Article Title:

A critical analysis of the impact of the Beijing Olympic Games on Australia's sport policy direction

Journal:

International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics

Corresponding author:

Popi Sotiriadou, PhD
Senior Lecturer, Sport Management

[Griffith Business School](#)

G27_Room 3.36, Gold Coast Campus, Griffith University,
Parklands Drive, Southport Qld 4215, Australia
Phone: +61 7 5552 9241

Fax: +61 7 5552 8507

Email: p.sotiriadou@griffith.edu.au

Co-author:

Jessie Brouwers

Griffith University, Gold Coast, Australia

Email: Jessie.Brouwers@griffithuni.edu.au

A critical analysis of the impact of the Beijing Olympic Games on

Australia's sport policy direction

Abstract

This paper is a critical analysis of the impact of Beijing Olympic Games on Australia's sport policy direction. More specifically, the paper uses the multiple streams (MS) model as a conceptual framework for the analysis of the Australian sport policy environment before and after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The major influences on this environment at the time of this analysis are the Crawford Report, a substantial review of the Australian sport system, structures and policies (Crawford 2009) and the federal government's response to that review in 2010. The results of this analysis reflect the synergy of issues, political events and policy direction of Australian elite sport after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The analysis shows that Australia is heading towards an era in which there will be stronger connections between community sport and high performance sport, with the government playing an increasing leadership role. It is argued here that the use of MS provides a strong foundation for understanding policy processes, and that it makes it possible to go beyond mere description of sport policies and historical narratives of how those policies emerged.

Keywords: Australian sport policy analysis, Beijing Olympic Games, domestic sport policy, benchmarking, policy direction, path dependency, multiple streams (MS) model

Success in sport in Australia is believed by many to be due to an effective national sports system that offers improved participation in quality sports activities by all Australians and helps talented athletes reach their highest potential. Success at the elite level is measured by the medals won on the international stage (Sotiriadou 2009). Australia's tally of 46 medals at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing was its third-best performance at any Olympics, behind Sydney and Athens in that order. However impressive this outcome may have been, the steady decrease in overall performance since the Sydney Games and 'the ignominy of finishing behind Britain for the first time since Seoul, 1988' had the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) officials already 'plotting their revenge' (Linden 2008, para. 3).

After the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games the Australian sport system came under scrutiny (O'Brien 2008). In response, Australian Olympic officials called on the government to urgently act in order to 'turn the tables' on their traditional sporting rivals Britain at the 2012 London Games. Indeed, on 28 August 2008, only four days after the closing ceremony of the Beijing Games, the Australian Minister of Sport, Kate Ellis announced the appointment of an independent sport panel ('the Panel') to undertake a substantial review of Australian sport policy. The review was urgently required to identify the nature and causes of the perceived decline in Australia's standards and this paper takes a holistic approach to reviewing Australia's sport policy direction.

Sam and Jackson (2006) reported that opportunities to directly influence national-level government sport policy are rare. For this reason, task force committees and commissions of inquiry, such as the one that was appointed by the government to evaluate the sport policy situation in Australia, represent a distinctive feature of sport-state involvement. They are required to consult with both interested groups and the wider citizenry and this makes them

an important site for the analysis of policy formulation and development. The capacity of the Olympic Games to affect the sport policy of both the host and the participating countries is long-standing and well documented. For example, China invested heavily in support systems for its elite athletes because hosting the Games was a way to demonstrate the country's ideological and economic superiority and revival to the Western world (Green and Houlihan 2008, Wei *et al.* 2010).

However, the Olympic Games do not always affect sport policy through lengthy reviews and/or redirections of policy similar to the one that the Australian sport system underwent following the Beijing Games. The last time Australia swiftly responded to poor Olympic Games performances was after the Montreal Olympics in 1976 at which it failed to win a single gold medal. Those reforms resulted in the establishment of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) and the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) in the 1980s and heralded the beginning of an era of increased support for elite athletes. This support has resulted in Australia becoming a sports 'powerhouse', with many countries choosing to emulate its systems and processes (Sotiriadou 2009). The outcomes of the policy redirection of the 1980s and the impact that the Montreal Games have had on Australian sport have been reported on numerous occasions (e.g. Green and Collins 2008, Green and Houlihan 2008, Hogan and Norton 2000). Even though the latest effort to reshape policy represents another response to what were perceived by some to be poor Olympic performances, the impact of the Beijing Games on Australia's policy direction is less clear. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to analyse the impact of the Beijing Olympic Games on Australia's sport policy direction and in particular on the direction of its elite sports policy (note that this study does refer to grassroots policy because in the new policy direction, grassroots participation is viewed as being inextricably linked with elite success).

This paper's first aim is to apply insights provided by the theoretical model known as the multiple streams (MS) model to the Australian sport policy context. The second aim is to provide some detail on Australia's new policy direction and sport policy trajectories and the third aim is to offer a theoretically informed analysis of these sport policy trajectories. In doing so, the paper explores the relative merits of medal tallies, rankings and other measures of success and the possibility of using the concepts of path dependency and policy learning as ways of understanding recent sport policy developments. A fourth aim is to provide some, tentative at this point, comments on policy ramifications for sport policy makers, administrators and sport management professionals.

The use of the multiple streams model

Despite the increasing academic interest in sports-related policy areas, there is remarkably little use of the major frameworks available for policy analysis (Houlihan 2005). There are some exceptions however. Green and Houlihan (2005) studied elite sport policy using the advocacy coalition framework. Houlihan (1990, 1991) used the stages model to study the public policy response to football hooliganism in England. Others (e.g. Henry 2001, Houlihan and White 2002, Macintosh 1991) have applied institutional analysis to examine organisational infrastructure, and Chalip used the MS model to review USA's performance in the Munich Olympics in 1972 (Chalip 1995) and to review sport policy in New Zealand (Chalip 1996). As 'none of these frameworks is considered to be sufficiently persuasive' (Houlihan 2005, p. 163), the MS model is used in this study only as a point of departure for the analysis of sport policy. More specifically, it is recognised that 'policy analysis is an applied sub-field whose content cannot be determined by disciplinary boundaries but by

whatever appears appropriate to the circumstances of the time and the nature of the problem’ (Wildavsky 1979, p. 15).

The MS model focuses on the flow and timing of policy formulation (Kingdon 1984) and it is based on the principle that policies are not the product of rational actions because policy actors rarely evaluate a wide range of alternatives and they do not compare them systematically (Cohen *et al.* 1972). The major strength of this model is that it recognises that the policy process is fluid and non-linear, and that it involves a vast number of actors and forces. The MS model views the policy process as consisting of three streams of actors and processes:

1. A problem stream: This stream consists of evidence about the *problem* or issue under consideration (i.e. problem recognition) and the proponents of various problem *definitions*. A given situation has to be identified and explicitly formulated as a problem or issue. The feeling that something should, and can, be done to improve the problem is a prerequisite for formulating a policy to address it.
2. A policy stream: This stream is concerned with the formulation of policy alternatives and *recommendations*. A variety of actors can participate in the elaboration of such solutions and in the drafting of proposals for policy reform.
3. A politics stream: This stream comprises various political *events*. Although they take place independently of the other two streams, political events, such as an impending election or a change in government, can lead a policy to be included or excluded from the agenda (Houlihan 2005, Stout and Stevens 2000).

These three streams are separate and independent. As such, no stream by itself can control the overall policy process, though all streams are important. However, it is not always necessary

for all three streams to meet simultaneously for a policy to develop. In some cases, partial couplings, the convergence of two of the streams, are sufficient (Kingdon 1984). Further to this, in the MS model, there is no chronological sequence or priority among the streams. Streams act and react according to their own logic, until a window of opportunity is opened and two or more streams coincide and result in the formation of a policy. The *synergy* of the three policy streams ‘enhance significantly the chances that policy-makers will address an issue’ (King 2009, p. 39).

This study examines: (a) a policy problem (b) the formulation of policy recommendations and (c) the associated political realities that interact to produce (or fail to produce) policy change. In light of the relevance of the three streams of analysis to the subject of this study, the use of MS was deemed appropriate. Utilising insights from the MS model was useful for understanding the complexities and realities of policy-making. Given the broad-based and exploratory nature of this research, the MS model offered the potential to illuminate a range of aspects of the Australian sport policy process and to evaluate policy as a whole.

In the following section we examine the research design used in this study. Then we review the policy problem (*problem stream*) that this paper is concerned with (i.e. Australia’s performance at the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008) and its definitions (i.e. the measures of Australian elite sport success and the commitment to elite sport). This is followed by a description of the political realities and events that took place in Australia (including the election of a new government and the call for policy reform) in the lead-up to, and immediate aftermath of, the Beijing Games (*political stream*). After that, in the *policy stream*, we present the policy recommendations of the Crawford Report, an in-depth investigation of the

causes and origins of the Australian sporting system's underperformance. The findings of this report indicate the areas where policymakers needed to focus if they were to resolve the issue. Then, we discuss the government's responses to the Crawford Report.

Figure 1 The synergy of the issues, events and direction of Australian elite sport after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games

This is followed by the discussions section where we discuss the significance of those findings in light of path dependency and policy learning discourse, and draw, tentative at this stage, policy implications. We conclude that the MS model is a useful policy analysis tool

and that this paper makes an original contribution to sports policy scholarship. Figure 1 is an illustration of the synergy of the three policy streams as they pertain to this study.

Research design

The research design of this paper draws on empirical research conducted in the lead-up to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and the period following the Games. This study was structured around a number of questions that provided the context to collect, examine and analyse data in light of the three streams of the MS model. These questions were:

- (a) What is the issue that triggered a request for policy review, and what are the causes or origins of the the policy concern under investigation?
- (b) What were the political events and political realities that led to the policy review?
- (c) What are the aspects of the situation that require redress, and what recommendations should we put forward?

Information used to address these questions came from the academic literature on the Australian sport system and sport policy discourse, and from data derived from government documents, relevant websites, and newspaper articles. More specifically, in order to conduct a critical policy analysis, the government documents collected and analysed included the following media releases, annual reports, policy reports, reviews and strategy papers:

- *Australian sport: emerging challenges, new directions* (Commonwealth of Australia 2008)
- 'New directions for Australian Sport' [media release] (Australian Government 2008a)
- 'Expert independent sport panel appointed' [media release] (Australian Government 2008b)
- 'Independent panel report maps bold vision for Australian sport' [media release] (Australian Government 2009)
- *The future of sport in Australia* (Crawford 2009)

- National high performance plan for Olympic and Paralympic sports in Australia (Australian Olympic Committee 2009a)
- The Australian Olympic Committee's (AOC's) response to the Crawford report (Australian Olympic Committee 2009b)
- *Australian sport: the pathway to success* (Commonwealth of Australia 2010a)
- Budget, Portfolio budget statements 2010–11 (Commonwealth of Australia 2010b)
- '\$325 million boost to sport and getting more Australians active' [media release] (Australian Government 2010)
- Australian Sports Commission annual reports 2008-09, 2009–10 (Australian Sports Commission 2009, 2010)

To supplement the above documents, and in order to investigate policy processes, discourse and policy reactions, information available before and after the Beijing Games at the official websites of the ASC, AIS, and AOC was reviewed and analysed. Additionally, using the search codes 'Beijing Olympic Games', 'Australia' and 'performance' in the Google News database we searched the news archives for relevant articles (e.g. Courier Mail 2008, Lewis 2010, Linden 2008, O'Brien 2008). These newspaper articles were used to show the importance of the Beijing Games as a focussing event and to supplement information on the policy and political streams.

Two independent researchers analysed the data from the government documents, websites and newspaper articles. The researchers were looking for information in the collected data related to the three streams of the MS model. It is worth noting that the researchers were seeking information relevant to elite sport policy and high performance sport. Nevertheless, they both found that contained in that data there was information that related to grassroots or

community sport but which needed to be analysed. The logic of this decision was that excluding information on community sport would result in an incomplete picture of the new policy direction in Australia that sees the two ends of the sport development continuum as being closely linked.

Problem Stream

Losing the momentum

The changing trajectory of sport policy in Australia between 1970 and the mid-2000s has been widely reported (e.g. Bloomfield 2003, Green 2007b, Green and Collins 2008, Hoye and Nicholson 2009, Stewart *et al.* 2004). In short, before the election of the Whitlam Labor government in 1972, government involvement in sport policy was one of 'benign indifference' (Stewart *et al.* 2004). However, political indifference changed to political intervention during the 1970s when the then Labor government created programmes that reflected a commitment to fostering mass participation. The first tangible indication of a planned approach to elite sport development also occurred during this period. The government commissioned John Bloomfield to prepare a sports plan, and the resulting report was based on studies of major sport institutes in Europe (Bloomfield 1973). Bloomfield's report led to the establishment of a task force to inquire into the feasibility of an elite sports institute in Australia (Green 2007b). In 1974 a study group was appointed by the Minister for Tourism and Recreation, Frank Stewart, to report on the feasibility of such an institute. As a result the Coles Report was released in 1975 recommending the establishment of a sports institute (Coles 1975). The outcome of these reports was that the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment, Bob Ellicott, established the AIS in 1981 followed by the ASC in 1985 (Bloomfield 2003).

From the creation of the AIS and the ASC ‘the policies of Australia’s two dominant political parties converged in the prioritisation of international sporting success’ (Green 2007b, p. 942). More specifically, the establishment of the ASC as the leading governmental sporting agency reinforced the political commitment to elite development (Booth 1995, Green and Houlihan 2008). In addition, the decision to make elite sport a priority signalled a significant break with previous government thinking about sport priorities following poor performances by Australian athletes at the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games (Stewart *et al.* 2004). Underperforming at Montreal can be viewed as a ‘critical juncture’ or triggering event, ‘which set development along a particular path’ (Pierson 2000, p. 263). As a result, the Australian government has up until recently witnessed increasing returns on its investment in elite sport development in terms of medals won (Stewart *et al.* 2004).

This investment and commitment was reaffirmed in 1993 when Australia’s bid to host the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney was successful. Hosting the Games meant that the government was not about to stray from its elite sport development path (Green and Collins 2008). In a period of great financial uncertainty following the Sydney Games (Sotiriadou 2009), the government decided to maintain its strong support for elite sports while reducing its funding for mass participation programs (Green and Houlihan 2008). It appears highly unlikely that these priorities will change in the near future (Green and Collins 2008). By funding elite sports the government anticipated the benefits of success would trickle down to the community (Sotiriadou *et al.* 2008). Hogan and Norton (2000) describe this as a top-down approach to sport development, which directs funding towards producing excellence in sport. The expectation is that by providing the optimum training facilities, coaching, scientific expertise and international competition, ‘there is a greater probability that world-class Australian performers will follow’ (Green 2007b, p. 942).

As Australia moved away from the euphoria of Sydney 2000, there was evidence to suggest that Australian sport would face critical times (Stewart *et al.* 2004). Indeed, despite some superb and courageous performances, Australia slipped on the Beijing Olympic scoreboard compared to Sydney and Athens, and dropped from fourth to sixth place overall (O'Brien 2008). This inability to maintain the momentum attracted the sport industry's attention. Also, the traditional sporting rivalry between Australia and the United Kingdom (UK) was highlighted in the media (Australian Olympic Committee 2009a). The AOC had expected the UK team excel in the London 2012 Olympic Games, but with 47 medals, including 19 gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, the UK has already re-emerged as a global sporting power (Courier Mail 2008). John Coates, the AOC president, remarked that the friendly rivalry between the two countries is a fundamental indicator of how Australians view the success of the nation both on and off the sporting field. Most importantly, the UK posed an immediate threat to Australia's ongoing success and the UK's sport system and policy practices presented a direct and relevant benchmark (Australian Olympic Committee 2009a).

Clearly, sport in Australia has earned itself a spot in the public policy arena and fears of being left behind on a global stage triggered attention. That attention was articulated four days after the Beijing Games closing ceremony, on August 28, when the Minister for Sport Kate Ellis announced the formation of the Panel. This indicated that Australian policy makers were concerned with worsening performances at the elite level, particularly at global mega-events such as the Olympic Games. Hence, coming sixth at the Beijing Games and ranking lower than the UK in the medal tally represents for Australia an event of national significance, important enough to trigger a sport policy review and evaluation by the government.

The measures of Australian elite sport success

Australian national sporting organisations (NSOs) receive government funding from the ASC for elite sports based on the number of medals won at benchmark events and for community sports based on the number of registered participants they have (Stewart *et al.* 2004). In addition, the government, through the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), monitors trends in sport participation. For instance, while the total number of people aged 15 years and over who participated in sport and physical recreation increased from 10.5 million in 2005–06 to 11.1 million in 2009–10, the total participation rate fell from 66 per cent to 64 per cent. The decrease was largely driven by a fall in female participation, from 66 per cent to 63 per cent. A significant decrease in participation was also reported by persons aged 25–34. Participation in this age group fell from 75 per cent in 2005–06 to 69 per cent in 2009–10 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010).

While setting up a database listing the numbers of people who are members of sporting organisations and establishing participation trends is a seemingly straightforward process, the measures of elite success are more elaborate than medal counts and have attracted substantial research focus. That is essentially because there are various methods of measuring performance and elite success. De Bosscher *et al.* (2008) present four measures of success: (a) medal table ranking (b) total medals won (c) the points system and (d) market share. They discuss the relative merits these measures as indicators of absolute and relative success. They maintain that the table rankings and the medals won are limited indicators of success because they do not take into account the relative value of medals. They argue that the points system (three points for gold medal, two points for silver, and one point for bronze) which ‘converts relative performance to absolute performance and takes into account the totality of

achievement' (p. 50) is a method that takes into consideration the relative value of medals. According to De Bosscher *et al.* (2003), an even more accurate measure of success is market share. A team's market share is its percentage share of all the points available to all teams in the Games.

These indicators measure a country's absolute success (De Bosscher *et al.* 2007) and carry little information on how successful or efficient countries 'really' are in allocating their resources (De Bosscher *et al.* 2003). Information about 'real' success can only be given by indicators of relative success, where relative success is defined as 'absolute success controlling for exogenous macro-influences' (De Bosscher *et al.* 2007, p. 6). These indicators take into account macro-economic factors including the importance of wealth and population as determinants of success as well as the area, the degree of urbanisation, religion, and political system of each country. Last, alternative measures of performance may include the total number of athletes in a team; the number of athletes from a country who qualify for championships; the number who qualify to contest the final of an event; and the number who post 'seasonal' best performances (De Bosscher *et al.* 2008).

Green and Oakley (2001) used macro-economic factors to chart various countries' performances. In their study, Australia demonstrated the most notable sustained improvement in terms of efficiency relative to resources. However, based on the discussion on measures of absolute success, there is no evidence to suggest Australia is using a points system or market share system as a success indicator. Around the same time that the results of the Green and Oakley (2001) study were published, the government's *Backing Australia's Sporting Ability* (BASA) (Commonwealth of Australia 2001) strategy was announced. This strategy aimed at

building on the success already achieved, so the high standard of performance achieved by Australian athletes could continue throughout the next decade. This strategy was a significant commitment to the development of elite sport and to the use of more measurable policy outcomes. Nonetheless, existing measures of success in the national high performance plans of most sports still include medals won at benchmark events (Australian Olympic Committee 2009a). Invariably this measure is ineffective because a nation's ranking will always vary depending on other nations' performances.

The commitment to elite sport

Since the Seoul Olympic Games in 1988 Australia has been investing in high performance sport every four years in quadrennials that coincide with the Summer Olympic Games and electoral cycles. By contrast, the attempts to improve grassroots participation usually involve a long-term commitment that is beyond the term of a single government. Current and historical funding allocations demonstrate that the Australian federal government has over the years steadily increased funding for high performance sports (Australian Olympic Committee 2009a). In May 2011, the Gillard government announced its 2011–2012 budget for sport, providing a total of \$324.8 million over four years to support the full spectrum of sport from grassroots (\$128m) to elite competition (\$171.1m) (Australian Sports Commission 2011b). This inequitable funding which favours high performance sport over mass participation represents another discrepancy that has generated substantial debate within Australian political circles and the public domain.

A common argument used by governments to partially justify directing their funding towards the elite end of sport development is the so-called ‘demonstration effect’ (Weed *et al.* 2008). Also known as the ‘trickle-down’ effect, this term refers to the claim that funding at the top end of sports, and consequent elite success, may result in increases in mass participation numbers. The demonstration effect is used as a rationale for funding elite sport, and more recently, the absence of an increase in grassroots participation has been cited as evidence of the failure of programs that fund high-performance sport (Crawford 2009). However, the assertion that the trickle-down effect works in the area of sport has never been proven in a systematic way (Hogan and Norton 2000). Further to this, the AOC declared that there was a lack of direct evidence for a correlation between success at the elite level and increases in grassroots participation (Australian Olympic Committee 2009b). The AOC explains that participation is not increasing in percentage terms as a result of Olympic success and that ‘[w]hile there is anecdotal evidence which establishes linkages between Olympic (and other international) success and spikes in participation numbers, participation numbers are not themselves an appropriate measure of the success of a high performance plan’ (Australian Olympic Committee 2009b, p. 7). Hence, the absence of a ‘demonstration effect’ is no basis for questioning the success of a high performance program. Furthermore, the notion that a broad base of participation is a prerequisite for international sporting success is also unproven (De Bosscher *et al.* 2006).

It is clear then that the demonstration effect is unproven and that there is no proven connection between mass participation numbers and elite success. It is therefore surprising, given Australia’s systematic and strategic investment in high performance sport those simplistic and inaccurate measures of success are still used. UK sport, on the other hand, has developed a World Sporting Index to obtain a continuous, regularly updatable measure of

success for 60 sports (De Bosscher *et al.* 2008). In the absence of more sophisticated methods of measuring Australian elite success, the decrease in medals at the Beijing Olympic Games was used as the sole indicator of an alleged drop in Australia's elite performances.

The decision to prioritise elite athlete development in the 1980s, the establishment of the AIS and ASC, the bidding for and hosting of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, and the continued high levels of funding for elite sport are clear indicators of Australia's chosen sport policy path over the past 30 years and they also indicate this is an example of path dependency (Green and Houlihan 2008, Stewart *et al.* 2004). As social and political actors 'make commitments based on existing institutions and policies, their cost of exit from established arrangements generally rises dramatically' (Pierson 2000, p. 259). Turning away from the chosen path or switching from the path of elite athlete development could involve high 'political costs'. Green and Collins (2008) suggested that notwithstanding government rhetoric around extra funding for mass participation programs, and despite widespread concern about rising obesity levels in the population, the Australian government has been unable or unwilling to change its sport funding policy. This is probably because the political cost of reducing support for elite development would be too great for this to be a viable path to take (Stewart *et al.* 2004).

Green and Houlihan (2008) argued that the implementation of policy relies on path-dependent relationships. These relationships are influenced by the processes of 'policy learning', 'lesson-drawing', and 'policy transfer'. This cluster of related concepts has featured prominently in much recent analysis of policy change. Policy change is the result of policy learning and it is generally accepted that there are three levels of policy change (Hall

1986). First-level changes are alterations to the intensity or scale of an existing policy, such as an increase in an existing funding stream for elite athlete development. Second-level changes are those that introduce new policy in order to achieve existing objectives – for example, the introduction of the Olympic Athlete Program in the lead-up to the Sydney 2000 Games to support elite athletes. Finally, third-level changes are those that involve a change in policy goals. An example would be a decision to support community sport as opposed to elite athlete development.

The need to learn from abroad arises in times of ‘crisis’, such as poor performance at an Olympic Games (Green and Houlihan 2008). Over the last 10 years, countries have borrowed ideas from Australia more than from anywhere else (Green 2007a). This borrowing of ideas implies that many countries are making efforts to ‘benchmark’ and compare policies, processes and performances and that many countries want to excel on the world stage. Learning from the experience of others results in improvements that make it possible to do things better, faster, and cheaper. By monitoring the actions of others, countries are able to develop plans on how to make improvements or adapt specific best practices, with the aim of increasing some aspect of performance. The UK’s recent increase in expenditure on Olympic and Paralympic sports, and the resulting improvements in performances make the UK sport system a direct and relevant benchmark for the AOC and the Australian Paralympic Committee (APC). This interest in the UK’s success is driven by friendly rivalry and is exemplified in the AOC/APC 2012–2016 High Performance Plan in which the AOC/APC compare Australia’s performances to those of the UK in terms of gold medals and total medals won, with projections for 2012 (Australian Olympic Committee 2009a).

Studies on the development of elite sport systems (e.g. De Bosscher *et al.* 2009, Digel *et al.* 2006, Houlihan and Green 2008, Oakley and Green 2001, Sotiriadou and Shilbury 2009) make the implicit assumption that countries learn from each other and that a process of policy transfer is in operation. Policy transfer is an action-oriented intentional activity and refers to the process by which lessons learnt are transferred and are incorporated into a different organisational infrastructures (Houlihan and Green 2008). Houlihan (1991) suggested that governments' prefer sport policy solutions that promise an immediate impact, are cheap and are simple to administer. It could therefore be concluded that lesson drawing is not about innovation. Rather, lesson drawing 'presupposes that even though a programme may be new to a government considering it, something very much like it will be in effect elsewhere' (Rose 1993, p. 24).

Political Stream

Political events and calls for sport policy review

After 11 consecutive years of Liberal–National Party government, the Labor government led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd came to power on 3 December 2007. The Rudd government came to an end on 24 June 2010, when Rudd stepped down from the leadership of the Australian Labor Party and was succeeded by Julia Gillard. Soon after the Rudd government came to power the sports portfolio had been moved from the Department of Industry, Science and Resources to the Department of Health and Ageing and on 6 May 2008, the Minister of Youth and Sport, Kate Ellis, released the first sport discussion paper of the Labor Party. The paper was titled *Australian Sport: Emerging Challenges, New Directions* and was a response to an increasingly competitive approach to sport in many countries (Commonwealth of Australia 2008).

The discussion paper indicated that a reform of the Australian sports system – both at the elite and community level – could not be put off any longer and that Australia needed to take a new direction in sport to meet emerging challenges and to maintain its status as one of the world's greatest sporting nations. The government believed there was a need for new direction in two key areas: the way elite sport is supported and the way sport is used to boost participation and physical activity to help build a healthier nation. In the first key area, the government planned to ensure Australia's continued success at the elite level by reforming the delivery of the elite sporting programs, minimising duplication and maximising the effectiveness of available resources (Commonwealth of Australia 2008).

A few months after the release of this discussion paper, in August 2008, Australia with a team of 167 athletes performed well at the Beijing Olympic Games but won 22 fewer medals than in Athens, ending 6th in the gold medal tally. On the 28th of August, just days after the closing ceremony in Beijing, Minister Ellis announced the appointment of the Panel and its terms of reference (TOR) to investigate reforms the Australian sporting system (Australian Government 2008b). This resulted in a 347-page document, titled *The Future of sport in Australia* (also known as the Crawford Report and referred to in this paper as 'the Report'). This was the biggest review of Australian sport policy in more than a decade and it aimed at ensuring that Australia was prepared for the critical challenges facing sports at the elite and the community levels (Australian Government 2009, Crawford 2009).

The aspects of elite sport policy that required attention were reflected in two of the five TORs: 1. *Ensure Australia's continued elite sporting success* and 3. *Strengthen the path from*

junior sport to grassroots community sport right through to elite and professional sport (Crawford 2009, pp. 151-153). David Crawford, a highly-regarded businessman, was appointed as the chair of the five-member panel which comprised leading businessmen, board members sports organisations and a senior advisor. The Panel conducted two consultation processes: the Elite Sport Consultations and the Community Sport Consultations. As the focus on this paper is on elite sport, only the results from the Elite Sport Consultations are presented. In that consultation process, the Panel held discussions on issues relating to elite sport in Australia with 52 key sport stakeholders including peak sporting organisations, NSOs funded by the ASC, state and territory Ministers of Sport and Recreation (and their departments), institutes and academies of sport, and Commonwealth government sport agencies. Additionally, the Panel called in the national media for public submissions and received 96 (Crawford 2009).

Policy stream

The Crawford Report

On 17 November 2009, the Panel released the Report. The submissions and consultations revealed that the Olympic medal count was used as a means of measuring and defining success, and that the Australian sport system lacked an appropriate definition of sporting success. This ultimately inhibits an evidenced-based approach to the development of sports policies and strategies. Moreover, the absence of a definition of sporting success had led to a failure to collect meaningful data about the quality of Australia's sport and recreation participation. The Report made a strong case not only for the need to decide how to measure success but also to include grassroots sports and the broader concepts of recreation and physical activity in that measure. The Report argued that '[w]hen determining our national

sporting statement of success, elite performance in non-Olympic sports and the general health and fitness of Australians need also to be considered' (Crawford 2009, p. 6). Underpinning these aspirations and targets must be a plan

to broaden all sports participation base, expand the pools of talent in our preferred participation sports and appropriately invest in elite pathways and athlete support. Measurable targets should be agreed with the states and territories and NSOs for community participation and social inclusion (Crawford 2009, p. 9).

The Panel questioned the funding imbalance between Olympic and non-Olympic sports with Olympic sports benefiting substantially more than sports which, although not included in the Olympics, have widespread popularity. The Report called on the government to re-assess its funding priorities: 'The panel supports the setting of ambitious targets for Australia's elite sporting success. However, a re-assessment of funding priorities in light of policy objectives is now timely' (Crawford 2009, pp. 6–7). Some NSOs, the AOC and the APC have put together a case for an additional \$109 million per year on average for ten years on the basis that this is required to maintain Australia's position as a 'Top Five' medal count nation. In response to this, the Panel expressed doubts that this is where the next \$100 million per annum for sport should be spent and commented that considering the high levels of funding required for winning Olympic and Commonwealth games medals, it is vital that Australia's medal targets become more realistic.

The Report rejected the AOC/APC's call for an extra \$100 million a year for elite sport and argued that funding should be directed more towards mainstream sports that reflect Australia's character, such as surfing, golf, and cricket. This sparked a disgruntled retort from John Coates', president of the AOC. Alarmed by the Report's recommendations and under the threat of losing funding, Coates' response was swift. He publicly stated that this was an

insult to the sports that have given Australia international credibility and rejected the assertion that Olympic sports should be self-funded (Wilkins 2009).

A common view expressed to the Panel—even by many NSOs—was that:

elite performance ultimately depends on the depth of participation and this area has been badly underfunded ... If more money is to be injected into the system then we must give serious consideration to where that money is spent. If we are truly interested in a preventative health agenda through sport, then much of it may be better spent on lifetime participants than almost all on a small group of elite athletes who will perform at that level for just a few years (Crawford 2009, p. 8).

The Panel questioned the governments' top-down approach to sport development as it could find no evidence that high profile sporting events have a material influence on sports participation and advocated a more inclusive approach, one that takes into account the influences of a bottom-up approach to sport development.

Crawford reported on the complexity and inefficiency of the Australian sport system due to its three-tier government structure and 'its various arms' including sport and recreation, health, education, and other portfolios. Crawford identifies another dimension to Australia's cumbersome sport system: most NSOs have 'federal' structures consisting of several layers of governance and control, plus there is a plethora of many other players, including the AOC, private providers, universities and schools. In particular, Crawford questions the relevance of the ASC functions in light of the changing circumstances and expectations of sport: 'Whilst its vision for the nation to be recognised as a world leader in developing high performance and community sport is admirable ... it is time to reconsider the primary role and structure of the ASC' (Crawford 2009, p.11). The Panel was explicit in finding that the ASC engages in activities that create conflict, or have the potential to create conflict, and recommended that these activities should be removed from its operations. Specifically, and in relation to elite

sport, the Report recommended that the AIS should be separated from the ASC. The main reason behind this vital recommendation is the obvious conflict in its operations:

...the ASC 'owns' the AIS which has been increasingly viewed by the state and territory institutes and academies of sport (SIS and SAS) and private providers as a competitor. It comes into further conflict when the ASC negotiates the provision of government funding for the NSOs who are deciding whether or not to use the AIS (Crawford 2009, p. 9).

Finally, the ASC's role is defined as being responsible both elite and participation sport. However, that linkage between elite and mass participation is far from strong and the Panel believed it was important that policy and funding decisions should be made in ways that recognise that relationship:

The areas of elite and community sport are strongly related and the link needs to be reflected at the policy and strategic level. There is an obvious link between the size of the participation base and the flow of talented athletes to the elite end (Crawford 2009, p. 14).

The Panel's key recommendation was for the AIS to be separated from the ASC and then to be merged with the state institutes of sport (SIS) and state academies of sport (SAS) into a single body to form the Australian Institutes of Sport (AIsS):

This organisation will have its own separate governing board and a charter to deliver high-performance outcomes. This arrangement should ensure a national approach, eliminating the current issues around co-ordination, co-operation and competition (Crawford 2009, p. 16).

The Crawford Report stated that the current structure is 'second-best' because collaboration is voluntary and never guaranteed:

Even with reasonable collaboration, when agreeing on their high performance plans, the NSOs still have to deal with each of the AIS and the various SIS and SAS as separate entities with differing objectives, which can be time consuming, expensive and frustrating (p. 16).

Criticism was directed towards the AIS itself too as it takes elite athletes from club environments and often replicates the states and territories work. The report recommended that the AIS adopt a new approach built around a greater clarity of role and efficiency. The most significant recommendation was ‘for the national programs to be funded and managed by the Australian government and state and territory programs to be managed by state and territory governments’ (p. 17). Whilst the Panel accepted that these recommendations would be difficult to achieve, it argued that ‘the time has come to acknowledge that the current complex and competitive system is one of the greatest inefficiencies in delivering elite success on the world stage’ (p. 17). Furthermore,

combining the institutes would relieve competitive tensions in the elite network and the need for NSOs to shop their programs around the AIS and the SIS and the SAS. The institutes need to be one national body with state and territory located branches funded entirely by the Australian Government (p. 18).

The government response and policy direction

The Rudd government formally responded to the Report on 11 May 2010 with a sport policy paper (‘the Paper’) entitled *Australian sport: the pathway to success*. In the Paper, the government recognised that over the past decade, report after report had been ‘left on the shelf gathering dust’, and that Australia is ‘in danger of losing the momentum created in the lead up to and during the 2000 Sydney Olympic and Paralympic Games’ (Commonwealth of Australia 2010a, p. 1). Australia’s innovative systems and practices have not kept pace with competing nations, and in order to ‘regain our competitive edge we need to do things differently. We need to place a strategic focus on collaboration, reform and investment across the entire sporting pathway – from the grassroots up’ (p. 1). The government agreed that its policies so far have focused on delivering high performance success on the international stage through a top-down approach which has served Australia well. However, the Paper acknowledged that new challenges both on and off the sporting field highlighted the need for

urgent change. Therefore, the government argued, a new whole-of-sport approach was essential to increase the numbers of Australians participating in sport, to strengthen sporting pathways, and to ensure Australia continues to excel in international competition (Commonwealth of Australia 2010a). Fundamental to this new approach was to move away from:

the divisive community versus elite sport debates of the past and developing a collaborative, efficient and integrated national sports system focused both on growing participation for the benefit of our community as well as the high performance system (Commonwealth of Australia 2010a, p. 1).

Hence, the Paper argued that the way forward was to boost funding to both community and high performance sport, and also for the first time, to invest in the development pathway, the vital link that connects grassroots and high performance sport (Commonwealth of Australia 2010a, p. 1). The Paper was backed by \$195.2 million in new funding – the biggest funding injection to sport in Australia’s history (Australian Government 2010). As part of their new funding arrangements with the ASC, NSOs would need to focus on participation outcomes, development pathways and domestic competition opportunities. In relation to elite sport, the agenda included greater funding support for high performance athletes, for their competitions and for the retention of their coaches. There was to be a greater focus on the European Training Centre to maximise the existing investment of \$11million; a boost in research and innovation; and reforms of Australia’s high performance delivery system.

In view of this direction, the Commonwealth and state and territory Ministers for Sport and Recreation unanimously endorsed two highly significant developments in Australian sport: (a) the first National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework (NSARPF) (‘the Framework’), and (b) a proposed National Institute System Intergovernmental Agreement (NISIA) (‘the Agreement’) to guide high performance sport (Australian Sports Commission

2011a). The Framework would define the roles and responsibilities of each level of government, provide governments with the basis for clear alignment and cooperation, and guide the future development of policies, strategies and programs to deliver benefits to all Australians through sport, from grassroots participation through to national and international success. While the Framework provides whole-of-sport guidelines, the proposed Agreement will specifically focus on high performance sport delivered through the national institute system (i.e. the Australian Institute of Sport in collaboration with the state and territory institutes and academies of sport). More specifically, the Agreement will articulate measures of success; define the responsibilities of governments and the leadership role of the AIS in the national institute system; and guide the establishment and use of national priorities to develop, monitor, and review high performance plans (Australian Sports Commission 2011a).

The ASC will review and monitor the delivery of high performance plans through the 'Pathway to Podium' program. This process involves the ASC working with NSOs, the AIS, and the SIS and SAS where applicable, to monitor progress of the sport against key indicators, to identify and resolve issues, and to share information and best practice in relation to the effective operation of high performance programs. This, in turn, supports NSOs and other agencies to deliver the best quality programs and services to support their elite athletes (Commonwealth of Australia 2010b). Accordingly, the Agreement will ensure that the National Institutes of Sport and the NSOs work hand-in-hand to achieve common national goals as identified in the Framework. As a final act, it is expected that in January 2012 the Commonwealth and state ministers will take the Framework and the Agreement back to be passed through their respective cabinets before a formal launch of both documents.

The Paper was backed by the Rudd government's willingness to boost the number of Australians participating in sport and drive Australia's continued sporting success through the delivery of \$324.8 million in ongoing funding. Six weeks after the release of the *Australian sport: the pathway to success* paper, Julia Gillard became prime minister and in September 2010 the Hon Mark Arbib replaced Kate Ellis as Minister for Sport. On 10 May 2011, one year after the introduction of this major sport reform package, the Gillard government in its first budget honoured the promise of more than \$300 million to support the full spectrum of sport from the grass roots to elite competition (Australian Sports Commission 2011b). Annual reports from the ASC show a decrease in the percentage of total sports funding allocated to community sport (from 24 per cent in 2008–2009 to 21 per cent in 2009–2010) (Australian Sports Commission 2009, 2010). In his commentary on the budget, Acting CEO of the ASC, Professor Peter Fricker was simply pleased the first wave of funding was already flowing directly to all spectrums of sport, community and elite (Australian Sports Commission 2011c).

Discussion and tentative policy ramifications

The main ideas that the new policy direction puts forward for Australian sport are: (a) the whole-of-sport agenda that sees a change from a traditionally top-down to a bottom-up approach in developing sport, and (b) the strengthening of the ASC's role as the industry leader with the task of encouraging further alignment and coordination of high performance sport through the Agreement.

The first policy development represents a new direction that requires a change in the approach to developing sport and the strengthening of pathways recognised as the necessary links between the two ends of the participation continuum – mass participation sport and elite

sport. The realisation that grassroots development was in need of greater attention is not a new concern for Australian policy makers. According to the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (Department of Industry, Science and Resources 2001) the four-year plan announced in 2001 pointed to a slight shift towards participation programs with the ultimate aim of increasing the pool of elite athletes. Consequently, the plan saw participation as a means of increasing the pool of talented athletes and not as an end in itself. The new whole-of-sport agenda is epitomised by the creation and further strengthening of pathways that link the two ends of the participation continuum for the benefit of sport as a whole.

The whole-of-sport approach is an action-oriented path that symbolises active policy transfer and is a second-level policy change (i.e. it introduces a new policy in order to achieve existing objectives). The move to a whole-of-sport approach is suggestive of coercive, hence deliberate, policy transfer rather than voluntary lesson drawing. Typically, Labor government ideologies emphasise fairness, equal opportunity and achieving a more equitable distribution of wealth, income and status. Hence, this policy shift may represent an uncomplicated and easy-to-accept, easy-to-implement change of direction. Although change will not be instantaneous, this re-direction signifies a start to a longer-term shift in how the relationship between mass participation and elite sport is perceived. It is a direction that signals a symbiotic relationship between high performance and community sport instead of an adversarial one.

The second policy action (or inaction) concerns the roles and structure of the ASC and the AIS, the proposed Agreement and the boost in funding for sports. The ASC agreed to cooperate with the Agreement's call for a less adversarial relationship between mass participation and elite sport, but its response to the Panel's strong recommendation to

separate its activities from the AIS was much less cooperative. This arrangement would eliminate issues around coordination, cooperation, and competition, and most importantly, it would minimise the risk of the ASC engaging in activities that created conflict in its operations. However the ASC did not like this plan. The government heeded the ASC's objections and opted to reinforce the ASC's position as a system leader with the task of progressing *Australian Sport: The Pathway to Success*.

The ASC promised to better align its high performance program, build system cohesion with the help of state departments, and improve coordination of program delivery and collaboration between the AIS and the SIS and the SAS. The argument put forward by the ASC was that a national partnership approach between the AIS, the SIS and the SAS, with shared investment, influence and accountability, would result in a more cohesive and collaborative system. Under this new arrangement the AIS retained its close ties with the ASC and is guided by the ASC's planning and system leadership. Even though the states and territories share the goal of maximising the success of Australian athletes on the international stage with the Australian government, actions have often been determined on the basis of jurisdictional priorities rather than by the desire to further this goal (Commonwealth of Australia 2010a). Hence, it is highly anticipated that the new national approach will deliver a more aligned and effective sport system that sees the institutes and academies as partners and not just providers. The hierarchy of sporting organisations, the relationship between them and the way federal and state government assistance links with the sporting organisations all combine to define the Australian sport policy space (Webb *et al.* 1990). Securing strong NSO–state sporting organisation alignment, particularly around NSO strategic plans, is likely to change that space as it is likely to influence sports governance, culture and relationships. It

is also likely that the ASC will strengthen performance review and accountability requirements for funding as a part of the 'new world' (Commonwealth of Australia 2010a).

What is worth noting is that the duplication of services and the issues around the program delivery and resources were already identified in the government's discussion paper (*Australian sport: Emerging challenges, New directions*) released in May 2008 (see results section), well before the findings of the Crawford Report. Given that the government recognised that high performance sport has evolved and that it has become more convoluted and competitive, it remains to be seen whether this direction is going to be successful in the long term. What is certain is the clear need for stronger relationships, both between organisations and within them. The need for this strengthening of relationships was identified long before the Crawford Report (Sotiriadou 2009).

The government's desire for increased participation and sustained success on the world stage has resulted in overall funding for sport being boosted by \$325 million to \$1.2 billion (Lewis 2010). Increasing the funding for elite sport is a first-level change and allows sports to move forward and plan with confidence. If NSOs have a more secure platform to grow their capacity and sustainability, and if they are able to work in closer collaboration with SSOs and institutes of sport, they may increase their organisational capacity to deliver commonly agreed goals.

The increase in elite funding and the resistance to modifying the ASC structure are clear indicators of Australia's choice to continue the policy path it has chosen over the past 30

years (Green and Houlihan 2008, Stewart *et al.* 2004). This strongly suggests that path dependency is at work, due to the high political costs associated with second- or third-level changes of policy direction (Levi 1997, Pierson 2000). This finding of the study concurs with the prediction made by Green and Collins (2008) that major changes to elite sport policy in Australia are highly unlikely in the near future. In addition, the direct imposition of policy transfer from the federal to the state governments and the recognition of the ASC's role in working more closely with other government departments, may be evidence of what Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) refer to as 'direct coercive transfer' when one government forces another to adopt a policy.

Hoye and Nicholson (2009) predicted that Australia's performances at the 2008 Beijing Games have the potential to entrench current policy. Have recent events in Beijing reinforced the pre-existing elite sport policy in Australia? It would certainly appear so. Australian sport was given the opportunity to make decisive policy improvements and that failure to make the necessary changes confirms that the general direction of sport policy is determined by political expediency (Bramham 2001). Has Australia learned from its failures and from its past, and have the lessons learnt been translated into decisive action? It may be too soon to say, given that policy learning is not necessarily connected to policy change (Green 2007a). Australia is at the beginnings of a new collaborative planning process which will require agility, trust and a tolerance for ambiguity (Commonwealth of Australia 2010a).

Even though the road map for planning and funding high performance sport has been established, questions still remain: How should international success be defined? How should membership of sporting organisations and current participation levels be measured? How is

the funding imbalance between Olympic sports and popular non-Olympic sports going to be resolved? Have the medal targets been re-assessed? As a step forward, the Framework and the upcoming Agreement are a significant development and they will form the basis for continued collaborative work, including further clarification of the role of each layer of Australian sport. The time frame may be too short for these changes to have a significant effect on Australia's performances at the London 2012 Olympic Games. Yet it is probable that Australia will reappraise its direction after the London Games and, subject to athletic performances, shape a new national strategy.

Conclusions

Houlihan *et al.* (2009) argued that in order to provide a more adequate understanding of sport in contemporary society 'a more explicit and theoretically informed understanding of the process of sport policy-making and the role and significance of government and state agencies' (p. 1) is required. This study is an attempt to stimulate critical reflection on the nature and impact of government intervention in sport by using the MS model for interpretive policy analysis.

Usually government policy works in a rather simple way: a problem, a policy, a solution. For instance, a recurring problem in Australia is the high number of child deaths caused by drowning (Royal Life Saving Society – Australia 2010). Parents, governments, water safety agencies and charities must take action to prevent these deaths. The Royal Life Saving Society has called for a number of steps to be taken to decrease the number of child drowning deaths. The most recent solution to this problem was to form and implement a national 'Swim and Survive' program (Royal Life Saving Society – Australia 2010). This involved the creation of systems and structures to deliver this program across Australia. As such, policy

reaction is commonly studied in a descriptive way (Chalip 1991, 1995). The present study, however, adopted an analytical approach to explain elite sport policy formulation and direction. This was achieved by using the MS model, a framework for interpretive policy analysis that in the past has only been used or tested by Chalip (1995, 1996) in the area of sport policy. This study framed policy analysis in an inclusive and analytical way that was perhaps well suited considering the national significance of the issue under investigation. Hence, this study is an original attempt to apply the MS model to sports policy scholarship and sport policy decision making processes.

In summary, the MS model proved to be useful for understanding and analysing a policy issue, its origin, its nature and causes, and its management. In addition, it enabled an understanding of what drives policy decisions as well as what drives decisions to review policies, and who contributes to solving the problem, in what ways, and with what effects. These attributes make the MS model an essential tool for policy analysis in sport. The benefit of using MS is that it makes it possible to go beyond the mere description of sport policies and beyond merely narrative historical accounts of how those policies emerged. The application of methods from interpretive and critical policy analysis to the historical development of sports policies 'highlights interactions among dominant ideologies, legitimations, focusing events, problem definitions, and frames of reference. These, in turn, provide useful categories for cross-national comparisons of sport policies' (Chalip 1991, p. 249).

If sport policy analysts want to understand why some policy issues gain prominence over others, or why some strategies are pursued and not others, more attention should be paid to how the policy formulation process is organised (Sam and Jackson 2006). This study

attempted to complement other critical analyses of sport policy by showing how the policy concepts of path dependency, policy change, learning and transfer help explain the way a government views a situation contribute to the selection of issues, the channelling of debates, and the selection of alternatives.

Chalip (1991) maintained that policy learning needs to be put into perspective and context. In this study we used the Australian context before and after the 2008 Beijing Games and explored what Australia has 'learned' from these Games as well as from its past. Clearly, the Australian government's call for a review of the sport system and the subsequent Crawford Report can be largely considered to be a legacy of the Beijing Games. However, the impact of other factors of political significance on the request for policy reformation, such as the high levels of physical inactivity in the general population and the rising levels of obesity in Australia cannot be overlooked. Furthermore, improving our understanding of the impacts of the Olympic Games should not be restricted to the analysis of the economic, environmental, and tourism impacts on host cities. Rather, this study shows that the Olympic Games appear to have indirect yet significant other impacts on participating countries. More work is required in order to bring out current knowledge on the impact of Olympic Games on policy change.

Sam and Jackson (2006) claimed that for those involved in the management or administration of sport, task force reports such as the Crawford Report, are significant because 'they signal shifts in priorities that may eventuate in changes to the organizational environment' (p. 383). Although the Australian government does not seem to be willing to implement all of the Crawford Report recommendations outright, the political debate that the Australian policy review process gave rise to, and the extent of sport industry involvement it attracted, are

undoubtedly unprecedented. Thus, the government's decision to appoint a task force or inquiry to formulate sport policy, the process used, and the outcomes of that process, are all of concern to sport managers, administrators, and policy makers. This study concurs with Sam and Jackson (2006) who argue that there needs to be continued research in the area because task forces are frequently used as instruments in policy making, and significant reforms are often based on the unquestioned findings and recommendations of these bodies.

References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010. *4177.0 - Participation in sport and physical recreation, Australia, 2009-10* [online]. Available from: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Products/4177.0~200910~Main+Features~Comparison+over+time?OpenDocument> [Accessed 20 October 2011].
- Australian Government, 2008a. *New directions for Australian sport [Media release]* [online]. Available from: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr08-ke-ke012.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2008&mth=05> [Accessed 12 April 2011].
- Australian Government, 2008b. *Expert independent sport panel appointed [Media release]* [online]. Available from: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr08-ke-ke045.htm> [Accessed 12 April 2011].
- Australian Government, 2009. *Independent panel report maps bold vision for Australian sport [Media release]* [online]. Available from: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr09-ke-ke030.htm> [Accessed 12 April 2011].

Australian Government, 2010. *\$325 million boost to sport and getting more Australians active* [Media release] [online]. Available from:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/budget/publishing.nsf/Content/budget2010-smedia13.htm> [Accessed 12 April 2011].

Australian Olympic Committee, 2009a. *National high performance plan for Olympic and Paralympic sports in Australia*. St Leonards: Australian Olympic Committee Incorporated.

Australian Olympic Committee, 2009b. *The Australian Olympic Committee's (AOC'S) response to the Crawford report*. St Leonards: Australian Olympic Committee Incorporated.

Australian Sports Commission, 2009. *Annual report 2008-2009*. Canberra: Author.

Australian Sports Commission, 2010. *Annual report 2009-2010*. Canberra: Author.

Australian Sports Commission, 2011a. *Ministers endorse collaborative framework for Australian sport* [online]. Available from:
http://www.ausport.gov.au/news/asc_news/story_415974_ministers_for_sport_and_recreation_endorse_first-time_collaborative_framework_for_australian_sport [Accessed 14 March 2010].

Australian Sports Commission, 2011b. *Supporting Australian sport* [online]. Available from:
http://www.ausport.gov.au/news/releases/story_430936_supporting_australian_sport [Accessed 10 October 2011].

Australian Sports Commission, 2011c. *CEO Message: Sport budget 2011-2012* [online]. Available from:
http://www.ausport.gov.au/news/asc_news/story_430940_ceo_message_sport_budget_2011 [Accessed 10 October 2011].

Bloomfield, J., 1973. *The role, scope and development of recreation in Australia*. Canberra:

Department of Tourism and Recreation.

Bloomfield, J., 2003. *Australia's sporting success: The inside story*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd.

Booth, D., 1995. Sports policy in Australia: Right, just and rational. *Australian quarterly*, 67, 1-10.

Bramham, P., Hylton, K., Jackson, D. & Nesti, M., 2001. Introduction. In K. Hylton, P. Bramham, D. Jackson & M. Nesti (eds.) *Sport development: Policy, process and practice*. London: Routledge.

Chalip, L., 1991. Sport and the state: The case of the United States of America. In F. Landry, M. Landry & M. Yerles (eds.) *Sport: The Third Millennium*. Quebec: Les Presses De l'Universite Laval, 243-250.

Chalip, L., 1995. Policy analysis in sport management. *Journal of sport management*, 9, 1-13.

Chalip, L., 1996. Critical Policy Analysis: The Illustrative case of New Zealand sport policy development. *Journal of sport management*, 10, 310-324.

Cohen, M.D., March, J.G. & Olsen, J.P., 1972. A garbage-can model of organizational choice. *Administrative science quarterly*, 17, 1-25.

Coles, A., 1975. *Report of the Australian Sports Institute Group*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Commonwealth of Australia, 2001. *Backing Australia's sporting ability: A more active Australia*. Canberra: Author.

Commonwealth of Australia, 2008. *Australian sport: Emerging challenges, new directions*. Canberra: Author.

Commonwealth of Australia, 2010a. *Australian sport: The pathway to success*. Canberra: Author.

Commonwealth of Australia, 2010b. *Budget, portfolio budget statements 2010-11*. Canberra:

CanPrint Communications Pty, Ltd.

Courier Mail, 2008. *Fund sport before any Olympic Games bid* [online]. Available from:

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/opinion/fund-sport-before-any-games-bid/story-e6frerd6-1111117290913> [Accessed 6 April 2011].

Crawford, D., 2009. *The future of sport in Australia*. Canberra: Department of Health and Ageing, Commonwealth of Australia.

De Bosscher, V., Bingham, J., Shibli, S., Van Bottenburg, M. & De Knop, P., 2008. *The global Sporting Arms Race. An international comparative study on sports policy factors leading to international sporting success*. Aachen: Meyer & Meyer.

De Bosscher, V., De Knop, P. & Heyndels, B., 2003. Comparing relative sporting success among countries: Create equal opportunities in sport. *Journal of comparative physical education and sport*, 3, 109-120.

De Bosscher, V., De Knop, P. & Van Bottenburg, M., 2007. *Sports policy factors leading to international sporting success*. Brussels: VUBPRESS.

De Bosscher, V., De Knop, P. & Van Bottenburg, M., 2009. An analysis of homogeneity and heterogeneity of elite sports systems in six nations. *International journal of sports marketing & sponsorship*, 10, 111-131.

De Bosscher, V., De Knop, P., Van Bottenburg, M. & Shibli, S., 2006. A conceptual framework for analysing sports policy factors leading to international sporting success. *European sport management quarterly*, 6, 185-215.

Department of Industry, Science and Resources, 2001. *Game plan 2006: Sport and leisure industry strategic national plan*. Canberra: Sport and Tourism Division.

Digel, H., Burk, V. & Fahrner, M., 2006. *High-performance sport. An international comparison*. Weilheim/Teck: Brauer.

Dolowitz, D.P. & Marsh, D., 1996. Who learns what from whom? A review of the policy

- transfer literature. *Political studies*, 44, 343-357.
- Green, M., 2007a. Policy transfer, lesson drawing and perspectives on elite sport development systems. *International journal of sport management and marketing*, 2, 426-441.
- Green, M., 2007b. Olympic glory or grassroots development?: Sport policy priorities in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom, 1960 - 2006. *The international journal of the history of sport*, 24, 921-953.
- Green, M. & Collins, S., 2008. Policy, politics and path dependency: Sport development in Australia and Finland. *Sport management review*, 11, 225-251.
- Green, M. & Houlihan, B., 2005. *Elite sport development. Policy learning and political priorities*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Green, M. & Houlihan, B., 2008. Conclusion. In B. Houlihan & M. Green (eds.) *Comparative elite sport development: Systems, structures and public policy*. London: Butterworth-Heinemann, 272-293.
- Green, M. & Oakley, B., 2001. Elite sport development systems and playing to win: Uniformity and diversity in international approaches. *Leisure studies*, 20, 247-267.
- Hall, P.A., 1986. *Governing the economy: The politics of state intervention in Britain and France*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Henry, I., 2001. *The politics of leisure policy*, 2 ed. London: Palgrave.
- Hogan, K. & Norton, K., 2000. The 'price' of Olympic gold. *Journal of science and medicine in sport*, 3, 203-218.
- Houlihan, B., 1990. The politics of sport policy in Britain: The examples of football hooliganism and drug abuse. *Leisure studies*, 9, 55-69.
- Houlihan, B., 1991. *The government and politics of sport* London: Routledge.
- Houlihan, B., 2005. Public sector sport policy: Developing a framework for analysis.

International review for the sociology of sport, 40, 163-185.

Houlihan, B., Bloyce, D. & Smith, A., 2009. Developing the research agenda in sport policy.

International journal of sport policy, 1, 1-12.

Houlihan, B. & Green, M., 2008. Comparative elite sport development. In B. Houlihan & M. Green (eds.) *Comparative elite sport development: systems, structures and public policy*. London: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1-25.

Houlihan, B. & White, A., 2002. *The politics of sport development: Development of sport or development through sport?* London: Routledge.

Hoye, R. & Nicholson, M., 2009. Australia. *International journal of sport policy and politics*, 1, 229-240.

King, N., 2009. *Sport policy and governance: Local perspectives* Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Kingdon, J.W., 1984. *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies* Boston: Little, Brown.

Levi, M., 1997. A model, a method, and a map: Rational choice in comparative and historical analysis. In M.I. Lichbach & A.S. Zuckerman (eds.) *Comparative politics: Rationality, culture and structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 19-41.

Lewis, D., 2010. *FEWER fat people and more Olympic gold-medal glory are the aims of a big sports funding boost* [online]. Available from:

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=n5h&AN=SYD-5UE0X50291W1KNKX86QW&site=ehost-live> [Accessed 6 April 2011].

Linden, J., 2008. *Australia want more money to beat British in 2012* [online]. Thomson Reuters. Available from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/08/24/us-olympics-australia-idUSSYD14454520080824> [Accessed 6 April 2011].

Macintosh, D., 1991. Sport and state: The case of Canada. In F. Landry, M. Landry & M. Yerles (eds.) *Sport... The third millennium*. Sainte-Foy: Presses Université Laval, 269-

- Oakley, B. & Green, M., 2001. The production of Olympic champions: international perspectives on elite sport development system. *European journal for sport management*, 8, 83-105.
- O'brien, K., 2008. *Olympic report card: John Coates speaks with Kerry O'Brien* [online]. Available from: <http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2008/s2342865.htm> [Accessed 6 April 2011].
- Pierson, P., 2000. Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics. *American Political science review*, 94, 251-267.
- Rose, R., 1993. *Lesson drawing in public policy. A guide to learning across time and space*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House.
- Royal Life Saving Society - Australia, 2010. *The National Drowning Report 2010*. Broadway: Author.
- Sam, M.P. & Jackson, S.J., 2006. Developing national sport policy through consultation: The rules of engagement. *Journal of sport management*, 20, 366-386.
- Sotiriadou, K., 2009. The Australian sport system and its stakeholders: Development of cooperative relationships. *Sport in society*, 12, 842-860.
- Sotiriadou, K. & Shilbury, D., 2009. Australian elite athlete development: An organisational perspective. *Sport management review*, 12, 137-148.
- Sotiriadou, K., Shilbury, D. & Quick, S., 2008. The attraction, retention/transition, and nurturing process of sport development: Some Australian evidence. *Journal of sport management*, 22, 247-272.
- Stewart, B., Nicholson, M., Smith, A. & Westerbeek, H., 2004. *Australian sport: Better by design? The evolution of Australian sport policy*. New York: Routledge.
- Stout, K. E. & Stevens, B., 2000. The case of failed diversity rule: A Multiple Streams

analysis. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 22(4), 341-355.

Webb, P., Rowland, G. & Fasano, C., 1990. Development of sport policy and programs in sporting organisations: Theoretical and practical considerations. *The ACHPER national journal*, 129, 5-8.

Weed, M., Coren, E. & Fiore, J., 2008. *A systematic review of the evidence base for developing a physical activity, sport and health legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games*. Canterbury, UK: Canterbury Christ Church University.

Wei, F., Hong, F. & Zhouxiang, L., 2010. Chinese state sports policy: Pre- and post-Beijing 2008. *International journal of the history of sport*, 27, 2380-2402.

Wildavsky, A., 1979. *Speaking truth to power: The art and craft of policy analysis* Boston: Little Brown.

Wilkins, P., 2009. *Crawford report plays contentious tune* [online]. ABC News. Available from: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2009-11-18/crawford-report-plays-contentious-tune/1146534> [Accessed 10 October, 2011].