
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Sport – More Than Just A Game

Contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring

House of Representatives

Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

June 2013
Canberra

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ISBN 978-1-74366-038-6 (Printed version)

ISBN 978-1-74366-039-3 (HTML version)

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Foreword

This inquiry focussed on two issues – firstly increasing Indigenous participation in sport and secondly utilising sport to improve Indigenous wellbeing and support the Close the Gap targets. Sport can be the ‘hook’ or ‘vehicle’ to provide opportunities for communities to come together, to encourage Indigenous participation in education and employment, and to demonstrate positive behaviours through local and elite sporting role models

Overall the evidence from the inquiry supported the theory that sport has a positive impact on Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring and can contribute positively to achieving the Close the Gap targets in areas such as health, education and employment. The role of Indigenous mentors was regarded as a critical element to the success of these programs.

The Committee was impressed with many of the sports programs currently operating throughout Australia, including the Commonwealth Government funded ‘Learn Earn Legend’ program being facilitated by numerous sporting bodies that focuses on school to work transitions. The Committee was pleased to hear about the number of Indigenous students engaging in this program with commitment and passion, resulting in better outcomes for school attrition and attainment and furthering their education pathways and employment prospects.

The success of sports programs can be reliant upon strong partnerships fostered between Government, sporting bodies and the corporate sector. The Committee recognised that the benefits gained from sport was more than about simply increasing Indigenous participation in sport – it was about engaging the local community as a whole. Community involvement included encouraging Indigenous people to become involved in the administration, umpiring and coaching positions in addition to playing sport. The participation rates of Indigenous females are lower than the participation rates for males in a majority of the sporting codes and organisations and the Committee has made recommendations to Government to prioritise sports programs to Indigenous women.


Increasing participation of Indigenous boys and girls, men and women in sport was an area where the Committee believed sporting bodies could improve. The Committee hopes that all sporting bodies at local, state and national levels will continue to acknowledge the influential role they have in ensuring that Indigenous Australians are encouraged to participate in sport with culturally supportive policies and programs.

Positive messages of cultural celebration and pride at all sporting events can help in the path to Close the Gap and reconciliation. Several sporting organisations have adopted Reconciliation Action Plans, which is making progress in areas of reconciliation and increasing the understanding and respect for Indigenous Australians through the medium of sport.

The Committee found that sport is much more than just a game – it can be a pathway to stronger communities and better opportunities.

I would like to thank everyone who put submissions into the inquiry and made the time to attend the public hearings. I pass on my gratitude to the former Chair, the Hon. Shayne Neumann MP, the Deputy Chair, Dr Sharman Stone MP and all the members of the Committee for their work during this inquiry.

Ms Janelle Saffin MP
Chair



Membership of the Committee

Chair Ms Janelle Saffin MP (from 23/4/13)

Deputy Chair The Hon. Dr Sharman Stone MP

Members Ms Sharon Grierson MP

Mrs Natasha Griggs MP

Mr Barry Haase MP

Mr Ed Husic MP

The Hon. Shayne Neumann MP (to 23/4/13)

Mr Graham Perrett MP

Committee Secretariat

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Terms of reference

The Committee will inquire into and report on the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring, with a particular focus on:

- sporting bodies increasing opportunities for Indigenous participation, including opportunities for Indigenous women
- non-government organisations utilising sport as a vehicle to improve outcomes for Indigenous people, and
- the contribution of Indigenous sporting programs, as supplied by:
 - ⇒ the sporting codes
 - ⇒ the private and NGO sectors, and
 - ⇒ federal government assistanceto Closing the Gap targets.



List of acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AFL	Australian Football League
AICCHS	Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Service
APY	Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara
ARLC	Australian Rugby League Commission
ARTIE	Achieving Results Through Indigenous Education
ARU	Australian Rugby Union
ASC	Australian Sports Commission
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DoHA	Department of Health and Ageing
DRALGAS	Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport
DWF	David Wirrpanda Foundation
EITAAP	Elite Indigenous Travel and Accommodation Assistance Program
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
FOGs	Former Origin Greats

IMP	Indigenous Marathon Project
ISARP	Indigenous Sport and Recreation Program
ISDOs	Indigenous Sport Development Officers
ISDOP	Indigenous Sport Development Officers Program
LMRDT	Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team
NASCA	National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy
NATSISS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
NCIE	National Centre of Indigenous Excellence
NIRA	National Indigenous Reform Agreement
NGO	Non-government organisation
NRL	National Rugby League
QAIHC	Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council
RA	Reconciliation Australia
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
SANFL	South Australian National Football League
SRG	Sport and Recreation Group
WDSC	Western Desert Sports Council



List of recommendations

2 Sport as a vehicle to Close the Gap

Recommendation 1 - Framework for sport programs and Close the Gap outcomes

The Committee recommends the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, in consultation with the Minister for Sport, develop an overarching framework of service delivery and evaluation for Commonwealth agencies which fund sport programs to clearly identify outcomes that align with Close the Gap targets.

Commonwealth agencies, such as the Australian Sports Commission, which predominantly fund programs for sports-specific outcomes, should be exempt from the framework.

Recommendation 2 - Evaluating outcomes of sports programs

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government develop evaluation mechanisms for sports programs that include the collection of data on sport participation outcomes as well as non-sport outcomes such as the Close the Gap targets.

The Committee recommends that all Commonwealth funded sports programs should collect comprehensive data on Indigenous participation. The data should be collected at the start and finish of each program and should be analysed as part of an evaluation process for individual programs.

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government incorporate results of evaluations of sports programs and their contribution to Indigenous wellbeing into the annual Close the Gap reporting to Parliament.

Recommendation 3 - Learn Earn Legend

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government extend the funding of the Learn Earn Legend program to target Indigenous students in the high school years.

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government assess in 2016 the effectiveness of further funding the Learn Earn Legend program to target Indigenous students in the primary school years.

Recommendation 4 - Indigenous sporting carnivals

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government provide base funding and coordinated assistance to Indigenous regional and state sporting carnivals which draw together governments, sporting codes and clubs, mentors and role models, corporates and businesses to address health, education and employment Close the Gap targets.

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government ensure that funding is provided to sport and recreation carnivals and events in particular those which support high participation by Indigenous females.

Recommendation 5 - Three year funding

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government should fund Indigenous sports programs over a longer term preferably a three year cycle.

3 Participation in sport for Indigenous Australians

Recommendation 6 - Research the impact of sport

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government conduct a comprehensive project to measure and compare the range of outcomes across gender and age from Indigenous participation in sport and cultural activities.

Recommendation 7- Sport participation roles

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government acknowledge and develop Indigenous participation in the supporting roles around sport, such as coaches, umpires, health workers and administrators.

Recommendation 8 - Indigenous female participation

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government prioritise strategies within its sports programs to increase opportunities for Indigenous female participation in physical activity.

Recommendation 9 – Prioritise funding for Indigenous women and girls

The Committee recommends the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport ensure that funding for sport and active recreation for Indigenous women and girls is prioritised.

4 Partnerships, mentoring and culture

Recommendation 10 – Sponsorship towards Closing the Gap

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government investigate strategies to encourage philanthropy through mechanisms such as tax deductions for sponsorship by corporate bodies of Indigenous sporting programs linked to Closing the Gap outcomes.

Recommendation 11 – Promoting role models

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government support initiatives that increase the range of Indigenous sports role models at all levels, including and beyond the elite level.

Introduction

Sport's contribution to wellbeing and mentoring

- 1.1 The contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring arose as an issue during the Committee's inquiry into the high level of involvement of Indigenous youth in the criminal justice system. The Committee's June 2011 report *Doing Time - Time for Doing: Indigenous youth in the criminal justice system* found that sport and recreational activities were a way to deflect youth away from anti-social behaviour and self-harm. Mentors and role models through sport were found to assist youth at risk to develop self-esteem, self-worth, future aspirations and a commitment to community responsibility.¹
- 1.2 During this inquiry the correlation between sport and suicide rates was noted by Professor Colin Tatz who argued that the anticipatory, future-oriented activity is the beauty of sport:

Sport, uniquely, enables people to belong, to develop a sense of loyalty and community, to have a purpose. Above all, sporting competition is about anticipation: the next match, the next season. It is a future-oriented activity – whereas suicide resides in the immediate past and the very immediate present.²
- 1.3 Other participants in the inquiry maintained that sport can contribute to safer communities, help to reduce crime and can help to be a diversion from anti-social behaviour.³ The Queensland Government referred to anecdotal evidence from the Indigenous community of Aurukun in

1 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, *Doing Time - Time for Doing: Indigenous youth in the criminal justice system*, June 2011, pp. 61 & 64-72.

2 C Tatz, *Submission 2*, p. 3.

3 Australian Rugby League Commission, *Submission 16*, p. 34; Vicsport, *Submission 34*, p. 3.

remote Queensland that sport and active recreational activities assist with lowering the regularity of crime and behavioural problems and improve the self-esteem of the youth in the community.⁴

- 1.4 According to the evidence received throughout the inquiry, sport has an indelible impact on Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring and can contribute to achieving Close the Gap targets in health, education and employment. Mr Doug Booth, an academic with 25 years of academic research into sport as a social and cultural institution and practice, made the following comments in his submission:

Research emanating from nearly every academic discipline – economics, education, history, pedagogy, psychology, psychiatry, social and preventative medicine, sociology and sports studies – reports positive relationships between sport and community well-being. Many of these studies draw attention to the role of sport in fostering individual and community identity as a foundation stone for community well-being. In short, the evidence is unequivocal: sport – as an institution, practice, set of lores, culture – nurtures identity at both the individual and collective (e.g., community, town, regional, provincial, national) levels.⁵

- 1.5 Evidence from the inquiry acknowledged the skills learnt in sport and physical activities are transferrable to all areas of life such as teamwork, problem solving, resilience building, communication and social skills and responsibility.⁶ The building of confidence and a sense of accomplishment were described by the Indigenous Marathon Project and the David Wirrpanda Foundation as particular values of participation in sport and physical activity.⁷
- 1.6 Sport participation was viewed as being about more than the person playing the game. Participation can be in a range of ways such as scoring, refereeing, supporting, volunteering and sponsoring. Sport was seen as engendering community pride, bringing people together, and promoting inclusion, equality and fairness.⁸

4 Queensland Government, *Submission 46*, p. 2.

5 D Booth, *Submission 19*, p. 1.

6 David Wirrpanda Foundation, *Submission 4*, pp. 4-5; Touch Football Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 5; NASCA, *Submission 38*, p. 6; Hockey Australia, *Submission 30*, p. 11; Newcrest Mining Limited and Western Desert Sports Council, *Submission 50*, p. 6.

7 Indigenous Marathon Project, *Submission 49*, p. 10; David Wirrpanda Foundation, *Submission 4*, p. 4.

8 Australian Drug Foundation, *Submission 27*, p. 9; Australian Rugby Union, *Submission 37*, p. 4; Australian Rugby League Commission, *Submission 16*, p. 5; Commissioner for Children and Young People WA, *Submission 11*, p. 2.

- 1.7 Professor Colin Tatz referred to participation in sport as involving entire communities:

There is a confusion in many people's minds that you have to have the right muscles, the right attitude, the right facilities and the right talents to be involved in sport. But sport is about many other things. It is about being a fan, a touch judge, a referee, a newsletter writer, a fundraiser or a badge maker. Sport belongs to the entire community, and 'fandom' is what makes sport what it is. People do not play sports, other than minor leisure sports, in the absence of fans and viewers. ... So I would like you to consider looking at sport in the broadest sense of the term, as a community activity, a communal activity and an activity that means something to more people than just the players in the competition.⁹

- 1.8 Mr Dale Kickett, former AFL player and a Plan 2morrow 4 2day mentor with the David Wirripanda Foundation described the many contributions of sport to Indigenous communities:

The contribution sport has had on the Indigenous community can sometimes be underestimated in terms of breaking down barriers of equality, the impressions that either side of each (the Indigenous cultures and the wider community cultures has of each other), the obvious health benefits through being active physically, and mentally through the social interaction of being a player, coach, administrator or just a supporter. So there has been some Indigenous legends created through the interaction of themselves and sport but more importantly its opened doors to education, about each other's cultures, and created pathways for our young to follow.¹⁰

- 1.9 In its submission the Rumbalara Football Netball Club in Victoria stated that it is 'a place for the community to come out in force to cheer on friends and relatives, connect and be part of a proud, strong, family'.

Over the last fifteen years, the club has been a vibrant hub for the Goulburn Valley's Aboriginal community, a place to gather and connect through a shared passion for sport. There are currently around 440 people engaged at the club either as players or in the club's various programs, 80 per cent of whom are under the age of 25; approximately 50 people involved as coaches, team leaders, volunteers or trainers, and; over 130 paid-up social members.¹¹

9 C Tatz, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 1.

10 David Wirripanda Foundation, *Submission 4*, p. 4.

11 Rumbalara Football Netball Club, *Submission 23*, p. 3.

- 1.10 The Brisbane Broncos' submission noted that for many Indigenous people rugby league provides a platform for family togetherness:

Rugby League, for many families - particularly indigenous families - is more than just a sport they play, with televised rugby league games described as a site of family togetherness. As one participant of the study explained, 'we watch it [the Broncos match] every week. We have a little Sunday dinner for it.'¹²

- 1.11 Many participants described sport as the carrot or hook that leads to other aspirations and achievements. Dr Bruce Hearn Mackinnon discussed the passion for sport and its ability to grip whole communities:

Sport in general but I think football in particular in Central Australia, the area that I am most familiar with, the main sport that people are passionate about is Australian rules football. It is an activity which seems to have the ability to grip the whole community. They get passionate about it and interested in it. It is something which can activate people.¹³

- 1.12 Sport is highly visible to all Australians. Positive messages of cultural celebration and pride at big sporting events can help in the path to Close the Gap and reconciliation. Reconciliation Australia (RA) considered sport to be 'a key avenue for both building relationships and providing greater opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'. RA referred to sport as a powerful force for reconciliation:

Sport breaks down barriers, bringing people together for a shared passion and common cause. Everyone is seen as an equal when they're cheering for the same team and wearing the same team colours. As a result, sporting matches and events present an opportunity to access sports fans and supporters to promote better relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians outside of the sporting arena.¹⁴

Indigenous participation in sport

- 1.13 The collection of data on Indigenous Australians participating in sport and recreation is limited however there are statistics available from the

12 Brisbane Broncos, *Submission 3*, p. 2.

13 B Hearn Mackinnon, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 4.

14 Reconciliation Australia, *Submission 14*, pp. 1 & 5.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) 2008.

- 1.14 The ABS NATSISS survey was conducted throughout Australia, including remote areas, from August 2008 to April 2009. It collected information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' (aged 15 years and over) participation in sport or physical activities during the 12 months prior to interview.
- 1.15 The ABS NATSISS in 2008 found that:
- one in three Indigenous people aged 15 years or over had participated in sport or physical activities in the last year
 - the participation rate in sport and physical activities was 38 percent for Indigenous men and 23 percent for Indigenous women, and
 - the participation rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults taking part in sport and physical recreation decreased with age for both men and women. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men aged between 15 to 24 years had a participation rate of 53%, which decreased to 18 percent for men aged 45 years and over. Of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women aged 15 to 24 years, 36% took part in sport and physical activities, while this participation rate decreased to 11% for women aged 45 years and over.¹⁵
- 1.16 The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) submitted that new data on the level of physical activity will be available in approximately October 2013 and more detailed information on the types of physical activity will be released in June 2014.¹⁶
- 1.17 Further detail on participation rates in different sporting codes is discussed in chapter 3, along with evidence of some of the barriers to Indigenous people participating in sporting activities, including economic, structural and race-based barriers.

Conduct of the inquiry

- 1.18 On 20 September 2012 the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Minister for Sport asked the Committee to inquire into and report on the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring with a focus on:

15 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008, Australia (cat. no. 4714.0)', 2009.

16 DoHA, *Submission 43*, p. 4.

- how sporting bodies can increase opportunities for Indigenous participation, including opportunities for Indigenous women,
 - how non-government bodies can utilise sport as a vehicle to improve outcomes for Indigenous people, and
 - the contribution of Indigenous sporting programs to Closing the Gap targets as supported by
 - ⇒ sporting codes,
 - ⇒ the private and NGO sectors, and
 - ⇒ federal government assistance.
- 1.19 The Committee received 58 submissions from a variety of sources, including Commonwealth, state and territory government departments, local councils, sporting bodies and clubs, Indigenous groups and organisations, academics, and many individuals. A list of submissions received by the Committee is at Appendix A.
- 1.20 The Committee conducted six public hearings in Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. A list of public hearings is at Appendix B.
- 1.21 Submissions received and transcripts of evidence can be found on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/atsia.

Structure of the report

- 1.22 Sport as a vehicle for Closing the Gap is discussed in chapter 2. Commonwealth Government programs which support Indigenous participation in sport and recreation are examined, including a focus on outcomes, evaluations, and Indigenous female participation. Partnerships between the Commonwealth Government and state and local governments, service providers, and communities to achieve sport and non-sport outcomes are discussed.
- 1.23 Chapter 3 looks at Indigenous participation rates in a broad range of sporting codes. The Committee discusses the barriers to participation and what sporting bodies are doing to promote increased Indigenous participation, including encouraging greater participation by Indigenous females.
- 1.24 The important role of corporate sponsorships and Indigenous communities are discussed in chapter 4. Good partnerships are discussed as a significant issue for the successful delivery of sporting programs for Indigenous Australians. Indigenous mentoring and role models as important features of successful Indigenous sports programs are examined. Finally, the influence of culture on sport and sport on culture is

discussed and the significant role Indigenous culture in sport plays in reconciliation. Reconciliation through sport and the creation of Reconciliation Action Plans by sporting bodies and the corporate sector are discussed.

Sport as a vehicle to Close the Gap

- 2.1 The National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2008, commits all governments to the following six Close the Gap targets to address the disadvantage faced by Indigenous Australians:
- to close the life-expectancy gap within a generation
 - to halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade
 - to ensure access to early childhood education for all Indigenous four years olds in remote communities within five years
 - to halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for children within a decade
 - to halve the gap in Indigenous Year 12 achievement by 2020, and
 - to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.
- 2.2 The NIRA identifies seven action areas called 'building blocks', these being early childhood schooling, health, economic participation, healthy homes, safe communities, governance and leadership.¹ The NIRA is supported by an investment of \$4.6 billion through a series of Indigenous-specific and mainstream National Partnership Agreements.²

1 Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), Closing the Gap: Targets and building blocks, <www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/indigenous-australians/programs-services/closing-the-gap/closing-the-gap-targets-and-building-blocks> accessed 20 March 2013.

2 FaHCSIA, *Submission 42*, p. 1.

- 2.3 The Prime Minister's Closing the Gap Report 2013 acknowledged the importance of the Indigenous sports programs to Closing the Gap through its contribution to the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Australians.³
- 2.4 Many participants in the inquiry recognised that sport is a powerful vehicle for engaging Indigenous Australians in positive activities which lead to positive non-sport outcomes such as education, employment, health and wellbeing. The Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport (DRALGAS) submitted that sport and active recreation have indirect benefits under Closing the Gap building blocks, including:
- health - by encouraging a healthier lifestyle that includes physical activity
 - economic participation - through employment opportunities for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people such as sport and recreation officers
 - safe communities - by providing an alternative to anti-social behaviour, and
 - governance and leadership - by funding initiatives to build capacity of Indigenous communities to deliver sport and recreation activities independently.
- 2.5 Mr Matt Davies from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) spoke about sport participation as a 'very powerful vehicle for engaging communities in positive activities'. Outcomes of DEEWR programs are not sport focused, rather they use sport as a mechanism to engage and build positive education and employment outcomes.⁴
- 2.6 The Heart Foundation pointed to the health benefits to Indigenous Australians of physical activity among Indigenous Australians, including a reduction in risk for chronic disease, coronary heart disease and stroke, bowel and breast cancer, diabetes and depression.⁵
- 2.7 Swimming Australia submitted that swimming activities greatly assist in overcoming Indigenous disadvantage, including reducing illness and hearing related health issues:
- In some communities as many as 70 per cent of children have been found to have skin sores, at any one time. Impaired hearing, a

3 Closing the Gap: Prime Minister's Report 2013 <www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/indigenous-australians/programs-services/closing-the-gap/closing-the-gap-prime-ministers-report-2013> accessed 22 April 2013.

4 M Davies, DEEWR, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 7 February 2013, p. 1.

5 Heart Foundation, *Submission 58*, pp. 1-2.

symptom of glue ear, can seriously affect performance at school, and social circumstances. Between 14 and 67 per cent has some degree of hearing loss.

Swimming pool use in remote communities has been shown to reduce the prevalence of hearing loss and skin sores and other infections, which can result in long-term benefits through reduction in chronic disease burden as well as improved educational and social outcomes.⁶

- 2.8 Dr Bruce Hearn Mackinnon spoke about his observations in Central Australian communities of the ability of sport, particularly Australian Rules Football, to activate people and potentially enhance closing the gap:

Therefore it just strikes me that if we are looking at how to close the gaps and all the other targets governments and society talks about, we should be building on an activity which already has the passion and interest of the communities. This is not just in terms of participation in playing football. I see sports as being an opportunity to be leveraged in broader capacity building. Sporting teams need administrators, coaches, physios, bus drivers, cooks, timekeepers. Using sport as a model, I can see it as having the opportunity to become the centre for growth in community development.⁷

- 2.9 Mrs Fiona Pelling from North Queensland Cowboys described how rugby league clubs work with government towards closing the gap:

The contribution of Indigenous sporting programs and the principal contribution of our programs to the Closing the Gap targets is in engaging Indigenous young people and their families in those activities which directly influence the Closing the Gap target, education, employment and healthy lifestyles. We are able to do this because Rugby League is probably the highest-profile sport in North Queensland, including in most Indigenous communities. Indigenous legends within the Cowboys such as Johnathan Thurston and Matthew Bowen have a very real role model status amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the region and nationally. We have a deliberate commitment to engage Indigenous young people and their families, and we employ skilled staff to achieve that.⁸

6 Swimming Australia, *Submission 8*, p. 2.

7 B Hearn Mackinnon, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 4.

8 F Pelling, North Queensland Cowboys, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 4.

- 2.10 Ms Trish Crews from National Rugby League spoke about the power of sport to engage children in other activities that are not necessarily about playing the game:

Our reading program is a really good example of that. We have all got kids and nieces and nephews and we all know lots of little kids out there who really do not like reading; however, if you can combine reading with rugby league, all of a sudden they are interested. They want to read about their heroes. They want to read about the games they see on TV. If you can provide curriculum based and appropriate reading levels based around the sport – and we have research behind this now – it does engage reluctant readers, particularly boys. It is the same with maths; it is the same with health.⁹

- 2.11 Mr Matthew Francis from Titans 4 Tomorrow stated that it is important to the club to make the distinction between the social outcomes made from government funding rather than the sport outcomes:

And we are very committed to what we are funded for, and that is those employment, education and training outcomes. So we are not using that funding to promote participation in sport per se. That might be a welcome by-product, but our key focus, and what the government is funding, is to increase the retention of kids at school and to provide them with a career pathway once they complete school. So the government dollars are spent where the government has asked us to spend them. That is a very important distinction for us to make.¹⁰

- 2.12 Left-field Business Solutions referred to the need for governments to clearly articulate what role sport plays in non-sport outcomes:

Critical to the use of sport as a vehicle to achieve non-sport outcomes is the development and design of programs and services that clearly identify what role sport plays. This is critical because sport is neither a panacea nor a silver bullet that will achieve holistic outcomes.¹¹

- 2.13 Further, Left-field Business Solutions stated that it is unrealistic to expect the sports industry to deliver non-sport outcomes in isolation to its core business to achieve quality sport outcomes, including increases in participation and improved high performance results. Therefore, partnerships between the sports industry and service providers of health,
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9 T Crews, National Rugby League, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, pp.13-14.

10 M Francis, Titans 4 Tomorrow, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 8.

11 Left-field Business Solutions, *Submission 55*, p. 1.

education, employment, social wellbeing and justice should be mandatory.¹²

Commonwealth Government sport initiatives

- 2.14 Sports policy has moved across Commonwealth Government portfolios numerous times in the last ten years. From 2004 to 2007, administrative responsibility for sport rested with the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. The Department of Health and Ageing administered sport from 2007 to October 2010, when the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet took over responsibility. The Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport has been responsible for sport since December 2011.¹³
- 2.15 Indigenous sports programs are funded through a number of Commonwealth agencies including:
- Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport
 - Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
 - Department of Health and Ageing, and
 - Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
- 2.16 The state and territory governments provide funds to Indigenous sports programs and a large body of the evidence received by the Committee refers to these programs. The Committee has chosen to focus its discussion in this chapter on Commonwealth Government programs and the essential partnerships and coordination required between all levels of government and other stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes for Indigenous people.

Department of Regional Australia, Local Government and Sport

- 2.17 Commonwealth responsibility for sport currently lies with the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government and Sport (DRALGAS). Within DRALGAS, the Office for Sport is responsible for two Indigenous sports programs:
- the Indigenous Sports and Recreation Program (ISARP), and
 - the Indigenous Sport Development Officers Program (ISDOP).

12 Left-field Business Solutions, *Submission 55*, p. 1.

13 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, p. 3.

Indigenous Sports and Recreation Program

- 2.18 The ISARP supports community participation in sport and recreation activities that help to improve the health and physical wellbeing of Indigenous Australians and those that contribute to broader social benefits for participants and their communities.
- 2.19 Prior to 2012, funding under ISARP was granted on an annual basis. This was to allow funding to be provided to the best proposals around Australia from year to year. However, this arrangement created too much uncertainty, since it was mostly ongoing activities or annual events that were funded. The annual funding round was also an administrative burden for recipients and the Office for Sport. Consequently, since 2012, most funding agreements have been approved for three years.¹⁴
- 2.20 The 2012-13 funding round of the ISARP resulted in 123 activities being approved for funding. The majority of funding agreements will run for three years to the end of 2014-15. The Office for Sport received 219 applications seeking funds totalling \$41.5 million for 2012-13. Recipients of funding are mostly community organisations, with some sporting organisations and local and state governments also receiving funding.¹⁵
- 2.21 The ISARP aims to support projects encouraging broad involvement and projects which involve groups that may not typically be considered prime candidates for sport and physical activity programs. The guidelines for 2013-14 grants encourage the submission of projects that focus on increasing involvement by Indigenous females through participation in the activities and also in other roles, such as coaches and administrators.
- 2.22 Some ISARP projects are spread across large areas of Australia, such as Athletics Australia's Athletics for the Outback and the Indigenous Golf Association of Victoria's 2012 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Golf Championships project. Other programs are directed at specific areas, such as funding to AFL Cape York Limited (Qld), South Australian National Football League and Australian Football League (AFL) (Victoria) Limited.
- 2.23 Activities funded by ISARP grants in recent years have included athletics, Australian rules football, basketball, boxing, golf, hockey, lacrosse, netball, rugby league, rugby union, soccer, softball, surf lifesaving, surfing, swimming and tennis.¹⁶
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14 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, pp. 10-11.

15 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, pp. 11 & 24.

16 DRALGAS, *Submission 51.1*, pp. 7-10.

Indigenous Sport Development Officers

- 2.24 There are 50 Indigenous Sport Development Officers (ISDOs) nationally. The Office for Sport funds 28 of these ISDOs dispersed around Australia and employed by State and Territory departments of sport and recreation, with the exception of Queensland which elected not to accept Commonwealth funding.¹⁷
- 2.25 However, the Queensland Government is working with 38 Indigenous communities to form Sport and Recreation Reference Groups (SRG) which will act as a coordination point comprised of key stakeholders in the community. The SRG will develop a community sport and recreation plan as the focus of effort for the organisations looking to provide support.¹⁸
- 2.26 The two main objectives of the ISDOs are to:
- increase the active participation of Indigenous Australians in sport and physical recreation, and
 - encourage Indigenous community ownership and management of sport and physical recreation activities, including through skills development.¹⁹
- 2.27 The ISDOs liaise with Indigenous communities in their region to assess sporting needs and priorities and coordinate the delivery of programs, resources and services in partnership with the mainstream sporting industry and the relevant state and territory departments of sport and recreation. The ISDOs develop a range of partnerships between sporting organisations, clubs, Indigenous community organisations, local governments, state and territory government agencies, and schools.²⁰
- 2.28 Much of the work of the ISDOs is focused on building the capacity of others to deliver, rather than directly delivering activities. DRALGAS submitted that community involvement in the coordination and running of activities had improved, however a number of activities continue to rely heavily on ISDOs to provide organisational and management roles for sporting and recreational programs.²¹
- 2.29 Netball Australia commented on the valuable 'brokering role of the Indigenous Sports Development Officers:
- Their aim is to create sustainable programs by focusing on building the sporting capacity of Indigenous Australians. This is

17 DRALGAS, *Submission 51.1*, p. 2.

18 Queensland Government, *Submission 46*, p. 4.

19 DRALGAS, *Submission 51.1*, p. 4.

20 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, p. 12 & *Submission 51.1*, pp. 4-5.

21 DRALGAS, *Submission 51.1*, p. 6.

achieved through coordinating the delivery of accredited coaching and officiating courses, building links to existing sporting clubs or assisting in the creation of new clubs and where possible, linking individuals to mainstream sporting competitions.²²

- 2.30 However, Netball Australia stated that the linkages between the national sporting organisation and Indigenous Sport Development Officer network had weakened over the previous 18 months, possibly due to a shift to providing general strategic and participation support, rather than a 'brokering' role.²³
- 2.31 Mr Adam Pine from Swimming Australia believed the ISDOs provide a very important link for peak sporting bodies to programs and communities. Mr Pine stated that ISDOs provide an understanding of the issues on the ground within communities which is difficult from the head office in Canberra.²⁴
- 2.32 Professor Colin Tatz believed Indigenous sports officers should be in every Indigenous community and should assist to organise sporting activities and competitions and coordinate funding.²⁵
- 2.33 Feedback to ISDOs from Indigenous communities and organisations and state sporting organisations in 2011-12 indicated 'satisfactory' to 'very satisfactory' results with the performance of ISDOs in coordinating and delivering activities.²⁶

Australian Sports Commission programs

- 2.34 The Australian Sports Commission (ASC), a statutory agency within DRALGAS' portfolio, focuses on getting more Australians participating and excelling in sport. The ASC is responsible for two programs related to promoting sporting activities among Indigenous Australians:
- the Elite Indigenous Travel and Accommodation Assistance Program (EITAAP) assists Indigenous sportspeople and their sponsoring organisation to attend national or international events and competitions, and
 - participation funding grants to national sporting organisations to support participation by Indigenous Australians. A wide variety of sporting organisations receive grants, including Australian Football

22 Netball Australia, *Submission 28*, p. 18.

23 Netball Australia, *Submission 28*, p. 18.

24 A Pine, Swimming Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 17.

25 C Tatz, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 3.

26 DRALGAS, *Submission 51.1*, p. 6.

League (AFL), basketball, cricket, hockey, netball, rugby union, rugby league, surfing, softball, tennis, swimming and touch football.²⁷

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

- 2.35 The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has a number of programs that use sport and other activities, such as dance and performing arts, to improve educational and employment outcomes for Indigenous youth. DEEWR funds two Indigenous sport programs:
- Sporting Chance, and
 - Learn Earn Legend.
- 2.36 Up to December 2012, DEEWR also funded the No School, No Play program.²⁸
- 2.37 The DEEWR programs contribute to three key Closing the Gap targets:
- to halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for Indigenous children within a decade,
 - to halve the gap for Indigenous students in year 12 equivalent attainment by 2020, and
 - to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.
- 2.38 From an educational perspective, the aim is to increase educational engagement so that youth gain a Year 12 or equivalent qualification. From an employment perspective, the focus is on improving participation in education, so that Indigenous youth are skilled, confident and competitive when entering the workforce, and on providing access to employment opportunities. DEEWR explained:
- These programs do not seek to produce elite sports men and women. They use sport as a hook to improve educational outcomes and employment prospects of all participants as a contribution to closing the gap in the participation of Indigenous people in social and economic life and often in locations where the gaps are at their greatest.²⁹
- 2.39 Also of relevance under the education portfolio is the development of a national health and physical education curriculum which is expected to be finalised in late 2013. This curriculum will deliver the health and

27 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, pp. 2, 15-17.

28 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 1.

29 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 3.

wellbeing learning that all students require, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.³⁰

Sporting Chance

- 2.40 The Sporting Chance program aims to improve educational outcomes such as strengthened engagement with school, improved attitudes to schooling, increased school attendance, increased retention to Year 12, and increased capacity to make informed decisions about post-school pathways. Providers work with schools, education authorities, sporting bodies, businesses, communities and parents.
- 2.41 The Sporting Chance program comprises two elements:
- school-based sports academies – targets secondary students and delivers sports activities up to three hours a week, including training and competitions. In addition, up to nine hours a week is spent on behaviour and leadership camps, mentoring programs, cultural activities, reward excursions, support to complete vocational or technical courses and employment expos, and
 - educational engagement strategies – targets primary and secondary students in remote communities and delivers a range of sport and recreation based activities to engage students in education. The program provides a few visits per community a year.³¹
- 2.42 The Sporting Chance Program funding model requires providers to source two thirds of the operating costs of an academy.³²
- 2.43 A notable example of a sporting academy is the Clontarf Foundation, which uses Australian Rules Football as the hook to attract Indigenous boys to school, engage them in learning and improve their education, discipline, life skills, self-esteem and employment prospects. By creating an attractive, safe, welcoming and supportive environment, some of the most at-risk and disengaged students are drawn into education. The Clontarf Foundation operates 40 school based sports academies across Western Australia, Northern Territory, Victoria and New South Wales.³³
- 2.44 The Achieving Results Through Indigenous Education (ARTIE) program is a rugby league Sporting Chance program which operates in 21 schools in Queensland and uses former and current origin players to ‘promote the

30 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 1.

31 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 5.

32 DEEWR, *Submission 48.1*, p. 4.

33 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, pp. 12-14 & *Submission 48.1*, p. 4.

- importance of attending school, engaging in literacy and numeracy and how that impacts life beyond school'.³⁴
- 2.45 The National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy (NASCA) runs two academies:
- the Walan Barramal Sporting Chance Academy in South Sydney consisting of 94 students (in 2011) from Tempe High School, Alexandria Park Community School and Marrickville High School, and
 - the Gambirrang Sporting Chance Academy in the Dubbo region, consisting of 117 students (in 2011) from Dubbo College Senior Campus, Dubbo College Delroy Campus, Wellington High School, and Narromine High School.³⁵
- 2.46 Role Models and Leaders Australia operate seven girls-only academies in Western Australia, four in the Northern Territory, and one in New South Wales. Every school where Role Models and Leaders Australia operate an academy, there is also a Clontarf Foundation boy's academy. There are 13 co-educational academies operating under the Sporting Chance program.³⁶
- 2.47 DEEWR reported that at the end of 2012, 39 percent of academy participants were female and 61 percent were male. In 2013, \$3 million has been allocated to girls' only academies, \$6.5 million to boys' only academies, and \$4.3 million to co-educational academies.³⁷
- 2.48 An example of education engagement strategies under the Sporting Chance program is the ARMTour (Athletes as Role Models) NT project which is delivered by NASCA. The project aims to encourage the educational engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary and secondary students in Papunya, Hermannsburg, Yuelamu and Santa Teresa in the Northern Territory. The project uses sport and high profile athletes as role models to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth in remote communities to stay in school, lead healthy lifestyles and make positive choices in life.³⁸
- 2.49 NASCA recommended that the Sporting Chance Program funding continue and that the program be expanded throughout the country. In its submission, NASCA described why its Academies in South Sydney and

34 M Martin, Former Origin Greats, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 5.

35 NASCA, *Submission 38*, p. 37.

36 DEEWR, *Submission 48.1*, p. 4.

37 DEEWR, *Submission 48.1*, p. 4.

38 DEEWR, *Sporting Chance program education and attainment strategies*, <www.deewr.gov.au/sporting-chance-program-education-engagement-strategies> accessed 21 February 2013.

central NSW and the ARMtour program in the central desert have been successful:

The strength in these lies with the strong relationships between NASCA staff, the students and the communities, coupled with the wide range of interesting and engaging activities. Students attend school because they know if they don't they won't get to participate in NASCA activities. School attendance and behaviour in sessions are used as measures for whether they attend end of year camps and other activities. Past students have said this was the only reason they kept going to school. We have waiting lists of students wanting to be in our Academies. Not only are the Academies enjoyable, they provide a support structure for students that they are often not getting elsewhere.³⁹

Evaluations of the Sporting Chance program

- 2.50 DEEWR collects attendance data, general literacy and numeracy improvement data and case studies. DEEWR stated that it is not possible to establish causal links between the contributions of sport to specific improvements in educational outcomes. However, data showed that participation in the Sporting Chance Program was a contributing factor in improving education outcomes.⁴⁰
- 2.51 An evaluation in December 2010 of the Sporting Chance program found that more than 90 percent of the students interviewed and surveyed reported a positive attitude toward their schooling, particularly in relation to their attitudes to school, self-identity, sense of pride in being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and self-efficacy as learners.⁴¹
- 2.52 DEEWR submitted that the average attendance rate of girls that participate in a Role Models and Leaders Australia academy is 71 percent, whereas the average attendance rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls that do not participate in an academy is 68 percent. The Clontarf Foundation academy participant's average 72 percent attendance while the cohort of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boys that do not participate in the academy is 66 percent.⁴²
- 2.53 Student feedback on the Sporting Chance program is that it is successful in engaging students in school but the nature of the educational engagement activities meant that the impact is likely to be short-term rather than sustained. Effective educational engagement activities were characterised
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39 NASCA, *Submission 38*, p. 7.

40 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 7.

41 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 9.

42 DEEWR, *Submission 48.1*, pp. 3-4.

by consistent and regular delivery, without too much time occurring between visits.⁴³

- 2.54 Netball Australia noted that the involvement of girls in academies under the Sporting Chance program is likely to be complex. For example, in a review of the program in 2009, the one girls-only academy, Role Models Western Australian Clontarf Girls Academy, indicated that the lack of purpose-built boarding accommodation in remote areas led to a high turnover of girls at the school. The review found that research was required into the needs of Indigenous female students and their motivations. Further, specific strategies for females needed to be developed.⁴⁴

Learn Earn Legend

- 2.55 The Learn Earn Legend program encourages young Indigenous people to remain in education and be aware of and explore career opportunities. In 2011-2012, the total expenditure by the Commonwealth Government to Learn Earn Legend was over \$9.25 million.⁴⁵ The focus is on school to work transitions and aspiration building. DEEWR stated:

Sport provides a means of engaging students and employers. The initiatives supported under the LEL! banner are not sporting programs, nor do they encourage students to become sports people. They are projects which encourage students, particularly those in the latter years of school, to remain engaged and to see beyond the end of school. The majority of the projects provide intensive, individual support to participant students, assisting them to realise their career goals. Intensive, individual support is provided to students, assisting them to realise their career goals.⁴⁶

- 2.56 Elite sportspeople act as role models or Ambassadors for the Learn Earn Legend program with access to corporate sponsors facilitated through the sporting codes. For example, the Broncos partnered with Arrow Energy and All Trades Queensland to provide school based traineeships and apprenticeships for 15 students across Brisbane and Ipswich.⁴⁷ Tennis Australia, in collaboration with the Evonne Goolagong Foundation, delivers the Learn Earn Legend message through a range of programs such as 'Come and Try' days and camps.⁴⁸

43 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, pp. 10-11.

44 Netball Australia, *Submission 28*, p. 15

45 DEEWR, *Submission 48.1*, p. 1.

46 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 18.

47 Brisbane Broncos, *Submission 3*, p. 17.

48 Tennis Australia, *Submission 24*, pp. 4-6.

- 2.57 The Imparja Cup is Cricket Australia's 'marquee event' as part of its Indigenous program. The Imparja Cup is designed to encourage Indigenous Australians to participate in cricket and in 2012 had 32 teams participate, including a super clinic with approximately 120 children from local schools around Alice Springs. During the Imparja Cup, Learn Earn Legend funding assists Cricket Australia to stage activities to encourage and support Indigenous Australians take up education, training and employment opportunities.⁴⁹
- 2.58 Learn Earn Legend supports several other sporting events and programs such as the NRL Indigenous All Stars team and its yearly match against the NRL All Stars, Former Origin Greats (FOGs) Employment and Careers Expos, Dreamtime at the 'G and associated matches, and Local Legends, who are everyday people doing great things in their community.
- 2.59 Mr Mark deWeerd from National Rugby League discussed the benefits of the Learn Earn Legend program:
- The biggest benefit out of Learn Earn Legend is the ability for us to build the aspirations of young Indigenous people. We provide a range of programs to do that. It provides us with access. Learn Earn Legend has it clear message, which is about getting an education, finding employment and then becoming a legend in your community.⁵⁰
- 2.60 The Broncos reported results for students on the club's Learn Earn Legend program. For example in 2010, 39 out of 41 students entered into jobs, training or further education. In 2011-12, 103 of the 135 students found further education opportunities, work or training.⁵¹
- 2.61 Learn Earn Legend projects focus on senior students in Years 10 to 12 in order to address decreasing retention rates and to improve employment outcomes by providing young Indigenous people with a vision of their potential pathways beyond school. DEEWR submitted that retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students rapidly decrease over Years 10 to 12. The retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for Years 7/8 to Year 10 in 2011 was 98.7 percent. This decreased to 73.3 percent for Years 7/8 to Year 11 and 48.7 percent for Year 7/8 to Year 12.⁵²

49 S Kipman, Cricket Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 11. Cricket Australia, *Submission 35*, p. 6.

50 M deWeerd, National Rugby League, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 16.

51 Brisbane Broncos, *Submission 3*, p. 17.

52 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 19.

- 2.62 Several sporting organisations which run Learn Earn Legend programs supported the extension of the program to lower high school grades and into primary school years.⁵³
- 2.63 The North Queensland Cowboys recommended the Commonwealth Government extend the Learn Earn Legend funding to primary age groups:
- We know from the Obe Geia challenge and the Every Day Counts initiative that the power of legends like Johnathan and Matthew to engage Indigenous young people is even more pronounced within the primary school children than it is with the secondary students. We also know from school feedback that successfully engaging with Indigenous students in primary school is the best way of setting them up for success in secondary school and beyond.⁵⁴
- 2.64 The North Queensland Cowboys self-fund the Every Day Counts program as an add-on to the Learn Earn Legend program aims to increase attendance rates for Indigenous children in the primary school grades. Mrs Fiona Pelling described the impetus for the Every Day Counts program:
- A big part of the problem we are finding with the Learn Earn Legend! program is that a lot of our kids that are coming out in year 11 and year 12 have only got grade 5 or grade 6 numeracy and literacy skills, which severely compromises their choices as they leave school. Through our investigations we have found that a lot of this is due to nonattendance at school and non-engagement. If you can get them to attend primary school and get those attendance levels up I think their engagement in their high school years will be much better. They will feel included at the same level as the other kids at school and they will be less likely to truant.⁵⁵

No School No Play

- 2.65 The Commonwealth Government provided \$2 million to the No School No Play initiative to support eight national sporting organisations to promote school attendance. Programs were based on partnerships between sporting organisations, parents and communities of secondary school students. The goal was to assist Indigenous students to increase their Year 12 attainment through reward and incentive initiatives,

53 J Creamer, Titans 4 Tomorrow Lt, R Jensen, Take Pride Program, M Martin, Former Origin Greats, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 7.

54 F Pelling, North Queensland Cowboys, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 4.

55 F Pelling, North Queensland Cowboys, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 3.

- mentoring and personal development and community engagement. The program ceased in 2012.⁵⁶
- 2.66 DEEWR reported that in December 2011, No School No Play projects were being delivered to 2 727 students, of which 2 540 were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. On average approximately 80 percent of No School No Play participants were reported to have improved school attendance and school engagement.⁵⁷
- 2.67 Basketball Australia expressed its disappointment at the discontinued funding of the No School No Play program and reported that in 2011, 80 per cent of the participants in No School No Play through Basketball Australia improved their engagement with school, and 90 per cent improved the numbers of days they attended school. One school in Coffs Harbour went from an average of 50 per cent attendance at the school to 91 per cent attendance, across two terms in which they operated No School No Play.⁵⁸
- 2.68 The Committee heard evidence about no school, no play programs operating without government funding. Some sports work with schools to run no school, no play programs. For instance, Rugby Union stated the concept of no school, no play has been entrenched in their programs for years.⁵⁹

Department of Health and Ageing

- 2.69 The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) funds a number of programs which aim to increase physical activity among Indigenous people. Some examples of DoHA's contributions to improving the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people through sport and physical activity are:
- the Indigenous Chronic Disease Package which aims to close the gap in life expectancy within a generation. One of the aims of this package is to reduce major risk factors for chronic disease. As part of the package, Regional Tackling Smoking and Healthy Lifestyle Teams promote and support good health including through sporting role models who promote smoke-free healthy messages
 - the Deadly Choices campaign, developed by the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health in Queensland, uses sporting role models to engage

56 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, pp. 16-18.

57 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 17.

58 K Keneally, Basketball Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 26.

59 T Evans, Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team Inc., *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 41.

with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The program aims to empower Indigenous people to make healthy choices for themselves and their families, including exercising and undergoing health checks

- the Healthy Communities initiative provides funding to local councils to implement community-based, healthy lifestyle programs targeting disadvantaged populations and unemployed adults. Many of these programs benefit Indigenous people
- funding to Vibe Australia Pty Ltd to develop, produce and disseminate health and lifestyle promotion materials for Indigenous people. Sports people are regularly featured as role models
- as part of the 'Swap it, Don't Stop It' program, a dedicated Indigenous webpage was created and includes messages such as swapping sedentary behaviour for physical activity, and
- funding to the Clontarf Foundation through DEEWR to incorporate health promotion activities. Under the National Binge Drinking Strategy, the Australian National Preventative Health Agency funds the David Wirrpanda Foundation to support its 'Gwabba Yorga - Gabaa Worra' project, which uses netball as a means to educate Indigenous girls about the dangers of binge-drinking.⁶⁰

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

2.70 As the lead agency for Indigenous affairs, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) provides whole of government coordination, policy advice and support for the Council of Australian Governments' National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA).⁶¹

2.71 FaHCSIA funds several initiatives, some of which are not Indigenous specific, that use sport as a mechanism to improve outcomes for Indigenous Australians, including:

- the Respectful Relationships strategy aims to prevent sexual assault and domestic and family violence through education. Funding has been provided to National Rugby League and the AFL
- Community Action Grants under the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-22 which provide support to communities in reducing violence against women. The Australian

60 DoHA, *Submission 43*, pp.4-8.

61 FaHSCIA, *Submission 42*, p. 1.

Netball Association was funded to educate on healthy relationships and violence prevention, train coaches and implement a peer education and mentoring program for Indigenous young women. The AFL was funded for an education program and National Rugby League was funded for a communications program⁶²

- to the AFL and AFL affiliates for a range of initiatives across Australia, for example:
 - ⇒ to establish partnerships between AFL clubs and Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory and South Australia
 - ⇒ a 'Strength and Unity through Football' project delivers football programs in Maningrida, Yirrkala, Ngukurr, Lajamanu and Hermannsburg communities to provide leadership skills and training
 - ⇒ a South Australian National Football League Coordinator in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in South Australia
 - ⇒ a Youth Leadership Program in the APY Lands delivered by the Adelaide Football Club in collaboration with former AFL player Andrew McLeod,⁶³ and
 - ⇒ a range of activities, including training, workshops, carnivals and competitions for East Kimberley communities delivered by the West Australian Football Commission in partnership with Garnduwa Amborn Wirnan Aboriginal Corporation⁶⁴
- Sports Leadership Grants and Scholarships for Women Program is a joint initiative with the Australian Sports Commission which provides development opportunities and training to women to reach their leadership potential in the sport industry, and
- The Youth in Communities Program operates in more than 30 locations in the Northern Territory, delivering early intervention, prevention and diversionary initiatives for Indigenous youth at risk. Some examples of sport related activities are:
 - ⇒ a Sport Demonstration Project to trial a best practice model for delivering sport focused diversion activities through improved whole of government coordination and the use of place based

62 FaHSCIA, *Submission 42*, pp. 2-3.

63 Adelaide Football Club, *Submission 6*, p. 1.

64 Further details on the \$13.2 million provided to the AFL and AFL affiliates through FaHSCIA from 2010-11 to 2012-13 is in *Submission 42.1*.

- approach to service delivery to build community capacity in Gapuwiyak, Wadeye, Yuendumu, Gunbalanya and Nguiu
- ⇒ diversionary programs in Yirrkala, Milingimbi, Ramingining, Gapuwiyak and Umbakumba run by the East Arnhem Shire Council
 - ⇒ a regional development manager working in Wadeye and Galiwin'ku with AFL Northern Territory to establish and coofinate competitions organise coaching and umpiring courses and promote healthy lifestyles, and
 - ⇒ suicide prevention education and activities with a focus on sport in the Northern Territory.
- 2.72 In 2012, the Commonwealth Government made a commitment to continue the Youth in Communities Program for 10 years. Under the Package, the program will be progressively integrated into 15 new remote sites across the Northern Territory. This will increase the level of access to and integration of a variety of services including mentoring, sport and recreation.⁶⁵
- 2.73 An interim evaluation report in 2011 of the Youth in Communities program found the program made good progress in engaging Indigenous young people in positive activities. FaHCSIA submitted that the evaluation included evidence of young people at risk engaging constructively with peers, participating in community events such as sport, increasing self-care and self-esteem, improving attendance and re-engagement with school, contributing to community wellbeing, influencing the resilience of peers and engaging in cultural activities.⁶⁶
- 2.74 In addition to regular reporting and monitoring arrangements, FaHCSIA has commissioned independent evaluations of AFL funded programs, including the AFL Remote Regional Development Program in Wadeye, the AFL National Partnership Agreement, and the Youth in Communities Program. FaHCSIA submitted that evaluations show that:
- AFL involvement in these programs has a positive impact in encouraging healthy and active lifestyles, building leadership skills, strengthening community cohesion, improving school attendance and engagement in some type of training, education or paid work in remote Indigenous communities.⁶⁷

65 FaHCSIA, *Submission 42*, pp. 2-6.

66 FaHCSIA, *Submission 42*, p. 6.

67 FaHCSIA, *Submission 42.1*, p. 9.

Government coordination to achieve Close the Gap outcomes

- 2.75 Coordination across government departments in the delivery of Indigenous sports programs was a common theme in submissions to the inquiry. For example, Professor Colin Tatz described what he called 'passing the buck' on sport:

Let me just get out of the way the need to look into the constant shuffling of sport between government departments, with each one passing the buck, so to speak, to other departments, saying, 'We're not into sport; we're into housing,' or, 'We're into health; it's not about sport,' et cetera. Government departments are obstinate in refusing to see a correlation between the two.⁶⁸

- 2.76 Left-field Business Solutions stated that because the funding of sport related programs for Indigenous Australians is spread amongst a number of Commonwealth Government agencies, there is an immediate risk that these programs do not operate cooperatively to achieve Close the Gap outcomes. Left-field Business Solutions recommended a framework be developed for government agencies that fund sport for non-sport outcomes:

The NIRA and service delivery principles provide the basis for an overarching framework which agencies that fund sport for non-sport outcomes can operate under. Such a framework should be developed and managed by the lead agency for Indigenous affairs, the Department for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), in consultation with the lead agency for sport, the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport (DRALGAS) and other agencies already investing in sport programs for non-sport outcomes. Funding to the sports industry from the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) and other State/Territory Institutes and Academies of Sport should be exempt from this framework as this funding predominantly supports sport-specific outcomes like participation, capability building (coaching and officiating), junior and elite pathways (e.g. State/National Championships, Commonwealth Games, World Championships etc.).⁶⁹

68 C Tatz, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 1.

69 Left-field Business Solutions, *Submission 55*, p. 4.

2.77 Similarly, Netball Australia called on the development of an overarching strategic framework for the long term investment in Indigenous sport programs:

In acknowledging that a significant amount of work has been done to empower Indigenous communities and recognising the valuable contributions of many committed, motivated and dedicated individuals and organisations, the main impediment is that the sport sector has been devoid of an overarching strategic framework and/or policy positions and the long-term investment that is required to achieve sustainable and successful Indigenous policies and programs (be they culturally inclusive, mainstream or Indigenous specific).⁷⁰

2.78 The submission from the Indigenous Marathon Project stated that education, health and sports departments should take a collaborative approach when developing programs in communities:

IMP believes that there needs to be more collaboration between Federal Departments and the Deadly Fun Runs are an example of this. The main source of assistance for the Deadly Fun Runs does not necessarily come from Indigenous Sport Development Officers (ISDO's DRLGAS funded) but more so the Healthy Lifestyle Workers located all over the country (DOHA funded). So we have a program funded by the department of Sport, but delivered by Department Health on the ground (and ISDO's in a number of areas). ... In order to develop sporting programs it would seem DOHA and DRLGAS should work a little closer in order to achieve the most efficient value for money programs on the ground for both parties.⁷¹

2.79 Many participants in the inquiry referred to the need for a coordinated effort from all levels of government, non-government entities and Indigenous communities on the delivery of sports programs.

2.80 DRALGAS stated that the Office for Sport and the ASC were seeking to build relationships with state and territory sport and recreation departments to facilitate coordination, where possible, in various communities and regions.⁷²

2.81 The application process for ISARP funding includes referring general details of grant applications to other Australian, state and territory governments and agencies that provide grants of a similar type.

70 Netball Australia, *Submission 28*, p. 2.

71 IMP, *Submission 49*, pp. 10-11.

72 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, p. 23

DRALGAS stated that there could be scope for increased efficiency if all government agencies adopted a similar approach so that information on grant applications for sport and active recreation and grant approvals could be shared.⁷³

- 2.82 The Queensland Government referred to the challenges with the coordination of funding to sports programs:

The Queensland Government has consistently invested funding with local governments, sport, recreation and community organisations to strengthen participation opportunities for Indigenous people. A consistent challenge in achieving increased participation is coordinating the diversity of effort and funding that occurs particularly in remote communities and engaging community members to identify sport and recreation needs.⁷⁴

- 2.83 vicsport stated that sport must be combined with other government services in tackling health inequalities in Indigenous communities:

To solely focus on sport as a determinant of wellbeing fails to appreciate the vital role that all government departments play in the health of communities including key community services such as education, employment, health, law and order. All relevant government departments should be working towards a whole of government approach in tackling health inequalities prevalent in Indigenous communities.⁷⁵

- 2.84 The Government of South Australian claimed there are multiple levels of disadvantage in urban, regional and remote areas and therefore multiple strategies using sport to achieve outcomes, whether they are sport related or other outcomes with regard to education, health, employment or crime prevention. The South Australian Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure stated that sport can provide a range of benefits for Indigenous people but it is not a panacea and governments need to be clear about what they are trying to achieve through the delivery of sport and recreation programs:

It is the view of the DPTI that it is not a lack of financial resources that is limiting development of sustainable sport but rather the lack of clarity around desired outcomes, limited coordination and communication, and significant duplication of effort across various levels of Government and NGOs. Anecdotal evidence in remote areas has pointed to an overwhelming number of

73 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, p. 24.

74 Queensland Government, *Submission 46*, p. 4.

75 vicsport, *Submission 34*, p. 5.

organisations visiting communities to achieve the same or similar outcomes. Sport also falls into this category.⁷⁶

- 2.85 Left-field business solutions stated that governments should be clear about what data is to be collected to determine the impact of Indigenous sports initiatives and suggested that output related data, such as number of participants and sport sessions, should be measured along with participant, deliverer and partnership feedback. Independent evaluations are also necessary to ensure accuracy and validity of data collected.⁷⁷
- 2.86 Mr Bill Fogarty asserted there was a need for better evaluations of the links between sports programs and non-sport outcomes in order for service providers to know where to spend their efforts.⁷⁸

Committee comment

- 2.87 Individuals and communities are passionate about sport. Sport excites people, gets them active and involves whole communities. The Committee found that sport can be a very powerful way of engaging Indigenous people and providing positive outcomes in the Close the Gap in areas of health, education, employment and justice.
- 2.88 However, the Committee notes that sport is not the sole ingredient to Indigenous wellbeing. While sport is often the hook, many government services, in partnership with Indigenous communities and the sporting industry, play a role in achieving Close the Gap outcomes. The importance of partnerships is discussed further in chapter 3.
- 2.89 Numerous participants in the inquiry pointed to the lack of coordination and the duplication of effort around achieving outcomes through sport programs. The Committee heard that the duplication of activities and limited strategic direction has resulted in a fragmented approach to sport and recreation service delivery for Indigenous Australians.
- 2.90 The Committee considers there must be clear direction on the purpose of sports initiatives and what outcomes governments are trying to achieve. There is presently no overarching strategy on how sports programs can be coordinated, involving partnerships and communities, and provide the outcomes in relation to Close the Gap targets.
- 2.91 The Committee considers that the Commonwealth Government must take a stronger lead in promoting better coordination of sport and recreation programs for Indigenous Australians.

76 Government of South Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 3.

77 Left-field business solutions, *Submission 55*, pp. 1-2.

78 B Fogarty, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 3.

- 2.92 The Committee considers that the Ministers for Indigenous Affairs, Sport, Health and Education need to take a more collaborative approach when developing sport programs in their portfolio areas. The Committee recommends the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, in consultation with the Minister for Sport, develop an overarching framework of service delivery and evaluation for Commonwealth agencies which fund sport programs. Outcomes should be aligned with Close the Gap targets.

Recommendation 1 - Framework for sport programs and Close the Gap outcomes

- 2.93 **The Committee recommends the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, in consultation with the Minister for Sport, develop an overarching framework of service delivery and evaluation for Commonwealth agencies which fund sport programs to clearly identify outcomes that align with Close the Gap targets.**

Commonwealth agencies, such as the Australian Sports Commission, which predominantly fund programs for sports-specific outcomes, should be exempt from the framework.

- 2.94 The Committee commends the sporting codes and clubs which are demonstrating Close the Gap outcomes through government funded programs. For example, the Australian Rugby League Commission outlined in its submission how its programs are contributing to each of the Close the Gap objectives in schooling, health, economic participation, safe communities, and government and leadership.⁷⁹ The Committee discusses sporting codes creating positive change for Indigenous communities in chapter 3.
- 2.95 Some government programs are focussing on particular Close the Gap outcomes, such as Learn Earn Legend, which aims to achieve positive outcomes in Year 12 attainment, employment and improvements in literacy and numeracy.
- 2.96 However, other sports programs are being rolled out with very little understanding of how the Close the Gap outcomes are being achieved.
- 2.97 Governments need greater understanding of what sports programs are achieving in relation to the governments' Close the Gap objectives. The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government develop

⁷⁹ Australian Rugby League Commission, *Submission 16*, pp. 22-26.

evaluation mechanisms for sports programs to include the collection of data on both participation outcomes and Close the Gap outcomes.

- 2.98 The Committee recommends that data collection for Indigenous participation in sport, including age and gender, is mandatory for all clubs and organisations that receive Commonwealth funding to run targeted Indigenous sporting programs. This Indigenous participation data should be compiled and provided back to the responsible Commonwealth agency for evaluation and analysis. This will assist both the sporting groups and the Commonwealth Government to gain a better understanding of whether the Indigenous sporting programs are having an impact on participation numbers.
- 2.99 Further, the Committee recommends results from sports program evaluations be incorporated into annual Close the Gap reporting to Parliament.

Recommendation 2 - Evaluating outcomes of sports programs

- 2.100 **The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government develop evaluation mechanisms for sports programs that include the collection of data on sport participation outcomes as well as non-sport outcomes such as the Close the Gap targets.**

The Committee recommends that all Commonwealth funded sports programs should collect comprehensive data on Indigenous participation. The data should be collected at the start and finish of each program and should be analysed as part of an evaluation process for individual programs.

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government incorporate results of evaluations of sports programs and their contribution to Indigenous wellbeing into the annual Close the Gap reporting to Parliament.

- 2.101 The Committee notes the positive comments from non-government agencies regarding the DEEWR programs Learn Earn Legend and Sporting Chance. Sports clubs and codes demonstrated how these programs can contribute to better education and employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians. The Committee supports the continuation of funding to these two programs.
- 2.102 The sporting industry has demonstrated that the Learn Earn Legend program is effective at engaging Indigenous youth and promoting the

positive messages of completing high school years and gaining employment.

- 2.103 Currently funding to the Learn Earn Legend program targets Indigenous students in Year 10 to Year 12. The Committee notes the comments by the sporting industry that Learn Earn Legend could have greater positive outcomes in education if it targeted Indigenous children at school during the earlier high school years.
- 2.104 The Committee contends that the Learn Earn Legend is a very effective program at working towards Close the Gap targets in education and employment. The Committee believes targeting Indigenous students in the earlier years of high school would assist to further achieve the Close the Gap target to halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for children within a decade.
- 2.105 The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government extend the funding of the Learn Earn Legend program to target Indigenous students in the high school years. Further, the Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government assess in the year 2016 the effectiveness of the Learn Earn Legend program being extended to target Indigenous students attending primary school.

Recommendation 3 - Learn Earn Legend

- 2.106 **The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government extend the funding of the Learn Earn Legend program to target Indigenous students in the high school years.**
- The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government assess in 2016 the effectiveness of further funding the Learn Earn Legend program to target Indigenous students in the primary school years.**
- 2.107 There are 50 Indigenous Sport Development Officers (ISDOs) across the country employed by the state and territory departments of sport and recreation. Funding by the Commonwealth Government supports 28 of those ISDOs.
- 2.108 The Committee notes that the Queensland Government elected not to be part of the ISDO network, rather it supports 38 Indigenous communities to form Sport and Recreation Reference Groups to coordinate stakeholders in a community.
- 2.109 Some witnesses spoke of the value of ISDOs to provide links between governments, sporting bodies and communities in coordinating sustainable sport and recreation programs. However, the Committee notes

comments by Netball Australia that linkages between national sporting organisations and ISDOs had weakened.

- 2.110 The Committee believes ISDOs have an important role in assisting to breakdown the silo effect of different government departments and to connect key service providers in education, health and employment, with local sporting bodies and community groups about sport and recreational opportunities available.
- 2.111 The Committee encourages the DRALGAS to ensure ISDOs continue to provide the essential links between sporting organisations and stakeholders in Indigenous communities to coordinate sustainable sports programs.

Sports carnivals and events

- 2.112 Many participants spoke of the significance of sporting carnivals and events at bringing communities together for sport and recreation, while enabling service providers to conduct and promote their business.
- 2.113 Dr Alfred Bamblett from the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd referred to football and netball carnivals which brought together many young participants and enabled health checks:

We have been engaged in a couple of Closing the Gap programs where we have run football and netball carnivals for young people and kids in schools. The idea was to get them to come along so we can do some preliminary health checks – that was to satisfy the funding bodies. Of course, the kids are not interested in the health check; they are really interested in football, netball and getting together. These sorts of things are part of making it happen. It adds benefit. We have had kids who have had to get glasses and kids who have had to have their hearing attended to.⁸⁰

- 2.114 Dr Bruce Hearn Mackinnon discussed the positive impact that sporting carnivals can have on communities in terms of inclusion and capacity building. He commented:

I see sport not only as an incredible opportunity for wider capacity building but also for promoting self-governance, autonomy and strength in these communities. It is one activity for all people, which includes elders, young people, men, women – it just does not seem to matter. There is a unified excitement and passion for

80 A Bamblett, Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 6.

sports. You only have to visit a remote community sports weekend or the Lightning Carnival in Alice Springs for instance to see that engagement of people. That just shows people can be energised and motivated but people do need assistance.⁸¹

2.115 The NSW Annual Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout carnival has been referred to as a 'modern day corroboree' and brings together more than 100 teams across NSW. Ms Heidi Norman submitted that further annual government funding was required to support the future viability of the event.⁸²

2.116 Representatives from Australian Rugby Union spoke about the opportunities for government to spread messages through sport, such as at rugby carnivals and events. Mr David Sykes from Australian Rugby Union stated:

Effectively, you have a captured market. All of those kids who come along will get a health check, for instance. There will be promotions around anti-gambling. Those events happen anyway and they are always going to happen. They happen irrespective of government funding. So it is a real opportunity to have the government say that this is the message we are going to sell anyway. We do not have to host the cost of the event, but maybe sending someone along to talk to the kids is something that can happen with relatively little or no additional funding.⁸³

2.117 In the Western Desert region of Western Australia the Western Desert Sports Council (WDSC) provides structure around improving the level of sport and recreation programs for Indigenous communities. The WDSC holds three carnivals each year which attract up to 1 000 participants and attendees from eight communities. The WDSC is a partnership between eight communities who work together to develop an integrated regional program of sport and recreation activities. The WDSC has formed a partnership with Desert Feet Inc (DFI) which promotes music, dance and performing arts to the region. The DFI assists the WDSC to ensure cultural activities are provided at the carnivals for those people who are not participating in the sporting activities. The partnership brings sport and music together to focus on the determinants of health to bring about changes in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.⁸⁴

81 B Hearn Mackinnon, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 23.

82 H Norman, *Submission 44*, pp. 1 & 3.

83 D Sykes, Australian Rugby Union, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 41.

84 Newcrest Mining Limited and Western Desert Sports Council, *Submission 50*, pp. 3-9.

- 2.118 The Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC) is the state peak body representing community controlled health services across Queensland, and the Queensland affiliate for the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation. In 2011 QAIHC established a partnership with the Arthur Beetson Foundation to support the organisation and running of the Queensland Murri Rugby League Carnivals.
- 2.119 QAIHC utilised the Murri Carnival to promote healthy lifestyles within Indigenous communities and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access their local Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Service (AICCHS). All players and officials competing in the Murri Carnivals are required to complete a health check at their local Community Controlled Health Service. In 2011, this resulted in the completion of over 1 200 health checks throughout Queensland. At the 2012 carnival held in Ipswich, 47 teams competed which equated to around 1 000 competitors over a long weekend.⁸⁵
- 2.120 For players competing in the Under 15 Competition, it was compulsory that they maintain 90 percent attendance at school. The carnivals are promoted as alcohol and drug free events and provide an opportunity to integrate and showcase the work of Tobacco and Health Lifestyle Teams funded by the Department of Health and Ageing. The Institute for Urban Indigenous Health launched its Deadly Choices campaign at the carnival and representatives from groups such as Former Origin Greats provided some role modelling and mentoring.⁸⁶
- 2.121 QAIHC partnered with the Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Foundation to support similar events through organised Rugby Union competitions, supporting participation at under 16, under 18, senior men's and women's levels. These events utilise the same principles of compulsory health checks for all participants, along with regular participation and attendance at school in order to be eligible for participation. Ella Sevens Events in 2012 were held in Cairns and Brisbane, with around 12 competing men's teams and six women's teams and the National Indigenous under 16 tournament held on the Gold Coast with six competing teams and participants of around 200 young men from all states and territories.⁸⁷
- 2.122 Mr Selwyn Button from QAIHC referred to the importance of having 'solid partnerships' with the Arthur Beetson Foundation and the Lloyd

85 QAIHC, *Submission 26*, p. 3.

86 QAIHC, *Submission 26*, pp. 1-2.

87 QAIHC, *Submission 26*, pp. 2-3.

McDermott Foundation and the endorsement of the state sports governing bodies, such as Queensland Rugby League and Queensland Rugby Union to allow the carnivals to be successful in promoting non-sport outcomes such as health, education and employment:

As we have seen at the Ipswich carnival and a few of the Lloyd McDermott carnivals in Queensland, they do attract some fairly big crowds. We get a fair few people that have come from all over Queensland to come and have a look at this stuff. So what you have created is an environment where not only can you drive home a message around health and wellbeing, around active sport and recreation participation, but there are secondary benefits that we can get out of that as well. We can have conversations with people about the importance of schooling, about the importance of education and training and going on to employment and university and other bits and pieces, and we can even build it into the process of the carnival, particularly for the under 16 boy players.

It was one of their requirements to have 90 per cent participation and attendance rates at school leading up to the carnival. So, if you are building those things into the overall package, you are building a much more solid structure from which you are going to get outcomes in terms of not only sporting achievements and sporting abilities but overall social development through participation in school, education and training, university, and other bits and pieces as well.⁸⁸

- 2.123 Mr Selwyn Button spoke about further opportunities for QAIHC to partner with other organisations that run carnivals, such as a netball carnival to attract a large number of females across a large area.⁸⁹

Committee comment

- 2.124 The Committee is encouraged by the success of sports carnivals and events at bringing together a variety of organisations and Indigenous families and communities. The evidence demonstrates that if partnerships are formed in the lead up to a sporting event, the benefits to Indigenous players and their extended families are many, including to health, wellbeing, education and employment. Sporting events and carnivals, such as the Murri Carnival, have helped to promote greater responsibility

88 S Button, QAIHC, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 34.

89 S Button, QAIHC, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 35.

- in managing health conditions and support greater awareness of issues impacting on health in communities.
- 2.125 Data collected by health, education, employment and other agencies at sports carnivals and events would be useful inclusions in the evaluations of sports programs as described previously in this chapter.
- 2.126 The Committee believes there is a role and responsibility for the Commonwealth Government to support Indigenous sporting events and carnivals that promote health and wellbeing, education and employment. Governments should not take control of these events, instead it should fulfil a partnership role in supporting and partnering organisations on the ground.
- 2.127 The Committee believes governments should give further consideration to supporting sporting carnivals and events where sports are played which are popular among female participants.
- 2.128 The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government fund regional and state sporting carnivals which draw together government, non-government, sporting codes and clubs, mentors and role models, and businesses to address health, education and employment Close the Gap targets.

Recommendation 4 - Indigenous sporting carnivals

- 2.129 **The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government provide base funding and coordinated assistance to Indigenous regional and state sporting carnivals which draw together governments, sporting codes and clubs, mentors and role models, corporates and businesses to address health, education and employment Close the Gap targets.**

The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government ensure that funding is provided to sport and recreation carnivals and events in particular those which support high participation by Indigenous females.

Three year funding

- 2.130 While recognising coordination and partnerships are critical to sustainable sports programs that achieve Close the Gap outcomes, numerous participants in the inquiry believed another important requirement was longer term funding to provide sustainable government programs.

2.131 The Chief Executive Officer of the Clontarf Foundation described its success as being due to the partnerships with communities and the long term involvement in the community to build relationships over 30 years.⁹⁰ Long term relationship building needs longer term funding according to Mr Anthony Bowd from vicsport:

The manner in which programs are being funded I do not think has traditionally worked with how successful programs are rolled out. Sporting programs are traditionally funded on a set time period – say, one year or two years – and at the end of that time we tend to count up the numbers and how many people participated, and that dictates whether the program is successful or not. But I think that history demonstrates that the really successful programs occur over a long period of time and that they do not necessarily fit into the standard funding models of 12 months, for example. So sports need to take a longer-term view – and funders also need to take a longer-term view – of how funds are committed to these programs.⁹¹

2.132 The South Australian National Football League (SANFL) submitted that the key risks to the delivery of its sports programs in remote Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands are insufficient funding or the cessation of funding. The Senior Sports League and the Junior Sports Program were reviewed by FaHCSIA and DEEWR in 2010 and found they were essential strategies in the health and wellbeing of people on the APY lands.⁹²

2.133 Left-field Business Solutions also suggested that a collaborative approach to the delivery of successful sports programs is underpinned by funding security, of at least three to five years, and a commitment to sustain services for as long as it takes to achieve outcomes.⁹³

2.134 Some participants in the inquiry suggested that sports receiving government funding and providing ‘fly in, fly out’ programs, provide little to no opportunity for ongoing involvement in many communities. Touch Football Australia referred to the experience of many remote communities:

Community members have become accustomed to sporting programs that begin but very rarely continue because the funding has disappeared or because there has not been an emphasis on providing the education and support necessary for the sport to

90 G Neesham, Clontarf Foundation, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, pp. 30-2.

91 A Bowd, vicsport, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 9.

92 SANFL, *Submission 18*, p. 2.

93 Left-field Business Solutions, *Submission 55*, p. 2.

continue within the community, and as a result, community members are now very hesitant in becoming involved in new programs because there is an expectation that it will fail.⁹⁴

- 2.135 NASCA recommended a minimum of three year government funding contracts:

The nature of government contracts means that the grant cycle may be 12 months, which can create program uncertainty. It also makes planning for coming years difficult and in some circumstances can create unrealistic goals for change. This would also assist in the prevention of stop-start, fly-in fly-out activity that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have had so frequently in the past, creating distrust and minimal long term impact.⁹⁵

- 2.136 The North Queensland Cowboys recommended the Commonwealth Government extend the length of the Learn Earn Legend program to run beyond one year at a time:

Currently, the government's Closing the Gap targets and our Learn Earn Legend program are funded to run only one year at a time, and a lot of that is building relationships with the schools so they allow us to run those programs. We need continuity and consistency within the school so that kids feel it is something to aspire to as they go up through the grades.⁹⁶

Committee comment

- 2.137 The Committee contends that financial resources to Indigenous sports programs are significant and the goal of achieving sport and non-sport outcomes through sport programs must start with better coordination of effort and partnerships between governments, non-government organisations and communities. There is a lack of clarity around desired outcomes and duplication of effort across various levels of government and non-government organisations.
- 2.138 Recommendations 1 and 2 aim to provide government with the tools to better direct funding in a coordinated way.
- 2.139 In addition, the Committee maintains that government funding to sport and recreation programs must be over at least three years to assist in achieving sustained and coordinated sport activities and events for Indigenous Australians.

94 Touch Football Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 8.

95 NASCA, *Submission 38*, p. 7.

96 F Pelling, North Queensland Cowboys, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 4.

- 2.140 The Committee recommends Commonwealth Government funding to sports and recreation programs in Indigenous communities is over a longer term preferably a three year cycle.

Recommendation 5 - Three year funding

- 2.141 **The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government should fund Indigenous sports programs over a longer term preferably a three year cycle.**
- 2.142 The Committee contends that sports based programs must link to local sporting clubs and communities and develop the community capacity to deliver a program which can be sustained beyond funding timelines.
- 2.143 Partnerships between governments, communities, sporting codes, the corporate sector and other not-for-profit or non-government organisations is critical to the achievement of sustainable sport and non-sport outcomes. Partnerships and sponsorships are discussed in chapter 4.
- 2.144 The involvement of the sporting industry in developing and delivering sustainable sport and recreation programs is essential and various sporting codes and clubs are working with Indigenous Australians to improve their participation rates in sport and recreation and to assist with Close the Gap outcomes.
- 2.145 Participation in various sports and overcoming some of the barriers to participation, including improving participation by Indigenous females are discussed in chapter 3.

Participation in sport for Indigenous Australians

- 3.1 Many people in Australia participate in less physical activity than is considered necessary for ongoing health and wellbeing. Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) indicate the incidence of inactivity is considerably greater among Australia's Indigenous population.¹
- 3.2 As stated in chapter 1, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) 2008 survey found that 'only 30.1 percent of those aged 15 years and over had participated in sport and physical activities during the 12 months prior to interview. The participation rate for males was 37.7 percent and for females 23.3 percent.'²
- 3.3 During the inquiry the Committee examined the differences in Indigenous participation rates across a broad range of sporting codes and organisations. In addition the Committee considered the barriers to participation and what various sporting bodies were doing to promote Indigenous participation.
- 3.4 The Committee focussed on the topic of women in sport as Indigenous female participation rates in sport were even lower than Indigenous male participation rates in sport. The Committee was interested to find out what programs or sports were successfully engaging Indigenous girls and women.

1 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, p. 4.

2 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, p. 6.

Participation rates and barriers

- 3.5 Evidence was received from a broad spectrum of sporting codes and organisations across Australia from the well-known Australian Football League (AFL), National Rugby League (NRL), cricket, netball and hockey through to sporting organisations such as tennis, swimming, surfing and mountain bike riding.³ A majority of sporting organisations that lodged submissions to the inquiry operated targeted Indigenous sports programs.
- 3.6 During the inquiry the Committee attempted to determine the participation rates for Indigenous Australians in each of the sporting codes. It became clear that only a handful of the sporting codes could provide this information to the Committee.
- 3.7 The Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC) had a thorough break down of statistics demonstrating numerous positions for Indigenous participation in rugby league across Australia.
- 3.8 The Rugby League National Census 2011 identified Indigenous Australians in various roles across the game, including:
- 3.39 percent of committee members at registered clubs
 - ⇒ 5.8 percent of all registered Rugby League players in Australia (aged 4-19+)
 - ⇒ 8 830 males 532 females
 - 8 percent of National Toyota Cup players
 - 12 percent of NRL players
 - 21 percent of State of Origin players, and
 - 35 percent of the Australian National Team.⁴
- 3.9 The Northern Cowboys, a community owned club, commented that it worked closely with its high Indigenous population in the community.
- While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up some 11.9 per cent of the total population in our catchment, some 13.5 per cent of our player group identifies as Indigenous Australian. In addition, 11.1 per cent of our full-time administration and coaching staff identify as Indigenous. Four out of five of our Indigenous staff are female.⁵

3 A complete list of submissions authorised by the Committee can be accessed at: www.aph.gov.au/sport

4 ARLC, *Submission 16*, p. 6.

5 F Pelling, North Queensland Cowboys, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 3.

- 3.10 The Brisbane Broncos commented that they 'have a long and proud association with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. More than 15 percent of our organization is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage.'⁶
- 3.11 The AFL in its submission stated that Indigenous Australians represent:
- 6 percent of all participants
 - 10 percent of AFL lists, and
 - 3 percent of employees.⁷
- 3.12 In 2008 the AFL developed an Indigenous Framework to outline its philosophy, practice and programs with respect to development in Indigenous communities. The submission stated that 'the underpinning principle of this framework is partnership. The contribution and guidance of key Indigenous staff in leading our program development has been key to the AFL's success.'⁸
- 3.13 A very significant finding from the AFL demonstrated the importance of employing Indigenous staff to increase Indigenous participation rates:
- The AFL's Indigenous employment strategy has demonstrated the importance of employing Indigenous staff in increasing Indigenous participation. Since 2008 the number of Indigenous people in the industry has grown from less than 10 to over 80, equally our participation has grown from 29,000 in 2007 to 41,000 in 2012. Dedicated Indigenous sporting programs delivered by local Indigenous staff are key to ensuring Indigenous people have equal access to our game.⁹
- 3.14 Hockey Australia discussed the Remote and Indigenous Communities Hockey Program (RIHP HOCKEY) highlighting its Indigenous participation targets for 2012. These targets included:
- delivering across nearly 1 million sq.km , 5 regional programs and 48 communities
 - touching over 3000 participants
 - accreditation and Training of over 150 coaches and umpires
 - supporting 5 regional competitions - 400 participants - talent and mainstream pathways.¹⁰

6 Brisbane Broncos, *Submission 3*, p. 4.

7 AFL, *Submission 20*, p. 1.

8 AFL, *Submission 20*, p. 1.

9 AFL, *Submission 20*, p. 1.

10 Hockey Queensland Inc., *Submission 33*, p. 7.

- 3.15 Softball Northern Territory commented in its submission 'it attracts over 1 700 participants to the Territory's Shire Softball competitions.'¹¹ While it does not have specific figures for Indigenous participation, Softball Australia hosts competitions that aim to increase participation levels of Indigenous women and children living in remote communities by way of a structured and regular sporting activity. Softball Northern Territory stated:
- Participating teams play a round-robin home-and-away format over a 10-15 week period. This format promotes wider community involvement and enhances inter-community relationships. Softball Northern Territory, through the delivery of coaching and officiating training courses, has increased the capacity of participating Shires to host a sustainable competition.¹²
- 3.16 Cricket Australia informed the Committee that figures for 2011-12 demonstrate that cricket is Australia's number one participation sport, with more than 880 000 Australians playing cricket.¹³ However, in terms of Indigenous participation in cricket, Cricket Australia commented that more work was required in this area:
- Further investigation of junior participation amongst Indigenous Australians uncovers only 5% of boys and 1% of girls aged 4-14 played cricket which is why we want to invest more in this area.¹⁴
- 3.17 Tennis Australia told the Committee they do not currently collect data on Indigenous participation. However they suggested in a year or so they should be able to collect that data using its new database system called My Tennis.¹⁵
- 3.18 Tennis Australia informed the Committee that in partnership with the Evonne Goolagong Foundation they have been delivering the Learn Earn Legend Program across the states to 1 100 boys and girls at different locations around the country.¹⁶
- 3.19 Netball is ranked as the leading women's participation team sport and the top team based sport in Australia for 15 to 24 year olds. Over 1.2 million participants enjoy the game nationally and Australia has been dominant on the international stage since 1963. Netball Australia has more than 330 000 registered members; 5 000 clubs nationally; 570 Associations; and

11 Softball Australia, *Submission 12*, p. 5.

12 Softball Australia, *Submission 12*, p. 5.

13 Cricket Australia, *Submission 35*, p. 3.

14 Cricket Australia, *Submission 35*, p. 5.

15 B Tierney, Tennis Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 31.

16 T Browne, Tennis Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 26.

eight member organisations.¹⁷ Netball Australia had participation statistics for all women however they did not have data for Indigenous specific participation.

- 3.20 In its submission the Government of South Australia raised the issue of limited capacity within the sports industry:

It is important to note that the capacity of the sport industry is limited. It is largely volunteer run and there are often expectations that because one sport has the funding to assist, other sports will have the same capacity. Most sports at a state level do not have specific funding for Indigenous participation.¹⁸

Documenting the impact of sport participation

- 3.21 The national research and data collection is very limited in relation to the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing. In addition there is a lack of general statistics demonstrating Indigenous participation levels in sport and physical activity across all age groups.

- 3.22 Several witnesses called for improved data collection and research in the area of Indigenous participation in sport. Some witnesses called for improved data collection from sporting codes whilst others suggested research should be undertaken to assess the benefits that sport and sporting events have on the wellbeing of Indigenous Australians.

- 3.23 Some of the limited data from the ABS includes the following statistics for Indigenous Australians aged between four and 14 years old that have participated in organised sport in the past 12 months:

Based on 2008 data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), in Australia, for Aboriginal children and young people aged four to 14 year, almost half (47%) had played organised sport in the last 12 months. Of these children and young people 51 per cent were boys and 43 per cent were girls. Aboriginal girls and boys four to eight years of age had lower participation rates (30% and 34% respectively) than Aboriginal girls and boys aged nine to 11 years (57% and 63% respectively), and 12 to 14 year olds (51% and 69% respectively).

For Aboriginal boys aged four to 14 years, the three most popular sports were Australian rules football (17%), rugby league (16%) and outdoor soccer (10.5%). For Aboriginal girls aged four to 14

17 Netball Australia, *Submission 28*, p. 3.

18 Government of South Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 3.

years, the most popular sport was netball (13%) followed by swimming (7%) and basketball (7%).¹⁹

- 3.24 Professor Colin Tatz advocated for research to be done on the linkages on delinquency and self-harm rates between Indigenous communities that have organised sport and seasonal sporting events against those communities who do not. At a public hearing he elaborated on this idea emphasising that it would not be a difficult or costly to conduct:

It is not a difficult exercise, and it is not a costly exercise, to set up a monitoring research project alongside Aboriginal communities where there is heavy sporting activity as measured against a few Aboriginal communities where there is no sporting activity. So you can measure three things: a community with sport; a community without sport; and then, in turn, you measure – and as I said it is not a difficult exercise – the suicide rates, the delinquency rates, and the assault and physical harm rates in a community when the competition is on and when the competition is off. I think you will find, as I found with my study of Aboriginal delinquency and the impact of sport on that in the 1990s, that it is not rocket science to work out and find factually that where there is sport, and heavy sport activity, the rates of delinquency and harm et cetera go down, and when the season is off the rates skyrocket.²⁰

- 3.25 Mr Anthony Bowd from vicsport commented that there was not a lot of research publically available that has been completed on the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing. He noted:

There is some research that has been done on the benefits that sport can have on delinquency, but there really is a shortage of research on the benefits of sport.²¹

- 3.26 A majority of submissions agreed that there would be many benefits for increasing Indigenous participation in sport. However, an important aspect of such an aspiration is to be able to analyse current participation levels across a wide variety of sports in order to be accurately able to assess increased participation rates following targeted Indigenous sports programs. The following quote emphasised this point:

Without reliable information about who is playing what sports in Australia – and why those sports are or are not attracting Indigenous or CALD [culturally and linguistically diverse]

19 Commissioner for Children and Young People WA, *Submission 11*, p. 2.

20 C Tatz, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 2.

21 A Bowd, vicsport, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 8.

participants – it is difficult to determine what specific programs need to be developed to increase the participation rates of different groups. Sporting organisations need to make this data collection a priority.²²

- 3.27 Some witnesses referred to the need for better evaluations of programs that link sport with other outcomes. For example, Professor Bill Fogarty saw a need for better evaluations of programs which link youth to sport and education, particularly in remote communities:

It is not enough to say that we think sport is doing great things; we need to know in real terms where best to spend our efforts.²³

- 3.28 Professor Mick Dodson told the Committee he was seeking an Australian Research Council grant to carry out research on why cricket was played in some remote Indigenous communities before the second world war and then disappeared and did not come back:

Our preliminary investigations show that there is a dearth of research, a dearth of material. It is really hard to find stuff. You look back in some of these remote areas to the twenties and thirties when cricket proliferated in these remote communities. Around the war it disappeared and did not come back. Why was that? What happened? I am not singling out cricket particularly but why did it vanish from the scene? We need to know the answer to those sorts of questions and research can deliver, I think, potentially some of the answers.²⁴

- 3.29 The Committee heard that not only is there a lack of information on the participation of Indigenous Australians in sport but more specifically there is a dearth of research on the participation of Indigenous girls and women in sport. Professor Bill Fogarty made this point at a public hearing:

We need to look at the models that are actually working. What is it about Deadly Sisters that is working? What are the things that you think could be working better? How applicable are they to other codes and other areas? The final really big thing is around the grassroots capacity. What are the models that are working really well? Again, what are the parts that are adaptable and what are the parts that are not adaptable? Clontarf is a fantastic thing and it has become the catch-all phrase of a great model, but does it work

22 Dr Adair and Dr Stronach, *Submission 29*, p. 3.

23 B Fogarty, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 3.

24 M Dodson, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 3.

in other codes? We do not know. How well is it really working for girls and women? We do not know.²⁵

- 3.30 In contrast with the discussion on the limited research that has been conducted in Australia, the National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy (NASCA) pointed out in its submission that in the international sphere the benefits of sport on education, health and youth development have been recognised and used for many years:

The links between sport, positive education and health outcomes and child and youth development are well documented. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) first recognized sport as a tool for education and incorporated it into its program in 1952 and more recently sport is being used as a tool across all Millennium Development Goals (Right to Play, 2008).²⁶

Committee comment

- 3.31 The Committee believes there is value to be gained from sporting codes and organisations collecting data on Indigenous participation. Whilst a few of the larger sporting organisations had collected statistics on Indigenous participation, many of the witnesses who spoke with the Committee thought it would be beneficial for their organisation to collect data on Indigenous participation.
- 3.32 The Committee suggests that data collection of Indigenous participation should be incorporated into a registration or enrolment form. The Committee acknowledges that many sporting groups are locally based or state run and therefore are dependent upon volunteers to run the club. However the Committee urges all sporting groups to gather this information where possible to assist with national data collection for Indigenous participation in sport.
- 3.33 Recommendation 2 in chapter 2, aims to provide the Commonwealth Government with comprehensive data to evaluate outcomes of Indigenous sport programs. Data would include statistics collected by sporting bodies.
- 3.34 The Committee recommends that a comprehensive project be undertaken to measure the impact of Indigenous participation in sport and cultural activities across age and gender. The Committee understands that some of the outcomes from participation in sport cannot be easily measured, such as improved welling or capacity building within the community.

25 B Fogarty, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 25.

26 NASCA, *Submission 38*, p. 1.

However, given the amount of Commonwealth money being spent in this area, the Committee believes that further research and documentation of outcomes would benefit policy makers, sporting bodies and Indigenous communities. The Committee noted the importance of funding being equitably distributed across Australia.

Recommendation 6 - Research the impact of sport

- 3.35 **The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government conduct a comprehensive project to measure and compare the range of outcomes across gender and age from Indigenous participation in sport and cultural activities.**

Barriers to participation

- 3.36 The Committee examined the barriers that may prevent Indigenous Australians from participating in sport. The Committee received evidence that discussed economic and structural barriers, as well as gender and race-based barriers.
- 3.37 In its submission vicsport highlighted some structural barriers that can decrease participation in sport such as 'limited access to facilities and high costs of transport, membership and uniforms. Factors such as race-based discrimination can also exclude participation.'²⁷
- 3.38 Professor Colin Tatz discussed economic and structural barriers, especially for remote Indigenous communities:
- The almost total absence of sports facilities in many remote communities like Lombardina, Doomagee, Mornington Island, Santa Teresa. Salt pans and sticks in the ground are what pass for football arena, no gyms or indoor courts. No lights, no showers, no coaches, no equipment are the order of the day.
- The presence of some playing fields but no equipment, no local organised competition, no travel money to get to competition, no sponsors, no financial resources apart from beer canteen profits.²⁸
- 3.39 Netball Australia raised concerns about the lack of economic and structural facilities in remote communities:
- As expected in all sports, there was a barrier with finance, infrastructure and services, but particularly in remote areas. There

27 vicsport, *Submission 34*, p. 4.

28 C Tatz, *Submission 2.1*, p. 3.

was a lack of capital and life-cycle funding for facilities, so that facilities were built but there were no long-term plans around maintaining and enhancing those facilities.²⁹

- 3.40 At a public hearing, Mr Anthony Bowd from vicsport suggested that consideration of possible barriers for participation needs to be given to a variety of sports and recreation, not just mainstream sports:

There need to be, as much as mainstream sports, successful sports. I think we need to understand that there are many second- and third-tier sports which are less mainstream and which are also very popular in communities. I point to the example of the VicHealth funded Surfing Victoria program, a terrific program which has been delivered in coastal Victoria. So mainstream sport is important, but I think that a wide breadth of sport may also help to increase the appeal to young women and girls, which is what part of this inquiry is looking at.³⁰

- 3.41 Community support, including having appropriately trained coaches was another barrier that was brought to the Committee's attention:

A further barrier was in the workforce, in terms of volunteers and the lack of appropriately trained people – which you alluded to before about physios, doctors and coaches – but also the managers, administrators and the volunteers who run the clubs, and knowledge of the government structures and understanding what it takes to actually put a team on the court.³¹

- 3.42 In its submission to the inquiry, the Government of South Australia, highlighted the following barriers that may exist for Indigenous Australians in urban, regional and remote settings:

Barriers specific to Urban Communities:

- Cost of playing structured sport in general is higher than in regional areas.
- Insufficient financial support to allow individuals to access clubs. Many funded programs aim to introduce Indigenous people to sport but fail to consider the individual's capacity to pay club fees or the costs associated with elite sport pathways.
- Short term programs are offered through some sports and government funded projects but little attention is paid to linking or creating capacity for long term participation.
- Lack of awareness of sport opportunities that are available in any given location.

29 N Cohen, Netball Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 19.

30 A Bowd, vicsport, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 8.

31 N Cohen, Netball Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 19.

Barriers specific to Regional Communities:

- Lack of community consultation and engagement.
- Lack of multi-purpose facilities or access to existing facilities.
- Lack of leadership within the community.
- Lack of confidence and/or support networks to join local clubs rather than setting up specific Indigenous clubs.
- Insufficient financial support to allow individuals to access clubs. Many funded programs aim to introduce Indigenous people to sport but fail to consider the individual's capacity to pay club fees or the costs associated with elite sport pathways.
- Community priorities - other things are more important, e.g. family and culture.

Barriers specific to Remote SA (South Australian) Communities:

- Lack of trust and engagement between community and service providers
- Limited access to sporting clubs as well as little understanding of how structured sport works.
- Community priorities - other things are more important, e.g. family and culture.
- Fly in-fly out, random, unplanned and uncoordinated (across agencies) visits.
- People in communities are not willing to take the lead (because culturally it may not be the norm).
- Lack of a functional base to deliver sport from, lack of facilities and equipment.
- Expectations of travel to metropolitan areas for state or national Indigenous programs/events. This heightens existing levels of disadvantage.
- Lack of resources to deliver programs in remote locations.³²

Cultural and gender barriers

- 3.43 Cultural stereotyping was discussed as a potential barrier to participation in sport that existed for some Indigenous women. Traditional roles in various cultures that stereotype women in the helping capacity rather than the participator in sport draws some parallels with Indigenous cultures.
- 3.44 The Committee received evidence that related to the way sport can rally a community, however this often results in women setting up the BBQ or canteen or participating in more administrative jobs rather than in physical activity.
- 3.45 Professor Colin Tatz provided an example of cultural and gender barriers that can be present for Indigenous communities. He commented that:

32 Government of South Australia, *Submission 41*, pp. 3-4.

Because the normal view in traditional communities of women is they are childbearing, they ought to bear children, they bring an economic benefit to the community in the form of the social service become to women.

In a similar sense in other parts of the world, there is huge discrimination against Muslim women because they also are prescribed traditional roles which do not include putting on running shorts and running around the Olympic track. So yes, there is a very serious problem of how a young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or South Sea Islander girl gets out from under the expectations of the clan, of the community, to break away and join an Institute of Sport in Canberra, leave home at 12 and not stay with a cottage mother and run and jump and play tennis and swim.³³

Racism

- 3.46 Racism in sport was discussed as a possible barrier for Indigenous Australians. Racism is conceptualised as comprising avoidable and unfair phenomena that lead to inequalities in power, resources and opportunities across racial or ethnic groups. It can be expressed through beliefs and stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination, and occurs at many social levels, including interpersonally and systemically, and as internalised racism.³⁴ Netball Australia emphasised in its submission 'Sport must combat racism in order to make a sustainable and valid contribution to Indigenous wellbeing.'³⁵
- 3.47 At a public hearing in Sydney, Mr Tom Evans, Executive Officer, Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team, informed the Committee that all major sporting codes had just signed up to an anti-discrimination campaign called 'RACISM. IT STOPS WITH ME.' Mr Evans explained the program was high-profile, and would roll out over the next 12 months.³⁶
- 3.48 Netball Australia advised the Committee that the purpose of the campaign is to:
- Ensure more Australians recognise that racism is unacceptable in our community.

33 C Tatz, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 8.

34 Netball Australia, *Submission 28*, p. 8.

35 Netball Australia, *Submission 28*, p. 8.

36 T Evans, Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 45.

- Give more Australians, at an individual and organisational level, the tools and resources to take practical action against racism.
- Empower individuals and organisations to prevent and respond effectively to racism where it may happen.³⁷

Committee comment

- 3.49 The Committee acknowledges there are significant barriers that Indigenous Australians may need to overcome in order to participate in sport and recreation. During the inquiry the Committee heard from several impressive Indigenous Australians who had overcome some of these barriers to participate in sport at local, state, national and international events.
- 3.50 The Committee noted that some of the economic and structural barriers would require some innovative thinking and cooperation from all levels of the community, individuals and government. The Committee does not believe it is solely up to the Commonwealth Government to resolve the structural barriers that exist in many Indigenous communities.
- 3.51 The gender imbalance for participation in sports within the Indigenous communities is of great concern to the Committee. The Committee encourages all sporting groups and organisations to assess what can be done within each sporting organisation to improve the participation of Indigenous women in sport.
- 3.52 The Committee suggests that sporting organisations consider employing more Indigenous women and where possible encouraging more Indigenous females to step up to become coaches, and mentors within their sport of choice.
- 3.53 The Committee strongly endorses the anti-discrimination campaign being run by the Australian Human Rights Commission 'RACISM. IT STOPS WITH ME.' The Committee was encouraged to hear that a majority of sporting organisations had signed up to it.
- 3.54 The Committee strongly encourages all sporting organisations and recreational activity centres to sign up to this campaign in order to develop policies and strategies to combat racism head on in all sport and recreational programs throughout Australia.

37 Netball Australia, *Submission 28*, p. 8.

Recommendation 7- Sport participation roles

- 3.55 **The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government acknowledge and develop Indigenous participation in the supporting roles around sport, such as coaches, umpires, health workers and administrators.**

Women in sport

- 3.56 The participation rates of Indigenous females are lower than the participation rates for males in a majority of the sporting codes. The issue of gender equity was raised to highlight potential barriers and to discuss what is currently being done by sporting organisations to address the low Indigenous female participation statistic.

- 3.57 The Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport (DRALGAS) recognised the need to improve gender equity in Indigenous sports participation. DRALGAS informed the Committee that one third of the participants in the Indigenous Sports and Recreation Program (ISARP) projects in 2012-13 were expected to be female. In its submission it DRALGAS stated:

It is also likely that the next funding round of the ISARP will prioritise applications promoting sport and active recreation for Indigenous women and girls. Available statistics indicate that the level of involvement in sport and physical activity is lower among Indigenous females than males and yet, notwithstanding the efforts of various organisations, at present the majority of Indigenous people assisted by sport participation programs are male.³⁸

- 3.58 Professor Colin Tatz emphasised his concern with the disparity of funds being spent on Indigenous men and women in sport. He commented:

... let me say to you that, for every \$100 that is spent on Aboriginal male sport, you are lucky if \$1 is spent on women's sport. There is a gross disparity not only in the minds of sporting bodies but in the minds of Aboriginal communities that sport is for men and it is the footy that is the big deal, not the netball, not the basketball, not the field hockey and the various other games that women can participate in. Now, of course, in the general community, women's

38 DRALGAS, *Submission 51*, pp. 20 & 23.

soccer and women's hockey teams have all become national iconic sports.³⁹

- 3.59 Ms Kathryn Palmer, Chief Executive Officer of Netball Australia discussed what is achievable at grassroots level with the big budgets of men's sports, such as AFL and NRL, and the comparably much smaller budgets of women's sports, such as netball:

My sister has worked at Rumbalara with the ASHE program, and she has seen generational change. It is amazing what can happen if you put the resources in the right spot. I am not saying that the government is going to solve this problem and should give us a bucketload of money. We can continue doing what we are now, and we love what we do and it is very effective. But if you really want to change the world for Indigenous women and girls in sport, there needs to be more action.⁴⁰

- 3.60 Ms Palmer highlighted the multitude of barriers that exist for Indigenous women participating in sport:

I see it really as a double-whammy for Indigenous women and girls, because as an all-female sport we suffer from all of things that women suffer from: a lack of respect, inequality, low levels of influence and economic power, and few women in decision making positions. So we suffer from that, and then the Indigenous women and girls have, on top of that, a lack of opportunity, racism and many other barriers to having an active and healthy lifestyle that every Australian should have an opportunity to participate in.⁴¹

- 3.61 In its submission Netball Australia informed the Committee that in 2005 it commissioned research to analyse and recommend programs and events that are essential for the development of Indigenous Australians in netball, including looking at barriers to participation. The research concluded that the main barriers to participation clustered around:

- In-effective, poor or non-existent communication, collaboration and strategic partnerships.
- Finance, infrastructure and services (lack of capital and life-cycle funding).
- Transport and logistics especially given the remoteness of some geographic areas.
- Culture, including attitudes to physical activity, Anglo-Saxon planning and delivery.

39 C Tatz, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 4.

40 K Palmer, Netball Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 15.

41 K Palmer, Netball Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 10.

- Work force, including volunteers and lack of appropriately trained people.
- Program awareness and delivery, including male domination of sport in communities, and “one size fits all” approach.⁴²

3.62 NASCA discussed the importance of providing services directly targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls:

Through our programs and conversations with school staff and community members, we have identified a need to provide additional support to females in a ‘female only’ environment.⁴³

3.63 Whilst mainstream sports are popular for women such as netball, basketball, hockey and softball, Mr Anthony Bowd from vicsport encouraged the Committee to focus on a wide breadth of sport to help increase the appeal to young women and girls.⁴⁴

3.64 vicsport raised another interesting point with the Committee in terms of women having a preference for non-competitive sport:

Traditionally programs are offered to males in structured and competitive formats however we know from research into non-indigenous female participation in sport that female interest drops off in the teenage years due to females not necessarily seeking a competitive sporting experience, demonstrating a preference for more social non-competitive sport. This barrier should be considered when tailoring programs for Indigenous female participants.⁴⁵

3.65 The Indigenous Marathon Project (IMP) co-ordinates ‘Deadly Fun Runs’ in the communities where they have had a past or present IMP squad member. The fun runs attract a fifty-fifty ratio of male and female participants. Ms Nadine Hunt told the Committee how successful the Deadly Fun Run series had been in expanding and attracting female as well as male participation:

The Deadly Fun Run is definitely expanding. It has been 12 months and we have had 35 official community fun runs held throughout Australia in four different states, with 1 300 different participants. Eighty-five per cent of those participants are Indigenous and 52 per cent are women. The biggest thing I noticed with the fun runs is that it is something women can be involved in. When you go to a lot of the communities the girls are sitting on the

42 Netball Australia, *Submission 23*, p. 3.

43 NASCA, *Submission 38*, p. 3.

44 A Bowd, vicsport, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 8.

45 vicsport, *Submission 34*, p. 5.

side, just watching the boys play footy. It is like, 'What do the girls have?'⁴⁶

3.66 The Rumbalara Football Netball Club values the input of women into its club and netball teams. Its submission commented:

Many people say that a great strength of Rumbalara's is that it does not have the kind of 'blokey' culture found in most sporting clubs - women have always played an equal role in the club.⁴⁷

3.67 The Committee examined what programs the various sporting codes had developed for females and how they were encouraging the participation of women in sport.

3.68 Australian Rugby League Commission highlighted some positive statistics showing women's involvement in rugby league. The increases in participation seemingly correlated with increases in female employment, in particular within the managerial and executive positions:

- 70% increase in the number of women in Board or executive management positions.
- Including 37% of administrative positions across all levels of the NRL management structure and the ARLC.
- 10% increase in the number of women in other management positions.
- 20% rise in female participation from 5 490 in 2011 to 6 559 in 2012.
- Female club membership increasing by 20 000 in 2011 to 82 250 to account for 41% of all members.⁴⁸

3.69 As indicated in the above statistics, Ms Trish Crews, General Manager of Community, Culture and Diversity, NRL told the Committee about the increasing participation of women over the past three years:

As part of the strategic plan that we have just launched, the participation of women and of girls in particular is our fastest growing area of participation.⁴⁹

3.70 As part of the social inclusion agenda outlined in the NRL's Strategic Plan, it states that 'rugby leagues commitment to gender diversity will be supported by skills development programs and reflected by a greater representation of women at all levels.'⁵⁰

46 N Hunt, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 29 November 2012, p. 4.

47 Rumbalara Football Netball Club and The Kaiela Institute, *Submission 23*, p. 7.

48 ARLC, *Submission 16*, p. 10.

49 T Crews, National Rugby League, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 16.

50 NRL website, NRL's Strategic Plan <<http://www.nrl.com/>> accessed 24 April 2013.

3.71 Ms Crews continued:

We have at the All Stars game the prematch, the curtain raiser, which is the Indigenous women's All Stars versus the women's All Stars, which is made up of the rest of the Jillaroos, which is the national women's team. We work really closely with the two knock-out organisers in New South Wales and Queensland to ensure we select the best girls from both of those competitions to come forward.⁵¹

3.72 Mr Joseph McDermott, Queensland Rugby League Game Development Manager, commented more generally about the focus on developing women in rugby league. He stated:

Increasing the participation and representation of women and girls in all areas of Rugby League will assist in building a more balanced and diverse sport, promote a positive sporting culture, provide strong leadership and ultimately contribute to a strong, sustainable sport from grassroots to elite and from remote to metropolitan locations. The game is also making a concerted effort to ensure females with leadership capacities are aware of the opportunities from a career perspective, and we intend to continue this.⁵²

3.73 The Committee was informed that most of the rugby league based Closing the Gap programs had an even breakdown of male/female participation. One of the reasons given for this was that the branding of rugby league clubs is so powerful and attracts both males and females to participate in the programs that use rugby league as the 'hook' to engage participants.

3.74 DEEWR stated that sporting partners are chosen for the Learn Earn Legend initiatives based on their appeal to young people, both male and female, and their links to the corporate sector who are able to provide work experience and employment opportunities. The majority of Learn Earn Legend projects are based around male dominated sports, however because the projects are not based on participation in sport, female participation is high.⁵³

3.75 Titans 4 Tomorrow General Manager Mr Matthew Francis commented that 'in all our Indigenous-specific programs over 50 percent are female.'⁵⁴

51 T Crews, National Rugby League, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 16.

52 J McDermott, Queensland Rugby League, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 2.

53 DEEWR, *Submission 48*, p. 19.

54 M Francis, Titans 4 Tomorrow, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 7.

- 3.76 Brisbane Broncos Government Projects General Manager, Mr Scott Czislowski told the Committee:
- This year around 56 percent of our students are female. Last year it was 55. That changes from area to area. In the Ipswich area this year we have a huge number of females compared with males, whereas in the northside of Brisbane there are more males and females. But we have 56 percent of females in our program.⁵⁵
- 3.77 The Northern Cowboys Community Manager, Mrs Fiona Pelling commented 'In our programs it is probably about 50 percent for both, depending on populations of the schools. It is equally as appealing to our female participants as it is to our male participants.'⁵⁶
- 3.78 Former Origin Greats Program Manager, Mr Matthew Martin commented that 'The ARTIE academy has 1 630 participants, of which 803 are female and 827 are male. In our academy operations females engage in our program more than males do.'⁵⁷
- 3.79 Social Softball games conducted by the Mornington Island Sports League in 2010 attracted more than 290 community participants, with the majority being women and girls. With the support of a local working group and regular visits by specialist program providers supported by Softball Queensland, participants now have the skills required to organise, play and officiate games. A day-long community Softball event in 2010 saw 60 participants in four teams compete against each other in a round-robin competition.
- 3.80 Australian Rugby Union (ARU) representatives spoke with the Committee and admitted that 'opportunities available to young Indigenous females are far more limited.' Mr David Sykes told the Committee that the ARU would focus in the future to increase participation of women in the 7s rugby strategy.⁵⁸
- 3.81 The Committee received a submission from Mr Ross Tanimu, coach of a South Australian local rugby union women's team. The local team has a high representation of Indigenous players. The team not only encourages participation in the game but offers empowerment and personal growth as demonstrated in the following statement:
- The 2012 women's rugby season for the Onkaparinga women's rugby team has become a wonderful journey of empowerment,

55 S Czislowski, Brisbane Broncos Rugby League Club, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 7.

56 F Pelling, North Queensland Cowboys, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 7.

57 M Martin, Former Origin Greats, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 8.

58 D Sykes, Australian Rugby Union, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 39.

achievements, self determination and personal growth, for the team as a whole. We have seen a growth in new and young women players being inducted into the code of rugby as well, we have seen a growth in family support.⁵⁹

Indigenous women's perspectives on participation in sport

3.82 In a survey put out to all Onkaparinga players Mr Ross Tanimu asked the women for suggestions of how to increase Indigenous participation in sport. One of the women suggested the following:

Maybe a family fun day, where the mums could come out and try the sport and have rides, games for the kids. A real community feel about it.⁶⁰

3.83 The survey asked what the women liked about having so many Aboriginal women playing rugby at the Onkaparinga rugby club. The following statements summed up the many benefits that accompany the health benefits of participating in sport.

I think it's great to have a team of so many Aboriginal women as it's so empowering for all of us. As soon as one sistagirl joined we all did as a support.

I think it's great, because it's like Aboriginal women are taking back control of their lives and their future. Stereotypes don't matter. It's great because just talking with them in our language is fantastic after not living with my own community for a while. Saying something and having someone understand is awesome.⁶¹
... good to see them out all out and doing something instead of sitting at home and doing nothing.⁶²

I think if we continue to raise awareness because with most Aboriginal things, it does rely on word of mouth. If we can continue to promote it with adequate support than we would see more interest by aboriginal women.⁶³

My view is that our people like to do things in groups I guess, and the woman that contacted us to play are well known and well supported in the community, it offered a togetherness, family environment, a place where our kids were safe and be together. It felt like a gathering place, a place we had goals and a place we

59 R Tanimu, *Submission 1 attachment F*, p. 1.

60 R Tanimu, *Submission 1.1*, p. 11.

61 R Tanimu, *Submission 1.1*, p. 14.

62 R Tanimu, *Submission 1.1*, p. 16.

63 R Tanimu, *Submission 1.1*, p. 14.

could support each other. A place to gain fitness and laugh and enjoy new friendships.⁶⁴

Committee comment

- 3.84 The Committee was particularly impressed with the work that the NRL is doing in terms of attracting near equal male and female participants for its Indigenous programs.
- 3.85 The statistics that demonstrate an increase in female participation at board level right through to the participation levels are reflective of the positive change for women that is taking place in rugby league. Some of the most compelling evidence from the ARLC was the fact that in the last three years, participation of women and of girls was one of the fastest growing areas of participation.
- 3.86 While Netball Australia recognised that there were several barriers that women in netball had to overcome to increase Indigenous netball participation, there was a real sense of commitment to wanting to break through these barriers to achieve greater participation rates for Indigenous Australians.
- 3.87 The Committee suggests that large successful sporting bodies such as the NRL and the AFL partner up with female sporting bodies to mentor and support them to expand their Indigenous sporting programs.
- 3.88 The Committee was impressed with the work being carried out by Mr Tanimu, who had engaged Indigenous women at the local level to participate in a women's rugby season in South Australia. It was evident that having one dedicated mentor who engaged the local community was able to build up not only a team of predominantly Indigenous women but a successful team who went on to win a grand final after four years of training, playing and mentoring.
- 3.89 The testimonials written by the female rugby players on the benefits of playing sport with other Indigenous women were very powerful statements demonstrating how women at a local level can go from not playing any sport to playing several seasons in a row. The Committee was impressed to hear that a number of Indigenous women were participating in sport and benefiting from the health and wellbeing payoffs due to the dedication of just a few people within the community.
- 3.90 Such a successful outcome as the Onkaparinga Rugby Club demonstrates that individuals at a local level can have long term success in terms of increasing Indigenous participation in sport. However it is important to

64 R Tanimu, *Submission 1.1*, p. 26.

recognise that individuals need support through local clubs and communities as well as the opportunity to access support from larger sporting organisations, and state and Commonwealth governments.

- 3.91 The Committee believes the comment made by vicsport regarding females preferring non-competitive sport to be very telling and suggests that sporting organisations consider a range of social sporting days to be run annually to encourage greater female participation. Family sporting days and community carnivals could be one way of engaging more females to participate in sport. Social and recreational types of sport should be considered when tailoring programs to encourage Indigenous female participants.
- 3.92 The Committee believes Commonwealth Government departments should continue to work on tailoring their sports programs to encourage greater participation by females. The Committee urges Commonwealth Government departments to continue to work with traditional girls' sports bodies, to develop appropriate opportunities for females under the Commonwealth Government programs.

Recommendation 8 - Indigenous female participation

- 3.93 **The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government prioritise strategies within its sports programs to increase opportunities for Indigenous female participation in physical activity.**

Recommendation 9 – Prioritise funding for Indigenous women and girls

- 3.94 **The Committee recommends the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport ensure that funding for sport and active recreation for Indigenous women and girls is prioritised.**
- 3.95 The Committee believes that in the longer term a focus on younger Indigenous people participating in sport will have a trickle on effect and assist older generations in the future to lead longer healthier lives. Sport is an important vehicle for achieving the health, education and employment targets set by the Close the Gap agreement.

Partnerships, mentoring and culture

- 4.1 Creating strong partnerships arose as a significant issue for the successful delivery of sporting programs for Indigenous Australians. Partnerships between governments, both state and Commonwealth, the private sector and the non-government sector were discussed in detail.
- 4.2 The value of integrating Indigenous mentors and role models throughout Indigenous sporting programs was another important topic of discussion. The Committee spoke to several Indigenous mentors and roles models and discussed with them what made a good mentor and role model.
- 4.3 The influence of culture on sport and sport on culture was raised by Indigenous individuals and organisations. The significant role that Indigenous culture in sport has on individuals and communities emphasised the positive impact sport has on reconciliation. Reconciliation through sport and the creation and implementation of Reconciliation Action Plans were discussed throughout the inquiry.

Partnerships

- 4.4 The importance of quality partnerships arose frequently during the course of the inquiry. Most importantly developing a solid relationship with members of the targeted Indigenous community was paramount in achieving successful outcomes through sport.
- 4.5 The Committee was informed that many of the partnerships were multi-faceted bringing together communities, the corporate sector, government, non-government organisations, schools and health centres.
- 4.6 Dr Alfred Bamblett, Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd discussed the importance of developing effective partnerships by emphasising the need for community members to be participants in a program rather than simply recipients:

It is a statement saying very clearly: if you want to do anything in the area of Aboriginal issues, we have to be participants, not recipients of goodwill; not recipients of nice feelings; not recipients of just the money that you give, but in fact that we are actually able to participate and set a direction.¹

- 4.7 The National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy (NASCA) commented in its submission that it was established seventeen years ago to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in sport and to provide young people with the opportunities to develop their sporting prowess and create career pathways.

NASCA was filling a gap to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent in sport, because no one else was. This was done through clinics, camps, carnivals, scholarships and talent identification programs, across the country.²

- 4.8 In its submission, NASCA commented that David Liddiard, its Director and Founder, for many years campaigned government and the major sporting codes to impress upon them the significant role that sport can play in improving the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:

David spoke with seven successive CEO's at the NRL and it wasn't until David Moffett and David Gallop listened and finally got the ball rolling, creating the Indigenous programs now in existence at the NRL. NASCA was critical in opening doors and leading the dialogue in creating change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing.³

- 4.9 Miss Carla McGrath, Program and Sustainability Officer for the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE) stated that the NCIE has been a success as a result of the localised partnerships that were developed with the Redfern community:

We would not be able to be here if it were not for having worked with the local Redfern community in order to make sure that we have the legitimacy to operate. We would not have been able to develop any of the programs that we have without working in with those people who have already been working on the ground and having seen some success in order to do that. So there is not an element of what we do that is not done in consultation with

1 A Bamblett, Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 6.

2 NASCA, *Submission 38*, p. 3.

3 NASCA, *Submission 38*, p. 4.

organisations that are already working at a local level and starting to see some success.⁴

- 4.10 Mr Richard Kilian, representing National Rugby League (NRL) discussed the need to develop strong relationships between the communities and different providers in order to develop the most effective programs:

You should see yourselves more as coordinators, understanding your backyard; having the consultations, understanding what the need is with the communities and having that relationship with those different providers, whether it is corporates, governments or philanthropic mining companies. They should see the funding that we give them as a seed and look at how they can actually grow that with those other agencies. We all recognise that we are not the professionals in delivering health programs or educational programs, but we do provide a really good platform or a really good tool to give those outcomes the best opportunities to actually happen. That is what those clubs are doing. They are working with the communities, having those relationships with the different providers such as Mission Australia. Then through a holistic approach we are able to deliver better programs for the communities based on need as opposed to perceived needs.⁵

- 4.11 Professor Mick Dodson made a significant point about not relying on Government support only, pointing out that effective partnerships between corporates, governments and communities are often more sustainable in the long-term.

I am not saying government should vacate the space – government has to be in the space. My point is that everybody has to do some of the lifting; it is not just all up to government. We cannot just sit back and wait for government to turn up. In fact, if we find some private money from the corporate sector, from our own resources or from elsewhere then government tends to come in. It is easier to persuade government to come in, but do not expect them to be first cab off the rank.⁶

- 4.12 The issue of tri-partnerships between communities, government and the corporate sector was discussed. Ms Trish Crews from NRL supported the notion of tri-partnerships by stating:

4 C McGrath, National Centre of Indigenous Excellence, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 25.

5 R Kilian, National Rugby League (NRL), *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 18.

6 M Dodson, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 24.

Government and sport can work together to look at issues and then work together with corporate – absolutely, I think it can be tri-funded and tri-partnerships – so that you can go into a community and say, 'Okay, what are the issues here and how can we all work together to create it across, rather than down in silos?'

We only started this work six years ago; we have been reliant on funding from either government or corporate to be able to do that. We have worked in silos but we believe that given the work that we have seen – if you could go into Western Sydney, for example, and look at health, literary, employment and all of those Closing the Gap issues – we could work together in a partnership to address all of those issues. That would be a much more powerful opportunity, rather than working in silos.⁷

- 4.13 Mr Joshua Creamer, Chairman of the Titans 4 Tomorrow program highlighted the importance of tripartite relationships:

Specifically we have a program with Origin Energy in the Surat Basin, known as the 'I Can' program, which is due to expand in the new year as we bring Santos into that relationship. We understand the value of having an industry based approach with a tripartite relationship between the government, the corporate sector and Indigenous communities.⁸

- 4.14 Mr Shane Mattiske, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC) made the following comments:

We have some great ideas. We see what we can deliver as being really powerful, gaining that support from the whole of society – whether that is government or the corporate world – to support the programs we would like to assist in. That is the real challenge for us. We have a limited capacity and we have certainly made strong commitments to support these programs, but real outcomes cannot be achieved without working in coordination with government and with the corporate world.⁹

- 4.15 The Australian Football League (AFL) commented on the various partnerships they have established in the field of Indigenous sports programs.

We invest in the order of \$8 million into dedicated Indigenous programs and staff. In addition the AFL in partnership with the Federal government is providing support to initiatives such as

7 T Crews, NRL, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 18.

8 J Creamer, Titans 4 Tomorrow, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 2.

9 S Mattiske, ARLC, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 19.

the Korin Gamadji Institute, Cape York House and the Michael Long institute.¹⁰

- 4.16 The Australian Rugby Union (ARU) informed the Committee it uses partnerships effectively:

We have a really effective alumni, we have some great corporate partners and we have a really comprehensive school network.¹¹

- 4.17 The ARU discussed the important role that sporting codes play in terms of linking corporate partners in with smaller Indigenous organisations. Mr David Sykes commented:

Whether it is the AFL, rugby league or Tennis Australia, you have got sponsors knocking down your door to be associated with your brand. But you have both got a common objective, which is that you do have this corporate social responsibility, and if that is introducing people from Qantas to Tom and saying, 'Look, this is what Tom's organisation is about; it is fantastic. Will you back that?'¹²

- 4.18 Partnerships are critical for successfully building holistic Indigenous sports programs. The Adelaide Crows stated:

The Adelaide Football Club (AFC) in collaboration with ABLE Solutions (Managing Director former AFL player Andrew Mcleod) and Yourkids (Managed by APY Lands Program Manager Frank Leonard) have initiated a program for remote Indigenous youth that we believe, through sport, can create a positive social change in the areas of education, health and wellbeing, and with this hopes to change the landscape of Indigenous programs within Australia.¹³

- 4.19 Whilst partnerships at all tiers were considered vital, Mr Anthony Bowd from vicsport raised the issue of recognising that some large sporting bodies have much greater capacity in terms of budgets and branding power, enabling larger sponsorship deals whereas smaller sporting bodies don't have as much capacity. He commented:

The mainstream sports have big budgets and I hear about the numbers of their staff, and that is fantastic. But some of the smaller

10 AFL, *Submission 20*, p. 1.

11 D Sykes, Australian Rugby Union (ARU), *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 38.

12 D Sykes, ARU, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 42.

13 Adelaide Crows, *Submission 6*, p. 1.

sports – Darts Victoria, Table Tennis Victoria, Softball Victoria and taekwondo – are hand-to-mouth organisations...¹⁴

- 4.20 Another point that was drawn out of the discussion from Mr Bowd included the important role that peak Indigenous bodies play in terms of partnering with less financial sports to try to deliver programs. Mr Bowd provided the example of VicHealth funding a \$10.2 million program whereby 30 state sporting bodies could apply for funding to help disadvantaged community groups, of which Indigenous is one. He commented:

Of 30 sports that applied, only four were Indigenous programs. That is the flow-on effect of not having VAYSAR to work with and partner up with these smaller sports. This is something that should not be glossed over. Recognised peak bodies are needed so that Indigenous sport can partner and work with the less financial sports to try to deliver some of these second- and third-tier programs.¹⁵

- 4.21 In funding the Clontarf Foundation, DEEWR informed the Committee that it ensures that Clontarf maintains partnerships with other providers so that it has sustainable funding and is not just reliant upon Commonwealth Government funding. In a submission it stated:

The Sporting Chance Program school-based sports academy funding model requires the providers to source two thirds of the operating costs of an academy. The Foundation has strong partnerships with State and Territory Governments as well as the corporate community who also contribute funding to their academies.¹⁶

- 4.22 Partnerships are integral to the way NASCA operates. NASCA told the Committee 'the government gives us one-third in cash and then we have to find the remaining two-thirds of the budget either in cash or in kind.'¹⁷ NASCA elaborated:

We have made that commitment around how we engage with the corporate sector and the philanthropy sector and, clearly, from a government perspective on how we have evolved on our funding to date. I think that from an opportunity perspective we are really looking forward to building on that, but we require that stability from government. In essence, the collaboration work that we are

14 A Bowd, vicsport, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 27.

15 A Bowd, vicsport, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 27.

16 DEEWR, *Submission 48.1*, p. 4.

17 G Nash, NASCA, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 37.

evolving in that corporate sector has been a critical piece in the evolution of what we do at NASCA.¹⁸

- 4.23 Similarly, partnerships are integral to the way that the David Wirrpanda Foundation (DWF)¹⁹ operates. The Foundation is funded through a variety of Government, corporate and philanthropic sources. The DWF has over 22 MOUs and funding agreements with a variety of bodies. Some of the main sponsors of the Foundation include Rio Tinto, Shell Australia, Netball Australia, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Australian National Preventive Health Agency.²⁰
- 4.24 The Rumbalara Football Netball Club and VicHealth have demonstrated how partnerships are important ways to taking a holistic approach to health – understanding that health and wellbeing are directly linked to the context of broader social issues, such as healthy families, employment, and connection to land and culture and spirituality. With VicHealth, the club has created a health promotion model which uses sport as a way of empowering people to take control of their own health and have harnessed further community's support networks.²¹
- 4.25 Mr John Brady from the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health made the following comment highlighting the range of partnerships involved in the delivery of Indigenous sports programs:

This is going to be its third year and it is about seeing the changes and also the relationships that you form. As part of the Indigenous sports program, you are working with a lot of groups: Aboriginal medical services, non-government organisations, public schools, independent schools.²²

Sponsorship

- 4.26 Sponsorship was an issue that arose out of partnerships with the corporate sector. The Committee discussed with witnesses the access that sporting organisations have to sponsorship.
- 4.27 Professor Colin Tatz was adamant that corporate sponsorship in the area of Indigenous communities was an area that had great potential:

18 B Duarte, NASCA, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 35.

19 DWF was established in 2005 by David Wirrpanda, a former Aboriginal AFL player.

20 A full list of sponsors can be found at:
<www.dwf.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=76&Itemid=148>
accessed 7 May 2013

21 Rumbalara Football Netball Club and Kaiela Institute Limited, *Submission 23*, pp. 5-6.

22 J Brady, Institute of Urban Indigenous Health, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 40.

The private sector is an absolutely untapped source of income and resources. I am not going to talk about tobacco companies – forget it. And I am not going to talk about liquor companies; I think they should be left out of this picture altogether, for obvious reasons. But there are any number of industries – and I am thinking of chocolate industries or confectionery industries, or some food industries – that could be readily sold the idea of big-noting themselves by installing a gymnasium – I do not care if it is called the KFC gymnasium!²³

- 4.28 Mr Shane Mattiske, Chief Executive Officer of the ARLC discussed the way money is generated for the Indigenous programs each year through the annual All Stars rugby league match run at the start of each rugby league season.

All Stars match are actually quarantined and turned around and dedicated to Indigenous programs. So it is a really effective way for us to generate funds that can support Indigenous programs. That is a commitment that the game is very keen to make. We see the very positive outcome of that activity, that celebration that happens on one day but has a flow-on effect throughout a whole season or in fact a whole year.²⁴

- 4.29 The NRL acknowledged the success they have in attracting corporate sponsors to deliver Indigenous sports programs. Mr Richard Kilian from NRL commented:

The support from the corporates has been overwhelming. Obviously we all recognise that they have corporate social responsibility to give back to Indigenous communities and we feel that we provide a solution for them in terms of delivery of their outcomes through the vehicle of sport, particularly rugby league and particularly with the state of origin job experience program. When we approached the corporates to see if they wanted to be involved in it, it was primarily around providing work experience for Indigenous kids. Their response was: 'Yes, we would love to be involved. But what are the other expectations?' And we said, 'Basically it is just to provide a safe environment for these kids to do work experience and an environment that is culturally appropriate.' As far as the program, that was it. Since their

23 C Tatz, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 7.

24 S Mattiske, ARLC, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 13

involvement in it, they have started coming back to us and saying, 'We are quite keen to do more in the Indigenous space.'²⁵

4.30 The power of the AFL brand attracts a range of partners including corporate and broadcast partners, government agencies and community organisations such as Clontarf, The Long Walk, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club, Worawa Aboriginal College, Garnduwa Sport and Recreation.²⁶

4.31 Ms Nadine Cohen from Netball Australia observed that sport has traditionally been excluded from the philanthropic sector. She commented:

The not-for-profit reform agenda that is being looked at both federally and in some jurisdictions, as well as the not-for-profit tax reform working party, really needs to have a look at how sport can access some of the philanthropic opportunities without having to set up separate foundations which then add compliance and regulatory burdens, governance arrangements et cetera. I am not talking about providing incentives for sport outcomes per se but opportunities to use sport to achieve health and wellbeing, and other social change outcomes.²⁷

4.32 Mr Tim Rowe from the Indigenous Marathon Project (IMP) discussed the need for IMP to access tax deductible gift reciprocity status to raise money from the private sector:

I suppose at the moment it is quite minimal support that we receive from the private sector. I think we are limited in the fact that we do not have deductible gift reciprocity status, although there is the Australian Sports Foundation, which we are linked through, which is enticing for individuals to donate to because they also get a tax concession. This Australian Sports Foundation has been great, however, there are guidelines to how we are to acquit those funds which do not necessarily fall to where we need to spend the money.²⁸

4.33 Mr Jon McGregor from the Australian Drug Foundation commented on funding and sponsorship for remote communities.

The issue of funding and sponsorship is especially important in those remote communities where there are very few other options. Around the country what we have found is that when clubs can

25 R Kilian, NRL, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 13

26 AFL, *Submission 20*, p. 3.

27 N Cohen, Netball Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 24.

28 T Rowe, Indigenous Marathon Project, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 29 November 2012, p. 7.

change the culture and attract more members than other businesses and philanthropists then a range of other organisations are willing to make investment into the space.²⁹

- 4.34 Dr Bruce Hearn Mackinnon spoke about the limited opportunities to seek business support in remote regions such as Yuendumu:

A really important question was asked earlier on about sponsorship and funding. If we are talking about remote communities – as I said, that is my experience – obviously you are limited. There tends not to be any local businesses there. In the Yuendumu there are two shops. In some areas of the country, there might be mining companies with opportunities for sponsorship but by and large in a lot of remote communities it is going to be dependent upon government funding.³⁰

- 4.35 The Committee discussed the difficulty for some regional and remote communities to access sponsorship from larger corporations. During this discussion Professor Michael Dodson gave an example of where BHP was funding a leadership program for youth in Yuendumu despite not having a mining interest in the region. Mr Dodson explained that BHP was involved through Reconciliation Australia's Indigenous Governance Awards program.³¹

Community engagement and capacity building

- 4.36 The Committee examined what the key enablers were for successful Indigenous sporting programs. An issue that arose often throughout the inquiry was the need to achieve comprehensive community engagement. The following statement was echoed throughout the evidence received:

A long term successful sports program requires solid community engagement.³²

- 4.37 Dr Bruce Hearn Mackinnon recognised that sport was a positive enabler for Indigenous communities. He stated:

I see sports as being an opportunity to be leveraged in broader capacity building. Sporting teams need administrators, coaches, physios, bus drivers, cooks, timekeepers. Using sport as a model, I

29 J McGregor, Australian Drug Foundation, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 24.

30 B Hearn Mackinnon, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 23.

31 M Dodson, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 24.

32 A Bowd, vicsport, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 8.

can see it as having the opportunity to become the centre for growth in community development.³³

4.38 Mr Anthony Bowd from vicsport emphasised the importance of a community having someone to champion the program. He stated:

Community role models are very important. Sport has a role in going to communities and not just building the programs and moving on but also building community role models and people to deliver programs in the community. Those people then become champions of the program and also champions of the community more broadly. Sport has a role to play in building community role models, but sport also needs to be helped in itself to be able to understand how it should work with communities. If sport is going to be a deliverer and a trainer and try to build long-lasting programs, it needs to be assisted in that regard as well.³⁴

4.39 In its submission, vicsport highlighted a common problem with high turnover of non-community staff and low levels of community engagement.

Many sport and recreation programs operating in Indigenous communities do so in an environment of high turnover of development officers and low community involvement. Despite a general understanding that programs need to function as part of a 'whole-of-community' approach, there often appears to be little integration of the sport and recreation program with other parts of the community.³⁵

4.40 The Western Desert Sports Council echoed the view that sports programs can benefit communities in many ways:

Sport embodies community development for community members:

- They learn about the games and the rules of the games
- Through playing sport, indigenous kids learn about co-operation and teamwork which are skills they will take with them into the workplace.
- Capacity-building also takes place within the WDSC Board. Board members are elected representatives of the eight communities. The WDSC provides opportunity for these elected representatives to self-organise which leads to personal growth.

33 B Hearn Mackinnon, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 4.

34 A Bowd, vicsport, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, pp. 8-9.

35 vicsport, *Submission 34*, p. 6.

- It provides the opportunity to learn about and practice responsibility.³⁶

4.41 Mr Shane Phillips, CEO, Tribal Warrior Association commented that:

To sustain ourselves, we need to build capacity within our communities and within our services. That level of empowerment and engagement is paramount for what we are doing and what we aim to achieve.³⁷

4.42 Ms Julie Warren, AFL, discussed with the Committee the important role that AFL engagement officers have in terms of providing a key focus to make sure that the program is locally owned and run by community. She explained:

Across the country there are 400. In the Territory we have roughly 12 sites, and that is continuing to grow through partnership with the government. We are working to make sure that there is a person there and also trainees coming up, so we are growing the capacity to make sure that that is run by local community people. At this point in time most of those appointments are non-Indigenous people, but we are really focusing strongly on making sure that there are trainees coming through, so that ends up being owned and run by the community.³⁸

4.43 Mr Ross Tanimu shared with the Committee his own success story of engaging with his local community effectively in South Australia in terms of establishing a touch football competition and coaching a women's rugby team. The evidence demonstrated that Mr Tanimu acted not only as a facilitator but as a mentor and champion of the game. In terms of growth and success Mr Tanimu comment:

We started off with seven high schools and 70 students. From 2011 to 2012 it has increased to 21 high schools with 270 kids playing touch football as our vehicle of engagement.

I was approached to coach a women's rugby team, with initially three Aboriginal women. Now I have close to 17 on the books. Within three years we won the grand final. What it says to me is that sport is setting life skills in place, and by setting goals and objectives you will overcome adversity.³⁹

36 Western Desert Sports Council, *Submission 50*, p. 6.

37 S Phillips, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 21.

38 J Warren, AFL, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 25.

39 R Tanimu, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 4.

Committee comment

- 4.44 The Committee views the successful building of partnerships to be critical to the service delivery for all Indigenous services, sporting programs included. The evidence provided to the Committee highlighted some very successful partnerships that were achieving long-term results such as the Clontarf Foundation.
- 4.45 The Committee believes that establishing a relationship with the Indigenous community is essential for all sporting organisations delivering Indigenous sports programs. The evidence suggested that solid engagement with the community results in programs that get community members on board to participate and assist with the running of the program. As a result individuals within the community become involved in the delivery of the programs which nurtures a sense of commitment and success for the program.
- 4.46 The Committee strongly supports the need for communities to establish local champions for every Indigenous sports program. The value in finding a local advocate of the program is immeasurable and can assist with creating a willingness of locals to participate which has a flow on effect of community capacity building in terms of getting other people on board with the program. Having a local champion for a program in the community can achieve longevity for a program as well as increased participating rates and additional health and wellbeing outcomes.
- 4.47 Securing sponsorships in addition to Commonwealth Government funding can greatly assist in the delivery and longevity of Indigenous sporting programs. It was recognised by all partnerships how important the combination of non-government, government and the corporate sponsorship was for the successful delivery of Indigenous sporting services.
- 4.48 Increasing philanthropic support within the non-government sector is an area that should be encouraged. The Committee believes the Commonwealth Government should investigate strategies to encourage philanthropy through mechanisms such as tax deductions for sponsorship by corporate bodies of Indigenous sporting programs linked to Closing the Gap outcomes.
- 4.49 The Committee notes sport sponsorship is frequently linked to alcohol and alcohol consumption. This is of particular concern to the Committee as it reinforces a drinking culture which has had devastating consequences for many Indigenous communities. It is essential that sponsorship is sought from industries and companies that promote healthy living.

Recommendation 10 – Sponsorship towards Closing the Gap

- 4.50 The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government investigate strategies to encourage philanthropy through mechanisms such as tax deductions for sponsorship by corporate bodies of Indigenous sporting programs linked to Closing the Gap outcomes.

Mentoring and role models

- 4.51 A majority of the evidence indicated that most of the successful Indigenous sports programs relied on engagement from Indigenous mentors or role models.
- 4.52 The David Wirrpanda Foundation (DWF) exists to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by working together to empower and build capacity amongst Aboriginal individuals, their families and their communities.
- 4.53 The DWF emphasised the need to incorporate mentoring into successfully Indigenous sporting programs:
- Sport and mentoring programs must use Aboriginal people as role models and mentoring staff. This ensures that the programs are driven by Aboriginal people, and are culturally appropriate. All of our Aboriginal role models are either current or former elite athletes or high achieving positive role models in the community. Working with sports organisations as partners ensures a sustainable collaboration that will create a lasting legacy. Mentoring needs to be the key component of all programs, to really have an impact on a participant’s life, and role model mentors must be trained appropriately.⁴⁰
- 4.54 The sporting codes informed the Committee that Indigenous mentors and role models they engaged in programs acted as the ‘hook’ to attract Indigenous people to participate in programs. At the same time they described the success that the mentors and role models had in engaging the participants in various programs and discussed the positive outcomes that resulted from the engagement and mentoring.
- 4.55 Mr Joshua Creamer, Chairman of Titans 4 Tomorrow shared with the Committee the following insight into the work of a mentor/role model:

40 David Wirrpanda Foundation, *Submission 4*, p. 2.

We see ourselves as a service provider which uses sport as a tool to engage people like Preston Campbell, Dean Widders and others who are part of our program who are essentially the hook for those young Indigenous people who have not necessarily grabbed onto these opportunities before. That hook is then supported by infrastructure. There are four of us here on the panel today who are people skilled in education and who can provide that assistance in mentoring and learning which is assisting our participants to go on and set higher aspirations and achieve greater outcomes in their lives.⁴¹

- 4.56 In its submission, Titans 4 Tomorrow provided examples of the personal success stories that the mentoring program has achieved. The submission discusses the power that the mentors have in terms of the ability to raise the sense of identity and confidence in participants to allow them to dream beyond the immediate and achieve success in ways they never thought possible. Two of the case studies are outlined below:

Twelve months ago Misty left home and was living on the streets and heading to dependency on drugs and alcohol. Through the intervention of her Indigenous Education Officer she decided to give the T4T program a chance and was inspired by Clinton Toopi's workshop where he shared some of his personal history. She describes T4T as her 'rock' and her family. She is now completing Year 12 and is confident of progressing to University to study Psychology and Criminology. She wants to be a Youth Worker who goes to the kids rather than have them come to her. Her long-term ambition is to establish a charity to help homeless kids as she understand their experiences.⁴²

Kieran is an 18 year old. In Year 12 by his own admission he was 'in a dark place' and contemplating self-harm. In his own words he thought he would become another statistic of an Indigenous kid not completing Year 12.: "Without that person to talk to I would have been out on the street at nights getting into trouble or being put into lock-up or even worse." A workshop with Preston Campbell was a turning point and he has not only completed Year 12 but is now a marketing trainee working at the Titans and is contemplating going to University.⁴³

41 J Creamer, *Titans 4 Tomorrow, Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 3.

42 *Titans 4 Tomorrow, Submission 22*, p. 8.

43 *Titans 4 Tomorrow, Submission 22*, p. 9.

- 4.57 At a public hearing Mr Scott Czislowksi discussed the key message that the Brisbane Broncos mentoring program delivers in terms of achieving success despite having to overcome adversity.

Indigenous players in particular have become very positive role models for all students in the mentoring program – boys and girls. A key message that they take home with them from sessions spent with the players is one of pride in community, family and self, and desire to achieve greatness even through adversity. ...

We have been in the program for three years. Forty per cent of our staff are Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people, which we feel is a very important part of grasping with the kids, getting that cultural background and being able to communicate with the families and the students involved in the program.⁴⁴

- 4.58 Ms Julie Warren acknowledged the success of Indigenous role models being employed by AFL and having a positive impact on increasing participation rates:

Three years ago, when we developed our Indigenous framework, we also developed our employment strategy, and we have gone from less than 10 people employed in the industry to over 70. That has had a massive impact on participation. When we first measured our participation rate, it was just under four per cent; now, it is close to seven per cent because of the Aboriginal staff involved in delivering our programs at a grassroots level.⁴⁵

- 4.59 Ms Belinda Duarte discussed the value of mentoring and provided an example from her time spent with the AFL SportReady program. AFL SportsReady works in partnership with over 700 premier sporting clubs and other organisations around the country, to ensure young trainees can access quality education and job opportunities. Ms Duarte commented:

During my time with AFL Sportsready, a really critical element, which is a focus of the inquiry around mentoring, in the evolution of the Indigenous employment program was for us to take time to invest in mentoring. What we found was that intensive mentoring by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during the first 16-week period of a young person on a traineeship was a key element in the success, and the rate of completion was significantly increased.⁴⁶

44 S Czislowksi, Brisbane Broncos Rugby League Club, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 4.

45 J Warren, AFL, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 10.

46 B Duarte, NASCA, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 5.

4.60 Ms Warren praised the success of AFL SportsReady program.

In terms of mentoring, we have tried a number of ways of developing formal mentoring programs. They are very resource intensive, so our mentoring tends to be much more informal and focused on role modelling. Again, I acknowledge the work of SportsReady, because their mentoring program has been fantastic. They have had 1 000 trainees go through, which is probably one of the most successful Indigenous traineeship programs in the country. I am not aware of any program that has been more successful than that.⁴⁷

4.61 Mr David Sykes from ARU discussed the successful long-term partnership ARU has with the Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team (LMRDT). The LMRDT assists young Indigenous people in developing their rugby skills and then using those skills as a means of personal development to assist in securing a future for themselves as adults. Mr Sykes commented:

Originally the program was started to increase Indigenous participation in rugby, but it has become far more than that. It is a mentoring organisation giving a transformative experience to young men all around the place.⁴⁸

4.62 Ms Kate Malpass, a mentor for the DWF, currently works in Healesville at Worawa Aboriginal College. She informed the Committee of a program she runs there called the Deadly Sista Girlz, which is the only one the DWF has based in Victoria.

4.63 Ms Malpass explained to the Committee that as a mentor she is able to connect with the girls and explain many life skills in addition to playing sport as a result of her life experience.

I teach sexual health to the girls, which some people like and some people do not. I teach them about money. I teach them about drugs and alcohol. However, in saying that, we then go on to play sport, because that is where their passion is. That is where they can relate to you. They look up to you, so they listen to what you say on everything else.⁴⁹

4.64 She also spoke about mentors demonstrating pathways:

I think it is important to have role models in that position to go out there and show these girls that there are barriers – but none of the

47 J Warren, AFL, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 10.

48 D Sykes, ARU, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 38.

49 K Malpass, David Wirrpanda Foundation, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 8.

mentors in our program have ever sat around feeling sorry for themselves. We have got out there, we have made our own pathways and we talk. I do not just talk about my life experience; I talk about a lot of the other girls' life experiences as well, and that is where you relate to the girls. I think it is about showing them that there is that adversity but you can overcome it. I think that the women are in less of a position to do that – to have the self-belief.⁵⁰

- 4.65 A submission from the Rumbalara Football and Netball Club emphasised its commitment to mentoring:

By providing an environment where people can connect and learn from their community, the club taps into the strong culture of mentoring that is an intrinsic part of the community. It is something they have tried hard to build on.⁵¹

- 4.66 Ms Trish Crews, from the National Rugby League Commission highlighted some positive feedback about the role models they received from one of the programs:

We get countless emails, stories and phone calls from teachers and parents saying: 'Thank you. We had a player come into our school last week to talk about healthy living' – this is through our program Eat Well, Play Well, Stay Well – 'and all of a sudden my little boy has come home and asked for vegetables for the first time in his life. The next time you come back, can you get that player to tell him that he needs to clean his room?' They listen to their role models. If we can get our role models – which we are – delivering the appropriate messages at the appropriate levels for the children they are speaking to, it can have such a powerful effect.⁵²

- 4.67 As part of the Learn Earn Legend program, the NRL explained how they would like to develop the mentoring program. Ms Crews provided the following example of what they wanted to achieve in the future:

Earlier this month the NRL had the pleasure of hosting His Royal Highness Prince Charles at an All Stars demonstration and mentoring session for Indigenous students at Bondi Beach. His Royal Highness was introduced to rugby league Indigenous stars Greg Inglis, Greg Bird, Preston Campbell and George Rose and took part in our Dream, Believe, Achieve program. The mentoring session encourages students to build on their self-esteem,

50 K Malpass, David Wirrpanda Foundation, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 18.

51 Rumbalara Football Netball Club and The Kaiela Institute, *Submission 23*, p. 9.

52 T Crews, NRL, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 14.

resilience and positive ways to identify and achieve their future goals.

If one of the kids drops out in that first six months the opportunities of them re-engaging are very slim. We work with them for six months and then that is it. Our dream would be to almost create an alumni of kids that come through these programs. Prince Charles actually said it to the kids the other day: 'You guys need to come back in a year's time and you need to be the ones helping the NRL mentor the next wave of kids coming through.'⁵³

What makes a good mentor

4.68 During the Brisbane public hearing, the Committee was interested to find out what made a good mentor. Mr Preston Campbell, representing Titans 4 Tomorrow commented:

I guess a mentor is someone who is a good role model, who leads by example, basically does the right thing, leads in the right direction and offers a hand wherever they can.

That is what I do. That is what we do at the Titans. I know that Rod does it up there, and the FOGS, the Titans and the Cowboys. I guess it is a personal relationship – you have to get in depth with what these young ones are all about. Education is important and their health is important, but with these personal relationships a lot of personal issues come up. You need to be able to listen to these young ones about their personal problems.⁵⁴

4.69 Mr Rod Jensen, Manager of the Take Pride program, Learn Earn Legend commented:

As far as I understand how mentoring works, why it works for me and why I am so good at it, is that I have come from where those kids have come from. They want to see how I got out. They want to know what I have learnt.⁵⁵

4.70 Mr Preston Campbell summed up what it means to be a mentor. He said:

It is someone who wants to listen and who really cares about these young ones. It is not about going in and looking for the next Jonathan Thurston. It is about looking for the next leader in our community.⁵⁶

53 T Crews, NRL, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 17.

54 P Campbell, Titans 4 Tomorrow, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 8.

55 R Jensen, Northern Pride Rugby League Club, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 9.

56 P Campbell, Titans 4 Tomorrow, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 9.

- 4.71 vicsport highlighted the importance of developing role models and mentors at the community level:

It is important to recognise that role models play an important part in the successful delivery and ongoing sustainability of sporting programs. Role models at the community level are very important for the success of programs. Often strong leaders and role models within the community are the driving force behind successful programs. Sports have a role to play in developing and nurturing community leaders, this includes skills transfer to local residents so that they can carry on once the sport and development officer leaves the community.⁵⁷

- 4.72 Community role models was addressed in the submission from the Indigenous Marathon Project:

The Deadly Fun Run Series (DFRS) is a component of the Indigenous Marathon Program and is a series of fun runs operating within 15 communities. An objective of the DFRS is to create community champions and pave the way for future role models and stories of achievement and success from within communities.⁵⁸

- 4.73 In its submission the DWF shared some mentor stories with the Committee. Below is an example of what one of the Indigenous mentors wrote about the benefits of mentoring:

The contribution sport has had on the Indigenous community can sometimes be underestimated in terms of breaking down barriers of equality, the impressions that either side of each(the Indigenous cultures and the wider community cultures has of each other), the obvious health benefits through being active physically, and mentally through the social interaction of being a player, coach, administrator or just a supporter. So there has been some Indigenous legends created through the interaction of themselves and sport but more importantly its opened doors to education, about each other's cultures, and created pathways for our young to follow.⁵⁹

- 4.74 The Stride Foundation emphasised the point that sporting mentors can deliver skills and messages that can be transferred and used in everyday life. He commented:

57 vicsport, *Submission 34*, p. 6.

58 Indigenous Marathon Project, *Submission 49*, p. 5.

59 David Wirrpanda Foundation, *Submission 4*, p. 4.

Organisations that utilise sport as a vehicle for engagement need to be very clear in their messages to young people about achievement and success particularly with Indigenous youth. While sporting success is clearly an effective method of engagement for Indigenous young people, role models/sports players need to relay that sports is not the only avenue of success in the world and the underlying skills acquired in their career can be applied in any context.⁶⁰

- 4.75 The Adelaide Crows submission discussed a mentoring program recently developed by Andrew and Rachel McLeod. The McLeod's are passionate about a structured mentoring program that will assist in developing future role models in their local community. The submission commented that 'A Certificate 1V in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mentoring is in the final stages of being approved by the Australian Governing Body. The Certificate will be offered to all mentors, enabling them to become valuable assets to participants as well as people in their wider communities.'⁶¹

Women as role models

- 4.76 Increasing participation figures is important for Indigenous Australians and in particular for Indigenous women given the participation rate is so low. Ms Duarte provided the example of how her mother was a positive role model in her life:

From a female's perspective, to witness my mother being very physically active was critical and it was learnt behaviour that was carried on by the women in my family.⁶²

- 4.77 NASCA informed the Committee of its ARMtour program that uses athletes as role models. NASCA commented that it always provides an equal male to female role model/mentor ratio on the ARMtour program.⁶³

- 4.78 At a public hearing in Melbourne, Netball Australia Chief Executive Officer, Ms Kathryn Palmer commented:

We admire the achievements of the AFL and NRL and what they do in providing opportunities for Indigenous men and boys. They have wonderful role models at the top and incredible grassroots programs. We could just dream of having the same impact, and I think it is incredibly disappointing that there are so few female

60 Stride Foundation, *Submission 15*, p. 3.

61 Adelaide Crows, *Submission 6*, p. 3.

62 B Duarte, NASCA, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 18.

63 B Duarte, NASCA, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 18.

role models at the top and so few grassroots participation programs for Indigenous women and girls.⁶⁴

- 4.79 Hockey Queensland submitted the following point that a dedicated focus on Indigenous women in hockey resulted in many benefits including developing future role models:

The development of this Indigenous hockey team resulted in significant improvements to the player's self-esteem, confidence and self-worth. In addition to the benefits that the hockey program and the development of team provided, the players' self-worth was reinforced as they realised they had become effective and inspiring role models to Indigenous youth throughout the country.⁶⁵

- 4.80 vicsport suggested the media had a role to play in promoting female athletes in sport to encourage greater participation given the success to date of role models for men in sports such as NRL and AFL.

There is a distinction between community based role models and elite athletes role models. Often there is a great sense of pride with elite athlete role models who are promoted and celebrated within communities however whilst there are many male Indigenous athletes succeeding in National and International sport, female elite role models are not as prevalent. There is a greater role that media can play in supporting and promoting female athletes, especially female elite athletes in order to encourage the next generation of female participants.⁶⁶

Short term role models

- 4.81 The Committee received evidence that was critical of some Indigenous sporting programs using well known sports people to fly in and out of communities with the aim of motivating the community to get active and participate in the chosen sport that the role model represented.
- 4.82 Professor Colin Tatz raised his concerns about the fly in and out model stating that it was wasteful of resources and did not have a long lasting effect:

Role models I think are exaggerated. There have been a number of attempts to send people of repute and renown to remote communities and they have been a flop. I can remember Tony Mundine, Anthony's father, going up there. I can remember

64 K Palmer, Netball Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 9.

65 Hockey Queensland, *Submission 33*, p. 19.

66 vicsport, *Submission 34*, p. 6.

various footballers, including the late Artie Beetson, going up. Evonne did her share of travelling around, showing herself up there. They come one day on an aeroplane, they are there for half a day and they are gone. They leave behind some boxing gloves and that is the end of the matter. So role models in this sense are a kind of waste of money and waste of time. It all makes people feel good for a day.⁶⁷

4.83 He suggested that in reality the 'longer term role models basically are going to come from television, radio and magazines rather than from a visit of a particular star.'⁶⁸

4.84 Professor Bill Fogarty was a strong advocate of the grassroots development of sporting organisations as opposed to the fly in and out model:

What I was getting at is that there are two parts to getting Indigenous engagement. I was not saying that role models do not have a part at all; what I was getting at is that they are one part. Julie mentioned that you need both those things – the grassroots development and the role model elite athletes – happening at the same time.⁶⁹

4.85 One of the submissions argued that in terms of improving the general health and wellbeing of Indigenous communities, comprehensive participation programs were needed:

... not "talent spotting" by football codes or the government-funded Indigenous Marathon Project, wherein only a handful of athletes is supported (Adair, 2012). The idea that high profile Aboriginal and Islander athletes serve as exemplars for others to follow is alluring, but there is no evidence that this translates into sustained sport/physical activity patterns for their communities generally. Localised programs, with locals empowered to deliver them, is what is needed to produce real impacts; not "helicopter" initiatives by non-Indigenous people.⁷⁰

Committee comment

4.86 The Committee was impressed with evidence of the success that the integration of mentoring and role model programs has had on the delivery of sporting programs. The Committee was very pleased to hear that

67 C Tatz, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 5.

68 C Tatz, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 5.

69 B Fogarty, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 24.

70 Dr Adair and Dr Stronach, *Submission 29*, p. 3.

mentors and role models not only support the engagement and participation in programs but often have further benefits such as participants becoming community leaders, increasing school attrition rates, gaining employment and improving health and wellbeing outcomes.

- 4.87 The Committee applauds the work of many of the sporting bodies who had well developed mentoring programs and could demonstrate highly successful outcomes such as the AFL SportsReady program, Titans 4 Tomorrow mentoring program and the Brisbane Broncos mentoring program.
- 4.88 The Committee commends the initiative of Andrew and Rachel McLeod from South Australia who have developed a Certificate 1V in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mentoring in South Australia which is soon to be approved. The Committee believes there is a great deal of value in running a structured Indigenous mentoring course that complements the current mentors and role models that deliver a wealth of life experience and hope for the younger generation of Indigenous Australians.
- 4.89 The Committee also applauds smaller sporting organisations such as the David Wirrpanda Foundation that supports the Deadly Sista Girlz program, directing efforts specifically at mentoring young Aboriginal girls and women. The Committee believes more funding should be focussed on programs that develop Indigenous female leaders in communities as the impact of such a program has many benefits.
- 4.90 The Committee agrees that female role models in sport should be elevated and given greater recognition within modern Australian society. The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government encourages sporting codes to focus their efforts in this area and work in partnerships with the corporate and government sector to create more visible female sports role models, including more Indigenous female sports role models.

Recommendation 11 – Promoting role models

- 4.91 **The Committee recommends the Commonwealth Government support initiatives that increase the range of Indigenous sports role models at all levels, including and beyond the elite level.**

Culture, sport and reconciliation

4.92 The influence of culture on sport and sport on culture should not be under-estimated. The Committee received evidence recognising the positive influences that culture and sport have on each other, in particular for Indigenous run organisations.

4.93 One of the submissions received during the inquiry summed up the link between culture and sport:

Sports from my perspective is a 'vehicle' that has the potential to enhance cultural wellbeing, inclusiveness, unity and more importantly develop self esteem/determination and cultural empowerment.⁷¹

4.94 The Titans 4 Tomorrow submission described the additional benefits that sports programs can deliver to Indigenous communities:

It has been the experience of Titans 4 Tomorrow that this proper use of sport can not only deliver statistical outcomes but also allow participants to aspire to become generational leaders for their community and their culture.

What it cannot measure is the sense of cultural identity and connectedness engendered through the programs.

As well as connecting with individuals, sporting organisations also have the ability to engage a broader cross section of community than traditional service providers. Sport is often a major point of connection for families. Families will attend sporting events together, watch sport together on television, and discuss results.⁷²

4.95 Some of the evidence went as far as stating that sports carnivals and events held the cultural significance of a modern day corroboree:

Research on the Knockout highlights the significance of the Knockout carnival as a social event, as a 'modern day corroboree', the economic contribution of the Knockout including public and private sponsorship and stall holdings, and the development of the women's and junior competition.⁷³

4.96 Mr Jason Tamiru, Director of the Melbourne Aboriginal Youth, Sport and Recreation Centre made a similar comment about the cultural significance of a sporting carnival:

71 R Tanimu, *Submission 1 Attachment B*, p. 1.

72 Titans 4 Tomorrow, *Submission 22*, p. 1.

73 H Norman, *Submission 44*, p. 1.

It is all about history. I have said it before and I will say it again: we do follow our people's tracks. It is not a cliché; it is the reality. Belinda was talking about the footy carnival – it is a modern-day ceremony. We all come together, everyone looks forward to it. There are so many communities in Victoria, and here is an opportunity for all of us to come together, catch up, see what is going on...⁷⁴

- 4.97 Ms Belinda Duarte, Director of the Korin Gamadji Institute spoke about the importance of holding Indigenous sporting carnivals, highlighting the connection that is formed between sport, culture and community:

Going back to some of the grassroots activity and dialogue around why do we need our own teams, our own carnivals, our own activities, you cannot underestimate the ceremonial significance of getting our mob together. Traditional ceremony has a place, but culture continues to evolve over the years. All the evidence shows that events and activities that celebrate contribution or engage communities where they feel a sense of belonging, pride and a coming together on something that is positive and not another funeral, or are connected to come with family again for sorry business, or just the interpersonal challenges that families live with day to day, those gatherings are critical – they are critical because they give us a sense of belonging; they give us an opportunity to dip our toe in the water and say, 'Actually, I am not too bad at this.'⁷⁵

- 4.98 Mr Sebastian Kipman from Cricket Australia commented on the importance that Indigenous cricket carnivals such as the Imparja Cup has with the connection to culture:

The Imparja Cup is exactly what you have just talked about: the coming together of cricket teams from across the country. There are stories of people driving for 20 hours straight to get to the Imparja Cup. We talk about bragging rights. It is a competition that was started by a couple of guys bragging about the best cricket team. One of the two guys did not even have a cricket team, so that history is still strong there. When teams travel interstate, their team management require them to investigate the culture and interrogate who they are playing, so it is beyond just cricket.⁷⁶

74 J Tamiru, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 26.

75 B Duarte, NASCA, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 26.

76 S Kipman, Cricket Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 27.

- 4.99 In its submission the Rumbalara Football Netball Club commented that its motto of 'proud, strong family' highlights the basis of its cultural connectedness, the club has every opportunity to build on that family focus, and that is a vital asset in fortifying the culture.⁷⁷
- 4.100 A community leader from Coober Pedy made the following observation to the Stride Foundation emphasising the importance of culture and community when sports programs are involved:
- I'm not interested in numbers in only sports program. Sport is good for our young people but it is not the amount of kids it attracts it is what it means later that matters. I'm interested in culture and how programs have anything to do with our culture. Everything comes back to culture even sport's so it must be relevant and lasting.⁷⁸

Reconciliation

- 4.101 Celebrating and recognising Indigenous participation in sport has helped to reduce racism in sport and has advanced reconciliation.

During the past two decades the AFL has successfully positioned itself as the national sporting brand mostly closely associated with the process of 'Aboriginal' reconciliation and the non-tolerance of racism in sport. The AFL was the first professional sporting body in Australia to address on-field racism by adopting anti-racial vilification laws in 1995. At the same time, the AFL also became a strong public voice for reconciliation through events such as the annual 'Dreamtime' at the G match, recognition of an Indigenous Team of the Century and a tacit acknowledgement of the Indigenous football game marngrook as the precursor to the contemporary game.⁷⁹

- 4.102 Reconciliation Australia commented in its submission:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and achievement in sports provide a platform for reconciliation, and can contribute to improvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sports people provide strong role models for all young people, and fight

77 Rumbalara Football Netball Club and The Kaiela Institute, *Submission 23*, p. 11.

78 Stride Foundation, *Submission 15*, p. 2.

79 C Hallinan and B Judd, 'Indigenous studies and race relations in Australian sports', *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, vol. 15, no. 7, 2012, p. 916.

against some of the negative stereotypes that exist about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.⁸⁰

- 4.103 The David Wirrpanda Foundation submission included this quote from one of its mentors Dale Kickett who commented:

The contribution sport has had on the Indigenous community can sometimes be underestimated in terms of breaking down barriers of equality, the impressions that either side of each(the Indigenous cultures and the wider community cultures has of each other),⁸¹

- 4.104 Ms Belinda Duarte commented on the benefits of holding Indigenous carnivals and celebrating in a way that is akin to Indigenous ceremonies. Inviting non-Indigenous people to join in such celebrations would be another step towards reconciliation through the medium of sport.

[Aboriginal sports carnivals] ... have a critical role to play in assisting us to evolve and to celebrate our identity and have non-Aboriginal people join us in feeling what that is and understanding what that is. It strengthens our country to be a part of those ceremonies. When a common religion in this country is sport, why can we not house that and allow others to be exposed to it and understand the cultural significance of it right here today?⁸²

Reconciliation Action Plans

- 4.105 Many sporting bodies are recognising the benefits of establishing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as part of their core business. A RAP is a business plan that turns good intentions into actions. A RAP publicly formalises an organisation's contribution to reconciliation by identifying clear actions with realistic targets and is developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and leaders.
- 4.106 The Committee discussed what this meant for sporting bodies and how it was engaging more Indigenous Australians to either participate in sport or engage in non-sporting outcomes.
- 4.107 In its submission to the inquiry Reconciliation Australia, the national organisation building and promoting reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community,

80 Reconciliation Australia, *Submission 14*, p. 2.

81 David Wirrpanda Foundation, *Submission 4*, p. 4.

82 B Duarte, NASCA, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 26.

highlighted the role that RAPs play in the delivery of Indigenous sporting programs. Reconciliation Australia stated:

Sport is an important part of Australian life. It can break down racial and socio-economic barriers and offers a unique opportunity for all Australians to participate as equals. Sport is based on the principles of teamwork, fairness and equality which are also fundamental principles of reconciliation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and achievement in sports provide a platform for reconciliation, and can contribute to improvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sports people provide strong role models for all young people, and fight against some of the negative stereotypes that exist about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.⁸³

4.108 The following sporting organisations currently have endorsed RAPs registered with Reconciliation Australia:

- National Rugby League (NRL) and Australian Rugby League (ARL)
- Brisbane Broncos
- Melbourne Storm
- Ipswich Jets
- Northern Pride Rugby League Club
- Essendon Football Club
- Richmond Football Club
- Subiaco Football Club
- Cricketing Old Greats (COGS) Australia

The follow sporting organisations were in the process of developing a RAP:

- Australian Rugby Union
- Queensland Rugby Union Ltd (Including the Qld Reds)
- Gold Coast Titans
- Australian Sports Commission
- NT Cricket⁸⁴

4.109 Reconciliation Australia discussed in its submission the valuable contribution the corporate sector plays in promoting RAPs.

The corporate sector plays a leading role in promoting, encouraging and facilitating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in sports, and delivering sporting programs. A

83 Reconciliation Australia, *Submission 14*, p. 2.

84 Reconciliation Australia, *Submission 14*, p. 4.

number of Reconciliation Australia's corporate RAP partners have partnered with, or have committed to partner with, sporting codes and non-government organisations to deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sporting programs.⁸⁵

- 4.110 Professor Michael Dodson discussed the purpose of RAPs with the Committee and explained that he was co-chair of Reconciliation Australia at a time when RAPs were first being developed. He made the point that everyone from the top of the organisation has to be willing to change and consider working with Indigenous Australians differently. He commented:

This is the way we do things around here. We actually spend some of our budget on encouraging participation of Aboriginal people. We spend some of our budget in raising awareness and educating people about Aboriginal history and Aborigines' place in society. We spend money on paying people who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to be lecturers, professors and researchers; to be undergraduates, postgraduates and general staff workers. We actually spend our money on that; we are not waiting for the government to come.⁸⁶

- 4.111 Most RAPs encourage organisations to develop partnerships with local Indigenous Advisory Councils to discuss ways to engage with the local community. Ms Belinda Duarte discussed the benefits of Indigenous Advisory Councils:

Given that we are talking about governance roles, capacity and getting Indigenous people into decision-making roles, ... – and a couple of people made reference to it – is an Indigenous advisory group or an Indigenous advisory council. I am interested in how we get more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across decision-making roles but particularly how those advisory groups influence governance and the implementation of programs on the ground. Some people are doing great jobs; other people need some work.⁸⁷

- 4.112 Mr Shane Mattiske, Chief Executive Officer of the ARLC, discussed with the Committee the benefit of delivering a RAP. He commented that in 2008 the NRL was:

the first national sporting organisation to commit to a reconciliation action plan, and I believe we remain the only major

85 Reconciliation Australia, *Submission 14*, p. 4.

86 M Dodson, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 14.

87 B Duarte, NASCA, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 21.

sporting organisation to do so. We are now in the third year of our second iteration of that plan, and we are continuing to drive that message of reconciliation across our game.⁸⁸

4.113 Mr Mattiske explained that ‘the Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council was formed in 2008 to fulfil the role of the RAP Working Group to provide independent direction and advice on Indigenous matters.’⁸⁹

4.114 The NRL RAP has led to:

specific strategies around our programs – our engagement with Indigenous development officers, for example, and specific strategies to fund and support programs to support social change in Indigenous communities. It also includes a range of measures that are aimed at increasing Indigenous participation in our sport.⁹⁰

4.115 Ms Nadine Cohen from Netball Australia stated that whilst they did not have a RAP at this stage they would like to develop one:

A key priority for us would be for our community engagement manager to develop a national reconciliation action plan for us. ... We need to get our strategic positioning right and provide tools to the community to understand and deliver sport in a non-Anglo-Saxon manner. It is a long way of saying that we are going to develop one but we need to understand what we want to achieve first and how we are going to achieve it.⁹¹

4.116 Ms Julie Lawson from the ARU told the Committee the ARU is in the process of developing a RAP:

Part of my role this year has been flying out to the different state unions to run some programs at schools, and then I have been meeting with people at those state unions. We have been talking about their Indigenous programs overall and what they are up to, and then I have been encouraging all the state unions to develop a RAP. Reconciliation Australia has guidelines of what a first-year RAP should look like, so some of the things in that document have to be there – something like culture awareness training for staff or not necessarily planning an event around NAIDOC Week but encouraging staff to maybe get involved in local events that are already happening.⁹²

88 S Mattiske, *ARLC, Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 10.

89 *NRLC, Submission 16*, p. 4.

90 S Mattiske, *ARLC, Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 12.

91 N Cohen, *Netball Australia, Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 13.

92 J Lawson, *ARU, Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 40.

- 4.117 The ARU currently has established an Indigenous reference group. Ms Lawson commented:

Yes, we already do have a reference group, which is made up of individuals from ARU and also members of the Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team. There is Gary Ella, Glen Ella, Tom, Lloyd Walker and a few of us. We are, I guess, part of the core members of that group, and also as part of the meetings we have looked at identifying other key people in the community to come in and talk to us to make our events better.⁹³

- 4.118 Mr Matthew Francis from Titans 4 Tomorrow told the Committee they are currently developing a RAP:

At the moment we are developing our Reconciliation Action Plan, but we have an Indigenous advisory council for our programs. Josh, as well as being the chair of T4T which is our not-for-profit organisation, has a group that meets on at least a quarterly basis and involves parents, the GUMURRII Unit at Griffith University, Education Queensland and some of the local elders and representatives. As we are moving out to the Surat Basin we are developing that as well. We bring parents onto the residentials with the kids, so not only are the kids actively involved in the program themselves but we also involve the parents in that process, which is really important in an area which does not have much Indigenous infrastructure.⁹⁴

- 4.119 Ms Julie Warren from AFL explained to the Committee why AFL did not have a RAP in place:

... given the work that it takes to prepare a RAP, we instead produced our own Indigenous framework, which was our version of a RAP. RAPs make organisations accountable for delivering on their agreed actions. As the AFL is constantly in the media spotlight, we are accountable always. We used a lot of the principles of the RAPs in our Indigenous framework but did something slightly different.⁹⁵

- 4.120 However, Ms Warren did explain that two AFL clubs, Essendon and Richmond had developed RAPs of their own.⁹⁶

93 J Lawson, ARU, *Committee Hansard*, Sydney, 21 November 2012, p. 42.

94 M Francis, Titans 4 Tomorrow, *Committee Hansard*, Brisbane, 6 December 2012, p. 14.

95 J Warren, AFL, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 12.

96 J Warren, AFL, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 22 November 2012, p. 13.

Committee comment

- 4.121 The Committee recognises the many benefits that sport delivers to Indigenous communities. Sport has been described as being the 'hook' for engaging Indigenous Australians in education programs. Similarly, sport has been described as the 'glue' that assists in building relationships and community cohesion and reinforces the importance of Indigenous culture.
- 4.122 Many Aboriginal run/owned organisations commented on the important link that exists between sport and culture. The Committee understands the importance of maintaining strong culture for Indigenous communities and recognises the reciprocal benefits that sport and culture have on one another. The Committee congratulates the various Aboriginal Institutes and organisations that host Indigenous sporting carnival and events that help to celebrate and nurture Indigenous cultures throughout Australia.
- 4.123 The Committee congratulates the AFL for being the first professional sporting body in Australia to address on-field racism by adopting AFL Player Rules in 1995. As discussed in chapter 3, given the high level of support and status that many Australians attribute to sport, the Committee believes that all sporting organisations, local, regional and national, should sign up to the Australian Human Rights Commission's 'RACISM. IT STOPS WITH ME' Campaign.
- 4.124 The Committee strongly supports the positive messages of cultural celebration and pride at big sporting events, that can assist in developing a positive pathway to Close the Gap outcomes and promote reconciliation. National events such as the AFL's 'Dreamtime at the G' and the NRL's 'All Stars' matches should continue to be televised live, on free to air television across Australia as a continuing step towards reconciliation.
- 4.125 As Reconciliation Australia has discovered through its RAP program, corporate Australia is a willing contributor to Indigenous programs and in doing so is able to establish strong connections throughout Australia at various levels.
- 4.126 The Committee congratulates the NRL for being the first national sporting body to develop a RAP. The Committee believes that all sporting bodies and organisations should develop a RAP which would greatly assist in increasing the participation rates of all Indigenous Australians into a variety of sports and recreation programs. The Committee considers sport to be a great leveller and that it can assist in bringing about reconciliation for all Australians.
- 4.127 The value in developing RAPs should not be underestimated and the significant progress that is being made in terms of increasing Indigenous awareness in sporting codes and individual organisations will have

significant benefits in the long-term for Indigenous participation in sport. The Committee is of the belief that by encouraging sporting organisations at all levels to develop RAPs, it will improve the understanding and awareness of Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures that will ultimately lead to improvements in reconciliation and a reduction of racism in sport.

Concluding remarks

- 4.128 This report identifies the enormous potential of sport to improve Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring. Throughout Australia in urban, regional and remote settings Indigenous Australians are passionate about sport. Sport is more than just playing a game. Rather, the Committee found sport to be the hook that leads to many aspirations and achievements for Indigenous Australians.
- 4.129 The Committee has set out a plan of action for the Commonwealth Government to review what is being done in the area of Indigenous sport programs and what needs to be improved. To ensure the contribution of sport will continue to improve Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring the Committee has recommended that the Commonwealth Government develop an overarching framework of service delivery and evaluation for Commonwealth agencies which fund sport programs. Outcomes should be aligned with Close the Gap targets in health, education and employment.
- 4.130 The Committee has called for an increase in the focus on programs to address the low participation of Indigenous women in sport, including as role models for young Indigenous Australians. The Committee congratulates the sporting and other non-government bodies which have developed role modelling and mentoring programs which assist young Indigenous Australians to develop positive aspirations for their future.
- 4.131 The Committee views the successful building of partnerships to be critical to the service delivery for all Indigenous sporting programs. Effective partnerships involve solid engagement with Indigenous communities. The Committee challenges the non-government sector, including sporting bodies, the corporate sector and Indigenous communities, to continue the great work being done in this area and invest in sporting programs which link to Close the Gap outcomes.

Janelle Saffin MP
Chair

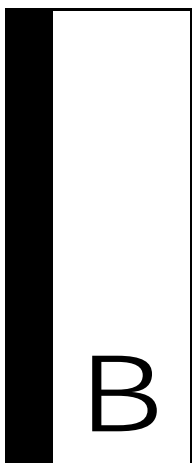


Appendix A – List of submissions

- 1 Mr Ross Tanimu
- 1.1 Mr Ross Tanimu
Supplementary Submission
- 1.2 Mr Ross Tanimu
Supplementary Submission
- 2 Prof Colin Tatz AO
- 2.1 Prof Colin Tatz AO
Supplementary Submission
- 3 Broncos
- 4 David Wirrpanda Foundation
- 5 Mr Peter and Mrs Catherine Sheehan
- 6 Adelaide Football Club Ltd
- 7 City of Darebin
- 8 Swimming Australia Ltd
- 9 Dr Bruce Hearn Mackinnon
- 10 VicHealth
- 11 Commissioner for Children and Young People WA
- 12 Softball Australia
- 13 Oztag Queensland
- 14 Reconciliation Australia
- 15 Stride Foundation Ltd
- 16 Australian Rugby League Commission
- 16.1 Australian Rugby League Commission
Supplementary Submission
- 17 Basketball Australia

18	SA National Football League Inc
19	Mr Doug Booth
20	AFL
21	North Queensland Toyota Cowboys
22	Titans 4 Tomorrow
23	Rumbalara Football Netball Club and Kaiela Institute Limited
24	Tennis Australia
25	Queensland Rugby Union
26	Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council
27	Australian Drug Foundation
27.1	Australian Drug Foundation Supplementary Submission
28	Netball Australia
29	Dr Daryl Adair and Dr Megan Stronach
30	Hockey Australia
31	Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-op
32	Former Origin Greats Queensland
33	Hockey Queensland Inc
34	vicsport
35	Cricket Australia
36	Football Federation Victoria
37	Australian Rugby Union Ltd
38	National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy
39	Touch Football Australia
40	Central Australian Youth Link-Up Service
41	Government of South Australia
42	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
42.1	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Supplementary Submission
43	Department of Health and Ageing
44	Ms Heidi Norman
45	Royal Life Saving Society NT Branch
46	Queensland Government

-
- 47 Mr Joe Shaw
 - 47.1 Mr Joe Shaw
Supplementary Submission
 - 47.2 Mr Joe Shaw
Supplementary Submission
 - 48 Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
 - 48.1 Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
Supplementary Submission
 - 49 Indigenous Marathon Project
 - 50 Newcrest Mining Ltd/Western Desert Sports Council
 - 51 Department Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport
 - 51.1 Department Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport
Supplementary Submission
 - 52 Football Federation Australia
 - 53 Institute for Urban Indigenous Health
 - 54 Northern Pride Rugby League Football Club
 - 55 Left-Field Business Solutions
 - 56 Mr John Bell
 - 57 Dunghutti Sport and Recreation Indigenous Corporation
 - 58 Heart Foundation



Appendix B – List of hearings and witnesses

Wednesday, 21 November 2012 - Sydney

Individuals

Prof Colin Tatz

Australian Rugby League Commission

Mr Shane Mattiske, Interim Chief Executive Officer

Australian Rugby Union

Ms Julie Lawson, National Education and Participation Coordinator

Mr David Sykes, Government Affairs Adviser

Basketball Australia

Mr Graeme Allen, General Manager, Game Development and Chief of Staff

Ms Kristina Keneally, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Elysha O'Neill, Schools Engagement Officer

Clontarf Foundation

Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer

Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team Inc

Mr Tom Evans, Executive Officer

National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy

Ms Belinda Duarte, Chairperson

Ms Georgina Nash, Education Programs Manager

Mr Stewart Okell, South Sydney Project Officer, Walan Barramal Academy

National Centre of Indigenous Excellence

Mr Ben Bowen, Life Team Leader

Ms Carla McGrath, Manager, Program and Sustainability

Mr Shane Phillips, Chief Executive Officer, Tribal Warrior Association
National Rugby League

Ms Trish Crews, General Manager, Community, Culture and Diversity

Mr Mark deWeerd, Community Program Manager, Culture and Diversity

Mr Richard Kilian, Program Manager, Indigenous Community

Thursday, 22 November 2012 - Melbourne

Individuals

Prof Michael Dodson

Dr William Fogarty

Dr Bruce Hearn Mackinnon

Mr Peter Sheehan

Mrs Catherine Sheehan

Mr Ross Tanimu

Academy of Sport, Health and Education

Mr Phillip Guthrie, Manager

AFL

Ms Julie Warren, Manager, Indigenous Employment Program

Australian Drug Foundation

Ms Liz Archer, Consultant

Mr Jon McGregor, Community Programs Manager

Cricket Australia

Mr Sebastian Kipman, Advisor, Government and Community Relations

David Wirrpanda Foundation

Miss Kate Malpass, Program Mentor

Melbourne Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Centre

Mr Jason Tamiru, Arts and Culture

Netball Australia

Ms Nadine Cohen, Head of Strategy and Government Liaison

Ms Kathryn Palmer, Chief Executive Officer

Korin Gamadji Institute

Ms Belinda Duarte, Director

vicsport

Mr Anthony Bowd, Business Operations Manager

Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd

Dr Alfred Bamblett, Chief Executive Officer

Thursday, 29 November 2012 - CanberraIndigenous Marathon Project

Ms Nadine Hunt, Project Officer and Deadly Fun Run Coordinator

Ms Laura Oldfield, Media and Communications Manager

Mr Timothy Rowe, Chief Executive Officer

VicHealth

Ms Caroline Walker, Executive Manager

Thursday, 6 December 2012 - BrisbaneIndividuals

Dr Steven Rynne, Lecturer, University of Queensland

Brisbane Broncos Rugby League Club

Mr Scott Czislawski, Government Project Manager

Evonne Goolagong Foundation

Mr Roger Cawley, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Mrs Evonne Goolagong-Cawley, Chairperson

Former Origin Greats Queensland

Mr Matthew Martin, Education Program Manager

Mr Gene Miles, Executive Chairman

Hockey Australia

Mr Grant Weir, Game Development Manager

Hockey Queensland Inc

Ms Kim Guerin, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Julie McNeil, Program Manager, Remote and Indigenous
Communities Hockey Program

Institute for Urban Indigenous Health

Mr John Brady, Program Coordinator, Indigenous Youth Sports Program

Dr Alison Nelson, Manager, Workforce Development and Allied Health

Northern Pride Rugby League Club

Mr Rod Jensen, Manager, Take Pride Program Learn Earn Legend

National Rugby League

Mr Arthur Eustace-Earle, Government Relations Adviser (Queensland)

North Queensland Toyota Cowboys

Mrs Fiona Pelling, Community Relations Manager

Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council

Mr Selwyn Button, Chief Executive Officer

Queensland Rugby League

Mr Joseph McDermott, Manager, Game Development

Swimming Australia Ltd

Mr Adam Pine, General Manager, Strategic Relations

Tennis Australia

Mr Tim Browne, Legal Counsel,

Mrs Brenda Tierney, Inclusion Co-ordinator

Titans 4 Tomorrow

Mr Joshua Creamer, Chairman

Mr Matthew Francis, General Manager

Ms Christine Halliwell, Chief Operating Officer

Mr Preston Campbell, Learn Earn Legend Ambassador

Mr Michael Searle, Managing Director

Thursday, 7 February 2013 - CanberraDepartment of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Mr Matt Davies, Group Manager, Youth and Inclusive Education

Mr Stephen Goodwin, Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Schooling Branch

Ms Brenda Love, Branch Manager

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Ms Caroline Edwards, Group Manager, Strategic Priorities and Land

Mr Robert Ryan, Branch Manager, Remote Priorities

Ms Fiona Smart, Branch Manager, Women's Safety and Family Violence
Branch

Thursday, 14 February 2013 - CanberraAustralian Sports Commission

Mr Geoff Howes, Acting General Manager, Sports Development Division

Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport

Mr Arthur (Bill) Rowe, First Assistant Secretary, Office for Sport

Ms Celia Street, Assistant Secretary, Sport Policy and Programs Branch,
Office for Sport

Left-Field Business Solutions

Mr Carl Currey, Director