

**MINISTERIAL TASK
TEAM ON SPORT:
A HIGH PERFORMANCE
SPORTS SYSTEM FOR
SOUTH AFRICA**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Following a meeting of major stakeholders on 27 November 2000, the Minister of Sport and Recreation, Mr Ngconde Balfour, appointed a Ministerial Task Team to investigate High Performance sport in South Africa. The Task Team was charged with identifying and looking into factors which impact negatively on South Africa's sporting performance and coming up with recommendations as to how such factor could be addressed. This initiative was motivated partly by the perception that South Africa had performed poorly at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

The Task Team was announced in mid December 2000 with the CEO of the South African Sports Commission, Dr Joe Phaahla, as Chairperson. The Task Team commenced its work in January 2001.

The purpose of this report is to bring together all the many issues raised by the various sub-committees and to present a comprehensive set of recommendations to the Minister for Government consideration.

Although much still needs to be done, the work of the Task Team undertaken at the initiative of Minister Balfour, has provided a most comprehensive analysis of the situation in South African sport as it exists at the end of 2001. The report has also provided directions for the future and opportunities have been identified for improving the South African sporting system.

In opening the Task Team Workshop on 17 August 2001, Minister Balfour said he was convinced that, as a nation, South Africa could deliver better sports performances internationally. It was important, he said, to pinpoint the faults in the present system and come up with appropriate recommendations for improvement. He warned, however, that it would be difficult to secure

substantial additional funding from Government given the many urgent issues facing the country and he expressed the view that the best way to convince Government of the value of supporting sport was to demonstrate its contribution to improving the quality of life of all South Africans. In that context, it was important to identify innovative approaches to ensure the best possible value from every Rand obtained for sport.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF SPORT

Sport has a major impact on communities. It is an essential part of community life. In the new South Africa, sport can be a most powerful tool for reconciliation and for the development of disadvantaged communities. Sport brings a country together better than anything else. It promotes community enthusiasm and provides an important avenue for social development, particularly amongst the young, as well as the ability to educate youth about health and social issues. It empowers people and teaches leadership and citizenship skills and the importance of co-operation towards shared goals. It challenges inequalities in gender, race and disability. It educates against anti-social behaviour and re-integrates disadvantaged groups, particularly youth at risk. It enhances national pride.

In the case of South Africa it might be truly acknowledged that sport is one of the most important cohesive factors in uniting the entire nation. This potential should be further harnessed for the good of the South African community. We should fully utilize the opportunity that sport offers to demonstrate the best qualities of South African society to the world. That he has taken the initiative to do so is greatly to the credit of Minister Balfour.

3. WORK OF THE TASK TEAM AND THIS REPORT

An enormous amount of thought, effort and dedication went into the work of the different sub-committees. Although the sub-committees departed from different points, depending their respective backgrounds and brief, they have investigated and identified all the crucial elements for South Africa to be successful at elite sport. There is also a high degree of unanimity in their reports.

In line with the Minister's instructions, the Task Team has concentrated its energies on the issues relating to high performance or "elite" sport. Generally it is recognized that sport cannot be compartmentalized. A good standard of sport at the high performance end of the scale can encourage a wider level of sport and physical fitness at the community level, with all the benefits that derive from that. Equally, no country can expect to achieve and sustain success at the elite level without a strong base in the community, because that is where every champion has their beginnings.

A number of sub-committees have raised issues of importance aimed at the longer-term development of sport. There is a strongly expressed view about the need for an improvement in school sport and sport and physical education at the community level as being valuable in itself, as well as in order to develop a base for elite sport. While recognizing these as important issues, they are not considered here as being outside the terms of reference for this report. There is recognition within the Task Team of the need for a similar investigation into community sport.

It is very important to recognize, however, that sport at an elite international level is a tough business. To be successful there must be a complete commitment to performance and to eliminating any factor which compromises that direction. In the end, it must be accepted that there must be some degree

of trade off between a High Performance program and the development of sport at the community level. There are simply not enough resources to do both to the level all would desire.

This report aims to synthesize the many issues raised by the various sub-committees with a view to providing a comprehensive and consistent direction for the establishment of an integrated national High Performance program. Although not covered in the same order as in the sub-committee reports or sometimes in the same detail, the points made in this paper are consistent with those reports.

All the reports have stressed the need for urgent action. It must be borne in mind that no plan is perfect and to seek perfection is to invite delay. Further, given the resources available, it would be impractical to meet all the recommendations made in detail in the short term. The report, therefore, concentrates on what have been identified in the reports as the priority areas for action. While some of these can be implemented immediately, some will take time. All, however, can be commenced without any delay.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Inherent in the reports of the sub-committees, there is a set of guiding principles that must inform any High Performance program, namely:

- **Strategic Planning.** There must be one direction based on a strategic plan covering all elements of the system; it must be centrally driven, with no duplication, to give the best value possible for the funding available.
- **Performance.** This is the principal objective of the High Performance system. Nothing must compromise the search for performance.
- **Excellence.** There must be a commitment to excellence at all levels in all endeavours.

- **Access and Equity.** The plan must provide the opportunity for all sectors of society to reach their potential.
- **Professionalism.** Sport must be run on “business-like” principles.
- **National Focus.** This sports system is for the benefit of the nation as a whole. It is driven by a national direction.
- **National Federations.** These are the bedrock of the sports system. They must take responsibility for the destinies of their sports.
- **Athlete Centered/Coach Driven.** Sports performance comes from well-trained, well-coached athletes. Every part of the system is devoted to the long-term welfare and improvement of athletes.
- **Sports Sciences.** Vital for success in high performance sport, sports science must be applied, practical and delivered in accordance with the needs of national programs developed by head coaches.
- **Fair Play.** The system must be based on respect for the rules, for fellow athletes and other participants in the system and on honesty and co-operation between all stakeholders.
- **Drug Free Sport.** There is a total commitment to drug free sport, which requires a national testing system and tough penalties.

It should be kept in mind that there is no easy path to success in sport at the elite level. That applies to athletes and it applies likewise to the systems that will nurture those athletes. Success is only possible by adopting a rigorous approach, totally directed towards the achievement of excellence. Sport, just like any other successful enterprise, must be managed and coordinated as a major national industry, run along sound business principles including good corporate governance, a clear focus on core business and accountability to stakeholders in the interests of the customers, in this case the South African public.

Such an approach will involve tough and sometimes unpopular decisions. The South African Sports Commission (SASC) will require strong support to provide the authority and leadership it will need to make such decisions.

Despite the concern expressed about South Africa's recent sporting performance and the natural desire to improve, it would be wise to set realistic goals. In this context it is worth stressing that success at international level does not come either cheaply or quickly. Expectations to achieve success at the Athens Olympics, should not be too high. Rather than putting too much emphasis on that goal, a more realistic time frame may be the Beijing Games in 2008. Neither should undue emphasis be put solely on the Olympic Games. There are other multi-sports events such as the All Africa Games and the Commonwealth Games where success is also important and welcomed by the public, not to mention individual world championships. Likewise, failure to win medals should not necessarily be taken as a sign of failure within the system. Rather, what should be sought is a constant improvement over time in individual or team performances. If this occurs the medals will come. There is perhaps a need to educate the South African media of this reality.

5. STRUCTURES OF GOVERNANCE: A NATIONAL DIRECTION

5.1 Role of Government Authorities

The most important factor in the success of any corporate enterprise, including high performance sport, is clear direction and authority. This is a primary need identified by the Task Team. The success of elite sport at the national level requires the smooth operation of a sophisticated management system and this, in turn, requires a very clear definition of authority, responsibility and accountability. There must be one driver and one direction and this must, of course, be consistent with Government policy.

There is a strongly expressed view that clarity of direction is lacking, that there is an element of confusion over roles and too much duplication and fragmentation, although it is recognised that this is inevitable in a new system and that there has been a constant improvement. Clear role demarcation is necessary between the Government department Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA), the South African Sports Commission (SASC), the various multi-sports bodies such as the National Olympic Committee of South Africa (NOCSA), the South African Commonwealth Games Association (SACGA), the All Africa Games, the South African Games and between national and provincial structures.

If South Africa is to be successful in sport at the elite level it is absolutely essential that there be one authority charged by Government with the responsibility to develop, co-ordinate and monitor a comprehensive system established in accordance with a broadly agreed national strategy and run on strictly business lines. This is not a function that can be carried out directly by a Government department with all the restrictions inherent in such authorities. It must be carried out by an organisation which is close to sport, has a degree of management flexibility to allow it to operate in a business-like manner and which must be in a relationship with Government where it can be held accountable for results. The Task Team is of the opinion that the SASC is best place to carry out this function.

It is important that the Department works closely with the Minister to advise him on the overall direction of sport and to assist in the establishment of a contract for the Commission, setting out what the Government requires of it in broad terms, establishing its funding levels based on achieving the outcomes with which it is charged and identifying the performance indicators on the basis of which it will be measured. The Department will also have an important role in facilitating interdepartmental and international relationships.

Under such an approach the Government, operating on behalf of the shareholders, that is the people of South Africa, would be charging the SASC to achieve certain outcomes, would agree to fund it for that purpose and would judge its performance on the extent to which it achieves those outcomes. The SASC could then report against those outcomes through its Annual Report to the people through the Minister and the Parliament. This is an accountable process.

Likewise, within the SASC, there must be one centre of authority, charged with responsibility for the national plan for High Performance sport. This High Performance Unit should be under a Manager with no other responsibilities. To develop this program will be a demanding task and there must be nothing likely to dilute a total concentration on it. The role of the Manager of High Performance sport would be to deliver the High Performance outcomes demanded of the SASC by Government. This person would integrate all elements of High Performance sport into one national plan and be responsible for the co-ordination and monitoring of those various elements.

Thus, the role of the Minister as the principal authority of the Government will be established, as will the role of the SASC as the principal program manager with a clear responsibility to achieve a certain outcome. In turn, within the SASC, the role and responsibility of the High Performance Unit will be clear. The central task of the SASC in respect of High Performance sport will be to develop the strategic plan for sport as a whole, to manage the system for implementing it and to monitor progress toward achieving the objectives identified in the plan. It is the role of the Board of the SASC to ensure this occurs. There must be a rigorous concentration on performance at all times and at all levels, by the SASC in setting the standard, by national sports, by coaches, scientists and athletes. Any breakdown or failure of concentration in that chain will compromise performance.

5.2 National Sporting Federations

National Sporting Federations (NFs) are at the centre of the sports system. They must be best placed to know their particular sport and the requirements of their athletes. NFs must accept ultimate responsibility for the success or failure of their sports. Just as in a corporation, each product division has its plan, which integrates with the corporate plan. This requirement for planning and the need for clear direction and authority must extend down to individual sports. Each NF must establish a plan outlining its own goals and the strategies it will employ to achieve those goals.

The SASC must ensure that each sport develops its own plan. These do not have to be elaborate. Indeed they should be simple and uncomplicated. However, some NFs will require assistance. A vital element of each plan must be an analysis of the sport's performance as measured against its major international competitors. No sport will be successful unless it is constantly measuring itself against its principal opposition. The performance indicators for the individual NFs should be related to continuous improvement in international rankings. Funding of NFs should be based on the achievement of identified results.

Because overall funding is limited, it is inevitable that the SASC approach must be selective. In order to achieve success in the shortest possible time it will be necessary to give priority to those sports with the best chance of success for every Rand expended. Some sports will be better developed than others. Some sports have multiple disciplines, which means there are more medals available. For example, in team sports it is necessary to support all the members of the team for the chance of only one medal, whereas in others, for example boxing, swimming, cycling, track and field, multiple medals can be achieved for the same financial outlay.

This may be hard on some sports but, where resources are limited, it will be absolutely vital to set priorities and stick to them. It is therefore proposed that a simple classification system be established taking account primarily of the potential for success. Those sports judged as having the greater potential should be funded at a higher level per athlete than those with a lesser potential. This classification system should be constantly revised in order to keep sports under pressure to perform, but also in recognition that sports might drop out or new sports be added, depending on performance.

Because funding is limited, it has been recommended that Government funding not be directed to the major, wealthy professional sports such as rugby, cricket, soccer, golf and motor racing, which have significant funding from their commercial sponsorships. Indeed the strength of some of these commercial arrangements may result in directing commercial sponsorship away from the smaller sports where success is sought. On the other hand, there may be some case for Government funding at the developmental level of these high profile sports to encourage participation from disadvantaged communities. If this is considered desirable, thought should be given to making any such contributions dependant on an equal contribution from the sport.

In undertaking this task, it will be important for the SASC to work closely with individual NFs to assist them develop their plans and to manage themselves effectively in order to be able to achieve their goals. In recognition of the truth that success starts in the boardroom, the SASC should establish a program to foster management improvement and governance issues for individual NFs.

5.3 Multi-Sports Organizations

One problem identified in a number of the sub-committee reports is that of the fragmentation between the organizations responsible for South African

participation in multi-sports events. There are separate bodies for the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games and All Africa Games. The need to incorporate these bodies within a national governance model has been stressed as essential to avoid duplication and waste of resources. These organizations are principally responsible for selecting teams for particular multi-sports events and the transportation to and management of teams at events.

The concept of Team South Africa has been advanced, with the objective of achieving a unified approach to the organization and management of South African teams in multi-sports events by 2005. This would be one macro body bringing together NOCSA, SACGA, the organization for the All Africa Games and eventually the World Student Games and the Paralympic Games. This united body, seen to be outside Government, would have the responsibility for the preparation of all South African teams taking part in multi-sports events. It would thus facilitate the presentation of a consistent image of South Africa, including team outfitting and colours, and develop real expertise in team management, an issue raised by a number of the sub-committees. Thus a major area of current duplication would be eliminated.

Team South Africa might also provide a vehicle for raising non-government funding. The concept of Team South Africa should be brought into the overall structure for the co-ordination of High Performance sport.

5.4 National and Provincial Structures

Clarity in the roles of the national and provincial government structures must be clearly defined. The development of sport at the provincial level is very important because this level of government is closest to the community and because this is where the champions of the future will be found. The division of responsibility that would appear logical would be for the national

government to have prime responsibility for national programs, such as the High Performance program, while the provincial governments look after the development of sport at the sub-elite level and take a high level of responsibility for community sport and recreation. This gives them the responsibility of fostering sport at the sub-elite level, concentrating on the development and training of provincial teams in the interests of providing the highest possible level of competition domestically.

Provinces also have an important role in supporting their regional academies, which will in turn provide support for provincial level athletes and for those national athletes living and training locally. It might be valuable to determine these respective roles through formal agreements between the national and provincial governments. When funds are provided from national to provincial level this should be done through formal contracts under which the provinces might be contracted by the national government to deliver certain defined outcomes as agreed upon also by the SASC.

6. ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR THE HIGH PERFORMANCE PLAN

6.1 Planning

An essential prerequisite for success at the elite level is that each NF develops a clear strategic plan, identifying goals for success established over a defined period and the strategies for achieving those goals. This planning will assist in the introduction of “professionalism” or business-like management in all aspects of NFs operations, including in management, coaching and support services. South African sport, with the exception of a limited number of codes, stagnated during the apartheid years because of international isolation and the resulting dearth of stimulation provided by external contact. The development of a professional culture will do much to overcome these disadvantages. Just as with

a business there must be a constant search for innovation and excellence. Again, this is facilitated through quality planning.

This planning approach is based on the concept that the NF must be at the centre of any sports system. They must know their sports better than anybody and must be encouraged to take ultimate responsibility for their destinies. The primary focus of the NFs must be the welfare and performance of their athletes. This responsibility includes the identification and nurturing of all the talented participants in their sport.

It is the primary function of the management of the sport to ensure this plan is prepared and widely accepted. The plan must be established against a detailed analysis of the sport's major international competitors and on a principle of constant improvement. It is not necessary, and is in fact unrealistic, to expect sports to progress too rapidly. What is essential, however, that they continue to progress. Their funding should be based on this principle, with them meeting agreed performance indicators. If a sport ranked, say, tenth in the world can progress to seventh, this is a good result and should be applauded as a success. It should then have an expectation of improving to fifth, from where it becomes a realistic medal prospect.

Each element necessary for success must be included in the plan, including coaching, talent identification, training programs, international competition schedule, sports science and medicine requirements. The Head Coach for the sport must be fully involved in this planning process as the person ultimately responsible for its implementation.

It must be recognised that these objectives will not be achieved unless there is an urgent upgrading of managerial skills in the NFs. There is a strong case for the provision of funding for the employment of qualified managers within the selected NFs and for a specific management improvement program to improve

efficiency and effectiveness. NFs must be made accountable for the success or otherwise of their codes.

6.2 Coaching

Coaching has been identified by the Task Team as an absolute essential for success and one of the major deficiencies in the current system. I agree that quality coaching at all levels is a pre-requisite for success.

A major role for the management of any sports organization is the appointment of the Head Coach for the sport. The Head Coach should have the responsibility for establishing the national training program for the sport and for each individual athlete. They must be responsible for bringing together every aspect of support for the athlete and integrating it into the overall coaching program. In most cases, but not necessarily, the Head Coach will also be the national team coach. However, it is important that the Head Coach develop a national training program, integrating all elite athletes around the country and organising the services to support them. The immediate focus will be on the national team.

The national junior team must also receive special attention, as they will become the national team for the future and can be developed over a longer period of time. Beyond the junior team there must be a network of young players developed through the provincial sports system. The whole system must be integrated into a unified approach for the sport with clear development pathways for talented athletes.

While there will naturally be a desire to see South African coaches prosper, it could be considered in the short term to import top quality coaches from overseas in sports where the level of coaching may not be adequate to secure the desired results. The need is, however, to attract committed people to the profession, to train them to international standards and to retain their expertise in

the profession by insuring that they are properly re-numerated. Hence a major focus to insure future success, must be expended on the development of sophisticated, inquisitive, motivated and well-trained coaches in all South African sports but, most especially, in those that are identified as key sports.

Because of the intense nature of successful coaching and because of its importance, there is a need in the selected sports for funding support to pay at least the Head Coach. It is impossible to successfully fulfil the role of a head coach on a part-time basis.

The establishment of a coaches association should be fostered to encourage greater communication amongst coaches including from different disciplines. An annual coaches conference should be held where common issues can be discussed and coaches given the opportunity to hear from other world-class coaches.

6.3 Coach Education

The Task Team also identified the vital importance of coach education. Quality coaching at all levels is essential for the successful development of skill levels and a competitive attitude amongst young athletes. This can only be developed through a comprehensive approach to coach education.

There is a very strong case for the establishment of a National Coaching Coordinator within the SASC. This office would work with each sport to develop appropriate coach education resources, training programs and formal accreditation qualifications. It would perform the role of an Academy in terms of developing a strategy and working with individual sports and educational providers to develop resources for an accreditation pathway, linked to the national accreditation system through THETA. The detailed work would not be

required to be undertaken by this office. Much could be outsourced, possibly to tertiary institutions.

Coaches should be encouraged to continually upgrade their qualifications or seek higher levels of accreditation. Recognition of the value of coaching as a profession should be encouraged.

6.4 Athlete selection and Talent Identification

Success requires a cadre of elite athletes, shadowed by a cadre of potential national team members, always putting pressure on those in the national team. A pro-active approach to identifying and selecting talent is an absolute prerequisite if South African sport is to progress. There is no point to such a process, however, unless it is linked to a structured program that will foster the development of young athletes identified as talented. Neither is there any point in identifying and developing young talent if gifted athletes already in a sport are not adequately supported.

It is almost certain that there are many talented athletes in South Africa who are not aware of their sporting talent, as they are not provided with an opportunity to try a wide range of sports. Through good talent programs it is possible for young people with hidden talent to emerge and be given the opportunity to develop. Some of them will excel. A targeted talent identification process will also enable the identification of athletes from disadvantaged backgrounds who might otherwise not be found.

Talent identification, selection and development require the employment of multi-disciplinary models. These will include consideration of kinanthropometry, physiology, psycho-social influences, biomechanics and maturation issues. There is no one correct model. It is dependant on the complexity of the sport and its infrastructure at a local, provincial and national level.

Talent Identification involves the screening of children and adolescents using selected tests of physical, physiological and skill attributes in order to identify those with potential. Talent Selection is the screening of young athletes already participating by using experienced coaches and/or physical testing. Talent Development follows the talent identification/selection process and requires the provision of adequate coaching, facilities and competition to enable newly identified athlete the opportunity to progress. Targeted Recruitment involves the recruitment of talented athletes from existing systems where it is possible to implement development programs through additional resources. This obviously reduces costs and attrition rates. Different models will suit different sports.

The first step is to choose the model appropriate to the sport. Because of cost there must be a selective approach. Some sports would require a high investment, while for others the investment will be modest. Some sports will provide a shorter-term to develop athlete to international level; others will require two quadrennials. The key to talent identification is to determine how much of the performance outcome can be measured. If the requirements for success in a sport are predictable then identification initiatives are more suitable.

It is recommended that a centre for co-ordinating all national talent initiatives be established under a National Talent Identification Co-ordinator. This will ensure adequate utilisation of resources and standardisation of processes. The co-ordinator will work with the priority NFs to develop sport specific programs. This centre should be established as a unit under the National Sports Science Co-ordinator.

Sports can employ a mix of methods. Whatever system is used, however, it must integrate with the overall plan of the Head Coach. They have the responsibility to build up a national system to ensure they are being fed information on talented athletes who can be tried out for more senior teams. The

Head Coach must develop and work with a network of coaches at the provincial level who will follow his philosophy and training programs. This way all talented young players will be taught the right skills so that, when they do make it through to national teams, Head Coaches will not have to waste time and effort teaching them the basics they should already know. An extensive system of competition at local and provincial levels is necessary. This is where young athletes are developed and nurtured. The better the local competition, the better the product it produces.

6.5 Training Programs: Centres of Excellence

Each sport requires a unique training program. It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to develop this. It will take account of such factors as the geographical distribution of the sport and the ages and personal circumstances of the athletes. It must integrate all support mechanisms to make access by athletes as easy as possible.

There has been much discussion in some countries about centralised and decentralised training programs. According to the Task Team there are pros and cons about either approach. One central institute can bring together all athletes and services and can be valuable for developing skills and attitudes particularly amongst young athletes. It is also easier to provide educational and vocational services. There can be economies of scale in this and there is great benefit in having coaches and scientists working on different sports associating together in an environment of intellectual excitement and excellence. On the other hand, there are costs involved particularly in providing full time scholarships for athletes. Centralisation tends to be more difficult with older athletes who are likely to have job and family commitments and it does not suit unsophisticated athletes who may find it difficult to live away from their home environment. The Task Team considers that, at this stage, a centralised institution is not the best approach.

An alternative approach would be to develop Centres of Excellence at appropriate locations around the country, possibly in conjunction with tertiary institutions. There are significant advantages in the centralisation of training programs for some sports, including team sports. It is very difficult to develop success at a team level without significant periods of time for the team together. Training programs at Centres of Excellence must be incorporated into the Head Coach's national program. Indeed, Head Coaches should be located at their sport's Centres of Excellence.

A major advantage of Centres of Excellence is that they can provide a concentration of expertise and services for a particular sport with that radiating out through the sport's national training network. They will also facilitate the concentration of scientific expertise around an individual sports so that sports science personnel become experts in the application of their particular disciplines to those sports. This will assist coaches learn more of the benefits of sports science while encouraging scientists to provide what coaches need.

6.6 Athlete Welfare

Just as training programs are important, so also is athlete welfare, as has been recognised by the sub-committees. Any High Performance program must aim to enhance the personal, educational and vocational development opportunities for elite athletes. Given the enormous commitment required of any athlete to reach the top and their relatively short athletic careers, it is important to develop young athletes as full people. Many, particularly from disadvantaged communities, will find sport offers them a way to better themselves in terms of their later lives. They will not be able to make the best of these opportunities without help in terms of education, vocational or personal development. Apart from anything else, studies have shown that athletes who are broadly developed in the non-sports areas in fact perform better in sport.

It is also desirable to guard against the perception that a group of privileged people will be created who will have little connection with the community or with the rank and file of athletes. There is a need for elite athletes to be seen to be making a wider contribution to society and should be used to market social benefits.

To give effect to this recognition, I believe it would be desirable to appoint within the SASC an officer with the responsibility to co-ordinate athlete support around the country. This officer would liaise with educational institutions and other training bodies and provide athletes with advice on their educational and vocational problems, assist them find appropriate work which will allow them to train, and to organise training in basic life skills, for example how to sit a job interview or write a job application, develop public presentation skills. Many of these services can be obtained on a voluntary basis or from private providers at concessional rates. If the concept of Centres of Excellence is pursued, each centre might have a nominated person to co-ordinate these activities locally.

The other area of real importance for athletes, particularly those who cannot make a living out of their sport, is assistance in finding work where they can get enough time off to train. This is one advantage that the military and police services can provide, while also training athletes for a valuable career. Tertiary institutions and major corporations should be able to do so as well. Certainly tertiary institutions should be approached about the possibility of scholarships for talented sportspeople who have the necessary academic qualifications.

In Australia a very successful program that operated in the lead up to the Olympic Games was the Olympic Job Opportunity Program (OJOP). It has also been successful in the United States. This program sought to place athletes with major businesses, with a commitment by the company to train them professionally and provide them with time off for training. The Program was

supported by the Prime Minister, who wrote to the 500 leading companies urging them to participate, with great success. Many companies found that having a household name or an elite athlete training for the Olympics was a great value to their staff in terms of creating a concept of self-discipline and excellence. Many athletes have ended up in permanent employment with their OJOP hosts. Neither does the plan need to be confined to highly educated athletes. Useful jobs and career development were provided for less well-educated athletes who were able to work as mail sorters, postmen or in semi skilled jobs. Such a concept is worth consideration in collaboration with or through Team South Africa.

6.7 Competition

Another component of the High Performance program is the constant need for high quality competition. If you want to beat the best you must be used to playing against the best. There is no point going to a world championship and suddenly being up against vastly better, fitter, more experienced teams. Without competition at the highest level it will never be possible to measure your standard. This applies not only to national teams but also to national junior teams, the national representatives of tomorrow. Constant international competition is, along with coaching, probably the most important ingredient in international sporting success. It is expensive but it should be high on any sport's list of priorities.

Strong domestic competition is also important in terms of developing talented young athletes aspiring for national teams, as well as keeping international athletes as fit as possible outside their international calendars. In some sports it may even be necessary to create suitable domestic competitions to ensure quality. The old system based on provincial teams may not provide the best competition in all sports or it may be necessary for some athletes to move to stronger provinces or stronger competitions in the interests of their development.

For this reason also it is necessary to have a good system of talent scouts and the flexibility within sports to allow this.

6.8 Sports Science and Sports Medicine

Because sport has become so sophisticated and fractions of a second can mean the difference between first and second or even first and last, a sound sports science system is obviously necessary for success. Science, however, is expensive and for this reason it must be practical. While there is clearly a need for theoretical science, which might lead to some significant breakthrough, this might best be left for the university system, although this might be contracted to undertake certain projects.

Coaches need constant scientific monitoring of athletes. As much of this will be done around the country there is a need for a national set of protocols to ensure all scientific monitoring is being done and recorded in a uniform manner. It is important, however, the only information that is needed and used should be collected. There is a view that, currently, athletes are tested but the information collected is not used or not used effectively. If this is the case it is a waste of resources. Head Coaches should all be fully familiar with the sports sciences, their benefits and how they can best be applied in their sports. Unfortunately this is not always the case, which is why contact must continually be facilitated between scientists and coaches.

Because the purposes of the sports sciences are to facilitate athlete development, it is recognised that the sports science system needs to be integrated into the strategic plan for High Performance sport. The Sports Information and Science Agency (SISA) have developed a strategic and unified approach to the implementation of sports sciences across the country. While SISA has a mandate beyond High Performance sport, the work it does is essential to the realisation of the success of the High Performance strategy. The

activities of SISA should, therefore, be closely integrated within the unit of the SASC responsible for the High Performance program.

There is value in a co-ordinating body for sports sciences as long as it brings together a wide range of practitioners. Such a body must also ensure that the entire sports community is knowledgeable about and integrated into the national High Performance network. This body should include one or two national coaches as a contribution to greater understanding between coaches and scientists.

There are five primary roles for the sports sciences program. The first is to provide an appropriate level of medical servicing to provide for the general health and injury rehabilitation of athletes; second is the scientific program covering the normal disciplines such as physiology, psychology, biomechanics, nutrition, and based on providing practical servicing for athletes to enhance performance; third is a national network for talent identification, discussed in more detail below; fourth is a technical program to identify and improve the technical aids to performance, such as radio telemetry, game analysis, improvements in equipment design and manufacture; and lastly, a communications network or website for the dissemination of technical material to practitioners around the country, allowing for an interchange of ideas.

There is no reason why some of these services should not be outsourced to commercial organisations. It is, however, important that they be controlled centrally to avoid duplication, fragmentation and waste and ensure that services are directed to athletes in accord with the needs of coaches.

In accordance with the national approach, there would seem to be value in identifying, under the National Co-ordinator for Sports Sciences, a national co-ordinator for each major scientific discipline. For example, there would be appointed a national co-ordinator for physiology, biomechanics, psychology,

nutrition etc. This co-ordinator would be responsible for ensuring that both appropriate research and athlete servicing was being undertaken in a co-ordinated fashion throughout the network, ensuring national protocols are in place and that coaches are receiving the information they need in respect of that particular discipline. These would ideally be voluntary positions filled by existing practitioners.

At the same time, scientists working at Centres of Excellence would develop greater expertise in the sports they are working with, so more closely aligning the provision of scientific services to the requirements of athletes and coaches.

6.9 Drug Free Sport

The taking of performance enhancing drugs is, unfortunately, still common in some sports in some countries. The problem seems to be variable and, while there does not seem to be the widespread officially sanctioned use of drugs as in former years, there still seems to be pockets of use, often associated with one or a small group of prominent coaches or people who are able to get themselves into positions of influence over athletes. Meanwhile, of course, new substances are constantly being developed which makes it continually difficult for regulators to keep up. At the end of the day a democratic country may have to accept that, if it takes a tough line against drugs, it may suffer in terms of performance; but that is one of the prices of honour and honesty. There can be no glory or sense of achievement in winning through drugs. Neither can any Government put substantial funding into sport unless it takes realistic steps to combat doping.

Anti-doping activities, however, can be very expensive and it is important to find the right balance between not doing enough and doing too much. Essentially this comes down to a cost benefit analysis in regard to what is a sufficient level of testing to create an effective deterrent.

It is probably unrealistic to think that drug taking in sport can be totally eliminated. A regime under which athletes can expect to be tested at random a number of times a year is probably sufficient. While there is a school of thought that says there should be no targeting in a truly random program, the reality of the cost structure is that targeting makes sense. There is no point testing athletes in sports where drugs will have little performance effect. There is little point in testing for all drugs in all sports because some drugs are more important for performance in some sports than in others. And it must at least be questionable, in a sports drugs program, to test athletes who are well below national representative level or to test para-sports people, that is those who may use drugs popular in sport but for non sports purposes, such as body builders. In the interests of economy, therefore, programs need to be reasonably specific.

As a statutory body, the South African Institute for Drug-Free Sport (SAIDS) have been made responsible for the collection of samples and analysis. There is some question as to whether it needs to be a separate body with its own legislation and administration. This might be considered an example of duplication that is not necessary and could possibly be removed without compromising the independent integrity of the testing program.

It has been recognised as important, however, that an anti-doping policy not be divorced from the overall national policy for High Performance sport. It is an essential role of the SASC to develop and oversight the national anti-doping policy. This might encompass a broad national anti-doping policy that lays down specific procedures, practices, penalties for infringement and appropriate appeal mechanisms. In turn, each NF should, as a condition of funding, be required to have its own policy based on the same principles as the national policy, or formally adopt the national policy as its own. It is understood that at least most sports have anti-doping provisions in their constitutions. Where sports have their own policies they should, as far as possible, be consistent with the policies of their respective international federations. The SASC may have to assist some

sports develop appropriate policies and it must monitor compliance with those policies.

South African athletes will inevitably from time to time be up against drug users in other countries, with adverse effects on their results. For this reason, it is important for South Africa to play its part in the international campaign against drug use in sport. It should seek to play a useful and constructive role in bodies such as the World Anti-Doping Authority (WADA). Thus it would show its own athletes it was doing what it could to achieve a level playing field for them and ultimately improve their results. It would also help to gain approval for a rigorous and tough policy domestically.

6.10 Monitoring Co-ordinating and Reporting

The primary task for the High Performance program of the SASC should be to co-ordinate all elements of the national High Performance strategy. In doing so it must continually monitor sports performances against the indicators agreed with the sport. This should form the basis of the funding contract between the SASC and the sport. But its purpose should not be one just of compliance. It should set out to identify areas where sports can improve and to help them find ways to do so. It should be a think tank to provide ideas for sports, to take ideas or practices that work well in one sport and seek to transform them more widely.

In order to undertake this role a standard, simple method of reporting should be developed which will identify the major components of each of the nominated sport's training, coaching and support programs and test them against its international results and international standing. This should not be overly complex. Most sports simply do not have the resources to spend on producing useless statistics, so information collected should be only information that needs to be collected. But the role of monitoring is essential to ensure that the right

direction is being followed or whether changes are required based on actual information rather than guesswork.

In order to facilitate co-ordination there may be merit in the establishment of a small High Performance Management Committee, chaired by the Director of High Performance and composed of the officer in charge of relations with NFs (including funding and monitoring), the national Sports Sciences Co-ordinator, the National Coaching Co-ordinator and a representative of Team South Africa, possibly with others co-opted as required. This group might meet frequently with NFs to review their plans, monitor compliance and seek to assist where possible.

7. FUNDING AND MARKETING

There can be little doubt that all aspects of high performance sport require access to funding. The reality, however, that Government funding will always be limited puts extra emphasis on the need to ensure that all waste is eliminated. It also means that considerable effort must be employed to raise the maximum level of funding from non-government sources. This is a difficult task. Sponsorship is always difficult to achieve, even for the large, popular sports. A major problem for many small sports is that the sponsorship market has been largely tied up by the big professional sports, which means there is little residue to go round. Further, many smaller sports do not have the management and marketing skills, or the money to invest, to attract sponsorships or negotiate with sponsors.

The fragmentation between the existing bodies makes it difficult for them to raise funds to meet their essential purposes. Apart from its practical management utility, the concept of Team South Africa could develop a very useful role in raising commercial funding for sport. This might be an extension of the current and successful Olympic Foundation. Through a unified approach Team South Africa should be able to present a much more

marketable product than the member organisations can separately. From the funding raised through such a concept, the costs to Government of preparing and sending representative teams away would be reduced, so allowing much needed resources to be directed elsewhere. It could also allow Team South Africa to provide support direct to some athletes or make contributions to High Performance programs in conformity with the overall national strategy. If this eventuates, in order to avoid fragmentation or duplication in future, it would be important that there be an agreed position on what elements of funding were undertaken by Team South Africa and what elements were funded through the Government processes. This is a further reason why it would need to be incorporated into the national High Performance strategy.

7.1 Assistance with Marketing

There may be advantage in examining the establishment of a Trust or some similar mechanism to assist in the raising of commercial revenue. Such a body could develop strong relationships with the media. It would also develop the necessary expertise required for marketing and negotiating with sponsors, developing merchandising and official supplier arrangements and, particularly, assisting in maintaining sponsorships, activities which many small sports are not equipped for. It might also seek to develop licensing arrangements with broadcasters for smaller sports.

Such a Trust might include leading businessmen and other prominent community leaders and so extend the sport network in the community. There might be some resistance to this idea from smaller sports that believe they already have satisfactory arrangements. But it would not need to be compulsory and, if the concept were seen to be successful, the benefits would quickly become obvious. This could be an extension of the Olympic Foundation operated through or in conjunction with Team South Africa.

7.2 Sports Lottery

A Sports Lottery has recently been established and this is regarded as a positive step. Certainly this concept has been extremely successful in the UK and has directed many millions of pounds into sport. The Lottery, however, is relatively new and there has been some concern expressed about the method of distribution of its profits.

There would appear to be a strong case for the distribution of Lottery funding to follow a strategic direction determined by the overall strategic direction for sport as a whole. This may, for example, involve a decision that Lottery funding should be distributed for one or more clearly defined purposes, for example for community development, for elite sport or for facilities building, or a combination of purposes. Whatever strategy is adopted, funding should be directed in the first instance to the body or bodies responsible for the overall development of that aspect of sport. In the case of funding for elite sport, this would suggest the SASC as the body with the overall responsibility in that regard.

7.3 Taxation

The Task Team has identified a number of other ideas worth consideration. One relates to taxation. If sponsorships or even voluntary contributions are subject to preferential tax arrangements they become much more attractive to donors. A further approach worth consideration is that of attempting to get major companies to “adopt a sport” by taking an overall interest in a sport, including provision of funding. While R200 000 would be very little for a major corporation, it would be a gift from heaven to most small sports. The idea would be even more attractive if it were related to a tax concession. A similar idea is to encourage major companies to support athletes through a job opportunity scheme. (See section on athlete welfare.)

A further issue relating to taxation is to look at ways in which athletes earnings can be taxed at a preferential rate which takes into account the fact that an athlete's earning potential is only over a very short number of years. Many athletes make substantial sums, on which they pay high levels of tax, but only over a short period after which their earning capacity diminishes. There would be great advantage in a system that allowed some evening out of this phenomenon.

7.4 Parastatal Corporations

The wealth and commercial power of the parastatal corporations has been recognized and an investigation of the ways in which they may be encouraged, or obliged, to contribute to sport has been recommended. As with other commercial enterprises, relatively small contributions from these organizations would be of immense assistance to sports while demonstrating a commitment to the community.

7.5 Government Funding Cycle

A further idea well worthy of consideration is to provide Government funding over a four-year funding cycle. This would allow the SASC to plan more effectively and to demand that individual sports plan more effectively. It is, of course, difficult to plan when financial resources are not known in advance. If this is not possible because of Government policy, it would be worth considering the possibility of sports at least receiving a notional or indicative allocation over a number of years based on the Government's forward estimates. This would greatly facilitate forward planning.

As is clear from the report of the sub-committee on Funding and Marketing, there are no easy answers in this regard. This makes it more important to

avoid duplication and waste while continuing to investigate any ideas for raising non-Government funding.

8. ACCESS AND EQUITY

Every sports program must take account of access and equity issues. It is recognised, however, that this is a long-term issue that goes well beyond the development of a High Performance program, although it is just as relevant in this respect as it is in any other part of the sports spectrum. There is a moral as well as a legislative reason for taking account of access and equity issues in a sports policy.

If there is a desire to see an improvement in sport then no sector of the population can afford to be ignored. There are many potential champions amongst the disadvantaged groups of society as well as amongst women. It is important that all have a chance to fulfil themselves and, at the same time, contribute to the country's sporting prowess. Sport can be particularly important for such people, giving them avenues for advancement that might not otherwise be available. Likewise sport can be very important for people with disabilities, providing opportunities for rehabilitation as well as opportunities to represent their country with honour.

It is also the case that, in some sports, competition amongst women for social and historical reasons is not as strong as it is in male competition, so offering better opportunities for success, though this situation is changing as more countries see the value of investing in women's sport. This is nevertheless an important issue that might be considered when determining the priority sports for assistance.

The sub-committee on Access and Equity has correctly pointed out that discrimination goes well beyond normally recognised areas. It is manifest in a

wide range of social activities, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, age, religion, language and disability, to pick just a few at random. Issues of access and cultural understanding are also important in providing opportunities for socially disadvantaged communities and, particularly, rural communities. The sub-committee took the view that there is still a good deal of ignorance as to the causes of discrimination and misunderstanding about the definitions, legislation and the responsibility of all to address equity issues within their ambit of control. It is recognised that this is not an issue confined to High Performance sport. But, as it must cover the entire sports program it must be considered in the ambit of the Task Team.

8.1 Need for an Audit

The sub-committee recognises that equity needs to be achieved in the composition of governance structures, amongst employees and participants and at all levels of sport. A national approach is needed. In order to set a benchmark against which future improvement can be measured, the sub-committee considers it important to conduct an audit to map the current situation. This audit should include all sports organisations, government and non-government, multi-sport organisations, national federations and provincial structures. The latter part of the process would see the development of a reporting template to enable progress to be monitored. The sub-committee recognises that there would be a cost involved in this exercise that might limit its scope or timeframe.

The sub-committee recommends a short-term strategy, between 2001 and 2004, during which time there should be developed a comprehensive national equity plan for sport which would include principles of good practice, timeframes, achievable targets and budgets. Each organization would be required and assisted to develop its own plan and would be required to report on progress in

accordance with guidelines published by the Department of Labour. An access and equity policy should be a requirement of Government funding.

8.2 Transformation Monitor

In order to undertake this activity, it is proposed that a Transformation Monitor be appointed, to be supported by a Reference Group. This should be a senior position and located within the SASC. Its role would be to encourage the participation of all parties to further the principles of access and equity, to assess data and analysis from the audit, develop consultative fora, assist organizations develop individual equity plans, establish methods for reporting and monitoring and institute databases to ensure up to date information. It would need to work with other departments, such as Health, Welfare and Education, to ensure that issues within sport were integrated into similar efforts in the wider community and contributed to the broader national program. It would work closely with program areas to assist in the development of specific interventions for improvement in the sports sector.

Over the longer term, from 2005 to 2008, the Transformation Monitor would continue to assist organisations meet their targets and implement independent reporting mechanisms. Once the policy and reporting systems are in place, the Monitor would become more active in recommending subsidies to encourage best practice and funding allocations to sporting organizations taking account of compliance with agreed performance targets. Once the equity plan has been adopted, mechanisms to handle consistent non-compliance should be investigated and implemented.

8.3 Training

The sub-committee has identified an urgent need to undertake a training program for sports administrators at all levels, but particularly at senior levels.

This should be based on managing diversity to achieve a culture in which the values of dignity, equality and freedom may flourish and in extending understanding about the many cultural and social issues involved in this important aspect of national life.

9. INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Sport in the modern world has become a highly sophisticated business. As such it needs constantly to access and implement the most modern technology, not only for the potential of technology to improve performance but also as an essential management tool. This is particularly important in South Africa because geography and social development dictate a high degree of decentralisation. In any decentralised system the exchange of information is essential in order to ensure the maintenance of a common direction. The Task Team agrees that High Performance sport would benefit by the development, design and implementation of a transparent uniform data management system designed to facilitate and standardise inputs and outputs in order to enhance performance and accountability across and within all national sport codes, affiliates and agencies.

9.1 Approach to Database Management

Database management is the utilisation of management systems dependent on information technology (IT). Its effective operation depends on the appropriate technology, the programs needed to communicate data effectively and the skilled personnel to manage the system. The sub-committee report points out that there is currently a high level of duplication and fragmentation in this area with a number of organisations proceeding to develop their own systems independently at very high cost. This is another example of wasted resources that can only be rectified by a national approach.

The need for the employment of modern technology was recognised in the early 1990s and SISA, established in 1995, undertook the development of this important tool. Much work has been done through the establishment of a network through the various sports institutes. Through that network a testing and reporting system has been developed for athletes.

The sub-committee points out, however, that at this stage, there is no comprehensive approach to the development and maintenance of a national sports IT network. The sub-committee recommends an immediate investment in the human resources, the operational platform necessary and the capital investment required to meet current and future needs. As with the work of some other sub-committees, it is accepted that the needs for effective database management go well beyond its application to High Performance sport but must embrace the entire sports system. No High Performance program can operate effectively without it, however, and so it is necessary to consider it in the work of the Task Team.

9.2 Key Elements in Database System

The sub-committee has identified a number of key elements in such a system:

- **Data Management** - the collection of appropriate and consistent data is essential for an effective IT system if it is to provide useful analysis and reporting, particularly in the divergent and decentralised system of South Africa.

- **Modelling** - an appropriate IT system will allow the application of technology to assist decision-making on issues such as measuring success and planning of incentives nationally on the basis of common data, operating financial allocations and reporting against key performance indicators, sports performance analysis and prediction, team

selection and management. Thus it will be possible to easily analyse performance against investment.

- **Output Reports** - the connection of all sports codes and supporting services through an "intra-sports web" will allow the dissemination of knowledge throughout the system. While there is currently a one-way connection with sports organisations and institutes with SISA, a "bridging" between these organisations would allow a flow of information across the network. This will provide a valuable stimulus to research and facilitate its communication to users. It would also facilitate the generation of "output" information and the production of tailored reports for sponsorship, marketing and communication purposes.
- **Input Designs** - the collection and "warehousing" of information from different databases into one system or "container" will allow access to wider information sources by enabling the collection of diverse data and converting it into usable form for dissemination through the system. Thus information can be collected from different institutions, registration of athletes, coaches etc. for central collation and dissemination through the system as required.
- **Rewards and Incentives** - reporting on performance relative to objective indicators will greatly facilitate monitoring and therefore allow informed decisions on funding allocations for individual sports or other elements of the system. Such an approach can also be developed to allow for the collection and dissemination of "best practice" models.
- **Forward Planning** - as with other sub-committees, the desirability of four year funding allocations was recognised which, together with good data management, would allow better planning. This would be facilitated

through audits of current information to determine bases against which progress can be measured.

9.3 National Approach to Information Technology

The sub-committee also calls for a national approach to IT and recommends the convening of a conference of stakeholders to consider and agree upon a national strategic plan for IT, to consider national needs, the design of the system appropriate to those needs and its operation. This is essential if the system is to meet the needs of users, the most important requirement of any technology. For this reason it would be important for this conference to include users, including coaches and sports administrators. It is, of course, also important that it conforms to the broad Government IT network.

It is recognised that the commitment to IT within the sports system will be uneven and take time because of the lack of confidence in its use by older people. Work will be needed to promote the benefits of the system and a long-term approach to IT development is inevitable. Of utmost importance, however, is the need for one national IT system for sport. While much of the technical capacity can be outsourced, there is a need for a national manager for the network. The role of this manager would be to develop the strategy agreed between stakeholders and work to empower the sports community to encourage its implementation.

As with all components of the High Performance system, it will be necessary to set priorities in relation to IT development. These will depend in part on the stage of development of the system. The most important requirements of an IT system are to:

- Allow the speedy and efficient collection of athlete registrations for each sport and, at the high performance end, for the establishment of an

athlete database. This can incorporate all information regarding an athlete, including performance data. Although it would have to be fire walled for privacy reasons, the database should be used to collect physiological training data from athletes through the various testing sites around the country, on the basis of common protocols, to be fed through to Head Coaches who will then have a ready and immediate picture of training performances. Information collected is wasted if coaches do not know how to use it.

- Enable Head Coaches to disseminate their coaching programs throughout their sports network and receive consistent feedback.
- Allow the ready collection of information and reporting back to the SASC of the performance of national federations against key indicators. This can also be developed for financial reporting as well.
- Facilitate technical research. Technology is increasingly used in applications such as games analysis and in areas such as biomechanics or for the physiological measuring for talent identification. For this reason there must be close association between sports science and IT so that IT can be used to the maximum extent for scientific research. Much of this work can be carried out through CSIR that has a high level of technical capacity.
- Communicate and disseminate information such as educational material, training material and research throughout the network and allow ready access to international developments.

SISA currently operates a database that provides some capacity and, as SISA is located within the SASC this will facilitate the essential integration of IT services. But, at the risk of repetition, it is vital that there be one national system. This

should be located at the SASC as the central program body. It should be charged by the national High Performance unit to undertake the tasks identified above.

10. MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

There are a number of miscellaneous issues raised in the reports of the sub-committees that require further attention.

10.1 Bidding

Concern has been expressed about the process of bidding to hold major sporting events in South Africa. Such events can be very important for the presentation of an attractive image of South Africa internationally and can bring major economic benefits through tourism. Further, they can help in the development of particular sports domestically by bringing the best in the world to South Africa, so providing a more level playing field, giving South Africans the opportunity to witness major sporting events, and saving costs on overseas travel. They are, however, expensive, both in the bidding process as well at the organisational stage. To be effective they also require extensive expertise in terms of management.

It is not necessary to confine bidding to the larger events. While it would be very difficult to win an Olympics and enormously expensive to organise one, there are many events which, although smaller than that, are still major events on the international calendar. The Commonwealth Games, All Africa Games and individual world championships or major regional events can contribute substantially to tourism and sports development.

International events, however, inevitably require Government involvement and the bigger the event the greater the Government involvement is likely to be. There is, therefore a need for some co-ordinating mechanism to ensure that

there is not duplication or conflict in the bidding for events, that all Government services can be integrated and appropriate assistance provided to organisers. There may also be merit in considering the establishment of a small program to assist the smaller sports bid for and host events. In this way broad expertise can be developed, smaller sports can be assisted to promote themselves domestically and top competition can be obtained without the costs of sending teams overseas.

10.2 Involvement of Non Sports Institutions

A number of sub-committees drew attention to the part traditionally played in South African sport through national institutions such as the military and tertiary institutions. In order to maximise the available resources, there is general agreement that every effort should be made to capitalise on these institutions. The military in particular can provide good competition opportunities through participation in service or wider domestic competitions. It can also provide opportunities for the employment of top-level athletes, giving them a career while offering opportunities for them to train at an appropriate level.

There is potentially a major role for tertiary institutions in the longer term by providing qualified teachers and sports technicians and professionals. The recognition of sport as a desirable career will probably do more to create an awareness of the benefits of sport to the community than anything else. In the shorter term, tertiary institutions would provide suitable locations for sport specific Centres of Excellence, providing facilities and grouping a range of expertise around individual sports, including sports science, research and coach education. They should be approached to investigate the possibility of providing scholarships to some athletes.

Other Government instrumentalities, such as Health and Education, will also have a role to play in the wider picture of South African sport. The Department

should establish the appropriate mechanism for co-operation and seek to engage these organisations positively. The recognition of sport will be heightened if its value can be demonstrated in the areas of Health and Education. Although it is outside the scope of this Task Team, a number of sub-committees have made the point strongly about the need to address the position of sport and physical education in schools as a matter of priority.

10.3 International Relations

The Task Team also recognised the importance of international relations. Access to the best information and developments from overseas is vital in the recognition that elite sport is a major international enterprise. There is a tendency to enter into international agreements because they seem polite things to do but which do not provide great value. There would be benefit in reviewing all overseas agreements to ensure that agreements are entered into which will be of value to South African sport, to concentrate on maximising the benefits that will derive from close relationships with a few key countries and in working to facilitate those relationships.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS BY MR JIM FERGUSON

The former CEO of the Australian Sports Commission, Mr Jim Ferguson, who assisted in the final composition of the Task Team report, made the following recommendations:

11.1 Funding

An important issue not raised in the sub-committee reports relates to the appropriate funding body for sports. It would seem consistent with their general thrust that the appropriate body for this purpose should be the SASC. If the SASC is to be responsible for the overall strategic plan and that plan is to follow

through into the individual NFs with their performance to be monitored by the SASC, and they are to be funded on the basis of their performances as a result of that monitoring, then logic clearly suggests that the SASC is the appropriate funding mechanism. This, of course, should not stop the Minister, as the people's representative, expressing his views. If there are objections to this proposal for reasons of broader Government policy, then whatever the source of funding is it should be guided by the assessments made of individual sport performances by the High Performance program.

11.2 Decentralisation

While I agree with the Task Team that the development of one fully centralised institution may not be the best value for money at this stage, a completely decentralised approach, with athletes and support staff all over the country will be expensive, difficult to co-ordinate and ultimately not successful.

11.3 Proposed action plan

- Develop a contract between the Minister and the CEO of the SASC setting out the Government's requirements, indicating funding levels and the indicators on which the performance of the SASC will be measured.
- Establish a High Performance Unit within SASC and provide it with a clear mandate from the Commission, including performance indicators and budget.
- Appoint officers to work with NFs to develop individual sports programs and to monitor performance. Assign responsibility to an officer to develop an athlete support system to assist national athletes with personal and educational issue, concentrating of the priority sports.

Together with Team South Africa, investigate an athlete job opportunity program.

- Appoint a National:
 - Sports Science Coordinator
 - Coach Coordinator
 - TID Coordinator
 - Coordinator for Athlete Welfare
 - Transformation Monitor. (NB These appointments do not have to entail taking on new people. There are probably already people within the SASC who can assume these roles.)

- Establish a small High Performance Management Team to give advice to the Director of High Performance. This should include the two national coordinators as well as a representative of Team South Africa.

- Through this group identify those sports with the best chances of international success, taking account of the opportunities some sports provide for the disadvantaged community. This to be done against a transparent set of criteria so that all sports will know what is required in terms of selection into this group.

- Develop High Performance plans with these sports. Ensure they identify and appoint (with funding provided) the best person they can find in the world as Head Coach and that they also appoint (with funding provided) a good quality Executive Officer. Set clear performance indicators for these sports.

- As soon as possible, get the Head Coach to develop a national training plan, based on a Centre of Excellence appropriate to the sport and identifying sports science needs.

- Provide a budget and a mandate for the National Talent Identification Officer to commence the process of identification of talented athletes in the selected sports as soon as the pathways for development have been established.
- Reform the board of SISA into a national Sports Sciences Committee to ensure it is representative of all stakeholders. Invite appropriate people to become national coordinators in the major sports science disciplines. Develop a sports science service delivery mechanism in conjunction with Head Coaches in priority sports. This must give the coaches what they want not what the scientists want them to want.
- Establish a small group of stakeholders to recommend on the appropriate IT network, hardware and software. This might require expert technical assistance.
- Initiate discussions at the highest level with the military and with parastatals to investigate ways in which they can be integrated into the national sports system.
- The Minister can announce these measures as his plan for success. In any public discussion it should be stressed that this will not achieve immediate success or success at Athens. It should be stressed that this is a long-term plan aimed at continuous improvement.
- It should also be recognized that many of these initiatives would take some time to get under way. For example it will take time to develop the right IT system. But action to commence the process can start immediately.

12. CONCLUSION

It is my pleasure to submit this report to the Minister of Sport and Recreation, Mr Ngconde Balfour, on the _____ day of _____, 2002 at _____.

Dr Joe Phaahla

Chairperson: Ministerial Task Team