

A Comparison of Australia, Singapore & Hong Kong Sport policy 澳洲、新加坡及香港運動政策的比較

Patrick WC LAU

*Department of Physical Education,
Hong Kong Baptist University, HONG KONG*

Eric CH CHAN

*Master's Programme of Public Administration,
Hong Kong Baptist University, HONG KONG*

劉永松

香港浸會大學體育學系

陳志匡

香港浸會大學公共行政碩士課程



Abstract

The present study investigates the sport policy between Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong. The objective is to contrast current Hong Kong sport policy with Australia and Singapore through their respective sport administrative structures, allocation of funding to sport, elite and mass sport development. Finally, based upon the Australia and Singapore experiences, policy recommendations were made to provide references to the Hong Kong sport policy development in the next decade. The findings demonstrated that Australian and Singapore central sport agencies have worked closely with government departments, national sporting organizations and private sectors to deliver a wide range of sports to their citizens and elite training. Furthermore, based upon the Singapore experience, government's strategic blueprint and new visions for the future sport development is imperative to the success of sport culture. Finally, sport industry is playing a significant role in both elite and mass sport development. Other policy suggestions are made in the study based upon the lessons from Australia and Singapore.

KEYWORDS : sport system, mass sport participation, elite sport, sport promotion, sport culture

摘要

本文探討了澳洲、新加坡和香港的運動政策。目的是在運動管理系統、運動資金分配、競技運動與大眾運動參與等方面，分別將香港現行的運動政策與澳洲和新加坡的政策進行比較。最後藉著澳洲和新加坡的經驗，對香港未來十年的運動政策發展提出參考性的建議。研究發現澳洲和新加坡的主要運動管理機構都與政府部門、國家運動單項組織及私人機構緊密合作，為國民提供了多元化的運動項目選擇和競技訓練。而且，新加坡的經驗進一步顯示政府的長遠規劃和新思維對運動成功發展具決定性影響。最後，運動產業化對競技運動和大眾運動參與的發展都發揮了重要的作用。最後，文中亦基於澳洲和新加坡的經驗提出了其他政策建議。

關鍵字：運動系統、大眾運動參與、競技運動、運動項目推廣、運動文化

Introduction

Since 2000, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) has been responsible for the allocation of funding to sport development as well as coordinating the overall sport

policy. Within this 10-year time, Hong Kong Sport Development Board (HKSDB) was dissolved, Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) was privatized, sport review was conducted and the new structure of Sports Commission (SC) was established to advise the overall sport development

in Hong Kong. All these structural changes are critical to the mass sport participation and elite development of Hong Kong. In this paper, the current sport administrative system, mass sport participation and elite sport development of Australia and Singapore would be contrasted with Hong Kong. Australia was chosen because Australia has outstanding performance for the elite sport development and sport for all campaign respectively (ASC, 2009).

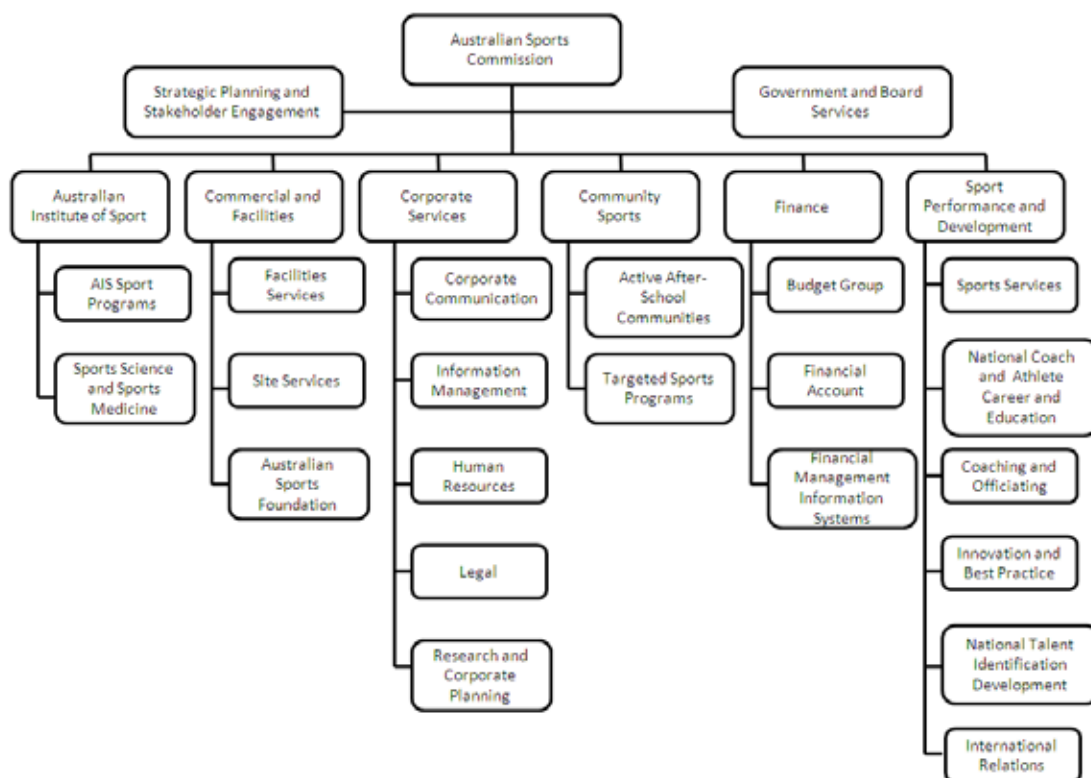
Singapore has a very similar situation with Hong Kong especially in population structure and economic status. She has been very successful in developing a wide range sports and recreational activities for their citizens. Development of sport industry is also one of the main streams in their targeted strategic approach. In this paper, sport administrative structures, the allocation of public funding to sport, elite and mass sport development would be investigated. The objective of the present study is to contrast current Hong Kong sport policy with Australia and Singapore. Finally, recommendations would be made to provide references to the sport policy of Hong Kong in the next decade.

Sport Policy in Australia

Sport administrative structure

In Australia, the government is committed to invest more efforts in promoting mass sport participation as well as elite sport (ASC, 2009). On behalf of the Australia Government, the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) allocated funding to individual national sport organizations (NSOs) to enhance the mass sport participation and develop elite sport (ASC, 2007a). The ASC has provided varies services including elite coaching, sport science, sport information, sport education, development of sports participation and funding program to NSOs (ASC, 2007b). The ASC consists of the Sport Performance and Development division, Community Sport division and Australia Institute of Sport (AIS), and other units (figure 1) to excel in both mass and elite sport development. The ASC works closely with a range of NSOs, local governments, schools and community sport organizations to promote sports.

Figure 1. The ASC organizational chart (source: ASC, 2009, p.8)



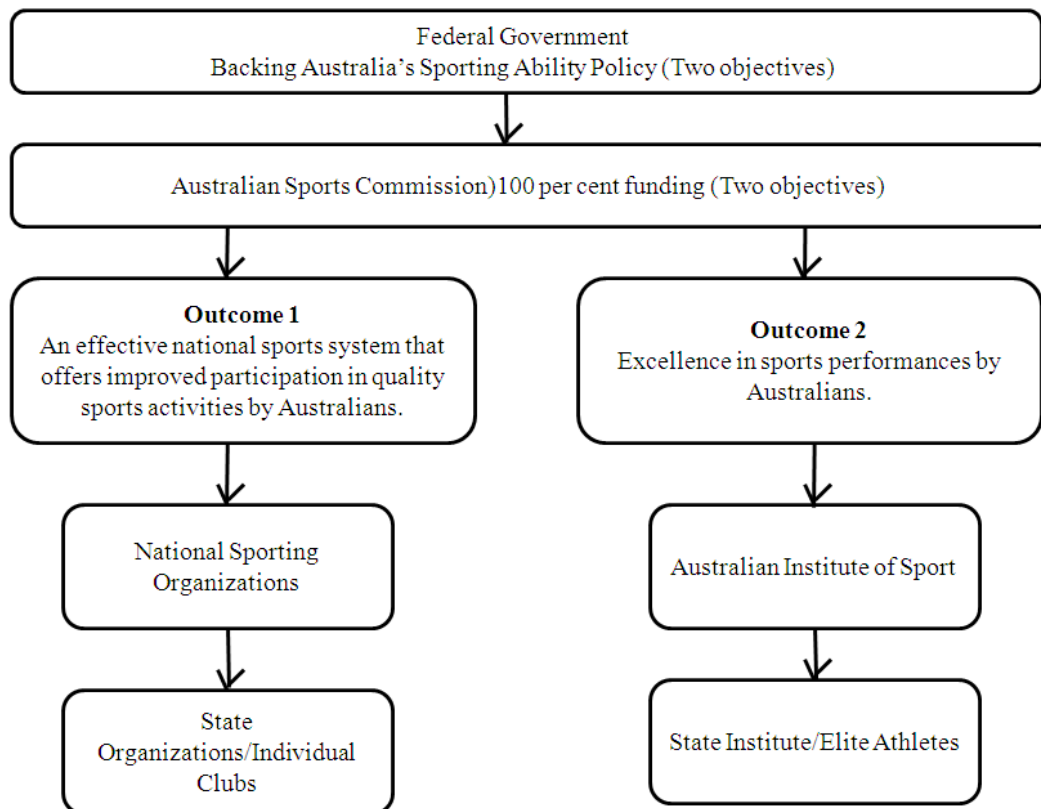
In June 1999, the Minister for Sport and Tourism was appointed to conduct a comprehensive report titled ‘Shaping Up – A Review of Common Wealth Involvement in Sport and Recreation in Australia’ for the ‘Sport 2000 Task Force’. Afterwards, the Australian Government published a policy document “Backing Australia’s Sporting Ability” (BASA) in April 2001. The policy was for the planning of sport development for the next 4 years in which the Federal Government committed additional AUS\$161.6 million to support Australian sport (ASC, 2001). Importantly, rather than focusing on the participation in unstructured physical activity, this policy focused more on the organized sport participation and emphasized on strengthening sport club system.

In order to improve the long-term development of organized sport participation, the Active After-School Communities (AASC) program was introduced in 2005. The AASC program is a channel for the children who love playing sport joining the local sport clubs. The AASC program aimed to provide an opportunity for the children to join physical activity in the community (ASC, 2007b). As of the above, sport organizations, sport clubs, local community organizations and private providers of sport programs involved in the AASC program have committed to deliver an after-school program with quality, safety and fun to the primary school children.

The allocation of public funding to sport

In Australia, the income of Australian Sports Commission is mainly come from the Treasury of Australia’s government. At the State level, the governments use their own funding to promote community sport and recreation. Figure 2 showed the BASA funding flowchart for the years 2003-2004.

Figure 2. BASA funding flowchart (2003-2004) (Source: Stewart et al., 2004, p.183)



In 2004/05 financial year, the Australian Government appropriation to the ASC was AUS\$145.794 million. “In addition, the ASC generated in the order of \$24.812 million in revenue from corporate sources such as sponsorship, hire of facilities and interest, from external sources” (ASC, 2005, p.79). The disbursement of funds across the ASC is depicted in Figure 3

In 2008/09, the Australian Government continued to support the development of elite athlete and community sport. An amount of AUS\$219.785 million was allocated to advance the sporting excellence and participation in community sports. The disbursement of funds across the ASC is depicted in Figure 4. The fund to community sport was increased 8% among the disbursement of funds. It showed that the clear direction of the Australia Sports Commission in participation of community sport, particularly in young people.

Figure 3. Disbursement of the Australian Government appropriation across the Australian Sports Commission, 2008–2009 (Source: ASC, 2005, p.80)

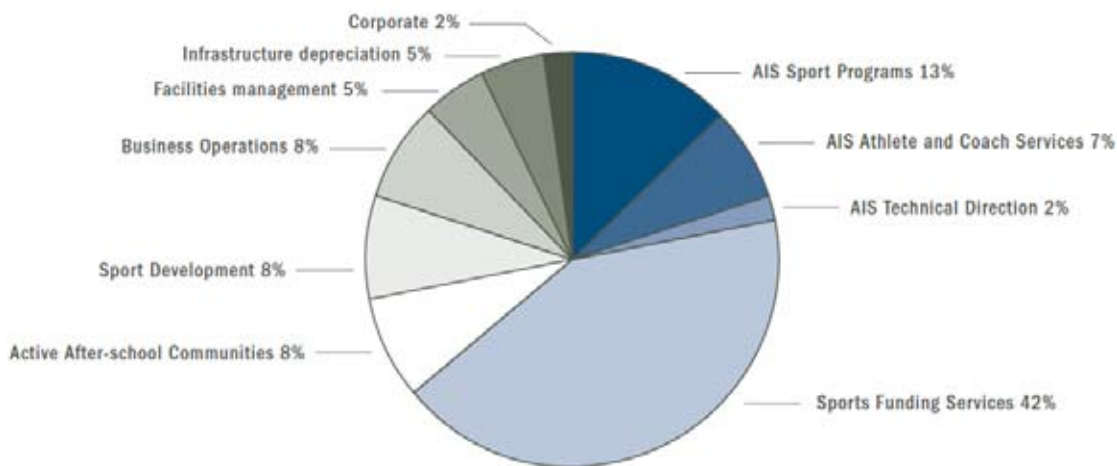
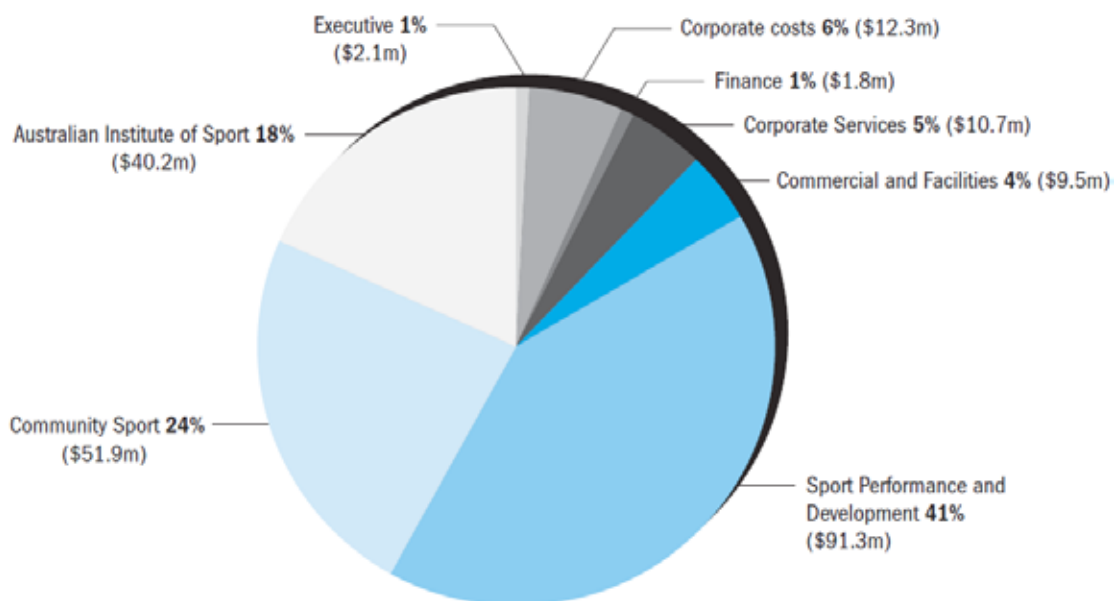


Figure 4. Disbursement of the Australian Government appropriation across the Australian Sports Commission, 2008–2009 (Source: ASC, 2009, p.83)



ASC considered shortcomings in the existing facilities. "In order to allow the AIS to deliver a world class sports education, new facilities were needed. According to the record, AIS's facility received an amount of AUS\$65.4 million over four years from the Government for facility improvements starting from 2003-2004" (ASC, 2003, p.348). Subsequently, the AIS Redevelopment Project was increased to AUS\$74.05 million due to depreciation. According to the annual report 2008/09, the AIS Redevelopment Project was almost completed. The new redeveloped facilities played an important role for preparing Australian athletes for competition in World Championships and Olympics.

Elite sport excellence

The AIS is Australia's premiere sports training institute. The AIS provides athletes with the access to expert coaches, world-class facilities, world-leading sport science sport medicine services, coach technical development, athlete career and education. The current BASA policy continues to support the elite athlete development. In the 2008/09 Commonwealth budget, AUS\$131.5million was allocated to improve the sporting excellence including the operation of the AIS. Elite development programs provide satellite sites around the nation and Canberra site. The satellite residential programs are not only held in Australia, but also in overseas. For instance, "Melbourne delivers the golf and tennis programs, Perth offers field hockey program, while the road cycling based in Italy" (Stewart et al., 2004). The AIS also supported 36 programs in 30 sports and offered scholarships to 644 athletes in 2008/09. The AIS has been playing a critical role in providing support for the elite performance program of NSOs. The NSO elite performance programs are supported by the ASC which provides funds for such competitive performance sport programs each year.

Mass sport participation

The Community Sport division of ASC is responsible for promoting and supporting sports participation at the community level. It works closely with NSOs to increase the sport participation at the community level including children, youth, indigenous Australians, disable, aging and women. In 2001, ASC set up new strategic directions to advance the existing sports policy. Under the Active Australia program, ASC provided significant support to attract more people of all ages to take part in grass-root sports in schools, clubs and community centers

(Australia's National Local Government Newspaper, 2001). Stewart et al. (2004) pointed out that "the Targeted Sports Participation Growth (TSPG) program is the major component of the 'fresh approach', and is the cornerstone of the ASC junior and grass-roots sport development agenda" (ASC, 2001). Currently, the TSPG program has been established by the ASC in partnership with 17 established sports: Australian football, baseball/softball, basketball, cricket, cycling, football, hockey, golf, gymnastics, lawn bowls, rugby league, rugby union, surf life saving, swimming, touch football and volleyball. Each of the targeted sports has a well developed infrastructure to enable the implementation of programs and to achieve significant growth in the number of all age participation in grassroots sport. Moreover, the ASC is seeking for a new way to establish partnerships between sport and business to improve the sustainability of participation growth.

According to the 2005-06 Multi-Purpose Household Survey (MPHS), almost 66% of the interviewee aged 15 or above participated in sport at least once within twelve months (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007). The report also revealed that about 4.7 million people participated in sport twice a week (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007). With a concerning number of activity participated, MPHS showed that over 50% of the participants only participated one sport activity. One fourth of the participants took part in two sports and only 18% of the participants took part in more than three or more sports (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007).

ASC has identified the importance of creating and maintaining sustainable partnerships with schools. They have established the Active After-school Communities program (AASC) in 2004 as a part of the former Government's initiative 'Building a Healthy, Active Australia' program. The target of the AASC program not only encouraged children to take part in mainstream sport, but also inspired their participation in other non-mainstream sport activities through local sport clubs, particularly primary school children.

The outcomes of AASC program showed that the children who participated in the AASC program are spending 2.9 hours per week on average in non-structured sport activities, which almost doubled the structured sport activity. Around 63 per cent of their parents would like to encourage their children to join sport clubs (ASC,

2009). It also indicated that almost two-thirds of the participating children would like to join a new sporting club or organization. Moreover, a number of initiatives were implemented to support the transition of children into sport clubs at state and local level, including a campaign focusing on promoting club growth and benefits. Upon the above new innovative programs, it clearly showed that ASC has given the community sport with a high priority in the Australian sport system.

Sport Policy in Singapore

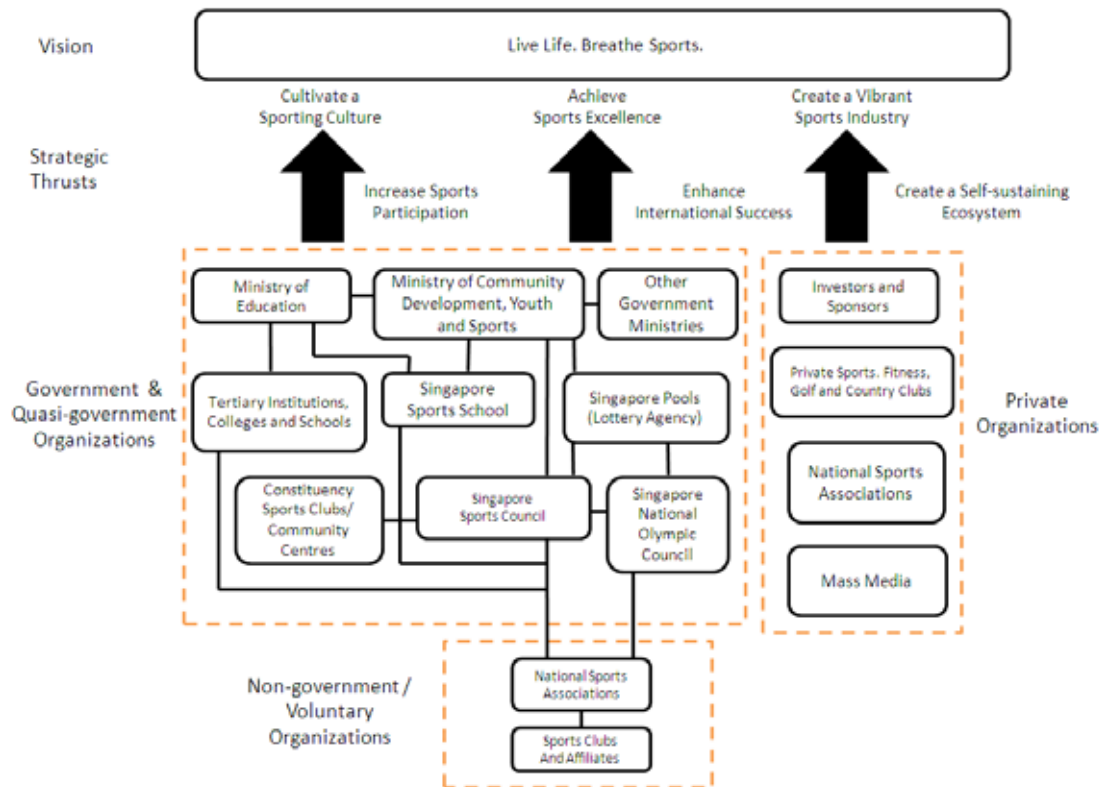
Sport administrative structure

The Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) supervise all issues related to sports in Singapore. Under the purview of MCYS, Singapore Sports Council (SSC) is the central agency to deliver sport programs. By creating a sport culture, achieving elite

sport and developing a sport industry, SSC produces sport champions and provides an enjoyable sport experience for Singaporeans (SSC, 2010c).

The Sporting Culture Committee (SCC) was formed in September 2006 by the Singapore government and focused on improving Singapore sport culture in the next 10 to 15 years. The triple engines of the growth in sport policy are: mass sport participation, elite excellence and sport industrialization, and they have continued to roar with achievement (MCYS, 2008, p.3). The Sporting Culture Committee reviewed the existing policy and outcomes in 2008. The committee made 23 recommendations to vibrant and self-sustaining sport culture in Singapore. It also produced an ambitious blueprint for Singapore’s sport future with new vision: “Live Life, Breathe Sports” and kept on track with the existing strategy for developing the key thrusts of Sport for All, Sport Excellence and Sports Industry (figure 5).

Figure 5. Schematic representation of the Sports Community and the Sport Vision of Singapore
(Source: Houlihan & Green, 2008, p.85)



The Committee also proposed four strategies to achieve the new vision for the sporting Singapore. Such strategies would catalyze the development of Singapore's

sport culture. The pathway to develop sport culture is illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Holistic View of Various Strategies/Pathway to Develop Sport Culture
(Source: MCYS, 2008, p.29)



The allocation of public funding to sport

Historically, sport development was the incorporation of Singapore Pools, a wholly government-owned lottery agency in 1968 (Singapore Pools, 2005). Singapore Pools provided funding to the SSC for new initiatives. The lottery fund has been a critical benefactor for elite sport infrastructure, programs and support in Singapore. In 2001, the government and Singapore Pools committed HK\$2.5 billion over a five-year period to make Singapore among the top 10 sport nations in Asia by 2010.

Apart from funding from lottery, the SSC builds up partnerships with commercial companies on multiple synergistic programs in order to achieve the funding and sponsorships. In 2010, Swiss watchmaker 'Longines' and Nestle MILO are supporting and grooming the young sport talents in Singapore by annual grants (SSC, 2008a) (Asiana Sport for All Association, 2010).

With the objective of creating a self-sustaining sport eco-system, Singapore is seeing sport as an investment which can seek a numerous tangible and intangible benefits in the society. According to the recommendations of Sporting Culture Committee Report 2008, national investment in sport has been increased to cohere with the objective. In order to actualize the SCC's goals, the Committee estimated that an additional investment of S\$39.8 million is needed for 2008 to 2010 and S\$36.6 million for 2011 to 2015 (MCYS, 2008).

Elite sport excellence

The sport excellence division of the SSC mainly assists elite athletes through direct grant funding and provision of back-up services in sport science, sport medicine, education and career advice, lodging and training facilities (Barrie & Mick, 2008). In 2007, the SSC also launched the sport scholarships with the aim of increasing the support for sport professionals. The scholarships are directed to three key fields in sport business: sport science, sport management and marketing, and sport media and broadcasting.

To spawn the youth for future champions, Singapore set up the Singapore Sports School (SSS) to develop elite performance sport. It is an independent school specialized in providing a conducive academic setting and professional sport training environment for teenagers who would like to be elite athletes. Up-to-date, the school

has boasted over 400 elite athletes who have benefited from the one-stop service, enabled them to balance their academic pursuits with intensive sport training" (SSS, 2010). The athletes of the Sport School have broken 11 national records, 29 national age-group records, 12 national schools records and 21 school championship records.

A key moment for Singapore sport excellence was the publication of Sporting Culture Committee Report in which the Committee recommended to enhance sport medicine and sport science centre at international level to serve the elite athletes, and sports and wellness markets. Moreover, world-class Sports Institute is considered to be developed at the Sports Hub as part of an integrated plan to achieve high performance targets. With such improvement, Singapore would have a greater chance to win medal at the Olympic Games. In the report, the Committee proposed to conquer medal glory in the future events such as Olympics in London 2012. The country will maintain the top 10 sporting nations in Asia and steadily enhance Singapore athletes' performance among the world-class professionals (MCYS, 2008).

The SSC believed that NSAs would become more significant in the advancement of sport. They were the cornerstones for the promotion of sport excellence. Thus, the SSC has given S\$31.9 million to NSAs and increased the direct grants to the NSAs by 2.6% for funding respective sport development programs.

Mass sport participation

Nowadays, playing sports in Singapore is no longer just for health and fitness. It gives people an opportunity to spend a quality time with family and friends. For the definition of sport participation, SSC share their vision to everyone and the stakeholders such as spectators, volunteers, parents, officials, coaches and athletes (SSC, 2009a).

To realize the sport participation in Singapore, the SSC conducted the National Sports Participation Survey (NSPS) once every five years in order to gauge the level of sport participation and recreational physical activity in Singapore. The 2005 NSPS showed that more Singaporeans (at age 15 or above) participated in sports. Among them, individual-based activities such as jogging, swimming and walking are more popular and preferred (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Top 20 most popular sports of participants in 2005 (Source: SSC, 2005, p.25)

RANK ORDER	SPORT	ESTIMATED NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%
1	Jogging	586,763	21.1
2	Swimming	400,625	14.4
3	Walking	293,119	10.5
4	Gym Workout	154,089	5.5
5	Badminton	141,128	5.1
6	Soccer/Football	130,434	4.7
7	Cycling	109,791	3.9
8	Basketball/Street Basketball	75,649	2.7
9	Golf	55,328	2.0
10	Yoga	54,798	2.0
11	Tennis	50,281	1.8
12	Rhythmic Exercise	39,733	1.4
13	Taiji Quan	37,406	1.3
14	Dancing (All Forms)	35,939	1.3
15	Tenpin Bowling	28,353	1.0
16	Qi Gong	22,631	0.8
17	Fishing	21,469	0.8
18	Netball	19,469	0.7
19	In-line Skating	17,633	0.6
20	Volleyball/Beach Volleyball	17,353	0.6

Through the joined efforts from the SSC, Ministry of Education (MOE), Health Promotion Board and other agencies and partners, Singapore has achieved their target sport participation rate in 2005. According to the annual report 2005/06, the growth of sport participation increased from 38% in 2001 to 48% in 2005 among the aged 15 and above. Singaporeans who participated in sports three or more times a week increased to 25% compared to only 16% in 2001” (SSC, 2006a). According to the Sporting Culture Committee Report (2008), the Committee proposed to attain the sport participation rate to 66% by 2015, where two third of the Singaporeans will take part in sports at least once per week. And more volunteers will be attracted by building up spectatorship at live sport events. Indeed, Singapore has stronger sport culture by shifting the participation patterns.

Singaporeans are encouraged to participate in all kinds of sports other than the traditional sports. Sports become a new lifestyle options for Singaporeans. This is reflected by the participation rate and the interest in a wider variety of sports among Singaporeans (SSC, 2010a). To reinforce the “Let’s Play” message, the SSC developed a new online portal in which provided more updated sport information for visitors about where to play and

watch, how to play and who to play with. Visitors could book SSC sport facilities through the portal easier and more accessible. Since June 2008, SSC opened their sport facilities to general public. The school fields are also opened to the general public for sport and recreational activities during weekends.

For youth sport development, the Sports Education Program introduced more sports to children and youth in schools. Of these, SSC strengthen the relationships with the MOE and relevant sport service providers to organize a series of school sport programs including the Young Team Singapore Ambassadors program, Junior Sports Leader Award, Sports Leader Award, the Junior Technical Officiating Program, Young Team Singapore Ambassadors and the Sports Education Program. Such programs catered skills learning and sport knowledge to students and help to promote active participation of sports in schools.

The SSC also offered Learn-To-Play program to encourage young people to play sports in their daily lives. The SSC delivered a wide range of tailor-made sports and fitness classes to meet the demands of different age groups (SSC, 2010b). In June 2008, Singapore launched the first kids-only sport club to promote the enjoyment

of sports among the children ages three and above (SSC, 2009a). A sister program, the "Sport On! Kids" Club for children (age 3-12) was introduced. It hosts the online portal 'Sports On! Kids', in which the visitors can gain more fun by blogs, gallery and forum. It also provides the latest information regarding sport programs and events for kids.

Sports industry development

In order to create a vibrant sports industry, Singapore government decided to develop an integrated world class sports facilities within the city called 'Sport Hub'. The Sport Hub provides integrated programs to all Singaporean for entertainment, business and elite training. The Sport Hub is also the first and the largest sports facilities infrastructure project in the world, named Public-Private-Partnership (PPP). The PPP is a comprehensive project proposed by the private sectors, which will be responsible for design, building, finance management and operation of the Sports Hub in a period of 25 years. The committed private sectors will be returned by a monthly payment for the mentioned period (SSC, 2009b). Singapore government reserved an estimated amount of S\$1.87 billion for services rendered over the course of the 25-year contract. This can ensure that the Sports Hub remains relevant and vibrant throughout the contract period. The stadium is not just about money, sport industry or job opportunity, it is also an icon to the people and the country.

With the unique financing structure, Singapore won the right to host the first Formula One Grand Prix night race and the Youth Olympic Games. For the first host of Formula One Grand Prix, Singapore government planned to develop the motor sport industry in Singapore by building a permanent racetrack in Changi with the private sector. For example, many US, Europe and Japan premium automobile companies and their suppliers have set up their regional headquarters, research & development centers to manufacture racing facilities in Singapore (Wee, 2007). It is not only benefit to the Singapore's economic development, but also gives access for the general population with motor sport interest.

The SSC has reached out to the business community to increase the marketing and networking opportunities. The Sports Hub and Formula One will add more vitality to the sport culture and business in Singapore. Market researchers predict that the sports market in the Asia-

Pacific region will reach to US\$17 billion by 2009. Especially in sponsorship & merchandising revenues, there will be an expansion to US\$9 billion, and the television rights will increase to US\$3 billion

Singapore's economy was boosted due to the steadily growth of the sport industry. According to the MCYS, the estimated Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contribution has gone up to S\$696 million in 2003 compared to S\$581 million in 1998 (MCYS, 2008). Besides, the Sporting Culture Committee Report (2008) has set the target that the sport sectors should have S\$2 billions contribution to the GDP by 2015.

Sport Policy in Hong Kong

Sport administrative structure

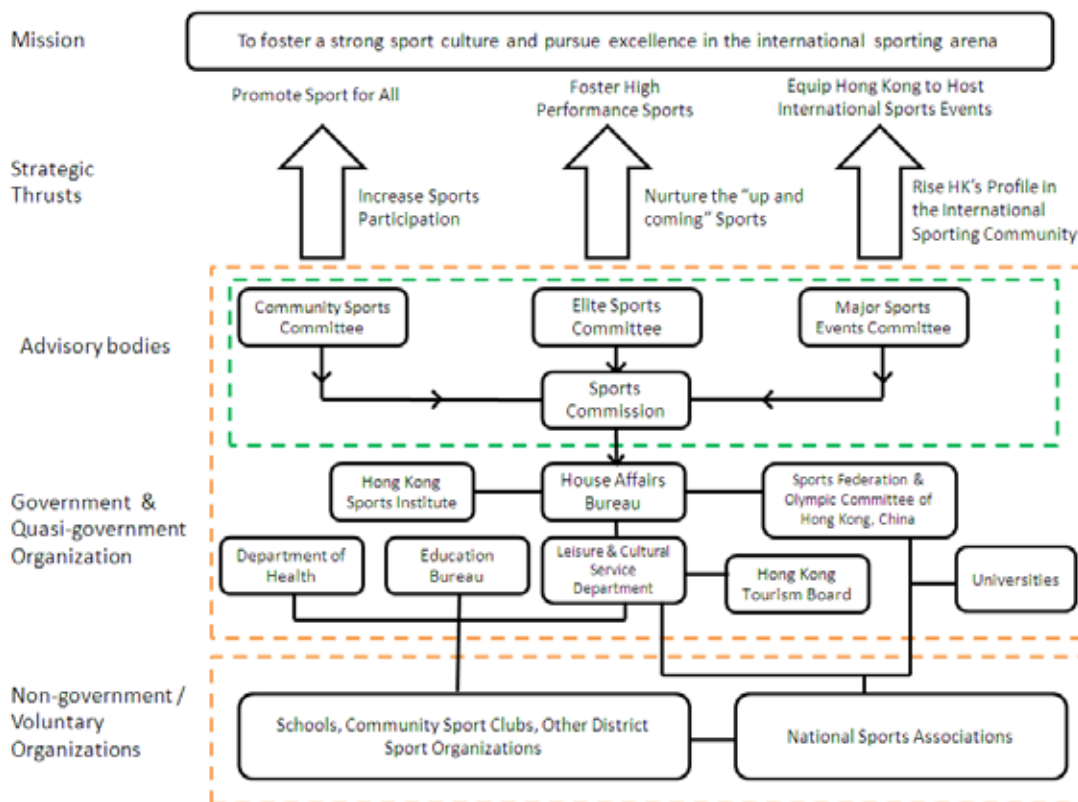
Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) is responsible for formulating and implementing sport policy through Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). These policies are to promote sports and provide leisure services to the community. The LCSD develops and manages public facilities for general recreation. On the other hand, national sport associations (NSAs) are responsible for the training and organization of local and international sport competitions. In addition, the LCSD provides funding support to the NSAs under the established sports policy. Besides, the Department works closely with the District Councils, NSAs, Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong (SF&OC), district sport associations (DSAs) and schools to promote the concept of Sport-for-All, and to implement the strategic planning in the provision of high quality leisure and facilities in the community.

With the broad directions for long-term sport development in Hong Kong, the Government established the Sports Commission (SC) in 2005 to advise all issues related to sport development, which include policies, strategies, implementation framework. Three policy objectives are established by the SC and they are: Sports for All, sport excellence, and promoting Hong Kong as an attractive venue for hosting major sport events. The Community Sports Committee (CSC), Elite Sports Committee (ESC) and Major Sports Events Committee (MSEC) were set up under the SC to give advice on the relevant sport development tasks. The current administrative structure is a significant milestone of the sport development for Hong Kong. (Figure 8).

For the development of elite sports, the Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) Limited becomes an incorporated body to undertake all issues related to elite performance sport training. Other than sport facilities, the support given to athletes includes elite coaching and training, sport science, sport medicine, strength and conditioning, athlete affairs and education, applied research, sport information, finance and accommodation.

As local governing bodies of individual sports, NSAs are empowered to organize sport programs from beginners to elite athletes in local and overseas tournaments. As representative of the 74 NSAs and National Olympic Committee (NOC), the SF&OC is responsible for sanctioning the Hong Kong delegation to participate in major games such as the Olympics, Asian Games, East Asian Games and National Games.

Figure 8. The Structure of Hong Kong Sport Delivery System



The allocation of public funding to sport

Sport Funding to Elite Sports

According to the HKSI annual report 2008/09, the government subvention remains the main source of income for the HKSI. Other subvention comes from the Arts and Sport Development Fund, Special Incentive Fund, commercial, sponsorship, and others (Figure 9).

In 2008/09, HKSI received a total of HK\$198.5 million from the government subvention, of which HK\$34.5 million was designated for Direct Financial Support to athletes, HK\$54.8 million was designated for

the Elite Training Program which provided elite coaching, squad training programs, meals and accommodation, sport science and sport medicine support, education and career guidance and the use of training facilities to the scholarship athletes. In the fiscal year 2009/10, Hong Kong government increased their funding for elite athletes with additional \$50 million each year. The extra funding is to provide more support for the top athletes in training, coaching, education and career development (Legislative Council, 2010). In order to get a strike for London Olympic Games 2012, the government increased the cash awards to HK\$3 million for a gold medal winner. Badminton, windsurfing, cycling and table

tennis are selected as the target sports for medals at the London Games. Each sport association will receive an additional funding of HK\$1.5 million annually for athlete training.

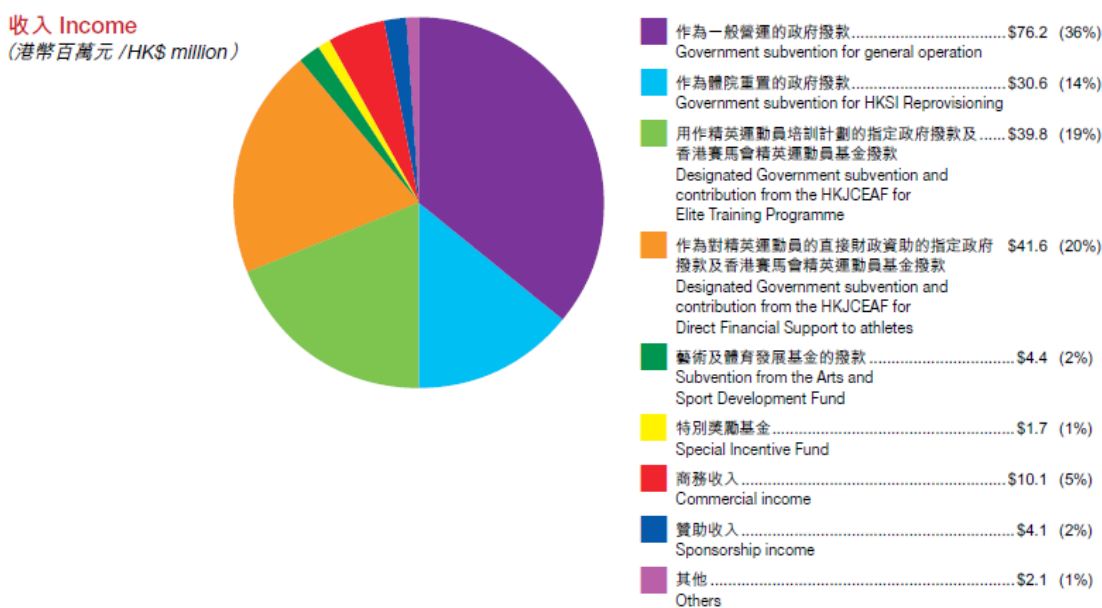
The Arts and Sport Development Fund (ASDF)

In 1997, Hong Kong government set up the ASDF to support the long-term development of sports, culture and arts. The fund provided over HK\$380 million from 1997 to 2007 (Sallay, 2009). These included an annual recurrent funding of \$90 million to the HKSI to cover the expenses on its training programs, purchasing of facilities and equipment. The funding schemes could provide financial assistance to athletes with demonstrated performance and potential. In 2008, an additional annual funding of \$40 million was given to support elite athletes in education opportunities, career development, financial assistance, athlete training and coaching support.

Special Incentive Fund (SIF)

To encourage and recognize outstanding performance of Hong Kong athletes, Special Incentive Fund was launched in 2006. This fund is administered by the HKSI and supported by the Government Facility, Program Donations Scheme and the Grantham Scholarships Fund. The fund provides a total funding support of HK\$9 million over four years for the athletes (HKSI, 2008). Athletes who win medals at various levels of international competitions in 2006 -2009 can receive a cash incentive twice a year. As of 2010, an accumulated total of over HK\$5.5 million has been allocated to over 400 local athletes under the SIF. The latest payment batch, with the amount of HK\$78 million, has been granted to 178 HKSI Scholarship Athletes from 16 focus sports.

Figure 9. Income for the HKSI in 2008/09 (Source: HKSI, 2009b)



Elite sport excellence

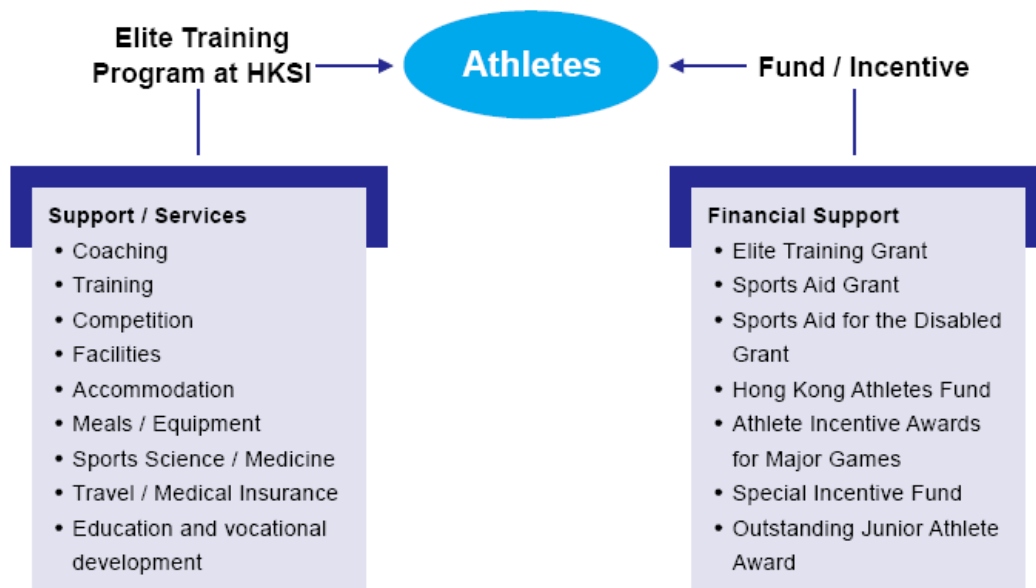
Hong Kong elite training program are aimed to provide coaching, sport science and sport medicine, strength and conditioning, athlete affairs and education,

applied research and sports information to athletes. Figure 9 shows the services and funds administered by HKSI to elite athletes.

Figure 10. Overview of elite athlete support at HKSI (source: HKSI, 2009a)

The Searching for New Sport Stars program was launched in 2000 to recruit new potentials for various elite sports and to identify young talents. (HKSI, 2007a). The program is an important media where young talents can be identified and nurtured. Young people can commit themselves to full-time sport training and

improve Hong Kong’s results in the Asian and World Junior Championships. In community level, Joint School Sport Training Program is designed to provide training opportunities for students with potential in sports. The students with high potential will be selected for advanced level training by veteran coaches from the NSAs.

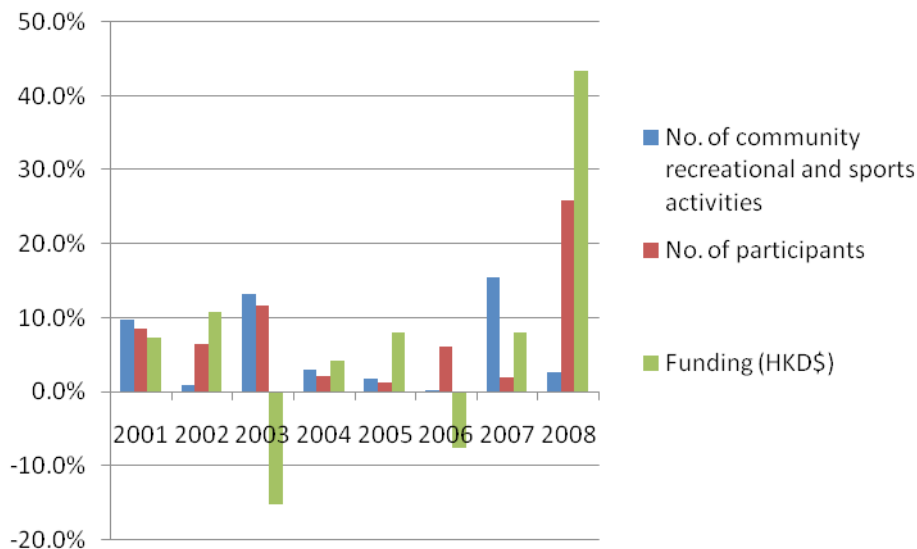


Mass Sport Participation

LCSD is the core service provider to promote mass sport participation. LCSD has co-operated with related government departments like Education Bureau and Department of Health, NSAs, district sports associations, schools and private organizations to organize a wide variety of activity programs, training courses and competitions. These programs include: Young Athletes Training Scheme, School Sports Promotion Program, District Sports Teams Training Scheme, Sports Subsidy Scheme, Masters Games, Corporate Games, and Community Sports Clubs Scheme.

In addition, LCSD launched the Physical Fitness Test on the Community in 2005 to understand the fitness condition of Hong Kong people, and identify the priority areas to improve the physical fitness among the community. In order to continuously measure the effectiveness of the promotion of Sport for All in the community, a comprehensive study on the participation patterns was conducted by LCSD. The survey showed that the Hong Kong citizens’ sport participation in 2001 was 63% and there was a great improvement with a rise of 15%” (CSC, 2009). Apart from the improvement of participation rate, the frequency of sports participation is also enhanced. About 19% participants played sport almost every day rising up to 22.9% in 2008, and 12% participated in sport 3-5 times per week up to 18.3% in 2008. 69% of the participants took part in sport less than three times per week was reduced to 58.8% in 2008. The following chart (figure 10) shows the increase of community recreation and sport activities organized by LCSD.

Figure 11. LCS D Sports Activities 2001-2009.



Implications from Australia and Singapore Sport Development

Australian and Singapore central sport agency have worked closely with government departments, national sporting organizations and private sectors to deliver a wide range of sports to their citizens. In Australia, the ‘Shaping Up’ report provided a clear direction of sport development for next decade and the BASA has been considered as an important medium of social cohesion. The interim report also showed that AASC program is very successful in enhancing the participation rate of organized sport activities. Australian Sports Commission not only focuses on medal winning at Olympic Games and world championships, but also pays significant effort on the mass sport participation, particular for youth. Tailored sports programs are delivered to fulfill the specific needs of different age groups, including children, youth, women, working adults and elderly. Finally, the Australian Government has committed to work in partnership with NSOs, state and territory institutes to deliver high-quality sport science support and high performance sport programs to elite athletes.

On the other hand, Singapore Sports Council formulated a strategic blueprint for the future of Singapore sport policy. The new vision of ‘Live Life, Breathe Sports’ is raised upon the strategic thrusts: sport excellence, Sports for All and a vibrant sports industry. Sport institute and Sport School provide

systematic training and education to athletes under one stop service. As a result, significant improvement in athlete’s performance is expected. In addition, the federal government and lottery fund mainly support the elite athletes for sustaining the success in international level, especially to success in Olympics. There is no doubt, that Singapore not only utilizes sport as a tool for economic development, but also hosts major sport events to promote their country. Significantly, the establishment of the sport hub has brought huge benefits to Singapore, including the enhancement of international prestige, tourism, commerce, entertainment, and social construction. By winning the bid for hosting large-scale sport events, Singapore has demonstrated their accomplishment and the capacity of the nation.

Hong Kong government has set-up a new administrative structure in sport since 2000. The new structure clarified the context of responsibilities of the key sports agencies according to the three major aspects - Sports for All, turning Hong Kong into a sports events capital and high performance sport. The Sports Commission became an advisory body to give advice in community sports, elite sports and major sports events respectively on all matters related. In community level, the LCS D promotes sports and provides leisure services. The HKSI undertakes the elite sport training to the Hong Kong athletes. The new direction of sport policy has provided an overall administrative structure and a

focused and integrated approach to the long-term sport development.

For the allocation of funding to sport, the sport funding is still mainly supported by government subvention, which will be affected by the economy and government policy focus. According to annual report 2003/04, the sport funding to organize sport and recreation programs was dropped 15.2% due to economic downturn by SARS impact. To solve this problem, Hong Kong has large potential to set up sports lottery to fund elite athletes. However, the sport gambling may lead to an addiction in gambling in the society. On the other hand, many countries are seeing sport as a business that can generate profit. Currently, Hong Kong Standard Chartered Marathon and Hong Kong Rugby Seven are the largest sporting events in Hong Kong. These two events have attracted a lot of commercial sponsorships and brought in large income to the Associations. If Hong Kong refers to the Singapore successful experience, sport industry can be developed in Hong Kong. In this case, Hong Kong government not only reduces the financial burden through the development of sport industry, but also builds up a career path for the retired athletes.

Hong Kong has successfully promoted mass sport participation after 2000, especially in youth sport participation. According to the consultancy Study on Sport for All 2009, the sports participation of Hong Kong citizens was rising up from 15% to 63% comparing similar survey conducted by SDB in 2001. These figures also indicated that the sport participation rate of Hong Kong citizens were on the rise by the efforts of government departments, non-government agencies, schools and NSAs. This encouraging result is tally with the number of sports activities organized and participants in various programs. The LCSD organized a total of 33,900 community recreation and sport activities for 1,945,000 participants in 2008 increased 54.1% and 55.2% respectively from 22,000 sports activities and 1,253,442 participants in 2001. Besides, the numbers of subsidies programs are still increasing constantly, particularly in youth participation.

Nonetheless, to compare the current figures of sport participation rate with Singapore and Australia, Hong Kong (63% in 2008) is still lagged behind Australia (66% in 2005) but higher than Singapore (48% in 2005). To keep the pace with the neighbor countries in the

development of mass sport participation, sport participation survey conducted in five-year interval is imperative. Such information is significant to sport policy-makers for developing sport culture and fulfill the changing needs of the society.

Based upon the result of the Consultancy Study on Sport for all (2009), it showed that the popular activities most likely are jogging, swimming and badminton. Those three activities occupied over one third of participants. In practice of Singapore and Australia, wide variety of sports is significant to sport participation in community.

For elite sport system, HKSI is still the backbone to elite sport. HKSI not only offered new technology to elite athletes, but also strengthened the cooperation with China Mainland in the exchange of coaching and training methods. By benchmarking with Australian Sport Institute, it relied substantially on the academic and scientific stakeholders, in which the universities and Sports Medicine Australia plays significant roles to provide sport science and sport medicine support to the Australian athletes.

Policy Recommendations

After the review of Australia and Singapore sport development, suggestions to Hong Kong future sport development are made.

Administrative structure:

- Establish a more centralized sport governing body with decision-making and resource allocation authority, like Australian Sports Commission and Singapore Sports Council, in both mass sport participation and elite development. Consequently, the centralized governing body can actualize the central policy with a more consistent, efficient and effective approach to the society.
- Explore a more interactive and multiple communication approach between the centralized governing body, HKSF, NSAs, District Boards, schools and community sport organizations.
- HAB should refer to the Australian and Singapore government to produce a longer-term (15-20 years) and regular and progressive (every 5 year) sport policy for the public and the professional bodies and inform them the position and investment of the

Government in the sport development, including elite and mass sport. As a result, an overall vision is emerged and the stakeholders can be more proactive and plan ahead accordingly.

- Hong Kong government should produce a reasonable ambitious sport future with new vision like Singapore, in which “Live Life, Breathe Sports” is their central vision produced by the Sporting Culture Committee in 2008. And the central governing body should keep on track with the existing strategy for developing the key thrusts of Sport for All and Sport Excellence and make recommendations to the government.
- The government should provide incentives, initiate and encourage commercial sectors to explore the potential of sport industry.
- Sport mega event could be planned ahead by the government aligned with the long-term sport policy on the mature status. Consequently, the economy, sport tourism, international image, physical culture, social construction and infra-structure could be benefited to the whole society.

Mass sport participation:

- A regular database of Hong Kong people’s sport activity level should be established in order to track the changes and make appropriate actions. Furthermore, a benchmark of international advanced countries and cities, especially within the Asian region, should be produced for goal setting in Hong Kong’s sport development.
- In order to effectively promote sport participation, more varieties of sport should be introduced into public. Consequently, Hong Kong citizens may participate in more than one sport activity due to the shift of participation patterns.
- Hong Kong government should promote the after school sports programs like the Active After-School Communities program in Australia, which can enhance the school students participation in sport.

- A wider range of sport activities, especially non-main stream and non-competitive sport, should be introduced to the public. Thus people with different age, interest and lifestyle can be entertained. According to the Singapore experience, these wide ranges of activity options would change participation pattern in the public and increase the participation rate by the end since a bigger pool of potential sport participants may be recruited due to the change of nature in sport.

Elite sport excellence

- HKSI should strengthen the athlete exchange programs with China Mainland and overseas sport institutes. Furthermore, the establishment of satellite training sites around China and overseas would provide athletes with more diverse training techniques and exposure.
- HKSI should build a long term research relationship with sport scientists in local and overseas universities so elite athletes can be benefited from the scientific and advanced technologies.
- Like Singapore, setting-up sport school where the athletes could receive systematic training and education under one roof. The athletes can concentrate on training. As a result, higher performance can be achieved. (elite)
- Elite development programs provide satellite sites around the nation and Canberra

Funding and sport industry development:

- Hong Kong government should encourage joint venture with commercial sectors, like Singapore, to build and manage more modern sport facilities. This move not only releases government’s financial burden in sport development, but also provide opportunity for commercial sectors to invest in sport industry.
- Besides, government should explore the commercial sector’s financial input in sport like sport marketing, funding and sponsorship.
- To strengthen financial foundations to Hong Kong sport development, the Sports lottery could be considered as one of the sport funding sources with cautious measures in dealing with pathological gambling and addiction.

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Correspondence

Patrick WC Lau
Kowloon Tong, Kowloon,
Hong Kong
Email: wclau@hkbu.edu.hk