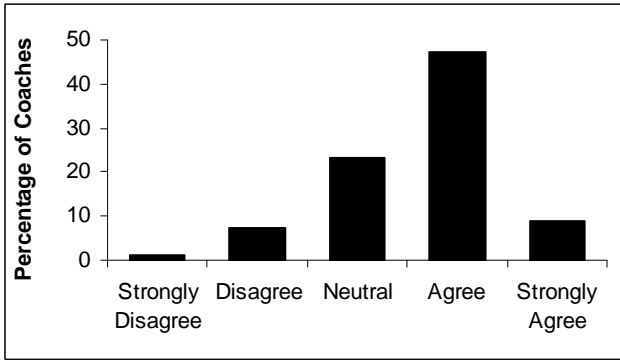


Figure 8: Time required to complete individual modules is appropriate (approx 3-4 hours per module).

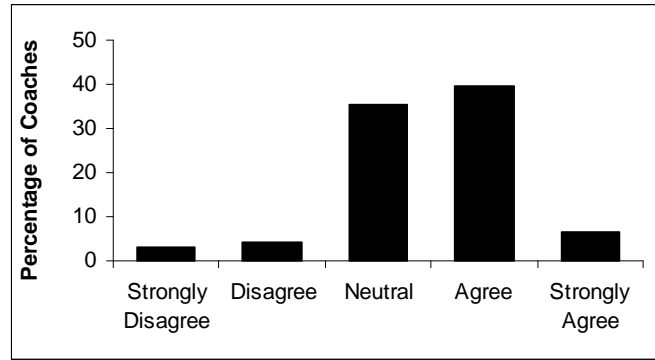


Figure 9: The Cost of Level 2 is pertinent considering length of modules and expertise of presenters.

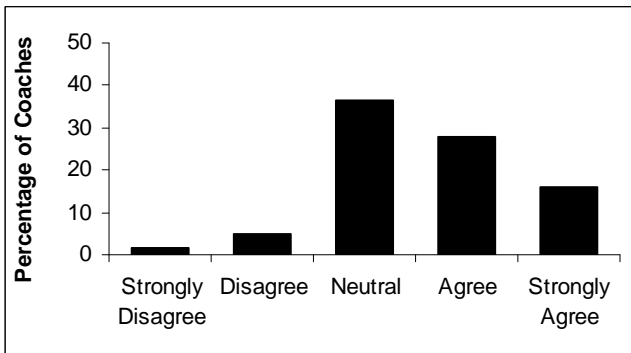


Figure 10: The availability of modules often precludes participation

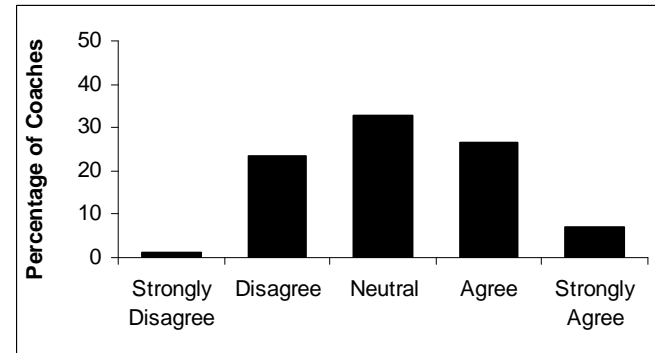


Figure 11: The timing of Level 2 modules with the ACF National Championships provides the best access for coaches.

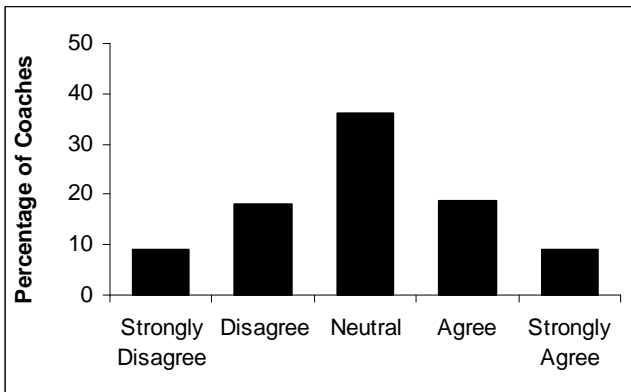


Figure 12: Level 2 takes too long to complete

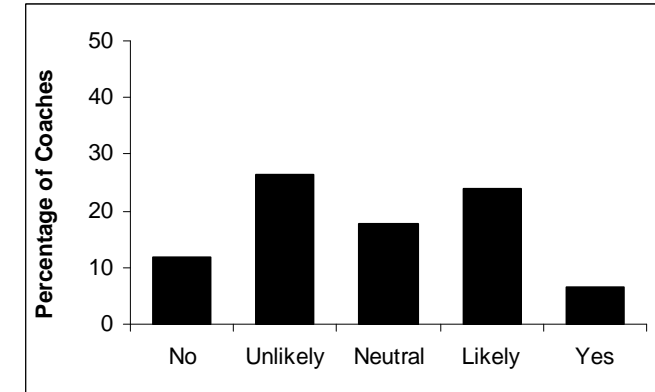


Figure 13: How likely are to you commence Level 2?

Coaches were asked if they didn't intend to participate in Level 2 to explain why and various reasons were given. The reasons were categorised and generalised for the basis of this report but the overall issue remains the same. Some of the main reasons were time, cost, family and work commitments. Nine percent of coaches felt that they would undertake Level 2 in the future. Twelve coaches felt the Level 1 course was adequate and therefore felt no need to complete Level 2. Several coaches stated that Level 2 is not compulsory and that there was no incentive to complete Level 2 and some coaches felt there were no benefits. Ten coaches were retiring from coaching or felt that they undertook different aspects of calisthenics coaching including recreational or solo coaching and that Level 2 wasn't appropriate to them.

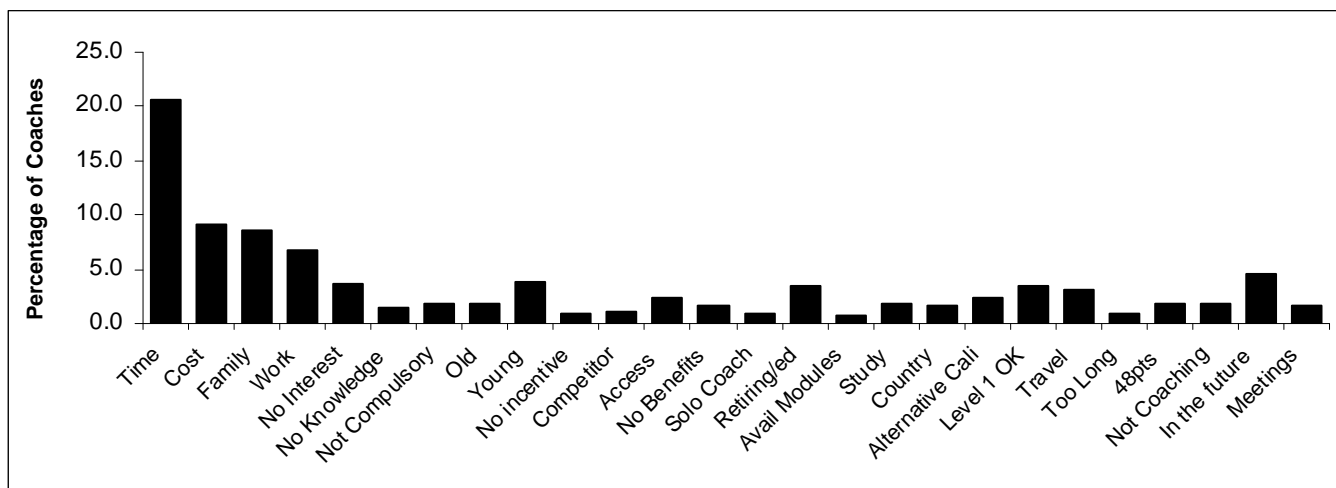


Figure 14: Reasons preventing commencing Level 2 Coaching program.

Several suggestions were made in regards to what changes could be made for Level 2. One of the main factors reported was that there wasn't enough information about the requirements of Level 2 and what it entails. Some coaches wanted more modules run locally and didn't want to travel interstate. Accessibility of modules and more notification and advertising of modules was required so coaches would be able to attend them and this was an important factor that they wanted changed. It was also suggested to conduct Level 2 over a weekend or two.

Some other general points noted were that there was no incentive to undertake Level 2 or that they wanted more recognition for being a Level 2 coach. Several coaches believed four years was too long to wait to commence Level 2. A suggestion of completing Level 2 by Distance Ed was made. Some coaches stated that the general principles course wasn't relevant to calisthenics, calisthenics presenters were needed and that it was too much to undertake. The number of update points required was indicated as a point to change. Fourteen coaches would not change anything about Level 2 and seemed happy with the current course.

Coaches were also asked to comment on all aspects of Coach Education. Many points were made and are too extensive to list here but comments will be circulated to the ACFCC committee to assist with future decisions about the courses. There always appear to be the most common factors of time and money for various reasons. The cadet course provides the starting point for our coach education and it was suggested to provide supervising coaches with a copy of the course notes. The Level 1 course received many comments relating to many aspects of the course and this will be looked at by the ACFCC. Some were inspired by the presenters, modules and the ability to meet other coaches and thought the content and the update seminars were sufficient for their coach training. The Level 2 course provided lots of discussion. Some coaches believed it should be compulsory for state team coaches or ambitious or high division coaches, whereas others did not. The general principles course was deemed to be either too long or not relevant to Calisthenics coaches according to some coaches.

Discussion:

This survey has provided a great insight and a lot of information regarding coaches' perception of Level 2 and reasons why they have not commenced Level 2 training. The main outcomes were that time and money are the major factors for not commencing Level 2. Other important factors included not enough information regarding Level 2 and that the General Principles course contained information that was not relevant to calisthenics. Many factors were given but time appeared to be the most prominent cause for not commencing Level 2 along with cost, family and work commitments.

The major aims of the survey were met and it was found that the majority of coaches thought that the length of the modules and the requirements for commencing Level 2 are appropriate. The majority of coaches believe that the cost is appropriate considering the length of modules and expertise of presenters however cost of Level 2 is one of the main deterrents for undertaking Level 2. Several coaches would not change anything about the Level 2 course. It was also found that 65% of coaches believe that Level 2 is important to coaching however this has not influenced their decision to commence Level 2.

There was a lot of feedback on why coaches are not undertaking Level 2 and apart from the main issues of time, money, family and work commitments there were several common themes: not enough information, no incentive or recognition, the General Principles course is too long or not suited to calisthenics and the availability of modules.

The information about requirements for Level 2 is inadequate according to many coaches and this is currently being rectified. The coaching part of the ACF website will include the overview and requirements of Level 2. Several documents will be available for perusal including the Level 2 update sheet and will contain all the information relating to Level 2. Information can also be sought from coaches' current Level 2 state co-ordinator.

Several coaches believed there was no incentive or benefit from achieving Level 2. However, Level 2 forms the ongoing professional development that is required for coaches to excel and master their skill. The benefits of Level 2 are greater coaching strategies and improvement of individual skills including clubs, rods, and dance. Communication is enhanced and can be the difference in how a coach speaks and handles a class and therefore ensures a happy and successful team. The incentive or benefit may be that coaches are better equipped with skills and knowledge that will influence their coaching. It was also stated that only state team, higher division or ambitious coaches need to undertake Level 2, however every individual will gain from increased knowledge and skill. Some coaches wanted more recognition for their Level 2 qualification and this can occur through individual clubs and the greater calisthenics community having an increased awareness of what Level 2 is and what skills and knowledge the coach has.

At the time this survey was undertaken, the General Principles course was completed through the ASC and provided a thorough and informative course on all aspects of coaching. Many coaches felt this course was onerous and took too long to complete. Over 70% of coaches have not commenced or completed the general principles course and for 35% of coaches this is the only component required to achieve Level 2 accreditation. The ACFCC has undertaken the task of modifying the current General Principles course to be more related to calisthenics and for it to be an open book module conducted by the ACFCC. Hopefully this will enable more coaches to undertake the General Principles course and complete Level 2. The incentive is also that the calisthenics General Principles course will be cheaper than the original course.

The availability of modules and modules run locally has been a factor for some coaches not being able to complete all the seven sports specific modules. The reason coaches are encouraged to attend modules interstate is to allow for interaction, learning and networking with the wider Calisthenic coach community. For this reason states endeavor to present some modules at the time of major Calisthenic events, e.g. National Championships, when coaches are particularly likely to be traveling. Perhaps one of the reasons that more modules are not run in each state regularly is due to lack of interest and

modules need to be run in a cost effective way to ensure that costs are covered and not increased for the coaches. It was suggested that the entire Level 2 course should be run over a weekend or two. As the Level 2 modules are each four hours long it would entail 16 hours of intense concentration for the completion of four modules. The next ACFCC coaches' conference will endeavour to offer three Level 2 modules over the weekend conference.

The ACFCC continues to update and evaluate all coaching programs. Based on this survey some changes to the Level 2 course have already been implemented and future decisions will be influenced by the outcome of this survey. One of the major changes is that Level 1 coaches can now register for Level 2 after two years of coaching instead of the four year wait previously. Compulsory attendance at Sport & Recreational module as an update seminar has been removed. The General Principles course has been rewritten by calisthenics coaches to ensure its relevance and that it covers all aspects of calisthenics coaching. The General Principles course will be available as an open book format and will be a fantastic module for coaches to complete. The Level 2 update sheet was revised in 2006 and ensures it is similar to attain points as Level 1.

It appears that there are many myths and ill conceived truths or incorrect information regarding Level 2. Some truths about the common myths are that:

- There is no time limit to complete Level 2.
- Level 2 requires 48 points in a four year accreditation cycle however more points are awarded for each update compared with the Level 1 update points- i.e. L1 coach of one section- 2pts, L2 coach of one section- 4pts.
- Level 2 is not very costly; each four hour module costs \$55 nationally. This is a cost effective seminar of \$13.75/hour.
- Candidates need not travel interstate to complete the modules. As this is a national program, all states are able to offer each module and coaches are able to attend if they so desire. However if each state offers and rotates Level 2 modules all could be completed within several years.

In summary the Level 2 course is adequate and appropriate according to the respondents of the survey however many factors influence coaches to undertake and complete the course. Hopefully the results of this survey and this report will influence coaches' perceptions and help them understand more about Level 2.

Written by
Renaë Gow
ACFCC Victorian Delegate

Acknowledgements:

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Appendix 1: Other Reasons Preventing Coaches Commencing L2 or Why they have not commenced L2

Not registered	Other involvement in calisthenics
In the future- no hurry	Assists
Not national coach	Solo Coach
Left the sport	Recreational
GP too big	Adjudicating
Too complicated	Examining
	Cali
Long-term coach	Skills
No internet	Administration
Not Coaching	
L1 updates extra	
Undecided	
High level	
L1 experience first	
Runs whole club	

Appendix 2: Minor Suggestions for changes to the Level 2 course

Availability	Be able to do all modules in own state
Wants less cali	More recognition for completing
GP too much	Modules early in year before comps
Incentives-free courses, services tech guides	Annual information brochure
Zoned modules	If free
2 whole day seminars/year	More options of modules & dates/year
Only compulsory for state team coach	Modules at night- not weekends
If compulsory for examiners	L1 updates and years of experience = L2
Have to relinquish other areas of involvement in cali	2 modules in a day
Modules presented in remote areas	More detailed info about modules
No levels for girls coaches adjudicators	Modules closer to her home
Fewer modules OR choice of modules	Shorten L2 and create L3
GP presented at weekends by cali presenters	Points for background and work
Only a hobby sport	Benefits as a coach
Emphasis on rotation items and basic skills	Solo coach only
One module replaces one meeting requirement	Only if compulsory
Replace/combine meeting with module	Complete in one day
Getting L2 info on completion of L1	Consideration for age
Benefits on completion - bonus update points	Wider RPL
Currently no assessment-? Proof of improvement	
Info provided is daunting-deterrent for lower grade coaches	

Appendix 3: General Comments made regarding all aspects of Coach Education

Time	Too time consuming if limited involvement sought
Cost	Coaching is very expensive
Cadet	Provide supervising coaches with Cadet Course notes
Level 1	L1 gets boring being all weekend Hobby-L1 OK L1 training with others/meeting exp coaches great for rural coaches Enjoy having I/S presenters L1-inspiring Little co-ordination of L1 updates at national level 40 hours hard working with Tinies L1 needs more emphasis on timing, lighting, etiquette L1 not intense enough L1 & updates sufficient
Level 2	Prefer Dist Ed for L2-not I/S Why can't any L1 coach attend L2 modules- why 4 year wait L2 should be compulsory for State Team coach L2 should not be compulsory for State Team coach Only ambitious coaches want more than L1 L2 should only be compulsory for all or for high divisions GP time hard to find No improvement in coach standard with L2 Happy to do L2 modules but not GP-time & cost Not all coaches aspire to L2 Can't travel Interstate-student Need more frequent modules Huge cost but OK over years Too long a process in ACT What are the benefits & recognition for L2 coaches L2 informative, interesting & relevant Interstate participation great Personal develop only benefit of L2 L2 should not be compulsory-cost L2 modules I/S very costly Don't go I/S for L2 modules-wait for next time L2 should offer more for exp coaches Current L2 should be L1 Ed essential-no time for L2 Would quit if L2 compulsory L2 important but need to ensure affordable & time available L2 great-only young singles can travel I/S L2 taking longer-cancelled modules Important to keep learning-one L2/yr not always possible L2 great-GP not all relevant Is cost & length of L2GP necessary L2 not required when just starting coaching L2 less full-on-more would do it L2 necessary but huge time commitment Had incorrect info L2 update pts L2 GP in 1st 4 yrs as L1 then move into modules Modules need to be relevant to cali More presenters needed for WA L2 expensive for hobby coaches Limited opportunities for L2 modules with small numbers