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PRESS RELEASE

'LIVE LIFE, BREATHE SPORTS'
SPORTING CULTURE COMMITTEE RELEASES ITS RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sporting Culture Committee (SCC) released its report today, detailing 23 recommendations to catalyse the growth of an inclusive sporting community, groom our own sporting heroes to bring home international glory, and develop a dynamic sports industry that generates economic opportunities.

2 Formed in September 2006 by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), the SCC is chaired by Parliamentary Secretary Teo Ser Luck. Mr Teo and his fellow committee members, who hail from the people, public and private sectors, share a passion for sports and a strong belief about the benefits of sports to the individual, community and nation. The list of committee members is available at Annex A.

3 Said Mr Teo, "After many months of brainstorming by the members of the Sporting Culture Committee, as well as consultation with various groups and stakeholders from within and outside the sporting fraternity, I am pleased to share the Committee's report with the public. I believe this report is an important step towards nurturing a sporting culture in Singapore."

4 The Committee's recommendations emphasise providing sports opportunities for all – the young, working adults, families, seniors and the disabled – and ensuring engaging experiences for active sports participants, spectators and even volunteers. The recommendations include the formation of a National Sports Strategy Committee to oversee the implementation of the SCC's recommendations, initiating the inclusive multi-sports Singapore Games, supporting the development of sports clubs, and creating more playing spaces in the heartlands.

5 Mr Teo added, "The Committee members strongly believe that sports has the power to galvanise people. Sports is fun and allows families, friends and neighbours to bond in an emotive and experiential manner when they play and watch sporting events together. The Committee hopes that everyone will come onboard and work together to build an enduring Singapore Sporting Culture."

6 The Sporting Culture Committee has submitted its report to MCYS. The Ministry will study the recommendations and give its response during the Committee of Supply sessions in March.

Attachments:

Annex A – Composition of Committee

Annex B – Sporting Culture Committee report (Executive Summary)

ISSUED BY

THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH AND SPORTS
14 February 2008

ANNEX A

COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE

Chairman

Teo Ser Luck	Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports

Members

Bernard Tan	Managing Director (Fixed Income), Development Bank of Singapore Chairman for sub-committee looking at "Demand and software – Developing a sporting lifestyle"
Ng Ser Miang	Executive Board Member, International Olympic Committee & Vice President, Singapore National Olympic Council Chairman for sub-committee looking at "Glory for the nation – Sports heroes and champions"
Low Teo Ping	Vice President, Singapore National Olympic Council, President, Singapore Sailing Federation & President, Singapore Rugby Union Chairman for sub-committee looking at "Building the sector – Creating a sports ecosystem and developing the sporting industry"
Benson Puah	Chief Executive Officer, The Esplanade Co. Ltd

	Chairman for sub-committee looking at "Supply and hardware – Catalysing sporting opportunities in the community"
Alex Chan	Chairman, Singapore Sports Council Chairman for sub-committee looking at "Increasing mindshare – Public education and awareness"
Ang Peng Siong	Managing Director, APS Swim School
Warren Buckley	Chief Executive Officer, Suntec Singapore (until 4 June 2007)
Chris Chan	Secretary General, Singapore National Olympic Council
Chew Hock Yong	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports
Mike DeNoma	Group Executive Director (Consumer Banking), Standard Chartered Bank
Koh Ching Hong	Managing Director, Toyota Borneo Motors
Dr Michael Koh	Director (School of Sports, Health and Leisure), Republic Polytechnic
C. Kunalan	Asst. Professor, National Institute of Education
MAJ Lien Choong Luen	Asst. Director (Future System Directorate), Ministry of Defence
Ravi Menon	Deputy Secretary (Policy), Ministry of Finance (until 1 April 2007)
Darrell Metzger	Chief Executive Officer, Sentosa Development Corp. (until 1 April 2007)
MG Neo Kian Hong	Chief of Army, Ministry of Defence
Ng Wai Choong	Deputy Secretary (Policy), Ministry of Finance (from 1 April 2007 onwards)
Niam Chiang Meng	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports

Oon Jin Teik	Chief Executive Officer, Singapore Sports Council
Ms Seah Jiak Choo	Director-General of Education, Ministry of Education
Ms Norma Sit	Managing Director, RED ART Liveworks Pte Ltd
Ms Sum Chee Wah	Director (Education Programmes Division), Ministry of Education
Dr Benedict Tan	Head (Changi Sports Medicine Centre), Changi General Hospital
Tan Boon Huat	Chief Executive Director, People's Association
Tan Ju Seng	President, Singapore Disability Sports Council
Ms Naomi Tan	Co-curricular Officer (Co-curricular Activities Branch), Ministry of Education

ANNEX B

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE'S REPORT

After extensive deliberations and consultations, the Sporting Culture Committee has come up with twenty-three recommendations, which will contribute to a vibrant and self-sustaining sports culture. These recommendations will build upon our current sports development efforts and help Singapore work towards a National Sports Vision whereby:

> ***Sports is a celebration of a healthy and spirited lifestyle.***
>
> ***It ignites passion, builds character and bonds Singaporeans.***
>
> ***Together, all of us in Singapore will strive to be active in sports for health, for vigour and for life.***

This vision is encapsulated by our tagline:

Live Life.
Breathe Sports.

Guiding Principles

The Committee proposes the following principles to establish shared values and nurture strong multi-stakeholder commitment and guide stakeholders as they work to implement the SCC's recommendations:

- ***To create sporting opportunities for all;***
- ***To focus on the "software", "hardware" and "heartware" components for sports;***
- ***That sports is an investment which will take time to be economically self-sufficient;***
- ***To look for win-win solutions as sports compete for funding, sponsorships, people's time; and***
- ***To create a unique value proposition for sports that create attitudinal and behavioural shifts, to encourage people to adopt sports into their lifestyles.***

Targets

The Committee has proposed the following targets for Sporting Singapore:

- ***Attaining 66% sports participation by 2015, whereby 2 in 3 Singaporeans take part in sporting activities at least once a week;***

- ***Building up spectatorship at live sporting events and attracting more volunteers into sports to involve at least 10% of our population on a regular basis;***

- ***Attaining medal glory in the 2012 and future Olympics, maintaining our position among the top 10 sporting nations in Asia, and nurturing a steady stream of world-class Singaporean athletes; and***

- ***Having the sports sector contribute S$2b value-add to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2015.***

Recommendations of the Sporting Culture Committee

- ***Recommendation 1: Convene a National Sports Strategy Committee*** to take ownership and oversee the implementation of the SCC's recommendations, as well as review and advise on national sports policies.

The Committee's additional recommendations can be classified under four broad strategies, as follows:

Strategy 1 – Inspiring the Nation

The Committee aims to raise public awareness and interest towards sports, in particular local sports.

- ***Recommendation 2: Develop entertaining sports-centric media channels*** to elevate local sports coverage in television, print, internet, new media etc.

- ***Recommendation 3: Support creation of compelling sports content*** by offering matching grants through a Sports Content Creation scheme.

- ***Recommendation 4: Promote our sporting champions*** as inspiring heroes and positive role models.

Strategy 2 – Generating Sporting Opportunities for All

The Committee aims to advocate sports as a choice lifestyle and leisure activity for Singaporeans from all walks of life.

- ***Recommendation 5: Maximise usage of publicly-funded sports facilities*** through efficient facility planning and innovative spaces in town centres.

- ***Recommendation 6: Create more playing spaces*** that allow imaginative and spontaneous play.

- ***Recommendation 7: Create 360° sporting environments*** that are customer-friendly and accessible to all demographic segments.

- ***Recommendation 8: Teach every child at least four sports*** so that they pick up the love of sports from young.

- ***Recommendation 9: Create more play opportunities for every child*** particularly in the before and after school hours.

- ***Recommendation 10: Initiate the Singapore Games*** to get Singaporeans excited about local sports and home-grown talents.

- ***Recommendation 11: Host one marquee sports event every month*** so that Singaporeans can experience the buzz of major home-grown and international sporting competitions.

Strategy 3 – Building a Flourishing Sports Ecosystem

The Committee aims to generate high levels of community involvement, with market-driven initiatives to support sports clubs, programmes and infrastructure.

- ***Recommendation 12: Grow vibrant sports clubs*** to offer Singaporeans ample sporting opportunities throughout their lives.

- ***Recommendation 13: Set up an NSA Advisory Council*** as a platform for NSAs to discuss issues and strategize areas of collaboration.

- ***Recommendation 14: Fortify NSAs' sports management capabilities*** so that NSAs can be become world-class leaders in their respective sports.

- ***Recommendation 15: Train 'Learn to Play' instructors*** to expand the pool of qualified instructors to teach children and beginners.

- ***Recommendation 16: Raise standards of the coaching industry*** to benefit trainees, coaches and the wider sports industry.

- ***Recommendation 17: Create the market to grow sports enterprises,*** so that sports companies can anchor in Singapore and expand into the region.

- ***Recommendation 18: Make Singapore an international sports medicine and sports science (SMSS) centre of excellence*** to serve our athletes and the broader sports and wellness markets.

- ***Recommendation 19: Encourage the private sector to manage sports facilities and programming*** for the public to enjoy more varied and accessible playing opportunities.

- ***Recommendation 20: Enhance the legal framework to support sports*** so that sports issues and disputes can be managed with greater professionalism, transparency and speed.

Strategy 4 – Developing Champions

The Committee aims to develop sports champions to provide a powerful source of inspiration for the nation.

- ***Recommendation 21: Form a multi-agency 'Glory for the Nation' committee*** to strive for sustained Olympic and Paralympic medal honours.

- ***Recommendation 22: Start a world-class Sports Institute at the Sports Hub*** to provide top-notch training, competition facilities and services for our elite athletes to excel.

- ***Recommendation 23: Ramp up youth talent development*** so that we can broaden the pipeline leading to sports excellence.

The Path Ahead

Our plans are ambitious and to be successful, we require the 3M's of Mandate, Money, and Manpower.

- ***Mandate:*** We would need the full backing of our national leadership as well as the support of the sporting fraternity and wider community.

- ***Money:*** We need to increase our national investment in sports to order to create a self-sustaining sports ecosystem in the future. The Committee estimates additional investments of S$39.8 million (for 2008 to 2010) and S$36.6 million (for 2011 to 2015) will be required to implement the SCC's recommendations.

- ***Manpower:*** We would need passionate and competent personnel at multiple levels to see through the recommendations.

The Sporting Culture Committee's report is a start point, not an end point. The Committee hopes that everyone will come onboard and work together to build a Singapore Sporting Culture.

Live Life.
Breathe Sports.

over a period of one month and costs about S$200. Depending on the sport, coaches may need to undergo further practical training and costs will differ.

The Committee recommends

Starting a pre-NCAP short course. This will introduce basic coaching skills for volunteers or 'weekend coaches' who work with children. For instance, the Australian Sports Commission has introduced an online *Beginning Coaching General Principles* course, which contains five modules covering a range of general coaching topics e.g. roles and responsibilities expected of a coach, planning, safety, working with parents, communication, group management and inclusive coaching practices when working with people with disabilities. This online course spans about six hours.

The NSAs and SSC should look into offering this pre-NCAP course via online or classroom settings, with SSC playing a facilitating and aggregation role to expedite widespread deployment across different sports and joint marketing. The Committee recommends that the pre-NCAP course be offered free of charge or at a nominal cost for at least one to two years to encourage beginner instructors to undergo training. More importantly, this pre-NCAP course must be recognised by key stakeholders such as the MOE, schools and PA in order to ensure widespread adoption. The course must also incorporate a hands-on module in sports safety, e.g. educating trainers on first aid, performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), using the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and so on. With more people equipped with basic sports safety training, we can then raise the overall awareness of safety issues and develop broad-based capabilities to deal with minor accidents and contingencies in sports events and activities.

Once a database of pre-NCAP instructors is formed, the SSC should encourage these interested and committed individuals to pursue certification in NCAP, thus building up the pipeline of trained coaches in Singapore.

Recommendation 16:

Raise standards of the coaching industry

Current Status

Estimated figures from SSC's NROC show that only a small percentage of coaches who provide sports coaching or training in Singapore are NCAP-certified.

The Committee recommends

The SSC to lead a concerted push to encourage more coaches to be NCAP-certified and promote market awareness of the certification's benefits. The SSC must work with key partners like the PA and MOE to increase incentives for coaches to be NCAP-certified, e.g. only NCAP-certified coaches can participate in programmes supported by the various agencies and/or coach in public sports premises. The SSC should also seek feedback from non NCAP-certified coaches on why they do not go for the certification, and these inputs can then be used to improve the NCAP system.

As the coaching industry matures in the long term, the Committee would recommend that NCAP certification be made a compulsory requirement before any person can coach in Singapore. This would be similar to the life insurance industry in Singapore where the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) requires all sellers of insurance products to pass the Certificate in Personal General Insurance and/or the Certificate in Commercial General Insurance, depending on the products sold or advised.

We would like to emphasise the need to promote public awareness of the NCAP system and accept it as the definitive quality assurance or trust mark. This could be done through a sustained public education campaign through media channels and prominent advisory signages at sports facilities. This campaign should specially target schools, clubs and parents who employ coaches to teach beginner to intermediate levels, as they may be unaware of the specific advantages of hiring a properly trained and certified coach.

The long term goal is to raise the level of coaching professionalism so that trainees can look forward to more effective and safer sports education, coaches enjoy better rewards and recognition, and the sports industry as a whole raises its capabilities and value-add.

IV. Promoting sports as a robust economic engine

Recommendation 17:

Create the market to grow sports enterprises

Current Status

The SSC is working with the economic agencies such as the Economic Development Board (EDB) and Singapore Tourism Board (STB) to develop our sports industry as a growth sector to anchor value-added and export-oriented sporting activities. This includes providing sports-related products and services to meet local and foreign demand, as well as attracting visitors to Singapore for sports-related conferences and events, sports medicine and sports science services, etc.

The Committee recommends

A coordinated effort amongst the key agencies to create an active marketplace in Singapore for sporting goods and services, so that commercial enterprises of local and foreign origins can establish their operational hubs here to expand into the region. In particular, the Committee suggests the following:

a. Setting up a sports entrepreneurship clearinghouse

This service – which can take the form of a physical drop-in centre, a call-centre or even a virtual portal – would provide a one-stop shop for current and prospective sports-related enterprises to obtain information on assistance schemes, market information, etc. Regular

events can be organised for companies to discuss sports-related business opportunities in Singapore and the region. The Committee suggests that SSC should tap on SPRING's and the Action Community for Entrepreneurship (ACE)'s institutional knowledge and resources to implement this idea, bearing in mind that SPRING and ACE promote entrepreneurship and assist the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across various industry sectors.

b. Capitalising on the Sports Hub and other Marina Bay developments

The Sports Hub and other developments in the Marina Bay area, e.g. the Sands Integrated Resort and Gardens by the Bay, would generate tremendous business opportunities for sports-related services and products, especially in organising top-notch sporting events and conferences. The SSC and EDB should share these exciting developments with local and foreign sports enterprises and help them capitalise on the new opportunities. In the longer term, the Committee suggests that SSC, EDB and other key agencies should consider developing the broader Kallang area around the Sports Hub into a sports-centric business park, which would anchor top-notch sporting companies undertaking a wide range of business-to-consumer and business-to-business economic activities such as developing new sports materials, providing sports education services, and so on.

c. Outsourcing functions

The SSC and even other government agencies should also look progressively towards outsourcing its non-core sports-related functions to the private sector, such as operating and marketing sports facilities, managing sports events and award ceremonies, and marketing sports programmes, etc. This will not only create greater cost efficiency, but also enable the private sector to build up their sports-related competencies and services, which can then be offered internationally.

Recommendation 18:

Make Singapore an international sports medicine and sports science (SMSS) centre of excellence

Current Status

The growth of the global sports markets[18] is an opportunity that Singapore should ride on. Similar to the way that Singapore is a world-recognised air and sea regional hub, we can be an international sports medicine and sports science (SMSS) centre of excellence. The SSC is currently collaborating with the local hospitals in the area of sports medicine and related services for athletes. There is further scope to transform this into a viable industry to serve domestic and international demand.

The Committee recommends

Developing Singapore into a leading international centre for SMSS services, research and product development. Building on the services and products developed to support elite athlete performance, we should capitalise on the growing opportunities in the healthcare sector and cater to a broader market, e.g. better treatment of injuries, commercialising SMSS research, and so on. The SSC and relevant agencies – including EDB, hospitals, schools and research institutions – should map out an industry development strategy, which would tap on as well as complement ongoing efforts to develop the biomedical industry in Singapore. The strategy would need to define specific activities to target, identify best ways to tap on our existing expertise and initiatives (including development of the Sports Hub); map out the critical success factors such as expertise, manpower and technology; propose incentive and support schemes including existing life sciences research funds; and develop an overall timeline.

Recommendation 19:

Encourage the private sector to manage sports facilities and programming

Current Status

[18] PricewaterhouseCoopers estimates that the global sports market will increase from US$96 billion in 2006, to US$124 billion in 2011. The Asia-Pacific sports market alone is expected to expand at a rate of 5.3% annually from US$13.7 billion in 2006, to US$17.7 billion in 2011. [Source: PwC report on 'Global Entertainment and Media Outlook: 2007-2011']

The government's policy – as implemented by SSC – has been to build and operate accessible and affordable sports facilities at all major population centres in Singapore. The Committee's assessment is that it is timely to have greater private sector involvement to build and manage the community sports facilities and programming, including the integration of such facilities in commercial developments.

The Committee recommends

That the government should adopt a principle of widening market participation in the management and programming of community sports facilities. This not only helps to build a marketplace and grow the industry as discussed earlier, we can tap on the private sector's expertise and creativity in events and programming management, thus enhancing the overall viability and vibrancy of the sports facilities. Specifically, the Committee would recommend the following:

a. Private sector management of regional sports facilities

The Sports Hub, slated for completion in 2011, is being developed through a Private Public Partnership model whereby the Sports Hub operator designs, develops and operates the entire facility. This would ensure that the operator takes a holistic and long-term approach to manage the Sports Hub and has an incentive to keep the place well-utilised and vibrant.

The Committee believes that a similar model can be extended to the community sports facilities currently managed by SSC or other government agencies. For instance, a number of existing sporting facilities can be aggregated together for a market sounding exercise whereby interested parties are invited to bid to operate the sports facilities. To ensure that the facilities remain affordable to the public, the bidders can ask for a government operating subsidy in their proposals. The model could lead to a win-win situation whereby the government maximises value for money in running the sports facilities (i.e. the subsidy given to the successful bidder could be comparable to or even less than the government's costs in running the facilities directly), while the successful bidder would enjoy the upside in running a wide range of sports, leisure and commercial events, activities and programmes.

The Committee recommends that the SSC undertake a pilot market sounding exercise. This would be a good learning experience and stepping stone towards additional private sector involvement exercises and approaches in the future.

b. Providing more sports facilities in commercial buildings

Why not let mum shop while dad hits the gym and the kids take swimming lessons in the same location? All of this can take place in the family's favourite shopping mall.

Currently, sports facilities can be provided as part of a commercial establishment's allowable Gross Floor Area (GFA). Developers would commonly include only commercially viable sports facilities such as gyms, bowling alleys, snooker halls, etc. In recent years, the URA has introduced the Civic and Community Institution (C&CI) Scheme which allows the private sector to integrate C&CI uses in private commercial developments by allowing additional C&CI GFA, over and above the approved GFA[19].

The Committee understands that the URA has recently extended the C&CI scheme to include sports uses to facilitate the integration of additional sporting space within existing and new commercial developments. This is a very positive development, and the Committee hopes that with this policy change, more developers will come forward to include sporting facilities in their commercial properties. This way, consumers will be able to play sports and do shopping under one roof, while mall operators would see increased foot traffic. The Committee would recommend that the SSC and URA should inform all the commercial developers about this policy change, and link the interested developers with suitable NSAs and other sports organisations.

V. Building a strong legal foundation

[19] This is subject to a GFA cap of 4,000 sqm or 10% of the overall GFA, whichever is the lower.

Recommendation 20:

Enhance the legal framework to support sports

Current Status

Sports, not unlike other social or economic sectors, has its share of disagreements and disputes between different stakeholders, particularly sports excellence issues like athlete selection by NSAs for the Major Games. Currently, these disputes would either have to be resolved internally within the NSA or proceed to the civil courts, which could result in a long-drawn and expensive process. Compared to the more matured sports sectors in other countries, our local sports fraternity is generally unfamiliar with the legal aspects of rights management, content distribution, professional athlete management, etc.

The Committee recommends

Enhancing the legal framework to support the growing sports industry, in particular to have sound dispute resolution mechanisms so that sports-specific issues can be managed with greater transparency and speed. Specifically, the Committee would recommend the following:

a. A mediation and arbitration framework

The Committee is pleased to note that the SSC, together with agencies like the Singapore National Olympic Council (SNOC), Singapore International Arbitration Centre, the Singapore Mediation Centre and the Singapore Institute of Arbitrators have launched the Alternate Dispute Resolution Framework on 7 January 2008. The Committee would recommend that all stakeholders in the sports sector – from NSAs to athletes to service providers – be encouraged to adopt this sports-specific and comprehensive mediation and arbitration framework tailored for sports.

With this system in place, the Committee hopes to see greater professionalism and speed in the way disputes are managed and resolved. This framework is applicable for various facets

of sports, not just sports excellence. In the long term, this framework would be a critical component of developing the sports industry in Singapore.

b. Educating and enhancing sports law

In Singapore's context, 'sports law' is primarily the application of various laws and disciplines to issues unique to sport and the only piece of legislation that is specific to sport is the Singapore Sports Council Act introduced in 1973. The Committee feels that it would be useful to raise the awareness of legal issues and implications in all matters relating to sports policy, programmes and processes. For example, a private service provider would need to understand liability issues, NSAs would need to know how to better exploit naming rights for their various assets, and event organisers should understand intellectual rights management and how to protect themselves against ambush marketing.

The Committee suggests that a working committee comprising legal experts and sports management practitioners could be set up to study existing practices and the legal frameworks that govern sports in other countries – particularly those with established sports industries – so as to develop ways to educate the sports fraternity and even the wider public about sports legal issues, as well as propose whether there needs to be new or revised legislation to support Singapore's growing sports industry.

Strategy 4 – Developing Champions

Sports excellence is a powerful medium to generate more interest in sports and build national pride. Singaporean athletes have steadily improved over time at international competitions. Combined with the right training programmes and facilities, and proper support from various stakeholders, government agencies and the public, our national athletes have the potential to achieve sustained medal success at the Major Games, including the Olympics and Paralympics.

Recommendation 21:

Form a multi-agency 'Glory for the Nation' committee

Current Status

Supporting our elite athletes demands nothing less than the full alignment and cooperation across multiple agencies. This ensures that our athletes can enjoy the best level of coaching and infrastructural support, take leave of absence from school or work without worry, etc. The Committee's assessment is that there is a need to create a multi-agency platform to align efforts and iron out cross-agency issues, so that our athletes can focus on their training and preparation for the Major Games, particularly pinnacle competitions like the Olympics and Paralympics.

The Committee recommends

That a 'Glory for the Nation' standing committee be formed to strategise, coordinate and monitor this national effort to help our national athletes strive towards Olympic and Paralympic medal glory. This committee should comprise representatives from the major stakeholders in sports excellence, such as the SSC, SNOC, NSAs, MOE, educational institutions (including the institutes of higher learning) and Ministry of Defence (MINDEF).

In particular, the role of MINDEF would be to support the training and scheduling needs of male elite athletes to balance their sports and national service commitments.

Other than looking after the able-bodied athletes, the 'Glory for the Nation' committee is inclusive and should support our Elite Athletes with Disabilities (EAD) to compete internationally, e.g. in the ASEAN ParaGames, FESPIC[20] Games, Commonwealth Games and the Paralympics. This committee could also be a useful multi-stakeholder platform to continue the progress of Project 0812[21] which has been initiated by the SNOC to push for Olympic glory in 2008, 2012 and beyond.

The MCYS, SSC and SNOC should take the lead to form this 'Glory for the Nation' committee, which would take an athlete-centric approach in identifying the enhanced support needed to help our most promising elite athletes succeed at the Olympics and Paralympics. This would represent the 'turbo boost' over and above the more systems-centric assistance that SSC and NSAs are providing to the elite athletes.

Recommendation 22:

Start a world-class Sports Institute at the Sports Hub

Current Status

The Sports Hub, when it is ready in 2011, will be an integrated venue to support all three sporting pillars of Sports for All, Sports Excellence and Sports Industry. In particular, the Sports Hub will provide top-notch training and competition facilities for our elite athletes. Many countries such as Australia, Finland, Hong Kong and the United Kingdom, have their own sports institutes serving as a centralised, state-of-the-art facility for top athletes, coaches and other sporting professionals to train, interact and share best practices. To a modest extent, the success of the Singapore Sports School (the Sports School) has shown that a centralised, 'hot-housing' and well-managed approach is the way forward to pursue sports excellence.

[20] The FESPIC Games will be renamed as Asian Para Games from 2010 onwards.
[21] Project 0812 was announced by the SNOC in January 2007 to provide enhanced support for a targeted group of athletes to win medals at the 2008, 2012 and future Summer Olympics.

The Committee recommends

A world-class Sports Institute to be started at the Sports Hub. To help our athletes excel at world levels, this facility would have the best hardware and software, including top sports medicine and sports science (SMSS) services. The Sports Institute would complement the Sports School's youth development focus by providing comprehensive support and management for Singapore's top senior athletes.

A successful Sports Institute requires the joint ownership by the SSC and NSAs. Hence we suggest to set up a multi-stakeholder working committee – comprising representatives from the SSC, Sports School, NSAs and external experts – to co-develop the working model, including the sports to be included, management structure, resource and manpower requirements. The Committee also recommends that this working committee study the Sports School's partnership models with NSAs. This is highly relevant because the Sports Institute would similarly need to establish a close working partnership with NSAs.

While the Sports Hub will only be completed and operational in 2011, we recommend that the SSC should work with the NSAs to establish a 'virtual Sports Institute' whereby the working relationships, role clarity, respective responsibilities and hiring of key personnel would be in place at least 2 years before the Sports Hub goes live. This way, the systems and software can be tested and fine-tuned to world-class standards before moving seamlessly into the Sports Hub.

Recommendation 23:

Ramp up youth talent development

Current Status

A number of outstanding athletes who perform well at the school-level and may have the potential to join national squads tend to stop competitive sports once they leave school. This

is a common occurrence in many developed countries. To ensure that we have a critical mass of athletes with potential, there must be a broad feeder pipeline at the outset, hence the need to improve our youth talent identification and management.

The Committee recommends

Enhancing youth talent recruitment and ensuring a structured and comprehensive flow-through system into the senior squads. The Committee strongly supports the direction taken by the MOE with the implementation of its new Talent Development Framework from 2008 onwards.

The Committee recommends building upon the **MOE's Talent Development Framework**, which focuses on three key strategies: (i) talent development of Primary school athletes through the Junior Sports Academies (JSAs), (ii) increasing support for the Singapore Schools Sports Teams (SSST), and (iii) enhancing the resources of schools to identify athletic potential, e.g. in-house skills test for sports, and software to help identify students with athletic potential and/or great interest in sports. In particular, the Committee suggests:

a. Developing a sound and rigorous process to identify and develop young sporting talent

The Committee recommends that the MOE work closely with the SSC, Singapore Sports School (SSS) and the NSAs to develop a sound approach towards the identification and development of our talented youth. To achieve this, the Committee suggests that sport-specific indicators be developed to allow for a rigorous process in the identification and management of our young sporting talent, ensuring that they attain their highest potential.

Starting in one or two sports, the stakeholders – the MOE, SSC and SSS – should come together to formulate a common set of criteria and protocols that reflect athletic ability among young children. However, the criteria and protocols should strike a balance between identifying those with potential and not sidelining the 'late-bloomers' in sports. These tests will form the basis of a structured talent management system to nurture and develop the talents of these youth through regular, high-level training. A major component of the talent management system would be close and regular monitoring of the athlete's progress to

determine how best to improve his or her performance in accordance with the athlete's goals and aspirations as well as bodily changes in the adolescent stage. Even if the identified youth does not make it to the national teams eventually, he or she would have been exposed to structured and high-level training, and this would at least inculcate a lifelong love of sports.

In future, this set of criteria can be modified and adapted for integration in the schools' Physical Education curriculum, before and after school sports programmes as well as CCA structure. This way, all Singaporean youth will have a better understanding of their own physiological strengths and limits, thus helping them to appreciate sports better.

b. Coordinating multiple pathways to elite performance

There are various stakeholders in the current elite performance landscape. While each of the stakeholders offers different pathways in the elite performance continuum, there must be coordination between the various pathways for a more efficient and strategic use of resources. This could entail, for instance, setting up a central database to track the best talents, establishing protocols to facilitate youth to transfer from say the SSS to other schools and vice versa, and so on. The Committee recommends that the SSC take the lead in working with the NSAs, SSS, MOE and other stakeholders to coordinate the talent identification and management process and ensure a seamless transition between the various pathways.

Since its opening in January 2004, the SSS has raised the standard for youth sports. Its students have won many international honours for Singapore at the junior and senior athlete levels. The Committee recommends that the SSS play an active role in knowledge transfer and sharing vis-à-vis other schools and stakeholders in the areas of talent identification and management. This could be done through holding regular workshops, staff exchanges and even intensive training camps for students of other schools during the holidays.

The Path Ahead

The Committee hopes that this report will catalyse a broad-based effort to galvanise the individual, family, community and nation. For these recommendations to take root and build a great sporting culture, the Committee believes that 3 M's are required – mandate, money and manpower.

Mandate

First and foremost, for the Committee's work to be effective in the long run, the report must have the full backing of national leadership. In other words, a strong mandate must be given to the MCYS and SSC so that they can champion the cause of sports, address issues with all the various stakeholders, and see the Committee's recommendations through to completion.

Money

The Committee on Sporting Singapore's (CoSS) work has been effective in helping Singapore run a major lap in sports development because of the generosity of the MOF and Singapore Pools in starting up the S$500 million Sporting Singapore Fund (SSF) in 2001. There has been a subsequent injection in 2005 to support the SSF until 2010. We have estimated that over and above what is currently available in the SSF − essential to supporting various ongoing sports programmes managed by the SSC, NSAs, Sports School and other stakeholders − additional investments of S$39.8 million (for 2008 to 2010) and S$36.6 million (for 2011 to 2015) would be required to implement the Sporting Culture Committee's recommendations. The Committee hopes that the MOF would consider this additional national investment favourably, so that Singapore can sprint the next lap.

Manpower

The MCYS and SSC, being the sector authorities on sports, must be the primary custodians to execute the recommendations. Both MCYS and SSC will be the lead agencies must take ownership of this report, assess the feasibility of the recommendations, and take up those recommendations that can be implemented through to completion. As the recommendations cut across multiple agencies' areas of responsibility, MCYS and SSC need to tap on existing inter-agency platforms through the proposed National Sports Strategy Committee to push the sporting culture cause.

Members of this new National Sports Strategy Committee could convene regularly, e.g. in a conference or workshop environment, to deliberate and review the progress of the recommendations, think of new ideas and continually push the envelope of sports development. This way, the Sporting Culture Committee's legacy would not be a mere report drafted by a once-off gathering of sports-passionate minds, but instead will evolve into a something larger – an inter-agency platform to where views can be exchanges, ideas will be generated and steady progress will be made towards the successful implementation of the Sporting Culture Committee's recommendations.

Ultimately, sports is about people. To run the next lap, we must have passionate and competent individuals – from the volunteer coach who diligently trains his soccer youth charges every week, to the national athlete who wants to be a world champion and achieve glory for nation and self, to the sports administrator doing his part to help service providers – who see themselves having a stake and taking responsibility to educate and encourage others to live a sporting lifestyle.

Let us continue to work together to build a Singapore Sporting Culture.

Live Life. Breathe Sports.

Annex A

Members of the Sporting Culture Committee

Chairman

Teo Ser Luck	Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports

Sub-committee Chairman

Demand and Software

Bernard Tan	Managing Director (Fixed Income), Development Bank of Singapore

Glory for the Nation

Ng Ser Miang	Executive Board Member, International Olympic Committee & Vice President, Singapore National Olympic Council

Building the Sector

Low Teo Ping	Vice President, Singapore National Olympic Council, President, Singapore Sailing Federation & President, Singapore Rugby Union

Supply and Hardware

Benson Puah	Chief Executive Officer, The Esplanade Co. Ltd

Increasing Mindshare

Alex Chan	Chairman, Singapore Sports Council

Members

Ang Peng Siong	Managing Director, APS Swim School
Warren Buckley	Chief Executive Officer, Suntec Singapore (till 4 June 2007)
Chris Chan	Secretary General, Singapore National Olympic Council
Chew Hock Yong	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports
Mike DeNoma	Group Executive Director (Consumer Banking), Standard Chartered Bank
Koh Ching Hong	Managing Director, Toyota Borneo Motors
Dr Michael Koh	Director (School of Sports, Health and Leisure), Republic Polytechnic
C. Kunalan	Asst. Professor, National Institute of Education
MAJ Lien Choong Luen	Asst. Director (Future System Directorate), Ministry of Defence
Ravi Menon	Deputy Secretary (Policy), Ministry of Finance (until 1 April 2007)
Darrell Metzger	Chief Executive Officer, Sentosa Development Corp. (until 1 April 2007)
MG Neo Kian Hong	Chief of Army, Ministry of Defence
Ng Wai Choong	Deputy Secretary (Policy), Ministry of Finance (from 1 April 2007 onwards)
Niam Chiang Meng	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports
Oon Jin Teik	Chief Executive Officer, Singapore Sports Council
Ms Seah Jiak Choo	Director-General of Education, Ministry of Education
Ms Norma Sit	Managing Director, RED ART Liveworks Pte Ltd
Ms Sum Chee Wah	Director (Education Programmes Division),

	Ministry of Education
Dr Benedict Tan	Head (Changi Sports Medicine Centre), Changi General Hospital
Tan Boon Huat	Chief Executive Director, People's Association
Tan Ju Seng	President, Singapore Disability Sports Council
Ms Naomi Tan	Co-curricular Officer (Co-curricular Activities Branch), Ministry of Education

Annex B

Learning from Overseas

Introduction

Singapore is still in its infancy in sports development. There is much we can learn from other countries such as Australia, China and Finland, which already have an established sporting tradition and culture. As we learn from their best practices, we should also note the different cultural and historical contexts, so that we can adapt accordingly to suit our purposes.

Common trends and lessons from other countries

From 14 to 18 May 2007, the Committee undertook a study trip to Finland to gain insights into the strong Finnish sporting culture and the critical success factors behind it. The key learning points were:

- That a national ideology revolving around sports is an important foundation for a strong sporting culture;
- How a strong sense of civic participation and volunteerism in sports are key contributors to a sporting culture;
- A multi-faceted and holistic approach is beneficial when it comes to sports promotion and development; and
- The importance of capitalising on private-public sector partnerships and developing manpower and research capabilities when promoting sports.

As we compared the lessons from the trip with our knowledge of other countries with strong sporting cultures, the Committee observed several key similarities and trends. The following

lists a broad overview of the lessons we have gleaned from the success of other countries' sports policies:

Lesson 1: A clear vision for sports is a must-have

It is crucial to have a clear vision for sports before we embark on any sports promotion programmes. The vision should outline the benefits of sports to the nation, intended goals, targets and well-tailored strategies. In most countries, the vision is encapsulated in a national sports policy that expresses the government's commitment and rationale to promoting sports.

For Australia and Finland − countries with well-established and rich sports traditions − their national sports development policies[22] clearly articulate the government's aims and strategies for promoting sports, and the benefits it would bring to their people. In Asia, Japan's 'Basic Plan for the Promotion of Sports' states the significance of promoting sports and charts the relevant goals and measures from 2001 to 2010.

Lesson 2: A sporting culture is sustained by bottom-up initiatives and active participation in sports by the population

A strong sporting culture is very often characterised by active citizenry in sports participation. In countries with a long-standing history in sports, sports is very much the way of life for the people and this is evidenced in the community sports scene.

In Finland, the strong tradition of sports clubs is the cornerstone of their sports promotion strategy. There are some 8,000 sports clubs and 300,000 volunteers involved in the clubs. Sports club membership and volunteerism are integral to the Finnish lifestyle, and they stay with the individual throughout his or her life. This strong civic participation is the bedrock of the Finnish sports policy, and is a large part of the reason why the Finns are the most active in sports within the EU today.

[22] The Australian government has formulated a national sports policy, "Building Australian Communities through Sport", to guide its sports development strategies and the work of the Australian Sports Commission. Finland has the "Sports Act" which articulates the overarching aim of promoting recreational, competitive and elite sports as well as related civic activity.

For Australia, sports is a critical part of the Australian psyche and almost one in three Australians play sports or exercise twice a week or more[23]. Due to the high regard for sports, many Australians strive for sports excellence at the highest levels and there is a high demand for sports events, thereby fuelling a robust sports industry. Together, these factors work in tandem to create and sustain a strong sports culture.

Lesson 3: Presence of national will

For sports to flourish, the government must be committed to supporting sports development as a long-term investment. Sports is an indispensable vehicle to achieve social objectives, e.g. national pride and social bonding, but the benefits are usually only apparent in the mid to long term. Therefore it is necessary that the national vision for sports be championed by the government with a long view.

In Australia, there is non-partisan political support for sports across Australia's three main political parties and minority parties. Regardless of changes in the ruling party or coalition, the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) has been receiving stable and increased funding for its elite programmes over the years. Furthermore, the appointment of the AIS Director by the Prime Minister signifies the national importance of sports.

National will is even more pronounced in China, where the government has played a large role to promote and develop sports. Physical fitness has always been an important aspect of traditional Chinese culture, and since 1995, the Chinese government has embarked on a series of 'Sports for All' programmes and initiatives to involve more people in physical activity. The government has also placed great emphasis on sports excellence at the highest levels as a tool for instilling national pride among the people. Since 1979, Chinese athletes have taken part in five Summer Olympic Games, garnering a total of 80 golds, 79 silvers and 64 bronzes, thus showcasing their prowess to the rest of the world. With its intention to advance its mark in the international sporting arena as a showcase for the country's progress on the global stage, the Chinese government bid and won the right to host the Summer Olympic Games in 2008.

[23] These figures were released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in Feb 2007, as part of the study entitled "Sports and Physical Recreation, Australia 2005-06".

Lesson 4: Adopting a multi-faceted and holistic approach towards sports

Sports is a social activity that brings many benefits to the participant. Countries have espoused the multiple benefits of sports, e.g. physical and mental benefits, social benefits such as building national pride and social cohesion, and economic contributions to the country. A coordinated inter-agency approach that gives public and private agencies a shared responsibility in sports promotion and development is bound to yield greater success.

This is the case in Finland which uses a network of established links among the various sports organisations and interest groups, ensuring that sports is represented at every level, i.e. the national level (Ministry of Education), regional level (provinces), and local level (municipal authorities, non-governmental organisations such as sports clubs and organisations). The Finns also adopt a perspective whereby sports can impact beyond the individual to the family, community and national levels.

In Japan, sports is regarded as a healthy pastime for all Japanese, young and old. Not only does sports help build discipline, teamwork and fair play, it helps the elderly keep fit and healthy. The Japanese government has been encouraging lifelong participation in sports by setting up at least one comprehensive community sports club in each municipality from 2000 to 2010. These clubs offer a variety of sports for Japanese of all ages and skill levels, with certified instructors on hand to assist participants at different skill levels. These clubs make it possible for the local residents to engage in regular sports activities for life.

While a decentralised and networked approach is helpful to bring sports to the masses, it may not be the ideal method to attain sports excellence at the highest levels. The Finnish Olympic Committee had mentioned their need to increase professionalism and adopt a more coordinated approach to enhance their sports excellence outcomes. The learning point for us is to adopt different approaches for our sports for all and sports excellence plans, e.g. a networked and ‘many helping hands’ approach would better support a vibrant club culture and participation, while a more focused and structured approach is better suited to develop our athletes into champions. These approaches would reinforce each other and ensure the success of our participation and excellence efforts.

Lesson 5: Establishing and maximising partnerships between public and private sectors

Adopting a public-private partnership approach should provide a win-win arrangement for all parties involved in sports, particularly in the case of managing sports facilities and event venues.

Australia's sporting facilities are versatile and designed to be multi-purpose so that they can host sporting, entertainment and social events. In the case of the Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre (MSAC), the management effectively balances community needs and commercial interests through creative scheduling and strategic marketing to various groups. For instance, the MSAC has facilities open for community use and members-only fitness gyms and wellness centres. Similarly, the Kuortane Sports Institute in Finland caters to the needs of the elite athletes and the larger community. The Kuortane Sports Institute is jointly funded by private, public and people sectors – the Ministry of Education funds 37% of the Institute's operating costs while the remaining funds are raised through room rentals and commercial sponsorships.

A mix of revenue sources is common for many sports clubs in Finland, where a large majority of their revenue comes from membership fees (80-90%), while the rest is made up of local government subsidies, i.e. municipalities, and commercial sponsorships. It is through this bottom-up approach that the Finnish sports programmes and schemes are able to flourish and become self-sustaining in the long run.

[End of Report]