

A photograph of three female volleyball players in action on a wooden court. One player in a red jersey is jumping high on the right side of the frame, reaching towards the net. Two players in blue jerseys are on the left side, also reaching towards the net. The net is visible in the center. The background is a light-colored wooden floor.

CONSULTATION PHASE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL SPORT PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL SPORT PLAN

In May 2017, the Hon. Greg Hunt, Commonwealth Minister for Sport announced the development of a National Sport Plan, for release in 2018.

Currently, Australia's Winning Edge, released by the Australian Sports Commission (the Commission) in 2012, guides policy in relation to high performance, and Play. Sport. Australia., released in 2015, provides strategic direction in relation to growing participation. The National Sport Plan will establish a shared set of national expectations across these issues, and others, for the sport and physical activity sectors.

The Plan will be based on four key pillars, which recognise the fundamental contribution sport makes to society:

- prevention through physical activity, recognising the role that sport plays in supporting the health and wellbeing of Australians
- participation, recognising the role that sport plays in supporting communities to come together to compete, play and get active
- performance, recognising the Government's commitment to high performance sport in Australia
- integrity, recognising the importance of honesty and fair play in all levels of sport, from community and grassroots through to elite sport.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Commission coordinated a national consultation process, involving 13 stakeholder forums – nine run in partnership with State Departments of Sport and Recreation (SDSRs) – an additional three National Sporting Organisation (NSO) forums in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney, and a health promotion/prevention forum run facilitated by the Commonwealth Department of Health; and, an online submission process via the Commission's website and a community perceptions survey.

This report outlines the key themes and findings from the forums and online submission process.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL NATIONAL SPORT PLAN

Participants were clear that the National Sport Plan must be underpinned by a set of **guiding principles** which provide a vision for Australian sport and a rationale for the government's ongoing role in the sector. This is particularly the case given the increasing focus on health promotion signalled under the Plan.

The guiding principles provide an opportunity to explain **how the Plan aligns with other relevant policy frameworks**, including activity in other sectors and departments. Consultation participants emphasised that for the four pillars of the Plan to be successful, they need to be underpinned by cross-government collaboration.

Given the stakeholders at all levels of government and sporting organisations, the Plan should include an **accountability framework**, which outlines roles and responsibilities. Accompanying **outcome measures** will help to ensure tracking of progress.

While getting all Australians moving is critical, participants at the forums and online identified a series of **priority populations** for inclusion in the Plan. These included demographic groups, such as women, people with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background and people living in rural and remote areas. It also included people less likely to engage in sport, such as those at key transition points in their life.

These critical elements will provide the structural foundations for a successful Plan.

THE FOUR PILLARS

Prevention through physical activity

Three of the four pillars - participation, integrity and performance - were considered core business for the Commission and the sports sector more broadly and received strong support. Prevention through physical activity, while supported by most forum participants, requires some explanation in terms of its inclusion in the National Sport Plan.

While participants were divided as to whether awareness or behaviour change represents the key challenge, there was a strong call across the sector to invest in a public awareness strategy regarding the full spectrum of benefits of sport and physical activity, including physical and mental health, as well as social and community benefits.

In order to drive success in relation to using sport to promote health and prevent chronic disease, participants strongly emphasised the need for collaboration across government – with departments of health, education and transport – as well as with health delivery bodies. While the link between health and sports and physical activity made intuitive sense and was supported by the sector, there is a feeling this is new territory for sports organisations, and the public sector dedicated to sports administration require upskilling to be successful against this pillar.

Participation

Growing participation received strong support as a key pillar for the Plan, in line with the core emphasis for most sporting organisations. The biggest challenge in relation to driving participation was seen as the failure of sports in schools. The sector strongly called for a reintroduction of compulsory sport or physical activity in both primary and secondary schools, to set up healthy habits for life. Physical literacy was identified as a tool for measuring engagement with sport and fundamental motor skills, and compared to children's development in other core curriculum skills, such as literacy and numeracy. Participants voiced concern regarding the lack of capacity among teachers to teach sport and physical activity, given the declining emphasis of sports in school over the past 20 years. The Sporting Schools Program was highly praised as an effective means of addressing some of the gaps in the education system.

Three barriers to participation were consistently identified throughout the consultation: affordability; an over-emphasis on competition over other motivators such as socialising; and some of the pervasive stereotypes regarding sports.

All forums and many online submissions raised the traditional club membership model as potentially out of reach of many individuals and families, requiring a significant investment and sustained commitment.

Participants highlighted the importance of developing flexible and affordable approaches to offer pay-as-you-go and 'try-before-you-buy' options to encourage take-up. However, participants suggested that sporting organisations may need additional support to transition to a sustainable model in this environment.

Participants also indicated the focus of sport on competition is a significant barrier for some, particularly those who have not engaged in sport in some time. They noted the importance of sporting organisations staging options that emphasised participation or 'having-a-go', and the benefits of entertainment and socialisation over competition.

Finally, for Australians to get involved with sports and physical activity they need to see themselves in it. Several forums raised the importance of presenting inclusive and realistic images of participation to drive growth. This was especially the case for sedentary people, or those who had not engaged with sport for a long time, as well as those who do not fit the classic Anglo-Australian, male, team-sports mould.

Modified formats, both in terms of how games are played and how they are staged, were seen to offer strong growth potential. In particular, formats focused on accommodating the time-pressure of modern life via compressed formats were strongly supported, as were those that offer participation opportunities to those who may feel excluded from traditional sports such as walking-versions of traditional sports.

Performance

Many participants strongly associate the Commission with nurturing sporting high performance in Australia, so this pillar was strongly endorsed for inclusion in the Plan. However, within the context of the 2012 strategy Australia's Winning Edge, Australia's performance at the Rio Olympics in 2016 and a global trend for

narrowing investment in high performance to a smaller number of sports the performance pillar was a highly contested issue.

Overall, there is strong support for redefining high performance in the National Sport Plan, with several participants noting the current definition excludes several growing sports, and fails to acknowledge sustained high performance, and other important contributions to the sector. Participants were also clear that high performance funding must be equitable for sportspeople with a disability and female athletes.

Furthermore, while participants acknowledge the value of high performance in sports as a means to inspire and drive civic pride, the majority of participants agree the more important indicator of success than medals are the stories of success. These stories, which may not necessarily include a medal achievement, were seen to hold strong value to inspire and drive participation.

There is also some interest in more closely linking high performance and growth in participation, to acknowledge the link between high performance and health of a sport at a community or grassroots level. In particular, the online submissions highlighted the cycle of performance and participation, with a strong community sports base contributing to a high quality development pathway, where in turn, sporting success encouraged participation at the grassroots level.

Integrity

The forums primarily focused on what integrity means for the sports sector in a local context.

For many participants, particularly NSOs, integrity is seen as almost synonymous with good governance. Effective governance structures were seen as essential to ensuring sports are played and managed fairly at all levels. Many online submissions interpreted this question as about the need for an additional integrity body – an issue that proved highly contentious.

Beyond governance, integrity in sport was strongly associated with conducting and playing sports in line with a sport's or club's values. While some examples of positive cultures were offered that were led by participants, several forum participants provided examples of successful strategies to embed strong values within that involved active, formal engagement across a sport or club to operate by an agreed set of values.

ENABLERS OF SUCCESS

In addition to the four pillars, the Minister's outline for the Plan included four key issues: sporting infrastructure; major events; governance; and, funding, including the idea of a national good causes lottery. All four of these issues can be considered as critical enablers of success for the Plan.

Sports infrastructure

Infrastructure shortfalls were seen as a key barrier to growing sports participation. These gaps were focused on three key areas: the need for new infrastructure to support growth and modified formats; the need to focus on maintaining and updating existing infrastructure; and the challenges associated with accessing existing infrastructure, particularly in schools.

Stronger collaborations across sport and other sectors were seen as vital to driving infrastructure improvements. A multi-sport approach was seen to hold strong potential in unlocking the value of existing facilities as well as driving investment into new facilities. Furthermore, collaboration was not seen as restricted to sports working together, with several examples of co-investment with other community organisations or schools offered in the forums. The sector sees a role for the Commission in providing support to find alternative funding streams and/or structure co-investment opportunities.

Major events

Major sports events were seen as the domain of tourism rather than sport, with return on investment largely calculated on the basis of economic impact, rather than the impact on the sport itself. However, second-tier sports events are viewed quite differently, with participants noting these events hold strong potential to drive improved participation outcomes. Consequently, the consultation revealed a high level of support for hosting second-tier events.

Across all events, there was a call for better collaboration to maximise the legacy potential for the sector. Early, multi-sport collaboration to plan for multi-use venues and workforce development received strong support across the consultation. Online submissions called for greater transparency in the allocation of funding for events.

Funding

Three key issues emerged in relation to funding sports and physical activity in Australia: the need to consider alternative sources of funding as the sector and business models evolve; strong support for regulatory interventions; and a moderate level of support for the national good causes lottery.

NSOs, and to a lesser extent SSOs, acknowledge the sports landscape is undergoing change, and as a result there is a broad acceptance that business models less reliant on membership fees must be developed, involving new streams of income. For example, many NSOs expressed support for co-investment with community organisations and/or health delivery bodies to fund their activities. There was also interest expressed in collective impact models, to reduce administrative costs. Participants also suggested there was a larger potential role for philanthropy, but structural changes were required to maximise the benefit, such as to deductible gift recipient status rules.

A strong call for regulatory intervention emerged throughout the consultation process. Participants proposed government and industry interventions, such as levies, rebates and tax deductions, to both fund sports and physical activity directly, as well as reduce barriers to participation. There was also strong support for taxation of perceived negative influences in sport, particularly gambling providers.

While some strident opponents of the national good causes lottery exist, overall the majority reasoned that the lottery was an acceptable stream of revenue given it is not based on the outcome of a game. In particular, those that were familiar with the UK lottery and its impact were strongly supportive of the idea.

Governance

Given the 2015 consultation process focused on governance facilitated by the Commission, this issue did not attract significant attention in the National Sport Plan consultation. However, some NSOs in particular did reflect on the pressure across the sector to evolve governance structure in line with their business models, and noted a potential role for the Commission in building capacity.

Additional enablers of success

In addition to these four issues, a small number of additional key enablers of success for the Plan were raised throughout the consultation. These included:

- investing in and growing the workforce, with particular emphasis on volunteers
- developing data sources that measure the health, social and community impacts of sports and physical activity
- activating the existing research and evidence-base
- utilising technology to encourage participation and support organisations.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. THIS DOCUMENT

This document presents the draft findings of the consultation process for the National Sport Plan ('the Plan') conducted in June and July 2017 on behalf of the Australian Sports Commission (the Commission). It contains three sections, incorporating discussion of findings relating to:

- the Plan's pillars: prevention through physical activity; participation; performance; and, integrity
- enablers of success for the Plan and the sector more broadly
- key elements for consideration in developing an effective Plan.

This report includes findings from all forums including the preventative health focused forum facilitated by the Commonwealth Department of Health, plus 443 written submissions.

1.2. THE NATIONAL SPORT PLAN

Currently, the sports sector in Australia has no single, unifying policy at the national level. In May 2017, the Hon. Greg Hunt, Commonwealth Minister for Sport announced the development of the National Sport Plan, describing it as a long-term strategy for the whole of sport.

Australia's Winning Edge, released by the Commission in 2012, guides policy in relation to high performance, and Play. Sport. Australia., released in 2015, provides strategic direction in relation to growing participation. The National Sport Plan will establish a shared set of national expectations across these issues and the remaining pillars for the sport and physical activity sectors.

The Plan will be based on four key pillars, which recognise the fundamental contribution sport makes to society:

- prevention through physical activity, recognising the role that sport plays in supporting the health and wellbeing of Australians
- participation, recognising the role that sport plays in supporting communities to come together to compete, play and get active
- performance, recognising the Government's commitment to high performance sport in Australia
- integrity, recognising the importance of honesty and fair play in all levels of sport, from community and grassroots through to elite sport.

The Plan will provide the actions and accountability structures which underpin these goals, to position Australian sport for the long term.

1.3. CONTEXT

Sport in Australia is changing. People are increasingly living busy, more individualised lives, and a more individualised model of sport and recreation is growing alongside it, focused on play, participation and health (as outlined in the 2013 CSIRO publication *The Future of Australian Sport*). This presents challenges to the sports and physical activity sectors, which must adapt to ensure it remains relevant and delivers benefits for Australians, and a return on investment for government.

In recognising the challenge of a changing sport and recreation sector, the Commonwealth Government appointed an Independent Sport Panel to provide recommendations into the future of the Australian sports system. The resulting *Crawford Report* (2009) provided eight recommendations:

1. define the national sporting policy and vision
2. reform the Australian Sports Commission to lead the sports system
3. merge the Institutes of Sport
4. build the capacity of national sporting organisations (NSOs)
5. improve sport in schools
6. build community sport
7. improve sport participation for all Australians
8. develop a sustainable funding base for sport.

The first of these recommendations, define the national sporting policy and vision, underpins the purpose of the National Sport Plan. Many of these key themes from the *Crawford Report* continue to influence the discussion around the Plan, particularly the importance of sport in schools, the role of community sport, and driving growth in participation. These ambitions are reflected in *Play. Sport. Australia.*, which focused on growing participation, membership and improving governance in sport.

While the sports sector has long been focused on community participation, sports policy must also balance the challenge of supporting elite performance on the world stage. Australia's Winning Edge presents

Australia's high performance sports strategy for 2012-2022, which aims to have Australia in the top five at the Olympics, top 15 at the Paralympics and Winter Olympics, number one at the Commonwealth Games, and producing 20 world champions every year. It identifies the following priorities to achieve its goals:

- investment targeted to achieve the greatest chance of international success
- planning and review process to provide for improved accountability
- improved support for high performance athletes
- strengthened governance, workforce and leadership capacity to improve efficiency of investment
- evidence-based investment.

1.4. CONSULTATION PROCESS

This report has been informed by a three-stage consultation process, which is outlined below.

Stakeholder forums

During June and July, the Commission, in partnership with State Departments of Sport and Recreation (SDSRs) across the country organised 13 forums – one in each state/territory capital (with two in Adelaide), plus three NSO forums in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. An additional forum focusing on prevention and health promotion was held, facilitated by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

Attendance at the forums ranged between 20 and 80, and in total, over 320 stakeholders engaged in the forums.¹ Stakeholders included representatives from NSOs, State Sporting Organisations (SSOs) and SDSRs.

Most forums were approximately two hours in length, with the majority of time devoted to small group discussion around the key pillars and issues with notes recorded on butchers paper. Where attendance was less than approximately 30 people, one large group discussion was held. Group discussions were reported back as plenary discussions. All forums were live transcribed. The agenda, including key consultation questions, is provided at Appendix A.

Online submissions

The Commission also hosted an online submission process via its website, which provided stakeholders with an opportunity to provide feedback on the issues informing the Plan. The questionnaire is provided at Appendix B.

Respondents could choose to complete an online, open-text questionnaire provided by the Commission, or to provide a free-text written submission. All online submissions have been analysed and included in this report, with the exception of a small number of submissions received following the completion of this report.

Based on the questionnaire and a sample of initial responses, a coding frame was developed. As submissions were received they were uploaded to NVivo, a qualitative analysis software package, and coded using the coding frame.

Analysis

Transcripts and butchers paper notes from each stakeholder consultation were thematically analysed, as were the online submissions using NVivo. Following this, an internal analysis workshop was held to identify the issues and proposed solutions emerging from the data.

The themes and findings are presented in this report. Where specific quotes have been used, they have been attributed to their source.

¹ Attendance at the Melbourne forum was large as it coincided with the National Sports Convention. The largest state-based forum was Brisbane.

2. THE FOUR PILLARS

This section discusses feedback from the consultation in relation to the pillars of the Plan.

2.1. PREVENTION THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The first pillar discussed at the forums was prevention through physical activity. There was strong endorsement for the inclusion of a pillar relating to prevention, with participants recognising the contribution that sport makes to healthy lifestyles and health promotion. However, forum participants believed there needed to be a clear statement of rationale for inclusion of this pillar as it represents a broader remit for the Commission and the Office for Sport than previous policy, and should address physical activity, active recreation and a role for sport in health promotion and prevention of chronic disease.

Reflecting the perceived stretch for the commission into a new era, health promotion, through this pillar, a dedicated forum focused on prevention was held to engage relevant stakeholders outside the sport sector.

Strong call for engaging the public regarding the benefits of sport and physical activity

Consultation participants identified four core benefits to participating in physical activity: benefits to physical health; benefits to mental health; direct social inclusion; and the building of community connectedness and cohesion.

Participants at the forums and online agreed that the physical health benefit of sport is the area of benefits currently best understood by the public, but that there is still some way to go to improve understanding and awareness among the public. In particular, participants pointed to health outcomes, such as movement minutes and obesity rates as evidence that more needs to be done to link preventative physical health activity with sports.

There was strong appetite among participants for a public awareness campaign directed at behaviour change. The 1970s campaign *Life. Be In It*, and its mascot, Norm, was mentioned at every forum.

Participants urged that an awareness campaign should tell a more complete story of the benefits of sport and physical activity, building on the physical benefits, but also highlighting social, mental health benefits and community benefits. Online submissions echoed the call for a more comprehensive public awareness campaign.

Participants felt the sport sector had not adequately conveyed the mental health benefits of physical activity to the public. To date, they believed the focus has been on “it’s good for you”, rather than “it feels good”.

They believed the latter message might have more traction, and is more aligned with modern Australians’ lifestyles, which are becoming increasingly individualised and focused on holistic approaches to health and wellbeing.

A nation-wide societal campaign that targets the fun and enjoyment of participating in sport, as well as the health benefits associated with playing sport or undertaking physical activity. (Online submission)

Participants also emphasised the value of direct social connection from engaging in sport. Forum participants and many of those who made an online submission gave examples of the social connectedness built through sport participation that improved their mental health and connectedness:

I need to go there, to be there, a purpose. (NSO forum participant)

Clubs become social organisations, not just competition managers and organisers. (Sports sector participant)

Finally, participants gave examples of sports as improving social cohesion and community connectedness. Sports and play activities give people the opportunity to connect and be part of something bigger. Countless participants gave examples of committed sports club volunteers who contributed to their sports club ‘communities’, and of youth programs which engaged disadvantaged or at-risk young people. Equally, individual sports and activities demonstrated peoples’ desire to ‘be part of something’, for example, runners who turn up every week to do a parkrun™ when they could choose to do the same run in the same park on their own.

In addition to a broader public awareness campaign, participants suggested a number of target groups who they believed could benefit from a targeted campaign to emphasise the positive benefits of physical activity.

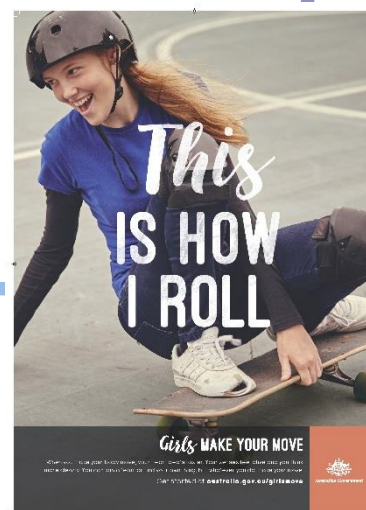
A number of participants at forums and through online submissions cited Girls Make Your Move, as an example of the kind of positive campaign that can target teenage girls, a group at risk of disengagement from sport. Other target groups included middle-aged men, new migrants and Indigenous Australians.

Participants reflected on the awareness of the contribution sport and physical activity makes to health and wellbeing, and the link between awareness and behaviour change. Other participants suggested awareness was not the critical issue; but rather people face barriers when starting sport and physical activity. They suggested that in order to better address preventative health, we have to address these barriers, which are further discussed in section 2.2.

GIRLS MAKE YOUR MOVE

The Department of Health launched the *Girls Make Your Move* campaign in 2016, aimed at engaging teenage girls (aged 12-19) in physical activity. The campaign follows a similar strategy to that undertaken by Sport England under the banner 'This Girl Can'. The campaign spreads a positive message that engaging in sport and physical activity is fun, sociable and feels great. It provides suggestions of activities, information on where to participate and vouchers for discounted participation, e.g. 30 days of free Jazzercise membership.

Participants in the consultation suggested this was a group at risk of dropping out of physical activity due to competing pressures and rising body image concerns. An evaluation found that 71 per cent of those who recalled seeing the campaign had done something as a result of seeing it, such as taking up more physical activity or looking up more information. One in five said they had actually done more physical activity as a result, and most of the target audience said that they felt more positively about engaging in sport than they had before seeing the adverts.



The Commission was keen to explore the perception across the sector of targeting public awareness efforts to the most sedentary Australians. Targeting the most sedentary has been a focus in the UK, based on the rationale that this strategy delivers the biggest return on investment. When asked, there was very little appetite among forum participants altered to target the most sedentary, with a focus instead on increasing participation among those who may once have been engaged, or encouraging more frequent participation. This is not unexpected, given the profile of participants at the forums.

Health delivery bodies and research organisations responding to the online submission process were more likely to provide suggestions for engaging sedentary people, reflecting on the experience in the UK. These emphasised the importance of reducing the barriers to entry to make people's first experiences of sport fun, and to reduce the risk of off-putting experiences, such as injuries, which might prevent them from re-engaging.

For sport to cater to those who are sedentary there must be an 'easy' and appealing entry point. Low-grade activity with a social focus that provides immediate enjoyment and guarantees an injury free experience. (Online submission)

The programs more likely to attract this demographic are less structured and competitive but encourage achievement of personal goals, social interaction, confidence, and provide an experience or challenge for the participant. (Online submission)

Support for working with health delivery bodies

Participants believed there was potential for greater collaboration between sports and health delivery bodies, such as the Heart Foundation, Diabetes Australia and beyondblue. While supportive, many participants felt there needed to be a clearer articulation of where the National Sport Plan sits within the Department of

Health, the Office for Sport and the Australian Sports Commission's strategic landscape, and that it should address how the agencies will work together to deliver sports and preventative health activities in partnership. Roles and responsibilities for the Plan are discussed further in section 4.

TRIATHLON & BEYONDBLUE

Triathlon NSW (TNSW), through its Community Sports Link Program, partners with other sporting organisations with aligned values, NSW Government Sport and Recreation Offices, educational institutions and charities. The program is designed to drive growth in the sport, as well as fulfil TNSW's social responsibility commitments.

TNSW with beyondblue worked to increase awareness and understanding on issues such as depression, anxiety, and suicide prevention in Australia. The program was focused on communicating the positive effect that active participation in sport can have on an individual's mental health, as well as creating an opportunity to improve understanding of mental health conditions within the triathlon community.

The partnership saw seasoned triathletes encouraged to take on a triathlon or multisport challenge in support of beyondblue, as well as promoted triathlon and multisport challenges to inexperienced triathletes via beyondblue. TNSW reported a 60-70% increase in participation at one particular event, and reported the event created a safe space for members to discuss issues of mental health.



Much of the discussion around the potential for collaboration with the health sector focused on the role of the GP. Many participants believed that GPs could play a greater role in advising their patients about the importance of sport and physical activity for improving and maintaining their physical and mental health.

GREEN PRESCRIPTION (NZ)

New Zealand's Green Prescription (GRx) initiative was launched in 1998 and is a health professional's written advice to a patient or their family to encourage and support them to become more physically active and to eat healthier as part of a total health plan. The initiative consists of two components: GRx (for adults) and the GRx Active Families program, which aims to increase physical activity for children, young people and their families, and was introduced in 2004.

Following issue of a GRx, a patient or their family is referred to a local provider who will encourage physical activity through face-to-face or telephone meetings for 3-4 months, or support in a group setting for 3-6 months.

Most referrals for GRx are to support prevention and management in patients with chronic disease and long-term conditions such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Core GRx funding of NZD3.784 million was provided, with additional an addition NZD1.6 million in one-off funding in July 2012. In May 2013 an additional NZD7.2 million, over the next four years, was allocated to the GRx budget to increase adult referrals, particularly for patients with pre-diabetes or diabetes.

The GRx has been devolved from Ministry level to district health boards, with the Ministry now maintaining a national overview of the initiative and monitoring progress through quarterly reports and annual surveys. Research has indicated the Green Prescription primary care intervention is effective over the longer term (2-3 years) for men and women.



Some questioned the success such an approach might have, noting GPs can be hard to engage and already play a role in giving health promotion advice. However, others suggested there was the potential for GPs to become hubs for information on sports clubs and activities in their local area, and could provide referrals to sports clubs, much as they might provide referrals to other health and community services. This builds on the idea of the Green Prescription from New Zealand (see box).

A further role for health providers was suggested, providing support and training to sports coaches and trainers working with more challenging demographics, such as people recovering from an injury, with mental health conditions or obesity. It was suggested many of the challenges engaging with these groups, who are among those most likely to benefit from regular physical activity. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was also presented as a particular opportunity, with people on the NDIS having more flexibility than they might have in the past to explore new sporting avenues:

I go ten pin bowling and we have a number of our bowlers who have NDIS plans and that includes ten pin bowling so they can travel interstate and that's funded, so that works well for us. (Sports sector participant)

Success in prevention requires cross-government collaboration

Participants discussed the critical importance of cross-government collaboration, as a precursor to any commitments in the prevention pillar. Recognising the increased scope of the Plan with regards to health promotion and prevention, it is necessary to outline how the Commission and the Office for Sport will work with health departments, as well as other government departments with a stake in health promotion. These include transport, to support active transport, and urban planning to support planning for open space and infrastructure.

Additionally, participants were keen to understand how the Plan would work across levels of government, given differing responsibilities for sport and health funding and policy at federal, state/territory and local government.

There is a need to review language that divides the health and sport sectors. (Online submission)

The delivery of sport involves all three tiers of government and a variety of agencies in each sector, including sport and recreation, health, education, infrastructure and Indigenous affairs, but there is inadequate co-operation between all these stakeholders, leading to inconsistent and ineffective delivery. (Online submission)

To fully harness the benefits of health prevention through sport and physical activity, participants also believe there needs to be effective regulatory interventions. These are discussed in section 3.2.

2.2. PARTICIPATION

Support for inclusion of a pillar focused on participation was extremely high. This is the primary issue of concern for the majority of organisations represented at the forums.

The perceived link between prevention and participation was strong, with many participants recognising that barriers to participation were those that hindered effective health promotion and prevention through physical activity. The critical issue identified across all forums and in many submissions is the issue of sport in schools.

Sport in schools the number one issue

The single biggest issue discussed at all forums was the perceived failure of sport in schools. As a participant in Darwin noted, “children are a captured market” and participants believe we do not currently do enough to capitalise on this target group during their time at school. School provides a key moment to establish good habits for life, by engaging children in physical activity and getting them enthusiastic about sport and healthy lifestyles.

Generally, the sector contends that sport must start when children are young, and continue throughout schooling. In addition, there was a feeling parents should be a key target for the Plan, to support a focus on the youngest Australians. Teenagers were also seen as particularly important, as this was a moment of transition where physical activity may lose priority in their lives:

Sport offers the essentials of wellness and teaches vital life skills that help develop children to adults. Skills such as team work, discipline, responsibility, and maturity are developed from sport. (Online submission)

That age group around 15-18, there's a lot of other pressures, academically and socially as well, but there doesn't seem to be any particular focus that holds or grows that teenage participation. (NSO forum participant)

The biggest opportunity is the inclusion of sport on the school curriculum, primarily through compulsory physical education (see Appendix C for current status). Suggestions included aligning the amount of time on the school curriculum to minimum requirements for movement, as well as requiring dedicated time for sport, such as an afternoon a week.

Several participants noted Australia measures children's development on literacy and numeracy indicators, but does not track their physical or health development. There was some support for a physical literacy or milestone measure, with several noting that measurement of fundamental motor skills ceases after early childhood:

The development of basic physical literacy should be deemed to be as important as reading, writing and arithmetic in schools given that it is an ongoing exercise habit which will provide the health benefits to keep a person alive, enabling them to enjoy the fruits of their education. (Online submission)

Participants were open to creative ways to include sport on the school curriculum. They see opportunities to weave sport and physical activity into the curriculum at all ages, for example, by tying it to the emphasis on the importance of play in early years, or linking it to science in later years.

Participants emphasised the importance of upskilling teachers in providing education on physical activity and tying it into the broader curriculum. Many participants spoke of a perceived 'brain drain' in schools. Over the past 20 years, with the reduction in sport in schools, there is a perception teachers have lost the capacity to teach sports and physical activity effectively:

School improvement is all about capacity building of teachers. So you'll take your sport to the schools, but you won't have a confident teacher who feels they can deliver the sport. (Sports sector forum participant)

Participants at all forums spoke about the need to work with departments of education on a number of fronts – to support the reintegration of sport and physical activity onto the curriculum, to support the training and capacity building of teachers, and to enable access to school facilities and infrastructure (see section 3.1).

Collaboration between education and the sports sector could help to address the critical transition points that the sector addressed (above). Participants believed that greater integration, for example, through the sharing of infrastructure or professional development opportunities, could strengthen relationships between schools and clubs to ensure there was local knowledge of sporting pathways for young people. Sporting Schools was also raised as a program which significantly strengthens relationships between clubs and schools (see box).

SPORTING SCHOOLS

The Sporting Schools Program is a \$160 million initiative of the Australian Government which works to increase school children's participation in sport, and to partner them with community sporting opportunities. The Commission has partnered with over 30 NSOs to deliver sport before, during and after school.

Sporting Schools provides a program for primary schools and a targeted program for Year 7 and 8 students in secondary schools. Sporting Schools programs are provided free to children and their families, underpinned by the quality assurance of NSO-endorsed sporting products.

Since the program commenced in 2015, over 5,800 primary schools have received funding. This has given more than 300,000 primary school students each term the chance to get active, engaged and have fun while sampling a variety of different sports.



Participants at the forums and via the online submissions, from across the sports sector, were highly supportive of Sporting Schools, particularly in the absence of more comprehensive and compulsory sports education. Participants believed it was an effective program for facilitating children and young people's access to sport, especially to a broad range of sports, as well as providing support for teachers and coaches.

Sporting Schools is a fantastic initiative, so that teachers don't have to know about all sports, coaches can come in and teach kids to play. (Online submission)

We believe that the diversity of sports supported through the Sporting Schools program is an excellent measure to increase the range of activities children are exposed to, and strongly support the proposed extension of Sporting Schools to Year 7 and 8 in high schools. (Online submission)

The Sporting Schools initiative is vital for improving physical activity participation by primary school-aged children. (Online submission)

Affordability a key barrier

Affordable access to sport was identified as a critical barrier to participation. At the forums, participants discussed how the traditional club membership model could be off-putting for some, as the cost was often prohibitive and required a long-term commitment.

In addition to membership fees, uniforms, equipment and transport are added costs for playing sport. As cost of living pressures in Australia increase, families especially are increasingly making cost-based decisions about which sports their children should play.

Participants at the forums highlighted flexible, affordable options to enable affordable access to sport:

- pay-as-you-go models, where you only have to pay for the sessions that you attend
- 'try before you buy' where you can try out a sport casually before making a commitment for the rest of the season.

This of course presents challenges to the business models of traditional clubs, designed to offer financial security to sports organisations. Many of the online submissions focused on the importance of providing financial ongoing support to clubs at the local level to ensure there were viable organisations offering opportunities to engage in sport. If funding cannot be found from alternative sources, costs are passed onto sports consumers, presenting a barrier to participation, and a challenge to the sustainability of the organisation:

Amateur sports [are] based on income from participants, and governments to allow various programs to be implemented across the State. Local governments need to be more supportive of other sports in their regions, so as not just to focus on the big, highly funded, commercial sports. (Online submission)

Consultation participants also suggested governments could assist to ensure affordable access to sport. At the Queensland forum, participants highlighted the *Get in the Game* vouchers which provide subsidised access to sport for young people on a healthcare card, removing cost as a barrier to families.



GET STARTED VOUCHERS

As part of the Get in the Game initiative, the Queensland Government provides 'Get Started' vouchers to children and young people to participate in sport and recreation. The vouchers provide up to \$150 of support for a young person aged 5 to 17 who holds, or whose parent/guardian holds, a Health Care Card. The voucher supports them to access activities at a sports club that has been pre-approved by the Queensland Government.

Feedback from participants at the Queensland forum and case studies on the Queensland Government website suggest the scheme has been effective in enabling young people to access sport where money has been a barrier. However, it should be noted that comprehensive evaluation data is not publicly available.

Affordable access was also seen to be linked to access to facilities. As discussed in section 3.1, participants generally believed more could be done to integrate across levels and portfolios of government to support access to facilities. Participants believed affordable access could be supported by better utilising the facilities and infrastructure already in place, for example, by supporting better access to school facilities out-of-hours. Parallels were drawn to the sharing economy, where people could rent shared community equipment. Examples were given of partnerships already occurring in some sports, e.g. kayaking and sailing, where equipment costs can be prohibitive, to illustrate the benefits of sports working together.

Modified formats represent strong participation growth potential

Several sports have taken steps to introduce modified formats and staging to reach new target audiences and adapt to the Australian public's changing lifestyles. People are increasingly time-pressured, are trying to fit in more activities with their children, and sports are competing against 'screen time'.

New, shorter formats have been introduced, such as 'Fast 4' tennis and 'Fast 5' netball. Furthermore, formats have been adapted to reach new audiences who might not participate in traditional club sports. For example, walking basketball is a modified, walking version of the game to support participation by a diversity of ages and abilities. Different formats allow modifications to be made to venues, seasons and to appeal to participants who might be put off by full versions of the sport.

Additionally, staging has been modified to fit busy work and family schedules:

We looked at having easier, flexible more accessible timings for sport. The traditional training through the week and the Saturday afternoon model isn't flexible enough for today's youth who may be working on the weekends or families working shifts and things like that. (Sports sector participant)

This means a willingness to be more creative. Several participants spoke of the WA taxi drivers' cricket league, which accounts for their shift work. A participant in Brisbane cited a daytime young mums' netball league that provided a crèche. Others discussed the role of technology in creating 'virtual competitions', whereby people measure their own performance on fitness trackers and 'compete' with others in their own time.

Participants at all forums recognised that for many people a critical element is that it is about 'participation, rather than competition'. Sports have been modified to recognise that people might be looking for other benefits outside competition, such as exercise, entertainment and socialising. Cardio Tennis is a modified format, which emphasises fitness over tennis skills; Night Owls Bowls is a social bowls format which has aimed to encourage more young people to take-up bowling.

While many sports have been successful in adapting formats, participants agreed that there was still room for more agility:

I think there is a real inertia in sport against change, particularly in conventional sports. It's interesting the sports that have had to respond to a commercial imperative seem to be much more flexible in terms of what they're prepared to deliver. (NSO forum participant)

Some feeling sporting stereotypes a barrier to participation

Participants raised the issue of role models they could identify with, and the reverse issue of damaging stereotypes while participants at all forums recognised the need to provide effective, realistic role models that encouraged people to participate in physical activity, many online submissions suggested that elite sportspeople could be effective in playing this role. However, others, both online and in the forums, suggested that elite role models can be potentially intimidating. This is especially the case for people who have been disengaged from sport for some time.

Some participants believed there were issues to be addressed in relation to sporting stereotypes for sport to reach a wider audience. Participants argued that some people were put off participating in sport because

they needed to see more people 'like them', flaws and all, represented in sport to realise that they too could participate. We also note the evidence suggests that realistic role models that are more closely aligned with the target audience are more effective.

I think sports needs to see some overweight people enjoying it and playing it. People need to relate to what they see and think maybe that's me, maybe I can do it and not be ridiculed and I will feel welcomed. Because all of our posters and media campaigns are just really sexy-looking people with great abs. I think the general community looks at that and goes 'that's not me'. Or if there is Muslim women with hijabs, they can't participate because there is no-one there that looks like them. (NSO forum participant)

'Sport' is not relevant to many and can be a bridge too far for many people. Physical activity is 'gettable'. (Online submission)

It is important to consider that the word 'sport' may actually have a negative impact on many people, particularly those for whom school sports days were unpleasant events. For some people, sport can be associated with being competitive, tough and only for highly coordinated or very fit people. (Online submission)

Tension between viewing and playing

A small number of forum participants noted there is a tension in major sports being driven to increase participation given they are invested in having large numbers of spectators to drive advertising revenue:

I think a problem is the awareness of sport currently in Australia is so skewed towards professional sport and then that leads to... sport for them is actually watching sport, so coming here and sitting down and being passive or watching on TV and I think sport needs to have an honest conversation. (NSO forum participant)

Sport is already a strong cultural element for Australia. We need to shift the cultural emphasis from a watching to a doing. (Online submission)

2.3. PERFORMANCE

Participants in the consultation recognised that performance was an important pillar for inclusion in the Plan, and noted high performance is the traditional operating space for the Commission. However, it presented a difficult question for the sports sector organisations to answer given that they are generally concerned with coordinating grassroots and community sports. For some NSOs, it was clear that they were conflicted in their dual responsibility to balance community sport and elite performance. These are very different issues for organisations, and indeed for the Commission, and balancing these issues will present a challenge in the Plan.

Need to redefine performance

Participants could see some of the merits of a strategy which pursues high performance measured in medal tallies. Firstly, they recognised that it was a useful measurement metric in a conversation where it is hard to define what 'high performance' is. Secondly, they recognised the benefits of medal tally success, in terms of civic pride, and resulting funding and sponsorship.

However, most participants were frustrated with the relatively narrow definition of high performance outlined in Australia's Winning Edge strategy. This partly reflects that many of the stakeholders attending the forums represented NSOs and SSOs that do not benefit from Australia's Winning Edge's definition of high performance.

When talking at an elite level, there was strong support to redefine 'high performance' and participants believed there were several dimensions that should be accounted for:

- growth in performance
- sustained performance over time
- high performance in seasonal sports
- performance in non-Olympic sports
- contribution to the sport sector as a whole, e.g. 'feeder' sports, such as wrestling, athletics and surf-lifesaving.

Support high performance sport in the same way as 'gifted' academics, artists (music, visual, etc). It's OK to encourage excellence, but don't get that confused with core issues such as physical literacy, physical education, and physical activity within the population. (Online submission)

The balance between spending on elite and grassroots sport is complex. Although the latter provides more general wellbeing results, the prestige and commercialism of sport via elite outcomes plays a crucial role in making sport attractive to the general population. (Online submission)

Participants were also clear that any high performance funding model must provide equity for high performance women's and disability sports, and transparency of the funding process. In particular, many submissions pointed to the recent success of the Women's Rugby 7s side and the launch of the AFLW, and of sportspeople with disabilities such as Dylan Alcott, as examples of where investment leads to both high performance outcomes and a community participation boost. Many also believed that the inclusion of women's sport went to the heart of integrity in sport (discussed in section 2.4).

Stories trump medals

Participants at several forums reflected that, to them, the purpose of high performance sport was to celebrate performance and to inspire others to participate. As such, it wasn't necessarily about the performance per se, but about the stories told about the performance:

The stories were more important than the medals and I felt last year watching the athletics girls it was fantastic watching the relay team, they were just so stoked where they achieved and how they achieved and personal bests and it didn't matter they weren't going to win the final and I think we need to understand what the goal is. (Sports sector participant)

Champion everyday sporting achievements. I frankly don't care if an elite athlete shaved two seconds off their record. I would rather see more about everyday achievements like my OzTag teammate who lost 10kgs through joining sport and feels better than ever. (Online submission)

Link between performance and participation encouraged

Participants strongly linked performance of a sport to the previous discussions around prevention and participation, reflecting that high performance is not simply about performance at an elite level, but about contribution at a community and grassroots level. When it came to determining a funding model for high performance, many suggested one that was linked to the number of people playing the sport at a community level and/or growth in the sport at a grassroots level. Participants at the forums believed that sports should be rewarded if they demonstrate high performance as well as good role models, strong partnerships, good leadership and good governance:

How can I feel national pride that a handful of 'elite athletes' have won an international competition when 70% of the population is overweight or obese? (Online submission)

Greater resources are required at a community sport level to ensure best population health outcomes are achieved. (Online submission)

Additionally, participants reflected that strong performance at an elite level does not indicate that a sport is 'healthy' at the grassroots. Particularly via the online submissions, participants reflected that the performance and participation pathway is cyclical, with high performance inspiring participation, but also that strong participation ensures a healthy performance pipeline. They believed that supporting sports with strong participation was a means to ensuring long-term high performance:

Always contribute to grassroots level because that's where the next lot are coming from. (Online submission)

While the Commission's ongoing review of the national institute network saw little focus placed on issues of improvements to the network throughout the forums, the online submissions did reflect the sector is generally supportive of the AIS. Participants recognised the value of the network for providing "cross-pollination" opportunities between sports, especially for smaller sports. However, there were calls for better coordination across the network, and frustration at the requirement for coaches and athletes to be based in Canberra.

Online submissions were also generally supportive of the AIS network, but believed there were a number of areas in which it could be strengthened. In particular, participants believed the AIS's talent identification pathways for athletes and coaches needed to be improved, and in a broader range of sports. Linked to this, participants also believed there has been a loss in the AIS's research capacity (see section 3.5). Some participants also reflected that the AIS could provide greater non-sport support for athletes, such as mental health and resilience, support, and guidance for their post-sport career.

Many of the successes enjoyed by Australian sport over the years has been due to of the revolutionary focus on sport science and medicine through the AIS and the State and Territories Institutes and Academies of Sport. Innovation has come through valuable collaborations with research institutes, universities and other relevant industry groups. For Australia to remain competitive continued investment in the capability of the AIS in sports science and technology is essential for elite athletes to achieve successful performances and in the other areas of study and research for sporting organisations to improve their capabilities so grow and provide for their participation communities. (Online submission)

Importantly, participants were keen to see how any discussion of performance in the National Sport Plan was linked with Australia's Winning Edge strategy, which is due to run until 2022.

2.4. INTEGRITY

Forum participants were advised the National Integrity in Sport Unit (NISU), within the Commonwealth Office of Sport, is undertaking a parallel process to the consultation with a specific focus on some of the high-profile national integrity issues – including doping, gambling and match-fixing. As a result, forum participants were encouraged to consider the issue of integrity within their local context.

For almost all forum participants, integrity meant creating suitable structures within their sport to ensure it was being played fairly and by the rules. Integrity was inescapably linked to good governance, particularly for NSOs:

Integrity was really what you want to stand for in sport and that really comes down to its rules versus behaviour/leadership. We've got a lot of policies which are the rules, but really, it's about the behaviour and the leadership. (Sports sector forum participant)

Whether you refer to it as integrity, governance, accountability, transparency - it's all similar things. (NSO forum participant)

It's not a doping or match fixing issue, it's an issue of maintaining the best objective grounds for these competitors to compete on. (NSO forum participant)

The primary strategy for achieving integrity within a sport, at the community, club or elite level was to clearly articulate the sport's values in a code of conduct and accompanying set of policies, and then thoroughly and effectively embed that throughout the sport to create a strong culture, which promotes positive behaviour.

Some online submissions believed that it was necessary to move beyond 'voluntary' codes of conduct, with greater criminal sanctions for sports integrity breaches or a sector-wide integrity body, similar to ASADA but with a broader remit. Several submissions acknowledged the role that the NISU already plays:

The NISU should take the strategic lead in this area with a focus on antidoping, illicit drugs, anti-match fixing and independent tribunals. (Online submission)

A model featuring a coordinated, consistent approach to sporting integrity matters would be preferred, although it is not practical to create an 'ASADA equivalent' for each stream of sporting integrity. (Online submission)

Some sports could give examples of positive cultures within their sport, led by their participants, such as ultimate frisbee, where games are self-regulated without umpires, and children's volleyball, where the emphasis at the end of the game is on congratulating your opponents before celebrating or commiserating with your teammates:

It has been shown by clubs in different sports across Australia that when they are well run and well governed, they are able to steadily increase their participation rates while also creating their own revenue streams and therefore becoming self-sufficient. I think for sport and clubs to be long-term successful they cannot rely on external finances for the majority of their income. (Online submission)

Other sports recognised embedding integrities might require an active education approach to ensure sports, at all levels, were incorporating their sound and fair values. This included peer education and effective role modelling:

TOP CLUB

The TOP Club program has been developed by the WA Sports Federation in consultation with several sports organisations in WA. The major aim of the program is to build better cultures in clubs that assist in tackling some of the integrity challenges surrounding a number of sports.

TOP Club engages club members in developing club values and identifying appropriate and inappropriate behaviour related to supporting and embedding those values as part of developing a club plan for the year.

The program uses a 5-pillar model including people, personality, processes, promotion and play. It is completed in three stages, including an online survey for members, a stakeholder workshop and development of a final report and action plan.

It goes all the way right back to the local club, local community level. I think we all face that in terms of the intersect between the law, community values and behaviours and the integrity of your sport and the role models that are so important for a segment of the community that look towards those people for role model sort of status. (NSO forum participant)

Stakeholders at every forum identified that parents and spectators were a significant challenge for clubs at the local level, with the overly competitive nature of a minority undermining the positive culture that a majority create for their children. Again, participants pointed towards using codes of conduct for parents and spectators to ensure they were aware of their obligations, effective signage and reminders of positive behaviour at games and practice as strategies to support improved integrity.

Participants were, to some extent, frustrated that integrity has come to be regarded as a 'sports' issue. For most sporting clubs, integrity issues are few and far between. Indeed, some participants suggested this is part of the problem, as when issues do arise, clubs often lack the knowledge and skills to effectively deal with problems. Some participants suggested there was a role for the Commission in acting as a knowledge facilitator to support sporting organisations and clubs when integrity issues arise so that they can be dealt with effectively.

Finally, participants identified that inclusivity is central to integrity in sport. That is, for sports to be truly fair and operating on an even playing field, they need to be open to all. Participants identified that women's sport remains an issue, particularly in relation to the availability of female friendly facilities. Additionally, they suggested sport needs to do more to appeal to changing community demographics, such as understanding what sports would most appeal to new migrants, and providing opportunities to engage with them. Opportunities to include these population groups must also be accompanied by supportive and empowering behavioural policies which challenge many of the stereotypes of sport as male-dominated and Anglo-Australian.

While sport is purportedly based on an ethos of fair play, competition and opportunities being equal, and is structured on the basis of a commitment to codes of ethics and conduct, unfortunately this isn't the reality. A small minority make it to the top levels of sport in competition, administration or as officials, but many do not because of structural and institutional barriers, discrimination, exclusion and inequality of opportunity. This is particularly true for women and girls, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people, LGBTI people and those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds. (Online submission)

MORELAND ACTIVE WOMEN AND GIRLS STRATEGY 2009

Moreland City Council laid out a strategy to increase women's and girls' participation in sport, particularly women and girls who are at school, from low income families, who do not speak English, who have a disability, or who are older than 65 years.



Moreland City Council

The strategy had several dimensions, including marketing at targeted demographics. However, critical to its success was capacity building with sports providers to ensure that clubs could work with women and girls. This included recruitment of more female volunteers, development of more female programs, enhancing sporting pathways for females (especially past junior competitions), preventing girls dropping out of sport, and promoting sport in schools. Investment was also made to develop suitable infrastructure, including suitable women's changing rooms, enclosed showers and improved lighting. The Strategy was also implemented into whole of Council policy and procedure.

Clubs were supported with resources, such as guidelines and audits to help them improve their own facilities.

Since 2009, female participation in sport in Moreland has increased from 8 per cent to 22 percent in 2017. The LGA now also has a number of senior women's teams in major sports, including AFL, athletics, cricket, netball and softball.

3. ENABLERS OF SUCCESS

In addition to the four pillars, the Minister's outline for the Plan included four key issues: sporting infrastructure; major events; governance; and funding, including the idea of a national good causes lottery. All four of these issues can be conceived of as critical enablers of success for the Plan. This section will discuss the four key issues identified for discussion throughout the consultation, as well as a small number of additional enablers identified during the process.

3.1. SPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Adequate infrastructure is a critical ingredient for growing sports participation. Forum participants in particular indicated they feel there is a lack of national emphasis on infrastructure funding currently, with a small number of participants reflecting on dedicated infrastructure funds that were available in the past.

Current shortfalls reportedly stifling growth potential

The shortfall in relation to infrastructure focused on three areas. Firstly, many sporting organisations clearly expressed the need for new infrastructure to support and grow participation. The online submissions clearly articulated the link between participation growth and the availability of suitable infrastructure:

A significant concern at grassroots sport level is the availability of facilities for that participation to take place. Indeed, in NSW, this may be the most pressing issues of all with regard to community sport.
(Online submission)

A priority of Australian sports must be to ensure that there is sufficient sports infrastructure at the local level to enable people of all ages to participate as fully as possible in the sport or physical activity of their choice. (Online submission)

While there are several barriers to evolving formats to encourage broader participation, a lack of facilities to expand sporting offers was consistently raised. Furthermore, a lack of appropriate facilities can undermine the current operations of sporting organisations, for example by forcing them to field games at inappropriate times due to a lack of facilities:

We have to use space reasonably densely in terms of participants and move to less preferable time slots.
(NSO forum participant)

Infrastructure and funding are linked in a big way, in that currently there is no sporting infrastructure fund...if the role of this Plan could be that it gets placed back on the agenda it's a good opportunity to do so. (NSO forum participant)

In addition to a lack of focus on funding new sporting infrastructure, a need to invest in maintaining and updating ageing infrastructure was also emphasised. The need to maintain and update infrastructure was to ensure facilities remain not only safe and attractive venues likely to attract participants, but also to ensure venues are suitable for the players and conditions. For example, the lack of air-conditioning in indoor venues was noted by several organisations.

You see big capital investments but little consideration given to the ongoing maintenance. Part of the funding decisions on smaller assets needs to consider the long-term viability. (NSO forum participant)

Probably less than 5% of Australian indoor venues have air-conditioning, compared to 95% in the US.
(Sports sector forum participant)

Finally, access to sporting facilities also poses a challenge. Many organisations and individuals expressed their frustration that high-quality venues are inaccessible due to school or council regulations. This lack of access to suitable facilities is a particular challenge for non-traditional and non-organised sporting occasions. The value of random play was emphasised in terms of engaging kids and those disengaged from traditional, organised sports, which is reportedly increasingly difficult to facilitate with restricted access to green spaces and other facilities. This issue underscores the importance of collaboration across areas and levels of government.

Despite these barriers, the sector articulated a number of clear strategies to encourage increased and more effective investment into infrastructure.

Collaboration key to infrastructure improvements

A multi-sport approach was seen as vital to unlocking the value of existing facilities as well as driving investment into new facilities. With the aim of increasing the utilisation rate of any facility, the sector clearly supported the approach of working together to develop new, or update existing multi-use facilities. A multi-sport approach was recognised by many as a significant cultural change for a sector more accustomed to competition than collaboration.

It comes down to looking at sustainable quality multi-use facilities and ways we can create thriving community hubs. We need to look to venues that can support the casual participation movement. (Sports sector forum participant)

This collaborative approach to funding infrastructure was not seen as restricted to sports working together. Several participants raised examples of partnerships with other community organisations to develop or update facilities that serve as 'community hubs' rather than just sporting venues. For example, Surf Life Saving Tasmania had worked with Sailing Tasmania and a local school to develop a shorefront facility that supported both sports, as well as providing an outdoor classroom for the school. To facilitate this style of collaboration, many participants discussed the importance of considering co-investment models as opposed to a more traditional means of unlocking capital for infrastructure.

Ultimately the one passion is to get people into the water safely so we see that's a really good case study for lifesaving clubs [to partner with community organisations]. There are days and weeks that they're not being used so there are conversations between clubs and the organisations that are surrounding them. (Sports sector forum participant)

These alternative approaches to sourcing funding and pooling investment to support infrastructure development prompted some to note a role for the Commission in upskilling the sector. Many organisations recognise the changing landscape in relation to funding new and existing infrastructure, and would like to see the Commission guide the sector in relation to potential sources of alternative funding and co-investment models.

I think this is an area where the Commission could play a role with leadership and capability development and help sports in terms of finding other pots of money, thinking about co-investment to maximise the usage of facilities. (NSO forum participant)

Finally, there was a strong call for the sector to consider a different approach to calculating value of the sporting infrastructure. Aligned to the perceived opportunity to frame sport as offering considerable health and social benefits for individuals, as well as social and cultural capital for communities, many proposed calculating the value of sporting infrastructure based on the value generated for the community in its broadest sense, rather than just for the individual participants and associated businesses who may benefit from investment into facilities.

When you're thinking about infrastructure there's some measurement needed around actually what it delivers to the community. (NSO Forum participant)

3.2. MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS

The consultation focused on major events in terms of prioritising investment, the role for major sporting events compared to second-tier events, and the need to ensure major events leave a positive legacy for the community.

Currently, major events are largely seen as a tourism rather than sporting concern, with return on investment largely viewed in terms of economic impact for the event location, rather than in terms of growing participation or otherwise impacting the sport (with the exception of potentially developing new infrastructure that leaves a positive legacy). While this heavy focus on tourism associated with major events is largely accepted by the sports sector, there was a desire to see more transparency with regard to how decisions regarding major events are made and to potentially support regional areas with the staging of major events:

An agreed joint government plan for tourism bodies should be established to identify and work actively with sports to prioritise, ensure infrastructure is maximised and assets renewable is effectively managed to cater for both major city and regional upgrades. (Online submission)

Whilst the largest domestic and international events are focused on the major cities, many smaller events take place in regional Australia and can provide a significant boost to regional economies. (Online submission)

Second-tier events are viewed quite differently by the sector, and are seen as offering strong potential to drive participation and community involvement due to their less professionalised nature. While it is largely accepted that top-tier events are focused on entertainment, while second-tier events offer greater community impact potential, there was a desire to see major sporting events leverage their activities to more effectively drive positive community impact. For example, one forum participant suggested a sport should be bound to a 'one for one' policy – where the staging of a major event should mandate the staging of a community-level event that leaves a positive legacy for the community in relation to participation or infrastructure.

We should have a better system that leverages major events so we can also tie them in with grassroots, to create a longer living benefit. Nothing's really tied together appropriately to give every sport or every local community an example of how they could leverage off events like the Tour Down Under for example. (Sport sector forum participant)

We're supportive of getting the second-tier events, because it leads to people getting involved in participation. (Sports sector forum participant)

There was also a call for better collaboration to maximise the legacy of major and second-tier events. With a focus on the importance of multi-use venues and workforce development, many participants discussed the importance of early multi-sport collaboration to ensure the facilities and practices in place for events offer optimum ongoing value to the sporting community.

From a sporting point of view, regardless of the size these events give a boost to bringing in the ranks of volunteers into the sport, which will then hopefully provide a legacy going forward to support those sports far into the future. (Sports sector forum participant)

3.3. FUNDING

Four key issues emerged in relation to funding for sports: the need to consider alternative methods of funding as business models in sport evolve; a strong call for regulatory and other interventions to better support high-performance and grassroots sport and recreation; a desire to see greater transparency and consistency with regard to funding allocation; and a discussion regarding the proposed national good causes lottery.

New sources of funding accepted as necessary

NSOs and to a lesser extent SSOs recognise the sports landscape is changing. While the Coalition of Major Professional and Participation Sports (COMPPS) have developed effective business models, many of the smaller NSOs spoke of the challenges in relation to adjusting to new business models, no longer based predominantly on membership revenues. Aligned to these shifting business models, many NSOs expressed an interest in new approaches to funding their activities. For example, NSOs discussed co-investment with community organisations and health delivery bodies to fund facilities and deliver programs. There was also an interest in impact investing structure such as Social Impact Bonds and Payments for Outcomes contracting, and collective impact models – where several organisations share central functions such as information technology, human resources and marketing – to relieve NSOs of back-end administrative costs.

Sport has evolved from a very volunteer based type of organisation into a business, and we are all at different points along the pathway. As with any other business, sport should be looking at how we diversify what we offer. Not many sports are agile anymore enough to be ahead of the game – because at the moment sport is just not quick enough to be able to do it themselves. (NSO forum participant)

We've all got our own offices, we've all got our own admin, our own finance. If NSOs could have a common back office in a facility it would be extremely helpful. (NSO forum participant)

Philanthropic support was also identified as a source of potential funding throughout the forums and the submissions, with several submissions noting the good work of the Australian Sports Foundation. NSOs noted any increased role for philanthropy in funding sport would involve a cultural shift given Australia does not have a strong culture of sports-giving compared to arts- or higher education-giving. Despite several mentions of the Australian Sports Foundation, persistent structural barriers (sports organisations generally not meeting the legal meaning for charity to earn deductible gift recipient (DGR) status required to receive donations) for the sector were raised:

[Australia should] continue to provide more opportunities for philanthropic donations to sport through vehicles such as the Australian Sports Foundation. Look at tax rules that will allow more people to support sport through this mechanism [and others like it]. (Online submission)

Strong appetite for regulatory intervention

A strong and consistent theme throughout the consultation was the support for government and industry intervention to fund sport and physical activity directly, and to reduce the financial barriers to access.

Proposed taxation interventions focused on perceived negative influences on sports and physical activity. Almost all forums proposed taxing gambling providers to fund sports and physical activity, given their increasing visibility in organised sport, and this was strongly supported by most. Taxing alcohol and unhealthy food providers was also raised and supported (particularly a sugar tax throughout many submissions), given the impacts of these products were viewed as counter to the objectives of the Plan and sports and physical activity generally:

Increase regulation – especially around betting, alcohol and fast food advertisements. There is a confused message being sent. (Online submission)

The British government estimates it will raise AUD860 million in the first year from the Soft Drink Industry levy on sugary drinks. The revenue from the levy will be spent on school physical education and sport provision and breakfast clubs in England. (Online submission)

In addition to taxation, a range of financial levers were proposed to incentivise participation in sport including private health or Medicare levy rebates or tax deductibility for money spent on sports and physical activity such as gym memberships, club memberships, uniforms, travel, equipment and event entry fees. In a culture where there are significant time and financial barriers to accessing sports and physical activity for many, these interventions were strongly supported across the sector.

If you can prove that you're involved in an organised sport and you've been playing X amount, then you can get a discount on your Medicare levy. (Sports sector forum participant)

What are some of those things that could break down excuses, and provide incentives. Not just live a long life, but tax implications, Medicare benefits. (Sports sector forum participant)

Sector wants greater transparency and consistency in government funding

While the forums focused on the merits of funding participation growth versus high performance, and the appropriate ways to link and balance these priorities, several of the submissions focused on funding allocation:

The primary challenge in relation to the current funding models relates to transparency into the criteria used, and more specifically the pathway for achieving a new milestone (i.e. increased funding) within the criteria used. Understanding the avenues and benchmarks for a sport to work towards in order to obtain additional funding will ensure a focused organisation and ensure sport strategies align to government objectives. (Online submission)

To assist government agencies to fairly and reasonably distribute funds, [organisation] suggests a consistent framework for grant allocation across all levels of government be developed and reviewed with established measure targets. The guidelines can then help to bring alignment to local, state and national sports organisations. (Online submission)

Unsurprisingly, the sector is highly competitive in relation to securing funding, and there was a strong call to improve the level of transparency in regard to how funding decisions are made, and to provide a greater level of consistency so that sports may plan in the medium and longer term based on funding certainty.

National good causes lottery supported by most

Overall, the idea of a national good causes lottery was supported in the consultation. The primary opposition among those opposed to the approach was based on the inherent contradiction in voicing concern regarding the increasing influence of gambling in sport, and simultaneously instituting a lottery to fund sport. To a lesser extent, there was some concern regarding undermining existing lotteries, particularly in Western Australia where LotteryWest has a strong community impact and reputation:

There's deep integrity questions about running a lottery to run sports funding. We talk about gambling as a problem and then we're gambling to fund sport. (Sports sector forum participant)

I think it's a predatory product. (Sports sector forum participant)

However, the majority reasoned that not being dependent on the outcome of a game made a lottery an acceptable means of funding sport, and several forum participants were able to cite the strong positive impact of the UK lottery, further supporting the argument in favour of the approach. This is not an unexpected position in a sector battling for adequate funding for their activities:

A direct example of the National Lottery Fund in Great Britain...In the lead up to Rio, our budget was \$900,000, there's was eight million pounds, with a dedicated training facility. (Sports sector forum participant)

Several forum participants did raise the importance of articulating the intended and actual outcomes of the national good causes lottery. They indicated to gain initial support and maintain ongoing interest, positive success stories of opportunities enabled by the fund should be communicated to the public:

I think for the lottery to be successful, the Australian community will have to have a real understanding of how that money is being used. Be it high performance or participation. (NSO forum participant)

3.4. GOVERNANCE

Overall, discussions regarding governance in sport, and the appropriate roles for Commonwealth, state/territory and local government, and NSOs, SSOs and community organisations attracted relatively little attention throughout the forums. A dedicated process focused on governance facilitated by the Commission in 2015, as well as the system of governance framework established in the *National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework* released in 2011, have given the sector the opportunity to provide feedback and there was a call to build on this work rather than duplicate it. However, the online submission did focus on governance.

NSOs in particular reflected on the challenges associated with federated models:

Federated structures are now proving archaic and are stagnating growth in participation and business practice. (Online submission)

While previously, the federated structure increased competition and created Australia's sporting prowess, it is now a hindrance to Australia's international sporting success. Research has shown there is a lack of collaboration and duplication of tasks around the states, with resources and funding not being used effectively. (Online submission)

Furthermore, NSOs emphasised that pressure across the sector to evolve their business models posed a set of governance challenges. As membership revenues fall, several NSOs discussed the challenges associated with commercialising their sports in other ways. By evolving business models from member-based organisations to those generating revenue through advertising, product and merchandise sales, and/or other means, many NSOs indicated a lack of skill within their current staff to shepherd these changes through successfully:

Sport is undergoing an evolution from volunteer administered to operating as a business. Different sports are at different stages along this journey and as such sports hold different levels of capability and resources. [Organisation] encourages the Australian Government to lead, develop and empower sport administrators and Sport Board members in understanding what is and how to embody the 'business of sport'. (Online submission)

This need for capacity building raises the potential for the Commission to play a role in upskilling organisations to modify business models, including appropriate governance structures.

3.5. OTHER KEY ENABLERS OF SUCCESS

While not contained in the proposed key issues released by the Commission, several other key enablers were consistently raised throughout the consultation process.

Workforce development critical to growth

A strong theme throughout the consultation was the perceived devaluing of the sports sector workforce, as evidenced by a lack of investment in professional development, spanning volunteers, coaches and teachers.

The sports sector currently employs approximately 220,000 people and depends on the efforts of 1.8 million volunteers across Australia.² This very heavy reliance on volunteers was consistently identified as a barrier to growing participation, especially within an increasingly time-poor society and in light of the range of legal and regulatory hurdles which volunteers must pass:

I think we're moving away from the traditional idea that people are going to volunteer in all our sports so what does volunteer development look like going forward and how reliant we are on volunteers? Volunteer development, retention and attraction is a big thing in order for sport to grow and prosper. (Sports sector forum participant)

While many NSOs, SSOs and community organisations strongly support the development of modified formats to encourage participation, an evolution of how or when physical activity or sports take place requires additional commitment from existing volunteers or the recruitment of new volunteers. Furthermore, there is a feeling across the sector that the volunteer workforce requires capacity building and development to step up to the increasingly skilled and complex tasks required of them:

The skilled workforce, the maturity of that workforce needs to improve. We need to really focus on an approach with local clubs to help them mature and really define roles and responsibilities. We're asking volunteers to do a lot more and they haven't necessarily got the support around them to succeed. (Sports sector forum participant)

When you think about adding sports and additional activities, it's an 'and' not an 'or' and you're relying on volunteers. (NSO forum participant)

Consequently, the development of the volunteer and paid workforce in the sports sector was identified as a key enabler to growth and success.

The submissions in particular focused on a perceived lack of capacity of coaches, both at the grassroots and elite levels. Many submissions noted while Australia has a history of high quality coaches, many of these individuals are at the end of, or have finished their careers, and there is a lack of emerging coaching talent. They highlighted a lack of investment of time and funding in professional development as driving this trend:

Coaching standards across many Australia sports have deteriorated in Australia. There has been a 'brain drain' and retirements in coaching ranks, which have not been addressed. The AIS has always been the leader in sports medicine and science – the world has copied this. The AIS needs to become the champion and perhaps the deliverer of more sophisticated coach education programs...there needs to be a higher, more rigorous standard, for the serious elite coaches. (Online submission)

Train, educate and engage more coaches from various ethnic groups to become leaders and mentors within their communities. (Online submission)

Finally, given teachers in most jurisdictions are no longer required to teach sport and physical activity, the consultation also revealed a concern regarding this element of the workforce being ill prepared to engage kids and effectively teach these skills:

Employ in-house 'PE mentors' to assist classroom teacher to deliver quality physical education and sport sessions. (Online submission)

Health and social impacts data required to better articulate the value of the sector

The consultation demonstrated a high level of confidence across the sector of sport and physical activity's value in delivering economic benefits, promoting health, preventing chronic disease including mental illness and building strong social networks and community connectedness. However, many participants felt the sector is lacking data to tell this complete story of value – noting that participation or membership data only paints a partial picture of impact.

We don't value the social capital sport provides and so we don't put the money back. That's a challenge and it's not linked to policy at the Federal level. (Sports sector forum participant)

² Intergenerational Review of Australian Sport 2017, The Boston Consulting Group, 2017.

While economic impact studies regarding the sector as a whole, or sports or events specifically, are seen as highly valuable, forum participants supported a greater focus on measuring and placing value on the health and social impacts of sport and physical activity for Australians. This exploration of the health and social return on investment of sports was seen as a critical input to leveraging the necessary funding to grow participation.

We talk about a National Sport Plan. It's almost a national community plan, of which sports is one component. I think we've got a good opportunity to maximise engagement with some of that broader thinking. (NSO forum participant)

Does community drive sport, or does sport drive community? (Sports sector forum participant)

Significant value exists in the existing research and evidence-base

Consultation participants did not directly nominate the existing evidence-base as an enabler of progress. However, the consultation did reveal a strong level of support for the insights work the Commission has produced, despite not always being aware of its existence. For example, the identification of a targeted marketing approach to encourage participation in sports and physical activity led many to suggest market segmentation as a useful foundation for this approach, although were not always aware of the Commission's two market segmentation reports released in 2013. Furthermore, the *Intergenerational Review of Australian Sport* goes some of the way in relation to providing health and social impacts data as discussed above (although it should be noted this was publicly released during the consultation period so low levels of awareness are to be expected).

There is an opportunity to use the National Sport Plan as a strategy to activate the strong existing research and evidence-base to encourage application of these insights in planning and delivery.

Technology can play a role for participants and organisations

While the increasingly sedentary lifestyle of many Australians is often associated with the growth of 'screen-time', technology was also consistently identified as a potential enabler of growing participation. Technology was seen as playing a potential role with regard to encouraging participation, as well as to assist sporting organisations.

The consultation identified the potential of technology to play a role in relation to recruiting new participants via engaging potential participants online and converting spectators to participants, motivating participants via use of tracking data, competitions and online communities, and in blending technology and activity via examples such as Pokémon Go, Laser Tag or virtual competitions.

Last year we held our first indoor rowing championships and although it's not really an elite event, it's a mass participation event. We adapted the concept from other countries and it was a virtual championship so people could do it in their home state over a 2-week period. We certainly got good numbers for the first year, around 700 and we hope to get up to about 1,000 in year two. (NSO forum participant)

For organisations, several forum participants acknowledged the important role of digital infrastructure in planning and delivering sports and physical activity. Examples included interactive maps of facilities, technology to simulate training, and creation of engaging user platforms for registration, hosting competitions and other interactions with participants.

Digital infrastructure to support sporting infrastructure is important, especially as we look to more multi-use facilities. (Sports sector forum participant)

We're trialling in Victoria and hoping to roll out in the next year or two these virtual reality simulators to take into the schools. (Sports sector forum participant)

4. PROPOSED PLAN ELEMENTS

The Commission has committed to detailing actions against the four pillars and providing guidance on the role of the four identified key issues within the National Sport Plan. The following section outlines some proposed additional elements of the Plan. These elements represent the critical scaffolding for a plan of this kind, to ensure it responds to the calls for clarification from the sector, that success is measurable and there is an agreed plan for implementation.

4.1. TITLE AND SCOPE

The Minister announced the development of a National Sport Plan, and this has been the working title throughout the consultation period. However, the Commission have acknowledged the Plan is not a 'national plan' in the traditional sense – that is, it is not focused on the interaction and integration between the Commonwealth and the states/territories, and it will not seek endorsement from the states/territories. While this potential point of confusion was only raised at a small number of forums, to avoid future confusion regarding responsibilities for implementation and funding arrangements, it is recommended the Commission consider replacing 'National' with 'Australian/Commonwealth' to reflect the authorising context of the document.

Furthermore, there is an opportunity to reposition the Plan as focused more broadly than sport, to cover issues of physical activity (including sports) and health promotion, by naming the Plan differently. A recent international example is the United Kingdom's Towards an Active Nation.

Sport needs to find better language to help government understand why it's so important to invest. We tend to trend to sport language - winning, medals, health, fitness, energy. Until we as sport can come together and find language that connects to what's important to government, we're not going to make the big changes we need. (NSO forum participant)

4.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

There was a strong call from many involved in the forums to see a clear and bold vision and set of guiding principles and accompanying rationale articulated as part of the Plan. This call was largely based on two issues. Firstly, the proposed Plan does not represent an update of an existing document, so there is a need to clearly lay out the intentions and parameters of the document for stakeholders. Secondly, many stakeholders felt the Plan demonstrates a shift in focus for the Commission, so are seeking a clarification of the Commission's remit and sphere of influence. In particular, the inclusion of the prevention pillar significantly broadens the set of relevant stakeholders to include health, although some submissions expressed concern this could undermine the sense of ownership of the Plan:

No one in the sector currently takes responsibility for or sets the direction of the sector. There is no bold vision that unites the key stakeholders and shines the spotlight on an ambitious positioning, which would allow each organisation to understand how they contribute to this overarching vision. (Online submission)

Across all forums, although most strongly among NSOs, participants indicated the Commission has traditionally been associated with planning for high performance and participation. While the move into sports and physical activity as a strategy to lessen the health burden in Australia made intuitive sense to most participants, there was a strong desire to hear the rationale for this shift in focus. Many participants assume this integrated focus of the Plan on health promotion and the more traditional areas of sports performance, participation and integrity is due to the structure of the Office of Sport being contained within the Commonwealth Department of Health. Other participants questioned whether the newer focus on health promotion signalled a shift away from a focus on high performance for the Commission.

Why is government funding sport? There has to be a clear rationale. Why is government funding high-performance sport? (NSO forum participant)

You must explain why prevention is one of the four pillars and then how prevention relates to the core business of the Australian Sports Commission - which is sport. There seems to be a shift in terms of core business and the other areas I can completely understand, but I do struggle with understanding why prevention is one of the four pillars. (NSO forum participant)

4.3. ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER RELEVANT POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Based on the perceived shift in focus of the Plan, there was a strong call from forum participants to locate the National Sport Plan within the broader policy context. This was strongly felt at the dedicated preventative health forum, in relation to the national preventative health agenda, as well as in relation to existing strategic commitments of the Commission and education.

The Commission's existing participation and high-performance strategies, *Play. Sport. Australia.* and *Australia's Winning Edge*, were raised by forum participants as setting the current strategic direction for the Commission and the sector. Particularly in relation to high-performance and Australia's Winning Edge, the sector indicated a clear desire for the new Plan to state whether it supports the direction outlined in 2012, or will supersede this vision.

Extending beyond the sports sector, the consultation called for the Plan to reference where it sits within cross-portfolio policy contexts. Specifically, the pillar focused on prevention prompted many participants to suggest the Plan should reference health promotion and other disease prevention strategies. The National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Health Council's National Strategic Framework for Child and Youth Health, the National Mental Health Plan and the National Disability Strategy were all raised as potentially relevant policies to coordinate with, to make clear the degree of alignment and integration within the Plan.

We are looking forward to a national, integrated approach to guide policy. (Preventative health forum participant)

While specific strategies or policies were not mentioned in the education sector, there was a strong call for better alignment between the objectives of the National Sport Plan and curriculum at a national and jurisdictional level.

4.4. PRIORITY POPULATIONS

Several priority populations or specific target groups were identified throughout the consultation for special or tailored consideration in the Plan. These groups were segmented by participants in two ways – demographically, or according to a specific lifestage.

The demographic groups were largely identified as priorities based on access barriers and included:

- women
- people with disability
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- people from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- people living in rural and remote areas.

Women and people with disability received particularly strong focus in the online submissions, as priorities for specific attention in the Plan. In relation to people with disability, there was a call to improve the accessibility of sporting infrastructure to provide more opportunities for participation for this group, as well as the importance of considering modified formats to enable access:

Sporting organisations could be encouraged/incentivised to connect with disability and the aged care service providers to support participation in modified sports – in and out of service facilities. (Online submission)

It is critical that a National Sport Plan consider the future needs of the population, and uses the opportunity to promote non-traditional sports (such as walking soccer or walking basketball) which can be enjoyed by those who are less active or who may have a disability. (Online submission)

There was also significant support for placing emphasis on women in the Plan. Concern was expressed that women hadn't received equitable support in relation to high performance opportunities in Australia, and NSOs repeatedly stressed women are an under-represented group in terms of participation:

Investment must be made to ensure the inclusiveness of everyone, particularly women and girls. (Online submission)

A major barrier to growing female participation is the lack of opportunities to play given that there are relatively few local girls competitions and even fewer teams. (Online submission)

In addition, women were identified as a key priority in relation to engaging groups at risk of disengagement at a grassroots level. There was a clear intersection between women as a priority group, and the lifestage groups identified.

These lifestage groups tended to be based on behavioural characteristics, mainly a high drop-off rate due to competing pressures in their lives, and included:

- adolescent girls aged 15-18, who tend to drop-out of participating in sport due to body image, confidence and other reasons
- men and women aged 18-25, whose participation declines in a post-school or post-tertiary education sports setting
- men and women following starting a family, when time pressures can see sports and physical activity decline
- older Australians, who may not be aware of the variety of traditional and non-traditional sports and physical activity options suitable for their age group.
- It is recommended these priority populations and lifestages should be specifically mentioned in the Plan given the low participation rate of these groups. While these cohorts should be acknowledged as deserving specific attention in planning and delivery, the Plan need not necessarily tailor actions for each (although special consideration may be warranted for women and people with disability given the attention they received).

A 'Diversity in Sports and Physical Activity' section within the introductory sections to set the scene and establish the guiding principles will allow the Plan to make a case for the sector to be responsible for considering the full spectrum of diversity and responding accordingly.

4.5. OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

Reporting on the progress of any reform is essential in order to know that the commitments are being delivered, and that they are making a difference. An annual reporting process for the Plan should be established that provides timely public reports on the implementation of the National Sport Plan. This reporting process should ideally include a set of high-level outcomes measures for each of the agreed actions contained within the Plan, and support the continued development of a richer set of measures relevant to the sector.

National reporting should ideally be based on information that has been collected and refined through local use. While the Commission already has significant data resources through AusPlay, Sporting Schools and other membership and participation data, it is expected the development of outcomes measures for the Plan and a corresponding measurement and reporting framework may require some planning and investment.

The data required to monitor progress of the Plan is wide-ranging, complex and in some cases sensitive, and is collected by a wide range of providers.

The sector is strongly supportive of a renewed focus on measurement:

Develop measurable and trackable objectives that can be used to regularly report performance....Provide regular updates back to the sector regarding areas of success and challenges that require new/different approaches. (Online submission)

It is important that the government commits to ongoing (at least on a triennium basis) monitoring and surveillance of physical activity and sport participation so that the effectiveness of implementation of the National Sports and Physical Activity Plan can be determined. Specific sectors can also contribute to monitoring and surveillance (e.g. education, health, transport, sport etc.). Specific major programs should also be regularly evaluated so that return on investment can be determined. (Online submission)

It possible the Commission may be in a place to propose a set of national indicators as part of the Plan's publication. Alternatively, the outcomes measurement and reporting section of the Plan may be dedicated to development of appropriate national indicators.

4.6. ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

A plan of this kind would traditionally include a description of the proposed governance arrangements, reflecting the commitment to accountability for the operationalisation and success of the plan. In the case of the National Sport Plan, given the sports-specific meaning of the term 'governance', it is proposed a section outlining the Accountability Framework or similar is included.

The Accountability Framework should establish an Implementation Group, which might include members from:

- the Australian Sports Commission
- the Office of Sport
- state/territory sport and recreation representatives
- cross-governmental representatives including from health, education and transport
- health delivery body representatives
- a small number of NSO representatives, to represent the sector rather than individual sports
- a small number of community/consumer representatives
- peak and advocacy body representatives to give voice to priority populations.

The Implementation Group would have three core roles. The first is to advocate on behalf of the Commission, and to promote the priorities expressed in the plan to key decision-makers, funders and policy-makers. The second core role is to identify and pursue strategic activities that support achievement of the Plan's vision, including alliance building and strategy development. The third core role is to both enable and maintain accountability for implementation of the Plan. This role has a focus on prioritising and selecting a small number of actions (2-3) each year that require higher-order collaboration or co-creation by partners across the sector and government portfolios to bring about change. The Implementation Group could be supported by focused Steering Groups, dedicated to progressing each pillar.

Internal accountability should be maintained through reporting of results to the Implementation Group, while external accountability is supported by a regular stakeholder forum/consultation to provide a transparent mechanism for actions and progress achieved under the Plan to be reviewed.

Effective implementation should be supported and coordinated by a dedicated secretariat, hosted by the Commission (as the chair).

Roles and responsibilities should be identified within the National Sport Plan. Ensuring a correct understanding of these responsibilities is essential and so too is the adequate resourcing of each respective party so that they can competently and effectively implement their role. (Online submission)

Because physical activity is multi-sectoral, responsibility for getting all Australians participating in sport and physical activity does not reside with one single government portfolio. Such diffusion of responsibility has potentially hindered previous efforts to develop and implement a national physical activity plan. Therefore, coordination is vital as no single sector can effectively deliver such a plan on its own. To achieve the long-term vision of this Plan, it is important to locate a multi-sector taskforce within the Prime Minister's Office. History at the State level has shown that the longest surviving Physical Activity Taskforces, were those located in the Premier's Office. This does not mean to imply that the Prime Minister's Office will be solely responsible; this should be a shared responsibility across sectors. (Online submission)

GLOSSARY

AIS	Australian Institute of Sport
ASC	Australian Sports Commission
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
COMPPS	The Coalition of Major Professional and Participation Sports consists of AFL, ARU, Cricket Australia, FFA, NRL, Netball Australia, and Tennis Australia. Each of these organisations is the governing body and custodian of a major professional sport in Australia. The role of COMPPS is to provide a collective response on behalf of its member sports where their interests are aligned.
DHB	District Health Board
DGR	Deductible Gift Recipient
GRx	New Zealand's Green Prescription
High performance sport	In general, high performance sport is focused on developing athletes to succeed at the highest possible level of competition e.g. Olympics, World Championships, Professional Sports Leagues (NBA, AFL, NRL etc.). This encompasses a pathway from junior competition through to international success, but is defined by being focussed towards the ultimate aim of world class performance.
LGA	Local Government Area
Major sports	Major professional sports are the COMPPS sports.
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NISU	National Integrity in Sport Unit
NSO	National Sporting Organisation
Non-organised sport	Informal sport participation such as jogging around the lake, cycling with friends, swimming at your local pool (outside of competition or club activity).
Organised sport	Sport participation through an organisation like a club, association, community group, gym, leisure centre, private studio.
Physical activity	Physical activity encompasses any bodily movement that requires energy expenditure. Sport is a subset of physical activity that meets the definition of sport above. Physical activity also includes: exercise – anything you do for fitness such as going to the gym, doing a workout/fitness activities; and recreation – anything you do for fun in your spare time which is physically active such as dancing or going for a bush walk.
SDSR	State Department of Sport and Recreation
Second-tier sport	Second-tier professional sports would be sports like Basketball Australia, Golf Australia, Baseball Australia, Bowls Australia, Confederation of Australian Motor Sport, Surfing Australia. Medal Sports are those sports which heavily rely on government funding to run their high-performance systems such as Swimming Australia, Cycling Australia, Hockey Australia and smaller sports.
SSP	Sporting Schools Program
Sport	A human activity capable of achieving a result requiring physical exertion and/or physical skill which, by its nature and organisation, is competitive and is generally accepted as being a sport.
SSO/A	State Sporting Organisation/Association

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APPENDIX A FORUM AGENDA



NATIONAL SPORT PLAN CONSULTATIONS

AGENDA

We encourage you to have your say online by completing the online questionnaire or uploading a written submission. To find out more about the development of the National Sport Plan, go to <https://www.ausport.gov.au/nationalsportplan>.

0.00-0.15	Welcome and introductions
0.15-1.35	Discussion of four key pillars of National Sport Plan <i>Prevention through physical activity</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How can awareness of the benefits of physical activity and sport be raised among the Australian public?▪ How can sports and health delivery bodies work together? <i>Performance</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What are the advantages and disadvantages of focusing on medal tally success vs supporting a broader range of sports?▪ Are there ways the national institute network can be improved to support performance? <i>Participation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How can sport (including non-traditional sport) providers evolve their games and offers to get all Australians active?▪ How can sports better targeted those not already engaged?▪ How can participation in schools be improved? <i>Integrity</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What does integrity in sport mean in your context?▪ What strategies have you seen effectively embed integrity in sport?
1.35-1.55	Discussion of other key issues <i>Major sports events</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How should government prioritise investment in major events?▪ Should governments invest in attracting major international sports events to Australia? What about second tier major sporting events? <i>Sporting infrastructure</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Given what we've discussed in relation to participation, to what extent does existing infrastructure respond to the needs we've identified?▪ How can existing infrastructure be utilised to support participation growth? <i>Sources of funding</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What other forms of non-government revenue could be used to help Australia athletes and increase participation in sports and physical activity?▪ Do you support a national good causes lottery to help Australian athletes and get Australians more active? <i>Governance</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What should be the roles for national, state/territory, local and community sporting organisations to grow Australian sport?
1.55-2.00	Next steps and close

APPENDIX B ONLINE SUBMISSION QUESTIONS

Questions

Participation

- How should sporting organisations evolve the way their games are played or the products/variations they offer to ensure we get and keep more Australians active?
- How do we make sport and physical activity part of everyone's daily routine?
- How can sports better reach under-represented groups?
- What is the role of non-traditional sport providers in helping to increase participation in sport?
- How do we increase sport participation in the schooling years to maximise physical literacy and establish good habits for life?

Prevention through physical activity

- How do we ensure that the key benefits of sport and physical activity such as physical and mental health, personal wellbeing and community cohesion are promoted by governments and the community?
- How should we raise awareness of the benefits of sport to the Australian public?
- How do we use the reach and influence of sport to get more people active – especially people with sedentary lifestyles?
- How do we ensure sport delivery bodies (e.g. Australian Sports Commission, State Departments of Sport and Recreation, National Sporting Organisations etc) and health promotion organisations work together as effectively as possible to improve population health?

Performance

- Should we be focusing on investment for maximum medal tally success or spreading our spend in support of more high performance athletes in a broader range of sports?
- How can the AIS and state-based institutes of sport better support high performance athletes?

Integrity

- What are the best arrangements for the Australian Government's sports integrity capability to ensure Australian sport is effectively protected against integrity threats.

Major Sporting Events

- Should governments financially support major sporting events to ensure their viability and delivery and provide opportunities to Australian sports and athletes?
- How do we maximise the value of investment in major domestic and international sporting events?
- How should governments prioritise investment in major sporting events?
- Should governments invest funding to attract major international sporting events to Australia?

Governance

- What should be the respective roles for national, state/territory and community sporting organisations to grow Australian sport?
- How can sporting organisations (national, state/territory, community) better play a role in getting more Australians active?

Sporting Infrastructure

- How can we better develop, utilise and maintain sporting infrastructure to support major events and participation growth?

Sources of funding, including a national good causes lottery

- Given governments have limited budgets how should they allocate funding across high performance and community sport?
- Do you support the introduction of a national good causes lottery to increase the funding available for Australian athletes and to increase participation in sport?
- What other forms of non-government revenue could be used to help Australian athletes and increase participation in sport?

To make your submission and share your thoughts and comments please visit
ausport.gov.au/nationalsportsplan

APPENDIX C COMPULSORY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN SCHOOL

Table 1 – Compulsory physical education (PE) in schools

State/territory	Primary	Secondary
ACT	Minimum of 25-30 minutes/day of moderate to vigorous physical activity as part of planned physical education and sport programs	Years 7-10: minimum of 150 minutes/week of moderate to vigorous physical activity as part of planned physical education and sport programs
NSW	No compulsory requirement, but the Department provides expected standards.	
NT	Minimum of 2 hours/week of physical activity in the curriculum each school week for students	
Qld	Minimum of 30 minutes/day of physical activity	Lower secondary: minimum of two hours/week of moderate intensity physical activity
SA	No compulsory requirement	
Tas	Minimum of 2 hours/week of physical activity	Junior secondary: minimum of 2 hours/week of physical activity
Vic	<p>Prep–Year 3: 20-30 minutes of PE/day</p> <p>Years 4-6: 3 hours/week of PE and sport with a minimum of 50% of that time for PE</p>	Years 7-10: 100 minutes/week for PE and sport
WA	Years 1-10: Minimum of 2 hours/week during the school day as part of student learning programs	



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