



**Submission to the Independent Sport Panel**

**November 2008**



**12th AUSTRALIAN  
MASTERS GAMES**  
20 February - 1 March  
Geelong 2009



## Opening Remarks

The Confederation of Australian Sport is pleased to provide a submission to the Independent Sport Panel. We welcome the opportunity, alongside other stakeholders in the industry to provide our thoughts, perspective and views on the important challenges confronting the sports industry.

The review is both timely and welcomed. We have in the summary below, addressed a number of concerns and viewpoints in regards the terms of reference for this panel. We have been concise and direct and would welcome the opportunity to elaborate further on the observations made in our submission.

Finally we offer the Panel the full support of the Confederation and wish you every success in your deliberations and recommendations.

## Terms of Reference: ELITE SPORT

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| <b>Funding</b>   | <p>It is imperative that within future funding models, elite sport be funded appropriately but clearly differentiated from funding for community and participation sport.</p> <p>The entanglement of current funding provides too many opportunities for the investment in community sport to be diffused in order to deliver on perceived targets from the elite streams. The Confederation strongly supports a more differentiated model for funding sport.</p> <p>A clear articulation of the Government's investment in elite and community sport will ensure all stakeholders are supported.</p>  |
| <b>A more reasonable and sustainable measurement framework</b>                     | <p>The preponderance of measuring performance by a gold medal count only is a limiting distraction for elite sport.</p> <p>That we can't measure the 'performance' of sport beyond 'gold medals' is a poor reflection on the industry and stakeholders. It is not a sustainable position for good policy.</p> <p>There is now an immediate need to develop metrics and a measurement framework that is comprehensive in nature and reflective of the complexities of international sport. A more comprehensive framework will act as a more constructive enabler for innovation and improvement.</p> <p>Elite sport should also not be divorced from participation sport in terms of achieving health, economic and social outcomes for the community. The contribution to and responsibility of elite sport to achieving overall health outcomes must be integrated into the measurement framework.</p> |
| <b>Removal of duplication and the federated model to elite athlete development</b> | <p>There is general consensus that Australian sport is failing to extract the necessary value from the national and state institute programs and investment.</p> <p>There is we believe now an immediate need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ move beyond the insatiable need for each and every institute to 'brand' athletes and successes</li><li>○ bring into alignment the strategic and business planning</li></ul>  |

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frameworks across the federated model

- o develop integrated programs which will optimize deployment of the limited resources available at both national and state level

The Confederation recognizes the value competitive pressures can provide in the way of innovation and improvement. Any alignment is not designed to mute this competition between institutes but to more effectively extract the value from the collective investment.

The review presents the unique opportunity to restructure management of elite sport and align the end to end responsibility for elite sport with the AIS. Then integration between the national and state institutes is likely to deliver greater dividends for all investor stakeholders.

### **Benchmarking Australia's investment in elite sport**

The Confederation strongly supports the concept of international benchmarking of our investment in elite sport.

Clearly, there is no open cheque book available for elite sport. Regardless of our performances at international events, elite sport administrators will seek increased support from Government.

The Confederation has previously supported an investment strategy which reflects the outcomes sought by the community (the ultimate investors) but countenances the comparative levels of investment. This we believe can be best achieved by benchmarking our investment with that made by for example the investment made by say the other 'top ten' Olympic performing countries.

The concept of international benchmarking is not new (undertaken for our tax system) but can support a more robust framework for Government and all stakeholders to ensure Australia remains competitive.

### **Increase opportunities for athletes to pursue sport as a career**

The ability of sport to attract and retain the very best athletes is the foundation for success.

In addition to supporting the continuation of the Australian Government Sports Training Grant (AGSTG) the Confederation supports:

- o The establishment of a *Sport Career Contribution Scheme* to allow athletes in non-professional sport to augment government scholarship funding to enable these athletes to pursue a full time career in sport.
- o Call for the Federal Government to grant tax exemption status on income derived from Commonwealth athlete scholarships. This should apply where athletes are deemed not to be carrying on a business.

### **Provide capacity for all sports regardless of their participation in Olympic or Commonwealth Games to gain access to the sport science knowledge and expertise**

Australia has developed an enviable reputation in the area of sport science.

Access to this collective intelligence is limited through the current funding models.

It is recommended that capacity be developed to ensure all sports are provided access to this sport science and expertise. Clearly linking the support to international success (this may be world cups or world rankings) should ensure NSO's strive to leverage the insights and intelligence available.

## Terms of Reference: COMMUNITY SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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| <b>Funding</b>  | <p>As noted previously, it is imperative that within future funding models, community sport be funded appropriately but clearly differentiated from the investment made in by elite sport.</p> <p>It is our view that community sport is adversely affected by an undifferentiated funding model. It is important at this juncture that community sport attracts and retains an appropriate level of funding. Community sport is pivotal to responding to the health crisis facing Australians. Under funding or diversion of funds from community sport will severely impact sport's capacity to deliver on these important objectives.</p>  |
| <b>A measurement framework</b>  | <p>No Government policy or program should be delivered without some core, robust and meaningful metrics to assess the performance against strategy.</p> <p>Our recent discussions and analysis suggest there is a 'drought' of robust consistent measures about sport. That there exists a significant gap between a simple measure such as participation (note the well known difference between ABS and ERASS data) is reflective of a dysfunctional approach to building a strong evidence base for the industry and the Government's policy.</p> <p>This is surely an area of focus for the review.</p> <p>That we can't measure the 'performance' of sport beyond 'gold medals' is a poor reflection on the industry and stakeholders. It is not a sustainable position for good policy. This attitude reflects the continuing short term evaluation of the success of Australian sport between one Olympics and the next whereas the benefits to the community of increased participation are longer term and strategies should be instituted for sustained growth and support of community participation in sport and active recreation.</p> |
| <b>Let NSOs deliver sport and government deliver direction</b>                              | <p>The Australian Sports Commission plays a pivotal role in delivering upon the Government sport policy. That should, in the view of the Confederation, be singularly about developing sport participation programs, ensuring the national pool of talented athletes remains strong and buoyant and ensuring the National Sporting Organizations (NSO's) are well placed in an increasingly competitive marketplace to leverage their sport programs to enhance the health and wellbeing of all Australians.</p> <p>With this in mind, it is imperative that National Sporting Organizations be charged with delivering sport.</p> <p>The ASC must then be charged with ensuring programs meet policy expectations and that sport is well placed to continue to deliver what is expected.</p> <p>A clearer articulation of the roles and responsibilities of the ASC and Government sport area is warranted particularly where there is an expectation that Health outcomes are to be met.</p>  |
| <b>Sport as part of learning and education – reintroducing sport back to the curriculum</b> | <p>Gaining traction on the increasingly serious health issues (obesity and Diabetes for example) facing all Australians requires intervention at an early age.</p> <p>Returning sport and physical activity to the curriculum is pivotal to these efforts.</p> <p>The Confederation has previously emphasized the importance of a 'whole of child' approach to addressing these significant health</p>  |

issues. Collective efforts from sport, education and health professionals is required to deliver the 'heart, mind and body' solutions required.

**Create incentives for sports to work collaboratively at giving all children a great sport experience**

The model for introducing sport to young children requires reassessment.

Sport currently competes with each other to in their view secure the young athletes.

A model where sport works collaboratively to introduce, engage and excite young people may be more effective in ensuring a life long love of sport.

Providing sport incentives to collaborate to teach young Australians the hand/eye, fitness and balls skills that sport as a collective provides will be required to break to current model and delivery imperatives.

## Terms of Reference: COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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### **A smarter, more contemporary system**

The Confederation acknowledges the changing face of Australian society and its people and the consequential need for a smarter, more contemporary sports system. With this in mind, the Confederation recommends:

- A Federal Government funded industry assistance program to develop and strengthen the capabilities and capacities in sports leadership and business skills in and across the sector.
- An industry assistance program targeted at accelerating the adoption of technological solutions to build and leverage sport and recreation as online communities and to broaden accessibility for all Australians to sport recreation services.
- An independent enquiry and investigation of membership and insurance models that allow casual participation and participation in a number of sports.

### **Create a facilities future fund**

It is now widely acknowledge that sport faces a facility crisis.

It is recommended that the Federal Government establish a sports facilities future scheme, provide immediate and then ongoing investment in:

- the renewal and refurbishment of existing sport and recreation facilities (both indoor and outdoor); while at the same time
- develop new sport and recreation facilities for the people of Australia.

The Confederation acknowledges that, to be successful, this facilities future scheme must seek and receive support from State and local governments. The approach will contribute to the health, social and economic benefit of the community and should be considered an important part of the risk management strategy for each level of Government. The Confederation urges the Federal Government to take a leadership position in this critical area

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