

BOOST FOR AUSTRALIAN SPORTING GOODS INDUSTRY WITH KOOKABURRA SPORT AND BURLEY-SEKEM TO MERGE.

Two Australian sporting icons today joined forces when Kookaburra Sports and Burley-Sekem announced an agreement to merge.

The move will see the strengthening of the Australian sporting goods and apparel industry with the consolidation of 240 years of experience into one operation. It will also ensure these two pillars of Australian and world sport remain Australian-owned and continue to employ more than 170 Australians in addition to its operations offshore.

Burley-Sekem Managing Director Ed Cunningham said that the merger will see the coming together of two successful companies synonymous with sport in Australia.

"This is an important and exciting day in the long history of Burley-Sekem. We are joining forces with another well-established Australian business that holds the same values and culture as Burley-Sekem. In a few years, the group will have three brands each with more than 100 years of experience in Australian sport, providing a tremendous platform for growth," said Mr Cunningham.

"The merger between the two companies will create a larger, stronger group with complementary skill sets. It's a natural fit with the adding of Kookaburra's global brand in cricket and hockey to our football offering and extensive licensing program."

Kookaburra MD Brett Elliot said that the merger offered exciting opportunities to expand both companies' involvement in Australian sport.

"The synergies between the two companies, historically, culturally and practically, are many. The respective major sports of each company complement each other seasonally, and enhance our business," said Mr Elliot.

"This will allow the entity to not only invest in improving its existing products for consumers and sport, but also expand into new product areas, building on each company's strengths and complementary skills.

"The merger of these two eminent companies ensures that for those two great Australian sports, footy and cricket, there will be balls that remain Australian owned and manufactured."

The iconic brands of the Burley Australian Rules football and the Kookaburra cricket and hockey balls will continue under the merger.

The new entity will retain its current operations bases and the balls will continue to be made in their traditional homes of Perth and Melbourne respectively.

Over the next 12 months, the two companies will develop a transition plan to create a single entity with its existing brands sitting within, that will play a vital role in the Australian sport, with ownership and manufacturing remaining in Australia.

ABOUT BURLEY-SEKEM:

Burley-Sekem's origins trace back to 1907 and today the Burley Football is the official football used in the WAFL and SANFL, along with many community leagues across Australia. Burley also holds an AFL license for supporter footballs.

It's Sekem apparel division stretches back to 1923 and has a long history across Australian sport. More recently it has become a leading distributor of Licensed Apparel and Accessories. It is a major licensing partner of the AFL, in addition to license agreements with the NRL, State of Origin, Australian Open, the Socceroos, A-League, the Wallabies and New Zealand Rugby Union.

ABOUT KOOKABURRA SPORT

Kookaburra Sport was started in 1890 by AG Thompson and today is still owned by the Thompson family.

It produces the global ball of choice for both cricket and hockey. Its cricket ball is used for Test cricket in the majority of Test playing nations and is used for all ODI and T20 internationals. It is also the ball of choice for domestic T20 competitions such as the IPL and the BBL.

Kookaburra have pioneered the white and pink cricket ball through its world-leading research and development department. It is the ball of choice for community cricket across Australia and is a supporter and sponsor of more than 100 grassroots leagues.

Kookaburra's hockey ball has been used in Olympic and Commonwealth Games for more than 30 years.

Kookaburra's extensive range of sporting equipment, protective gear and teamwear across both sports is endorsed by some of the world's leading players in both cricket and hockey.