

"OUR SAY ON OUR PLAY"

The South East Queensland Indigenous Sport and Recreation Strategy

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DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

LGA's	Local Government Authorities
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
SRQ	Sport and Recreation Queensland, Department of Communication Information, Local Government, Planning and Sport
LIROP	Local Indigenous Recreation Officers Program
ASSA	Australian Society of Sports Administrators
NASCA	National Aboriginal Sports Corporation of Australia
NAIDOC	National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Observance Committee
RCIADIC	Royal Commission Into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
ASC	Australian Sports Commission
ISP	(ASC) Indigenous Sports Program
YPSROP	Young Persons Sport and Recreation Development Program
SOCOG	Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games
SPOC	Sydney Paralympic Organising Committee

DEFINITIONS

Mainstream Sport	"Formalised Local, Regional, State and Club Competition recognised as a core sporting structure"
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Introduction/Foreword

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This document outlines the importance of Sport and Recreation to the Indigenous Communities of South East Queensland, and how Local Government Authorities (LGA's) and other key agencies can play their role in ensuring fair, equitable, and increased opportunities for Indigenous participation in Sport and Recreation.

It is also designed to help inform and educate the Indigenous communities in their endeavours to establish a more united approach to Sport and Recreation throughout the South East Region.

'To improve the well being of Aboriginal people in Brisbane through sport and recreation will require a co-ordinated approach by all relevant agencies'.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Project Steering Committee members:

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As well as the Local Government Association of Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sporting organisations, and a diverse representation from our Indigenous community.

Thanks also to the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA) for their archival material, and to Dr Ken Edwards for his assistance with historical references.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people view Sport and Recreation in various ways, but above all many see it as a holistic experience, encompassing Spiritual, cultural, political, and social well being and competition.

This report wants to build bridges between the Indigenous and non Indigenous communities in South East Queensland, so ultimately there will be benefits for everyone to share and to prosper.

Sport and Recreation can truly enrich the lives of Indigenous people and help to engender the values of tolerance and reconciliation within the wider community.

Executive Summary

The South East Queensland Indigenous Sport and Recreation Strategy – “*Our Say on Our Play*” has been co-ordinated and financially supported by a working party of representatives from Sport & Recreation Queensland, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Brisbane City Council, Logan City Council, Redcliffe City Council, Ipswich City Council, Redlands Shire Council and Gold Coast City Council.

This Strategy is an initiative of these combined Local Government Authorities and Government Agencies. It is based on information from a number of workshops held during 2000 with representatives from Indigenous communities at various locations in South East Queensland. The participants at these workshops came together in each region to talk about a diverse range of issues impacting on their local Indigenous sport and recreation infrastructure.

This strategy is the product of the most comprehensive, direct and documented consultation on Indigenous sport and recreation needs in South East Queensland. It is also the first plan focussed on assisting Local Government Authorities in meeting their corporate and community goals. The recommendations from “*Our Say on Our Play*” have strongly considered the resource implications for Local Government Authorities, yet ensure the needs of Indigenous communities are met.

Priority Recommendations

The recommendations from this document fall into four categories:

- *Policy development and coordination:*
To assist in creating an environment that increases the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Sport and Recreation.
- *Infrastructure development and coordination:*
To increase community involvement in the development and implementation of Sport and Recreation programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- *Education, Employment and Funding programs:*
To assist in the development and training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to deliver their Sport and Recreation.
- *Participation and recognition programs and initiatives:*
To promote and enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through a variety of sport and recreation activities, aimed at the whole community.

Major priorities identified in the Strategy are:

Coordinated implementation of this Strategy by all key stakeholders.

Sport and Recreation Queensland, ATSIC and Local Government Authorities (LGA's) to work closely with Indigenous communities to continue to develop and implement this Strategy.

Indigenous Sport and Recreation Advisory Groups

Infrastructure is vital to the delivery of sport and recreation to any community. This issue was highlighted at all workshops. One solution is the establishment of a Regional, and where appropriate, local Indigenous Sport and Recreation Advisory Groups. Such groups have already been established in Brisbane, Ipswich and North Stradbroke Island.

Local Indigenous Recreation Officers

There was a need expressed in all workshop discussions for the employment of Local Indigenous Recreation Officers to deliver appropriate sport and recreation opportunities to Indigenous communities. A number of South East Queensland LGA's currently received funding under the Sport and Recreation Queensland Local Indigenous Recreation Officer Program. The expansion of this program to other relevant Councils is a priority of this Strategy.

Culturally appropriate and accessible Education Programs and Courses

It is recommended that ASSA, Sports Federation of Queensland, LIROP Officers and TAFE Qld. work together to develop competency based identification programs and accredited courses for Indigenous sports people. These courses and programs should be easily accessible with an emphasis on cultural protocol, knowledge and sensitivity to ensure the best possible coaching and administration training is available for Indigenous communities.

Stronger links with State Sporting Organisations

Sport and Recreation Queensland and LGA's could play an important role in forging stronger links between State and Regional Sporting Organisations to develop programs which encourage increased participation by Indigenous people.

Support

The major stakeholders in the Strategy have a large responsibility for guidance and support in implementing the recommendations.

Sport and Recreation Queensland

SRQ's South East Regional Office is identified as having a key role in implementing those recommendations with regional implications, including:

- The establishment of a Regional Indigenous Sport and Recreation Advisory Group.
- The continued implementation of the LIROP program.
- Monitoring and coordinating evaluation of this Strategy.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

As the peak Indigenous body in Australia, their networking and access to information will be extremely important in implementing the Strategy. Responsibilities would include:

- Coordination and communication between Indigenous communities.
- Advocacy on emerging issues.
- Identification of policy and program needs.

These two agencies have equal responsibility with LGA's and the community to identify the policy recommendations that relate to them and work together to achieve desired outcomes.

Helping LGA's to Help Communities

LGA's are prominent and pro-active in the communities they represent. "*Our Say on Our Play*" is a document that when implemented, will boost LGA's effectiveness in delivering results to Indigenous people.

The importance of sport and recreation in Indigenous communities has been highlighted. The benefits are much broader than just physical activity.

"*Our Say on Our Play*" is more than a document – it is an opportunity. All stakeholders must closely study the recommendations and determine the best implementation methods for their communities. By working together we can provide a positive future for Indigenous sport and recreation in South East Queensland.

The relationship between Indigenous communities and Sport and Recreation is a time honoured one. Its significance is briefly detailed in the historical summary of this strategy. A number of historians like Professor Colin Tatz have written extensively about this relationship, as has Dr Ken Edwards from Brisbane, who has detailed the lives of a number of Queensland Aboriginal sporting legends.

Major social justice reports including the *‘Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody’*, the *‘Report of the task force on Aboriginal social Justice’*, and the *Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation* highlight how sport and recreation can have a positive influence on the lives of Aboriginal people.

As these reports suggest, participation in sport and recreation can give Aboriginal people a direction in life. It renews their self esteem and identity.

This report recommends that this philosophy should also be applied through-out South-East Queensland.

Workshops

CONSULTATION WORKSHOPS

Local Indigenous Sport and Recreation workshops were held at Redcliffe, Ipswich, the Gold Coast, Logan City, Caboolture, and Brisbane during 2000. There was a discussion with the Stradbroke Island Council of Elders informing them about this strategy, although no formal meeting with community representatives in a workshop setting took place. However both the Council of Elders and Dunwich State School returned their completed questionnaires. The Murri Independent School at Acacia Ridge also responded to these questions.

The participants came together in each region to talk about a diverse range of issues impacting on their local Indigenous Sport and Recreation infrastructure. They also discussed the possibility of Regional networking throughout the south-east.

WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

Outlined below is an overview of the common themes registered from the questions asked of the groups at the workshops.

(The Questions can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of this document).

- *The groups said that having fun, social contact, and networking was an important part of sport and recreation.*
- *Sport was a way of keeping the youth busy and on the right path, and therefore out of trouble.*
- *Sport is almost a rite of passage for the Indigenous youth, and that sport promotes values.*
- *A number of people said that sport is connected to everything they do, and it has a very high priority in their lifestyle.*
- *Sport should promote more of the positives than the negatives, and it should promote a healthier lifestyle.*
- *A number of people said that there wasn't enough funding for Indigenous sport and recreation programs.*
- *Participants said that a number of Indigenous sports men and women were still being discriminated against and treated unfairly.*
- *Transport is too expensive and is a major problem.*
- *Many people said that an Indigenous sporting reference group in the community was very important.*
- *An event calendar for local, State, and National events was also a priority.*
- *Create a newsletter and an Indigenous Sports directory.*
- *A number of people wanted to share a local sporting facility or building where they could meet and talk about their sport and recreation needs.*
- *Participants said that identification programs, and acquiring top coaches for their respective sport was a priority.*
- *The groups said that a sport and recreation camp was needed.*
- *Mentoring programs was a high priority.*
- *A lot of people wanted help or training in filling out funding applications.*
- *Approach the corporate sector for funding opportunities to become more self reliant.*
- *Most people wanted to see Indigenous sport and recreation officers employed to help there own people and communities.*
- *The participants said that Infrastructure was the number one priority, followed by funding and then Education and Training.*
- *The participants wanted more sport and recreation accredited courses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people.*

Recommendations

There are four areas which have been identified as priorities through the consultative process in the development of the South East Queensland Indigenous Sport and Recreation strategy. These are:

Policy Development
Infrastructure Development
Education Employment and Funding
Participation and Recognition

The Steering Committee has advised a time frame of three years for the development and implementation of the recommendations of this strategy.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION

‘To assist in creating an environment that increases the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Sport and Recreation.’

Policy recommendations

1. Under the leadership of SRQ, LGA's to work with their Indigenous communities to continue to develop and implement the South East Queensland Indigenous Sport and Recreation strategy.
2. LGA's to work with relevant Government agencies to devise and implement cross cultural training programs.
3. LGA's to encourage and maintain ongoing Indigenous representation on relevant Sport Advisory Boards, Committees and Organisations.
4. LGA's to establish a relationship with the Dept of Families, Youth and Community Care, and other key government agencies such as Corrective Services, in order to initiate a culturally appropriate sport and recreation program or plan for Indigenous youth – to help build self esteem and maintain the principle of ‘Crime Prevention’.
5. SRQ and ATSIC to advocate for the development of a Queensland Indigenous Sport and Recreation policy, in partnership with key stakeholders and LGA's.
6. LGA's to develop a culturally appropriate policy for identifying strategies to address the needs and priorities of Indigenous people in sport and recreation.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND CO-ORDINATION.

‘To increase community involvement in the development and implementation of Sport and Recreation programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.’

Policy recommendations

- 1. SRQ in collaboration with representatives from LGA’s, ATSIC, and Aboriginal reference groups, to establish a South East Queensland Indigenous Sport and Recreation body or Association.**
- 2. LGA’s to facilitate the establishment and operation of local Indigenous Sport and Recreation reference groups.**
- 3. Maintain the ongoing employment of Local Indigenous Recreation Officers Program (LIROP) staff within the LGA’s of South East Queensland.**
- 4. LGA’s in collaboration with community groups, Aboriginal reference groups, and interested agencies to advocate for a Queensland Indigenous Sport and Recreation peak body.**
- 5. LGA’s through LIROP officers, ATSIC, and community groups to establish a formalised Indigenous Youth structure throughout South East Queensland which encourages more participation in Sport and Recreation. eg: Black Ink – Brisbane Indigenous Youth (BIY) reference group.**
- 6. SRQ’s South East Qld. Indigenous Adviser, in conjunction with relevant reference groups, to investigate the development of a SE Qld ‘Communications’ strategy, incorporating a SEQ calendar of Indigenous Sport and Recreation events. Promotional strategies to include the Internet, Aboriginal Radio, etc. to relay information to the SEQ Indigenous community regarding these events, and other program and training opportunities.**
- 7. LGA’s, through consultation with local Indigenous reference groups, to explore the concept of establishing a local sport and recreation precinct as a base for Indigenous organisations; or access to a building on a regular basis to provide an ‘identity’ for the activities of the local Indigenous sport and recreation community.**
- 8. LIROP officers, local reference groups, and mainstream sporting representatives to liaise and develop partnerships to help create a more productive alliance and break down some of the barriers which exist to Indigenous participation in sport and recreation activities.**

‘To assist in the development and training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to deliver their Sport and Recreation.’

Policy recommendations

- 1. The Australian Society of Sports Administrators (ASSA), Sports Federation of Queensland, LIROP officers, SRQ, Indigenous Reference groups, and TAFE Queensland, to work together to develop appropriate competency based programs, to identify and develop talented Indigenous sports people. These same organisations to also develop appropriate accredited training courses for Indigenous sports administrators, coaches and officials.**
- 2. LGA’s to work with relevant agencies and the Indigenous community to acquire the best possible coaching for Indigenous sporting teams and community groups. Coach training to include an emphasis on cultural protocol, knowledge and sensitivity.**
- 3. LGA’s to work with State Government Departments to develop and administer more culturally appropriate education and training courses for Indigenous people regarding Sport and Recreation, and to ensure the courses are accessible by members of Indigenous communities.**
- 4. LGA’s to consult and negotiate with relevant local and state Government agencies to secure a stronger financial base for all structures within Indigenous Sport and Recreation, to ensure the long term viability of programs, initiatives, and employment.**
- 5. Reference groups, LIROP officers, and Indigenous Advisors of SRQ, to assist Indigenous Sporting groups and Associations to develop stronger and more productive relationships with the Corporate sector in order to secure financial support, and therefore minimise the dependence on Governments.**
- 6. Ensure that LGA’s Sport and Recreation funding programs are appropriate and supportive of the Indigenous community.**

‘To promote and enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through a variety of sport and recreation activities, aimed at the whole community.’

Policy recommendations

- 1. LGA’s to promote and facilitate indigenous involvement in events at international, national, state, and local level, as well as the 2001 Goodwill games in Brisbane.**
- 2. SRQ and LGA’s to identify the opportunities which international, national and state events offer for training and involvement of indigenous sportspeople in areas of volunteering, sports administration, showcasing culture and highlighting the indigenous sporting history of the South East.**
- 3. LIROP officers and SRQ Indigenous Adviser to co-ordinate an ongoing Indigenous sport recognition night in the South East, and help to promote and co-ordinate local award nights if so required by those respective communities.**
- 4. LGA’s, SRQ, and ATSIC to develop and initiate regular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sport and Recreation camps which cater for a diverse age and gender group from the South East region.**
- 5. Reference groups, LIROP officers, SRQ, and relevant mainstream sporting bodies to co-ordinate an annual or biannual Sport and Recreation roving festival within the South East, which showcases the culture and talents of the local Indigenous people. ie: Stradbroke Island, Caboolture, the Gold Coast etc.**
- 6. Establish mentoring programs for Indigenous Youth within the South East which would complement existing programs through the YPSRDP, Black Diamonds, and the ISP.**
- 7. LIROP officers and SRQ Indigenous Adviser to liaise with the relevant sporting bodies to ensure that Indigenous people are eligible and encouraged to nominate for mainstream Sporting awards.**
- 8. SRQ and LGA’s to forge stronger links with regional and State Sporting Organisations to develop programs which encourage increased participation by Indigenous people.**

Historical

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Australia's Indigenous People

The Aboriginal people and people from the Torres Strait Islands are the original inhabitants of this country, Australia.

There is much diversity within these two distinct groups. Different languages, customs, dance and traditions.

In the Australian Bureau of Statistics census in 1996, there were 386,049 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Australia, which represents 2.1% of the total population. Queensland has the second highest population (104,817) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. New South Wales heads the list with close to 110,000.

South East Queensland Indigenous Community

The 1996 ABS census revealed that the South-East ATSI region of Brisbane had just over 30,000 Indigenous residents, which represents 1.4% of the total regional population of South-East Queensland.

There are anomalies between the Indigenous people living within the boundaries of the South East. Each Local Government Authority (LGA) has traditional Aboriginal owners with sacred links to that particular country.

Many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders live in this area, and they have come from elsewhere in Queensland, or moved from interstate.

As stated earlier in this document there are fourteen LGAs within the South-East, and as expected Brisbane has the highest number of Indigenous people (almost 10,000).

A number of LGAs have formed respectful and productive relationships with their Indigenous populations, notably the Brisbane City Council, Ipswich City Council, and the Redlands Shire. The Brisbane City Council has identified a number of sites of significance to Aboriginal people, and initiated the strategy *'Building Communities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people'*.

The Redlands Shire has acknowledged the traditional Aboriginal owners of Moreton Bay (Quandamooka) and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with them. While the Ipswich City Council has formed an agreement with the local Indigenous population, adopting the principles of the national reconciliation document.

A HISTORY OF ABORIGINAL SPORT IN SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

Preface

The following is a brief outline of the history of Aboriginal people's involvement in sport and recreation throughout the South East Queensland region detailing incidents from the mid 1800's to present day. It in no way purports to be a comprehensive historical document, and therefore some names, places, and events may have been omitted. The author apologises for any misunderstanding or inconvenience this may cause.

For the purpose of this strategy, the borders of South East Queensland relate to fourteen LGA's, and to their respective boundaries. These include Brisbane, Redlands, Logan City, Gold Coast, Caboolture, Pine Rivers, Redcliffe, Ipswich, Beaudesert, Esk, Laidley, Boonah, Gatton, and Kilcoy. It must be noted however that some of the shires were not able to contribute to this process. But that should not exclude them from the implementation of this strategy.

According to information from FAIRA, within the South East region of Queensland there are a number of Aboriginal groups who claim traditional association with the land. These include the Toorbal (Brisbane), Jagara (Brisbane), Nunukul (Stradbroke Is), Ngugi (Moreton Is), Garumga (North-West), Jukambe (South), Gubbi Gubbi (Bribie Is), Kombumerri (Gold Coast), Jinibara (West), and Ugarapuli (South-West).

History

Records indicate a healthy and thriving sport and recreation lifestyle for Aboriginal men women and children in South East Queensland for most part of the last 150 years.

This included such practices as boomerang throwing, foot races, river regattas, spear throwing, cricket, football, and traditional sports like *Purru Purru*, and *Murun Murun*.

While the protectionist policies had a devastating impact on the social and cultural lives of Aboriginal people throughout Queensland. Historical evidence obtained shows that South East Queensland Indigenous people continued to excel at sport, despite no formal recognition of their achievements and restrictions on their movements and ambitions.

This article appeared in the Queensland Times on the 6th of October 1903:

'A fete day in Brisbane for the Deebing Creek and Durundur reserves was organised by Archibald Meston (Chief Protector). Aboriginal groups from the reserves arrived at the Brisbane Cricket Ground after a parade through the Brisbane Streets. A sports day was then held at the ground which attracted 3000 spectators. Displays of Boomerang and spear throwing were conducted. One spear throw with a woomera reached a distance of 145 yards. The Boomerang display lacked accuracy because of a crosswind. A Rugby union match was played between a local Brisbane side and a combined team from Deebing creek and Durundur.'

According to Queensland ethnohistory transcripts from the Archeology Branch of the former Department of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs in Brisbane:

'S.E. Queensland Aboriginal groups had recognised tournament centres where people met to settle their differences or simply compete in fights. These included Maroochydore, Nambour, Toorbul, Shafston (Kangaroo Pt), the Ekibin-Greenslopes area, Woolloongabba and Ipswich'.

'This type of fighting was both sport and etiquette. At the fighting rings at Jimboomba and Toorbul, early white observers noted that tournaments always began with a flowery exchange of abuse, a shouting match, between the two opponents. This was done in the fighting circle, and was followed by the contestants sticking their spears in the ground in a set manner. Keeping an eye on each other, the rivals would then pick their spears up with their feet.

This action would bring on a great cry from the crowds, which had camped towards the ring – often in Hundreds – to watch the match. In turns, the contestants then threw a spear/spears at each other. As both rivals were armed with shields, each was able to dodge and block the blows by skilful and graceful manoeuvring. If either man failed to make a 'hit' in this process, they might take up waddies (clubs) and fight each other. Women engaged in Waddy fights of this type too, often simultaneous with the male matches'.

The Joondoonbarrie people of Bribie Island were particularly renowned sportspeople and fighters, often winning contests at Tingalpa and Maroochydore.

The ethnohistory transcripts say that 'Tingalpa was a popular wrestling spot, where teams gathered from far and wide, once a year, as reckoned by the moon, at Bunya times. Two parties met face to face along a straight line. They wrestled, man against man, two at a time only, in a rough and tumble fashion. A decorated spear was the prize, and the victors put it carefully away, until they had to defend it the following year'.

The traditional game of *Purru Purru* was played with a ball made of Kangaroo skin stuffed with grass. The women were also able to take part in this game.

When sides had been chosen, the ball was thrown up in the air and caught: each side tried to keep it themselves, or to catch it from the other side. Other games which were common amongst some of the Aboriginal tribal groups from South East Queensland from the 1800's were skipping, mud fights, and turtles.

Skipping was done with a length of vine, with one end tied to a tree. There'd be four skipping at a time – two pairs – and they had to change places. As soon as the vine hit you, you and your mate had to retire.

The game of *Turtles* was played in lagoons. The person who acted as turtle had to be a very good diver and swimmer. He would first swim out to the centre of the lagoon, and say he was ready. Only two boys or two girls were allowed at one time to try to catch him ie: to tap him on the head. This game was played between rival tribes. Some of the turtles were very clever, and used to come up very slowly and carefully amongst the waterlilies, so as to hide from their pursuers.

Mud fights frequently took place. The mud was rolled into balls and two men took them and threw them at each other, while dancing with their bodies half stooped. The first man in the dance turned and held out his cheek for a mud ball; on receiving it, he threw one back and then held out the other cheek. This continued until both were smothered all over with mud. The players kept grave faces, but the onlookers were convulsed with laughter.

Whilst games were being played and enjoyed, much of the effort was training for later life, when the lessons learnt would be applied to hunting or for the art of war.

Not only were Aboriginal people involved with their own traditional games within their own tribal communities, newspaper articles suggest they were very much in pursuit of mainstream sporting competition.

From the Moreton Bay Courier dated the 29th of January 1848:

'Description of the regatta held on 26th January 1848, competitors included an Aboriginal group who crewed 'the pirate', a boat which was given to the blacks of amity point for their exertions in rescuing survivors of the unfortunate 'sovereign' steamer and her sable crew exhibited skill and emulation in the race. Other Aboriginal competitors included Gulpin in 'spring heeled jack' and Wallaby Joe in 'Moonbeam'.

And from the Queensland Times dated the 16th of February 1905:

'The list of competitors in the professional sprint race included the following Aboriginal men from Ipswich – A Henry. A Morgan. H Thompson. A Collins. G Brown. H Edward. A Sandy. W Martin. T Lake. H McDonald. A Dellor. R Logan. And Combo.

The region of Beaudesert produced some fine sportsmen and women. Rugby League was very popular in that area, and in the 1930's they had their own all black side which was very competitive. They went on to win a premiership.

This article appeared in the Beaudesert Times on the 14th of September 1951:

'Aboriginal elder Billy Drumley died last Tuesday aged 98. He was born near Nerang. He was a successful sportsman winning many trophies for boxing and running. He was also an accomplished axeman'. The paper described him as 'a man of rare character'.

Professor Colin Tatz in his publications *'Black Diamonds, 'Obstacle Race' and 'Black Gold'* has documented a number of Indigenous men and women from South East Queensland who have excelled in their sport. People such as champion boxer Ron Richards, who was born at Purga Mission near Ipswich. He is rated as one of this country's all time greatest fighters. Cousins Mabel Campbell and Edna Crouch from Stradbroke Island who both represented Queensland at Cricket in the 1930's. Edna's brother Glen Crouch represented Queensland in Rugby League, touring New Zealand in 1925. And cricketer Albert Henry from Deebing Creek reserve near Ipswich, who played Sheffield Shield for Queensland from 1901 to 1904.

The south east has certainly produced some gifted Aboriginal Rugby League players, and the Currie family stand out. Stokel, Allan, and Tony were all representative players.

The Sharman boxing tents were popular with a lot of people during the forties and fifties. For some Aboriginal men it was their chance of earning some good money. They toured the south east of Queensland and elsewhere for many years.

It's been noted by Professor Tatz in his publication *'Black Diamonds'* and by other historians that Aboriginal sportspeople have been accepted more into the wider sporting arena through attitudinal changes within society and simply by the abolition of discriminatory legislation. This has only occurred over the last thirty or so years.

At the inaugural Queensland Indigenous Sports recognition night held in Brisbane in June 1999, award recipient Darby McCarthy mentioned on stage that he was treated like a king when he was riding overseas at places like Royal Ascot in England, yet at the same time he *'couldn't vote in my own country'*.

A reflection of those societal changes though has become self-evident through more Aboriginal participation in the so called elite sports like Rugby Union, Tennis, Golf, and Cricket. An example of this is the NASCA project to find the Aboriginal equivalent to golfing great Tiger Woods.

This particular program has discovered some Aboriginal talent, yet more importantly the Australian Golfing fraternity has given these aspirants the chance to participate and succeed.

However some Aboriginal people remain so fiercely proud and protective of their cultural identity and their community, they want their identity represented on the sporting field. And so we've seen the formation of 'all Aboriginal' teams.

Some clubs say they do it to promote Reconciliation, and others simply prefer to play alongside their own people because they feel more comfortable.

South East Queensland has had its fair share of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sporting teams. As mentioned earlier the Beaudesert All Blacks were a popular team in the 1930's.

In Brisbane the Kangaroos and the Natives Rugby League sides had huge followings in the seventies and eighties. It was common to see a few hundred people turn out for their matches. The Natives RL side is still competing, along with a couple of other Rugby League all black teams including some from Inala in Brisbane and on Stradbroke Island. There's a number of Indigenous touch teams, an Aboriginal women's Softball team, an Aboriginal social Golf club, an Aboriginal Australian Rules football side, an Indigenous Soccer team, an Indigenous women's Rugby side, an Aboriginal Netball team, and a women's Surf team on the Gold Coast who wear the Aboriginal colours.

And of course there are those who compete at a more elite professional level that need mentioning. They include *Helena Saunders* from the Queensland Firebirds Netball team, *Shane Drahm* from the Queensland Reds, Softballer *Kelly McKellar*, Paralympian *Warren Lawnton*, Weightlifter *Anthony Martin*, Basketballer *Verle Williams*, Tennis player *Nathan Appo*, former Soccer international *Kayleen Janssen*, and *Shannon Best* from the Gold Coast, who's a world rated professional 'Wake Boarder'. He currently resides in Florida in the United States.

A HISTORY OF ABORIGINAL RECREATION HELD THROUGHOUT SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

A number of the traditional games and activities mentioned in the previous chapter on Aboriginal Sports could also be defined as recreational. Mud fights, skipping, turtles, traditional games, string games, and some ball games involved a wide cross section of the tribal community. While there may have been a competitive aspect to these games, the emphasis certainly appeared to be on having fun and enjoyment. One of the most important recreational and cultural events for Aboriginal groups around the south east in the eighteen hundreds was the Bunya Pine (Bon-yi) Festival held regularly around the Blackall ranges.

It attracted up to a thousand Aboriginal people from all over the region, (Brisbane, Kilcoy, Bribie Island, Gympie, Wide Bay, and Fraser Island) and was a celebration of life and culture.

****Hunting, gathering, song, dance, initiation ceremonies, arts, and theatre, involved men, women, and children, and are all recreation activities.**

Aboriginal recreation differs traditionally from non-Indigenous recreation. Most Non-Aboriginal Australians manage their life experiences by isolating them in separate blocks. People go to special centres for education purposes. They then move on to paid employment, an economic pursuit.

Separate to these activities, and as a reward, they enjoy recreational time out from the monotony of daily life. If inclined they may also become involved in spiritual experiences by attending church on Sunday.

Traditional Indigenous Recreation

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in traditional environments on the other hand, can be involved in all these activities at the same time. For example a group of women on a gathering excursion (an economic pursuit), could also teach the younger members of the group, giving instruction and passing on skills necessary for survival (education). At the same time, such activities can be very much recreational, as women laugh and talk, enjoying each others company. Spiritual enrichment, in caring for country, is a fundamental to such activities and on ongoing obligation.

Contemporary Indigenous Recreation

Very few Indigenous people live in a 'traditional' environment today. Some live in large urban centres like Inala and Acacia Ridge in Brisbane. Others live in large or small country towns like Mareeba, while many live in communities like Cherbourg, and the Torres Strait Islands. Few live in isolated areas, dependent upon their own resources, removed from western influences. The people living in these different environments have adapted or adopted some elements of non Aboriginal culture and technology, and have incorporated such elements into their lifestyles to a lesser or greater extent. This also applies to recreational services.

Across Aboriginal Australia, recreation means different things to different people living in different situations. Its definition is dependent on many factors including, place of residence, level of foreign intervention in lifestyle, socialisation, recreational resources available, and the degree of control of the natural environment.**

Subsequently ‘recreation’ differs with each Indigenous community throughout south east Queensland, and this must be acknowledged and respected. Each community must be consulted regarding their specific needs and endeavours.

Some ‘recreation’ events held around the south east include the annual ‘DAR’ Festival, First Contact Sports and Cultural festival, NAIDOC Celebrations, LIROP Officers ‘Get Active Days’, Traditional Dance troupes, Mali Kalai rowing, Kooemba Jdarra Theatre, and the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts.

*****Sourced from ‘Recreation in the Aboriginal Community’ – A report to the Dept of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism, and Territories 1993. By Judy Atkinson.***

Service delivery

MAINSTREAM SPORT AND RECREATION DELIVERY IN SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND

There are a large number of organisations throughout the South East which deliver Sport and Recreation. They include local, state, and regional sporting and recreational clubs, as well as Industry peak bodies such as the Sports Federation of Queensland, and industry service organisations like the Australian Society of Sport Administrators (ASSA).

The south east has an excellent range of sport and recreation facilities catering for a diverse group of people. There are programs for women, young people and the elderly, as well as a range of community festivals.

SERVICE DELIVERY TO INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

The "uneven playing field" for Indigenous Australians over the last two hundred years has been well documented in a whole range of social reports, and some have been mentioned in this strategy. ie (RCIADIC).

It was therefore inevitable through political, legislative, cultural, and moral pressure that Indigenous Australians would one day be given more recognition and acceptance. This is certainly true in the area of Sport and Recreation.

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has a number of initiatives in place, and one of these is the Indigenous Sport Program (ISP). ATSIIC was also involved in the formation of the ISP by providing financial support and entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the ASC.

The ISP implements programs such as the Young Person's Sport and Recreation Development Program (YPSRDP), Indigenous Mentoring scheme, Indigenous scholarships, anti-racism strategies, and community cultural carnivals (for remote communities). In this Olympic year, it is worth mentioning that the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) and the Sydney Paralympic Organising Committee (SPOC) had an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs unit. Its role is to showcase Indigenous culture, encourage employment and business opportunities for Indigenous people.

The Queensland State Government has responded to addressing service delivery to Indigenous people through the employment of Regional Indigenous Sport and Recreation advisers based around Queensland, and the implementation of the LIROP in 1997. The LIROP was established due to a lack of infrastructure and services filtering down to a local level. A number of LGA's have employed LIROP officers throughout the south east such as Brisbane City Council, Logan, Ipswich, and the Gold Coast.

The intention of this strategy is to LIROP officers with an additional tool for providing service delivery in a coordinated regional context. at a regional level, as highlighted by those community and industry representatives at the inaugural Sports summit at Jagera hall in Brisbane in March of 1999.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLE

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION QUEENSLAND (LGAQ)

LGAQ have two policy statements relating to Sport and Recreation.

Local Government acknowledges the need to ensure the provision of a diverse range of recreational and leisure facilities, programs and services to meet community needs.

Local Government recognises that multi use of sporting and recreational facilities will increase efficiency, and will encourage this practice within their communities, and with other spheres of government.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

Sport and Recreation now comes under the Portfolio of ‘Social and Culture’ for South East Queensland. They promote their grants programs through First Contact Incorporated and contribute to the Annual Sports and Cultural festival which is also co-ordinated by First Contact.

SPORT AND RECREATION QUEENSLAND

They have a program co-ordinator for Indigenous Sport and Recreation, who’s role is to oversee the implementation of the Indigenous Sport and Recreation strategy. This position is also responsible for developing partnerships across Government agencies and peak sporting organisations to contribute to a co-ordinated whole of government approach to service delivery.

The four key objectives in their strategic directions document are:

*Education and Training
Marketing and promotions
Program development and service delivery
Policy and Co-ordination*

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES

This agency has no specific policy relating to the employment of Indigenous Sport and Recreation personnel. They do have activity officers whose responsibility is to develop and initiate sport and recreation programs in the correctional facilities, which is aimed at both the Indigenous and non-indigenous inmates.

DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

This Department states its purpose to be:

‘The Department aims to improve the cultural, economic, physical, and social well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queensland by creating effective alliances and partnering arrangements’.

MAINSTREAM SPORTING BODIES

The peak advocacy group for sport in Queensland, the Sports Federation of Queensland does not have any “affirmative action” strategy or policy relating directly to the recruitment, employment, or involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Their membership organisations have various policies, and overall the majority of these sporting associations do not have a policy targeting any minority groups.

It would appear that the four football codes have adopted some limited form of “affirmative action” when it comes to Indigenous talent. There appears to be healthy numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders playing Rugby League, Australian Football, Soccer, and Rugby Union at a junior and senior level.

These sporting groups have deliberately targeted Indigenous youth around Queensland. The relationship has been mutually beneficial over many years, particularly in the case of Rugby League.

The successful programs undertaken by the above football codes could serve as relevant models for use by other sports such as Tennis, Athletics, Golf, Cricket, Swimming, Hockey, Lawn Bowls, and Basketball? Some strategies which could be adopted by sporting organisations to attract indigenous participants include:

- A liberal open ended approach to attracting participants
- Formulation of a specific statement acknowledging the needs of minority groups, including Aboriginal people
- Developing closer liaison with indigenous community organisations.
- Regular communication with LIROP officers or Indigenous Sports advisers in their particular region.
- Membership of Indigenous people on sporting committees and advisory boards.

Adoption of these types of strategies will assist to build a more constructive and inclusive alliance between mainstream sporting bodies and the indigenous community which will lead to increased participation and equity within our sporting community.

INDIGENOUS SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE SOUTH EAST

There are numerous initiatives and programs mentioned in this strategy which a number of south east Queensland LGA’s have set in place. LIROP officers have instigated many of these, such as the Brisbane City Council ‘Black Diamonds’ program.

The existence of a number of Indigenous Sporting clubs like the Jabal Jarri Social golf club, Natives Rugby League, and the Murri Mavericks Aussie Rules club have already been mentioned

However there is no framework operating to co-ordinate Indigenous sport and recreation activities around the South East. One of the main goals of this strategy is to alleviate this problem.

Some people though have recognised this structural shortfall and started to develop their own network including First Contact's renowned Sport and Cultural Festival, and their dance parties. More recently we have seen the formation of the North West Aboriginal and Islander Community Association. NWAICA operate within the North West boundaries of Brisbane, and have started a mixed youth touch football team.

Historically there has been a fragmentation of Indigenous Sport and Recreation endeavours across the South East, due to a number of reasons. Differences in culture and politics from community to community is one reason.

This document explores the implications of a regional framework, but respects those groups or individuals who would rather accept the status quo.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1 - WORKSHOP SUMMARY QUESTIONS

QUESTION ONE: *What does sport and recreation mean to the indigenous people of your community?*

QUESTION TWO: *What role does sport play in our lifestyle and culture?*

QUESTION THREE: *What challenges/barriers do the indigenous people of your community have in participating in sport and recreation?*

QUESTION FOUR: *What is the structure of indigenous sport and recreation in your community and who are the peak bodies at local, state, and national level?*

QUESTION FIVE: *What priorities are there in terms of the infrastructure of indigenous sport in your community? (eg – co-ordinated event calendar, regional groups)*

QUESTION SIX: *What new development or changes to existing facilities do you see as a priority? (eg: indigenous specific facilities).*

QUESTION SEVEN: *What type of programs do you see as a priority? (eg: participation education, training)*

QUESTION EIGHT: *What types of education and training do you see as important for indigenous people in sport and recreation (eg: event administration, funding applications).*

QUESTION NINE: *What priorities with regards to employment in the sport and recreation industry do you see? (eg: special event, increase numbers, higher level positions).*

QUESTION TEN: *Where do you see funding priorities lie in regards to the above highlighted areas? (eg: mostly facilities and programs, some on education and training).*

QUESTION ELEVEN: *Prioritise the above highlighted areas (from most important to least important) that need to be addressed in the next two (2) years.*