

The cover features a vertical color gradient from light green at the top to dark blue at the bottom. A white horizontal band is centered, containing the title. Below the band, the background consists of overlapping, semi-transparent wavy shapes in various shades of blue and green, creating a dynamic, layered effect. A dark blue vertical bar runs along the left edge of the page.

Executive Overview



The announcement by the Minister for Sport of the terms of reference for the Independent Sport Panel (the Panel) was a recognition by Government that it is now time to review all aspects of sport in Australia and to chart a new direction.

The terms of reference are very broad. The Panel consulted widely and all relevant stakeholders were given the opportunity to participate. In all, the Panel met with or received submissions from over 650 organisations or individuals. Many issues were raised, many problems identified and many suggestions were provided. It is clear that there is much to be done.

It is apparent that while significant gains were achieved in the way in which elite sport was administered post the 1976 Olympics, the world has changed. There is a need to address our goals and aspirations at both the elite and participatory level, taking account of economic and demographic changes, immigration and resultant new cultures, population shifts—rural to urban, and the changing nature of sport itself and physical activity.

As the terms of reference are broad and noting the inclusion of preventative health issues, the Panel has included within the definition of sport, physical activity in a broad sense.

The Panel formed the view that it is not possible to address all of, and make recommendations about, the multitude of issues that have been presented. It believes there are a limited number of fundamental issues, which if addressed, will make a difference and provide the basis to ensure the Australian sporting system remains prepared for future challenges at both the elite and community levels.

There are eight chapters as part of this executive overview. Each chapter deals with a fundamental issue, contains a summary of what needs to be addressed and provides recommendations for going forward.

The recommendations address the 'must do' initiatives and are interdependent in the sense that chapters may include issues relating to continuing success at the elite or participatory level, social inclusion, preventative health, pathways or funding.

The Panel believes that these matters need to be addressed if:

- Australia is to continue to be successful at the elite level.
- All Australians are able to participate in their sport(s) of choice.
- The health and wellbeing of our population is improved.

The Panel believes that if the right structure and governance is put in place, there is every chance for a successful future for Australian sport. Without the right structure and governance, success will not result.

The eight chapters are:

- Defining our National Sports Vision
- Reforming the Australian Sports Commission to Lead the Sports Systems
- Merging our Institutes of Sport
- Building the Capacity of our National Sporting Organisations
- Putting Sport and Physical Activity Back into Education
- Building Community Sport with People and Places
- Ensuring Australia's Sport System is Open to All
- Sustaining the Funding Base for Sport.

There is a summary after chapter eight listing all of the recommendations.

The part of the report entitled '*Assessment and Findings*' provides more details of the information considered by the Panel, the assessments made and the findings.

The information in '*Assessment and Findings*' contains many matters raised for future consideration. It is recognised that it is inappropriate to believe one size fits all. Accordingly, there will need to be judgement applied in particular circumstances in addressing these matters by those charged with the responsibility for implementation.

It has become clear to the Panel and confirmed by many submissions, that without implementing these changes, Australia will fall further behind in our standing in elite sport: the health and wellbeing agenda for our population will not be progressed to the extent it should, and the general level of participation in sport and physical activity will continue its downward spiral.

The Panel places on record its thanks and appreciation of the support received from the Sports Branch of the Department of Health and Ageing.