

NSW Institute of Sport - Submission

Background

The NSW Institute of Sport was established in 1996 with a mission to develop and assist identified high performance NSW athletes and coaches to achieve success at the international level.

Since commencing operations NSWIS has supported over 3500 NSW athletes to successfully achieve representation on senior and junior National teams. NSWIS athletes have also made a significant contribution to Australia's results in the three Olympic Games and Paralympics Games contested since establishment, providing 350 Olympian and 80 Paralympians.

From this representation NSWIS has supported:

- Olympics 26 gold medallists
 33 silver medallists
 36 bronze medallists

- Paralympics 20 gold medallists
 42 silver medallists
 20 bronze medallists

Australia's elite sport system has evolved since the inception of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in 1981 to become a system that is strongly embraced and supported both nationally and by all state and territory governments through respective State Institutes and Academies of Sport (SIS/SAS). The current success of our elite sport system is built upon all of the SIS/SAS and AIS programs operating with respective National Sporting Organisations in an environment of competitive collaboration.

Discussion

At the 2008 Olympic Games the training bases of the 26 Australian athletes who achieved gold medal winning performances were varied and spread across the country.

The table below indicates the various training bases of Australia's gold medallists which included Queensland (10 athletes), NSW (4 athletes), Victoria (4 athletes), AIS Canberra (4 athletes), Western Australia (3 athletes) Tasmania (1 athlete).

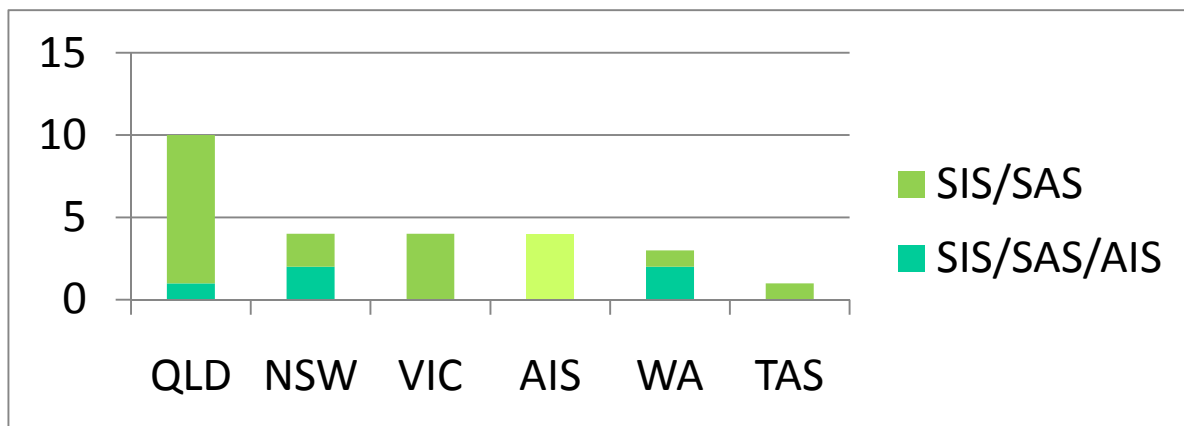


Table 1: Training bases of Australian athletes who won an Olympic gold medal in 2008

NSWIS believes that four important factors stand out as contributing significantly to the success of these athletes:

- **Choice in training environment** - athletes determined where they were best able to train based on many factors including coaching, family/friend support network, services, climate, education and work options, affordability etc.

Example: Emma Snowsill (Triathlon) - trained from her home base on the Gold Coast of Queensland after experiencing challenges in the lead up to the 2008 Olympics

- **Access to quality coaching** - coaches with similar technical expertise had vastly different styles. While one athlete thrived with a particular coach another may have experienced a decline in performance. The relationship and 'fit' between athlete and coach was an integral component of success.

Example: Matt Mitcham (Diving) - retired from Diving in 2007 after experiencing declining performances and low morale at the AIS - Brisbane and then moved to Sydney to access an alternative style of coaching

Example: Steve Hooker (Athletics) - trained in Melbourne until 2006 and moved to Perth in 2007 to access an international standard coach operating on a full time basis

High Performance Coaches who contributed to gold medal winning performances were 'engaged' in a variety of ways across the system including:

- o Full time / part-time employed - AIS/SIS/SAS or NSO/Club
 - o Fee For Service - NSO/Club and/or AIS/SIS/SAS
 - o Performance based grant - NSO and/or AIS/SIS/SAS
- **Access to Services and Support** - High Performance Services and supportive environments were provided to winning athletes through QAS, NSWIS, VIS, AIS, WAIS and TIS in conjunction with respective National Sporting Organisations. Applied research assisted to deliver 'cutting edge' services and equipment.

Example: Ken Wallace (Sprint Canoe) - Surf Kayak champion who transferred to Sprint Canoe and accessed QAS and AIS services and support on the Gold Coast

- **Access to 'World Class Competition'** - the ASC has provided National Sporting Organisations and the AIS with funding to assist athletes to access world class competition. SIS/SAS have also provided ongoing support to athletes to access world class competition opportunities throughout their campaigns. The AOC has supported athletes and National Sporting Organisations in the short term lead up to and during Olympic competition.

Example: Scott Brennan and David Crawshay (Rowing) - trained from Tasmania and Victoria respectively and benefited from accessing world class competition

Future Challenge

As with any system or structure, changes should be made over time to meet the ongoing and future demands of achieving sustained international success.

NSWIS believes that in a 'global sporting environment' athletes will continue to require access to:

- **Flexible 'global' training environment** - as athletes' sporting careers extend and a new generation who are

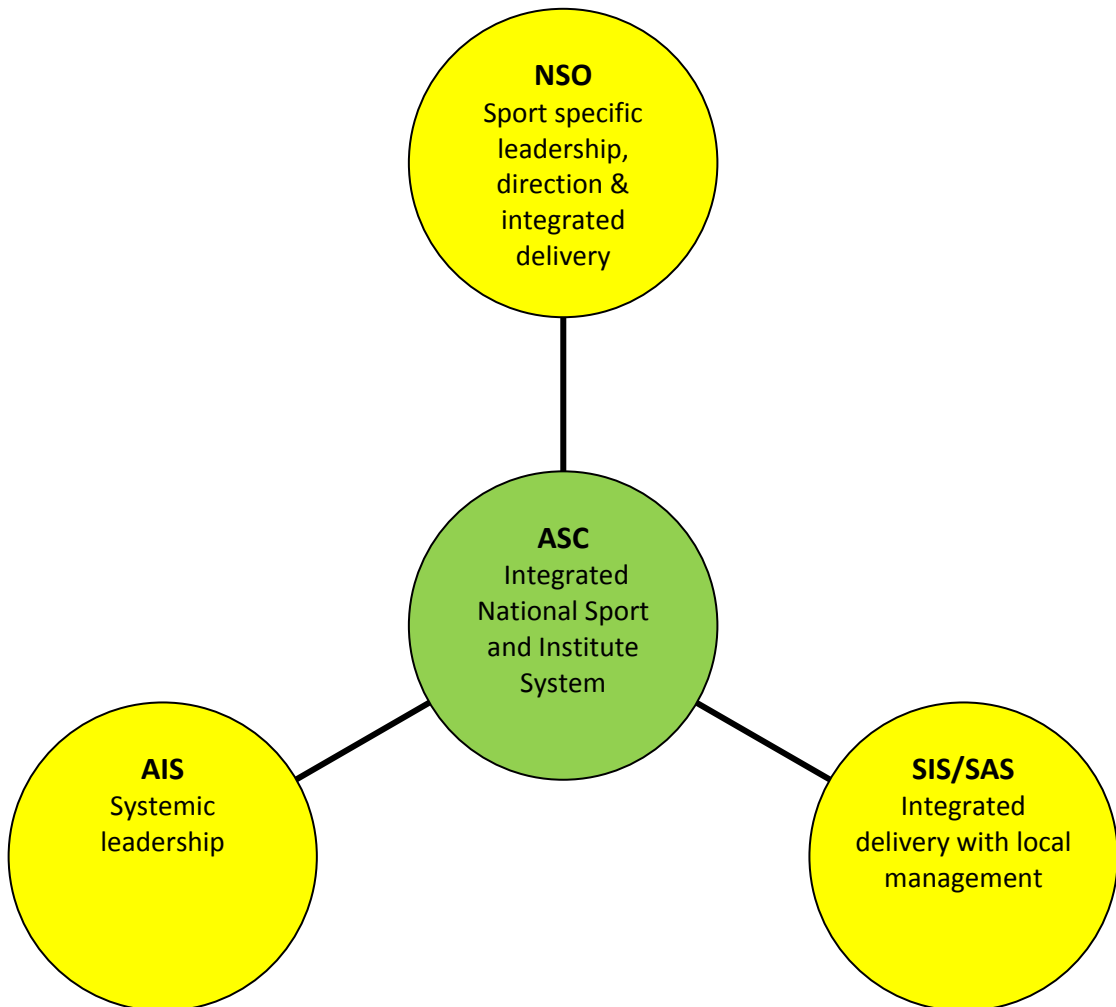
experienced in accessing resources globally as a part of daily life emerges, the ideal training 'environment' will be one that includes local and global elements in a flexible and 'cost effective' way. Athletes' ability to transition from one environment to the next will be better prepared than those who 'struggle' with change. Sports and Coaches who have the skills to work with athletes and manage the transition from one environment to the next will also be better prepared to support an athlete through the course of their career.

- **Quality coaching** - athletes will continue to 'vote with their feet' and explore 'the best' coaching options for them, locally and globally. As the countries largest employers of elite coaches from Olympic sports, the national network of institutes and academies of sport must continue to work cooperatively with NSO's, SSO's and the ASC to provide increased quality coaching options for athletes at the elite and underpinning levels. Effective management of global opportunities for athletes to access quality coaching through National Programs, Clubs, Universities, Trade Teams etc. should be further explored.
- **Services and Support** - athletes will continue to benefit from access to services and support locally and globally, as they search for 'any legal training advantage'. While Sport Science and technology play a key role, support of 'the total' athlete and their overall 'well being' will become increasingly important as athletes move from one environment to the next. Athletes and Coaches across Australia will benefit from a continued commitment to applied research across all areas of high performance services - a nationally coordinated approach to applied research is important for the future.
- **'World Class Competition'**- financially, one of the increasingly challenging factors that contribute to international success is access to world class competition on a 'regular' basis. Many sports have an opportunity to capitalise on 'professional club or team based' competition internationally, providing a 'cost effective' solution for athletes that enhances national team based and AIS/SIS/SAS touring opportunities.
- **Emerging Talent Development and Identification** - engagement with National and State Sporting Associations, through the institute and academy and National Talent Identification network, is integral to Australia's future sporting success. Athletes need to know how they can advance through a sport pathway and be motivated to reach their potential - any talent development and identification processes should operate in a

way that strengthens the sporting network and system in a coordinated way rather than operating in isolation.

Future Model

In order to meet the challenges ahead in elite sport and capitalise on Australia's competitive advantage of collaborative competition across the network, NSWIS recommends consideration of an 'alternative coordinated and integrated model':



MAJOR FOCUS OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Australian Sports Commission - National System Development:

- Coordinated and integrated National Sport and Institute System - collaborative system which maintains flexibility and competitive elements

National Sport Organisation: Sport Specific Direction, Leadership and Integrated Delivery

- Identification, implementation and management of sports direction and pathway across the national network
- Coordination and delivery of National Teams Program in conjunction with the sport and the national network

Australian Institute of Sport - Systemic Leadership

- Leadership of **applied** research and the use of technology to be implemented across the system
- Leadership and development of resources and standards for targeted services to be implemented across the system with some local flexibility
- Leadership of integrated talent development and identification in partnership with NSO's, SSO's, SIS/SAS, targeted RAS's, clubs, universities and schools etc
- Support and delivery of 'targeted' high performance 'environments' and programs for athletes in conjunction with sport and the national system (locally managed)

State Institutes and Academies of Sport - Integrated Delivery

- Support and delivery of 'targeted' high performance 'environments' and programs for athletes in conjunction with the national system (locally managed)
- Support and delivery of 'targeted' elite development and emerging talent 'environments' and programs for athletes in conjunction with sport and the national system including targeted SSO's, schools, clubs and regional academies of sport etc. (locally managed)

NB: ideally, the AOC, APC, ACGA etc. focus would continue to be on 'campaign based' multi-event competition preparation and performance with a stronger 'connection' and 'commitment' to an integrated national sport system