

Trends in Recreation and Sport

ACTIVE FOR LIFE



Government of South Australia
Office for Recreation and Sport

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Review of Grant Funding for Recreation and Sport in SA

The following information describes the trends in recreation and sport in South Australia and has been assembled to to inform a review of the Office for Recreation and Sport (ORS) grant funding programs.

We will be asking our stakeholders, including sport clubs and state organisations, councils, elected members of state parliament and the general community, to provide feedback on a range of issues during the consultation period.

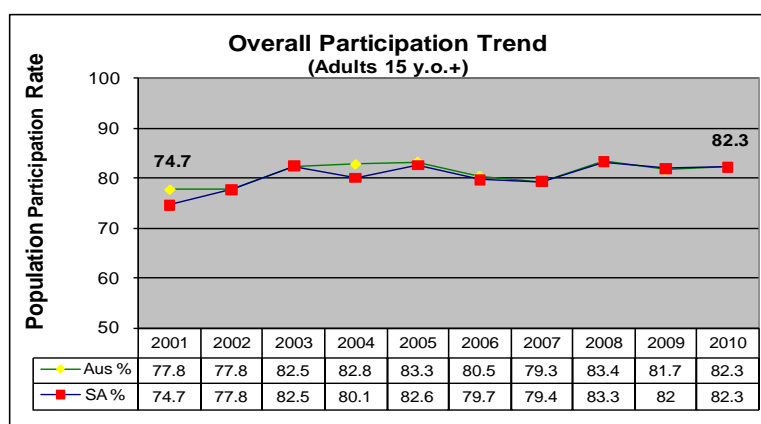
When considering the questions posed as part of the ORS review of grant funding programs we expect everyone to bring their experiences, knowledge and opinions to the review. However, we will also ask that our stakeholders consider the overall sport system when providing feedback. In particular we will be asking them to consider the most effective use of ORS grant resources to achieve our mission of encouraging all South Australians to enjoy lives enriched through participation in quality sport and active recreation.

Overall Participation

The Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS) collects information on adult participation (aged 15+) in sport and physical activity. ERASS has been collected for 10 continuous years on behalf of the Australian Sports Commission and the state and territory government agencies responsible for sport and recreation. It provides important information on the levels, type and frequency of participation and has been used as the basis for the trends and analysis presented below.

Figure 1: Participation trend 2001-2010

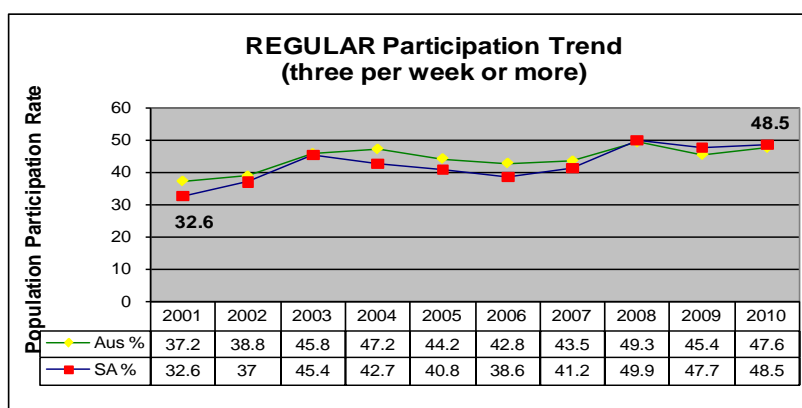
The ERASS overall participation trend shows that South Australian's participation rate is in line with the national average (see **Figure 1**) and the rate of participation has shown a steady increase from 74.7% in 2001 to 82.3% in 2010.



Regular Participation

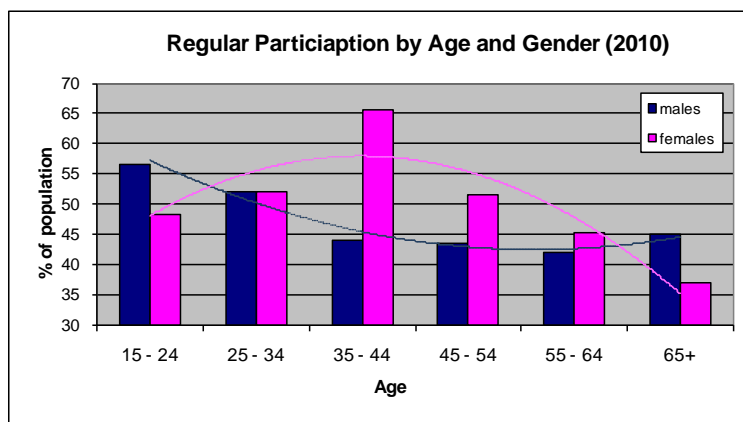
In order to realise a range of social and physical benefits, an individual should partake in regular physical activity. The **be active** message is the unified voice of government advocating for greater physical activity. Awareness of the **be active** brand continues to grow as do intentions to adopt positive behaviours. These intentions are showing in the ERASS series where regular participation (defined as 3 x per week or more) has increased from one third of the adult population in 2001 to almost half the adult population in 2010. (see **Figure 2**)

Figure 2: Regular Participation Trend 2001-2010



A closer examination of regular participation reveals that women are significantly more likely to undertake regular physical activity (3x per week or more) than their male counterparts and this disparity is most significant during middle age (see **Figure 3**).

Figure 3: Regular Participation in physical activities by age and gender



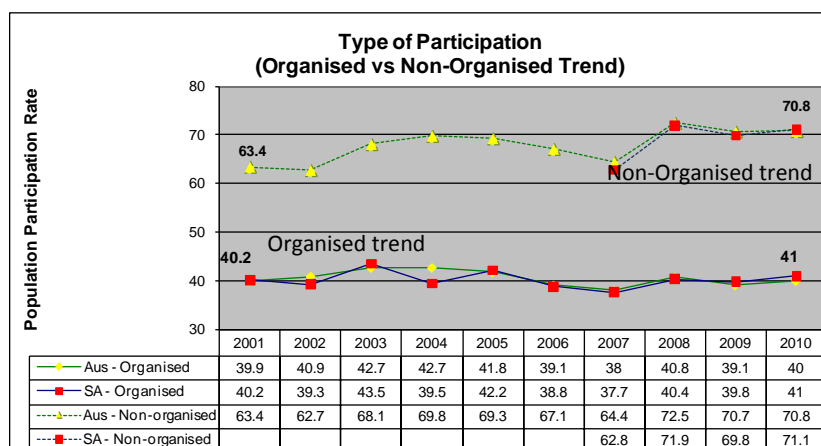
Type of Participation

One of the key differentiators of participation is the extent the activity is “organised”. Organised participation is defined when the activity is organised in full or part by a club, association or other type of organisation. This is an important distinction as it provides an insight as to where the participation takes place and the human and physical infrastructure required to facilitate it. And as such has implications for the type of support required to sustain, grow and/or improve the participation experience.

Modern lifestyles have resulted in a trend of increasing uptake of non-organised physical activities. Participation in these activities has grown by more than 7% points across Australia since 2001 (from 63% to 71%).

Despite this trend of increasing participation in non-organised physical activities, overall participation in organised activities has remained fairly steady (approximately 40% of the population) for the last 10 years. In 2010, 41% South Australian adults reported participating in organised physical activities (see **Figure 4**). Unlike regular activity, males are more likely to undertake physical activities in an organised environment compared females (45% vs 37% respectively).

Figure 4: Organised vs Non-Organised Participation Trend 2001-2010

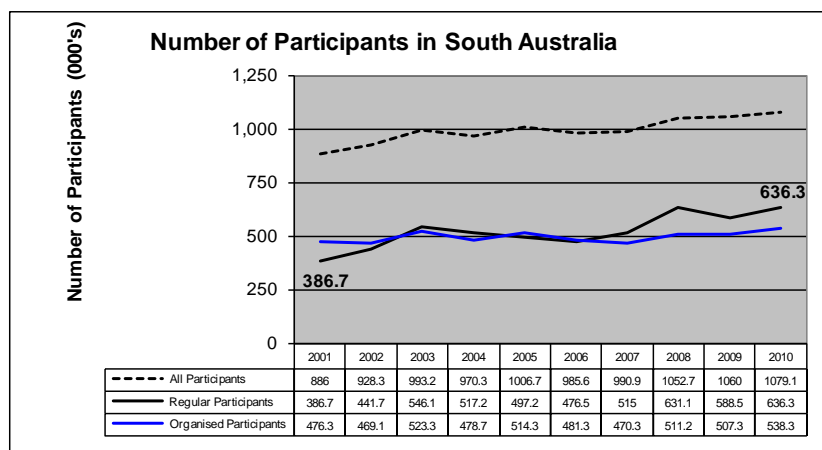


Number of Participants

Tracking the participation **rate** is important from a public health and well-being perspective as it illustrates the proportion of the population that is physically active and engaged in their communities. However, for recreation and sport planning it is equally important to track the **gross number of participants** to ensure the provision of physical infrastructure and appropriately trained human resources account for population growth and meet the needs of the community.

Since 2001, the number of South Australian adults (15 y.o.+) that participate in physical activities for exercise recreation or sport has grown from 890,000 to 1,080,000. This includes an additional 62,000 participants involved in organised activities, taking the total number of organised participants to 538,000. However, it is when we examine the growth in regular participants that we start to appreciate the strain on the sporting infrastructure. Since 2001 there are an additional 250,000 regular participants (see **Figure 5**). If we assume that on average these additional *regular* participants have only doubled their previous exercise and activity regime, our infrastructure has to facilitate 375,000 extra participation occasions per week or almost 20 million extra participation occasions per annum.

Figure 5: Number of Participants 2001-2010



Popular Activities



In 2010 the most popular activities for adults were walking, aerobics, cycling, swimming and running. Of these activities walking, cycling and running require little sport specific infrastructure with the majority being undertaken on footpaths, trails, linear parks and cycle lanes.

The most popular organised sports were aerobics/fitness, netball, Australian rules, tennis, golf, lawn bowls, cricket and football (soccer). (see **Figure 6**) The majority of these activities are undertaken on specific purpose playing fields or courts maintained by sport organisations and local government.

Figure 6: Top 20 Activities for Adults (2010)

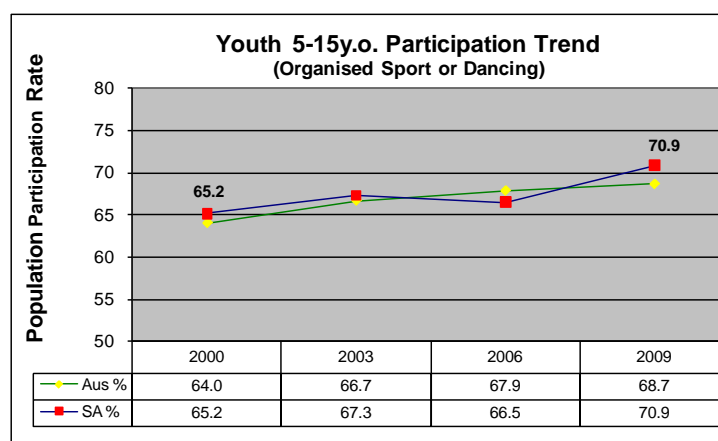
Top 20 Activities by Type of Participation			
South Australian ADULTS 2010			
Activity	Adult Participants ('000)		Proportion Organised
	All Adult Participants	Organised Participants	
Walking (other)	514.5	22.2	4.3%
Aerobics/fitness	319.3	103.7	32.5%
Cycling	150.4	16.5	10.9%
Swimming	132.9	25.0	18.8%
Running	125.7	22.2	17.7%
Tennis	91.6	45.5	49.7%
Netball	79.6	66.0	82.8%
Golf	69.7	36.8	52.8%
Australian Rules football	68.6	51.1	74.5%
Walking (bush)	60.8	7.9	13.1%
Cricket (outdoor)	54.4	35.2	64.8%
Weight training	46.3	6.1	13.2%
Basketball	46.0	30.9	67.3%
Football (outdoor)	44.3	33.6	75.8%
Yoga	42.4	21.1	49.7%
Lawn bowls	41.5	36.5	88.0%
Martial arts	27.6	23.1	83.7%
Fishing	26.5	1.0	3.8%
Surf sports	25.7	6.0	23.4%
Dancing	21.8	16.1	74.0%



Youth Participation

According to the ABS (2009)¹, 136,000 youth, (or 71%) played organised sport outside of school hours. The trend since 2000 of an increasing participation rate for youth across Australia has been replicated in SA. (see **Figure 7**). Much of this “organised” participation is facilitated through schools or community clubs and associations, and is supported by a significant volunteer effort. In fact, the ABS estimates that 40% of fathers and more than 20% of mothers of 5-14 y.o.’s volunteer for a sport and recreation organisation².

Figure 7: Youth Organised Sport Participation Trend



The ABS did some analysis of the characteristics of non-participating youth and found that the country of birth and employment status of parents were significant indicators that impact on participation. Youth born overseas in non-english speaking countries (40%), or with parents born overseas in non-english speaking countries (42%) were significantly less likely to participate in sport than their locally

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2009) **Children’s participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities**. Catalogue No. 4901.0

² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2009) **Voluntary Work, Australia**. Catalogue No. 4441.0

born neighbours (72%). The ABS reported that 37% of youth with a single (unemployed) parent and 41% of youth in a couple family (both unemployed) participated in organised sport.

Figure 8 below illustrates the most popular organised activities for youth in South Australia. Australian Rules football, swimming and netball all catered for an estimated 30,000 young South Australians.

Figure 8: Top 15 Activities for SA Youth (2009)

Top 15 Organised Activities South Australian YOUTH 2009		
Activity	Youth Participants ('000)	Youth Participation Rate (%)
Bike Riding*	121.1	62.7%
Skateboarding/rollerblading*	89.4	46.3%
Australian Rules football	31.2	16.2%
Swimming	29.9	15.5%
Netball	29.9	15.5%
Basketball	26.6	13.8%
Dancing	24.6	12.8%
Football (outdoor)	17.8	9.2%
Tennis	16.4	8.5%
Cricket	16.2	8.4%
Gymnastics	10.6	5.5%
Martial Arts	6.2	3.2%
Athletics, track and field	3.9	2.0%
Football (indoor)	3.5	1.8%
Hockey	1.6	0.8%
Other organised sports	23.0	11.9%
At least one organised sport	128.0	66.3%
* includes non-organised participation		



Sport makes a significant contribution to the physical, psychological and social well being of young people and is an effective way of producing benefits for both the individual and Australian society. Furthermore, research investigating the link between youth participation and its impact on adult physical activity support the conclusion that persistent participation in sport in particular increases the probability of a higher level of physical activity in later life³. Thus increasing the quality and accessibility of youth sport is an important consideration in the overall sport system.



³ Telama R et al, (1997). **Physical activity in childhood and adolescence as predictor of physical activity in young adulthood**. American Journal of Preventative Medicine 1997 Jul-Aug; 13(4): 317-23

Regional Snapshot

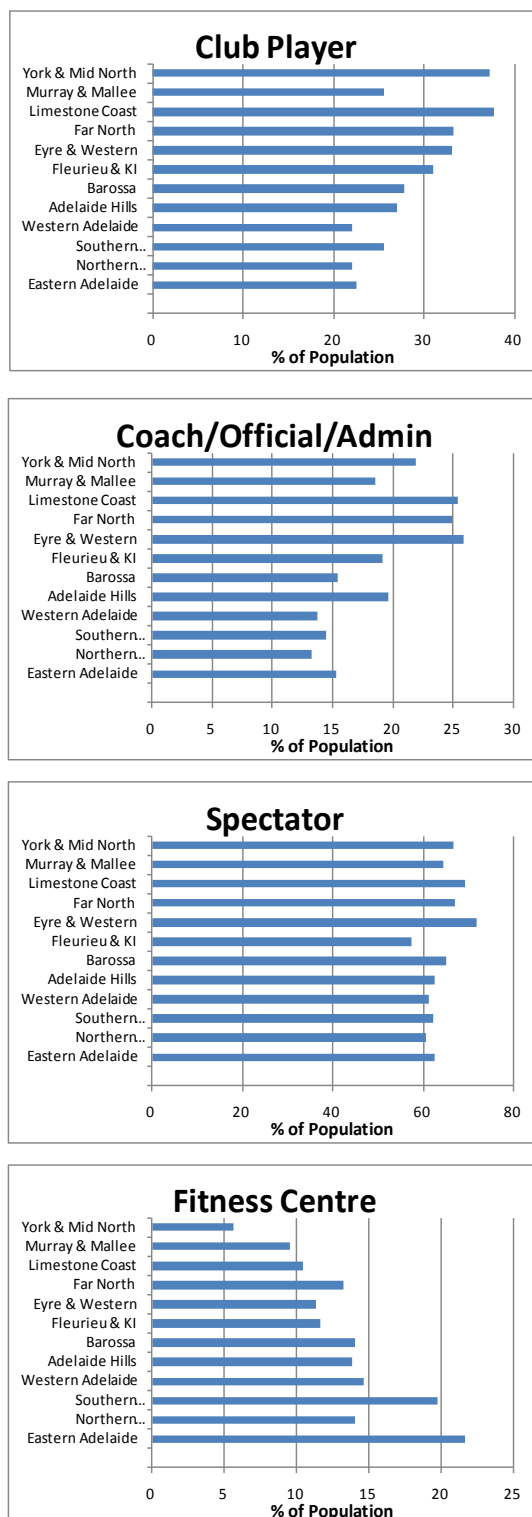
Regional communities have a reputation for supporting local sport and recent research would reinforce that notion⁴. Regional communities are more likely to participate through a club based structure, are more likely to volunteer and more likely to be a spectator than their metro counterparts (see **Figure 9**).

In fact in the regional communities an estimated one third of adults participated in exercise recreation and sport via their club based infrastructure and almost one quarter were involved as a coach, official, umpire or administrator. The only exception to the significant region vs metro difference was in the Murray & Mallee region. Whilst the whole of South Australia was in drought, the Murray was in crisis thus the result is not surprising and is perhaps another of the well documented social impacts of the extreme environmental event. (Although it should be noted that while the Murray and Mallee region had a lower rate of club participation and volunteering than other regional areas, both estimates were on par with the state average.)



When we examine participation via fitness, leisure or indoor/outdoor sports centre, higher participation is observed in metropolitan regions. Many of these facilities are serviced by the commercial sector and therefore supply is concentrated around areas of high population density, thus this finding is not surprising.

Figure 9 – Key regional stats



⁴ Department of Premier and Cabinet (2009) **South Australian Strategic Plan Household Survey** (Unpublished data)

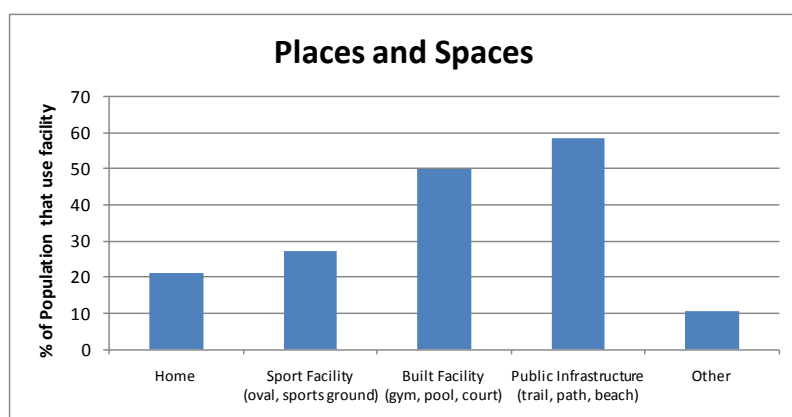
Sport Facilities

Local government is a significant provider of community recreation and sport facilities, including sport specific facilities, as well as recreation and open spaces. Councils work in varying degrees with their local clubs to offer sustainable, quality opportunities for participation.

However, unlike participation, there is little state or nation-wide collection of information pertaining to community sport facilities. In 2009/10, the ABS reported on facility usage and in 2010 the Office for Recreation and Sport asked households across the state to rate satisfaction with the accessibility and quality of facilities.

The ABS results⁵ showed that more than half the population used public infrastructure such as beaches, walking trails or footpaths to recreate, almost half used a built facilities such as a gym, pool or court and one quarter used a sports ground or oval (see **Figure 10**)

Figure 10: Sport Facilities Used in South Australia



The 2010 SA Household survey found that metropolitan and regional participants were mostly satisfied with the accessibility of sport and recreation facilities⁶ (see **figure 11**). Interestingly, the findings show that South Australians living in the fast growing urban fringe areas (Barossa, Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu) were the least satisfied

with accessibility of facilities. Overall, the majority of South Australian participants (90%+) were satisfied with the quality of sport and recreation facilities they used. The quality of sport specific facilities such as ovals, courts, pools and gyms were rated slightly higher for satisfaction than public infrastructure such as trails, paths, parks and the beach (**figure 12**). Participants in the Far North were least satisfied with the quality of sport grounds and Limestone Coast participants were least satisfied with the quality of built sport facilities. Regional participants who relied on public infrastructure for recreation were in general less satisfied with the quality when compared to metro participants.

Figure 11: Satisfaction with accessibility of facilities

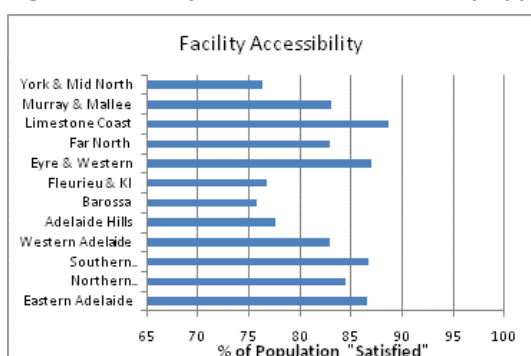
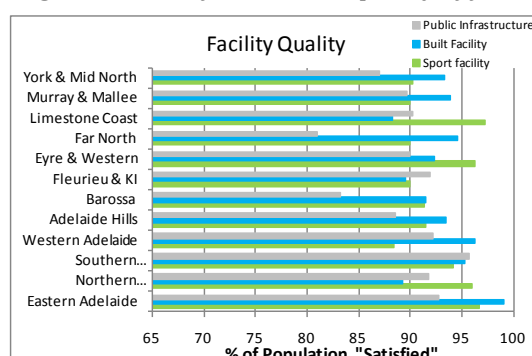


Figure 12: Satisfaction with quality of facilities



⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2009/10 **Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation**. Catalogue No. 4177.0

⁶ Department of Premier and Cabinet (2009) **South Australian Strategic Plan Household Survey** (Unpublished data)

Sport and Recreation Administration

Community sports clubs and associations are non-profit organisations that exist to provide sport and recreation opportunities for their local communities. Most of these organisations are administered on a volunteer basis⁷. In fact the sport and recreation sector is the biggest beneficiary of volunteer labour, with one third of all volunteer efforts going to sport, involving 367,000 South Australians who contribute approximately 48million hours p.a. Typical sport volunteer roles include coaches, officials, medical/trainer, scorer/time keeper, and administration.

Compared to other sectors, volunteers in the sport and recreation field take on significant responsibilities when you consider that 72% commit their efforts to an organisation with no paid staff. The practical implication of this structure is that sport volunteers must assume responsibility for sound governance including increasing regulations around insurance and risk management, financial accountability, occupational health and safety and child protection. Most volunteers in other sectors are supported by a paid workforce who assume these responsibilities on behalf of the volunteers.



Sport and recreation organisations have a hierarchical structure, with National Sport Organisations providing system leadership to state sport and recreation organisations (SSO's) who in turn provide leadership and support for regional associations and community clubs. Most national and state organisations have professional paid staff and will assume responsibility for sound governance, participation planning, high performance pathways, education and training activities and facility planning. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that the services that trickle down to local clubs are highly variable depending on the focus of the national and state organisation and the capabilities of the community level volunteers, which in itself varies between sites and over time.

Local clubs are largely responsible for the participation experience of sport participants in particular. Thus supporting community level volunteers to operate within legislative requirements and to provide quality participation opportunities is an important consideration in the overall sport system.

The Value of Sport and Recreation

Sport and recreation helps to build communities through social inclusion and a sense of connection, helps build families through shared experiences and shared achievements and can help address anti-social behaviour and support education. Sport and recreation is not the cure-all for society's issues, but with quality delivery and an appropriate level of support, it can assist in a positive way socially, economically and environmentally.

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006) **Volunteers in Sport**. Catalogue No. 4440 .0.55.001

Sport's contribution to Australia's GDP is approximately 2% – larger than the motor vehicle industry. It employs 220,000 people, generates \$358 million in annual exports and almost \$1 billion in taxation revenue⁸.

For every 10% of the population exercising regularly and moderately, a net benefit of about \$800 million is returned to the economy each year in reduced health care costs – even when allowing for annual costs of injury resulting from physical activity⁹.

Sport and recreation helps sustain the environment through protecting open space and natural areas, and through the use of active modes of transport.

Research in Western Australia confirms that the benefits derived from sport and recreation are not only well understood by the community, but the benefits are regarded as extremely important to both individuals and the community¹⁰ (see **Figure 13**).

Figure 13: Community Perceptions of Sport and Recreation

Individual Benefit	% Agree	Community Benefit	% Agree
Improves physical wellbeing	99%	Provides opportunities to meet others	96%
Teaches fair play and respect	94%	Creates close friendships	96%
Builds confidence and self esteem	95%	Feeling part of the community	92%
Develops self discipline and commitment	94%	Builds stronger family relationships	87%
Teaches life-skills such as respect and tolerance for others	91%	Provides support networks	91%
Provides a sense of achievement	97%	Builds community pride	89%
Makes you feel better (good) about yourself	95%	Creates tolerant communities	83%
Builds communication skills	89%	Reduces anti-social behaviour in the community	85%
Develops leadership skills	86%	Makes the community safer	81%
Improves ability to cope with stress or difficult situations	91%	Creates new life opportunities such as travel, business contacts, career opportunities	84%
Improves ability to learn	88%		

Sport and recreation organisations facilitate community engagement and foster cohesion to such an extent that membership is one of a suite of indicators used to measure social capital.¹¹ Similarly, volunteering is considered an indicator of social capital and thus both receive favourable policy consideration from governments.

⁸ Australian Sports Commission (1999) **Beyond 2000**. p.10

⁹ Sport and Recreation Victoria (1997) **The Business of Sport** Melbourne, Victoria.

¹⁰ Government of Western Australia (2008) **Sport and Recreation, It's More Than You Think**. Viewed on the web at <http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/assets/files/Research/It's%20More%20than%20you%20think%20single%20page%20for%20web.pdf>

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006). **Sport and Social Capital**. Catalogue No. 4917.0



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