

Executive Summary

ACTSPORT has conducted a survey of its members to ascertain the current issues and position of sports tourism in the ACT. The survey had a response of around 45% of ACTSPORT members but does not include data from the Brumbies, Raiders or Capitals activities as they have been considered to be too complex for this data collection method. ACTSPORT did conduct one-on-one interviews with these organisations and has considered the information when summarising.

Taking the data from the survey ACTSPORT has made a conservative assumption based on an average spend of a participant at a sport tourism event of around \$250, this would indicate the ACTSPORT members involved in this survey alone have contributed over \$11.24 million to the ACT economy in the past 18 months. Key results ascertained from the survey include:

- There were 36 sports that held an event in the past 12 months which attracted participants and spectators from outside the ACT
- From those 36 sports a total of 491 separate events were conducted
- These events included more than 45,000+ participants
- 93.3% of events held were participation based
- 36.7% of participants stayed for 2-3 nights in Canberra and 26.7% for 4 or more nights
- 50% of respondents said that funding was a major challenge when holding an event, and
- 53.3% of events were at a regional level and 73.3% at a national level.

The Economic Impact Study carried out in 2004 confirmed that Sport in the ACT as an industry contributes over \$69 million annually to the Gross State Product, **Table 1** (Impact of Sport & Physical Recreation in the ACT, ACIL Tasman, 2004). Given these figures and others from the study ACTSPORT believes that the industry has a lot of potential and scope to expand its sports tourism involvement.

Main issues from ACTSPORT Membership

➤ Funding Time Frames

From the members that were surveyed 74.4% identified that funding was a major challenge in holding a sport tourism event. The majority of members surveyed and interviewed outlined that this was due to the time frame in which funding was allocated.

To bid for a sporting event administrations are required to put together supporting materials, plans and budgets up to 5 years in advance, with current tourism funding rounds being allocated on an annual basis. Feedback from our members indicates that when applying this late in the process much of their impact and planning to attract visitors is lost.

➤ Adequate Accommodation for Events

Sport and recreation users are unique visitors in that the primary purpose for attendance is participation in a given event. This usually creates a situation where these visitors require budget style, short stay accommodation. It has been outlined by our members that access to such accommodation inhibits their ability to bid for and host major national and even some international events.

The ACTSPORT members data shows that 91% of sport tourism events surveyed are participation based and that this becomes a direct administrative challenge for the associations. Also, the majority of these events are Junior focussed events meaning that the participants have a number of family and management resources attached to the event which has not been covered in the survey exacerbating the accommodation issue.

Conclusion

ACTSPORT has evidence that the sport and recreation industry plays a big part in the overall tourism landscape for the ACT. The issues put forward do have an effect on our members when deciding to plan and bid for events that have the potential to attract visitors to the territory.

Our members through the Events Assistance Program, have access to three levels of funding flagship, core and developing events and primarily these programs are sufficient. However, ACTSPORT believes that the reporting and funding time lines need to be reviewed and an opportunity needs to be created for the sports industry to access flexible funding time frames prior to an event in order to lock in with bid time-lines.

ACTSPORT is also actively advocating for an Industry Economic Study that can give new and follow up data to previous studies and with a focus on ascertaining the impact of sports tourism to be included. ACTSPORT also believes that an overall government long term plan for the sport and recreation industry, linked into a tourism plan, is required. This would better enable our members to build adequate facilities and attract more sport tourism style events to the territory.

APPENDIX 1

DRAFT Policy Position to the Minister

Below are extracts from the ACTSPORT policy document which is currently under consultation with business and members. The document is due to be released in May and is intended to guide ACTSPORT members and the community in understanding the challenges for the Sport and Recreation Industry.

INDUSTRY PLANNING

- Seek input from all sectors including sport, health, tourism, education, planning and infrastructure, transport, community sectors and adopt an integrated "whole of government" approach planning.

Policy Recommendation: Formulate a Strategic Plan for the ACT Governments activities in the Sport and Recreation Industry that considers an overall government plan

Policy Recommendation: Funding for an Economic Impact Study to look at the results of the 2004 study conducted by ACTSPORT and the Government in order to analyse trends over the past two decades which will assist in strategic targeting assistance to the sport and recreation industry

- Sport is a key driver for tourism in the ACT. With the demise of the Rally of Canberra, increased funding must be provided to expand other existing events and to attract or create new ones.
- At the same time the Government must introduce arrangements to assist associations to bid for events in the budget a number of years out from the event. This is necessary because the national and international competition to host major events is very competitive and associations need to be able to be given an appropriate level of commitment of support in the early stages of bidding.

Policy Recommendation: Increase Tourism Funding for Sporting and Recreation Events

- Research has shown that events bring significant economic benefit to Canberra, not to mention the building of social capital. The ability for the ACT to attract enough events to make a difference is limited by the amount of funding available for this cause. Furthermore, it is recognised that **sporting** events are a significant contributor to tourism.

Policy Recommendation: Support the creation of and funding for specific sporting events that can be realised as flagship events for Canberra.

APPENDIX 2

Table 1 Direct contribution to ACT output, wages and salaries and Gross State Product, 2000-01

	Income \$m	Wages and salaries \$m	Industry value added (GSP) \$m
Health and fitness centres and gymnasia	10.8	4.2	5.2
Other sports and physical recreation venues, grounds and facilities	12.9	2.5	2.9
Sports and physical recreation services administrative organisations	58.0	11.6	14.9
Sports and physical recreation clubs, teams and sports professionals	21.4	8.4	9.7
Sports and physical recreation support services ^a	109.9	29.2	36.4
Subtotal	212.9	55.9	69.1
Hospitality sports clubs	83.1	20.7	30.7
Sport and physical recreation goods retailing ^b	47.5	5.5	6.2
Total ^c	343.6	82.0	105.9

^a Support services include things like education and coaching services, fitness training and government agencies administering or supporting sport – for a full list of the services included in this section please refer to p.53 of this report.
^b These estimates do not include sport and physical recreation retailing undertaking in department stores and other stores which are not solely retailing sport and recreation related goods and equipment. ^c Data on employment in the ACT’s manufacturing and wholesale industries related to sport and physical recreation is not available.

Note: These estimates exclude certain income and value added associated with the Olympic events which were conducted in the ACT in 2000. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: ACIL Tasman estimates based on ABS catalogues and budget papers, annual reports and personal communications.