

Tuesday, 15 September 2026

The Sydney Swans are Australia's most widely supported AFL club for a record 21 straight years

The Sydney Swans have topped the annual Roy Morgan AFL supporter ladder for a 21st straight year with 1,131,000 supporters – although this is down a large 166,000 (-12.8%) on a year ago.

However, the **Swans** are still over 60,000 ahead of Back-to-Back Premier the **Brisbane Lions** with 1,065,000 supporters – following a competition leading increase of 111,000 (+11.6%) on a year ago according to the 2026 annual Roy Morgan AFL club supporters survey.

Both the **Brisbane Lions** and **Sydney Swans** are set to play in Preliminary Finals this weekend for the chance to play off in this year's AFL Grand Final.

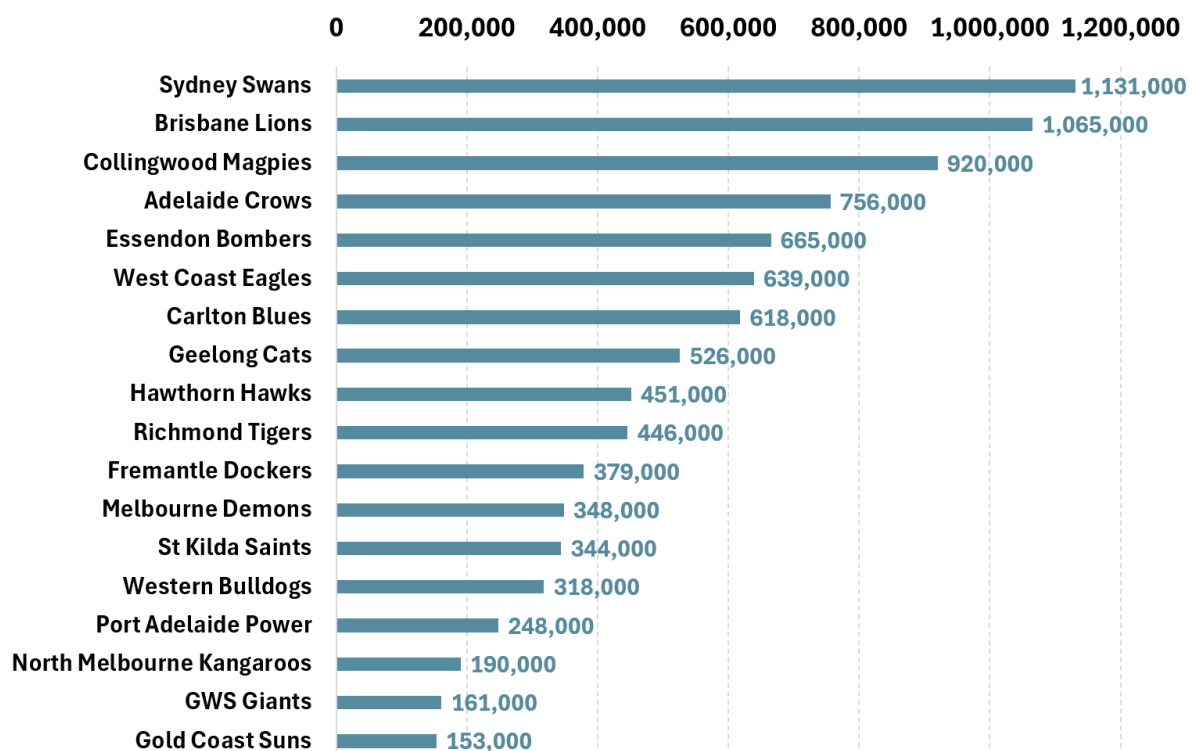
Beaten Wildcard Finalist **Collingwood** is the most widely supported Victorian club with 920,000 supporters, an increase of 47,000 (+5.4%) on a year ago ahead of last year's 'Minor Premier' the **Adelaide Crows** with 756,000 supporters, up 18,000 (+2.4%) on a year ago.

In fifth spot is traditional Victorian powerhouse, and this year's Wooden Spooners, **Essendon** with 665,000 supporters, just ahead of the **West Coast Eagles** with 639,000 supporters, **Carlton** with 618,000 supporters, and beaten Semi-Finalist the **Geelong Cats** with 526,000 supporters.

The **Cats** are one place in front of the team another team playing off in a Preliminary Final this weekend, **Hawthorn**, with 451,000 supporters, the most successful club of the last decade **Richmond** with 446,000 supporters, and this year's Minor Premier the **Fremantle Dockers** with 379,000 supporters.

There were three other clubs to increase their support over the last year – this year's surprise packets **Melbourne**, with the largest percentage increase of any club in the league with 348,000 supporters, following an increase of 58,000 (+20%) on a year ago, **North Melbourne** with 190,000 supporters after an increase of 6,000 (+3.2%), and the **Gold Coast Suns** with 153,000 supporters, up 13,000 (+8.9%).

AFL Club Supporter Ladder 2026



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source, July 2025 - June 2026, n=59,959. **Base:** Australians 14+.

9.43 million Australians now support an AFL club, and 9.31 million watch AFL matches on TV

The AFL supporter base has continued to consolidate in the last few years and well over 9 million Australians throughout each of the last four years, equivalent to over 40% of Australians, now support an AFL club – 9,432,000 supporters, up over 480,000 (+5.5%) compared to 2022.

In addition, there are 9,307,000 Australians who watched at least one AFL match on TV, up over 1.5 million (+20.3%) compared to 2022.

Julian McCrann, Industry Communications Director, Roy Morgan, says the Sydney Swans have topped the annual Roy Morgan AFL Supporter Ladder for a record 21st straight year:

*“The **Sydney Swans**, who this week host a Preliminary Final as the highest placed qualifier on Friday night, are the most supported AFL club with 1,131,000 supporters, although this is down 166,000 on a year ago after the club missed the finals in 2025 for the first time in half a decade.*

*“However, the **Swans** quickly bounced back this year to finish second on the ladder with 18 wins and only five losses, just behind ‘Minor Premier’ **Fremantle** on 19 wins. Despite a late season scandal involving several star players, the **Swans** won their Qualifying Final against defending Premier the **Brisbane Lions** – easily the second most supported club with 1,065,000 supporters, and up an impressive 111,000 (+11.6%) on a year ago following back-to-back Premierships in 2024 and 2025.*

*“For the fourth straight year **Collingwood** are the most widely supported Victorian club with 920,000 supporters, up 47,000 (+5.4%) on a year ago and well ahead of 2025 ‘Minor Premier’ the **Adelaide Crows** with 756,000 supporters following an increase of 18,000 (+2.4%) on a year ago.*

*“Despite an awful year on the field in which the club won their first ‘Wooden Spoon’ while playing with a full list of players since 1933, **Essendon** are the fifth most widely supported AFL club with 665,000 supporters, although down significantly on a year ago, just ahead of last year’s ‘Wooden Spooners’ the **West Coast Eagles** with 639,000 supporters.*

*“There were three other clubs to increase support led by **Melbourne** with 348,000 supporters and the largest percentage increase of any club on a year ago, up 58,000 (+20%). In addition, there was an increase in supporters for **North Melbourne** – which recorded the most wins for seven years and had 190,000 supporters, up 6,000 (+3.2%), and the **Gold Coast Suns** with 153,000 supporters, up 13,000 (+8.9%) on a year ago after the club notched its first ever finals win in 2025.*

“Australia has had a challenging decade so far with a once-in-a-century pandemic from 2020-22 followed by a bout of high inflation and cost-of-living concerns throughout the last few years from 2022-2026. However, the AFL has experienced record crowds and attendances post-pandemic.

“Combined AFL crowds in [Seasons 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026 have all exceeded 8 million](#) – all more than 500,000 higher than the pre-pandemic record of 7,594,302 attendees in 2018. This year is on track for a total attendance of over 8.5 million and an average attendance of over 39,000 – both would be new record highs, with average attendance set to beat the longstanding record of 38,541 set over 15 years ago in 2010 – and these figures are reflected in the Roy Morgan data.

“Overall support for an AFL club has now been well above 9 million in each of the last three years (averaging 9,708,000) – significantly higher than support levels during the pandemic which were below 9 million. In addition, well over 9 million Australians are watching the AFL on TV, at least occasionally, averaging 9,161,000 over the last three years – significantly higher than before.”

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan’s AFL Supporter profiles and other Sporting profiles data, please contact:

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Compiled with data from Roy Morgan's Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 60,000 respondents per annum), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom. A full-service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan has over 80 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2