



Australian Government

Australian Sports Commission

Barkly Community Sport Program

Final Report

Prepared by

Matthew Calf

Senior Manager – Industry Projects

Sport Division

Australian Sports Commission

20 September 2022



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
Executive Summary	3
Barkly Community Sport Program - Project Implementation	4
Project Roles and Responsibilities	4
Project Timeline	5
Project activities undertaken by the Australian Sports Commission	5
Barkly Community Sport Program - Project Outcomes	7
Barkly Community Sport Program - Project Funding and Expenditure	12
Barkly Community Sport Program - Project Review	14
Key Recommendations for Future Sport Initiatives in the Barkly Regional Deal.	22



Introduction

Through the [Barkly Regional Deal](#), the Australian Government committed \$800,000 over three years (2019-20 to 2021-22) to deliver a community sporting project.

On 19 September 2019, the [Barkly Governance Table](#) agreed to the employment of two staff to coordinate sporting events and competitions in the Barkly region. The staff were to be employed by Barkly Regional Council (BRC) through funding made available to the BRC.

In January 2020, a Memorandum of Understanding was established between the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development (DITCRD) and the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) in relation to the delivery of this community sports project under the Barkly Regional Deal.

The objective of the Barkly Community Sport Program was to improve social outcomes in the Barkly region through the provision of access to sporting activities. This included reactivating community sports leadership and building a self-sustaining model of community involvement in sporting activities.

This final report outlines the project activities undertaken by the ASC including a statement of expenditure, an overview of the benefits and outcomes of the project, and insights and recommendations from a post-implementation review of the project.

Executive Summary

The Barkly Community Sport Program was implemented by the BRC and the ASC between January 2020 and June 2022. The project was delivered on-time and within the allocated budget. Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Barkly Region and the Northern Territory, the Program:

- Supported the recruitment and employment of two new Regional Sport Coordinators at the BRC for the purpose of delivering the Program to June 2022.
- Established the Barkly Sports Hub Inc. as a new community-led umbrella body for sport in the Barkly.
- Delivered a new social sport program in Tennant Creek allowing the community to participate in Softball, Touch Football, Soccer, Tennis, Basketball, Yoga, Cricket, and Volleyball.
- Engaged peak sporting bodies to deliver training and education for community members in Boxing, Softball, Touch Football, and Rugby League.
- Supported the delivery of sport participation events in the Barkly Region including tours by peak sporting bodies, and supported tours of Barkly teams to regional sport competitions.

A post-implementation review of the Program conducted by the ASC in partnership with the Barkly Regional Deal Backbone Team found:

- There was overwhelmingly positive feedback on the social impact of the Barkly Community Sport Program from those who participated or were involved in the program. Community members who participated did so regularly and indicated a strong desire for Barkly Sports Hub sports/activities to continue.
- The presence and continuity of the Regional Sport Coordinators in the Barkly Region, and the support and oversight provided by the ASC were key strengths of the program.
- The presence of the social sport program, and an increased number of regional sporting events and training courses provided opportunities to build sports leadership skills and capabilities in the Barkly Region.
- The Program maximised the use of regional sporting facilities, however delays to key infrastructure upgrades impacted program delivery.
- More time and investment are needed to continue the reactivation of sports leadership and build a successful 'self-sustaining' model of community sport in the Barkly Region.
- The Barkly Sports Hub Inc. has an opportunity to play a central role in the coordination of future opportunities to build and reactivate community sport leadership in the Barkly.

Noting the 10-year timeframe of the Barkly Regional Deal, the ASC provides the following recommendations for any future community sport initiatives delivered under the auspices of the Barkly Regional Deal:

1. Future sporting initiatives funded under the Barkly Regional Deal should be explicitly designed to support achievement of the vision, priorities, and principles of the Deal.
2. Invest further in the presence of sport development officers in the Barkly Region to drive connections and collaboration amongst key stakeholders, support the growth of the Barkly Sports Hub Inc., and build community capacity and involvement in sport. Consideration should be given to the most suitable employer of these officers, including appropriate support structures.
3. The Barkly Sports Hub Inc. should be supported to grow as a community led central hub for sport program delivery and sport leadership development in the Barkly.
4. Embed evaluation in program design and implementation to ensure comprehensive understanding of program impact and identify any critical gaps in implementation.

Barkly Community Sport Program - Project Implementation

Project Roles and Responsibilities

The project role and responsibilities of the ASC and the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development were established via a Memorandum of Understanding on 23 January 2020. The project role and responsibilities of the Barkly Regional Council were established via execution of a funding agreement with the ASC on 10 February 2020, and a variation to this agreement executed on 21 January 2021. The below table provides a summary of these roles and responsibilities:

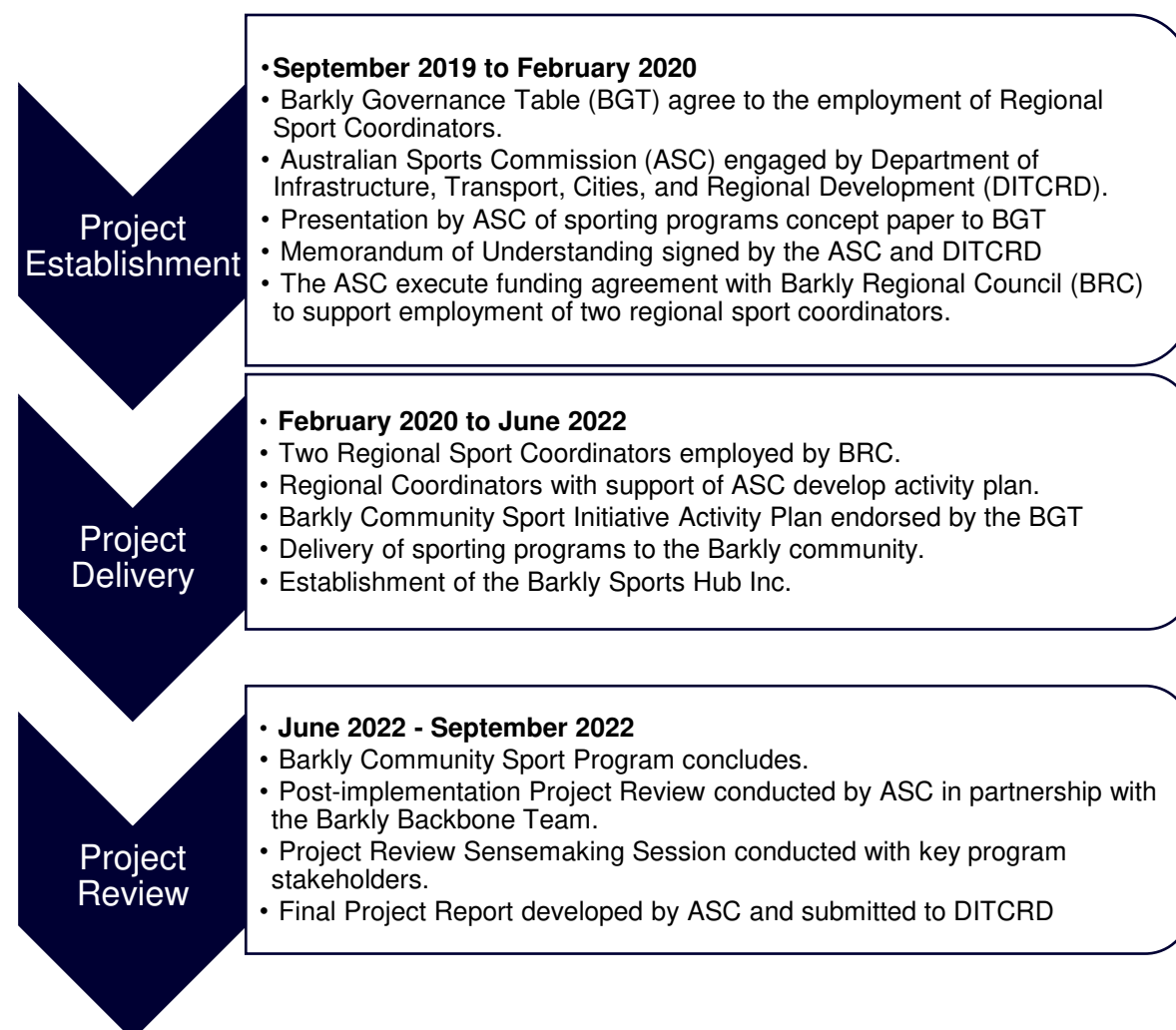
Figure 1: Project Roles and Responsibilities as set out in executed agreements between DITCRD, ASC and BRC

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development (DITCRD)	Australian Sports Commission (ASC)	Barkly Regional Council (BRC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of project funding to the Australian Sports Commission • Monitor and assess achievement against milestones in MOU • Provide project updates to the Barkly Governance Table • Provide updates to the Australian Sports Commission on relevant decisions by the Barkly Governance Table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding to organisations agreed in consultation with the Barkly Governance Table for project delivery. • Utilise existing networks with national sporting bodies to support project objectives. • Monitor and assess achievement of project milestones and objectives. • Provide updates to DITCRD and attend meetings as required. • Report on delivery of the project to DITCRD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ two continuous full-time equivalent Regional Sports Coordinators for a period of two years. • Development of a project activity plan for endorsement by the Barkly Governance Table. • Coordination and delivery of sporting initiatives in the Barkly Region as per the endorsed activity plan. • Report on delivery of the Barkly Community Sport Program to the ASC.

Project Timeline

The diagram below outlines key activities and events in the establishment, delivery, and review of the Barkly Community Sport Program:

Figure 2: Overall Project Timeline with Key Milestones.



Project activities undertaken by the Australian Sports Commission

The Australian Sports Commission's extensive support of the project included the following key activities:

1. Project planning and implementation support

In November 2019, the ASC prepared and presented an options paper to the Barkly Governance Table to inform and seek members views on how program operational funding should be expended.

Following the execution of a funding agreement with the BRC, and the Council's employment of two regional sport coordinators, the ASC directly engaged and supported the Council to develop a project activity plan. This plan was to outline the activities/initiatives to be implemented by the Council over the period 31 March 2020 – 31 March 2022 and include a detailed budget for endorsement by the Barkly Governance Table.

To support the development of the plan, the ASC hosted an online "Barkly Sport Initiative Workshop" across the 24th and 25th March 2020. Attendees included the BRC, Barkly Regional Deal Backbone Team and the Northern Territory Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture.

Following the workshop, the ASC continued to support the Council with key stakeholder engagement to identify priority activities. The Regional Sport Coordinators also engaged with members of the Barkly community through a variety of methods. This included a "Have Your Say on the Future of Sport in the Barkly" survey distributed widely through a variety of mediums and completed by more than 500 community members.

The Barkly Community Sport Initiative Activity Plan was subsequently finalised and presented to the Barkly Governance Table by the Regional Sport Coordinators. The Governance Table endorsed the Activity Plan at their June 2020 meeting (see Appendix A).

To support implementation of the endorsed activity plan, the ASC engaged fortnightly with the Regional Sport Coordinators, and monthly with the Director of Community Development at the BRC via online meetings, phone conversations and email. Direct support to the Council consisted of:

- the provision of advice on sport development such as coach education and club governance
- the provision of templates and administrative support
- leveraging the ASC's connections within the national sports network
- and support to access the ASC programs (e.g. [Sporting Schools](#)).

Two staff from the ASC, Meredith Kelly and Mick Coyne spent five days in the Barkly Region in May 2021. Key stakeholder meetings in Tennant Creek and visits to remote communities were of significant value to the ASC's understanding of the projects progress, as well as the program challenges and opportunities that existed in the region. The physical presence of ASC staff also enhanced the ongoing relationships with key stakeholders in the region.

Unfortunately, the impact of COVID-19 and associated travel restrictions prevented ASC staff from visiting the region on more occasions.



Barkly Region Visit – May 2021. From L-R: Meredith Kelly (Manager, Sport Infrastructure, ASC), Mick Coyne (Manager, Sport Infrastructure, ASC), Sharen Lake (Director – Community Development, Barkly Regional Council)

2. Utilising existing sport sector networks to enhance project outcomes

The ASC leveraged its existing sport sector networks to enhance program delivery throughout the duration of the project. This included:

- **Northern Territory Government (Sport & Recreation):** The ASC engaged directly with NT Sport and Recreation as well as facilitating a connection between relevant staff and the Barkly Regional Sport Coordinators. This engagement supported both project planning and implementation, connecting relevant programs and opportunities.
- **Boxing Australia and Boxing NT:** Boxing was identified as a key start up sport by the community and BRC. The ASC connected Boxing Australia to this opportunity and facilitated improved collaboration with Boxing NT so that safe and appropriate training and accreditation could be provided to the Barkly community.
- **Basketball NT:** Basketball was identified as sport of interest for several schools in the region. The ASC facilitated engagement between the Barkly Regional Sport Coordinators and Basketball NT to organise the delivery of basketball activities, and coach and referee accreditation by Basketball NT.
- **NRL NT:** The ASC facilitated discussions with the NRL to support access to NRL sanctioned equipment for the 'Remote Territory Challenge' conducted in Tennant Creek.

The ASC also connected the Barkly community to other relevant ASC programs, funding opportunities, and resources including Sporting Schools, the Share a Yarn program, Coaching and Officiating, Local Sporting Champions, and the Regional Sport Events Fund.

National Sporting Organisations continue to seek connection to the Barkly region through the ASC and although this project has concluded, the ASC will continue to facilitate these connections through established networks in the region.

3. Distribution and management of funding agreements

The ASC developed and executed a comprehensive funding agreement with the BRC in February 2020. A variation to this funding agreement was developed and executed in January 2021 to support the delivery of additional operational funding and enhance payment and reporting alignment with BRC processes.

The ASC's funding agreements included clear reporting obligations for the BRC that sought to ensure appropriate program accountability whilst minimising unnecessary red tape. The ASC provided clear program and financial reporting templates to assist the Council in meeting its reporting obligations and undertook detailed review and analysis of submitted reports. The ASC also invested considerable time in pursuing overdue reports due to the council often missing reporting deadlines.

4. Project reporting and broader support for the Barkly Regional Deal.

The ASC delivered regular program updates and reports to DITCRD. This included updates to the Barkly Governance Table Traffic-light Report and other formal submissions, the provision of detailed progress reports to DITCRD, and contributions to broader Barkly Regional Deal reports and publications. The ASC also initiated regular meetings with the Barkly Regional Deal team at DITCRD and the Barkly Backbone Team, and contributed to Commonwealth agency meetings hosted by DITCRD.

The ASC also engaged in and supported the Barkly Regional Deal Government Investment and Service System Reform Initiative and will continue to support the implementation of this initiative through the provision of relevant information and data.

Barkly Community Sport Program - Project Outcomes

The objective of the Barkly Community Sport Program was to improve social outcomes in the Barkly Region through provision of access to sporting activities. This included reactivating community sports leadership, building a self-sustaining model of community involvement in sporting activities, and maximising the use of recent and planned capital investment in regional sporting facilities.

To achieve these objectives, the Barkly Community Sports Initiative Activity Plan, endorsed by the Barkly Governance Table, identified five key areas of focus for the sport program:

1. Support structures for the delivery of the sport program (Community consultation, collaboration/partnerships with key stakeholders, resources, and training)
2. Governance and Club Development (Establishment of a governing body for sport in the Barkly region)
3. Workforce Development and Pathways (Focus on capacity and capability building with peak sporting bodies, connecting participation opportunities)
4. Establishment of social and structured sport programs
5. Maximising use of facilities.

A summary of outputs and outcomes against each of the five key focus areas is detailed on the following pages.

1. Support structures for the delivery of the sport program (Community consultation, collaboration/partnerships with key stakeholders, resources, and training)

The successful employment of two Regional Sport Coordinators by the BRC, and the continuity of these coordinators across the life of the project contributed significantly towards the achievements of the program. One of these coordinators continues to be employed by the Council in a sport development role in 2022.

The coordinators were the driving force of the program on the ground in Tennant Creek. With the support of ASC, the coordinators engaged extensively with the community, and key stakeholders both within and outside of the Barkly region. Figure 3 provides an indication of the program support structure established and fostered over the life of the program:

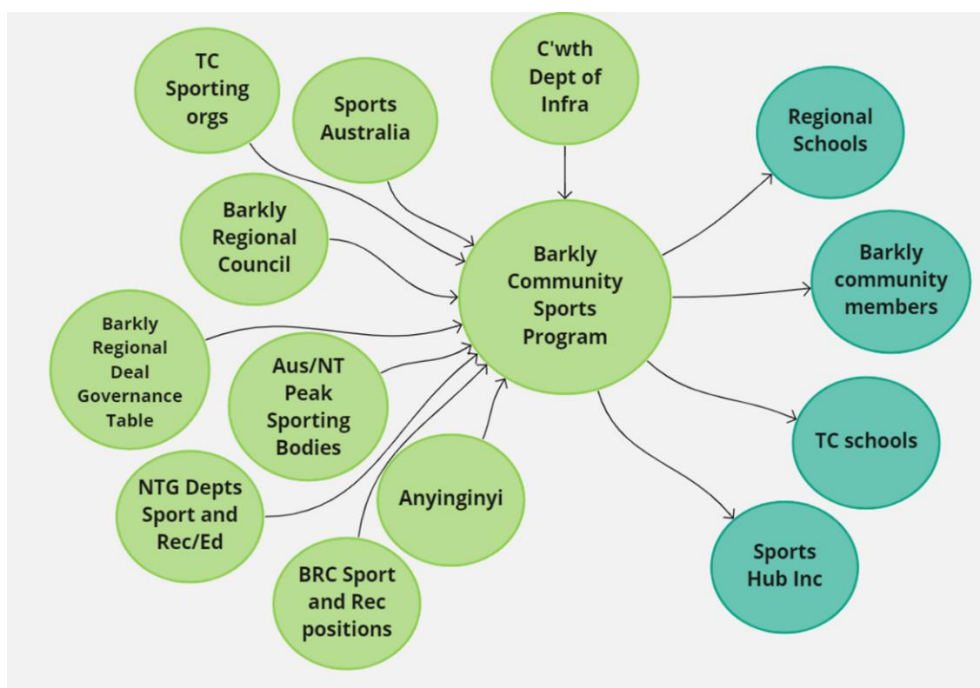


Figure 3: Key Stakeholder Map for the Barkly Community Sport Program.

The coordinators established a strong presence and character for the program that was recognised by the Governance Table as an early visible presence of the Barkly Regional Deal within the community. In addition to driving connections across the community, the coordinators' key functions were the organisation and delivery of sport programs and events, and the establishment of the Barkly Sports Hub Inc. This included the support of the John Moriarty Foundation Indigenous Football Week, the organisation of tours to regional tournaments and competitions such as the Southern Cup Basketball Competition (Alice Springs), hosting the AAI Central Australia Women's Softball Tournament in partnership with Softball NT, and the support of regional tours by peak sporting bodies (Tennis NT, NTIS, NRL). The coordinators also stretched across other areas of need including the reestablishment of the Tennant Creek Gym following the transfer of operation of this facility to the BRC.



Barkly Regional Sport Coordinators
Christopher Combridge (L) and Thomas
Machin (R) following a presentation to the
Barkly Governance Table. Supplied:
DITCRD

Local Sports

Barkly organisations unite to reinvigorate local sports

THE Barkly's sporting groups will unite next week as the NT Institute of Sport (NTIS) and National Rugby League (NRL) arrive in town for a two-day roadshow, followed by Baseball NT.

A much needed reprieve from months of lockdown, the events are supported by the John Moriarty Foundation (JMF), Anyingini Sports and Recreation, Youthlink and Barkly Regional Sports with the hope to reinvigorate sports in the region with the action-packed week.

On Monday and Tuesday, as a part of the Youthlink School holiday program, the NRL, and the NTIS will bring a Sport Roadshow to Tennant Creek with the support of Barkly Regional Council.

The two-day program will offer a selection of five different sports for kids to try – soccer, hockey, netball, rugby league, and cricket.

Monday's sessions will be for 6-10 year olds, running from 11am till 3pm and Tuesday will be for 10-19 year olds from 11am till 2.30pm.

Mixed teams will rotate through the sports during the day to try each of the sports on offer, with all sports abiding by current health guidelines.

Sport Program Coordinator Chris Combridge said it will be great for local kids to get back on the field and getting involved and having fun with sports again.

Sessions will be held at Purkiss Reserve. For further information, check out the advertisement below or contact the Barkly Regional Council.



BACK IN ACTION: Back row: Ade Rizzi (BRC), Stephanie Camphoo (JMF), Gina Rainbird (BRC) and in the front row, Chris Combridge (BRC), Stewart Willey (JMF), Patrick Coleman (JMF) and Tom Machin (BRC).

An article in the Tennant Creek Times highlighting the role of the Regional Sport Coordinators in driving connection between sporting organisations and facilitating the delivery of programs by peak sporting bodies. Source: Tennant Creek Times.

Local Sports



Softball tournament a smash for Tennant Creek

THERE was nothing soft about this comp!

After a successful albeit last minute round up, the reviews are in and there are calls for the AAI Softball Tournament to become an annual shin-dig.

The event was held by the Barkly Sporthub at Purkiss Reserve in Tennant Creek last Friday and Saturday.

Deb Booker, a principal officer for the NT Department of Health said the Tournament was a huge success!

"It is hoped that another tournament to be held in the near future and possibly an annual event," she said.

"Without all of these guys and girls this event could NOT have happened."

Central Desert Regional Council CEO Diane Hood was full of praise for the tournament.

"I would like to extend a big thank you to the Barkly Regional Council during the Tennant Creek Softball Tournament," said Ms Hood.

"A quick thank you to you and your team for hosting the bush Softball Championships in conjunction with NT Softball.

"Our three teams really enjoyed the weekend and being up in Barkly.

"And I'm thrilled to have bragging rights with Ti Tree defeating Laramba in the final!

"Thanks again, nothing but good reports about the facilities and event!"



The AAI Central Australia Women's Softball Tournament was organised by the Regional Sport Coordinators under the auspice of the Barkly Sports Hub Inc. This is a post-event article in the Tennant Creek Times. Source: Tennant Creek Times

2. Governance and Club Development (Establishment of a governing body for sport in the Barkly Region)

The challenges faced in establishing, governing and developing community sporting clubs within the Barkly Region was identified and acknowledged early by the regional sport coordinators. Additionally, with a small and dispersed population across the region, the viability of club-based sporting competitions was also identified as a key challenge. After a thorough assessment of structural options to support a self-sustaining model of community sport in the region, the Barkly Sports Hub Inc. was established by the regional coordinators as an umbrella body for sport in the Barkly Region.

With a management committee comprising members of the community (under the guidance of the regional coordinators), the Barkly Sports Hub Inc. was increasingly positioned as an association through which local sport programs, sporting events, peak sporting association tours, and sport training and accreditation could be coordinated and delivered for the Barkly region. The Hub now has an established identity and social media presence, and whilst there have been challenges in sustaining membership of the management committee, this established structure provides great potential to support the growth of sport participation in the region. A Theory of Change (Fig 4.) has been developed for the Barkly Sports Hub in partnership with the Barkly Backbone Team. Using the imagery of a key tree found in the Barkly, it outlines future outcomes for the Hub and the resources and actions required to achieve these outcomes.



Article in the Tennant Creek Times promoting the opening of the Barkly Sports Hub Inc. Source: Tennant Creek Times.

Figure 4: Barkly Sports Hub Theory of Change

3. Workforce Development and Pathways (Focus on capacity and capability building with peak sporting bodies, connecting participation opportunities)

Barkly community members were provided an opportunity to obtain coaching and officiating accreditations in softball, touch football, boxing, and rugby league. Twenty-five accreditations were reported by the BRC as having been achieved across the life of the program, adding to community capacity in sport delivery. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions however had a significant impact on this key focus area, with key staff from peak sporting associations unable to travel to the region to deliver further training and accreditation.

4. Establishment of social and structured sport programs

A new social sport program in Tennant Creek was a key output of the Barkly Community Sport Program. Initially designed to complement existing sport programs delivered by the BRC in remote communities and the Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation, the program grew both in the number of sports offered and the number of participants. Popular sports/activities included Slow Pitch Softball, Soccer, Yoga, Tennis, Cricket, Basketball, and Volleyball. Funding provided to BRC supported the purchase of equipment and resources, ensuring the social sport program was free for participants.

The social sport program operated under the auspices of the Barkly Sports Hub Inc. following its establishment and over time, new sport working groups were formed to oversee the delivery of sports. This reduced reliance on the regional coordinators for delivery of the program, and enhanced community capacity to deliver sport programs. The ASC understands that the social sport program continues to operate through the Barkly Sports Hub Inc.



Media Articles in the Tennant Creek Times promoting the Social Sport Program provided under the auspice of the Barkly Sports Hub Inc. Source: Tennant Creek Times.

BARKLY SPORTS HUB

Touch Football
When: Monday Nights Starts 17th Jan
Time: 6pm - 7:30pm at Purkiss oval

Soccer
When: Tuesday Nights Starts 18th Jan
Time: 7pm - 8pm - at Purkiss oval

Yoga
When: Tuesday Nights Starts 18th Jan
Time: 5:30pm- 7pm- at CWA

Tennis
When: Thursday Nights Starts 20th Jan
Time: 6pm - 8pm- at Tennis Courts

Cricket
When: Saturday Nights Starts 22nd Jan
Time: 6pm - 7:30pm- at Purkiss Oval

Slow Pitch Softball
When: Sunday Nights Starts 23rd Jan
Time: 6pm - 7:30pm- at Purkiss Oval

Sports are mixed and for ages 15 years - adults

EOI for Cricket & Slow Pitch Softball working groups

CONTACT
Phone: 0892 0089 FACEBOOK: BARKLYSPORTSHUB

BARKLY SPORTS HUB

TERM 3 SPORTS

Tennis
When: Monday Nights
Time: 5:00pm - 7:00pm- at Tennis Courts

Yoga
When: Tuesday Nights
Time: 5:30pm- 6:30pm- at CWA

Mixed Netball Competition
When: Tuesday Nights
Time: 5:30pm- onwards - at Basketball Court

Soccer
When: Tuesdays & Thursday Nights
Time: 7:00pm at Purkiss

Mixed Volleyball Competition
When: Wednesday Nights
Time: 5:30pm- onwards - at Basketball Court

Junior Multi-Sports
When: Wednesdays & Thursdays
Time: 3:00pm- 4:30pm- at Basketball Court
(A range of equipment for juniors to play a sport of their choice)

STARTING FROM MONDAY 25TH JULY

Promotional Flyers for the Social Sport Program produced and distributed by the Regional Sport Coordinators. Source: Barkly Regional Council

5. Maximising use of facilities

The Barkly Community Sport Program maximised the use of available facilities in the conduct of the social sport program and other sporting events. Significant delays to planned and expected infrastructure upgrades however impacted the growth of sport programs. This was particularly the case in Tennant Creek with the delay to the upgrade of Purkiss Reserve. The regional coordinators have also reported the need to upgrade other facilities such as the tennis courts and the old softball field to enhance the experience of participants.



Participants in the Slow-Pitch Softball program conducted at Purkiss Oval. Supplied: BRC

Barkly Community Sport Program - Project Funding and Expenditure

The Barkly Community Sport Program was delivered within the allocated budget as indicated in the table below:

Financial Year	Funding from DITCRD	Funding to Barkly Regional Council – Staff Wages	Funding to Barkly Regional Council – Operational Costs	ASC Admin Costs
2019-20	\$300,000	\$126,853 (Funding agreement - Paid)		
2020-21	\$400,000	\$245,783 (Funding Agreement - Paid)		
			\$151,200 (Variation – first payment of operational costs - Paid)	\$64,000
		\$29,342 (Variation - advance payment to resolve timing issues - Paid)	\$82,822 (Variation – second payment of operational costs – Paid in 21/22 due to late submission of operational plan)	
2021-22	\$100,000 (Paid)	\$100,000 (Funding Agreement – Paid)		
Total	\$800,000	\$501,978	\$234,022	\$64,000

Figure 5: Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Barkly Community Sport Program.

Barkly Regional Council (BRC) – Expenditure of Grant Funds

- On 10 February 2020, the ASC executed a funding agreement of \$501,978 with the BRC for the employment of two Regional Sport Coordinators.
- On 21 January 2021, the ASC executed a variation to the funding agreement with the BRC to allocate an additional \$234,022 for program operational costs and adjust the timing of payments for the staffing costs. The total amount committed under the agreed variation is \$736,000.
- In financial year 2019/20, the ASC paid BRC \$126,853, with the Council declaring expenditure of \$103,123.23. The ASC approved the Council to carry over \$23,729.77 in unspent funds to the 2020/21 financial year.
- In financial year 2020/21, the ASC allocated \$532,876.77 to BRC including the \$23,729.77 carried over from 2019/20. On 10 March 2022, the Council declared expenditure of \$301,918 in 2020/21, leaving a surplus of \$230,959.
- It was expected that the Council would declare a surplus due to the early allocation of \$29,342 in staff funding and \$82,822 in operational funding provided to avoid timing issues in the allocation of funding between DITRDC, the ASC and the BRC.
- Analysis of the Council's financial declaration indicated that funding provided for staffing (and associated oncosts) was expended in 2020/21 as forecast in the initial program costing. There was a significant underspend however of operational program funding. This was primarily due to the impact of COVID-19 and adverse weather events in the Barkly region during the financial year.
- A financial update provided in March 2022 by BRC indicated total program expenditure of \$640,730 to the end of February 2022, with approximately \$95,000 in remaining funds expected to be utilised on delivery of the program to 30 June 2022.
- BRC's final financial declaration and audited grant expenditure statement remains outstanding. The ASC is aware of significant financial reporting issues at the Council including a backlog of overdue financial acquittals. The ASC is continuing to pursue the Council for their final financial report but does not expect there to be any unexpended funds.

Australian Sports Commission – Administrative Expenses and Resourcing

The ASC deducted administrative expenses of 8% of total project cost (\$64,000), within the defined parameters of the project Memorandum of Understanding. These funds supported the provision of staff for the administration of funding agreements and direct program implementation support (including travel).

Throughout the duration of the project a dedicated EL1/APS6 equivalent staff member, with the oversight and support of an EL2 equivalent staff member led the implementation of the project, providing direct support to the BRC and engagement with DITCRD.

The ASC also mobilised staff within its Funding and Legal teams to support the creation and execution of funding agreements, and the administration of payments. In total, the ASC contributed significant value in kind through the provision of staffing and specialist support, over and above the deducted administrative expenses across the three years of the project.

Barkly Community Sport Program - Project Review

The ASC partnered with the Barkly Regional Deal Backbone Team to undertake a post-implementation review of the Barkly Community Sport Program. The purpose of the review was to understand what worked (and did not work) in the Program, and to inform future community sport initiatives in the Barkly.

Six questions formed the foundation of the review:

1. How accessible was the program to people across the Barkly?
2. How effective was the program in achieving its objectives?
3. How effective was the program in improving social outcomes for participants?
4. Was the program delivered on time and within budget?
5. What challenges did the program face and how were these addressed?
6. What are the learnings from this initiative and how we can use them to improve future efforts and outcomes in the Barkly?

Data sources for the review included:

- A survey of participants in the program. Using SurveyMonkey this survey was available to participants online and could also be completed on a tablet at one of the social sport sessions. Responses were collected from April – June 2022 and 44 participants completed the survey.
- Comprehensive stakeholder interviews were offered to key staff at BRC, DITCRD, ASC, the Barkly Sports Hub, NT Government (Sport & Recreation and Education) and other community organisations. Fifteen stakeholder interviews were conducted and analysed for key themes by the Barkly Regional Deal Backbone Team.
- Project Reports submitted by the BRC over the life of the program were reviewed, along with key foundational and operating documents from BRC, ASC and DITCRD.

Following data collection and analysis, the ASC and the Barkly Regional Deal Backbone Team hosted a Sensemaking Session for key stakeholders to share and 'make sense' of the initial findings of the review. Hosted at the Barkly Backbone Office at Tennant Creek (and online) on Tuesday 26 July 2022, the session was attended by representatives of the ASC, BRC, DITCRD, the Barkly Sports Hub, and NT Government (Sport and Recreation, Education, Housing).

Overall, in relation to the whether the objectives of the Barkly Community Sport Program were met, the review found:

- There was overwhelming positive feedback on the social impact of the Program from those who participated or were involved in the Program. Community members who participated did so regularly and indicated a strong desire for Barkly Sports Hub sports/activities to continue.
- The presence of the social sport program, and an increased number of regional sporting events and training courses provided opportunities to build sports leadership skills and capabilities in the Barkly. The COVID-19 pandemic however had an impact on the achievement of Program outcomes.
- The Program maximised the use of regional sporting facilities, however delays to key infrastructure upgrades impacted program delivery.
- More time and investment are needed to continue the reactivation of sports leadership and build a successful 'self-sustaining' model of community sport in the Barkly Region.
- The Barkly Sports Hub Inc. has an opportunity to play a central role in the coordination of future opportunities to build and reactivate community sport leadership in the Barkly.

Detailed insights from the post-implementation review are provided by review question on the following pages. The figures included were prepared by the Barkly Backbone Team to summarise the insights from the review and were presented to stakeholders for discussion at the Sensemaking Session.

1. How accessible was the program to people across the Barkly?



Figure 6: Program accessibility. Summary of insights from key stakeholder interviews, a survey of program participants and program reporting from BRC and ASC.

- The social sport program in Tennant Creek was well publicised and easy to access for adult residents in Tennant Creek and local surrounds. Programs were well organised and free for participants. The sport offerings were guided by community interest.
- Participation by indigenous members of the community was lower than expected.
- Opportunities exist to expand sport offerings to children and young adults across the Barkly. Consideration should be given to engaging remote communities in the social sport and sport event program.

2. How effective was the program in achieving its objectives?

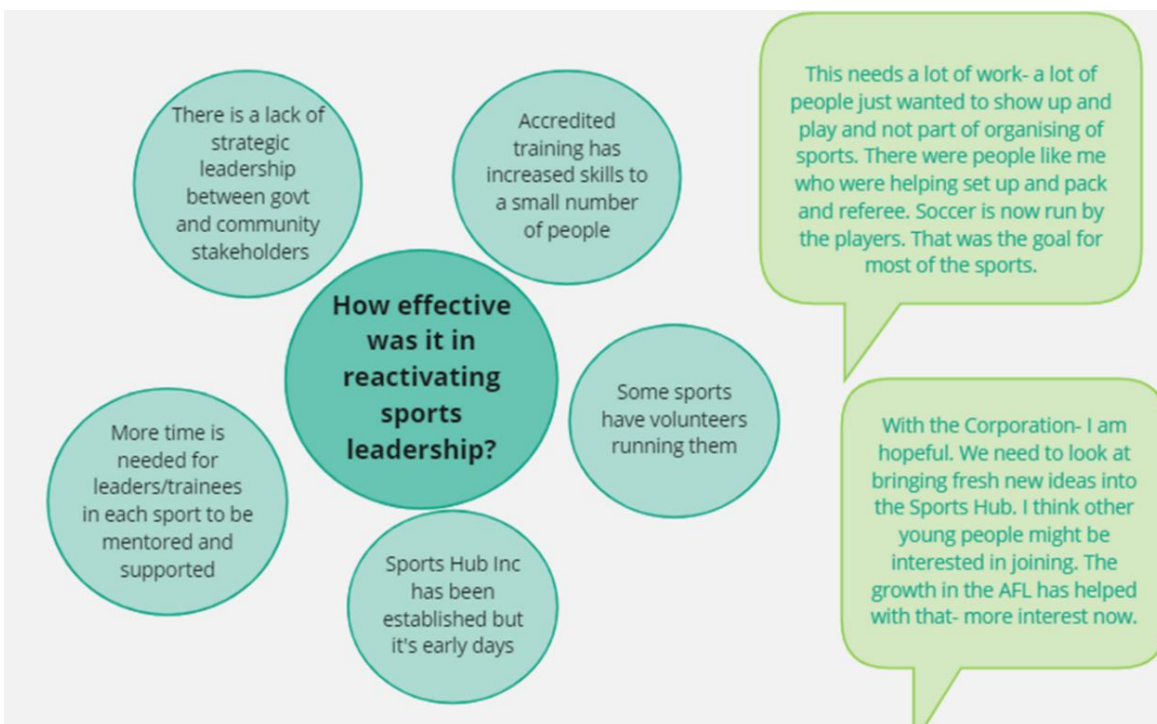


Figure 7: Reactivating Sports Leadership in the Barkly Region. Summary of insights from key stakeholder interviews, a survey of program participants, and program reporting from BRC and ASC.

- The presence of the social sport program, and an increased number of regional sporting events and tours provided opportunities to build sports leadership skills and capabilities in the Barkly.
- The provision of accredited training has increased coaching and officiating capability in 25 community members.
- The achievement of this outcome was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Face-to-face training and accreditation opportunities were limited, and the ability for peak sporting association staff to travel into the region was restricted.
- More time and investment is needed to achieve this outcome. The Barkly Sports Hub Inc. has an opportunity to play a central role in the coordination of future opportunities to build and reactivate community sport leadership in the Barkly.

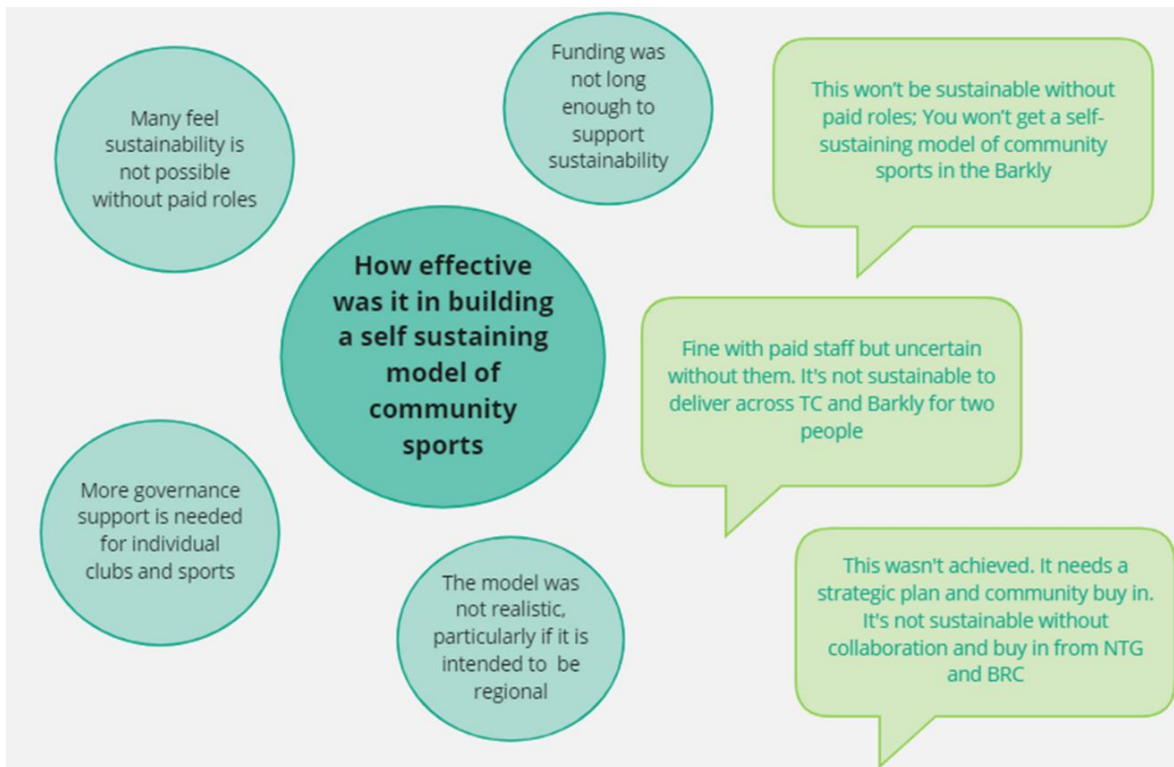


Figure 8: Building a self-sustaining model of community sport in the Barkly Region. Summary of insights from key stakeholder interviews, a survey of program participants, and program reporting from BRC and ASC.

- Clarity is needed in defining what a successful 'self-sustaining' model of community sport looks like in the Barkly.
- Many stakeholders reported the need for paid sport development officers in Tennant Creek to drive continued sport development across the Barkly. More investment in this resource would be welcomed.
- Considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, stakeholders felt that more time was needed to achieve this objective. The cessation of funding for sport development officers three years in to a ten-year deal was noted.
- All stakeholders responsible for and/or involved in the delivery of sport programs in the region need to be connected and collaborate to ensure efficient use of scarce resources and reduce the risk of duplication.

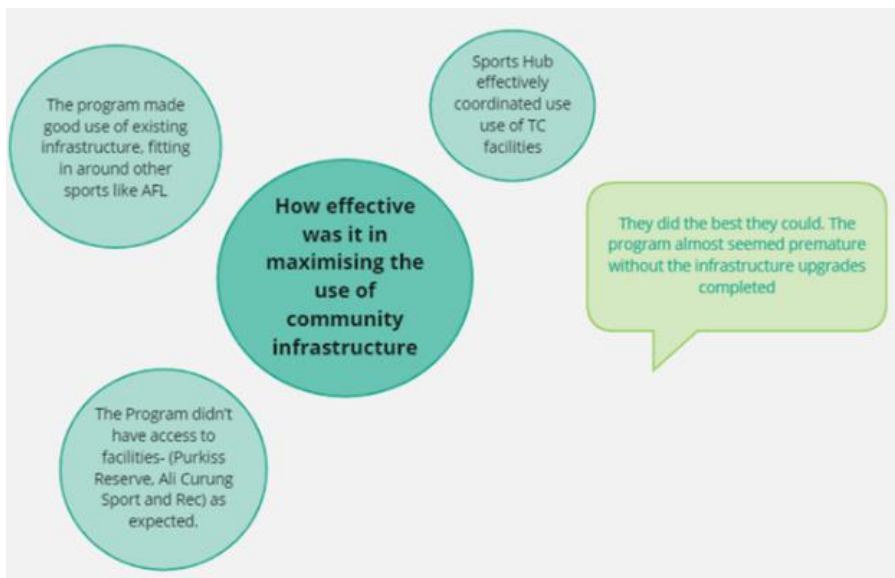


Figure 9: Maximising use of community sport infrastructure. Summary of insights from key stakeholder interviews, a survey of program participants, and program reporting from BRC and ASC.

3. How effective was the program in improving social outcomes for participants?

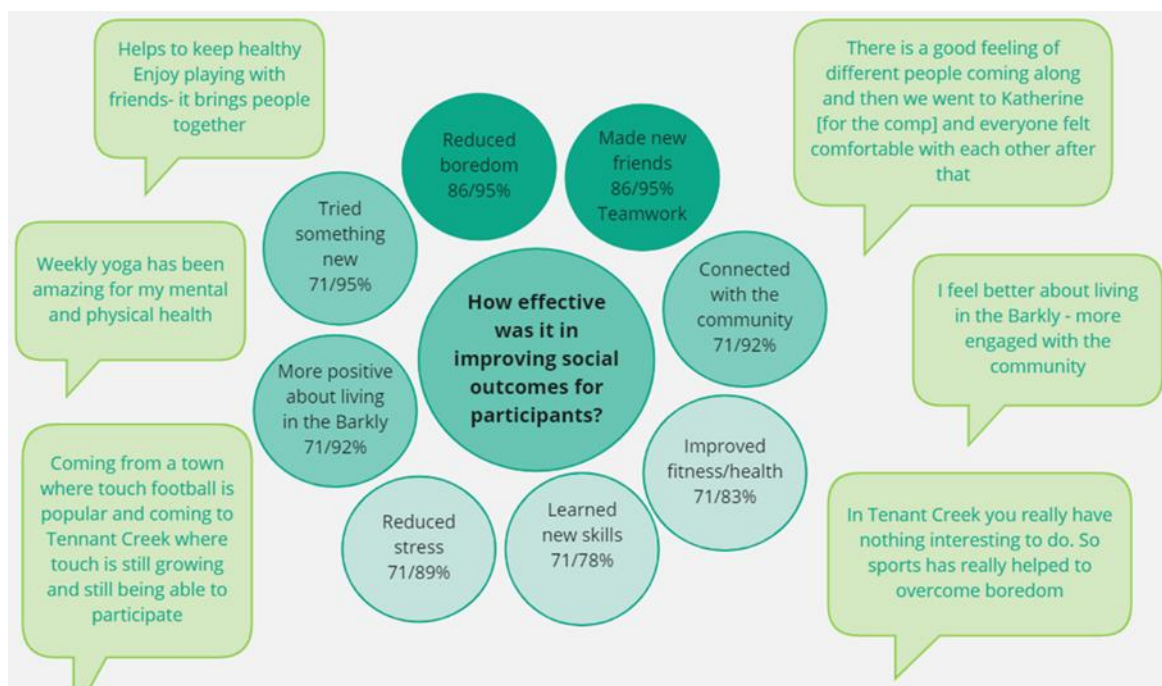


Figure 10: Improving social outcomes for participants. Summary of insights from key stakeholder interviews, a survey of program participants, and program reporting from BRC and ASC.

- There was overwhelming positive feedback on the social impact of the Barkly Community Sport Program from those who participated or were involved in the program.
- Community members who participated did so regularly and indicated a strong desire for Barkly Sports Hub sports/activities to continue.
- The identified positive impact on social outcomes by participants presents a strong value proposition for investing in an increase in the participant base across the Barkly.

4. Was the program delivered on time and within budget?

- The overall initiative was delivered within the expected timeframe.
- COVID-19 and inclement weather impacted the delivery of some program activities. This included the need to delay or reschedule planned activities. The volume of activities also appeared to be impacted by COVID-19 and associated restrictions.
- Project reporting by BRC to the ASC was often delayed/overdue leading to delays in reporting by the ASC to DITCRD.
- The program was delivered within the allocated budget. Progressive underspends by BRC supported the extension of the tenure of one regional sport coordinator by three months.

Funding Recipients and Purpose

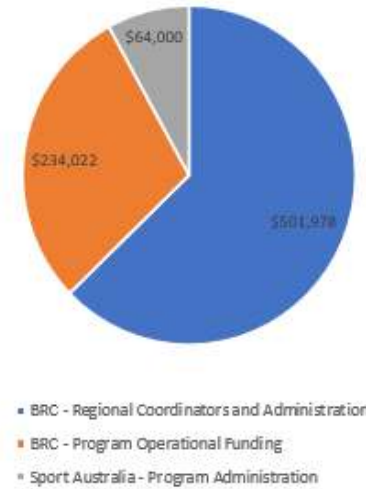


Figure 11: Distribution and use of program funding by BRC and ASC

5. What challenges did the program face and how were these addressed?



Figure 12: Program Challenges. Summary of insights from key stakeholder interviews, a survey of program participants, and program reporting from BRC and ASC.

- Stakeholders and participants reported a wide range of program challenges as indicated in the above figure. The COVID-19 pandemic provided the greatest challenge and most disruption to program implementation.
- Key organisational challenges included the inability for ASC staff to be more present in the Barkly, significant delays in reporting by BRC and the turnover of staff in the Barkly Regional Deal team.

- Key program delivery challenges included restrictions associated with the pandemic, the delay to planned infrastructure upgrades, inclement weather, and a lack of volunteers in the community to support the delivery of sport programs.
- Despite significant challenges, there was a significant amount of good-will between key stakeholders and partners that supported the identification and resolution of key issues.

6. What are the learnings from this initiative and how we can use them to improve future efforts and outcomes in the Barkly?



Figure 13: Program Strengths. Summary of insights from key stakeholder interviews, a survey of program participants, and program reporting from BRC and ASC.

- Overwhelmingly, stakeholders identified the presence and continuity of the regional sport coordinators in the Barkly, and the support and oversight provided by the ASC as key strengths of the program.
- New 'community assets' such as the Barkly Sports Hub Inc., social sport program, and expanded calendar of sporting events were visible strengths of the project.



Figure 14: Suggestions for improving the program activities delivered through the Barkly Sports Hub. Summary of insights from key stakeholder interviews, a survey of program participants, and program reporting from BRC and ASC.

- Key stakeholders and participants in the post-implementation review identified many opportunities for improving the Barkly Sports Hub Inc. and the sport programs and activities it offers.
- Opportunities to improve/enhance future sport participation projects in the Barkly were also identified through the post-implementation review.



Figure 15: Suggestions for improvement of the Barkly Community Sport Program overall. Summary of insights from key stakeholder interviews, a survey of program participants, and program reporting from BRC and ASC.

- Participants in the Sensemaking Session were asked to identify elements of the Barkly Community Sport Program that they would recommend be ceased/dropped, kept, and created in any future iterations of the Program. Responses are summarised in the table on the following page.

Figure 16: Suggestions for improvement of the Barkly Community Sport Program. Summary of input gathered from key stakeholders in the Sensemaking Session.

DROP	KEEP	CREATE
Don't need more administrators, need people delivering / frontline.	A funded coordinator role on the ground	Two trainee or more roles on the ground Pathways for volunteers into paid roles
Expectation to be volunteer led without support, or funded role.	Social Sports and a range of sports	Need to find funding for the Program
	Calendar of Comps	Have more say in NTG Role
	Support existing orgs/comps e.g., AFL	Need greater accountability and coordination with sporting peaks to make sure they come to the Barkly
	NTG Community Sports Officer (needs to be flexibility in this role)	Pool school Funding /applications for individual sports
	Come and Try Days was a success	Capacity Building for clubs – governance training / support
	Sports Hub Inc can be a recipient of future funding	BSh could be a kind of Peak Body for Sports in Barkly
	Regional Sports Program should remain as a priority for the Barkly Regional Deal Governance Table	Build on success in AFLW, draw on new volunteers, new people, new energy
	Ongoing capacity building and Support for a broad volunteer base. This needs to be done with Peak sporting bodies	Keep momentum in AFL off-season – eg run straight into basketball
	Build on popular sports – Mixed softball – off-season (footy)	Complete Sports Facilities.
	Collaboration with sporting peaks	Do new needs analysis with community
		Local clubs can become Sports Hub Inc affiliates. (eg Spitfires)
		More engagement with school programs and more pressure on schools to reinvigorate their sports programs

Key Recommendations for Future Sport Initiatives in the Barkly Regional Deal.

Noting the 10-year timeframe of the Barkly Regional Deal, the ASC provides the following recommendations for any future community sport program initiatives delivered under the auspices of the Barkly Regional Deal. These recommendations are based on insights gained from the post-implementation review, reflect only the view of the ASC, and are provided for consideration by the Barkly Governance Table and the DITCRD.

1. **Future sporting initiatives funded under the Barkly Regional Deal should be explicitly designed to support achievement of the objectives of the Deal.** This includes consideration of the new community vision, and five priority areas of change. Implementation of new initiatives should incorporate the five community identified principles/ways of working.



BRD Community Vision: Strong Barkly communities and families, together determining our future and thriving in both worlds.

2. **Invest further in the presence of sport development officers in the Barkly to drive connections and collaboration amongst key stakeholders, support the growth of the Barkly Sports Hub Inc., and build community capacity and involvement in sport.** Consideration should be given to the most suitable employer of these officers, including appropriate support structures. It is essential that these roles are complementary to, and do not duplicate existing roles/services provided by other key stakeholders such as the Northern Territory Government.
3. **The Barkly Sports Hub Inc. should be supported to grow as a community led central hub for sport program delivery, and sport leadership development in the Barkly.** This includes developing a stronger connection with existing sports clubs, and state and national sporting organisations to provide pathways for sport participation and involvement.
4. **Embed evaluation in program design and implementation to ensure comprehensive understanding of program impact and identify any critical gaps in implementation.** Key Performance Indicators should be co-designed with stakeholders in the Barkly to ensure objectives and reporting align with community priorities in the Deal's evaluation framework.



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

SportAus.gov.au



Leverrier Street Bruce ACT 2617
PO Box 176 Belconnen ACT 2616
+61 2 6214 1111