



OneSport Participation Growth Strategy

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DEFINITIONS & ABBREVIATIONS

Definitions

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| Athletics in NSW | A working title for the united operations of Little Athletics NSW, Athletics NSW and the NSW Masters Association |
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Abbreviations (as they appear in the strategy)

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Athletics NSW | ANSW |
| Little Athletics NSW | LANSW |
| NSW Masters Athletics | NSWMA |
| Joint Working Party | JWP |
| Member Associations | MA's |
| Australian Sports Commission | ASC |
| Athletics Australia | AA |
| Little Athletics Australia | LAA |

Executive Summary

Athletics NSW (ANSW), Little Athletics NSW (LANSW) and the NSW Masters Athletics (NSWMA) are strongly aligned to the OneSport philosophy and are working positively and collaboratively to deliver the OneSport Athletics in NSW strategy. The OneSport Athletics in NSW strategy includes 12 specific strategies for the period 2017/18 – 2019/20, including the Participation Growth Strategy; our road map for growing athletics participation in NSW.

The OneSport Participation Growth Strategy development has been divided into three phases:

- 1) Preliminary requirements to develop the OneSport Participation Growth Strategy (Phase 1) - October 2017
- 2) Research and strategy development (Phase 2)
 - a. The Lay of the Land Research Report – December 2018
 - b. OneSport Participation Growth Strategy – March 2018
- 3) Strategy Implementation (Phase 3) – From April 2018

Following the approval of the Participation Growth Phase 1 paper by the Joint Working Party (JWP) in October 2017, *The Lay of the Land Research Report* was compiled, collating research and information from OneSport NSW stakeholders and other athletics providers regarding participation offerings, previously conducted survey results from athletics stakeholders/participants across NSW, recent research from organisations including the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), Athletics Australia (AA), Little Athletics Australia (LAA) and Government Departments. The report recognises and supports the findings of previous reports and reviews regarding OneSport; including the Joint Organisational Review: Recommendations Report (May 2016) and the Athletics NSW and Little Athletics NSW: OneSport Project (May 2016).

8 preliminary recommendations were presented in *The Lay of the Land Research Report*:

1. Define and agree on what athletics participation and participation growth includes/involves
2. Grow the existing recreational running events and investigate the opportunity for broader engagement of the recreational running market, including community running groups and partnerships with other providers
3. As the number one sport/recreational activity, investigate how athletics can engage with the walking market
2. Grow the number and strength of OneSport Clubs, including investigate the appointment of a OneSport Officer to manage relationships and provide support services
3. Audit Clubs/Centres to better understand their operations and offerings to provide support and build capacity
4. Address the duplication and gaps in the participation pathways, specifically in U12-U17 age groups
5. Investigate the opportunities for stronger ties and deeper involvement with schools, teachers, delivery of school based programs and support services for enhancing the school athletic carnivals experience
6. Identify the opportunities for providing product offerings and engaging with Australians in the fitness and physical activity space

A consultation process from December – March 2017 saw feedback provided through an online survey, face to face meetings, OneSport Joint Staff Meetings, and email communications. Feedback was provided by representatives from LANSW and ANSW staff, JWP members and club/centre representatives, a summary of which can be found in Appendix B, page 19. The growth of OneSport Clubs received strong support via the online survey, with 75% of the respondents strongly agreeing with the preliminary recommendation to “*Grow the number & strength of OneSport Clubs, including investigate the appointment of a OneSport Officer to manage relationships and provide support services*”. The second most supported preliminary recommendation, with 62.5% of the respondents strongly agreeing was to “*Grow the existing recreational running events and investigate the opportunity for broader engagement of the recreational running market, including community running groups and partnerships with other providers*”. The two third most supported preliminary recommendations, both with 50% of the respondents strongly agreeing, was to “*Audit Clubs/Centres to better understand their operations and offerings to provide support and build capacity*” and “*Define and agree on what athletics participation and participation growth includes/involves*”.

Survey respondents all agreed that athletics is very broad and can attract and cater for everyone; regardless of age, ability and culture. It is also the basis of other sports and recreational activities, due to the fundamental movement skills and delivering the basics of running, jumping, throwing and walking. LANSW/ANSW staff and the JWP also completed an activity to ascertain who the Athletics in NSW customer should be, that will best grow participation in NSW. Eight customers were identified, then prioritized on a scale of importance. This identified the top four priorities as Secondary Children, Primary Children, School Athletics Carnivals and Recreational Running.

A target of 15,000 new participants in Athletics in NSW by 2020/21 has been proposed. The 3 primary objectives that aim to achieve the target are:

1. Strengthen the OneSport offerings and streamline the pathways for participating in athletics in NSW
2. Be the 'go to' organisation for NSW Schools to access athletics expertise, products and services
3. Achieve new participation growth in Athletics in NSW recreational running products and services

In order to achieve the target and primary objectives, 11 Deliverable Strategies across 3 Strategy Areas are identified:

1. OneSport Products and Services
 - 1) Coordinate and/or develop structured and ability appropriate participation opportunities for primary aged children (5-12yrs) and secondary aged children (12-17yrs)
 - 2) Develop and deliver an Athletics Youth Program to (re)engage youth in athletics participation
 - 3) Audit Clubs/Centres to understand their products/services. Develop resources to increase capacity and improve member services
 - 4) Develop a state managed track & field product to attract and engage social participants (Youth & 18+)
 - 5) Investigate the needs and interests of masters participation in athletics to establish relevant engagement & retention strategies (30+)
 - 6) Contribute to national OneSport pathways, products and policies
2. Schools
 - 6) Develop relationships with NSW Schools and the NSW School Sport Unit and be recognized as the 'go to' organization for athletics expertise
 - 7) Evaluate the school athletic carnival space and provide support for primary and secondary schools, teachers and School Sport Coordinators to have an (enhanced) positive experience with school athletics
 - 8) Increase school participation in athletics programs to ensure every child has the opportunity to learn to run, jump, throw and walk
3. Recreational Running
 - 9) Establish a community running package (delivery framework and suite of programs and clinics) to increase participation in RunNSW and Waratah Run Series events and engage with community runners
 - 10) Establish strong relationships with NSW event providers to increase NSW recreational running participation figures, and pursue alignment to the Athletics in NSW brand

Each strategy will be monitored through data driven evaluation and assessment tools. Resource recommendations and budget estimations indicate that to achieve the targets and objectives for 2020/21, an investment of approximately \$110,000 will be required, which includes staffing and operational budget. The success of achieving the targets and strategies will be dependent upon the Staffing and Operational Resources available. As such, the targets are set based upon the provision of one new staff resource to focus primarily on the implementation of Strategy Area 1: OneSport Products and Services; with Strategy Areas 2 and 3 dependent upon existing staff workloads. Further, the success of the strategy is reliant upon the successful development and implementation of other Athletics in NSW strategies, in particular the *Coaching & Officiating Development Framework*, the *Membership Model Review* and the *Centre/Club Capacity Enhancement Initiative*,

By 31 March 2018, recommendations for achieving participation growth, included as part of The OneSport Participation Growth Strategy will be finalised, with implementation to commence from 1 April 2018.

Introduction

Athletics, encompassing traditional track and field and recreational running is large and complex. It is both a recreational activity and competitive pursuit, which presents both opportunities and challenges, yet it has the ability to attract and provide participation opportunities for all ages and abilities. The fundamentals of athletics (run, jump, throw, walk, roll) provide the basis for almost every other athletic pursuit and therefore by default; every person, from childhood to adulthood should have the opportunity to learn and master the skills of running, jumping, throwing, walking and rolling.

Whether people master these skills to take part in athletics or to enhance their participation in other activities or sporting pursuits is irrelevant, this puts athletics in the box seat for providing the expertise to develop and master these fundamentals skills. To do this successfully, athletics needs to ensure its product and service offerings are current and relevant, are welcoming, inclusive and accessible by everyone, that there is a capable workforce in place to meet demand and that delivery is in a way that best suits the needs of the modern family unit.

So, what does this look like and what does it mean for athletics?

It looks like a clean slate and starts with taking an objective and analytical look at what products and services we offer, in what format we offer them and then critically assess each for their value, their relevance and their ability to meet our objectives. It is taking the time to review and analyse our performance and being honest about how well we executed the strategy and the tactics. Did we achieve our personal best? Do we need to re-think our approach? Despite how we perceive we performed, did our participants and our members achieve what they set out to when started their participation journey with us? If they didn't; how can we modify and adapt what we do to make it better and help our participants achieve their goals?

The journey to the development of the OneSport Participation Growth Strategy started with *The Lay of the Land Research Report*. What followed has been the opportunity for a range of stakeholders to provide their critical analysis of athletics products and services and contribute to and shape an approach to growing participation in athletics in NSW.

The opportunity is enormous, with 3.1 million Australians having participated in athletics (track/field, running, jogging) from July 2016 – June 2017 (Ausplay, 2017), a shifting focus as a nation on the important role of physical activity and fundamental movement skills and the motivating factor that athletics forms the basis of almost every other sporting and physical activity pursuit. Now is the time to make the change and take advantage of every opportunity to engage more NSW people into the wonderful world of athletics.

We have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Let's get started!

Purpose

To guide our activities as they relate to growing all current and future athletics participation related product and program offerings and delivery needs.

Scope of Strategy

The scope of this strategy includes consideration for all coordinated athletic activities in NSW (by LANSW, ANSW and NSWMA) and includes consultation with a range of athletics stakeholders.

Out of scope of this strategy are specific strategies pertaining to coaches, officials, membership and facilities.

This strategy should be read in conjunction with the *Coaching & Officiating Development Framework*, the *Membership Model Review* and the *Centre/Club Capacity Enhancement Initiative*, as all three are intimately intertwined with the OneSport Participation Growth Strategy.

It is also important to note that the success of the OneSport Participation Growth Strategy is dependant upon the successful implementation of the above strategies, with particular reference to the growth and development of new coaches and officials and the progress towards OneSport Clubs/Centres and their capacity and capabilities.

Situation Analysis

Analysis of the athletics landscape in NSW was completed as part of *The Lay of the Land Research Report* (Dec 2017) and included information about existing products and services, previously conducted surveys and general information about sport, participation and physical activity. Feedback was provided by a range of stakeholders and an activity was conducted to identify who the future customers of Athletics in NSW should be to achieve participation growth. Ongoing discussions have been held with staff to identify opportunities, challenges and any barriers to implementing the strategies and help shape the strategy contents.

While the contents of *The Lay of the Land Research Report* and the feedback received have shaped the direction of the strategy, a more specific situational analysis has been completed for each of the strategies presented in this document. The brief 'snapshot' of information will provide some background information, some of the thought processes behind the contents and add context to each strategy. The Situational Analyses can be found in Appendix A, pages 16-18.

Further background information and research can be found in *The Lay of the Land Research Report*.

Included in the Situational Analysis are the following areas:

- Market Size
- Target market/s & Opportunities
- Competitors
- Value proposition
- Critical success factors
- Delivery Channels
- Revenue Potential
- Further investigation

Challenges & Critical Success Factors

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| Challenges: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of the strategy in relation to the development of the <i>Coaching & Officiating Development Framework</i>, any strategies relating to coaches and officials, the <i>Membership Model Review</i> and the <i>Centre/Club Capacity Enhancement Initiative</i> • Consensus on the definitions of participation, participation growth and who Athletics in NSW customer/s are and utilizing these definitions as part of all thinking with regards to participation • Prioritisation and timing of national participation product development and pathways; this may result in interim/isolated products being developed or products not being developed in lieu of waiting for national bodies to develop and/or implement products • The resources (financial and/or human) available to implement projects |
| Critical Success Factors: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant progress towards OneSport Athletics in NSW, specifically in Clubs/Centre operations and their capacity and capability to cater for participation growth • Measuring participation as an individual's participation in products/services, not membership • All products and services are inclusive, accessible and welcoming of everyone • Consistent increase in accredited coaches to deliver products and services • Increased delivery of coaching accreditation courses in targeted locations, to ensure there is a skilled and confident workforce capable of structured program delivery • A focus on increasing the number of accredited officials to cater for participation growth • A solid understanding of the whole event experience for all stakeholders (participants, families, spectators, coaches, officials) to retain existing and attract new people to athletics |

Defining and Measuring Participation & Growth

Everyone has perceived ideas about what athletic participation is and what participation growth means. Participation can range from sprinting at Championship events, throwing at the local meet, running a recreational event, coaching or a parent assisting at their child's LA's centre. Growth can be measured by increasing existing participants activity, increasing membership/registrations, increasing revenue streams or expanding the offerings to new products/services. It is important to define and measure both participation and growth and to prioritise who Athletics in NSW customer/s should be, and to ensure all stakeholders agree with these aspects. This ensures a clear path forward, the best use of the resources available and the most targeted, strategic approach possible. Please note that strategies and measures for participation growth have not been developed based upon increasing revenue streams or profits.

This strategy utilises the following parameters:

- 1. A participant is considered part of Athletics in NSW if they have a minimum of one interaction with Athletics in NSW products and services (e.g. One recreational running event, one program registration) in the athletics year.**
- 2. A participant will be considered a NEW participant if they have had no engagement with any of the Athletics in NSW organisations or their activities for 5+ years.**

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Primary measures for successful participation growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New participants in identified Athletics in NSW activities ✓ Successful progression towards OneSport Club/Centre operations ✓ Implementation of new products and services by Clubs/Centres ✓ Participation growth from non-affiliated organisations (e.g. Parkrun, schools) |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Secondary measures for successful participation growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increased participation by existing participants ✓ Growth of accredited coaches and officials* ✓ Enhanced athletic experience for participants and stakeholders |

* The growth of coaches and officials will be primarily measured as part of the *Coaching & Officiating Development Framework* and any strategies relating to coaches and officials.

Evaluation and Reporting

Evaluation tools will be developed in conjunction with the approved strategy.

1. Online Evaluation Surveys:

- All activities to include evaluations
- Activity evaluations for participants including demographics, general feedback, learning/satisfaction levels, behavior change, previous Athletics in NSW participation and specific questions to track their participation journey
- Ongoing evaluations for coaches, officials, schools, clubs/centres including satisfaction levels, support/resources required etc

2. Registration:

- All participation strategy activity registrations to include standardized registration questions including how they found out about the activity, previous participation in Athletics in NSW products/services, current behavior (to connect with post evaluation behavior change), and specific questions to track their participation journey

3. Report Templates:

- Data collection that maps participation across a series of activities, to determine repeat participation by an individual
- Data collection that identifies where a participant has come from, and tracks their participation journey
- Data collection that indicates if participation growth is being achieved across all Deliverable Strategies and specific areas; participants, coaches, officials, clubs/centres, events, schools

4. Strategy Reporting:

| Report Type | Inclusions | Reporting Provided to | Timing |
|--------------------|--|--|----------------------|
| 2020/21 Review | Complete review of OneSport Participation Growth Strategy, inclusive of annual report reviews plus Primary Objectives, Overall Targets and Resources (Staffing/Operational). | Review to JWP and Board/s. Review process open to additional stakeholders. | Feb-Mar |
| Annual Report | Review of the Strategy Areas, Deliverable Strategies, Key Tactics, Target/s & Budget. Report on results, achievements, challenges, recommendations etc. | Annual reports. | May |
| 2 Monthly Reports | 2 monthly progress report and tracking the strategy implementation, including Strategy Areas, Deliverable Strategies, Key Tactics, Target/s & Budget. Responsible staff to provide updates on individual Deliverable Strategies and/or Key Tactics to monitor progress. | Written reports provided to JWP. Verbal and/or email updates via face to face, phone or teleconference. | As per JWP schedule. |

Primary Objectives:

1. Strengthen the OneSport offerings and streamline the pathways for participating in athletics in NSW
2. Be the 'go to' organisation for NSW Schools to access athletics expertise, products and services
3. Achieve new participation growth in Athletics in NSW recreational running products and services

Overall Target:

15,000# New Participants in Athletics in NSW by 2020/21

Strategy Areas, Objectives & Targets:

| No. | Strategy Area | Strategy Area Objective | 2020/21 Targets |
|-----|------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | OneSport Products & Services | Increase the number of OneSport products and services to provide improved participation pathways and club/centre operations. Engage with and maintain participation with people across the full life cycle. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 11,100 On Track participants new to athletics (30%)[^] ✓ 10% OneSport Clubs/Centres delivering follow on programs ⁺ ✓ 2,300 new participants in clinics and camps (50%)* ✓ 500 new social athletics participants (50%)⁺⁺ |
| 2 | Schools | Develop strong relationships with NSW schools to position Athletics in NSW as the 'go to' organization for athletics expertise and improve school engagement with Athletics in NSW products and services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New relationships with 3% of NSW Schools (94 Schools) ✓ 1,800 new LAPS participants (20 Schools) |
| 3 | Recreational Running | Grow participation in the existing Athletics in NSW recreational running events and engage with the broader recreational running market through promotions and education and training opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 600 new participants through clinics, programs and other activities** |

Figure obtained by adding individual participant key targets together from each Deliverable Strategy and rounding the figure (16,150) to 15,000. Recreational Running: Event provider/participant alignment figures not included (4,500).

[^] On Track is a new, national product which will have a compulsory roll out in 2019/20. This figure is focused on 30 new participants per centre, not upskilling existing centre registrants.

⁺ There was 17,675 U9-U15s (as at 11/17). The average per centre is 95. The target no. of centres delivering follow on programs (e.g. *Learn & Strive*) is 10% (18 centres).

* Delivery of state-wide camps/clinics, targeting 50% of total participants new to athletics in NSW.

⁺⁺ Based upon 1,500 participants, of which, 50% are new to Athletics in NSW products/services.

**parkrun clinic participants + parkrunner participation in RunNSW/Waratah Series Events + new RunNSW/Waratah Series Event participants. Recreational Running: Event provider/participant alignment figures not included (4,500).

**NB: Targets are established based upon the provision of one new staff resource to implement Strategy Area 1: OneSport Products and Services.
Meeting the targets for Strategy Areas 2 and 3 is dependent upon workloads of existing staff resources.
Integral to the success of this strategy is the development and implementation of other Athletics in NSW strategies (e.g. coaching & officiating).**

Deliverable Strategies:

| | Deliverable strategies |
|---|--|
| Strategy 1: ONESPORT PRODUCTS & SERVICES | 1. Coordinate and/or develop structured and ability appropriate participation opportunities for primary aged children (5-12yrs) and secondary aged children (12-17yrs) |
| | 2. Develop and deliver an Athletics Youth Program to (re)engage youth in athletics participation |
| | 3. Audit Clubs/Centres to understand their participation products/services. Develop appropriate resources |
| | 4. Investigate the needs and interests of Masters participation in athletics to establish relevant engagement & retention strategies (30+) |
| | 5. Develop a state managed track & field product to attract and engage social participants (Youth & 18+) |
| | 6. Contribute to national OneSport pathways, products and policies |
| Strategy 2: SCHOOLS | 1. Develop relationships with NSW Schools and the NSW School Sport Unit and be recognized as the 'go to' organization for athletics expertise |
| | 2. Evaluate the school athletic carnival space and provide support for primary and secondary schools, teachers and School Sport Coordinators to have an (enhanced) positive experience with school athletics |
| | 3. Increase school participation in athletics programs to ensure every child has the opportunity to learn to run, jump, throw and walk |
| Strategy 3: RECREATIONAL RUNNING | 1. Establish a community running package (delivery framework and suite of programs and clinics) to increase participation in RunNSW and Waratah Run Series events and engage with community runners |
| | 2. Establish strong relationships with NSW event providers to increase NSW recreational running participation figures, and pursue alignment to the Athletics in NSW brand |