



Submission to Independent Sport Panel on behalf of ACT Sport and Recreation Industry



1. Ensure Australia's Continued Elite Sporting Success

A. Identify any areas of duplication within Australia's sporting system and recommend ways to build a more efficient system.

Current situation and rationale for change;

- Potential duplication and limited coordination in the HP system between AIS, SIS/SIS, Regional Academies, Centres of Excellence and NSO/SSO HP Programs
- Limited engagement with University sport and what it can offer
- Athletes need options in order to obtain the best possible fit for their coaching, sporting, social, educational and cultural needs (particularly senior athletes if they are to be retained)– however, the AIS/SIS/SAS network is not adequately resourced or sufficiently extensive.
- There are also unnecessary obstacles within the sport networks which restrict athletes and coaches from provision of the appropriate support beyond jurisdictional boundaries.
- There is no clearly defined measure or stated national objective with regard to “sporting success” in elite performance. With no clear targets it is not possible to develop and implement the necessary plans or to determine necessary levels of resourcing for implementation purposes.

Recommendations for change;

- Clearly define measure or stated national objective with regard to sporting success.
- Ensure a more coordinated and efficient leadership through national bodies (AIS/NSO HP) with state bodies (SIS/SAS, state and regional academies, and club based centres of excellence and SSO high performance programs) in administration, program management, playing and coaching styles etc – through a national approach to the developmental pathways.
- Engage university sport at the appropriate tier in the HP pathway to provide sports science, research, sports management, coaching education, facilities, talent ID and development.
- Consolidate national funding sources to ensure athletes are supported in the optimal environment.

B. Examine the relationship between the ASC, AIS, State and Territory Institutes, academies of sport and regional institutes and how this relationship could deliver better athlete pathways

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- There is no clarity as to the overarching “industry leader” of our high performance system.

- Many NSO's, however do not have the quality of high performance leadership necessary to effectively develop and implement their national pathways plans. In addition, many national pathways plans are developed and negotiated by NSO's to cater for each of the AIS / SIS / SAS needs in order to secure their respective support.
- Potential duplication and disconnect in administration, program management, playing and coaching styles etc.

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Establish high performance director positions for the targeted sports as a condition of ASC funding.
- Establish a mechanism at the COAG level to provide for an overarching treaty, agreement, or agency that clearly establishes the national leadership structure for Australian Sport. This mechanism should secure and coordinate ongoing national (federal and state) financial support and clarify the roles and responsibilities of various bodies, including but not limited to the ASC, AIS, State and Territory Institutes, AOC and APC.
- Develop a unitary model for the national high performance system with the AIS at the head and with state bodies as the 'branch offices' and the NSO's HP programs and models to work with the AIS

C. Recommend opportunities to ensure maximum returns from talent identification programs

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- The current National Talent Identification (NTID) Program, does not acknowledge or support existing talent in the traditional sport pathway; does not align with the current elite athlete programs, and in many cases is not aligned with the NSO or SSO pathways and programs.
- The NTID program does not pay significant attention to the systemic development needs of athletes. The major focus is to hot house, talent transfer or fast track athletes not formally engaged in elite sport programs. This does not recognise that a significantly greater return on investment could be obtained by a more comprehensive resourcing of the developmental athlete already engaged in the system.
- A critical success factor in developing young athletes to become part of Australia's international success is the quality and quantity of coaching they receive at ALL levels of the athlete development pathway. It is not sufficient to rely upon very highly qualified coaches at the elite end of the pathway.
- There is need for a holistic approach to TID rather than individual sports, each carrying out talent searches and duplicating efforts.

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Maintain current initiatives but ensure they are fully aligned and integrated with the current network through NSO, SSO and State and Regional Academies of Sport.
- Establish a network of National Talent Development Centre's in regional and metropolitan areas that operate under the overall direction of the respective SIS/SAS. These Centre's should identify talent across a range of sports, support the generic athletic development of talented younger athletes (11 –15years); and prepare younger athletes more appropriately for progression into a talented sports programs.
- Examine the most appropriate structure and resource requirement to reinvigorate the focus on coaching, establishing a national pool of funds specifically to allow for the employment and retention of coaches at both elite and developmental levels.

▪ 2. Better place sport and physical activity as a key component of the Government's preventative health approach

A: Examine Government frameworks to ensure an on-going focus on grassroots and community sport and physical activity.

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- Health agenda needs stronger focus on health promotion and preventative health
- Need to define sport and its scope
- Lack of ownership & connection of play, recreation –through to sport pathway at grass roots level
- Local government and service providers not recognised yet provide 95% of all facilities at this level, many of which are in a poor state and need investment.
- Sport focused on the delivery of “core business” rather than the provision of sport-based physical activity and recreation.
- Lack of link between medical, health and community models of health and wellbeing
- School and community sport models need to be integrated

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Change the ASC Act scope to include physical activity, recreation and sport. (The definition for ‘sport’ should be explained and based on the ‘European Charter for Sport’).
- Health agenda to be used as driver for investment in physical activity, community recreation and sport participation
- Federal Government should recognise the role of local government and service providers, providing funding, resources and facility investment accordingly.
- Health grants funding to be aligned with health and wellbeing outcomes delivered through sport and recreation and fund accordingly.
- Commonwealth facility investment needed for community facilities, including “community hubs”, the allocation of funds/planning better coordinated with State/Local governments.

B. Examine Government programs to increase participation rates in sport and physical activity, including analysis of existing programs.

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- Sports clubs may not have the capacity or understanding to focus on health and physical activity – others may be better equipped.
- The level of change needs to be at a community level with less structure and more opportunities
- Recreational providers already present excellent programs but need greater recognition and resourcing
- Need to target groups in the community who “need more support” to become active
- AASC needs to be reviewed - is not sustainable, being too resource intensive and its outcomes are questionable in some regions where it is reliant on the out-of-school hours care to engage access.

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Within a broad scope of sport, recreation and physical activity, undertake a SCORS coordinated audit of all programs being delivered, map pathways and entry points and identify groups who need additional support (CALD, etc)
- Examine the barriers that exist for sporting organizations being willing to expand their activities to non-core methods/markets.
- Review AASC approach, examining the return on investment and possible means of creating a more inclusive model

- Key focus to be on community physical activity, opening up schools for greater community use outside of school hours – this issue needs to be on the Federal Ed. Minister's agenda
- Review junior sport models and delivery to better focus on fundamental motor skills through physical activity/play as a means to facilitate increased sports development.

C. Identify and recommend opportunities to break down barriers to participation at junior, adult and senior ages with a view to making it simpler and easier for Australians to participate in the sport or physical activity of their choice, including for women, the disabled and Indigenous people.

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- Many sports may require modification to encourage participation
- Some traditional sporting environments may intimidate certain community segments.
- Duplication for juniors between schools and junior programs in sport and rep teams
- Work place recreation opportunities are limited
- Many sports are not cognisant/willing to provide activities/services for participants and differing stages of their participatory lifecycle (eg beginner, recreation, veteran)

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Consider the need to incentivize/resource the greater modification of existing "sports" to better embrace all facets of the participatory lifecycle, not only at the junior level.
- Reduce 'red tape' to encourage greater participation in sport and physical activity.
- Support the exploration of mechanisms to engage more public and private workplaces in sport, recreation and physical activity as part of their corporate culture
- Flexibility of Commonwealth funding to better target specific audience groups who may 'need additional support'.
- Invest in facility partnerships with State/Local governments that make facilities more accessible;
 - Transport, design & development, more friendly environments; and
 - Development of community hubs and not stand-alone style sports facilities.

D: Recommend strategies to increase the effectiveness of the promotion of sport by the Federal Government to better communicate positive health and activity messages to the broader community.

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- Messages often are negative and contradict each other.
- Individual sports often sending out individual messages and communications campaigns.
- ASC – A Case for Sport (SBS -2006) paves way for single message.
- ASC – Communications Strategy (D.Pembroke – 2008) needs to be activated and shared in industry.
- Funding for health peak bodies is isolated from sport and recreation industry - sport not on health agenda and health not on sports agenda in Australia.

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Establish mechanisms at the COAG level to improve the recognition of the health-related benefits of sport, recreation and physical activity to better engage involvement of sport and recreation with the health sector
- Need to have a national body that is driving the recreation agenda that is integrated with sport.
- Existing communications strategy needs to be activated.
- Better promotion of the evidence base linking sport, recreation and physical activity with health benefits.

3. Strengthen Pathways from Junior Sport to Grassroots Community Sport Right through to Elite & Professional Sport

A: Examine the capacity of the system to ensure optimal and efficient delivery of the athlete and coach pathway for any given sport.

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- Transition and retention of juniors into the senior ranks of sport is a challenge.
- Recruitment of coaches and officials problems for some sports and in some areas.
- Capacity of the system is declining due to falling volunteer base
- Improvement of incentives for coaches and officials needed.

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Increase awareness of pathways and progressions with less emphasis purely on elite sport.
- Officials and coaches courses to be more accessible, with greater investment in successful on-line delivery models
- Volunteer strategy and campaign needed that highlights the benefits of volunteer involvement, encourages corporate empathy for volunteer activities and re-invigorates volunteerism in sport.

B: Examine how relationships between the Commonwealth Government and National Sporting Organisations, State Sporting Organisations and Australia's peak representative bodies at key multi-sports competitions may be strengthened to deliver better performance outcomes.

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- Election changes in government breaks down relationships and often results in mixed messages and decision stale-mates for a period of time.
- Organisations at all levels operate independently without potential strategic or operational links.
- Federations structure causing problems.
- Little recognition of local government and service providers who are outside present sport-focused structure.

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Need to have a national body that is driving the recreation agenda and is integrated with sport.
- Sports encouraged to review governance models to optimise pathways and communication.

4. Maintain Australia's Cutting Edge Approach to Sport Science, Research & Technology

A. Examine the capacity of the system to ensure provision of cutting edge technology, innovation, sport science, sports medicine, applied research to underpin sport performance and development, including ways to maintain Australia's position a leader in anti-doping.

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- There is need to broaden the capacity for research, science and technology and assist sport in gaining access to funding from other government agencies and private sources
- Competitor countries with bigger budgets have fuelled a brain drain from Australian research centres,
- Many stakeholders have conflicting expectations, discouraging collaboration - specifically the tension between a sport seeking to build a competitive advantage versus commercially-focused entity/industry that is keen to commercialise the product or idea as soon as possible
- Limited resources notably research time and a lack of funding support during research phase
- A generally fragmented approach to developing and managing projects

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Broaden the capacity for research, science and technology by building on the relationships with partners such as CSIRO and the university sector.
- Assist sport in gaining access to funding from other government agencies and private sources for research and technical development

B. Examine the current partnerships in place within these fields and recommend any potential partnerships.

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- Some current partnerships are in place with government agencies such as CSIRO and individual universities
- *There needs to be greater integration between*
 - Universities and Research Organisations
 - Industry/SME's
 - Facilitators – Business ACT, AusIndustry, Australian Institute of Commercialisation
 - AIS

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Broaden the capacity for research, science and technology by building on the relationships with partners such as CSIRO and the university sector

5. Identify opportunities to increase and diversify the funding base for sport through corporate sponsorship, media and any recommended reforms, such as enhancing the effectiveness of the Australian Sports Foundation.

Current Situation and Rationale for Change

- Many funding sources, need to be aligned with delivery models;
 - Federal, State, local government;
 - Health agencies;
 - Education sector; and
 - Private sector.
- Grants and sponsorship needs to be aligned.
- Much more funding is needed.

Recommendations: Proposed Changes

- Funding should go to the local level and through Local Government who own the majority of facilities which sports utilise
- ASF –
 - Allow tax donations to fund operational costs
 - Modify tax legislation to encourage corporate investment benefit (similar to the film industry)
- Develop a national sports lottery.