Consultation Paper

Victorian School Sport Reorganisation

Victorian Primary Schools' Sports Association
&
Victorian Secondary Schools' Sports Association

August 2009
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SECTION ONE: REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED BY MODEL

Review Recommendations most relevant to proposed SSV Organisational Model

Recommendation 3
That the administrative arrangements of the primary and secondary school sports programs in Victoria are streamlined by:
- Adopting the same terminology (Region, Zone and District) to describe demographics and staff roles;
- Implementing a single financial management system for the primary and secondary program and appointing a financial manager;
- Strongly supporting the involvement of classified officers from the “Principal class” to provide leadership on district, zone and regional sports committees.

Recommendation 6
That the current programming, rules and guidelines are modified to provide:
- The opportunity for all Victorian schools from all sectors to participate in all aspects of the primary and secondary school sport program;
- Equitable access for country students/schools;
- Opportunity for more State finals and National events to be held in country areas.

Review Recommendations strongly aligned to proposed SSV Organisational Model

Recommendation 2
That a single governance structure be established to:
- Govern the provision of school sport in all Victorian schools;
- Be inclusive of all current parties;
- Be established after exploring alternative governance arrangements such as an incorporated body.

Recommendation 5
That appropriate acknowledgement is given of the critical role of the School Sport Unit by:
- Establishing a P-12 task focus for the Unit staff;
- Undertaking a job redesign process within the School Sport Unit to determine the future task priorities and skills set required;
- Considering the redeployment of some staff to regional and country locations;
- Attracting and retaining staff with appropriate school sports leadership.

Recommendation 9
That the critical contribution made by staff to the success of the school sports program in Victoria is recognised and that the Department undertakes to:
- Investigate as a matter of urgency, alternative incentives and recognition to attract and retain staff in key roles in the school sport program;
- Explore and implement processes to ensure that key positions in school sport in Victoria can be better recognised as viable career path options.
SECTION TWO: INTRODUCTION

1 Rationale

The Recommendations from the Review of the Structure of School Sport in Victoria provide the basis for the organisational models set out in this paper. The paper specifically draws on Recommendations 3 and 6 in presenting an organisational model for Victorian interschool sport that forms the framework on which to increase participation and build strong intraschool programs and representative teams.

The Recommendations point to key organising principles that will inform the creation of the new structure. These principles are:

1. increase opportunities through participation in school sport for all students;
2. recognise and use strengths of current models;
3. maximise recognition of school sport personnel contribution to foster sustainability;
4. seek stronger identity with DEECD organisational structure and accountabilities;
5. use common language for definition of demographics and staff roles;
6. streamline administrative processes to support yr 4-12 school sport with maximum efficiencies;
7. manage finances by one body;
8. recognise regional issues and capabilities;
9. increase support at local levels for intra school sport; and
10. recognise that full participation for all schools is aspirational.

2 Current program

Intraschool Sport

School sport can involve competition within a school or between schools. Students can take part in competitive situations against students within their own school in a regular weekly program. This type of intra-school program can be a rich learning experience including basic skills, rules, preparation, umpiring and tactics, and is linked to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) as part of sport education.

Interschool Sport

Primary

Interschool sporting competitions offered as part of the Victorian Primary Schools’ Sports Association and the Victorian Secondary Schools’ Sports Association have students competing in events that see winners being promoted to compete in state school championships. These events are conducted in school time and span school terms. Successful school teams or individuals will compete at local district, zone, and regions to state level. In the primary school competition government and non-government schools students are full participants in the program. In the secondary school competition, government schools only compete. Most non-government secondary schools can compete in alternative competitions, see section 10.

Any student from an affiliated school can nominate for state school teams and participate in state school team trials to win a representative position in a Victorian state schools team to compete at national School Sport Australia events. Students from non-government schools are well represented in Victorian state school teams.

Secondary

The secondary program offers more sports across more age groups than primary programs; however in recent years both sectors have seen an increase in schools opting for gala or round robin days to reduce the number of days with teachers and students out of the school.
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Secondary cont’d

Victorian Secondary Schools' Sports Association events are planned to co-ordinate local through to state and interstate competitions for years 7 -12. This allows winning schools to progress to state finals in a series of competitions that correlates with community sport cycles and state and national events. Schools enter teams into initial rounds of competitions and are encouraged to continue if they win. Schools that withdraw teams at late notice incur fines at zone and state levels; however these fines may not fully cover the costs of organisation or arrangements for other schools affected by the withdrawal.

The program structure allows districts to invite non-government secondary schools to compete at their level however operating rules prohibit those invited schools from being able to progress through to zone or state events. In the current program structure, as the competition progresses to higher levels there is a corresponding reduction in students participating in interschool sport events.

3 Issues

The Review highlighted a number of issues that underpin the need for the organisation of school sport to be restructured at all levels. These issues are those related to student access and opportunity, and the capacity to offer students both quality programs and depth of experience.

Solutions to these issues point to the need for increased responsiveness as well as increased support for teachers, school sport communities and the delivery of sport programs. It is not expected that these issues will be fully resolved by the proposals set out in this paper, but your input will enable the proposals to be further refined, other options to be canvassed and the decision making process to progress.

3.1 Access to participation in secondary school sport

Some students who attend non-government secondary schools that are geographically isolated do not have access to a full inter school sport program. There are limited agreements in some districts that allow non government schools to participate locally in regular school sport. Students at these schools have not been able to experience a zone or state final even though they have been successful in their district because they do not attend a government school. These schools have expressed dissatisfaction on behalf of their students as they believe their students are having a negative experience given this exclusion. Recommendation 6 of the review referred to this issue and section 10 will explore this further.

3.2 Quality of senior school sport

Consultation issues raised across VSSSA zones include specific concerns for years 11 and 12. There is broad acknowledgement of the value that school sport offers senior students however increasing study and work demands impact negatively on teacher and student capacity to participate. Issues include:

(a) Difficulties in getting students to participate;
(b) Difficulties with getting staff to commit to coaching teams;
(c) Diminished quality of competition with limited participation leading up to state finals;
(d) Last minute cancellations due to lack of CRT and students sustaining their commitment;
(e) VCE commitments impacting on availability of students for current program offered; and
(f) One dimensional knock out competition structure unable to provide consistent challenge to meet student needs.
3.3 Transport
Transport is another significant issue for planning and participating in school sport. Current arrangements have groups of schools that are aligned together over time on a broad basis of locality. However there are a significant number of schools that travel past some schools to play against other schools that are further away as a result of these historical arrangements. Given that increasing travel costs have been cited as a barrier to sustaining or increasing participation in school sport it is useful to look at a structure that reduces travel and maintains local decision making and has the potential to increase participation.

SECTION THREE: MODEL AND CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Responding to this consultation paper

Responses to this paper can be given online at the following link.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=x4zjcJQbvrupw3K5usGCPg_3d_3d

The questions are numbered identically to assist your response. As questions 1-5 in the survey gather information about you to assist us to interpret your responses, the questions in this paper start at number 6.

Your views are important in consideration of the impact and opportunities the options offer all school students participating in school sport. All responses will be considered in determining the final agreement on the shape of school sport in Victoria.
SECTION THREE: MODEL AND CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

4 Proposed Name and Purpose of School Sport

As a result of the work to date implementing the Review recommendations, issues related to the name of the organisation and its purpose need to be considered. In a merge of the two Associations, the name and purpose will need to be re-established. Please consider and comment on the following proposed name and purpose for the merged association:

4.1 Proposed Name
It is proposed that the single merged entity would be known as School Sport Victoria.

4.2 Proposed Purpose

School Sport Victoria will actively promote school sport for all Victorian school students as a mechanism to support schools programs in developing their students' health and wellbeing. School Sport Victoria will do this by:

- Providing strategic leadership for Victorian school sport;
- Maximising participation opportunities for all school students in competition that is commensurate with their age and ability;
- Provide regular sporting competition that embraces an educational approach in developing students' appreciation and carriage of respected community values;
- Advocating recognition for school sport leadership at all levels; and
- Promote school and community partnerships through sport.

Questions

6. Does the broad purpose of School Sport Victoria capture what you think this organisation should do?

7. If not, what additional or different roles do you think School Sport Victoria should have?

8. School Sport Victoria is the nominal name of the organisation that is a result of merging the VPSSA and the VSSSA. Is this name suitable?

9. Can you suggest an alternative name for the new organisation?

5 Common language

The three parties working together to manage school sport are the Victorian Primary and Victorian Secondary Schools Sports Associations (VPSSA and VSSSA) and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). All three parties use common words with different meanings which is confusing when trying to develop a model for school sport, so common words with the same meanings need to be agreed to underpin school sports organisational structure. This is the first issue noted in Recommendation 3 of the Review.

The following terms and definitions are suggested to clarify the building blocks of the organisation.

School Sport is a sporting competition, most appropriately provided in conjunction with a physical education or sport education program that gives all school students the opportunity to continue their physical, social and personal skills education through competition at the intra, interschool, local, state, national and international levels.
5 Common language cont’d

Region is the geographical area that is defined by DEECD.

District is one or more school networks that have combined together as a sub group of the region.

Network is the cluster of schools in local government areas that are recognised by DEECD as sub-groups of Regions. These are useful organizing tools for school sports however are not recognized formally in the proposed structure.

Section is the subgroup of a network where the larger numbers of schools participating in yr 4-6 school sport requires smaller groups.

Convener is the person who is in charge of the school sport event that school teams have assembled for.

Organiser is the person who makes the arrangements for the school sport event. This could be a variety of people including but not limited to: a school sports co-coordinator, a section co-coordinator, a district secretary or regional officer.

Regional Officer is the person who is employed by School Sport Victoria to be the conduit of information and coordinator for school sport for that region.

District Secretary is the person who is the conduit of information and coordinator for school sport for that District.

Section Co-coordinator is the person who is the conduit of information and coordinator of section school sport.

Questions

10. REGION is the geographical area that is defined by DEECD. Is this term clear?
11. If not, how can it be made clearer?
12. DISTRICT is one or more school networks that have combined together as a sub group of the region. Is this term clear?
13. If not, how can it be made clearer?
14. As DISTRICT is a term used differently by both school sports Associations do you think it will be confusing to use this term in the new structure?
15. If yes, what term could be used in its place?
16. NETWORK is the cluster of schools in local government areas that are recognised by DEECD as sub-groups of Regions. These are useful organizing tools for school sports however are not recognized formally in the proposed structure. Is this term clear?
17. If not, how can it be made clearer?
18. SECTION is the subgroup of a network where the larger numbers of schools participating in yr 4-6 school sport requires smaller groups. Is this term clear?
19. If not, how can it be made clearer?
20. CONVENOR is the person who is in charge of the school sport event that school teams have assembled for. Is this term clear?
21. If not, how can it be made clearer?

22. ORGANISER is the person who makes the arrangements for the school sport event. This could be a variety of people including but not limited to: a school sports co-coordinator, a section co-coordinator, a district secretary or regional officer. Is this term clear?

23. If not, how can it be made clearer?

24. REGIONAL OFFICER is the person who is employed by School Sport Victoria to be the conduit of information and coordinator for school sport for that region. Is this term clear?

25. If not, how can it be made clearer?

26. DISTRICT SECRETARY is the person who is the conduit of information and coordinator for school sport for that District. Is this term clear?

27. If not, how can it be made clearer?

28. SECTION CO-COORDINATOR is the person who is the conduit of information and coordinator of section school sport. Is this term clear?

29. If not, how can it be made clearer?

6 Proposed School Sport Structure

In bringing together the two Associations in a DEECD environment, the advantages of alignment with the Department structures are evident in the opportunities for school sport to achieve recognition for the value it brings to school communities.

In a model that is aligned with DEECD structures the significant work undertaken by teachers and community groups volunteering their expertise will now have access to formal recognition in school leadership, curriculum resources and professional development. In addition, the fundamental partnerships that school sport is built on can now be utilised to strengthen arrangements across networks, and across the primary and secondary divide to develop broad inclusive approaches in line with the partnership aspect of the Blueprint. As schools move towards becoming an essential hub of their communities they will be able to build on school sport relationships to assist students’ transition and parent and community involvement.

For these reasons it is proposed that a merged association would operate on a basis that is consistent with the DEECD regional and network structure. In moving in this direction, the importance of local decision making would mean that, at the network level particularly, that the transition to the new structure will take time to achieve.

The following structure is proposed as a model that offers the strongest alignment with the Recommendations of the Review. This alignment increases the recognition within DEECD structures and offers a higher probability of success for the workforce recommendations 5 and 9.
DEECD Regional Model

This model uses the organising framework of DEECD as the structure for school sport. Schools across the state are divided into the nine DEECD regions, with the underpinning groups of schools based on the regional networks. This model allows a common operating framework for all schools that is connected to school and region accountability and performance frameworks. Primary and secondary schools will have the same organisational boundaries and so can maximise planning, resources and support for each other at a local level.

Each of the nine regions will be divided into school sport districts. These are groups of schools in local government areas that together offer viable group to compete against each other, the minimum number being six. Using the regional networks as an organising tool for districts ensures that schools that are working together across curriculum and community projects can extend these relationships to organise their school sport. The DEECD has 67 regional networks which inform the shape of this organisational framework. However of these, only 19 have enough secondary schools to create a single school sport district. The remaining districts will be two or more networks combined to provide a sustainable inter school sport competition.

There are over 1600 primary schools in Victoria, so the organisation structure needs to include another group to accommodate the volume of competition. This group, called sections, divides districts into smaller groups again using networks as an organising tool. Most of the metropolitan networks will need further division into sections, in which schools will play off against each other to determine section then district and finally region champions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year levels</th>
<th>4-6</th>
<th>7-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Districts</td>
<td>33-47</td>
<td>33-47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networks</td>
<td>(19*)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sections</td>
<td>240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 19 Networks are large enough to operate as stand alone Districts.

To refer to the DEECD regions go to:


Opportunities and issues of a regional structure

Strengths
- Common organising blocks in having the same Districts for all school sport;
- Strong alignment and recognition from senior DEECD personnel re school sport activities re workforce and accountabilities;
- Identity for school sport based on DEECD recognised relationships;
- Increased regional awareness and support for school sport;
- Increased participation across higher levels of competition;
- Introduced opportunities for joint yr 4 -12 sporting events in and across districts;
- Enhanced integration of program planning across yrs 4 - 12 in districts;
- Reduced travel given network and district boundaries;
Opportunities and issues of a regional structure cont’d

Strengths cont’d

• Recognition that Yrs 11-12 have specific pressures that competition can meet more flexibly at a local level; and
• Greater autonomy at a local level.

Weaknesses

• Nine is an inconvenient number for sporting competitions given impact on increased time, CRT, venue & associated costs for a longer competition for 2 groups x 5 team competition;
• Smaller regions advantaged by having fewer students in competition group;
• Current events conducted in minimal time so any reduction of available time would see modified rules implemented that diminish competition status;
• State Athletics finals will need to consider best approach to select fastest 8 for events that cannot manage 9 competitors. This could include heats and splitting the state final over 2 days;
• State swimming finals will have only one lane available for invitation swimmers; and
• Potential extra days out of school for sports that require substantial time to undertake ie cricket.

Questions

30. Can you see advantages to adopting the common districts and regions for primary and secondary school sport?

31. Can you see any significant issues to adopting this model?

32. If so, please identify the key issues

33. Can you see benefits for intra school sport from this model?

The options set out in the paper relate to how a school sport competition structure could be organised in a nine region environment.

Questions on the proposed structure have been put for each of the following sub-sections.

6.1 State or Regional championship model

Traditionally inter school sport events have culminated in state championship events. In the Victorian Secondary Schools' Sports Association events there is no relationship between the state championship and selection in representative teams. The Victorian Primary Schools’ Sports Association is the same as the secondary association for team sports however in individual events such as swimming, cross country and athletics, representative places are determined on the basis of success at the state championships.

One perspective is that the outcome for the majority of students participating in school sports is success at local and regional levels, with limited return for the conduct of state championships. In addition the demand on schools to release staff and students is always difficult especially at senior levels. A consideration for the organisation of school sport in Victoria is the value of holding state championships. Instead, the option could be the culmination of sporting championships at a DEECD regional level, with the available resources being utilised to support participation from school to regional level.
## 6.1 State or Regional championship model cont’d

### Questions

34. Do you feel that state championships should be retained for:
- individual and team school sports?
- only individual sports?
- only team sports?
- none?

35. If there was no state championships do you think students motivation and participation in school sport would be:
- less
- the same
- more.

## 6.2 State Champions

If State championships are an aspirational goal for the majority of entrants in a school sport competition then consideration of how to achieve a result needs to happen. The common practice in team events is to conduct a final between an even number of competitors, preferably a final 8, reduced to 4 and then out of the remaining 2. If the model of using the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development nine regions is adopted to promote opportunities in school sport, there are four options to consider as a way of determining a state champion.

### Option 1  Presidents Invitational Team

The state champion in a team sport is commonly determined by a final round robin in two pools of four teams. As the DEECD Regional model has nine finalists, the opportunity exists to include a ‘Presidents Invitational Team’ to even the pool numbers to five each. Participation in this team would be an honour extended via feedback on high performing students in schools that were not successful in reaching state finals. This team could be:

(a) created as a collection of nominated individuals; or
(b) the next best team in the competition. This would allow two teams from one region that was very strong in a particular sport to compete in the state final.

### Strengths

- Increased finals opportunities for more students;
- Increased quality and game time spent at finals event if 2 groups of 5 schools play off in a final round robin;
- Higher quality of teams competing in state finals play off;
- Opportunity to maximise benefits of 2 day sport ‘carnival’ event with students across the state;
- Recognition for individual students in being asked to be part of ‘invitational presidents team’;
- Opportunity for students to meet, compete and spend time with students from other schools as part of experience;
- Alternatively, recognition that the presidents invitation to participate to the next best performing school team offers another opportunity to the genuine second best team in the state;
- Capacity for region that is traditionally strong in a sport to have two representatives in the finals.
Option 1  Presidents Invitational Team cont’d

Weaknesses

• Additional 2 rounds in finals if round robin format to cross over finals format is used;
• Additional time for event or reduced time for rounds to get all teams through;
• Increased time required to conduct state finals in a longer competition for 2 x 5 pool competition;
• Increased CRT, venue & associated costs for a longer competition for 2 x 5 pool competition;
• Increased cost to participants given likelihood of accommodation needed for a 2 day final ‘carnival’;
• Reduced round time would mean significant modification to game rules and change game ‘essence’.

Questions

36. Do you support more students playing in state finals?
37. Which model of selecting a tenth team do you prefer:
   • Created as a collection of nominated individuals?
   • The next best team in the competition?
38. Do you think the team selected by invitation would be motivated to participate?
39. If not, what are the main issues that would limit their participation?
40. Do you support a 10 team competing in a state final over two days?
41. Please give key reasons for your answer

Option 2  State Champion from final 8 rotation

An alternative to having the nine regions play off in finals would be to have a reduction of finalists to 8 via a play off between two nominated regions. The regions to play off could be determined using a number of approaches.

This option proposes a rotation of regions to play off in every sport for 12 months; ie Southern Metropolitan Region and Gippsland in 2011, and Eastern Metropolitan and Hume Region in 2012 etc. Experience in VSSSA zones that use this approach confirms that this method works best when the two regions playing are geographically aligned. This also assists to reduce travel time and costs. In general this would mean that each region will play an additional game to determine who competes in the state final one year in five.

However two issues need to be acknowledged in this approach:
(i) geographic limitations; and
(ii) numbers of schools in the competition pool.

Gippsland which is located between the high plains and the east coast would most easily play off against southern metropolitan only. Playing off against any other region will mean travelling to Melbourne at a minimum and therefore increasing costs and time away from school.

In terms of numbers of schools playing in the competition, regions do not provide an equitable number of schools or students competing. Historically school sport has tolerated this volume inequity; however a rotational system can highlight the issue. For example, the combination of Southern Zone and Gippsland regions in a play off represents the largest group of VPSSA members and third largest VSSSA group. If an equitable size of the competition pool is more desirable, then a smaller region such as the Grampians will need to play off two years in a row. A comparison of the numbers of schools in regions and combined regions is in the table ‘Regions compared with combined regions.’
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Regions compared with combined regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increased opportunities for schools across aligned regions to work together;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agreed quality and game time spent at finals event in one day;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maximise benefits of single day state school sport final with minimal CRT and associated costs to school and students;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rotational system allows planning for additional game up to 4 years in advance;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased ability to collaborate with state sporting association in longer term planning;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Play off via aligned regions allows schools to determine arrangements to suit local needs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recognition that some students are competing against a larger number of schools and that this will be balanced out over a 5 year cycle;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• State swimming finals will not require an additional round;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunity for students to meet and compete with students from other schools as part of experience;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The 9th region that does not play off in the state finals is technically the 9th placed state finalist.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Schools will need to plan ahead for the additional game required in the five year cycle;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• One region will need to have an additional round for two years out of five;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• State athletic finals will require an agreed approach to select 8 finalists for limited events to enable championship to be held on same day.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Option 2  **State Champion from final 8 rotation**

**Questions**

42. This option enables 8 teams to play off for state finals on one day. Do you prefer this?
43. Would you support a rotational system of play offs between two regions prior to the state finals?
44. Identify any significant issues in the rotational play off model.

Option 3  **State Champion from final 8 permanent play off by two small regions**

Agreement of two regions to always play an additional round to determine the final 8 for a state championship in recognition of the smaller numbers of schools and students. The projected demographics for Victoria have significant population growth continuing in the east and south east regions of the state. Volume equity could be achieved by having two smaller regions in the west of the state agree to always play an additional round.

**Strengths**

- Increased opportunities for schools across aligned regions to work together;
- Agreed quality and game time spent at finals event in one day;
- Maximise benefits of single day state school sport final with minimal CRT and associated costs to school and students;
- Increased ability to collaborate with state sporting association in longer term planning;
- Permanent play off between aligned regions allows schools to determine arrangements to suit local needs;
- State swimming finals will not require an additional round;
- Opportunity for students to meet and compete with students from other schools as part of experience;
- The 9th region that does not play off in the state finals is technically the 9th placed state finalist.

**Weaknesses**

- Same two regions will have an additional round every year;
- Recognition of additional costs for these two regions will need to be addressed;
- State athletic finals will require an agreed approach to select 8 finalists for limited events to enable championship to be held on same day.

**Questions**

45. Would you support a structure where the same two regions played off each year?
46. Would you support your region being in a permanent play off with another region to win a place in the state finals?
47. If yes, what support would make this option viable?
48. If no, why not?
**Option 4  State Champion from a ‘conference’ play off**

Agreement that the 9 regions would split into two groups called ‘conferences’ that would decide their winner and then play a final against the winner of the other ‘conference’ to determine the state champion. Given travel costs, population data and school numbers the optimal division for the two conferences would be an east west division of the 9 regions, with the East Conference having four regions and the West Conference having five regions. This would mean that the membership of each conference would be:

**East Conference:** Southern Metropolitan, Gippsland, Eastern Metropolitan and Hume

**West Conference:** Northern Metropolitan, Loddon Mallee, Grampians, Western Metropolitan and Barwon South Western

For more information on the DEECD regions go to:


**Strengths**
- Increased finals opportunities for students;
- Increased quality and game time spent at conference finals event given smaller groups of schools to play off in round robin;
- Winner of conference could be decided on overall best result from round robin so east conference teams would play 3 games and west conference play 4 games;
- Opportunity to maximise benefits of finals experience in a more central location closer to the school;
- Additional level of recognition for Conference winners;
- State finals are smaller & less complicated to organise;
Option 4  **State Champion from a ‘conference’ play off**

- Athletics and swimming carnivals can be held for conferences with the fastest 8 times going through to state finals. This allows the 8 best students to compete at state championships, rather than the best single performer from one region.

**Weaknesses**

- Increased time required to conduct West conference finals allowing for additional round to cater for 5 team competition;
- Increased CRT costs and student days out of school if team makes state championship;
- Increased venue & associated costs for additional day to host state championship;
- Increased cost to participants if successful in making state championship;
- Final atmosphere may be subdued given reduced spectators at state championship conducted at a later date;
- Additional level of competition added to busy school sport calendar; and
- Additional level of competition for swimming and athletics to conduct conference competition.

**Questions**

49. Do you think that being the ‘conference winner’ will be an attractive outcome for students or schools?

50. Do you support an additional day out of school to determine the state champion after the conference final?

51. Do you support the opportunity for the best 8 performers to make the state championships in swimming and athletics no matter which conference or region they represent?

52. Using the DEECD’s 9 regions as a basis for restructuring school sports in Victoria, and the retention of a state championship, which system do you prefer for selecting teams or participants for state championships?

- Increasing the number of teams competing in the state championship to 10 by adding a Presidents Invitational Team
- Reducing the number of teams competing in the state championship to 8 by having a rotational play off between two regions
- Reducing the number of teams competing in the state championship to 8 by having a play off between the same two small regions each year
- Dividing the 9 regions into two ‘conferences’, the winner of each ‘conference’ to play off for the state championship.
7  Transition

There are a number of issues that need to be considered in moving from current arrangements to a new model. The merged organisation will need to start initial operation in January 2010, to plan and undertake its transition over the next 16 months to achieve full implementation by January 2011.

The organisation will need this timeframe to work with groups of schools to assist their decision processes in moving to the new structure. Schools have developed long standing school sport relationships that may now be affected by following the DEECD regional network model, and will need time to consider local options in the new structure. The decision process will need to be agreed across primary and secondary schools so that new arrangements can address operational issues concerning administration, finance, recognition, and resource impact.

Questions
53. Do you see any significant issues with the transition to the new organisation?
54. If yes, what are they?

8  Finals location

Recommendation 6 of the Review suggested that more state finals be conducted in regional Victoria. Over the last ten years there has been a significant effort to develop regional infrastructure in Victoria and many of the larger towns now have facilities that can accommodate a finals event.

Travel and equity concerns have high significance however may be balanced by the capacity and local support offered by regional Victorian centres wanting to attract events as a marketing and economic opportunity. Some sports are limited by the suitability of a venue, such as swimming where the state finals on a regional model will require a ten lane pool. This means that the event will continue to be held at MSAC or possibly move to Geelong. Other sports requiring local government ovals or facilities could be hosted in a number of locations that are accessible to all participants.

Questions
55. Are there any issues for participation if the state final is held in regional Victoria?
56. If yes, please identify.

9.  Optional Program for senior school sport

Competing study, work and sporting demands on senior secondary school students is restricting their available time and school resources to support the commitment required to compete in the current Victorian Secondary Schools’ Sports Association program. Alternative competition structures could be explored that recognise those demands and offer school sport competitions that have a stronger alignment to needs of senior students.
9. Optional Program for senior school sport cont’d

A combination of a strengthened intra school sport program coupled with different competition options for senior students could be offered to schools so they can elect to participate in interschool sporting competitions dependant on student need and interest. The competition options could include:

- open event entry in partnership with state sporting association— open to all schools;
- self nominated school entry into regular round-robin for specific sports (suited to sport specialist / academy schools but can include others). This would require a commitment from participating schools for a fixed period of time in terms of timetabling and facilities;
- The introduction of championship or premier league to deal with different types of competitions and standards;
- recognition of the value of a partnership with State Sporting Associations to assist in these alternative competitions and in the management of sporting demands on senior students who are pursuing an elite pathway. Refer to section 12 Related Activity - Sport sub committees for information.

Questions

57. Do you support greater flexibility in options for competition for senior students?
58. If not, please give reasons
59. If yes, do you have a preference for a particular type of competition?
   - open entry event
   - self nominated school entry into regular round robin
   - introduction of premier league
   - other.
60. If other, please detail here

10 Access to school sport

Recommendations 2 and 6 of the Review outline an aspirational vision that all schools can be full members of this merged school sport body. All Victorian primary schools are full members of the VPSSA; however full membership is not available to all secondary schools of the VSSSA. There are twelve other secondary school sports associations that conduct weekly school sport for the non-government schools that cover 27% of total student enrolments involved in school sport.

Associate membership is available to all non-government secondary schools as this allows for their students to participate in state representative teams at national School Sport Australia events. The majority of non-government secondary schools are affiliated with the VSSSA and their students have strong representation in state teams.

Non-government schools that conduct sport at weekends are unlikely to be interested in full membership of the merged organisation. However there are a small number of non-government secondary schools that are not able to play regular school sport as membership or distance prevents access to a secondary school sport organisation. These students need to have the opportunity to participate in regular interschool school sport.

Factors such as distance and travel costs mean that some VSSSA school sport districts in regional Victoria can only operate in a single viable collective model with members from government and non government schools. However these non-government schools are not able to have full membership preventing their students from playing in a state final.
In addition there are non-government schools who have indicated that they would prefer to continue to play in local competitions as they do for primary rather than travel significantly further distances at increased costs for secondary competition.

The DEECD Regional model for school sport should be able to accommodate all non-government schools should they wish to hold membership. Issues that have been raised as barriers to this full membership to weekly school sport in school time include:

- Appropriate infrastructure contribution required from non-government schools;
- Competition for students as a result of school sport scholarship programs;
- Inequitable competition as a result of the resources that non-government schools have; and
- Negative impact on current participants’ motivation and involvement given their strong perception of potentially unfair competition.

Option to move forward

The new organisation School Sport Victoria should support the government’s obligation to providing every child with access to a quality school sport program. At the same time acknowledge the difficulties inherent in an open access arrangement. To achieve a workable outcome it is proposed that those independent schools most in need be given consideration. Another way of meeting needs would be to design programs that offered flexibility in developing:

i. a set of eligibility criteria to support the membership could guide decisions concerning full access to the School Sport Victoria program. The eligibility criteria would need to satisfy the above concerns in addition to travel and distance barriers that regional schools in particular face. These criteria could be developed as part of the work for the new organisation in early 2010.

ii. a school sports program offering an ‘all schools competition’ in conjunction with the state sporting association, initially at the senior level. This approach, raised in Section 3 Issues in Current Program - Quality of senior level school sport, would enable full membership in an optional competition that allows schools to make decisions about the level of competition they will participate in. For example secondary non-government schools in Sunraysia can continue to participate in a regular weekly competition with government schools, however at the senior level initially, this regular weekly competition does not progress as a knock out event. If those schools wished to participate in an ‘all schools’ event they could chose to nominate into that competition.

Questions

61. How can we provide an accessible school sport program?
62. What do you see as barriers?
63. What do you see as solutions to those barriers?
64. How could the needs of students from regionally isolated schools be equitably met in this structure?
65. What type of eligibility criteria could be established to support an equitable school sport program?
66. What are the issues for an open competition?
11 **Sport sub committees**

Recommendation 4 of the Review is the establishment of sport specific sub-committees in a range of selected school sports to:

- Enable and foster stronger partnerships with state sporting organisations, especially in the interstate program; and
- Provide a state-wide network of teachers to contribute to the strategic development in each sport.

Sport specific committees will foster quality school sport programs by building partnerships between education and state sporting associations. These committees will bring together sporting and education expertise to inform both sectors in their planning and development to provide sustainable school sport programs with strong links to community and elite sport. Consultation with State Sporting Associations has been in progress since May on the basis of the outline in the linked document. Please read the outline and contribute your ideas directly to the project team.


12 **Conclusion**

**Questions**

67. Do you support this organisational structure for school sport?  
68. If not, please give your reasons

Responses can be given on the link below:


Thank you for your time and effort in responding to the consultation paper. The Executive of both Associations will consider all responses in September to determine the way forward to build a strong and sustainable Victorian school sport organisation for the future.

Further information about the Review implementation and timeline can be found on: