



28 October 2009

BASKETBALL AUSTRALIA

1. *Ensure Australia's continued elite sporting success*

a. *Remove Duplication*

- There is considerable duplication in NSOs having to negotiate 9 separate agreements with the AIS and each of the SIS/SAS, rather than being able to negotiate for a national program, delivered throughout Australia, through NESC or a similar coordinating body.
- The need for separate negotiations makes implementing a consistent national program difficult. SIS/SAS resources vary widely as do the outcomes they seek. It is particularly difficult to negotiate for SIS/SAS to be involved in junior aspects of the pathway as their funding relies upon success at senior international level.
- Particularly in the disability sport sector there are a number of organisations involved in the delivery of programs.

b. *National Team Preparations*

- An increasing number of players seek careers internationally, as there are limited financial opportunities in Australia. Accordingly national teams have limited preparation and consideration may need to be given to aspects of preparation occurring off shore.
- The “tyranny of distance” makes it difficult to attract international teams to Australia, which impacts adversely on the attractiveness of a sport to commercial partners.

c. *Links to University sectors*

- There are few formal links between University sport and NSO high performance programs. However, the university sector increasingly represents an opportunity for delivery of aspects of a high performance program as well providing for the overall development of athletes.

Example impact on basketball:

- We have not been able to negotiate for programs with VIS, NTIS and WAIS, despite having programs in each of the other SIS/SAS. Accordingly, the delivery particularly of sport science services is inconsistent.
- The recent review of our High Performance programs, conducted by the ASC identified the need for more full time coaches in basketball, particularly in the WNBL where none of the 10 coaches is full time in their WNBL involvement.
- The University of Sydney's involvement in the Women's National Basketball League has been very positive as has its partnership with NSWIS.
- The average salary of an athlete in the Women's National Basketball League is approximately \$5,000 per year.

- Only 7 of the 24 players that represented Australia in the Beijing Olympics will play in the Australian national leagues in 2008. The rest are playing in overseas leagues.

Recommendations:

- Streamline funding of national high performance programs so that NSOs do not have to negotiate separately with each SIS, AIS, ASC, AOC and APC.
- The AGSTG scheme needs to be continued and increased in the amount of athlete support enabling athletes to devote full time to preparation (eg \$50,000 per year).
- Additional financial support should also be available to have athletes playing professionally overseas remain in Australia in the year of major competition.
- There also needs to be much greater focus in support of our coaches. This is not only financial support but also in terms of resources and education.
- NSOs should be funded adequately to deliver “mainstreaming” of high performance pathways and programs in disability sport.

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

a. Enhancing the capacity for delivery of community sport

- There can be little dispute that sport and physical activities are a “practical and efficient way to....maximising the health and social dividends to the community”.ⁱ
- Community sport is primarily delivered by volunteers, with those that do work in the sport industry earning less than in other industries. Whilst the number of people volunteering in society is increasing the amount of hours each is doing is falling. Therefore, the number of people involved in sport in “non-playing” roles is not keeping pace with the increase in participation. (see **attachment A**)

b. Getting People Active

- The requirement by federal government that schools include two hours of physical activity per week in schools, is well below what is required of at least 1 hour per day. Sport and physical education needs once again to have a much greater focus in our school system.
- There is duplication between the current Active After School Communities program and Community Sport programs delivered by club/associations. Both are providing separate activities in the period immediately after the end of school. This duplication is inefficient and there is no evidence to establish that kids in the AASC program go onto a more sustained involvement in activity.

Example impact on Basketball

- Although basketball is the 4th most popular activity in the Active After School Communities program, less than half of programs (40% in 2007 and 26% in the first half of 2008) are delivered by an affiliated basketball association.ⁱⁱ
- We are aware of at least 12 people who have left employment with basketball associations to take up employment in the AASC program. The AASC program provided better pay and conditions.

Recommendations

- The following recommendations will assist either to increase the number of volunteers or reduce the cost of participation in physical activity:

- Introduce a tax rebate for approved costs associated with involvement in an eligible sport or active recreation, similar to that introduced in Canada in 2007. In this regard we endorse the recommendation made by the Australian Sports Federations Alliance.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Require large employers (more than 30 employees) to introduce corporate volunteer programs, whereby employees are given (for example) two paid days for involvement in volunteer activities. A number of employees (eg NAB, American Express) currently have such schemes. Consider giving tax concessions to such companies.
- Enable payment of an approved preventative health expense (eg sport annual registration fee) by employers on behalf of employees to be a tax deduction. This scheme should also enable employees to “salary sacrifice” such expenses without attracting FBT.
- Most health insurance policies will contribute to the cost of a gymnasium membership. This should be extended to apply to fees paid to a sporting organisation.
- Mandate at least 5 hours a week in primary schools for physical activity. Provide funding to schools to engage resources for delivery. Larger schools could provide assistance to smaller schools in delivery. High School students (as part of leadership courses) to conduct lessons for primary schools.

3. Strengthen pathways from junior sport to grassroots community sport right through to elite and professional sport

a. Sports acting in a “unitary” way

- Australia’s heritage means that federated models are a current reality. These models are inefficient and promote the continuation of narrow vested interests. Whilst it is recognised that more unitary or functional organisation models will serve sports better, not all sports have the critical mass to move to a unitary model. A “shared model” would remove many inefficiencies.
- There is little link between the funding that NSOs receive from the ASC and funding SSOs receive from state departments. At times there are conflicts between the priorities at national and state level.

b. Good Governance

- A lack of appropriate frameworks to attract and refresh sports leadership talent means that governance in many NSOs is not adequate to the task at hand.

c. Talent Identification

- The current ASC NTID program does not acknowledge or support existing talent in sports traditional pathway.

d. Equitable Access to Facilities

- Greater coordination of funding available for the development of new facilities or improvement of existing facilities is required. Coordination should be independent of the “political” process. In this regard we note the recommendations in 1997 for better coordination.^{iv}

Example impact on basketball

- Basketball has state associations with similar functions which could be delivered more effectively centrally. The introduction of our national insurance scheme is an example of a successful program.
- In 2004 Basketball Geelong paid \$130,000 per annum to the local council for hire of the indoor basketball stadium and was responsible for all maintenance costs.

In the same period, a football club in Geelong paid no rent (to the same council) for use of the outdoor facility and was responsible for 2.5% of maintenance costs. Such inequity is common.

Recommendations

- A “shared” model should include:
 - Smaller sports be encouraged to cluster together with a common back office providing administrative functions. The “Sports Houses” provided in the past have often been poor standard facilities and governments should provide reasonable facilities.
 - Smaller sports could also be placed in schools, to access their assistance with back office functions.
 - Larger sports should be encouraged to develop “centres of excellence” providing services to other sports in areas such as travel, insurance and online services. It is not recommended that the government provide these services.
- The ASC and the respective State bodies should require sports to present a consistent plan for the development and delivery of the sport at all levels.
- Funding at ASC and state level should prescribe a range of acceptable models with ongoing funding conditional upon delivery of a plan designed to move to this model within three years. The prescription to include:
 - Board structures (with a particular focus on independence and maximum tenure for directors)
 - Management structures and roles
 - Pro-forma expenditure structures (eg guiding % of revenues expended on categories such as elite teams, high performance pathways, community sports).
- NTID program should support sporting organisations on the development pathway for athletes and coaches. The school system provides an effective mechanism for the identification of talent.
- A National Audit Plan is needed and should:
 - Identify all facilities;
 - Identify where facilities are needed
 - Be supported by all levels of government
- The ASC charter should include the definition and stewarding of a facilities roadmap
- Government funding for facilities should be centralised
- Private funding models should be embraced.
- A 1997 report into facilities noted some positive case studies of access to school facilities and also discussed possible access to Department of Defence facilities.^v The

National Audit roadmap should consider closely how such partnerships are encouraged and utilised.

- Land developers in some states have a limited obligation for setting aside recreational space^{vi} however consideration should be given to them having to incorporate a plan for the development of necessary sporting facilities. This plan should be coordinated with the relevant community.

4. Maintain Australia's cutting edge approach to sports science, research and technology

Recommendations

- The cost of accessing medical support staff for teams is increasingly high, whether from private practitioners or staff linked to AIS/SIS/SAS.
- In terms of research and development, the AIS, SIS/SAS and universities should work collectively on this. With institutions specialising as centres of excellence in particular areas, rather than each trying to do a "bit of everything".
- These hubs should also look to carry out applied research that can be shared across sports.
- There is comparatively very little research conducted in the Paralympic area and this should be addressed, both in terms of equipment and athlete development.

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

While the structure of sporting administration has many appropriate elements, the funding applied to the model is inadequate to allow the model to run effectively.

Recommendations

- Below are a number of brief recommendations regarding options to increase, and just as importantly diversify, funding to sport. We do not suggest that any are new suggestions, and accordingly have not gone into detail. Many were discussed at length in the 1997 report^{vii} and we believe they should be reconsidered, as preventative health strategies not "funding sport" strategies:
 - Introduction of a sports lottery. In particular, we note the 1995 finding that there is no constitutional impediment to a national sports lottery.^{viii}
 - Introduction of a HECS scheme for elite athletes, based upon earnings subsequently made from sport
 - Provide 150% deductibility for investment in facilities or infrastructure
- We believe that the role of the ASC should be clarified as a funding agency.
- We note with some concern the bill currently before Parliament which, if passed, would prevent alcohol advertising in sport. We see no justification why sport should be singled out for prohibition of an otherwise legal commodity.
- We are particularly concerned that the thinking behind this bill could be the "tip of the iceberg". Will, for example, the next step be that "fast food" companies cannot advertise through sport?
- If, against our strong belief, a prohibition on alcohol advertising/sponsorship in sport is introduced, then the government should provide long term compensation to the sporting industry for the loss of this sponsorship.

- Whilst tax deductibility for donations to sport, currently facilitated through the Australian Sports Foundation, is desirable we strongly believe that:
 - The ASF should be separately funded and not funded from a 2% levy on contributions.
 - Donations made should be guaranteed of being directed, if desired, to a particular organisation. Whilst this invariably happens “in practice” it is inefficient for it to be that way.

Attachment A

Participation in Sport

- In 2006, 63.5% of children were involved in organised sports activity after school hours (increasing from 59.4% in 2000)^{ix}
- In 2008 and through to 2010, the Active After School Communities program will provide opportunity for only around 150,000 Australian children to become physically active^x. This represents 8% of 1,860,038 Australian children in primary schools (not including Year 7).^{xi}
- In 2004-05, 70.4% of Australians over the age of 18 had a low or sedentary exercise level. In 1995, 69.8% of Australians had a low or sedentary exercise level.^{xii}
- Commonwealth Schools funding legislation for 2005-08 triennium requires education authorities to include at least two hours of physical activity per week. Studies recommend for adolescent children at least 1 hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day.^{xiii}

Capacity of Community Sport

- The 2006 the average full time average weekly earnings for a person in the Sports and Physical Recreation Industries was \$832.60. This compares poorly to the average across all industries of \$1,083.40^{xiv}
- Between 2002 and 2006, the average weekly total cash earnings of full time workers in sports and physical recreation industries increased by 20.6% compared to a corresponding increase for full-time workers in all industries of 23.3%.^{xv}
- Within Sports and services to sport, the number of persons working as a volunteer manager or administrator (37,572) outnumbered those in paid employment as Manager or administrator (6,583) by over 5:1.^{xvi}
- Between 2001 and 2007, the number of people involved as coaches, officials or committee members has been relatively stable. In 2007 over a third of these people were involved in more than one role and more than half (55.8%) were involved with school or junior sport.^{xvii}
- Between 2000 and 2006 participation in organised sport by children aged 5-14 increased by 7.8%^{xviii}
- There is an increasing number of volunteers in Australia. In 2000, 24% of the population (3.2million) did volunteering. In 2006 this had increased to 5.4million (35%). However, the annual number of hours contributed on an individual basis was substantially lower falling from 74 hours (1995) to 56 hours (2006).^{xix}

References

- ⁱ *About time!: Women in sport and recreation in Australia*, The Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References Committee, September 2006, p24
- ⁱⁱ Based upon delivery statistics provided by the ASC to Basketball Australia
- ⁱⁱⁱ *Physical Activity Tax Rebate Initiative: Promoting Better Health Outcomes for All Australian Children*, Australian Sports Federation Alliance, March 2007
- ^{iv} *Rethinking the Funding of Community Sporting and Recreational Facilities: A Sporting Chance*, The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts, October 1997
- ^v *Rethinking the Funding of Community Sporting and Recreational Facilities: A Sporting Chance*, The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts, October 1997, pp86-105
- ^{vi} Eg s94 *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1997 (NSW)*
- ^{vii} *Rethinking the Funding of Community Sporting and Recreational Facilities: A Sporting Chance*, The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts, October 1997, pp107-149
- ^{viii} *Olympics 2000 ...and the Winner is?*, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, quoted at *Rethinking the Funding of Community Sporting and Recreational Facilities: A Sporting Chance*, The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts, October 1997, p108
- ^{ix} *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, April 2006, p15
- ^x *About the Active After-school Communities program*, Australian Sports Commission, sourced on 21 Oct 08 from www.ausport.gov.au/participating/schools_and_juniors/aasc/about
- ^{xi} *Schools*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007, p14
- ^{xii} *Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008, p23
- ^{xiii} *About time!: Women in sport and recreation in Australia*, The Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References Committee, September 2006, pp10-12
- ^{xiv} *Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008, p41
- ^{xv} *Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008, p40
- ^{xvi} *Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008, p44
- ^{xvii} *Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008, pp44-46
- ^{xviii} *Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008, p19
- ^{xix} *Voluntary Work, Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, pp5-6