



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Sports Commission**

Leverrier Crescent Bruce ACT 2617  
PO Box 176 Belconnen ACT 2616  
ABN 67 374 695 240

Tel 61 2 6214 1111  
Fax 61 2 6251 2680  
[www.ausport.gov.au](http://www.ausport.gov.au)

Committee Secretary  
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit  
Department of the House of Representatives  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find attached the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) submission to the Committee's Review of Auditor-General's Audit Report No. 12 Active After-school Communities Program (2008/09).

The ASC welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the review and looks forward to participating in the public hearing on 16 March 2009.

Should you require any additional information in the interim, please contact the Director of the ASC's Community Sport Division Judy Flanagan on 02 6214 1805.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B. Espeland'.

Brent Espeland  
A/g Chief Executive Officer  
5 March 2009



**AUSTRALIAN  
INSTITUTE OF SPORT**

**Submission to Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit – Review of Auditor-General’s Reports Nos. 3 to 17 (2008/09)**

**Audit Report No. 12, Active After-school Community Program**

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) welcomed the opportunity the audit presented to the Active After-school Communities (AASC) program to review and improve processes. This approach was demonstrated through the ASC’s responsiveness throughout the audit and willingness to adopt practices to address findings in many cases prior to the conclusion of the process and the tabling of the report. This included contracting Ernst & Young to review the existing grant acquittal processes and introducing more comprehensive record management procedures through archiving of web based content and version control of all corporate materials.

The ASC has embraced all recommendations made by the ANAO to improve its processes and a summary of these actions are provided below.

ANAO Recommendation 1:

*Improve the management of quality standards for deliverers in the Active After-school Communities program, the ANAO recommends that the Australian Sports Commission:*

- *Develop and apply a minimum standard for training and criminal history checks; and*
- *Monitor the use of exemptions at the state and national levels.*

In relation to the ANAO’s recommendations concerning the development and application of minimum standards for criminal history checks, the ASC considers the safety of children to be paramount, and criminal history checks have always been mandatory in the AASC’s community coaching registration process. It is also important to note that all community coaches perform their duties under the direct supervision of employees of the school or OSHCS.

As a national program, the AASC operates across the different child protection systems operating in Australia. There is no national system across jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction has different requirements in terms of:

- who must apply for a working with children check. Some states require anyone who has contact with children to apply while in other states it is dependent upon the amount of time spent with children and/or whether the person is a current or new paid employee, whether or not they are directly supervised; existing or new volunteer, or self-employed;
- definitions and terminology;
- what is checked (criminal records, offences, charges, disciplinary proceedings);
- validity period of working with children check whether an ID card or certificate is provided;
- who is classified as a mandated reporter;
- exemptions. Some states do not require parents to complete checks if their child participates in the activity; and
- costs and who is charged for working with children checks.

In implementing the AASC program, the ASC has ensured that AASC criminal history checking requirements are equal to, or exceed, the state legislative requirements in relation to working with children. This may be met through the state legislated Working with Children check processes or through direct application to the ASC to conduct the check as an agency of CrimTrac.

The ASC agrees with the audit findings that the procedures can be improved and has reviewed its current processes. As a result, the ASC has ceased providing temporary exemptions for criminal history checks.

Subsequently, there are currently no coaches participating in the program who have not obtained a satisfactory National Criminal History Check or met relevant state legislative requirements.

Going forward coaches will have to obtain a satisfactory National Criminal History Record Check before being allowed to work in the AASC program. The National Criminal History Record Check may be obtained through the relevant state legislative or teacher registration processes (both include a National Criminal History Record Check) or through direct application to the ASC as an agency of CrimTrac.

A minimum standard in relation to training will also be enforced.

#### ANAO Recommendation 2:

*To determine whether the Active After-school Communities program database is meeting the program's current and future needs, the ANAO recommends that the ASC review the purpose and function of the database.*

The ASC has engaged a Business Analyst to conduct a Post Implementation Review of the AASC database, with a view to updating and streamlining the functionalities of the database to ensure that it best meets current and future needs.

The AASC program also has a dedicated Information Technology National Project Team, made up of program staff at state and regional level, whose role is to continually review and provide feedback on the ongoing development requirements of the database. This project team oversees and prioritises a list of development requests. The AASC Information Technology National Project Team has been briefed on the Post Implementation Review and will be key contributors to this activity.

#### ANAO Recommendation 3:

*To reduce the resources currently required to process grant applications for the AASC program, the ANAO recommends that the ASC review and streamline existing processes and assess the merits of automating the grant application process.*

The ASC has begun work on scoping the automation of the grant application process. This will form part of the streamlining being undertaken as per the ASC's response to Recommendation 2.

The ASC has also reviewed current AASC grant payment and acquittal processes, and has commenced implementation of processes to improve the efficiencies of grant processing.

#### ANAO Recommendation 4:

*To improve the efficiency of acquitting AASC grants, the ANAO recommends that the ASC adopt a risk based approach that includes: 1) an assessment of the control environment of the program, 2) a sampling methodology for selecting grants; and 3) a process for analysing and communicating results.*

The ASC has already implemented this recommendation for the acquittal of AASC grants provided for Terms 3 and 4 2008. A post implementation review of the new acquittal process will be conducted in late 2009, through the ASC's Internal Audit Committee.