

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

TO

**A REPORT BY THE SENATE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENT,
RECREATION AND THE ARTS**

ON

**PHYSICAL AND SPORT
EDUCATION**

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON ENVIRONMENT, RECREATION AND THE ARTS
PHYSICAL AND SPORT EDUCATION

For ease of reporting, this response has followed the categories of recommendations as set out in the Committee's report with the exception of recommendation 17 which is being considered along with the recommendations under the National Education Curriculum heading.

Australian school children have a right to expect a complete education - an education which, as well as providing a thorough grounding in academic subjects, also introduces them to the enjoyment and health benefits which flow from physical activity and a healthy lifestyle.

These expectations must be met. The Commonwealth, State and Territory governments are obligated to continue to co-operate to ensure that physical and sport education is given a higher profile in school curricula.

If Australia's youth is to realise its full potential, it must be healthy, alert, capable.

The sportspeople of tomorrow will be drawn from the school children of today. To maximise the potential for success of an Australian team at the Sydney Olympics, we must increase the opportunities being offered to young Australians to participate in physical activity.

In tabling this response to the Committee's report, the Government is encouraged by a number of significant and positive developments in the area of physical and sport education in some States and Territories in 1993. While these initiatives will go some way to redressing the decline in physical education in our schools system, much work remains to be done in some areas.

NATIONAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Government considers the recommendations concerning the National Curriculum Framework to be an important area of the Committee's work and has moved quickly to implement the relevant recommendations.

In recent years the Commonwealth Government has worked collaboratively with States and Territories through the Australian Education Council (AEC) to provide a national perspective to school education, including physical education.

A number of recommendations about establishing appropriate mechanisms to ensure consistent and timely implementation of *A statement on health and physical education for Australian schools* and *Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools* have already been considered in the context of the AEC. All States and Territories are moving to use *Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools* at some level from 1994. AEC members (now members of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs) agreed to report on progress with implementation in each State and Territory in the first half of 1994.

RECOMMENDATION 1: That the National Statement on Health be renamed the National Education Statement on Health and Physical Education and that any subsequent documents reflect this more appropriate title. (Para 2.6)

Government Position: Supported

This recommendation was accepted by the Australian Education Council, and it was agreed to change the name of the National Statement on Health to *A statement on health and physical education for Australian schools*.

RECOMMENDATION 2: That the National Education Statement on Health and Physical Education be reconsidered to ensure full recognition for physical education as a national priority by identifying it as a separate Strand. (Para 2.14)

Government Position: Supported

The general thrust of the recommendation supports the Commonwealth's current policy to enhance the place of physical education within *A statement on health and physical education for Australian schools* and the associated *Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools*.

This recommendation was addressed by the Australian Education Council and it was agreed that physical education will be incorporated across all strands in the curriculum statements and profiles.

RECOMMENDATION 3: That, before the National Education Statement on Health and Physical Education and associated Profiles are finalised, wider and better consultation take place, and that this consultation allow sufficient time for considered responses. (Para 2.17)

Government Position: Supported in Principle

The deadline for finalising curriculum statements and profiles was 30 June 1993. This deadline, though controversial, was set co-operatively, involving all States and Territories. The first editions of the curriculum statements and profiles are available for implementation commencing in 1994. Further consultations and reviews of the curriculum statements and profiles will depend on the outcomes of future meetings of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Education, Employment, Training and Youth Ministers and the establishment of a structure which will facilitate the co-ordination of national collaboration.

RECOMMENDATION 28: That a minimum weekly time allocation for physical education, particularly in primary schools, be included in the National Statement on Health and Physical Education. (Para 5.8)

Government Position: Noted

Curriculum and teaching matters are primarily the responsibility of State and Territory governments. A *statement on health and physical education for Australian schools* provides a broad framework for teaching and learning outcomes in this curriculum area. *Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools* will assist education systems to meet the needs of all students as they progress through the learning levels and will provide a mechanism for encouraging all students to participate regularly in some form of physical activity and sports program. There is no provision in the curriculum statements and profiles to prescribe minimum time allocations for any component, including physical education. However, States and Territories may choose to specify time allocations. The profiles identify learning outcomes for students which will require varying amounts of time to achieve.

Since the Senate Committee's report was tabled, peak bodies including the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, the Australian Schools Sports Council, the Australian Sports Commission, the Confederation of Australian Sport, National Sport Development Officers and Vicsport, have met to frame a common response and plan of action. As part of this response, to assist States and Territories who do choose to specify amounts of time for physical and sport education, it was agreed by the above groups that every Australian child during the compulsory school years should receive a minimum of 60 minutes of physical education every day at secondary school and 75 minutes a day in primary school.

The Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation has written a Position Statement summarising recommendations for quality physical education programs in schools. This may assist schools to decide what is a minimum weekly time allocation.

RECOMMENDATION 4: That the National Education Statement on Health and Physical Education and Profiles be rewritten to produce structured and comprehensive physical education programs for implementation in both primary and secondary schools. (Para 2.20)

Government Position: Noted

A statement on health and physical education for Australian schools and Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools provide a framework within which comprehensive and progressive health and physical education programs can be designed and developed at the State/Territory system and school level.

RECOMMENDATION 15: That the Australian Education Council establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure States and Territories implement the National Statement on Health and Physical Education in a consistent and timely manner. (Para 2.48)

Government Position: Supported

The Australian Education Council agreed to consider implementation issues related to the curriculum statements and profiles within their State and Territory education systems. Ministers have commissioned the Curriculum Corporation to co-ordinate the gathering of information for States and Territories and to report upon the implementation of the curriculum statements and profiles in the first half of 1994.

While the Commonwealth is providing funding for professional development to assist the implementation of the curriculum statements and profiles under the statement **Teaching Counts** (released by the Hon Kim Beazley MP, Minister for Employment, Education and Training), it must be recognised that the simultaneous implementation of the curriculum statements and profiles in eight different learning areas from years 1 to 12 would place considerable strain on teaching resources across all systems.

RECOMMENDATION 17: That the Department of Employment, Education and Training provide funds from the Curriculum Development Project Grant to establish physical education programs and to define particular physical education outcomes. (Para 3.5)

Government Position: Supported

The general thrust of this recommendation is supported by the current work on the national curriculum framework, particularly through its emphasis on developing positive attitudes to the role of physical activity within the overall health context of students.

A critical prerequisite for the establishment of suitable physical education programs by teachers is adequate professional development. The Commonwealth has allocated \$60 million over the next three years to provide a National Teachers' Professional Development Program. The Program will increase the knowledge base of teachers and foster within the profession the relearning culture which is increasingly demanded by society.

One of the specific areas the Program will focus on is the implementation of the curriculum statements and profiles in all areas of learning. The curriculum statements and profiles will serve as guides for further program and syllabus development at the system and school level.

The defining of particular physical education outcomes is one of the major purposes of *Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools*. The first edition of this document was published in January 1994 and is available for implementation in the State and Territory education systems commencing in the 1994 school year.

STATE AND TERRITORY PE AND SPORT POLICIES FOR SCHOOLS

RECOMMENDATION 5: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with the States and Territories to prepare and circulate detailed written policies for physical education as a matter of priority. (Para 2.27)

Government Position: Supported

The then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on the report, including views on this recommendation.

However, the development and implementation of physical education policies is a matter for State and Territory education systems and individual schools. The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) is willing to work with the professional teacher association, the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER), the Department of Employment, Education and Training and State and Territory education authorities in the development of a model physical education policy. This can be provided to schools through the Curriculum Corporation. Through State and Territory based AUSSIE SPORT officers who retain links with State and Territory departments of education, the ASC will be able to provide advice to schools if required.

In addition, during 1993 a working party of sport and education representatives completed a national consultative process to develop a National Junior Sport Policy. This was co-ordinated by the Australian Sports Commission.

RECOMMENDATION 6: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with States and Territories to ensure that they provide greater education department support for teachers responsible for physical education. (Para 2.29)

Government Position: Supported

The then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on the report, including views on this recommendation.

However, the provision of greater education department support for teachers responsible for physical education is a matter for State and Territory education systems to address.

RECOMMENDATION 7: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council and the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, consult with State and Territory educational authorities, and sport and recreation authorities to ensure that written school sport policies are prepared and distributed as a matter of priority. (Para 2.32)

Government Position: Supported

The development and implementation of sport policies in schools will be a matter for State and Territory education systems and individual schools. The Australian Sports Commission (ASC), in consultation with the Department of Employment, Education and Training, will support the development of a model school sport policy, through circulation of the National Junior Sport Policy. When printed in April 1994, it will be circulated to sporting groups and to all school systems. The Policy also can be provided to schools through the Curriculum Corporation.

Through the ASC and State and Territory based AUSSIE SPORT officers, schools are encouraged to seek advice about the AUSSIE SPORT school education programs. However, it is essential that the AUSSIE SPORT programs be used by State and Territory education departments to complement sound physical education programs, not act as a substitute for them.

As this recommendation relates to matters within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on the report, including views on this recommendation.

The Commonwealth also referred this recommendation to the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, which endorsed the principles contained in the report.

RECOMMENDATION 8: That future directions for physical education policies and curricula take account of the principles (outlined by ACHPER) which include recognition for the lifelong benefits from physical activity, both to individuals and the community. (Para 2.34)

Government Position: Supported

In supporting the development of a model physical education policy for use by schools, the Australian Sports Commission has worked co-operatively with the Confederation of Australian Sport (CAS), the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) and a network of State/Territory education professionals, to promote and document the lifelong benefits of physical activity for individuals and the community.

As an important contribution to the implementation of this recommendation, the then Federal Minister for Sport, the

Hon Ros Kelly MP, initiated the development of an information package for distribution to Australian schools as well as a brochure for distribution to the Australian public. The package informed schools, parents and the public of the findings of the Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts Report *Physical and Sport Education*. The distribution of the package was completed in November 1993.

The package to school principals and parent associations included a:

- (a) letter of introduction from the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories, the Hon Ros Kelly MP;
- (b) 'Summary of the Senate Inquiry Findings and Recommendations, *Physical and Sport Education*';
- (c) position statement prepared by the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) - 'Quality Physical Education in Australian Schools';
- (d) brochure - 'You can help complete this picture' - which details the value of physical education, outlines the findings in the Senate Committee's report *Physical and Sport Education*, and suggests actions which could be taken by parents, parents and citizens associations, boards and councils to effect change.

The information contained in the package was developed by the Australian Sports Commission and ACHPER. Other groups, including the Confederation of Australian Sport (CAS), Australian Sports Goods Association (ASGA), State/Territory education/sport professionals and the Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts were consulted.

The brochure has also been made widely available to the public with the generous support of sport retail stores, local sports clubs, Pizza Hut restaurants, and other agencies. It outlines the importance of sport for children and informs the public about the decline of physical and sport education in some schools. The purpose of the brochure is to encourage parents and citizens to take practical actions which might assist and support local schools in the provision of sound physical and sport education.

In developing and distributing this package, it was recognised that the future directions for physical education policies adopted by schools will be determined by State and Territory education systems and individual schools. The principles outlined by ACHPER provide a sound basis for future directions.

NATIONAL SPORT POLICY

In response to growing concerns about the delivery of junior sport within schools and the community in 1991, a working party was established to prepare a National Junior Sport Policy. The working party comprised representatives from the Australian Sports Commission, the Confederation of Australian Sport, the Council of Directors-General of Education, the Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport and the Australian Schools Sport Council, with support agencies co-opted and consulted as appropriate.

The purpose of the National Junior Sport Policy is to provide a framework which ensures that all young Australians have the opportunity to develop and enrich their lives through sport.

The Policy is premised on the principle of social justice and the belief that sport, when presented and organised properly, is an important educational and developmental area that offers benefits to both the individual and to society.

RECOMMENDATION 9: That the Australian Sports Commission consult with the Department of Employment, Education and Training and the relevant State and Territory authorities before it finalises its National Junior Sport Policy.
(Para 2.40)

Government Position: Supported

The Australian Sports Commission has consulted the Department of Employment, Education and Training and the relevant State and Territory authorities and has taken the views of these organisations, as well as the many individuals consulted in meetings Australia-wide, into account in the development of its National Junior Sport Policy.

The National Junior Sport Policy was referred to the meeting of the Directors-General of Education on 10 August 1993. At that meeting it was recommended that further consultation occur.

The National Junior Sport Policy was endorsed by Ministers at the September 1993 meeting of the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council.

The policy will be published and circulated in April 1994.

RECOMMENDATION 10: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council and the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, consult with States and Territories to ensure that school sport and physical education policies are consistent. (Para 2.40)

Government Position: Supported

The Government's response to this recommendation is outlined in its responses to recommendations 5 and 7.

RECOMMENDATION 18: That Commonwealth funding for sports participation programs through the Australian Sports Commission be maintained, and that the allocation of funds between elite sports and other programs be reconsidered to ensure greater balance. (Para 3.8)

Government Position: Supported

The Government's four year sports policy and funding program, *Maintain the Momentum* has as its first priority "to build on the participation base of sport". In accordance with this policy the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has introduced new programs for volunteers, club development, masters/veterans sport and workplace sport, and in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission a program for sport for Aboriginal communities. Co-operative agreements with the States and Territories for the continuation of AUSSIE SPORT programs have been renegotiated for the next three years.

To implement these initiatives within the budget limits set by Government, the Board of the ASC has applied an internal efficiency dividend across all existing programs. The result of this process will be a 20 per cent increase in the budget for ASC participation programs over the four year period of *Maintain the Momentum*.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

RECOMMENDATION 11: That the Department of Employment, Education and Training provide funds from the Projects of National Significance Grants for quantitative and qualitative research into the physical education and sport participation levels, skill levels and special needs of girls, especially from non-English speaking backgrounds. (Para 2.43)

Government Position: Supported in Principle

The Federal Government recognises the importance of research into health and physical education. Limited funds are available to fund catalytic research and activities which assist in the development of quality education for all Australian school students.

The Government cannot sponsor research of this kind without the co-operation of each State and Territory education system, as only the States and Territories have access to data resources required to undertake this research.

The then Minister for the Environment, Sports and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on the report, including views on this recommendation.

The Government expects to commission some research on sport and physical education, taking into account State/Territory views and overall national priorities.

RECOMMENDATION 16: That the Department of Employment, Education and Training provide funds from the Projects of National Significance Grants for research into the physical education needs of primary school children. (Para 3.5)

Government Position: Supported in Principle

The Government's response to this recommendation is outlined in its response to recommendation 11.

RECOMMENDATION 25: That the Department of Employment, Education and Training provide funds from the Projects of National Significance Grants for research into current physical skill levels and fitness of Australian children and their participation in physical activity both in and out of school. (Para 4.22)

Government Position: Supported in Principle

The Government's response to this recommendation is outlined in its response to recommendation 11.

RECOMMENDATION 26: That the Department of Employment, Education and Training, and Department of Health, Housing and Community Services provide funding for longitudinal research into children's skill levels and fitness, to provide information for education and health policy makers on future designs for physical education skill based and fitness learning programs. (Para 4.22)

Government Position: Supported in Principle

The Government appreciates the potential benefits of such a longitudinal study; however, funding for such a study will need to be considered in the context of Budgetary processes.

Research funding is provided through the Human Services and Health portfolio by the National Health and Medical Research Council. Funding is provided to those projects which, under peer review, are deemed to be of the highest quality. The project would need to be of a suitable quality before funding could be considered.

It is not possible for the Department of Employment, Education and Training to sponsor such research without the co-operation of each State and Territory. This is due to the fact that only the States and Territories have access to data sources required to undertake this research.

The then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on the report, including views on this recommendation and the development of implementation strategies.

The Department of Employment, Education and Training will consider funding research projects to support this recommendation based on the responses from State and Territory Ministers for Education.

FUNDING

RECOMMENDATION 21: That the Commonwealth monitor State and Territory resource allocations for physical education and give consideration to specifying a percentage of its grants for education exclusively for the provision of physical education if State and Territory education departments do not take action to rectify the decline in the provision of physical education to students at both primary and secondary schools. (Para 3.41)

Government Position: Not supported

The Commonwealth recognises the constitutional responsibilities of the State and Territory governments and in recent years has moved to providing supplementary funding for general recurrent educational purposes within the context of a broad set of outcomes rather than as tied grants.

SPECIAL NEEDS

These recommendations are consistent with the equity work by the Australian Education Council which aims to ensure that the curriculum statements and profiles are inclusive of all students. In particular, the Commonwealth funded a series of projects to ensure that the curriculum statements and profiles address the needs of special education students and students whose first language is not English.

The diversity in the needs of students from different cultural, socio-economic, geographical and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds is recognised by the Commonwealth and supported by a number of initiatives. Under the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project the Commonwealth appointed gender equity consultants to ensure that the principle objectives of the National Policy for the Education of Girls were incorporated into the curriculum statements and profiles. In addition, the Commonwealth has funded a series of projects to develop nationally agreed guidelines in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies and appointed consultants to incorporate the principles and perspectives of these guidelines into the curriculum statements and profiles.

The Country Areas program aims to assist schools and community groups to improve educational participation, learning outcomes and the personal development of students whose geographical isolation restricts access to social, cultural and educational activities and services. Funding is provided by the Commonwealth and administered by State and Territory education departments.

RECOMMENDATION 12: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council and the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, consult with State and Territory authorities to develop future physical education and sport policies to specify programs which will better address the needs of children with disabilities. (Para 2.45)

Government Position: Supported

This recommendation relates to matters within the constitutional responsibility of States and Territories.

However, the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) Aussie Able and AUSSIE SPORT Units will work together to support the development of model physical education and sport policies/programs by the professional teacher association, the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER), and State and Territory education authorities. These policies will specify programs to better address the needs of children with disabilities. The policies can be provided to schools through the Curriculum Corporation. Through the ASC and the State and Territory based AUSSIE SPORT officers who retain links with State and Territory departments of education, advice will be provided to schools if required.

The then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on this recommendation and the development of implementation strategies.

The Commonwealth also referred this recommendation to the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, which endorsed the principles contained in the report.

In addition, this issue has been raised by the Australian Sports Commission in discussions with the Australian Olympic Federation, the Australian Confederation of Sports for the Disabled and the various national sporting organisations for the disabled. There is general agreement to provide for disability specific material within the AUSSIE SPORT program.

RECOMMENDATION 13: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council and the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, consult with State and Territory authorities to develop future physical education and sport policies which take better account of the special needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. (Para 2.46)

Government Position: Supported

Aboriginal Education Co-ordinators from States and Territories have been directly involved in national collaborative curriculum work. Through their involvement, the co-ordinators have made significant contributions to secure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the eight key learning areas, including *A statement on health and physical education for Australian schools* and *Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools*.

The Aboriginal Young Person's Sport and Recreation Development Program is a recent Australian Sports Commission initiative responding to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. The program is aimed at increasing the number and range of sporting and recreational opportunities available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.

Jointly funded by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and State and Territory sport and recreation departments, the program will run for an initial period of five years. The program is designed to further encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to continue their involvement in all aspects of sport including coaching, administration, officiating and playing.

The program will establish a network of 38 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sport and Recreation Development Officers (ASRDOs) based in Regional Offices of State and Territory sport and recreation departments. Twenty-three ASRDOs are currently working in a number of the States and Territories, supported by two officers operating out of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and the Australian Sports Commission.

The National Junior Sport Policy co-ordinated by the Australian Sports Commission takes account of the special needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

As this recommendation relates to matters within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on this recommendation and the development of implementation strategies.

The Commonwealth also referred this recommendation to the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, which endorsed the principles contained in the report.

RECOMMENDATION 14: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council and the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, consult with State and Territory authorities to develop future physical education and sport policies take account of the special needs of children, particularly girls, from non-English speaking backgrounds. (Para 2.47)

Government Position: Supported

The objectives of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools include raising awareness of the education needs of girls and equal access to participation in appropriate curriculum. Both the National Policy and the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls have specific recommendations to ensure equitable educational outcomes for girls, taking into account their cultural, language and socio-economic diversity. Addressing the needs of girls at risk and improving educational outcomes of girls who benefit least from schooling are specific priority areas of the National Action Plan.

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) will support the development of model physical education and sport policies by the professional teacher association, the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) and State and Territory education authorities. These models will take account of the special needs of children, particularly girls, from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The Commonwealth has taken a number of initiatives in school based sport which take account of the special needs of children, such as the AUSSIE SPORT program and the ASC's Women's Sport Unit's Active Girls Campaign.

As this recommendation relates to matters within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for

Education seeking comments on this recommendation and the development of implementation strategies.

The Commonwealth also referred this recommendation to the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, which endorsed the principles contained in the report.

RECOMMENDATION 19: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory education authorities to ensure that physical education funding is comparable to other curriculum areas. (Para 3.15)

Government Position: Supported

As this recommendation relates to matters within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on this recommendation and the development of implementation strategies.

RECOMMENDATION 30: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, and the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, consult with State and Territory authorities to develop and implement physical education and sport policies which specifically address the needs of girls. (Para 7.9)

Government Position: Supported

The National Junior Sport Policy co-ordinated by the Australian Sports Commission addresses the needs of girls.

The special needs of girls have been recognised and addressed by the Women and Sport Unit of the Australian Sports Commission in developing the Active Girls Campaign. The Campaign is part of the Government's commitment to increasing and improving access to sport by all Australian girls.

The Active Girls Campaign aims to encourage teenage girls to become more actively involved in sport and physical activity, and to increase public awareness of the social pressures and discriminatory practices that discourage girls from fully participating in sport.

The Campaign is directed at teenage girls, schools, parents, coaches, sporting organisations and clubs, and the media. It comprises:

- . a community announcement being shown on television and in cinemas Australia-wide;
- . posters, stickers and a colourful magazine produced for girls by girls;

- . a media awareness campaign; and
- . resources that explain the issues and provide realistic strategies to increase the participation of girls in sport.

As part of its Active Girls Campaign during 1993, the ASC's Women and Sport Unit developed a *Resource for Schools about Girls, Physical Activity and Sport*. The kit was developed for use by teachers and educators and includes resource sheets covering a range of issues including image and attitude, factors influencing girls' participation, harassment and resourcing.

The booklet *Strategies for Change - Creating new opportunities for girls in sport* was developed as part of the Active Girls Campaign to help parents, teachers, clubs and associations encourage girls to participate fully in sport.

As this recommendation relates to matters within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on this recommendation and the development of implementation strategies.

The Commonwealth also referred this recommendation to the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, which endorsed the principles contained in the report.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

The general thrust of the recommendations included in this section is consistent with the work of the Australian Education Council (AEC), and now the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. Through the development of the national curriculum framework, the Commonwealth and State and Territory education authorities have identified a range of student learning outcomes in health and physical education.

RECOMMENDATION 20: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory education authorities to identify specific learning outcomes from physical education programs and to collect and collate data to monitor these outcomes. (Para 3.35)

Government Position: Supported

Specific learning outcomes from physical education programs have been identified in *Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools*. All States and Territories are moving to use the curriculum statements and profiles at some level from 1994.

The collection and collation of data relating to these outcomes is a highly complex task. The AEC's National Report on Schooling in Australia currently collects and collates statistical data within an agreed national framework and provides a mechanism for the gathering of further data related to these outcomes.

As this recommendation relates to matters within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on this recommendation and the development of implementation strategies.

RECOMMENDATION 22: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory education authorities, to design and implement specific physical skill development programs with defined outcomes for lower primary children to ensure that all children have the opportunity to develop fundamental motor skills. (Para 4.11)

Government Position: Supported

The Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) AUSSIE SPORT program has developed, in consultation with the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER), a fundamental motor skill program ('Sport It') and another resource which supports young children's play ('Sportstart'). The ASC launched the 'Sport It!' program nationally in

February 1993. Sponsorship of the program kept the costs of enrolling low, enabling 44 per cent of all Australian primary schools to avail themselves of the program, and 45 per cent of all Australian primary school teachers to deliver the 15-week motor skill program. The ASC is continuing to work with sponsors to subsidise this and other programs to increase their accessibility to all students.

In addition, the Commonwealth - through the Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories - provides significant funding to the major national water safety organisations to assist in the provision of a range of water safety programs. In 1993-94, the Commonwealth provided \$1.6m for the programs which include the provision of water safety training to school children. This training contributes to the development of fundamental motor skills and fosters safe participation in a wide range of water related activities.

As this recommendation relates to matters within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on this recommendation and the development of implementation strategies.

RECOMMENDATION 23: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult State and Territory education authorities to develop and implement programs designed to provide remedial physical skill development learning in schools. (Para 4.13)

Government Position: Supported

This recommendation is consistent with the work by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs to meet the needs of students with intellectual, physical and sensory disabilities through the national curriculum framework.

The then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on the report, including views on this recommendation.

Under its Aussie Able and AUSSIE SPORT Programs, the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), in collaboration with the Australian Coaching Council, has developed coach/teacher education materials addressing the needs of people with disabilities. The development of the Coaching Athletes with Disabilities Scheme (CAD), in particular the production of the CAD manuals, will have an impact on the quality of coaching that all athletes with disabilities receive and in turn increase their future performances and quality of life.

RECOMMENDATION 24: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory education authorities to develop and implement skill development programs which enable access to girls and boys.
(Para 4.17)

Government Position: Support in Principle

This recommendation supports the current work by the Australian Educational Council, now the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs to ensure that the national curriculum framework is consistent with the National Policy for the Education of Girls.

The Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) Women and Sport Unit has taken steps to address the needs of girls with their Active Girls Campaign referred to elsewhere in this response.

The AUSSIE SPORT program exists to enrich the lives of young people through quality sporting experiences which will encourage lifelong participation.

As this recommendation relates to matters within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on this recommendation and the development of implementation strategies.

TEACHERS

As the recommendations concerning teachers generally relate to matters within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories and the autonomy of tertiary institutions, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on these recommendations and the development of implementation strategies.

These recommendations will also be brought to the attention of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and the Australian Council of Deans of Education.

RECOMMENDATION 27: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory education authorities to ensure that as a matter of priority, all physical education programs are conducted by, or under the supervision of, qualified physical education teachers, particularly at primary school level. (Para 4.26)

Government Position: Supported

The Government supports this recommendation which is consistent with the development of agreed generic competency standards for teachers which were undertaken through the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning. They are now being progressed through a working party of teacher employers, teacher educators and the teacher unions, chaired by the Commonwealth.

RECOMMENDATION 29: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory authorities and tertiary institutions to ensure that all teachers complete, as part of their tertiary training, courses which examine the particular needs of girls in physical education and sport. (Para 7.9)

Government Position: Supported in Principle

Higher education institutions are autonomous bodies responsible for their own management including curriculum development. Thus, any decision to incorporate courses into teacher education curricula is, ultimately, one for individual institutions to make. However, the Commonwealth will encourage tertiary institutions to include appropriate training.

RECOMMENDATION 31: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory education authorities to ensure all students have regular access to a specialist physical education teacher especially at the primary school level. (Para 8.28)

Government Position: Supported

The Government supports this recommendation, particularly in the context of the National Junior Sport Policy and the national curriculum framework.

RECOMMENDATION 35: That all schools encourage and support generalist teachers who become involved in school sport to acquire at least Level 0 National Coaching Accreditation in at least one sport. (Para 9.19)

Government Position: Supported

This recommendation is being facilitated by the Australian Coaching Council (ACC) through the newly established State Coaching Centres. The ACC and State Coaching Centres also encourage and assist teachers to attain higher National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS) qualifications.

Under the Australian Coaching Council's NCAS, the Level 0 courses (now changed to 'Orientation to Coaching' courses) and Level 1 courses provide the foundation on which to base and develop a more comprehensive program of sport education for both the school and the community sector.

The proposed program would include a newly developed 'Sport Educator's Certificate'. As part of a co-operative approach the two sectors would be linked for development purposes and to service the needs of the school system.

This new program would be based on the achievement of appropriate competencies for the tasks required of the teachers/coaches. Some sports, for example track and field, already have such a course for teachers which appears to be very successful.

The ACC is co-ordinating this program through the State Coaching Centres. The ACC is able to involve national sporting organisations (NSOs), State sporting organisations (SSOs), education institutions and authorities and professional associations in undertaking a needs analysis for teachers and school coaches and assist NSOs and education institutions and authorities to develop appropriate courses to be used in both in-service and pre-service environments.

TEACHER TRAINING

As these recommendations relate to matters which fall within the constitutional responsibility of the States and Territories and the autonomy of tertiary institutions, the then Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories and the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training wrote jointly to State and Territory Ministers for Education seeking comments on these recommendations and the development of implementation strategies.

These recommendations will also be brought to the attention of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and the Australian Council of Deans of Education.

In recognition of the importance of enhancing teacher excellence, a number of universities are currently reviewing their teacher education faculties with a view to improving the quality of teaching and training programs.

Continuing change and review of the school curriculum has been a feature of Australian education for several decades. The proposed implementation of the national collaborative curriculum and assessment framework will have gradual impact on school practice and on the professional development needs of existing teachers, particularly in areas such as gender equity and interdisciplinary themes.

It should be noted, however, that professional teacher associations play an increasingly important role in the provision of professional development programs for their members and could be encouraged to work in close co-operation with tertiary institutions in the development and implementation of appropriate teacher training programs. The Commonwealth currently supports a number of professional teacher associations within the context of the national curriculum framework and is providing additional funding to support its implementation. The recently established Australian Teaching Council should be able to play an increasing role in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 32: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory authorities and tertiary institutions to determine national minimum course requirements in physical education both for generalist and specialist teachers at primary and secondary level. (Para 9.12)

RECOMMENDATION 33: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory education authorities to specify national minimum attainment levels in physical education for the employment of both generalist and specialist teachers. (Para 9.12)

RECOMMENDATION 36: That all State and Territory education authorities provide and/or support their teachers in regular physical education inservice training. (Para 9.21)

Government Position: Supported

The Government supports these recommendations and has outlined its position in the introductory paragraphs in this section.

RECOMMENDATION 34: That the Commonwealth, through the Australian Education Council, consult with State and Territory authorities to ensure all currently employed teachers have access to the necessary inservice training and professional development to meet national minimum attainment levels in physical education for both generalist and specialist teachers at primary and secondary level. (Para 9.12)

Government Position: Supported

Curriculum design and accreditation of teacher education courses is the responsibility of higher education institutions, teacher employers and professional staff associations. The framework for competency standards developed by the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning and being further developed by the working party referred to in relation to recommendation 27 may guide the development of inservice training and teacher attainment levels.

The Government has allocated \$60 million over the next three years to provide a 'National Teachers' Professional Development Program'. The Program will increase the knowledge base of teachers and foster within the profession the relearning culture which is increasingly demanded by society. One of the specific areas the Program will focus on is the implementation of the curriculum statements and profiles in all areas of learning.

Under the Program, funds have been set aside for a pilot subject renewal program specifically for teachers of Physical Education and Health. In addition to this allocation, funding proposals relating to Physical Education and Health will be considered in the broader context of applications under the program.

The Government supports this recommendation and will refer it to relevant groups as indicated in the general response to this section.

THE COMMUNITY

RECOMMENDATION 37: That as part of the cooperative approach to school sport, all community members formally involved with junior sport and school sport be encouraged to obtain at least Level 0 National Coaching Accreditation. (Para 10.14)

Government Position: Supported

As 1994 is the Year of the Coach, many strategies are being designed by the Australian Coaching Council (ACC) to improve coaching standards in schools and the wider community.

The ACC would facilitate the link between school, community and sports coaching initiatives through the proposed 'Sport Educator's Certificate' concept as the foundation to encouraging community members involved in the delivery of sport to work as assistant coaches. The ACC's new State network supports the further development of coaching skills and expertise through the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme and associated ongoing education programs. In this way, a more effective community coaching process is being developed.

The recent establishment of ACC State Coaching Centres ensures more effective Australia-wide delivery of ACC and other coaching programs as well as improving state level support for coaches and sporting associations.

Effective implementation of the Sport Educator's program will be achieved through the network being established in each State, through the ACC State Coaching Centres and the already established AUSSIE SPORT network. This network also provides a link between the community, the education system and sport coaching initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION 38: That the Australian Sports Commission and the Confederation of Australian Sport work jointly to develop and implement standardised Codes of Behaviour for community members involved in school sport. (Para 10.15)

Government Position: Supported

Through the AUSSIE SPORT program, the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) AUSSIE SPORT Unit has developed a brochure "Code of Behaviour" for participants, parents and community members involved in sporting organisations. The ASC's AUSSIE SPORT Unit has distributed approximately 100,000 each year since 1987.

The AUSSIE SPORT Unit will continue to make this brochure available to the public on request. The Australian School Sports Council (ASSC) also distributes a similar brochure.

There are strategies in place to support the intention of the "Codes of Behaviour" brochure, some ongoing and some new. The

AUSSIE SPORT philosophy, its programs, publications and personnel all emphasise the importance of providing supportive environments for young people in sport. The Confederation of Australian Sport seeks to co-ordinate and promote a consistent approach to junior sport through its members which include over 120 national sporting organisations.

The Australian Sports Commission's National Junior Sport Policy extends the intent of the "Codes of Behaviour". It provides a national framework for use by clubs/associations, schools, parents, coaches and administrators which outlines consistent, fair and proper ways to approach the delivery of junior sport.

RECOMMENDATION 39: That departments of education, departments of sport and recreation, local government authorities, schools and sporting organisations work together to develop complementary policies which provide quality sporting opportunities for all children. (Para 10.24)

Government Position: Supported

This recommendation is supported by the Australian Education Council's national curriculum statements and profiles which provide a focus for ongoing collaboration between education systems, professional and community groups. Sport and recreation departments have participated in developing the draft curriculum documents.

The Commonwealth will consult with the Australian Local Government Association to encourage an integrated approach to the delivery of sporting opportunities for all children.

In November 1993, the Australian Sports Commission introduced *Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools* to the NSO National Development Officers and emphasised the need for all in junior sport delivery to recognise implications of developments in new approaches to curriculum design. Workshops were designed to explore the issues and implications.

RECOMMENDATION 40: That State and Territory education authorities consult with local governments to find ways to cooperatively provide and maintain facilities for youth sport. (Para 10.24)

Government Position: Supported

The general thrust of this recommendation is supported by the national curriculum framework. Curriculum statements and profiles serve as guides for further program and syllabus development at the system and school level.