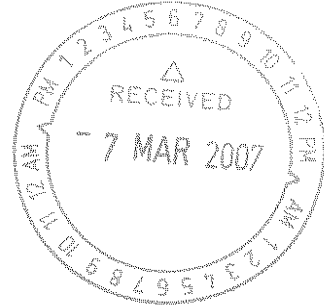




Dr Kathleen Dermody
Committee Secretary
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Dr Dermody

Inquiry into the Nature and Conduct of Australia's Public Diplomacy

The Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) formal submission into the Inquiry is enclosed. You will note that the ASC has confined the submission to the Terms of Reference sub paragraphs "a" and "b", leaving the remaining Terms "c" and "d" to DFAT and AusAID whose respective areas of responsibility covers these subjects.

As previously advised, I will be absent from Canberra for the public hearings on 14 March 2007. Mr Greg Nance, the ASC's Director of National Sports Programs who has direct responsibility for the ASC's public diplomacy programs will attend.

Yours sincerely

Mark A Peters
CEO

Australian Sports Commission

27/02/07

Encl : ASC's submission to the Senate Inquiry into the Nature and Conduct of Australia's Public Diplomacy



**SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE INQUIRY
INTO THE NATURE AND CONDUCT OF AUSTRALIA'S PUBLIC
DIPLOMACY**

AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION

Current Programs with a Public Diplomacy Element

Introduction

Australian Sports Commission (ASC) research points to empirical evidence of the direct role sport can play in advancing health and community development, reducing anti-social behaviour, building community and national identity, achieving international recognition, advancing the rights of women, fostering character development among citizens, and contributing to economic development. Sport is also recognised as a tool for national integration because of its broad relevance to education, health and politics. While sport itself cannot solve the development issues of a region, it can be an important component of a comprehensive development program because of its ability to transcend societal barriers.

Australia has a relatively mature and well developed sports system which contributes directly and indirectly to improving education and health outcomes. Increasingly sport, the importance of physical activity and linkages to development outcomes are becoming recognised in many developing countries.

The ASC is currently engaged with AusAID in the delivery of several "sport for development" programs under an umbrella agreement that includes the Australian Sports Outreach Program (ASOP). Activities are mainly in the Pacific Region, but also in southern Africa and the Caribbean. These programs have evolved to now include specific development objectives while maintaining a broad public diplomacy element.

The ASC's involvement in public diplomacy has been built over many years from simple athletic and sports events, sport specific and technical exchanges to the current range of "sport for development" initiatives as part of a broader strategic relationship with AusAID. In the early years of the ASC's activities overseas, public diplomacy tended towards specific athlete development and events at an elite level, which although noteworthy for their ability to expose individuals to the benefits of the Australian sports system, lacked any real depth and sustainability in building capacity in the countries involved.

The "sport for development" concept has changed this dynamic and is described below.

"Development is a process of enlarging people's choices and increasing the opportunities available to all members of society. Based on the principles of inclusion, equity and sustainability, emphasis is on the importance of increasing opportunities for the current generation as well as generations to come. The basic human capabilities that are necessary for this are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living

and to be able to participate in the life of community. Sport can directly help build these capabilities.”¹

In 2000, the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace defined Sport for Development as “all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental wellbeing and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organised or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games.”²

AusAID and the ASC, in the context of the ASOP, have adopted the term *Sport For Development* and defined it as “the use of sport for individual and institutional development that contributes to social development”. Social development is broadly recognised as anything that has a benefit to society. In adopting the Sport For Development term there is an important recognition that without sport activity, i.e. sport development, there can be no Sport For Development. This reflects the important balance between the relative strengths of AusAID and the ASC that are being brought together under the ASOP.

An important secondary outcome of these activities, especially given the universal appeal of sport, is the public diplomacy benefits for Australia.

Description of Recent and Planned Programs, including ASOP

An umbrella agreement has been signed with AusAID to cover activities under the Australian Sports Outreach Program and other sport for development projects that may arise from time to time.

The overriding goal of the ASOP is increased capacity in targeted countries to deliver sports based programs that contribute to social development. The projects that are delivered are designed to provide a mix of leadership, social cohesion, health promotion and public diplomacy outcomes. \$10 million funding is provided over five years until June 2011. Planning for ASOP is well underway and includes core concepts from previous sport development programs covering junior sports, sport for people with a disability, club development, specific local sports events and programs and support of athletes and administrators as leaders within their communities.

The Australia South Pacific Sports Program was superseded by the ASOP. \$5 million funding over five years is dedicated to the Pacific region. The focus is on community sport development. Implementation plans are being finalised and are expected to include core concepts of the subsumed program such as Pacific Junior Sport, Pacific Sport Ability and Pacific Sporting Champions. A post discretionary fund is also implemented in collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Australia Caribbean Community Sport Development Program operating since 2000 aimed at developing community sport was subsumed by the ASOP. Activities will continue in the Caribbean as part of a targeted component of ASOP which will be a mixture of smaller projects that will have an important public diplomacy element.

The Australia Africa 2006 Sport Development Program has been subsumed by the Southern Africa Component of the ASOP. Under the ASOP, the principal focus has remained the highly successful Active Community Clubs program, which is designed

¹ www.un.org/sport2005

² Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals, UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace (2003)

to establish sporting clubs in impoverished communities that are owned by the community members. Active Community Clubs are operating in South Africa and a small number of neighbouring countries.

In Papua New Guinea (PNG) the Strongim Komuniti Klub pilot project has been initiated under the umbrella agreement. This project is taking the Active Community Clubs model from southern Africa and implementing it in Papua New Guinea as part of AusAID's PNG Sport For Development Initiative. The ASC is receiving just over \$160,000 and the project finishes in November 2007. Pilot communities are in the Eastern Highlands Province.

The Solomon Islands Provincial Games Program was completed on 24 December 2006. This was a 12 month program funded by AusAID that consisted of multi sport events held in 9 provinces and Honiara. The program has been reviewed by AusAID and the findings will be applied to other ASOP activities.

The Oceania Sport Education Program, which originated prior to the umbrella agreement, targets specific educational outcomes. Resources have been developed and piloted and implementation strategies including a database and management committees finalised. This program will be launched in March 2007. The program provides strong links between Australia, the Oceania National Olympic Committees and the Olympic Sports Federations of Oceania, filling a large gap in sport development in the Pacific region in terms of a quality, competency based sports coaching and administration curriculum.

Opportunities for Enhancing Public Diplomacy

Australia has a reputation second to none for encouraging sport's participation at all levels and for achieving sports excellence in high performance sport. This position gives Australia a unique credibility to provide public diplomacy programs which have real penetration and meaning to countries not only in our region but world wide. There are three ways in which sport can enhance public diplomacy in Australia and overseas. These are:

- a. **Building on the established sport for development initiatives with Aus AID.** These programs have evolved over time from hard won experience of both the ASC and AusAID. If supported with appropriate resources, the ASC can mature the delivery and outcomes of these programs in a sustainable fashion across the Pacific region and elsewhere if required. The natural advantage is that the ASC is drawing on its own organisational strengths and experience as well as the Australian sports system as a whole.
- b. **Developing formal and informal relationships with strategic partners.** The ASC is already working on the ground in the Pacific region with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and increasingly will collaborate with the WHO to improve public health outcomes through sport for development. Other strategic partners emerging in the Pacific region are the World Bank and projects such as the Pacific Regional Initiative for the Development of Basic Education (PRIDE).
- c. **DFAT Post Discretionary Funds.** Although nominally only \$150,000 per year it is becoming increasingly evident that these funds when used for sport related initiatives are extremely beneficial in indirectly supporting programs for sport for development as part of overall public diplomacy.