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**Outcomes Report**  
***2010 and Beyond Panel***  
**Ottawa Roundtables**

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## A. Introduction

This report provides a summary of key findings and of the discussions that took place at the 2010 and Beyond Panel Roundtables of September 24, 2009 in Ottawa. Roundtable participants consisted of the Panel members, Panel secretariat and leaders from across the sporting community (please see Annex I for a list of Panel members and participants). The roundtables were conducted under the Chatham House Rule – in other words, all comments were made strictly on a not-for-attribution basis. As such, this outcomes report captures only the key insights and ideas that were generated and not the individuals or organizations that offered the insights.

## B. Key Findings

Key findings are items that were brought forward a number of times or ideas that received general support by the roundtable participants.

1. We need to look at post 2010 resources for high performance including OTP and other related high performance initiatives.
2. The sport community needs to better understand how to position high performance as a public asset and as something of value to the private sector.
3. The sport community needs to better understand how to relate to private sector – how to develop relationships and deliver value to sponsor.
4. The definition of high performance need not be perfect, but it should include the Train to Train level and higher (LTAD) and be based on the pursuit of the highest level of excellence in each sport, international results and medals.
5. High performance does not exist in isolation and the report has to say something about that.
6. Being the best in the world is a good vision for HP sport.
7. We should set national goals, as was the case with the 2010 Paralympic and Olympic Games.
8. Governments are not suited for high performance leadership.
9. OTP is seen as a good base upon which to build Canada's future HP system, with the addition of expanded services to more sports, strategic leadership, broader (public) accountability and a strong marketing capacity.
10. There is general agreement that the Panel should use principles like independence and responsiveness to assess the merit of potential governance and leadership models for HP sport.
11. There is widespread support for LTAD.
12. There is considerable support for targeting of resources.
13. There is considerable support for the development of sport institutes.
14. There is virtually unanimous support for a central independent, one-window body with a singular focus on, and leadership for, the business of HP sport in Canada.
15. HP sport should be evidence-based, expert-led and values-driven
16. There should be (more) consolidation of Games organizations and Games Mission activities.
17. We need professional development for coaches, employment opportunities for coaches, high performance planners, and professional corporate marketing.
18. While it is good to compare to other countries we should be able to and we should want to build a unique Canadian HP model.

## C. Summary of Key Outcomes – Morning Roundtable

Over the course of the morning roundtable a number of key themes were introduced.

### *i. The State of the System*

Participants agreed that we have a great opportunity to improve the high performance (HP) system, and that the existing system is not efficient. The need for coordination within the HP system was an important theme including the need for existing organizations to work together more effectively. The comment was made that if we built a HP system from scratch we would never do it the way it is currently constructed. The current system is perceived to be too slow and bureaucratic with far too many overlapping and unproductive forms of accountability for National Sport Organizations (NSOs), and far too much time wasted on process accountability rather than accountability for results. There was general agreement that it is much more important to have accountability for outcomes than the current focus on process accountability. Some of the priorities for improvement that were identified in this area include:

1. Coaches and technical leadership are critical both in a central body and in sport organizations
  - a. For example, the Queensland institute of Sport employs about 27 coaches who create a stable coaching environment and market. By way of comparison, all of Canada has about 150 national coaches employed by NSOs
2. Improving day to day environment for athletes
  - a. The observation was made that the real key to OTP is the culture of excellence
3. Resourcing is critical
  - a. Women's hockey, for example, benefited greatly from the additional resources from Molson which enabled the program to implement a meal plan, higher medical support staff and increase the investment in coaching.
  - b. Part of resourcing is increasing capacity of NSOs and national sport centres
4. Improved marketing, particularly to corporations
  - a. It is important to understand what corporations value and how the HP sport system can help them to achieve this value
5. Creating a central brain for the system
  - a. It can provide central targets and goals
  - b. It should be autonomous, nimble, evidence-based, expert led, values-driven and independent of government
  - c. It should have a single Board that would be the source of accountability to the government

It was noted that there is no point in giving resources to NSOs or CSCs if they don't have the capacity to deliver on the potential of this funding.

An analogy was made between the HP sport system and a business supply chain. Right now we don't have a good idea of what the components of this supply chain are, how they are linked to one another and how they are performing. There was general agreement that the performance of the HP sport supply chain could be improved. More fundamentally the question was asked whether we really know what it takes to get an athlete from the top amateur ranks to the top of the podium.

Concern was expressed over the limited capacity of Sport Canada to play a leadership role, including the fact that they operate in a much bigger Heritage department – that they have more accountants than people accountable for results. Participants agreed that it would be nice to have a streamlined system that would bring together all of the necessary elements for high performance sport in a 'one-window' approach.

In general, it was felt that many athletes currently succeed despite the system not because of it and that the system needs to be both more athlete and more coach centred.

## ***ii. Funding***

One common theme was the need to generate private sector dollars to maintain and expand current resources, especially after the 2010 Paralympic and Olympic Games. The observation was made that there was supposed to be \$55m of private sector money for OTP over 5 years but that even with the games the actual amount raised from the private sector was only about \$20m to \$25m. Of this investment, \$15M was provided by Bell Canada. Post 2010 it will be a real challenge to obtain this same level of investment. By way of example, it was provincial governments that supplemented the funding for OTP along with a seed contribution of \$5m from the Government of British Columbia

One caveat that was raised was that although amateur sport is a good product, sponsorship of amateur sport can be very up or down based on the economy and on changing priorities.

The suggestion was made that there needs to be a paradigm shift in terms of funding where sport relies more on its own internal resources. It is the participant and their families who still spend money on recreational activities even in an economic downturn. Can the HP sport community tap into this? How do we tap into resources that are not from the Federal Government? For example, Skate Canada has a great model where anyone who wears a skate is part of Skate Canada.

Another theme under funding was that sport has not done a good job of expressing its value to companies in terms of what they need – returns on their sponsorship investment. Further, there is a lot of confusion in the corporate world about sponsorships given the range of potential investments in areas such as municipal, provincial, and federal sporting bodies and events, multiple sports and international and national sports events.

The view was put forward that it is important to identify the right structure to generate resources. In that regard, one challenge with an independent agency is that one of the most visible asset that sport can sell, the Olympics, are currently owned by VANOC and will revert to the COC in 2012.

One idea was to focus corporate support on athletes, which if successful could take pressure of the AAP program, and possibly free up such resources for other HP uses. An alternative model would be to have the athletes support model directly supported by corporate donations.

One interesting dichotomy that was noted was that although the government is not the best deliverer of HP sport, the future of HP funding will be primarily from government.

### ***iii. Own the Podium***

Another important theme was that there has been a tremendously improved system for high performance development as a result of OTP, but also that it has been successful because it has been given the 'gas' to do its work. It was emphasized time and again that the key to success, at any level of funding, is to be able to target resources and support excellence, rather than attempt to provide an egalitarian distribution of resources,

It was suggested that OTP got a lot of heat for forcing a planning process onto NSOs but that this was one of the most important things that OTP did. At the same time, there is a lack of high performance planners, and directors don't necessarily know how to plan in ways that benefit both their sport and the whole system in order to create the outcomes at the HP level. Even with disparate funding sources planning is critical.

### ***iv. Metrics for Success***

The observation was made that we haven't yet developed effective processes to measure the usefulness of the components in the high performance system. A related observation was that not all elements in the system are adding to the end result, they just happen to be there at the end when we produce a medalist. There has never been an allocation of resources for the development of an evaluation process for the HP system to determine which components are the most effective at delivering value.

One of the great things about OTP is that it has rallied around the long term goal of Canada being the top nation in 2010. It was noted however that OTP hasn't yet developed intermediate goals for organizations to attain on their way to the national goal.

Participants felt that it is important to understand what the measure of excellence is, since some sports don't have the Olympic high end to aspire to. As such, we need to be careful how we define 'excellence'. The notion was brought forward that maybe what we are looking for is the top recognition that is possible for a sport.

## ***v. Focus on the Athlete***

There was general agreement that the focal point of the HP system is the success of the athletes that are in it. We have never put the resources to someone or some organization where we said “this is what we want you to develop for us”

## ***vi. Defining High Performance***

There was an interesting discussion that recurred throughout the day about the definition and scope of the HP system. The point was made several times that you can't ignore the grass roots because you can't pick up half a rope (i.e., it is the other half of the sport system and it is critical to the success of the HP system). The comment was made that one limitation of our current system is the definition of high performance sport and the fact that many of our services don't kick in until someone hits the national team or gets carded. As a result, we leave a lot to chance in terms of the pathway to get people to the national level and only then provide them with HP services. In many successful HP systems, there are interventions to find talented athletes and then there is a better supervised process for ten or more years to get people up to the level where they can win internationally.

There was general agreement with the fact that HP has to include interventions for talented athletes and support for Sport Schools that provide training for targeted and selected athletes. This introduced the idea of HP sport not as the tip of a sport pyramid with grassroots sport at the bottom but rather as an express elevator (column) that runs from early talent identification to the podium, either inside the “sport pyramid” or alongside it.

The Panel recognized the importance of this point but emphasized that due to the nature of the Panel's work it was necessary to assume that the grassroots component of the sport system is working and focus on what could be done to improve the HP component at this time.

In general, there was recognition that there is a need to have a clear focus on excellence and international results. In applying this definition, however, there needs to be the scope to make appropriate interventions earlier in the system. The suggestion was made to use the train to train stage of LTAD as the entry point to HP, but not just the broad train to train grouping but the targeted group that has the potential to become world champion athletes. Australia has been relatively successful at talent development and identification. One way to do this would be to move the Sport Centres to institute type models. In so doing you create a facilities-based hub for high performance excellence with athletes and coaches continuously interacting.

The Centres are open to all Canadians and would host training groups at each centre based on the presence of a critical number of athletes. This system would also create a succession program for coaches from provincial Centres to national teams.

Another important area of discussion was around the purpose of HP sports. Participants asked about the value of the Olympic medals, whether it was the medal themselves or whether it is the inspiration for a healthier and more active Canada.

### ***vii. Long Term Athlete Development***

There was a great amount of support for the LTAD model. A caveat was raised that it is important both to invest in mapping LTAD pathways and to provide the resources necessary to move athletes along these pathway. The observation was made that nine tenths of the development system is volunteer led and run at the community level and that LTAD is not happening in all communities, and most community coaches will not have heard of LTAD.

### ***viii. Paralympic Sport***

Concern was raised that in Paralympics sports there are disconnects between NSOs and PSOs and between able and disabled sport bodies. The ratio of allocation of attention and resources is disproportionately in favour of able-bodied sport

### ***ix. The Athletes Perspective***

The observation was made that as an athlete it is frustrating to not have a means test for funding, and that athletes receive the same amount of funding even if their financial situations are very different. This practice leads to questions as to whether performance or merit makes any kind of difference. This was one of the major innovations of OTP, the ability to target resources.

### ***x. The Importance of Leadership***

The comment was made that the sport system has to decide that we are going to make the difference and bring the HP system together. There was concern that sport leadership hasn't made a clear signal, as a group, that we are ready to have the whole system move towards excellence. There was support for the need to affirm and support a leadership model or organization that is at the centre of the enterprise looking at the whole system. There needs to be a group that pays attention to the overall values, performance and health of the HP system.

The central leadership body should have service agreements with all parts of the HP sport value chain. This is happening to a certain extent in the system already in athletics and in hockey but it could be more widespread and could involve a standard methodology and a common language.

There was a strong view that the sector needs to show leadership and take action. The leadership body shouldn't be government driven, needs to be an independent arms-length that is timely, efficient, nimble, expert led.

A final comment on leadership was that the sector has a number of leaders but it is equally important for some leaders to step back and become followers.

## ***xi. Opportunities for Coordination***

One of the key challenges identified was the lack of coordination/integration in the HP system. An example was the system's inability to coordinate mission operations and game preparations for world championships and Olympics. No organization has the mandate to coordinate all of these activities although the COC probably has a role to play given their experience in this regard.

## ***xii. Canadian Sport Values***

It was emphasized that the fact that we win as a country is important but that how we win is also important. As one participant stated:

“We don't chew up and spit out our athletes, we don't do drugs, we do it the right way AND we win, this is what gives us definition as Canadians”

Participants felt that sport in Canada is a public asset, created by citizens, and that sport in Canada is a public good. As such, it is critical to communicate the unique way that athletes return the investment in themselves into their communities.

A final view that was brought forward was that when thinking about sport, the public interest should align with Canadians. It's about our story and our narrative, and how sport replays to Canadians who we are and our narrative of why Canada. Our story right now is of excellence, it is in the public interest for Canada to excel - this has always mattered to Canada. The sport sector needs to articulate this and anchor it in the public interest

All HP athletes want a medal so the system should not be shy saying that this is what we want because that is what the athletes want. The purpose of the HP system should be that if they want the medal and are willing to make the sacrifices that are required that they have everything that they need to get there.

## **D. Summary of Key Outcomes – Afternoon Roundtable**

Many of the same themes and concerns were raised in the afternoon session as in the morning one described above. The following summary notes where the discussion echoed the morning roundtable without going into the same depth in repeating observations that have already been recorded.

### ***i. Definition of High Performance***

The afternoon roundtable spent a significant length of time discussing the definition of high performance. The definition that emerged included the importance of performance objectives and a focus on success. The definition of success was seen to include the highest standard that can be achieved both domestic and international. For instance, in soccer reaching and winning the World Cup was seen as at least as important as winning an Olympic medal.

It was recognized within the group that it can be difficult to come up with a single definition of high performance that encompasses team and individual, and Olympic and non-Olympic sports.

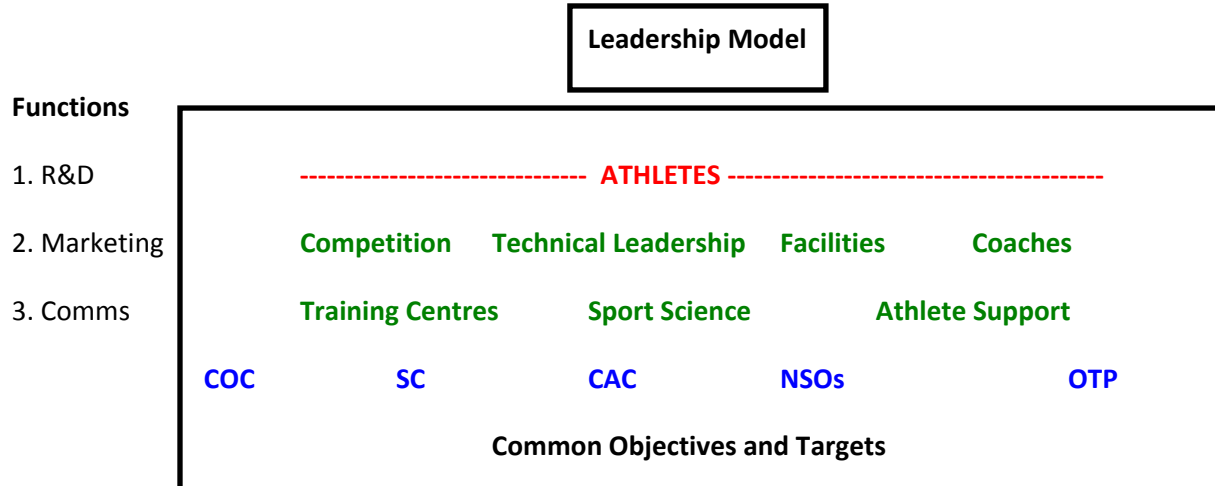
Once an agreement was reached that the roundtable would only look at the HP component of the entire sport system the question was asked as to whether there is a ‘business’ of high performance. There was general support for the definition of high performance put forward by the Canada Games and the Coaching Association of Canada in their submission (with the substitution of the word success for the original career):

*‘the pathway from recruitment of young talent through, on average, ten years of development in an enhanced training and competition environment, leading to a career at the national and international level’.*

Participants liked the notion of an ‘HP elevator’ at the edge of the LTAD or other models that takes talented athletes and moves them into the high performance stream.

There was a lot of conversation over the afternoon about what goes into the HP ‘box’. A model that was brought forward is captured in Figure 1 (over). It was agreed that the outcomes of this ‘business’ had to be focused on athletes and coaches and that there is a need to align sport resources much more broadly than simply the funding that is provided by Sport Canada.

**Figure 1: The Business of high Performance Sport**



**ii. Understanding the System**

As in the morning roundtable, there was an understanding that high performance is a component of the overall sport system with some variation in terms of early versus late specialization, Olympic versus World championships.

**iii. How can we Improve High Performance?**

One of the keys was to understand what sports and which athletes to focus on. The observation was made that one level of government (Sport Canada) has addressed this challenge through OTP and this might be a model that the provinces could support or partner in.

There was a shared desire to reduce duplication. NSOs need to deal with the COC, OTP, Sport Canada, National training centres and that it would be useful for these functions to be coordinated. Some ideas that emerged on how to coordinate these bodies included funding and accountability agreements. This could involve mergers and collaborations but there have to be incentives to work together. The view was raised a number of times that this is really about clearing the path and letting the athletes and coaches lead, and providing the support that they need to be successful.

Many participants felt that there is a need for a one window approach, an organization to provide leadership and that in the past when attempts have been made to form such an organization that it tends to lose altitude and go down to the lowest common denominator. OTP, in some ways, was the first attempt to move beyond a paradigm that “moves at the speed of the slowest”. Some of the key characteristics of such an organization would be:

- Principles based
- Accountable
- Independent from all bias including from NSOs
- Responsive
- Nimble and Quick
- Collaborative
- Targeted
- Evidence-based, expert-led, values-driven

It would also show strategic leadership (decisiveness in making decisions) and base its decisions on technical knowledge. There was clear agreement that a new organization needs to be clear of politics of all kinds both government and within the sport sector. It was felt that it would be easier for such an organization to make the tough decisions on funding allocation and targeting.

As in the morning session, participants felt that alignment will be critical both between sport organizations and between federal and provincial funders.

Participants emphasized that this is an opportunity to start with a clean slate as opposed to tinkering with what we currently have. There was a fair amount of agreement as to the need to pool all high performance resources into a single agency, outside of government. At the same time it was recognized that Sport Canada needs to maintain a public policy responsibility for sport in Canada.

The suggestion was made that the recommendations from the Panel could act as a broader catalyst for change in the sport system.

#### ***iv. The world post 2010***

There was clear recognition that the world is going to change post 2010 and that this new world would not be able to support all the duplication of effort and the same number of sport bodies and organizations.

There was an interesting discussion around the fact that there are a number of areas where NSOs can be more efficient including administration and translation, multisport integrated support through teams in sport science and sport medicine, co-location and mergers. There was some debate about how much 'slack' there is in the system but a number of participants argued that it should be possible to achieve efficiencies of up to 20% through rationalization.

# Annex I: Participant List

Ottawa, September 24

MORNING SESSION

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1	<b>Mike Chambers</b>	Canadian Olympic Committee
2	<b>Moira Lassen</b>	AthletesCAN
3	<b>John Bales</b>	Coaching Association of Canada
4	<b>Alex Baumann</b>	Own the Podium – Summer
5	<b>David Patterson</b>	Heritage Sports Group (Ringette)
6	<b>J.P. Cody</b>	Team Sports Caucus (Volleyball)
7	<b>Ian Bird</b>	Sport Matters Group
8	<b>Therese Brisson</b>	Multiple/Procter& Gamble
9	<b>Cathy Cadieux</b>	Canadian Wheelchair Sports
10	<b>William Thompson</b>	Skate Canada
11	<b>Paul Melia</b>	CCES
12	<b>Sheilagh Croxon</b>	Synchronized Swimming
13	<b>Wendy Pattenden</b>	CSC-Pacific

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**AFTERNOON SESSION**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1	<b>Sylvie Beliveau</b>	Canadian Soccer Association
2	<b>Wayne Parro</b>	Coaches of Canada
3	<b>Gerry Peckham</b>	Canadian Curling Association
4	<b>Michael Downey</b>	Tennis Canada
5	<b>Bryan Ozorio</b>	Government of Ontario
6	<b>Anne Merklinger</b>	Summer Sport Caucus (Canoe/Kayak)
7	<b>Marg McGregor</b>	Canadian Interuniversity Sport
8	<b>Jean Dupré</b>	Speed Skating Canada
9	<b>Greg Mathieu</b>	Canadian Cycling Association
10	<b>Jasmine Northcott</b>	CAAWS
11	<b>Joanne Mortimore</b>	Summer Sport Caucus (Athletics)
13	<b>Graham Brown</b>	Team Sport Caucus (Rugby)
14	<b>Paddy Boyd</b>	Yachting