



# OCEANIA NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEES

Regional Development Officer

## OCEANIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2003-2004

by Brian Minikin,  
Regional Development Manager

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# NOCs' BEST PRACTICES

## Regional Development File

### OCEANIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ANNUAL REPORT, 2003 – 2004

by Brian Minikin

Regional Development Manager

Oceania National Olympic Committees

#### **INTRODUCTION**

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In this, our Athens Olympic Year, much has taken place in sport throughout the Oceania Region since the successful Sydney Olympic Games. Immediately after the 2000 Olympic Games, the Island Nations came together and agreed that their performances in Sydney were not up to scratch, both athletically and administratively. In particular, it was recognised that the synergy created by working together, provided many more gains and opportunities than if each Island NOC ventured alone. Consequently, the ONOC embarked upon a four-year plan aimed specifically at strengthening the administrative infrastructure of the Region in Sport, with the focus of 'Development Through Competition'.

During our evaluations held in 2001, it was unanimously agreed that lack of communication and quality domestic competition were the two most important factors hindering our progress in sports development. These two issues have therefore received the most attention and where possible, we have worked hard to improve the quality and quantity of our human resources. Particularly for the Sports Development Officers (SDO's).

Development activities through the Pacific Region appear to have taken a quantum leap during 2003 – 2004, the fourth year of our current Development Plan, with a number of innovative and exciting breakthroughs taking place. It is hoped that this will reflect in a better performance by our administrators as well as our athletes at the Athens 2004 Olympic Games. The majority of NOC's now organise a viable and effective National Games, and consequently, the National Federations are

increasing their core function to offer more frequent and regular training and competition programs. We have also seen a rapid improvement in number and quality of sports facilities around the Region with some Pacific Islands nations now being able to boast International standard facilities. More importantly, Pacific Islands Governments are slowly realising the benefits that a well-managed sport development program can bring to their respective Countries.

The Regional Development Manager has had a busy 12 months since the last Annual General Meeting, primarily in support of the 2003 South Pacific Games, in extensive Field Work and has been actively involved in the further development and implementation of Web Site and Competition Management Solutions for Pacific Island National Olympic Committees. The following Report summarises these activities and highlights lessons learned to date.

## FIELD WORK

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The Field Work program for 2003 – 2004 has been largely 'ad hoc' responding to needs and demands from the Region as and when required. The underlying rationale for this remains as in past years, in that it is possible for day to day office based work to be completed from anywhere in the Region, while applying more specific skills in sports development as and when required. Approximately 60% of the past 12

months has been spent outside of Fiji, and well over half of the time spent in Fiji has been directed at providing assistance to either the South Pacific Games, or to the Fiji Sports Council.

Over the past 12 months, the Development Manager has spent time in the following Countries:

### Vanuatu

During May 2003 we conducted a field trial of the on-line registration and accreditation system for the South Pacific Games. Consequently, Vanuatu successfully entered the Games 2 months prior to the Games themselves, having all of their athletes and officials entered for the Games and included in the database used for managing the Games. This meant that substantial man-hours were saved in Fiji as well as saving Vanuatu many hours checking and rechecking entry forms. Vanuatu were effectively ready to come to the Games from the time they entered their team 'on-line'. The FSM, Guam and Palau, also utilised this system successfully. In the future it means that entry deadlines for Games can be significantly shortened as final teams become final and in particular, the administrative workload on the Organising Committees would be cut in half.

During August the Development Manager returned to Vanuatu for the Provincial Games held on the Island of Tanna, to trial the feasibility of web based results management from remote locations as well as to supervise a work experience placement for Netina Latu from Tonga and Joel Benjamin from Solomon Islands. Results were posted onto the Internet from Tanna on a daily basis, which meant that the media outlets in Port Vila were able to print up-to-date stories and photos from the Tina Latu (Tonga) at the TAFEA Games from a remote location like Tanna.

Joel Benjamin, the SDO for Solomon Islands, in particular was able to return to Solomon Islands and activate eight National Federation Web Sites and has been busy keeping the NOCSI Site alive ever since.

It was necessary to return to Vanuatu at various times between October and December to assist with the finalisation of an Olympoceanica Program and to assist the VASANOC with a complete review and overhaul of sport in Vanuatu, from the perspective of the National Olympic Committee and to attend an ONOC Executive meeting as well as a meeting of the Regional Sports Education Committee.

The problems facing the VASANOC are not too different to those facing the majority of NOC's throughout the Pacific and it has taken great courage by the current Executive.

Committee to take a stand and proactively fix these problems now in order to overcome the inertia that prevents sport in Vanuatu from moving onto the next level. A systematic process of review is currently underway to revamp the VASANOC Constitution to better protect its interests particularly in the face of improved funding and development opportunities provided by the Olympic Solidarity Programs. Central to this review is an analysis of its membership and the criteria currently used to accept and maintain membership of the NOC.

## Solomon Islands

Visits took place sporadically from October to December and once again during February 2004, primarily to assist with the establishment of their Olympoecania project and provide support for the training and implementation of staff and development programs respectively for the NOCSI, which is now firmly headquartered at the National Sports Complex in Honiara.

Finally obtaining the lease for the Multipurpose Hall and surrounding area has been four years in coming and will put many added demands upon the NOCSI. Not the least will be in staff development and training as the NOC will now need to move beyond its normal administrative functions to physically manage a fitness training centre, gym and outdoor sport and recreation complex.

The benefits have made themselves shown immediately with the British Government now putting in an additional \$SBD4.0m to renovate the Community Hall and Park Areas surrounding the National Gym. It has proven attractive to this Government Agency in Solomon Islands that the sporting facilities are now in the hands of Sport.

The NOCSI Office is very well established, with the

secretariat liaising closely with their Member Federations and providing much needed administrative support for sports organizations in Solomon Islands. Now that it also controls the Country's major sporting facilities, it will be able to take its support for its membership to an entirely new level.

Perhaps more significantly, the NOCSI now has an opportunity to establish an income base that will support its activities well into the future.

The Constitutional Changes that were introduced to the NOCSI during 2001 appear to have been positive overall, however problems remain in the implementation of the Constitution, in particular with the administration of the Executive Committee. It is a good example for all NOC's to note the importance of adhering to the 'Rule Book' and making sure that the Executive Committee in particular, remains viable.

Notably, the employment of a full time Secretary General, and the maintenance of Price Waterhouse as a funds manager, have contributed successfully to the rehabilitation of the NOCSI and the current standing that this organization now has in Solomon Islands.

## Samoa

A brief visit was made during September 2003 to establish a closer working relationship with the NOC with a view to formulating a structured work plan to assist the NOC with the organization of the 2007 South Pacific Games.

## Australia

Visits to Australia have been quite restricted over the past 12 months, with a meeting being held in Melbourne with the Sporting Pulse Company, during April 2003. Sporting Pulse continue to work closely with the ONOC office to further develop their software and fine tune [www.oceaniasport.com](http://www.oceaniasport.com) which is now very much functional and proving an excellent tool for regular communication both within and between NOC's and their member National Federations. Both Australia and New Zealand have opted for I.T. solutions that better meet their needs and suit their level of operation with respect to the Olympic Games and hence their presence on Oceania Sport is merely a link to their web sites.

Australia and New Zealand do not compete in the South Pacific Games, so there is no real need for their National Federations to make use of the database and Games entry system currently being made available. Nevertheless we have had feedback from a few National Federations within Australia and New Zealand who would like to be a part of OceaniaSport, particularly for the purposes of dealing with Oceania Events and activities and to establish closer links to the Pacific.

## Kiribati

An initial Visit was undertaken during January 2004 to assess the needs of the newly formed Kiribati National Olympic Committee. The National Olympic Committee has a great deal of work to do in order to properly establish itself and is looking forward to taking advantage of the opportunities being provided by the Olympic Solidarity program.

At the time of this visit, the KNOC had as yet to establish its own work and office space, however it was confident of being able to do this soon.

The developments that have taken place in Kiribati since it was first visited during 1997 have been outstanding and this has been reflected by the enthusiasm that has been shown towards grasping sports administration technology.

Currently seven out of the eight national sports federations have activated their Sportzware web-sites.

Kiribati made an impressive showing at the 2003 South Pacific Games winning gold medals in weightlifting and showing themselves to be competitive across a range of sports. This followed on from an equally impressive turn out at the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester England.

Sport Administrators in Kiribati have worked hard to bury personal differences and work together in the formation of the National Olympic Committee and with the establishment of new sports facilities throughout the Country, the future in sport for Kiribati looks very bright.

## Guam

The Guam NOC conducted a Sports Administration Program, during January 2004 that included the initial training on the web-sites and Competition Management software provided by Sporting Pulse. The workshop was well attended by 13 Sports Federations, all of who, appeared to embrace the opportunities being offered.

The program was conducted at the very impressive Leo Palace Resort, which is aiming to attract top sports teams and athletes for training by building international standard training facilities to

compliment its 5 Star Hotel and Condominium Complex.

It is anticipated that this program will stimulate an increased degree of sports development, as Guam recovers from the destruction caused by 2 very powerful Typhoons that hit the Island during 2002.

GNOC is embarking on a significant reform program for sport on Guam and looks set to benefit from much of the foundation work put in place over the past few years.

## Palau

Going to Guam, made it cost effective to make a visit to Palau to assist with another SportingPulse implementation program as well as work with the Mini South Pacific Games organising Committee to determine their needs and support requirements leading up to the Games.

Jubilee Kuardei Supervises in Palau.

The Organising Committee for the 2005 South Pacific Mini-Games have undertaken to run a paper free Games and make the best use possible of the available Internet registration and accreditation system as well as the Web Site

## Fiji

Direct assistance was provided with the Accreditation of athletes and officials attending the South Pacific Games and the coordination of the Results Centre during the Games, largely providing support to the Competition Managers and ensuring the results and information ultimately appeared on the various sport web sites created for this purpose.

A separate more detailed report is available.

The system worked very well overall however, as it was not fully integrated into the management systems being operated by the SPGOC, its value was not fully exploited.

This experience highlighted the need for development programs to be equally sensitive to the processes of implementation, in addition to the quality of the products and programs being implemented. It further confirmed that to pay for highly expensive systems is not the answer as the

based results system.

This visit also provided an excellent opportunity to review Solidarity Policy and Programs with the NOC and meet separately with all of the National Federations to hear their concerns and evaluate their needs for the new Olympiad.

These meetings highlighted a series of common themes that typify the problems facing Sport and the development of sport, throughout the Pacific and provided excellent material for the PNOG to draft its Four Year Development Plan for the period 2005 – 2008.

time taken for the implementation of these programs could result in much money being wasted.

Following the Games, there has been much work done in conjunction with the Fiji Sports Council as it now wrestles with the realities of managing \$50.0m worth of Sports Facilities. The Development Manager has completed a series of workshops with the Executive Board of the Sports Council and continues to provide support for the Human Resource Development Programs for Sports Council Staff.

Fiji has the population and market place to make their new sports facilities work, however there are some good lessons for all Pacific Islands who wish to embark upon the dream of having international standard facilities for sport. They are not cheap to establish and even less cheap to operate and maintain.

## REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS

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Only one Regional Training was held for SDO's over the past 12 months. This was timed to take place in the week leading up to the South Pacific Games to give SDO's an opportunity to take on the advanced party responsibilities for their delegations.

A Train the Trainers Workshop was conducted to teach SDO's how to deliver a simple Sports Administration Program for their NF's and Clubs.

In addition training was provided in Sportzware and the use of Sporting Pulse Web Sites.

For those SDO's who were available, the opportunity to complete some work experience during the Games was provided. Samoa, Solomon Islands, Guam, FSM and Papua New Guinea in particular benefited from this with complete up to date Web Site reports on their Games performance for the media together back home.

It should be noted however, that much of this work

was not continued once SDO's returned home. We can only speculate why this is so, and it will be interesting to hear from the National Olympic Committees in turn.

For many NOC's there appears to be an issue over paying for access to the Internet. While every Country is different, it is by far the cheapest medium available today particularly for obtaining up to date news and resources as well as for communication.

The SDO's throughout the Pacific are generally well-trained and highly competent people who require logistical support at home and encouragement from sports leaders to go out and deliver the skills they have developed.

In the near future, it is hoped that the SDO's will become the focal point for a regionally supported, national sport education program, which ASP2006 is currently initiating.

## SPORT DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS (SDO) PLACEMENTS

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Over the past 12 months there was a drop in the number of work experience placements for SDO's.

Joel Benjamin (Solomon Is.) and Netina Latu (Tonga) worked at the Vanuatu Games on Tanna.

The following people worked at the South Pacific Games in Suva :

Ariane Butler-Va'ia, Samoa  
Mary-Estelle Kapalu, Vanuatu  
Casper Pule, Solomon Islands  
Lestley Ashby, FSM  
Neil Krantz, Guam  
Netina Latu, Tonga  
Mereula Meya, Fiji  
Robert Graham, Cook Islands  
Evelyn V. Babona, PNG  
Benjamin Joel, Solomon Islands  
Jubilee Kuartei, Palau  
Maggie Tupou, Tonga  
Unaisi Rokoura, Fiji

The ASP 2006 Sports Program has taken over much of the continuing SDO Training Programs and jointly funded the attendance of a number of SDO's to the Australian Coaching Conference in December 2003. Since the Coaching Scholarships offered through the ONOC have received little interest from the NOC's unused funds from 2001 and 2002 Coaching Programs were directed to support this Program.

It is strongly recommended to all NOC's to look at not only expanding their numbers of SDO's in each Country but also that these people are given every opportunity to develop their expertise on a consistent and on-going basis.

In an environment where human resources are lacking, it is essential that our SDO's have access to good technologies and are kept up to date with computers and the Internet.

[www.oceaniasport.com](http://www.oceaniasport.com) has now been fully launched with Web Sites available for All NOC's and each of its member National Federations. It incorporates an on-line database and free use of the Competition Management Software, Sportzware, for which the Pacific Islands have contributed to its refinement for multi-sport events.

Since joining up with Oceania, Sporting Pulse have secured contracts with World and Australian Masters Games and Arafura Games while continuing to expand its formidable client base among the heavyweights of Australian Sport, like the Australian Football League and the Australian Rugby League. As sporting bodies come to understand the simplicity of this I.T. solution, more and more sports organization will opt for it as other solutions come and go. We in the Pacific are fortunate to have been able to access this system and are enjoying the opportunity to contribute to its further development.

A number of Oceania Federations have also opted to choose Sporting Pulse to provide their Web Site requirements. Basketball, Baseball and Football are also enjoying the benefits of utilising Sportzware for their Regional Competitions.

A Sporting Pulse consultant has conducted programs in eight Countries so far, including: Cook Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Guam, Kiribati and Palau. This is a little below what we would have liked given our commitment to utilise the Company for the training and implementation purpose in return for the free use of Sportzware and the discounted rates acquired for the use of the Web Site and Database facilities.

Other Countries are urged to acquire the necessary expertise to make the best use of this I.T. Solution. In particular, it is becoming increasingly apparent that it is necessary to have a couple of people in the Country trained to a very high level in the use of these tools so that they can follow up and assist the less frequent users.

It is strongly recommended that following the initial workshops conducted by the Sporting Pulse Consultants, that good reliable people be identified and sent to Melbourne for up to two weeks for intensive training on Sportzware and the Web Sites. These people would then become responsible for supporting the activities of sports federations in each Country to ensure that the solution is well understood and utilised.

The 2005 Mini Games in Palau will attempt to make full use of the system now that it has been established and passed the initial trials.

A detailed report on the current status of the development of Sportzware and the [www.oceaniasport.com](http://www.oceaniasport.com) portal is available.

Particular thanks go to the ASP 2006 Sports Program, for its continued support for this initiative. The tools being provided by Sporting Pulse are particularly attractive as they demand action at the 'grass roots' level and are 'inclusive' in that they recognise the value and sovereignty of all sporting bodies from club, through to national and regional levels.

## OCEANIA SPORT EDUCATION GROUP

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A joint initiative with the Australia South Pacific 2006 Sports Program (ASP2006), has been to establish a working group to put into action, long held plans for a Regional Sports Education Program.

Chaired by Mr Will Glenwright, the Establishment Group consisting of :

- Mr Albert Miller, OSIC,
- Mr Joji Liga, Fiji Sports Development Unit,
- Mr Gene Schembri, Australian Sports Commission,
- Mr Russell d'Costa, Australian Sports Commission,
- Mr Brian Minikin, ONOC,
- Mr Steve Smith, Chairman, Oceania Sport Federations,

initially met in Fiji during August 2003 just after the South Pacific Games and again in Vanuatu during November 2003 to establish the guidelines for a sport education system for the Pacific Islands.

It has been agreed that the project is feasible and that it should rightly position itself as part of an expanded Oceania Sports Information centre to take advantage of the excellent delivery system controlled by the University of the South Pacific. It sees as critical that sport education be delivered in each Country 'on tap' and to that end, substantial effort

must go into the skilling of local sport educators.

In Vanuatu we discovered the immense potential of the USP satellite system for delivering live tutorials and programs to eleven countries from Fiji or in fact from any of its annex establishments equipped with this technology.

With increasing frequency, Pacific Islands sports leaders are opting to bring in expatriate coaches to work with national teams. While in theory this might bring short-term results, in the longer term it is denying local people the opportunity to develop their elite coaching skills. Coaches and officials, just like the athletes themselves must be systematically exposed to international sport. In this way sport plays a broader role in the overall development of the Country and its people. In order to address the on-going need for local coaches to be able to learn and access the latest information on coaching and sports development, the successful implementation of this project is taking an increasingly higher priority.

This is an exciting project that will be highlighted further at the 2004 General Assembly of the ONOC.

## CONCLUSIONS

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The most compelling evidence that sports development is indeed taking place is reflected by the sophistication of projects that are being undertaken throughout the Region.