



**HEALTHIER, LONGER,
BETTER LIVES**



RETURN ON THE DOWERIN LEGEND, PRESENTED BY AIA

Dowerin, Western Australia – AIA Australia and The Dowerin Football Club are thrilled to announce a partnership that will see one of the greatest AFL footballers of all time return to his hometown club for a special one-game appearance.

Lance “Buddy” Franklin, will pull on the boots for the Dowerin Tigers when they take on Gingin in Round 1 of the Mortlock Football League. The 39-year-old who played 354 games for Hawthorn and Sydney, is expected to draw a massive crowd.

The highly anticipated match will mark a rare return to grassroots footy for the AFL legend, who won two premierships and 8-All Australian blazers, with the Dowerin community preparing to welcome one of its most famous exports back to the local oval.

The event will also serve as the centrepiece of Dowerin Football Club’s major fundraising drive to install new lighting at their oval, helping support the future of football and community sport in the region.

“Growing up in Dowerin, the footy club was a huge part of the community, so it’s pretty special to be able to come back and pull on the jumper again,” shared Buddy.

“I’m looking forward to getting out there with the boys and helping the club raise money for their facilities.”

Adding to the excitement, former Adelaide Crows and St Kilda player Tom Lee will also take the field for Dowerin in this historic match, while Brownlow Medallist and Hawthorn Premiership Player, Shane Crawford, will also be part of the fun.

Further details about the Round 1 clash will be announced in the coming weeks.

ENDS

EVENT DETAILS:

- **DATE:** Saturday 18th April 2026
- **MATCHES:** Dowerin Tigers vs. Gingin Eagles - Junior and senior football
- **SENIOR AFL TIMES:** Reserves kick off at 12.20 PM and League game at 2:00 PM

KEY MESSAGES:

- This event is the centrepiece of Dowerin FC’s major fundraising drive to install **new lighting at the Dowerin Football oval**
- Tickets can be purchased via <https://returnofthedowerinlegend.eventbrite.com.au>



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- Donations can be made via <https://asf.org.au/campaigns/dowerin-football-club-inc/community-oval-lighting-project>. The club's fundraising target is \$300,000.
- AIA Australia is supporting Buddy's visit to Dowerin because grassroots sport demonstrates the power of community and inspires so many Australians to lead healthier, longer, better lives.

TICKETING & TRANSPORT:

- **Online Only:** Tickets **must** be purchased in advance. There will be **NO gate sales**.
- **Ticket Sales Open:** 12pm WST Monday, 16th March 2026
- **Deadlines:** Ticket sales are capped and will close on **Thursday, 2 April** (unless sold out prior)
- **Bus Transport:** Limited return transport is available from **Cottesloe, Como, Bayswater, and Guildford**

PURCHASE TICKETS HERE: <https://returnofthedowerinlegend.eventbrite.com.au>

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For updates, follow:

[AIA Australia \(Instagram\)](#)

[Dowerin Football Club \(Instagram\)](#)

[The Buddy and Shane Show \(Instagram\)](#)

About AIA Australia

AIA Australia is a leading life insurance specialist with over 50 years' experience and a purpose to make a difference in people's lives. In 2014 the company launched AIA Vitality, a world leading, science-based health and wellbeing program, to the Australian market. In July 2017, AIA and its partners launched AIA's health insurance business, now known as AIA Health Insurance.



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In 2021, Commlnsure Life was integrated into AIA Australia. The lives of more than 3.1 million Australians are protected and enhanced through AIA Australia's unique value proposition of life, health and wellbeing. Our vision is to embrace shared value in championing Australia to be the healthiest and best protected nation in the world.

In pursuit of this, AIA Australia has developed AIA Embrace - a comprehensive wellbeing ecosystem of world-class products, programs and partnerships. These are designed to help customers, partners and the broader community to embrace better health and wellbeing.

In offering a broad range of health and wellbeing services to its customers, partners and broader community, AIA is proudly helping people lead healthier, longer, better lives.

AIA Australia is proud to have become a participant of the UN Global Compact in 2025, joining other like-minded organisations who are committed to supporting the sustainable development goals and ensuring a healthier, happier future for all.

AIA Australia has been recognised with multiple awards, including the ANZIIF Life Insurance Company of the Year (2024, 2023, 2022), GoodCompany Award – Top 40 (2024), Women in Finance Employer of the Year Award (2018, 2019), Super Review's Best Insurer of the Year (2018, 2019), FSC Life Insurance Industry Awards Innovation in Group Life Insurance (2021), Shared Value Awards Organisation of the Year (2020) and Shared Value Project of the Year (2021).

Further information at www.aia.com.au.

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