

HOCKEY AUSTRALIA  
NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PROGRAM  
CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT TO  
INDIGENOUS WELLBEING AND  
MENTORING



SUBMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING  
COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER  
AFFAIRS  
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## INTRODUCTION

Hockey Australia represents the sport at all levels, from our successful national women's and men's teams through to State and Territory Members and our passionate clubs and players.

Our vision is to be respected as an Australian and International sporting leader, demonstrating innovation and excellence in everything we do.

Hockey is a sport that is genuinely inclusive. The sport at both national and state level is administered for men and women together. We have a strong and vibrant grass roots participation base, with our latest census indicating that over 120,000 players are involved in regular competition, growing to over 200,000 when considering school based competitions.

Hockey is proud of its tradition and success within the broader Australian sporting landscape. It is an Olympic and Commonwealth Games team sport where Australia regularly excels at the pinnacle of international competition. Our two national teams – the Kookaburras and Hockeyroos - continue to be successful on the world stage. Olympic and Commonwealth Games Gold medals; World Cup and Champions Trophy Tournament performances provide recognition that Australia is one of the world's

Indigenous athletes have played a big part in Australia being a world force in hockey. Nova Peris-Kneebone (Olympic Gold Medallist and Des Abbott (2012 Olympian) are just two indigenous hockey players to have achieved world success. Hockey Australia has been directly involved in the highly successful North Queensland Indigenous and Remote Hockey program. We are now looking to expand the lessons learnt out of this program to form the National Indigenous Hockey Program

For a number of years Hockey Australia have been involved in conducting indigenous hockey programs. These have been small in nature with some planning but limited in resources.

For the past 10 years Hockey Australia has supported the North Queensland Remote and Indigenous Hockey Program. Our involvement in this program has escalated in the last two years and we have been able to seriously see the benefits in conducting a well organised integrated indigenous

program. The blue prints and templates that we have seen the from the North Queensland experience have lead us to looking at an expansion of this successful program to other parts of Australia and forming the National Indigenous Program (NIP)





## OUR BLUE PRINT

### **PLAN Step 1: Widespread Community Consultation**

Engage with the selected communities (e.g., education, health, hocky clubs, local shire and broader community including elders/parents) to identify community needs

Engage the expertise of Tony Shaw – Indigenous Services Australia (ISA)

Find out what other activities are happening in the local community, so as to ensure that there is no duplication around Program delivery

- Audit existing community facilities and equipment available within the selected shires
- Identify key stakeholders / organisations that will support delivery of the Program

### **PLAN Step 2: Effective Strategic Planning**

Identify priority areas within the Program, based on outcomes of Step 1 community needs assessment

- Determine the outcomes that the Program will deliver
- Developing an Implementation Plan which will detail how the Program will be developed and implemented
- Ensuring plans are reviewed to reflect the ongoing needs of the Program and broader community

### **PLAN Step 3: Recognise Cultural or Traditional Issues and Heritage**

- Combine sport with culture

*–E.g., the Hockey Queensland Remote and Indigenous Program implemented the Hockey Art Program, which involved local Indigenous artists painting hockey equipment with Indigenous designs to reflect connection to country and nature.*



- Experiment with Program modifications to **include references to language**
- Ensure that the Program scheduling **fits into existing school/ community priorities**

**IMPLEMENT Step 4: Develop a Base Program Model which Meets Local Community Needs**

Active participation – Ensure **adequate interest and minimal skills development** in place

- Skill Development and training – An **ongoing process of up skilling community** in coaching, umpiring and officiating.
- Competition and Pathways – A formalised competition/carnival schedule in the regions which allows **opportunity to play hockey outside of the immediate community**.
- Community Engagement – **Ongoing feedback process**
- Facilities and Equipment – **Ongoing evaluation of existing community assets** in relation to facilities and equipment that support the community aspirations and plans in relation to hockey development.

**IMPLEMENT Step 5: Build Community Capacity through Education and Training**

- **Identifying people in the identified communities** that will drive the Program. For instance:

*–In 2010-2011, the Hockey Queensland Remote and Indigenous Program secured funding for employment of two young Indigenous girls, who have since become an integral part of the Program.*

*–The Women’s Sport Leadership Program supported by the Hockey Queensland Remote and Indigenous Program is designed to better equip women in remote Indigenous communities with the skills of management and administration of the sport.*

- Modifying coach and officiating accreditations to **suit local community skill sets** and **ensure relevance** to the Indigenous community



- Ensure Program is flexible enough to be **modified according to changing socio-demographic and community needs**
- Provide support resources through **mentor programs**

**REFINE Step 6: Continue to Identify and Build Community Partnerships**

Government and non-Government agencies (e.g., FaHCSIA ICC, Indigenous Sport and Active Recreation Program, PCYC,s, Health Dept, Education Dept, , Heart Foundation, etc)

**Tony Shaw – Indigenous Services Australia (ISA)**

- Discuss **Community Benefit Messages** that might complement the Program
  - Exercise and lifestyle
  - The importance of a nutritious balanced diet
  - Anti-smoking, drug and alcohol messages
  - The importance of staying in school and completing education

Build links with local schools to develop strategies that would **increase attendance and improve behaviour of students** - via the *No School No Play* approach

**REFINE Step 7: Rollout the Pilot in targeted areas**

- Implement the pilot Programs within the targeted communities

**MONITOR Step 8: Undertake Data Collection to measure Program Outcomes**

- Evaluate if the Program is **achieving its intended outcomes** as identified in Steps 1 and 2
- Identify Program outcome indicators** that would inform how the Program is tracking against its intended outcomes
- Schedule regular reviews** and analyse outcomes data.



- Ensure that the monitoring of Program outcomes is **in line with best practice outcomes measurement**

**DELIVER Step 9: Build Community Sustainability**

- Develop pathway programs and further opportunities** that meet individual and team goals
- Update all communication mechanisms** including website and social networking sites
- Explore community engagement programs to **increase awareness of hockey and Community Benefit Programs**
- Develop mentor and role model opportunities** that reinforce what the Program delivers, as well as positive “Whole-of-Community” messages

*–Kookaburra players will be involved in the Program at key points to reinforce key Program messages, or as a reward for continued effort and results in the case of the No School No Play initiative.*

- Develop youth leadership programs
- Hockey Queensland’s Indigenous Youth Ambassador Program recognises youths who display good leadership, respect in the community, and high school attendance rates*



## OUR PROGRAM

The National Indigenous Program is now twelve months old and we have already seen and recorded very positive results.

The National Indigenous Hockey Program has used hockey and the profile and influence of hockey role models to deliver health messages and inspire healthy lifestyle decisions among youth living in remote communities.

We have initially targeted the Pilbara region based around Karratha, Port Headland and also Alice Springs and surrounding areas. In the following year we will include the North Coast of NSW and inner city Sydney. These areas have been chosen in consultation with the Australian Sports Commission as they include a high number of Indigenous youth, are a mix of rural and urban and most importantly they have the backing of a local hockey club or association.

Our program has been multi layered and has looked at both mass participation including clinics, community engagement, teams and competitions as well as health lifestyle outcomes.

## ROEBOURNE SHIRE

Hockey was not known in the town of Roebourne 12 months ago but now is the one sport in the town that has a team that represents the town in regional competitions that are conducted in Karratha.

This Roebourne team consisting of all indigenous children competed in the local junior competition in Karratha on a weekly basis. This was the first time any of the children had belonged to a team and experienced the roles and responsibilities that go along with being part of a collective group.





The lead up to the formation of the team consisted of 4 visits from the national team Kookaburra players to the Karratha area and more specifically to the town and school at Roebourne. The hockey program is unique in that it has collaboration from the following partners:

- Hockey Australia
- Roebourne Shire
- PCYC
- WA Department of Sport and Recreation
- Hockey WA
- Indigenous Services Australia (ISA)
- Fortescue Metals Group

197 indigenous children have been involved in the hockey program which has a local coordinator who works closely with Hockey WA and Hockey Australia and the Roebourne Regional School

National and Olympic players Des Abbott and Joel Carroll are Indigenous Ambassadors for the program and these players spend an equal amount of time in the class room as well as the hockey pitch.

The principal and teachers at school at the school are fully engaged and a formal agreement has been formed to evaluate attendance at the school for those students who are engaged in the hockey program. A hockey teacher 'champion' has also been appointed who monitors all aspects of the program

A hockey art program has commenced with the school in partnership with the Yinjaa-Barni art group where students are mentored in Aboriginal art using blank hockey sticks

Children at the Roebourne School are now more active with independent practice of hockey occurring at school at lunch time



There was a very positive engagement by the Roebourne students and the Olympic Hockey Team

The Students produced a movie to wish the Kookaburras luck that they placed on You Tube  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s1OwxE4HiUA&feature=plcp>

The team also received 15 individually typed letters (which were included in the curriculum as a class lesson in spelling & punctuation) of support to individual Kookaburras players and also the team. One of the letters was written by a whole class and the teachers informed us that she split the class in to groups and each group wrote a sentence then as a whole class – put them together in the letter – teamwork, spelling, and punctuation.

There is evidence of the time the players spent on classroom activities all around the school with pictures that had been made by the teachers and students, laminated then posted around including in the reception area for all to see

Roebourne prison has also been engaged with inmates constructing hockey goals for Roebourne School. The goals were manufactured for free and local prisoners were permitted to put the goals into place and thus have some affinity to the program



## ALICE SPRINGS

The Alice Springs National Indigenous Program has only been running for 8 months but has already seen amazing results in indigenous children take up the sport of hockey and join teams and competitions that have been formed.

Through work undertaken by the newly appointed Alice Springs Development officer 8 U12 teams have been formed with 47% of these teams populated by indigenous children. This is the first junior competition conducted in Alice Springs for a decade.

The children have been recruited through work undertaken in schools in Alice Springs and surrounds as well as the Gap Youth Centre. Over 600 children have been exposed to hockey for the first time.

The lessons learned from being part of a team (especially for the first time) cannot be overstated. Team work, commitment, interaction, time management, tolerance, playing by the rules, and hard work all go together to form any team or competition.

A further incentive has been provided in Alice Springs with teams to be formed to participate in NT championships in 2013. A requirement of being part of this team will be commitment to the team and training as well as an individually agreed commitment to school attendance.

This program although in its infancy has seen that hockey can be a first choice sport for indigenous children and that through hockey we can instil lifelong social skills as well as health benefits.



## INDIGENOUS SERVICES AUSTRALIA

From our blue print Hockey Australia understood that facilitated engagement, leading to parental support and participation, was a key success factor in engaging the Indigenous community to participate in hockey. With this mind we have formed a partnership with Indigenous Services Australia (ISA)

ISA consults to organisations in several areas, including:

- Corporate Indigenous Representation
- Indigenous Diversity Training (Cultural Awareness)
- Indigenous Work Ready Programs
- Indigenous Mentoring Programs
- Tjuma Indigenous Speakers Bureau
- Consultation on Community Programs
- Executive Field Trips to the Western Desert

We have worked with ISA to ensure that hockey initiatives in the National Indigenous Program now have Indigenous involvement or coordination, as we felt that this needed to be addressed as part of any new initiatives going forward.

ISA supported the idea for students to build a stronger relationship with the Kookaburra players; and also felt that Indigenous students would benefit from attending hockey camps and sharing stories in an "out-of-school" location so that trust and mutual respect could be developed.

ISA indicated that it would be better to cater a community-based sports education Program pilot to students who were in Year 4 and upwards, as they tended to be more responsive to Hockey Australia Partnership Review.

The ISA workshops presented to date have focused on teaching students to work as a team and listen to their elders and peers.

Other workshop/curriculum themes identified by Hockey Australia that have begun to be delivered through ISA include subject topics

- Health education and sexual health;



- School attendance and participation;
- Self-esteem and leadership skills, employment and re-engagement; and
- Fitness and well being

## CONCLUSION

Hockey Australia in a short period of time through our National Indigenous Program has seen both anecdotally and objectively that sport makes a positive contribution to indigenous wellbeing and mentoring.

We have taken on board the lessons learnt from other sports and more specifically the highly successful Hockey Queensland Indigenous Program as we look to further grow sustainable indigenous hockey programs.

Flexible community engagement will remain the number one priority in all of our programs with objective to introduce hockey to as many indigenous children as possible that then leads on to these children joining teams and associations. Playing in formal or semi-formal competition has proven the best method for keeping any player in the game for life