



VicSport Barwon Hub Pilot Project

Final Report

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Prepared by VicSport in conjunction with Leisure Networks,
City of Greater Geelong and Sport and Recreation Victoria
Regional Office.



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Barwon Hub Pilot Project Executive Summary

VicSport attended a Regional Forum in 2001 and presented the issues relating to the “Cost of Delivering Sport”. An outcome of this presentation was a series of discussions between Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) – South Western Region, Leisure Networks and VicSport. These discussions centred on creating an opportunity to consolidate both vertical and horizontal links within and across sports while creating links to corporate organisations.

The intention of the Hub was to pilot an administration centre which would be available to Barwon Region sporting associations and clubs. The Hub’s purpose was 2 fold to:

- Support clubs in terms of infrastructure such as photocopying, computer access and accommodation to perform administrative tasks; and
- Play a role of facilitating links between clubs using the facilities and hopefully to the State Sporting Associations through their contact with the VicSport officer housed within the facility.

Upon appointing a project officer, a needs analysis of 14 sports was undertaken. This took the form of discussions with the Sports Development Officer and the Regional Development Officer / key person for self-nominated sports in the Geelong Region. These discussions centred on the practicality of sports becoming tenants of a central administrative facility 2 days per week and also an outline of a professional development workshop series similar to the Sports Development Officer meetings conducted by VicSport in Melbourne.

The result of these discussions revealed the sports had strong reservations towards participation in the administrative centre due to:

- Project sustainability;
- Access after hours;
- Volunteer workers primarily doing their work from home; and
- Established organisations having existing premises.

However, Regional Sporting Associations were excited regarding the possibility of both vertical and horizontal links being created across sports through a professional development and networking calendar of events in the region based purely on the regions needs.

Given these results it was decided to place an emphasis on the professional development and the establishment of networks rather than on the administrative centre functions. The following events were then proposed:

- Professional Development Workshop Topics:
 - Public Liability Insurance
 - Participation Programs
 - Risk Management
 - Sponsorship and Marketing for sport organisations

- Network Luncheon Series:
 - Creating links between sport and the wider community
 - Sport and Tourism

The Steering Committee overseeing the Barwon Hub project has identified 3 key future objectives as an outcome from the Hub project. These objectives are as follows:

- Maintain / foster 2-way collaboration between regional and state level sports and sports development organisations;
- Maintain / further develop intra regional information sharing and networking; and
- Facilitate the further development of intra regional information and networking structures that can act as a conduit for the delivery of statewide initiatives into Regional Victoria.

Key to any further developments in the area is a clear understanding of the local environment and an understanding of the strengths and networks organisations involved bring to the project.

The Barwon Hub project served as a catalyst to bring the key organisations servicing sport in the Geelong Region together. The resulting meetings allowed a number of discussions and debates regarding Regional Sporting Development and the ‘sports house’ concept to take place amongst the key organisations.

As a consequence of the project it is also recommended that VicSport provide similar leadership throughout Victoria with similar developments in other regions being proposed. VicSport is aware any delivery model for statewide implementation must be based on the needs of each particular region. The demographic and infrastructure resources differ greatly between various regions in Victoria and therefore the project will need to adapt and respond appropriately.

VicSport view its role as critical to the success of developing this model in other regions. The primary benefit VicSport provide is to bring knowledge of the ‘big-picture’ to the regions and directly assist State Sporting Associations to enter each of the regions.

Section 1: What has been done and why

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1. Background

VicSport attended a Regional Forum in 2001 and presented the issues relating to the “Cost of Delivering Sport”. An outcome of this presentation was a series of discussions between Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) – South Western Region, Leisure Networks and VicSport. These discussions centred on the creation of an opportunity to consolidate both vertical links between Regional Sporting Organisations and State Sporting Associations; and horizontal links across sports and corporate organisations, incorporating the bigger Victorian picture.

VicSport submitted the Administrative Hub proposal to SRV seeking support to undertake the project as part the Industry Development Funding Unit. SRV subsequently supported the proposal allowing \$20,000 to be allocated to the six-month pilot project.

The intention of the project was to pilot the Hub as one way of supporting regional associations and clubs to address some of the areas of concern expressed anecdotally to key support agencies in the Region and to VicSport during consultations on the “Cost of Delivering Sport”. There was also interest in investigating the Hub as a transferable model to other parts of the State.

Within the Geelong Region a number of organisations are involved with sporting associations and clubs. The local government authorities, Leisure Networks Regional Sports Assembly component and local sporting associations all make a contribution and have an interest in supporting a range of sports to provide safe, appropriate, viable and sustainable sporting opportunities for the community.

1.1.2. Purpose of the project

The purpose of the project was to pilot the provision of:

- i. An administrative hub for 6 to 8 Regional Sporting Organisations and as a consequence of this co-location;

- ii. Facilitate professional development and sharing of ideas on a range of issues for regional sport; and
- iii. Increase the involvement of the corporate sector and State Sporting Associations within the region.

1.1.3. Definitions

i. Hub

The 'Hub' was originally proposed as a central administrative office providing communal office facilities such as computers, photocopiers, fax and meeting rooms sports were able to utilise. A project officer was to be based in the Hub two-days per week and assist the tenant sports with any issues they were dealing with. Through this co- location it was envisaged relationships would be formed across sports and the sharing of ideas on a range of issues would occur.

It was also the project officer's role to facilitate professional development and network development in the Geelong Region. This took the form of a series of professional development workshops and network luncheons.

ii. Geographic Coverage

The Barwon region incorporates a geographic area including the following Local Government Associations:

- Borough of Queenscliffe;
- City of Greater Geelong (COGG);
- Colac-Otway Shire;
- Golden Plains Shire; and
- Surf Coast Shire.

For the purpose of this project it was decided to base the Hub at Leisure Networks in central Geelong.

Despite this locality, the steering committee made a conscious decision not to limit the professional development workshops and luncheons to sports from central Geelong but extended invitations to sports located primarily in Geelong, Surf Coast and Queenscliffe local government areas.

1.1.4. Steering Committee

The 'key' organisations involved in sport delivery and sector development in the Geelong Region formed a steering committee,

which was established to oversee the project. A project officer was appointed 2 days per week on the project. The Steering Committee comprised representatives from:

- VicSport
 - Julie Sarll – Chief Executive Officer
 - Justin Gillingham – Project Officer
- Sport and Recreation Victoria Regional Office
 - Wendy Allen – Regional Manager
 - Paul Jane – Project Officer
- Leisure Networks
 - Jill Evans – Executive Officer
- City of Greater Geelong (COGG)
 - Liz Wood – Recreation Development Officer

1.2 Scope

The Barwon Hub pilot project was initially focussed on recruiting 6-8 tenant sports from the Geelong Region to utilise a common administrative centre based at Deakin University.

1.2.1 Key Organisations

The Barwon Hub project joined together the following organisations on the steering committee:

i. VicSport

VicSport (The Sports Federation of Victoria Inc.) is the peak independent body for sport in Victoria representing a number of Affiliated and Individual Members, Industry Associates, Corporate Supporters and Sponsors.

Established in 1966, VicSport has grown as a non-profit organisation deriving income from membership fees, corporate sponsorships and project funding. VicSport's aim is to advance sport in Victoria by enabling members to provide a service of the highest standard.

VicSport was seen as a key player in bringing State Sporting Associations into the Geelong Region thus providing a catalyst for

change in the region and assist the other key organisations to further define what the focus of the region should be with regards to sport development.

Please refer to Appendix A for a copy of the VicSport Affiliated Membership brochure for more information on VicSport.

ii. Sport & Recreation Victoria Regional Office

Sport and Recreation Victoria provides support to the sector through a number of programs. The Regional Office of SRV provided a liaison function between these. The programs relevant to the implementation of this project are the Industry Development Project fund and the Regional Sports Assembly Program. Both VicSport and Leisure Networks are recipients of funds through these programs in the region. The Regional Manager is the Contract Manager for the Leisure Networks agreement and plays a liaison role with the SRV organisations Unit for this VicSport project.

The Regional Manager chaired all steering committee meetings and throughout the project SRV provided direction for the project as it progressed.

SRV Regional office created briefing notes for Minister Madden and also wrote media releases surrounding the luncheon series.

SRV provided support by contributing to the contact database in the form of corporate contact, mailing lists and speakers for workshops.

iii. City Of Greater Geelong

The COGG as the local government authority has an integral role in supporting community sport and recreation. Local government is the key provider of sportsgrounds, pavilions and clubrooms. Consequently COGG has daily contact with many sporting clubs and regional sports associations in the allocation of sports grounds and facilities.

COGG provided databases of sporting clubs, Regional Sport Organisations and corporate mailing lists, and also hosted workshops at the City Hall Conference Centre. Liz Wood attended all planning meetings, workshops and luncheons.

iv. Leisure Networks

Leisure Networks was involved with the initial Hub concept in an attempt to clarify relationships between the Regional Sports Assembly program it delivers on behalf of SRV and state and regional sporting

associations. Leisure Networks staff supported the project worker as well as providing office space and access to telephones and Internet.

The Executive Officer attended all planning meetings and at times Leisure Networks Project Officer Jason Thompson was required to assist with SRV presentations.

1.2.2. Organisations involved

The following is a comprehensive list of all organisations involved in the Barwon Hub project. These organisations have all been involved directly in the project in various capacities.

Table 1-1 (below) list the Service Providers that have been involved in the Barwon Hub Project.

- **Table 1-1. Table of Service Providers.**

Organisation Name	Organisation Name
Borough of Queenscliffe	Golden Plains Shire Council
Barwon Primary Care Forum	Leisure Networks
City of Greater Geelong	Office of Regional Communities
Central Highlands Sports Assembly	Sport & Recreation Victoria – Regional Office
Geelong Area Consultative Committee	VicSport

Table 1-2 (below) lists the Regional Sporting Organisations based in the Geelong Region that have attended the network functions and / or meetings conducted throughout the project.

- **Table 1-2. Table of Regional Sporting Organisations**

Organisation Name	Organisation Name
Badminton Geelong	Geelong Junior Football Association
Bellarine Cricket Association	Geelong Ladies Darts Association
Bellarine Peninsula Tennis Association	Geelong Netball Association
Boroughcouthas Swimming Club	Geelong Rowing Association
Club Reflex Squash Centre	Geelong Snooker & Billiard Association
Football Geelong	Geelong Supercats
Geelong & Districts Bowls Association	Geelong Triathlon Club
Geelong & Districts Football League	Geelong Unity Netball Association
Geelong Athletics	Geelong Water Polo
Geelong Badminton Association	Netball Geelong
Geelong Baseball	Queenscliff Sports Network
Geelong Calisthenics Club	Royal Victorian Bowls Association Geelong

Geelong Field and Game Association	Southside Netball Association
Geelong Football Club	Tennis Geelong
Geelong Golf Association	Veterans Badminton Association
Geelong Hockey Association	Western Victoria Soccer Association

Table 1-3 (below) is a list of statewide organisations involved in the Barwon Hub project. These organisations are primarily State Sporting Associations however also include some organisations not directly related to the delivery of sport in Victoria for example, Tourism Victoria.

- **Table 1-3. State wide Organisations**

Organisation Name	Organisation Name
Calisthenics Victoria	VicSport
Confederation of Australian Motor Sport	Victorian Athletic League
Equestrian Federation Victoria	Victorian Cricket Association
Football Victoria	Victorian Golf Association
Rowing Victoria	Victorian Institute of Sport
Royal Life Saving Society of Victoria	Victorian Rogaining Association
Royal Victorian Bowls Association	Victorian Soccer Federation
School Snowsports Foundation	Victorian Squash Federation
Sport & Recreation Victoria	Victorian Water Polo Association
Sporting Shooters Association of Victoria	Victorian Weight Lifting Association
Surf Life Saving Victoria	Women's Sport and Recreation Victoria
Table Tennis Victoria	Youth Advisory Unit – Victoria Police
Tourism Victoria	

Table 1-4 (below) provides a list of Corporate organisations that attended the network functions.

- **Table 1-4. List of Corporate Organisations.**

Organisation Name	Organisation Name
Australian University Sport	Salvation Army
Baytec Institute	Skilled Engineering
Caribou Publications	StLaurence Employment Services
Four Points Sheraton	Surfworld Leisure Centre
Geelong Advertiser	The Pulse
Hire Intelligence	Thompson Tregear Pty Ltd
Rip Curl Australia	

Refer to Appendix B for a database listing of all organisations and individuals compiled while undertaking the project.

Table 1-5 (below) lists all organisations involved in delivering the Barwon Hub functions. The role of these organisations was as presenters or hosts of the functions.

- **Table 1-5. Organisations involved in delivering functions.**

Organisation Name	Organisation Name
Andrews Marketing Group	Office of Tourism Sport and the Commonwealth Games – Minister Madden
Ballarat Major Events	Salvation Army
Caribou Publications	Tourism Victoria
Football Geelong	VicSport
Four Points Sheraton Geelong	Victorian Cricket Association
Geelong Football Club	Victorian Weightlifting Association
IEA Brokers Pty Ltd	

1.2.3 Snapshot

The COGG and surrounding area is a well-resourced area of Victoria covering five local government areas; COGG, Borough of Queenscliffe, Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire & Golden Plains Shire. This project focussed primarily on the COGG municipality. Thus the following statistics are based solely on the Geelong Region.

i. Population

- Estimated resident population of 191,018 (2000) with an average annual growth rate of + 3.4%
- Estimated population by 2019 is 207,824

ii. Geography

- Total area of 1,240km²
- Urban area accounts for 325km²
- Situated 75 km from Melbourne's CBD

iii. Industry

- Major Industries in the region include:
 - Education
 - Government
 - Health
 - Manufacturing
- Major Employers in the region include (number of employees):
 - Barwon Health (2,300)
 - COGG (1,065)
 - Department of Education (2,100)

- o Ford Motor Company (2,500)
- iv. Sporting Infrastructure

The Geelong Region has approximately 661 sporting clubs and organisations made up of 37 leagues and 64 associations.

Sport and Recreation Victoria serve the Greater Geelong Region through the provision of \$528,500 (2002) funding for sport.

Public facilities include:

- 6 aquatic facilities (3 indoor and 3 outdoor)
- 379 playgrounds
- 40 tennis court complexes
- 8 skate parks
- 120 kilometres of walking trails

Geelong provides a number of facilities servicing the whole region. These include:

- Geelong Baseball Centre
- Geelong West Table Tennis Centre
- Kardinia Park Netball Centre
- Landy Field Athletics Centre
- Skilled Stadium – Geelong Football Club
- The Arena Basketball Stadium

Refer to Appendix C for a complete listing of statistics provided by COGG and SRV.

1.3. Process

It should be noted that during the initial stages of the project at all times the steering committee was conscious of the project being based solely on the specific needs of the Geelong Region. Therefore, the focus changed as the project progressed as discussed in section 1.4 (page 17) of this report. The following is the initial process undertaken with additions noted at each step.

1.3.1 Steering Committee Appointed

- i. Consisted of organisations outlined in section 1.1.4 (page 7)
- ii. Mike Barrow of the Office of Regional Communities was initially invited to attend the steering committee meetings however he decided that being kept informed of the project would be sufficient. He was

particularly interested in activities that build capacity and or develop leadership within the not for profit sport and recreation sector.

1.3.2 Work Plan Drafted And Approved By Steering Committee

Please refer to Appendix D for a copy of the workplan produced by the project officer in consultation with the steering committee for the project.

1.3.3 Project Officer Employed

The project officer was appointed by the steering committee on May 30th 2002. The project officer was Justin Gillingham, a full-time employee of VicSport and operated in close consultation with the Steering Committee at all times.

1.3.4 Set Up Office

- i. Initially the administration centre was to be at Deakin University however, after inspecting the location of the venue, it was decided Leisure Networks would be a more appropriate venue. The main reasons being:
 1. The site at Deakin was small in size and on the outskirts of Geelong; and
 2. Leisure Networks provided a central location and has obvious links to the project.
- ii. Focus from administration centre shifted to network development and needs analysis for the region as the project continued, then back again to the idea of an administration centre. This focus change was due in part to following reasons:
 1. Publicity generated by Geelong Football Clubs official launch of the Skilled Stadium expansion contains provision for a ‘Sports House’; and
 2. Frequent contact with the sports allowed them to be more receptive to discussions.

1.3.5 Identification And Recruitment Of Targeted Sports

14 sports were identified and interviewed with the Sports Development Officer from the State Sporting Association and the Regional Development Officer present. This not only forged the link from the State Sporting Association to the Regional Sporting Organisation but also provided a more dynamic atmosphere for the meetings.

A Sports Development Officer's role includes the following activities:

- i. "Liaise with clubs, affiliated associations, other sports and the public;
- ii. Manage and promote development programs;
- iii. Carry out administration and policy work; and
- iv. Develop and provide participation opportunities for players, in particular juniors;" (VicSport, *SDO Induction Kit*, p4)

The role of a Regional Development Officer is primarily similar to a Sports Development Officer, acting on regional basis. The Regional Development Officer works with their Sports Development Officer to implement and develop programs in their region.

The 14 sports the project officer met with were selected through the network of VicSport contacts. All VicSport member organisations received an e-mail outlining the Barwon Hub project and called for sports with part / full time Regional Development Officers to register their interest in the trial project.

The following is a list of the 14 sports that responded to the e-mail and subsequent meetings were scheduled.

Cricket	Surfing
Basketball	Baseball*
Athletics	Hockey
Bowls	Soccer
Netball	Golf
Calisthenics	Royal Life Saving Victoria
Water polo	Athletics

*Didn't have Development Officer appointed at time of contact

Discussions with the above sports revealed a strong desire to become involved with a professional development seminar series based on issues present in the Geelong Region.

The creation of a sport 'network' similar to the Sports Development Officer workshops conducted by VicSport in metropolitan Melbourne was viewed in a very positive light. However, the sports expressed reservations regarding becoming a 'tenant' sport for the project. The primary reasons for these concerns were:

- Volunteerism;
- Sustainability; and
- Part-time occupancy.

Further discussion of these points and a summary of the sport meetings are contained later in section 1.4 (page 17).

1.3.6 Project Officer Collaborate Facilitation

i. Workshops:

A total of 4 professional development workshops for Regional Sporting Organisation Representatives were conducted with a total of 102 people attended. These attendees were primarily from Regional Sporting Organisations and State Sporting Associations.

ii. Luncheons:

2 luncheons were conducted with a total of 76 attendees including a number of VIP's, local corporate identities and the media in attendance.

This series of functions was designed to present a series of business / sport delivery models to both the Regional Development Officer and Sports Development Officer from the sports to discuss in relation to their needs to better service the Barwon Region.

Please refer to Appendix E for list of attendees at all workshop and luncheon functions.

1.3.7 Monthly Steering Committee Meetings Conducted

The steering committee has met on a monthly basis throughout the project and more frequently when required.

1.3.8 Evaluate The Project

Evaluations of the project were undertaken in 2 ways.

- i. Formal meetings to discuss the project with the project officer and individual sports; and
- ii. Mail out survey sent to all workshop and luncheon attendees.

A discussion of the project evaluation is contained in section 1.5 of this report (page 22).

1.3.9 Budget

Please refer to Appendix H for the Barwon Administrative Hub budget.

1.4. Results

1.4.1 Survey Results

As outlined in section 1.3 (page 13), the initial task of the project officer was to determine the needs of regional sporting organisations with regard to administrative support, professional development and networking opportunities. The discussions centred on the practicality of sports becoming tenants and also a proposed outline of the proposed professional development and networks functions.

All sports expressed some concerns regarding utilising the administrative centre for the project. However, were excited regarding the possibility of both vertical and horizontal links being created across sports through a professional development calendar of events in the region based purely on the regions needs.

The Regional Development Officers / key regional people saw the project as a unique opportunity to network with other sports in the region and also forge links to local corporate organisations. While the State Sporting Associations saw it as a great opportunity for them to better service the regional areas.

A summary of the meetings with the sports is contained in Table 1-6 (page 18 – 19), detailed meeting notes are contained in Appendix F.

During this process the State Government and COGG were considering a proposal submitted by the Geelong Football Club for the expansion of Skilled Stadium. This expansion included the creation of a Sports House as a component. The Skilled Stadium plans were in the process of being independently audited by a consortium engaged by the State Government and COGG, during the Barwon Hub Project.

The obvious synergies between the Skilled Stadium expansion and the Barwon Hub project led to a strategic relationship between the 2 projects. The Geelong Football Club sponsored the first network luncheon and the final workshop, the sponsorship took the form of room hire and all food and beverage requirements.

• **Table 1-6. Summary of Sport meetings**

Sports	Summary of Discussions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Athletics - Baseball - Basketball - Bowls - Calisthenics - Cricket - Golf - Hockey - Netball - Royal Life Saving - Soccer - Surfing - Water Polo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Workshops</u> <p>The concept of a professional development seminar series was very well received by all sports contacted. The majority of State Sporting Association’s thought the idea of a series based on the Sports Development Officer series was excellent for the region.</p> <p>The following is a list of suggested workshop topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk Management - Insurance Education - Volunteer recruitment and retention - Resource Pooling - First-aid requirements of clubs - Governance procedures – Australian Society of Sports Administrators - Participation programs – case study from large sports - Marketing - promotion / sponsorship - Workshops modelled on Sports Development Officer workshop topics - Grants and Funding - Legal Requirements of clubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Luncheons</u> <p>Similar to the proposed workshops, network development was seen as an important step in developing sport in the Geelong Region. The sports saw the following opportunities arising from the proposed luncheon series:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance / create links to State Sporting Associations and vice-versa;

- Create links to local corporations (Alcoa, Pilkington's etc);
- Enhance / create links to local service providers and media;
- Raise sporting profile in the Geelong Region;
- Create links to other sports (Particularly larger sports eg, cricket, football and netball)
- Enhance / create new communication channels for athlete recruitment

At the time of the meetings links across the various sports in the Geelong Region appeared non-existent.

- **Administrative Centre**

While a number of sports saw the benefits of a central administrative centre there was only one sport interested in utilising the facility. The large majority of the sports had no use for central administrative centre as their operations were currently set up and it was impractical to re-locate 2 days per week. The other reasons discussed were the after-hours schedule of the volunteer administrators and the longevity of the 'pilot project'.

1.4.2 Workshops

A total of 4 workshops were conducted during the Barwon Hub Project. The topics were all raised by the sports consulted in the initial round of meetings. Table 1-7 (below) lists the 4 workshop topics, presenter and organisation, venue and also the number of attendees present at the workshop.

- **Table 1-7. Barwon Hub Workshops**

Workshop Topic	Presenter	Venue	Attendees
Public Liability The Insurance Crisis – Where to from here?	Rod Hughes – IEA Brokers Pty Ltd.	Geelong Town Hall Conference Room	Attended by 40 people
Participation Programs	John Harris – Victorian Cricket Association Julie Crothers – VicSport	Geelong Town Hall Conference Room	Attended by 23 people
Risk Management	David Talalla – VicSport Justin Gillingham – VicSport	Geelong Town Hall Conference Room	Attended by 22 people
Sponsorship and Marketing for sport organisations	Simon Welsh - Andrews Marketing Group	Pivots Room – Geelong Football Club	Attended by 17 people

1.4.3 Luncheons

- 2 network luncheons were conducted during the project attended by a total of 76 people. These attendees included a mix of regional organisations, State Sporting Associations, local corporate organisations and political identities as listed below in table 1-8 (below).

- **Table 1-8. Barwon Hub Luncheons**

Luncheon Topic	Venue / Sponsor	Presenter/s	Attendees
Creating links between sport and the wider community	Geelong Football Club	Hon Justin Madden MLC Julie Sarll - VicSport Peter Cayley – Weightlifting Victoria Bruce Ferriday – Community Access Program Phil Clohesy – Football Geelong	Attended by 44 people including: Hon Justin Madden MLC Hon Ian Cover MLC Hon Elaine Carbines MLC Mayor of Geelong Barbara Abley
Sport and Tourism	Four Points Sheraton	Tracey Hull – Major Events Ballarat John Craven – Caribou Publications Melissa Kerr – Tourism Victoria	Attended by 32 people

1.4.4 Administrative Component

The focus for the proposed Hub was to offer a shared administration centre for these sports to utilise thus reducing administration costs of rent, photocopying, fax, internet and phone charges. While also bringing together a small network of sports in a close-knit environment where it was possible to exchange ideas and establish a network for the mutual benefit of all sports involved.

The administration centre was not well received by the sports, which became apparent as the project moved forward for a number of reasons.

i. Volunteerism:

The main reason for the response of the sports to the administration centre was volunteerism. The vast majority of the sports in the Barwon Region survive on volunteers that invariably work full-time in addition to being on a committee for a given sport in the region. These volunteers are likely to complete their work in spare time, usually at night when the administration centre wasn't accessible.

ii. Sustainability:

By definition the Barwon Hub Project was a trial project. This implied to the sports an uncertain future of the administrative centre at the conclusion of the project, pending recommendations VicSport make to SRV. Therefore, it wasn't practical to expect sports to relocate their operations for a 6-month time frame, regardless of the perceived benefits.

iii. Part-time Occupancy:

The Hub was also only staffed for 2-days per week. Therefore, despite the benefits of working with the project officer, two days per week meant again relocating for only a brief period of time. This again related back to the practicality of the sports having access to the facilities on weekends and other times.

The Barwon Hub project served as a catalyst to bring the key organisations servicing sport in the Geelong Region together. The resulting meetings allowed a number of discussions and debates regarding Regional Sporting Development and the 'sports house' concept to take place amongst the key organisations.

The discussions, while not solving the above issues, did build a platform from which further progress can be made towards Regional Sport Development and the concept of 'Sports House'. Assisting this process was the publicity surrounding the Skilled Stadium redevelopment and reinforcement of the sports house concept through the Barwon Hub project. Resulting in the sports now being more receptive to the idea and potential benefits of sports house.

1.5. Evaluation

The Barwon Hub project evaluation has 2 sections. The first section (1.5.1 - below) contains information specific to the workshop and luncheon series from attendees regarding:

- Professional Development workshops;
- Networking luncheons; and
- Factors impacting upon participation.

The second section (1.5.2 – page 24) is a steering committee evaluation of the project overall, containing:

- Perceived outcomes;
- Positives of the project; and
- Areas for improvement.

1.5.1 Workshop & Luncheon Series

The qualitative results of the Barwon Hub Project were obtained in 2 ways:

- Formal meetings to discuss the project with the project officer and individual sports; and
- Mail survey sent to all workshop and luncheon attendees.

Please refer to Appendix G for a summary of these results.

i. Presentations:

The workshops and luncheons were well received overall. On a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) the average mark for the seminars was 4.0, with results ranging from 3.4 (usefulness of handouts) to 4.5 (quality of venues).

Despite a concerns raised at the steering committee during the project regarding the information being pitched at the appropriate level the evaluations reflect a clear understanding of the topics with an average mark of 4.1.

- Actions taken:

Table 1-9 (page 23) contains a list of actions taken by participants in the Barwon Hub project as a direct result of attending the workshops and luncheon series.

- **Table 1-9. Summary of direct actions from Barwon Hub Project.**

Action Taken	Organisation
Development of the Healthy Sport & Recreation breakfast seminar series	Leisure Networks
Event inclusive of people with disabilities for the region	Leisure Networks
Sponsorship proposal meeting with VicSport project officer	Geelong Unity Netball Association
Volunteer job descriptions	Football Geelong
Updated Public Liability Insurance cover	Geelong Hockey Association Geelong Rowing Association
Future links to presenters created	Victoria Police
Leisure Networks Annual General Meeting – Speaker Brian Cook (Geelong Football Club Chief Executive Officer)	Leisure Networks Geelong Football Club
Insurance Education workshop presented by VicSport	VicSport Queenscliffe Sports Network

- Future topics:

Suggestions for future professional development workshops were as follows from most to least requested:

- Governance
- Grant / Sponsorship proposals
- First aid
- Athlete recruitment
- Event organiser roles
- Media Promotion
- Police involvement with clubs

ii. Networking:

The evaluations reveal the network development was seen of great benefit to the majority of attendees. However, a number of attendees felt there weren't sufficient opportunities at the various functions to meet and develop contacts.

The feedback regarding the opportunity to network with regional and statewide organisations was very positive with the State Sporting Associations receiving the most comments.

iii. Factors impacting participation

Work commitments and family commitments were the main limiting factor on attendance. Mainly the volunteer attendees felt this way and some suggestions were made to schedule evening seminars.

The final workshop attendance was relatively poor in comparison to previous workshops, with 17 attendees from 25 responses. The evaluations showed this was due to a mix up with a function in an adjoining room at the Geelong Football Club.

1.5.2 Steering Committee Overall Project Evaluation

i. Outcomes of the project

The outcomes of the project include tangible outcomes such as numbers of attendees representing sporting and other organisations at workshops and network luncheon functions. The outcomes also include a large number of intangible results to assist the delivery of sport in Geelong Region. These include:

- Development of a coordinated database of contacts of Local Corporations, State Sporting Associations and Regional Sport Organisations;
- Facilitation of networking / connectedness over a series of meetings;
- Generation of vertical and horizontal links for the Regional Sport Organisations;
- Increased recognition and profile of regional and local sport and recreation with key decision makers for the region;
- The increased profile of State Sporting Associations and state issues in the Geelong Region, and vice-versa; and
- Created an awareness of the proposed sports house.

ii. Positives of the project

Throughout the Barwon Hub Project the key agencies involved had the opportunity to discuss Regional Sport Development and big picture issues facing the region. This assisted in clarifying the roles of various organisations and also led to the following:

- Familiarity of key people increased. Both from a key agency and individual sport perspective;
- More discussion has occurred regarding sport development and broader issues facing the region;
- Relationships have been built;

- Central database of associations and key people in the region has been established and is available to sport agencies in the region;
- Provided a State perspective to the region;
- Raised the profile of the Region with State Sporting Associations, VicSport and SRV;
- Communication occurred across a wide range of sports;
- Collation of a current database of regional sports associations previously not readily available to all key agencies;
- Demonstrated to Regional Sport Organisations that other agencies and their own State Sporting Associations are interested in supporting their development through listening, surveying and responding to their current issues;
- Enhanced relationship between professional employees and volunteers involved in network functions;
- Improved the knowledge base of support agencies - SRV, Regional Sport Organisations & Local Government Associations on the status and extent of development of a wide range of sports and provides a basis for further activity that supports this level of the sporting infrastructure; and
- Creation of a local steering committee provided an opportunity for a number of debates/discussions relating to the development of sport in the Geelong Region. This was an invaluable process to develop greater understanding and to inform future priorities and planning. In addition to help clarify the roles of the various organisations in the broader context of sport development and demonstrating the importance of a collaborative effort in the region, including the development of a Sports House.

Section 2: The future of the Hub in the Barwon Region

The project has generated great momentum in the Barwon region and the long-term prospects of the project in the Barwon region are positive. SRV, COGG and GFC are major players in the move towards a sports house at present.

Minister Madden’s press release regarding the Barwon Hub project is indicative of the support the project has received from the beginning. Refer Table 2-1 (below) for a copy of the release.

Table 2-1. Ministerial Press Release.

MADDEN BACKS SPORTS NETWORK PILOT IN GEELONG

The State Government today backed an important pilot project in the Geelong region that aims to develop effective partnerships among sporting organisations of different codes.

The Minister for Commonwealth Games, Sport and Recreation, Justin Madden, attended a VicSport-organised networking lunch held at Kardinia Park in support of the initiative.

“We recognise a coordinated regional sporting network has the potential to create efficiencies and maximise the impact of local investment in sport and recreation.

“VicSport is looking at the best ways to support regional sports development officers and other volunteer sports administrators working at the grassroots of local communities.

“I congratulate Leisure Networks and the City of Greater Geelong in providing significant support to VicSport in helping to progress this networking project.

“The contribution from local sports associations also has been crucial,” said Mr Madden.

“I encourage all groups to continue working in collaboration with each other and with VicSport to identify a suitable regional structure that enables all sports to grow.”

The Minister said a \$20,000 grant to VicSport for the project had been made by Sport and Recreation Victoria through its industry development unit that assists peak bodies.

He also praised Geelong Football Club for sponsoring today’s lunch.

“The Bracks Government wants to encourage everyone – from our youngest to our eldest – to be more active.

“Our broad goal is to provide all Victorians with the opportunity to enjoy regular physical activity in their everyday lives.”

This ‘bricks and mortar’ approach to creation of a Sports House is a critical step in overcoming the hurdles to sports utilising an administration centre as discussed in section 1.4.4 (page 21). Further feasibility studies are underway that will provide further details on options for the sports house management and operation.

Critical to the future of the Barwon Hub project in the region is the support of a number of organisations. These include:

- VicSport
- SRV
- Leisure Networks
- COGG
- Other Local Government Association’s: Surfcoast Shire, Borough of Queenscliffe, Golden Plains Shire and Colac-Otway Shire
- Other organisations working with regional sporting clubs and associations

With continued support from these organisations the future of the project in the Barwon Region looks bright. Further development of the network, development and maintenance of a central database of all sporting clubs, associations and contact personnel in the region is also important to any future success.

The number of organisations interested in seeing a Sports House succeed is a positive sign for the region. The organisations listed above therefore all have an important role to play in the Region to ensure a clear and coordinated approach to the development of sport in the Barwon Region.

2.1 Proposed Future Activities In Barwon Region

The networking activities were seen to be of great benefit to the region and it is proposed these continue in the form of Healthy Sports Breakfasts on a monthly basis targeting sporting administrators at the Regional Sport Organisation level organised by Leisure Networks in conjunction with the other organisations on the steering committee of this project.

Leisure Networks, is proposing a new service agreements focus on work and activities that reinforce its role as support for the regional level infrastructure. The focus will be on Education, Development and Resourcing at the regional level. The role or relationship of VicSport to the region is proposed to be that which brings together the state perspective on sports development and to facilitate a greater impact of the State Sporting Association’s into the region.

Future VicSport activities ought to reinforce a presence of the State Sporting Associations in the region.

The support agencies ought to continue to regularly communicate regarding their respective roles in the promotion, support and reinforcement of the structures / hierarchy of sport in Victoria.

2.2 Recommendations for Future Actions in the Barwon Region:

Table 2-2 (below) shows recommendations for future actions for organisations in the Geelong Region.

- **Table 2-2. Recommendation for the Barwon Region – Regional perspective.**

Objective 1:	
To maintain/ foster two-way collaboration between regional and state level sports and sports development organisations.	
How	Who
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite State Sporting Associations / VicSport to Southwest Regional Planning forums – to share information, structures, initiatives etc as required 	Network*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage clubs and associations to approach State Sporting Associations for assistance in relation to club and facility development through the following mediums: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sport and Recreation Breakfasts ○ Local Government and Leisure Network contacts ○ Network Facilitation 	Leisure Networks / Network
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities to influence further investment of program and support mechanisms into the region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify opportunities for collaboration through a survey / mapping of regional initiatives across state and national level organisations ○ Write to all State Sporting Associations and state sports development agencies advising them of the existence of the Network and role of the Network 	SRV / Leisure Networks Network
Objective 2:	
To maintain / further develop intra regional information sharing and networking	
How	Who
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network development through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaboration on the Sports House, Geelong Strategic Alliance and Sport and Recreation pillar ○ Collaboration on the enhancement of the workings of the Network undertaking regular strategic / relevant projects ○ Continuation of the Healthy Breakfast information / network 	Network Network Leisure Networks

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing existing data bases / information to create an accessible / Secure data set <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore a MC2 communication network as a secure repository of local information ○ Development of a communication strategy between all parties involved in sport and recreation. 	<p>SRV / Leisure Networks</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further enhance the regional map of existing organisations and capacities top create a base map where gaps and opportunities can be identified 	<p>SRV / Leisure Networks</p>

* Network refers to the Barwon Southwest recreation forum, which involves SRV, Local Government Associations, Regional Sports Assemblies, IIRD Rural Development Officers and Rural Access Workers.

Section III: The future of state wide Regional Development

VicSport is looking to provide similar leadership to the Barwon Hub Project throughout Victoria with similar developments in other regions being proposed. The steering committee also noted that despite the support provided through sponsorship by Geelong Football Club during the Barwon Hub Project, a similar professional sporting club is not critical to the success of the networking model.

Any delivery model for statewide implementation must be based on the needs of each particular region. The demographic and infrastructure resources differ greatly between various regions in Victoria and therefore the project will need to adapt to respond appropriately.

VicSport view their role as critical to the success of developing this model in other regions. The main benefit VicSport provides is to bring their knowledge of the ‘big-picture’ to the regions and also through membership links are in a good position to directly assist State Sporting Associations to enter each of the regions.

3.1 Guidelines

Experience with the Barwon Hub project has led to the following guide for development and implementation around Victoria.

Table 3-1 (below) shows recommendations for future actions for VicSport in the Geelong Region to address / improve its support of Regional Victoria

- **Table 3-1. Recommendations for expansion of this projects findings to the rest of the state.**

Objective 1:	
To maintain / foster two way communication and collaboration between state level sports and sport development organisations	
How	Who
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate cross sport planning and delivery to the regions by State Sporting Associations via convening networking and facilitation across sports to address the issue 	VicSport
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate cross agency planning and delivery to the regions by sports development agencies by convening / creating a State Steering Committee for Regional Development (agencies such as Victorian Institute of Sport, Sports Education Victoria, VicHealth, Australian Sports Commission, Sports Assemblies Victoria) Municipal Association of Victoria, Sport and Recreation Victoria 	VicSport

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a communication strategy to disseminate information to regional networks in a coordinated fashion from the above activities 	VicSport
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide base / current information to Regional Networks on which sports have regional delivery plans and encourage State Sporting Associations to provide information to regions on their plans. 	VicSport
Objective 2:	
Facilitate the further development of intra regional information and networking structures that can act as a conduit for the delivery of state wide initiatives into Regional Victoria	
How	Who
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine in each region the capacity of existing networks to act as a conduit and facilitate state-wide initiatives 	VicSport
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information to each region on the findings of the Barwon Hub project which led to the action items under Objective 1 	VicSport
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities across the state where projects and processes are in train where VicSport can value add on the existing initiative to achieve greater vertical and horizontal communication 	VicSport

Based on experience with the Barwon Hub Project the following activities could be performed by the Regional Steering Committee:

- Brief for the region

Activities could include the following:

- i. Appoint part-time project officer. The Steering committee to establish an official role description, to adequately define the role. A thorough briefing of the organisations involved in the project will then be held to inform staff of those organisations of the activities of the project officer;
- ii. Project officer to map sports and issues in the region and report to Steering Committee;
- iii. Project officer to conduct a series of interviews with agreed sports with Regional Development Officers or key personnel and Sports Development Officers;

- iv. Steering Committee to determine the regional program for the project; and
 - v. Project officer to implement regional program with the assistance of the Steering Committee members.
- Role of the project officer in achieving the goals of the brief;
 - Management structure for each region; and
 - Plan and implement activities based on each regions needs.

3.2 Expected Outcomes

The following are expected outcomes for this project of regional across the state:

3.2.1 Broader Community:

Includes General Public, Sporting Infrastructure (Regional Sporting Organisations and Clubs)

- Volunteers better able to manage clubs / regional associations
- Administrative efficiencies in evidence
- Better networking of the sport industry in each region
- Greater connections between sport and the corporate sector
- Enhanced links with State Sporting Associations in regional Victoria
- Processes established to better identify the needs and issues of each region
- Regional databases established outlining the 'sport industry' for the region
- Better planning within the region

3.2.2 VicSport Members:

- Better networking of the sport industry in each region
- Greater connections between sport and the corporate sector
- Greater recognition from all levels of government on the contribution sport and recreation make to the community
- Enhanced links with State Sporting Associations in regional Victoria
- Regional Development Officers better linked to Regional Sport Organisations, Local Government Associations and State Sporting Associations
- Over a period of three years the project to become self-sustaining through assistance provided to the Regional Sports Assembly program or similar regionally based organisation
- Processes established to better identify the needs and issues of each region
- Professional development and information sharing occurring on a frequent and regular basis
- Regional databases established outlining the 'sport industry' for the region
- Regional Development Officers information technology familiar – increased utilisation of VicSport's website

- Better planning within the region

3.2.3 VicSport:

- Better networking of the sport industry in each region
- Enhanced links with State Sporting Associations in regional Victoria
- VicSport programs in each region as required
- Over a period of three years the project to become self-sustaining
- Processes established to better identify the needs and issues of each region
- Professional development and information sharing occurring on a frequent and regular basis
- Regional databases established outlining the ‘sport industry’ for the region
- Regional Development Officers information technology familiar – increased utilisation of VicSport’s website
- Better planning within the region
- VicSport able to represent a wider range of views