

NWT Sport and Recreation Council **Profile Analysis**

Prepared for
NWT Sport and Recreation Council

Completed April 1, 2009
by
WHITEWORKS CONSULTING

Acknowledgements

Whiteworks Consulting would like to thank the following organizations for contributing to the consultation undertaken throughout this profile process. The feedback provided by each participant was invaluable.

- Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic
- Beaufort Delta Sahtu Recreation Association
- Mackenzie Recreation Association
- Municipal and Community Affairs – Regional Sport and Recreation Coordinators
- Municipal and Community Affairs – Sport, Recreation, Youth and Volunteerism Division
- NWT Recreation and Parks Association
- NWT Sport and Recreation Council
- Sport North Federation

Whiteworks Consulting also gratefully acknowledges the assistance of J. Carey Consulting Evaluations Plus Ltd. in planning and conducting the consultations, compiling results and co-authoring this report.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	i
List of Figures	iii
Acronyms	iv
Glossary	v
Introduction	1
Methodology	2
Profile Analysis	5
Mandate	5
Goals	8
Activities and Delivery Approach	10
Target Audience	14
Resources	14
Accountability	17
Summary of Recommendations	19
Conclusion	20
Appendix A: Description of SRC Stakeholders	21
Background Documentation	22

List of Figures

FIGURE 1: CONSULTATION SUMMARY3
FIGURE 2: SRC 2008-2009 APPROVED BUDGET15

Acronyms

ASCWA	Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic
BDSRA	Beaufort Delta Sahtu Recreation Association
GNWT	Government of the Northwest Territories
MACA	Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, GNWT
MRA	Mackenzie Recreation Association
NWT	Northwest Territories
RDO	Regional Sport and Recreation Coordinators, MACA
RPA	NWT Recreation and Parks Association
SNF	Sport North Federation
SRC	NWT Sport and Recreation Council

Glossary

For the purposes of this report, the following definitions are used:

Delivery Partner	Those partners receiving funding from the SRC for the purpose of delivering programs and services in the sport and recreation sector.
Physical Activity ¹	Physical activity involves physical endurance, flexibility and/or strength. To stay healthy or to improve health, experts advise that an individual should accumulate 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Sport and recreation programs are excellent ways to increase physical activity although there are other ways, such as being active at work.
Recreation ²	Recreation includes those activities pursued by individuals or groups to make their leisure time more interesting, enjoyable and satisfying. Recreation can include physical activity, active living, or cultural (traditional games and dance), social, artistic, creative and intellectual activities that people choose to participate during their leisure time. For the purposes of funding assistance, priority is given to those activities that increase physical activity levels of residents. Further, games of chance and events where prize money is awarded are not included in this definition.
Sector	The portion of the overall sport and recreation system that falls under the umbrella of the SRC, including those organizations that work with or receive funding from the SRC.
Sport ³	Sport is physical activity carried out in an organized structure and competitive environment, whose outcome is determined by skill and not by chance. It is marked by the disciplined use of muscle groups, mental preparation and strategic methods. Sport should promote fair play and healthy competition, discourage the use of performance enhancing substances, prohibit all forms of cheating and be free of harassment and abuse.
Stakeholder	Those organizations within the sport and recreation sector that work with or receive funding from the SRC.
System	Includes the sport and recreation sector as well as any other organization that implements programs, services or activities related to sport, recreation or physical activity at either the territorial, regional, or community level.

¹ See *The Northwest Territories Sport, Recreation, and Physical Activity System*, p. 12 and "Active Living at Work" at www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/fitness

² See *The Northwest Territories Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity System*, p. 11.

³ See *The Northwest Territories Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity System*, p. 11.

Introduction

In January 2008, the NWT Sport and Recreation Council (SRC) embarked on a journey to bring greater accountability to the NWT sport and recreation sector. First, the SRC undertook a review of historical and best practice documents, together with a stakeholder consultation, to better understand its current environment and to help refocus its work. The results of this first phase were documented in a report titled *Evaluation Framework Report* which was circulated to Council members and stakeholders in September 2008.

One of the recommendations of the phase one report was that the SRC should make a commitment to excellence in evaluation. To help address this, the SRC hired Whiteworks Consulting in December 2008 to undertake the *Commitment to Excellence: Evaluation Framework* project. The goal was to develop an evaluation framework that would demonstrate how the SRC's activities, the funding it distributes, and its stakeholders⁴ work together to achieve selected outcomes. A detailed workplan for this project, including consultation with stakeholders, was subsequently developed and approved.

Based on the project workplan, the consultants spent the first two months of 2009 consulting with stakeholders and collecting data related to the first and most critical piece of the evaluation framework – the Profile. The Profile lays the foundation for the remainder of the framework by documenting the way an organization is set up, its purpose, its relationships and accountabilities, its goals, and the resources it uses and distributes to its delivery partners. Without a solid Profile, it is impossible to map out a logical connection between an organization's activities and expected outcomes. Being able to make this connection is important because without it, an organization will be challenged to accurately measure whether the outcomes it achieves are a result of its activities or a result of activities beyond its scope.

During the course of analyzing the data, the consultants uncovered a number of issues that made the development of an SRC Profile extremely challenging. The consultants believe that the SRC needs to address these issues before the Profile can be finalized and successfully used for evaluation purposes. As such, the consultants have written the following report not as a completed Profile, but as a Profile analysis. It presents the various sections of a typical Profile - written in draft and as accurately as possible at this point – and then presents any issues with the Profile uncovered either in the background documentation, through stakeholder consultation, or both. Finally, the consultants provide, for each Profile section, the actions they believe need to be implemented in order for that section to be finalized. The report wraps up with a summary of all recommendations for moving the Profile toward completion, plus a few general suggestions.

Because this document has been structured as an analysis and not as a completed Profile, it should be considered a living document to which changes can be made as the SRC overcomes challenges and addresses issues. It is the consultants' hope that by presenting their findings in this way, the SRC is better equipped to continue on its journey toward greater accountability within the sector.

⁴ An overview of each stakeholder is provided in Appendix A.

Methodology

Model

In preparing an evaluation framework for the SRC, the consultants have chosen to use a model similar to the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada's *Results-based Management and Accountability Framework (RMAF)*. Because the 2008 *Evaluation Framework Report* found there was a lack of clarity around the SRC's delivery approach, the consultants felt that modifications to the traditional RMAF format⁵ were necessary, as was the need to develop the framework in a staged approach. These changes allow the SRC to spend more time to accurately define its profile and expected results before developing measures and formal reporting structures. The elements of the modified evaluation framework, in the staged format, are described below:

STAGE 1: December 2008 to May 2009

1. *Profile* – This element describes the SRC, its goals, its main activities and how they are delivered, its partners, those who benefit from the SRC's activities and what resources are currently used.
2. *Expected Results* – This element identifies the outcomes that can logically be expected to result from the SRC's activities, in collaboration with partnering organizations.
3. *Interim Accountability Plan* – This element indicates general information required from the SRC and its partners in order to begin monitoring performance.

STAGE 2: timing to be determined

4. *Monitoring and Evaluation Plan* – This element spells out the type and frequency of data collection activities required of the SRC and its partners, including necessary tools.
5. *Reporting Strategy* – This element creates a comprehensive checklist for each organization showing the type of reports required, who is responsible for them, and a reporting schedule.
6. *Evaluation Strategy* – This element will be used by the SRC Research and Development Coordinator or other evaluators when conducting an evaluation of the SRC's success, relevance and efficiency.

This report concerns itself with the first element in the framework, the Profile.

⁵ See Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2001, 2002, and 2005.

Methodology

The consultants developed the Profile analysis presented in this report by undertaking the following research activities:

1. *Review of background material* – The consultants reviewed a number of background documents such as briefing notes, reports, planning documents, etc, to better understand the history of the SRC and its partners, and to understand the mandate within which they operate. A list of the key background documents reviewed is included at the end of this report.
2. *Development of data collection tools* – This involved developing a series of interview questions and data checklists based on the review of background material and in collaboration with SRC staff. These tools guided the consultants in collecting the most relevant and valid data from stakeholders.
3. *Consultation* – The consultants conducted interviews and focus groups with the SRC, MACA, the RDOs and all of the delivery partners. Figure 1 below identifies the groups consulted, the location of the discussion, and the number of participants who attended and/or submitted their responses electronically. It is important to note that the target audience for the consultation was specific to those stakeholders who work directly with, are funded directly by, or who provide funding directly to the SRC. Therefore it did not include consultation with organizations that do not have a direct relationship with the SRC (i.e. municipalities, Territorial Sport Organizations).
4. *Additional research* – Results from the consultation required the consultants to conduct additional research in attempts to clarify the SRC Profile. This research involved further consultation with SRC, requests for additional background material and a review of that material. Additional background material is referenced at the end of this report.

FIGURE 1: CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Group Consulted	Location of Consultation	Number of Participants	
		Staff	Board
Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic	Yellowknife	1	
Beaufort Delta Sport and Recreation Association	Norman Wells		1
MACA – Sport, Recreation, Youth, and Volunteerism Division	Yellowknife	3	
MACA – Regional Sport and Recreation Coordinators	Yellowknife	5	
Mackenzie Recreation Association	Yellowknife	1	
NWT Recreation and Parks Association	Yellowknife	3	2 (Chair +1)
Sport North Federation	Yellowknife	5	
SRC	Yellowknife	2	4 (Chair + 3)
TOTAL		20	7

Following the data collection activities, the consultants synthesized their results into a single set of data, removing extraneous results and checking for reliability and validity. Results were then analyzed by identifying emerging themes and commonalities.

Limitations

This report is limited in two ways:

- During the data analysis process, a number of disconnects in the data surfaced which made it impossible for the consultants to finalize a Profile for the SRC at this time. The problems concerned fundamental matters such as roles and responsibilities, governance and accountability. As such, a few key sections of the Profile could not be completed because it was unclear whether the data collected represented a true picture of the organization. The issues that are currently preventing completion of the Profile have been highlighted in this report and will need to be addressed by the SRC before the Profile can be finalized and used for the next stage of the evaluation framework.
- As part of the consultation plan, the consultants sought to interview or receive feedback from the board members of each organization. Where full board participation was not realistic, the consultants and the SRC agreed that the input of the board chairperson from each organization would suffice. Despite efforts to include them, Figure 1 above indicates that out of the six potential board chairpersons only two provided feedback. For all organizations, few or no board members participated in the process. Therefore the overall data presented herein is not fully representative of the organizations' board members.

Profile Analysis

The first element of any evaluation framework is the Profile. The Profile lays the foundation for the framework by describing the organization and its programs in such a way that, later in the framework, it is possible to map out how the organization and its partners can achieve selected outcomes and how that achievement can be measured and reported.

The following is a list of the Profile components, based largely on the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada's RMAF format but modified to recognize the environment in which the SRC operates:

1. **Mandate** – The origin of the SRC and why the SRC exists.
2. **Goals** – The SRC's vision as to how it will fulfil its mandate.
3. **Activities and Delivery Approach** – How the SRC conducts its business and plans to attain its goals, a listing of its stakeholders and their relationships with the SRC, and the various activities funded by SRC resources.
4. **Target Audience** – Who benefits from the activities of the SRC and of its delivery partners.
5. **Resources** – What funding and human resources are used to undertake the SRC's main activities and what funding is given to delivery partners.
6. **Accountability** – To whom and for what the SRC and its delivery partners are accountable.

The following pages constitute the consultants' results for each of the above components. As noted previously, a full Profile cannot be produced at this time due to challenges uncovered during the data analysis process. Instead, each section presents a draft profile based on information gathered to date, an analysis of any issues related to that information, and the consultants' recommendations to move forward.

Mandate

Draft Profile

Between 1962 and 1999⁶, there were six government and non-government organizations established to implement various activities occurring within the NWT sport and recreation sector as follows⁷:

- 1962 Government of the Northwest Territories Recreation and Sport Staff
- 1976 Sport North Federation
- 1988 NWT Recreation and Parks Association

⁶ The dates referenced are the consultants' best interpretation, based on available documentation and consultation with each organization.

⁷ For a description of these stakeholders, please refer to Appendix A.

- 1989 Beaufort Delta Sahtu Recreation Association
- 1989 Mackenzie Recreation Association
- 1999 Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic

Historically, each of these organizations has been afforded the opportunity to deliver sport and recreation programs relatively independently. While each has, to some degree, aimed to increase the physical activity rates among the NWT population, population health statistics identified in 1996/97 that physical activity was as low as 12% among NWT residents aged 25-44 and 49% among those aged 12-24.⁸ By the early 2000s, this and other factors seemed to suggest the need for greater coordination in the sector and the distribution of public funds in a way that was more efficient and accountable.

According to background documents, the SRC was established in 2005 to address this need for sector integration and coordination, although the breadth of its mandate is not entirely clear. Background documents and most stakeholders agree that the SRC was established to provide leadership and support in the sport, recreation and active living sector through the distribution of public funds by:

- Creating a forum for all communities and sport leaders to have a voice in sport and recreation planning;
- Streamlining decision making and improving coordination in the sport and recreation system;
- Improving integration and a more effective use of resources that results in opportunities for all NWT residents to access sport, recreation and physical activity programs; and
- Establishing a mechanism to allocate available resources equitably to address programs and community needs.

The SRC's constitutional bylaws summarize its mandate with the following mission statement:

*To encourage and support the development of a broad range of sport and recreation programs and services for all residents of the Northwest Territories.*⁹

This mandate appears to have been broadened in the *2006-2009 SRC Strategic Plan*, which states that the SRC will: *Create the means for every resident to achieve greater health, quality of life and human potential through involvement in a dynamic and responsive recreation and sport system.*¹⁰

The SRC's website states that its role in the sector is "to provide effective leadership and support to the sport and recreation system by setting strategic direction and allocating resources"¹¹, which is significantly more narrow than the other statements.

Background documentation also confirms that the SRC was created to give the Minister of MACA one official point of contact to discuss policy and programming issues related to sport and recreation.

⁸ See NWT Bureau of Statistics.

⁹ See *NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners Procedural Bylaws*, p. 2; and *Council Orientation Manual*, p. 2.

¹⁰ See *Strategic Plan 2006-2009*, p. 2.

¹¹ As presented on www.nwtsrc.com.

Analysis

After analyzing the data, the consultants have identified the following issues:

- There is no single document that clearly describes why the SRC was established and the mandate for which it is responsible. The above description has been pieced together from various sources. This, plus the fact that the mission statement has changed, has led to confusion about the SRC's actual purpose and its role in the sector.
- Consultants note a discrepancy in the documentation when reference is made to sport, recreation and physical activity. In the SRC mandate, sport, recreation and physical activity (sometimes called active living) are identified as a responsibility of SRC yet other documents refer to sport and recreation only, omitting any reference to physical activity or active living. This has led to confusion about the breadth of the SRC's mandate and who should be involved to help achieve that mandate.
- The perception exists for some stakeholders that the SRC was established purely as a political exercise, creating another organization to 'offload' government responsibility for sector-wide planning. This perception is also fuelled by their belief that MACA is making the decisions for the sector. Many believe that the SRC cannot fulfil its mandate or establish credibility until it works autonomously from MACA.
- Many of the items listed in the above mandate are very broad and open to interpretation. This has led to confusion about what the SRC is expected to achieve, particularly since the SRC currently does not have the capacity to undertake all of the functions if they are interpreted in their broadest sense.
- The above mandate does not specifically mention the delivery partners or their responsibilities to work with the SRC within its mandate, yet the consultants understand that they are relied on for program and service delivery within the sector. The SRC will be challenged to fully accomplish its purpose until there is more clarity in the roles between and among all partnering organizations. The consultants also find it interesting to note that the SRC was originally called the NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners but the reference to partners was subsequently dropped in 2008, and the title is now the NWT Sport and Recreation Council.
- The consultants are unclear as to why the SRC broadened its mission from what is in its Constitution. Without documentation as to why changes were made or whether further changes are anticipated during the 2009 strategic planning process, the organization will struggle to stay focused.
- The mission statement in the *2006-2009 Strategic Plan* is beyond the scope of SRC's original mandate and, in the consultants' opinion, is largely unattainable. If this mission is retained, the organization will be frustrated at being unable to measure, let alone attain, its original mandate.
- Stakeholders identified that although they were involved in defining the purpose of the SRC, they were not involved in the 2006-2009 strategic planning process where SRC broadened its mission. Stakeholders are therefore unclear what roles they play in helping the SRC achieve its directions, if any.

Recommendations

Considering the issues above, the consultants cannot finalize the Mandate section of the Profile document until questions concerning the SRC mandate are addressed. Specifically, the consultants recommend that the SRC Council and its staff work together to undertake the following:

Recommendation #1: Review and discuss the results of this report, accept the recommendations as presented or make adjustments as needed, and develop a work plan to implement the recommendations.

Recommendation #2: Meet with the Minister of MACA to confirm the content, breadth and boundaries of the SRC's mandate, clarifying what the SRC will be accountable for and what roles the Minister sees the SRC, MACA and the delivery partners taking. The results should be well documented and communicated with all partnering organizations.

Recommendation #3: Either revise the mission statement so that it summarizes the re-confirmed mandate but does not exceed it, or do away with a mission statement if the re-confirmed mandate is clear. Document the rationale for any changes and update the Constitution based on what is defined.

Recommendation #4: Based on the mandate confirmed by the Minister and the mission confirmed by the Council, work with MACA to implement the necessary mechanisms to gain more autonomy.

Goals

Draft Profile

An organization's goals are often confused with its mandate, which is discussed in the previous section. Indeed both speak to the achievements that an organization hopes to attain. The difference is that the mandate is historical and describes the organization's purpose at the time of establishment. The goals, on the other hand, reflect the organization's particular focus for a 3-5 year period within that mandate.

The SRC has defined the following broad goal: To set broad direction for the sport, recreation and active living system through consultation, cooperation and the allocation of resources. Within this goal, the SRC's current Strategic Plan outlines four strategic directions for the period of 2006 to 2009:¹² They are:

- *Build a healthier, more physically active North through sport, recreation and physical activity.*

Work in this strategic direction was meant to engage and mobilize the NWT population towards action and create greater access and opportunities to healthy active living through sport, recreation and active living.

- *Create a shared voice, shared action and shared responsibility.*

Work in this strategic direction was meant to create a forum for all stakeholders to have a voice in sport, recreation and active living planning and decision-making, while ensuring coordinated action and commitment to the ideal of collective responsibility.

¹² See 2006-2009 Strategic Plan, p. 6.

- *Set broad direction.*

Work in this strategic direction was meant to articulate priorities, provide common direction for the NWT sport and recreation system and ensure accountability for results.

- *Increase system capacity.*

Work in this strategic direction was meant to develop the system's effectiveness by focussing on organizational, human, resource and financial resource issues. SRC would also look internally and focus on building an arms-length effective and responsive SRC which would then be able to effectively assist in building capacity within the system.

Analysis

An analysis of all data collected has led the consultants to identify the following issues related to the SRC's goal and its strategic directions:

- Some of the strategic directions reflect a broader direction than the SRC's original mandate. Until the SRC confirms its mandate and mission with the Minister, as recommended in Recommendation #2, it will be difficult for the organization to link its strategic directions in a measurable way and subsequently to build buy-in for its strategic directions.
- The majority of stakeholders are not clear as to whether the strategic directions above are for the SRC itself, for the SRC on behalf of the delivery partners, or for the entire sector. This has led to confusion regarding what role the partners have, or do not have, in setting direction. Stakeholders feel that if the SRC is setting direction for itself, then it needs to stick to a direction and move on with it. If the direction is for the partners, then the partners need to be involved in the planning process so that they can own a stake in the implementation of those directions. If the direction is for the sector, then the SRC needs to increase its capacity and strengthen its authority to do so.
- The SRC's strategic directions (and its mandate) suggest that the SRC will set direction for the entire sport, recreation and active living system and seek shared accountability for results. The consultants have identified, however, that there are organizations and funding related to the NWT sport, recreation and active living that do not fall under the SRC umbrella. For example, municipal governments are funded through MACA, not the SRC, for recreation programming. Similarly, the SRC is only one funding source for the territorial delivery partners. The SRC will be challenged to set system-wide direction for programs and funding for which it has no responsibility.
- The consultants understand that the SRC plans to redefine its Strategic Plan in 2009. If this is the case, the above description of the organization's goals and directions will soon be outdated, as will the activities described later in this report.

Recommendations

The consultants cannot finalize the Goals section of the Profile until there is clarity about the SRC's strategic directions. That being said, the consultants have deferred their recommendation related to goals to a later section of this report because they believe other actions are required before attention can be focused on goals.

Activities and Delivery Approach

Draft Profile

Activities

As noted above, the SRC implemented four strategic directions in 2006. As part of this exercise, the SRC defined a series of activities it would undertake. These activities are listed below, grouped under one of the four strategic directions of the current strategic plan. Note that the grouping has been done by the consultants in an attempt to provide structure to the list. The SRC may wish to group the activities differently.

Strategic Direction 1: Build a healthier, more physically active North through sport, recreation and physical activity.

- i. Provide lottery and other public funding to sport, recreation and active living sector organizations and initiatives.

Strategic Direction 2: Create a shared voice, shared action and shared responsibility.

- i. Influence public policy in the sport, recreation and active living related sectors; and advocate at senior level governments.
- ii. Support social marketing and advocacy efforts.
- iii. Build a stable consultation framework for ensuring system needs, gaps and overlap are identified and addressed from communities, partners, volunteers and professionals.
- iv. Develop and manage a coordinated multi-year accountability process with stakeholders.
- v. Create an environment that encourages community participation in the decision making process.
- vi. Seek out the concerns of our constituents and be accountable.

Strategic Direction 3: Set broad direction.

- i. Communicate, monitor and evaluate system priorities within the sport, recreation and active living sector.
- ii. Liaise provincially/territorially and nationally on sector wide priorities.
- iii. Implement and manage a coordinated business planning process.
- iv. Develop and manage a coordinated multi-year strategic planning process with stakeholders.
- v. Provide system wide leadership for the NWT sport, recreation and active living sector at senior levels and in areas previously untapped.

Strategic Direction 4: Increase system capacity.

- i. Show support for the work of sport, recreation and active living volunteers, professionals and organizations.
- ii. Seek other resources (financial and human) to the benefit of the system.
- iii. Work on broad strategic sport, recreation and active living issues.
- iv. Develop funding policy for the allocation of SRC resources.

The consultants believe the above list constitutes the 16 main activities of the SRC, however the Strategic Plan also includes a number of initiatives (19 in total) in which the SRC plans to be involved. These initiatives can be found in the Strategic Plan¹³, but have not been reproduced in this report for brevity sake. Some of the initiatives are similar to the activities listed above and others are not. It is difficult to know which list constitutes the most accurate picture.

Delivery Approach

The SRC's approach to delivering these activities is best described by looking at its governance and organization structures and how resources flow to its delivery partners. The SRC is a council of members comprised of representatives from seven NWT regions plus three representatives each from the recreation and sport fields. The SRC's Board of Directors and its Council members are one in the same. There is no general membership and at the time of writing this report there are no advisory committees or formal mechanisms for delivery partners to provide advice. A representative of the Department of MACA frequently attends Council meetings as an ex-officio member, but has no voting rights. Three of the Council members are also on the Sport North Federation Board of Directors, and one of these members is also on the Board of Directors of the Mackenzie Recreation Association, but the other three delivery partners do not have board members on the SRC.

The SRC employs a General Manager and a Research and Development Coordinator. The consultants understand that plans are being made to create two additional full time positions – an administrative assistant and a communications-focused position. Together, these individuals form the SRC staff responsible for implementing the decisions made by the Council and managing its day to day operations.

The SRC does not deliver sport and recreation programs directly, instead depending on its delivery partners for this task. Each partner is provided with an amount of public funding to help deliver programs and services across the NWT. Currently, the public funds distributed by the SRC are the lottery funds (detailed in the resources section of this report), but it is the consultants' understanding that other funding may be added to the mix over time. These funds are distributed to the following five organizations, but the consultants understand that MACA also funds these partners outside of the SRC structure, and that additional partners could be involved over time as needs change:

- Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic
- Beaufort Delta Sahtu Recreation Association
- Mackenzie Recreation Association
- NWT Recreation and Parks Association
- Sport North Federation.

(Note that some of these delivery partners are currently discussing their own governance changes that could affect how they relate to each other and ultimately to SRC.)

In 2008, after realizing limited success in achieving their strategic directions, the SRC worked with its Council members to take stock of its successes and to identify ways to improve its delivery approach. In response, the SRC renewed its four strategic directions by making a commitment to excellence in the following areas¹⁴:

¹³ See *2006-2009 Strategic Plan*, p. 7.

¹⁴ See *Strategic Plan 2006-2009 Year 3 (2008-2009)*, p. 1 and *Evaluation Framework Report*, p. 19.

- *Communication* - creating the strategies and processes needed to advance SRC's effectiveness in advocacy and information sharing.
- *Evaluation* - creating strategies and processes required to plan and evaluate SRC's collective ability to continually improve and be accountable.
- *Resource Development* - creating strategies around human resource excellence and increasing financial earnings/rewards for the sport and recreation system.
- *Client Services* - creating strategies around different mechanisms for delivery of services and product development.

These commitments were meant to reflect the way in which each of the four strategic directions will be strengthened.

Analysis

The following issues have been identified through an analysis of the data:

- There are conflicting messages in background documents with respect to the SRC's activities, resulting in confusion about what the SRC is actually 'doing'. The list of activities presented above is the consultants' best estimation of the work currently being undertaken (or being planned) for the SRC, but it is unknown whether all of this work is being done or whether this simply represents an ambitious vision.
- The consultants understand that the SRC will be implementing a new strategic plan in 2009 to guide the organization over the next few years. It is unknown if the SRC will change its direction from what it has currently defined and, if so, whether the main activities of the organization will also change. Attempting to finalize this section of the Profile while knowing the activities may change would be, in the consultants' view, a waste of resources.
- The SRC currently does not have the capacity to undertake all of the activities listed above even with the assistance of the delivery partners, and it should be cautious about attempting to do too much. Including all of the listed activities in an evaluation framework means that each one will eventually need to be evaluated. It is better to be realistic about what is achievable in the planning stages than to commit to too much only to risk having evaluation results confirm an over-ambitious plan.
- Perhaps the biggest challenge with the delivery approach is that the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders are completely unclear. Consultation confirmed that some stakeholders should be less involved in the SRC's activities than they currently are (e.g. MACA), while other stakeholders (e.g. delivery partners) should be more involved in activities like planning. Lack of clarity about the SRC's original mandate and its current strategic directions (both discussed earlier) are part of the problem. As well, the roles and responsibilities of each organization in working with the SRC have never been clearly defined. The consultants believe this has resulted in much frustration among the partners, inefficiencies, and barriers to productivity for the SRC as an organization. Specifically:

- It is unclear how much authority the SRC has to direct and expect accountability for the entire sector when the SRC funds only a part of that sector.
 - It is unclear what role the delivery partners are to play in setting the overall direction for the sector. There is currently no formal mechanism for partners to participate in sector planning yet it is understood that they will eventually be expected to be accountable for the funding they receive and the outcomes the SRC determines.
 - The structure of the Council presents problems in that some delivery partners have a presence and others do not. Some stakeholders believe that all delivery partners should sit on the Council. Others believe it would be a conflict of interest for organizations who receive money to participate on the Council that makes the funding decisions. Still others believe that no delivery partners should sit on the Council but that a formal advisory/planning group of partners be formed to regularly input into the system
 - The role that MACA plays within the SRC structure is unclear and often confusing. This confusion results from two things: first, MACA does not flow all sport and recreation funding through the SRC but funds some delivery partners directly; and second, the perception among some stakeholders is that MACA is working too closely with SRC, hindering the ability of the SRC to work autonomously and report directly to the Minister as they believe was intended.
- Stakeholders believe that the leadership role the SRC played by advocating in 2008 for funding to remain in the sport and recreation system worked well and should be a key direction as the SRC plans for the future. It was the perception among partners that beyond this activity, however, they were not sure how the SRC was moving toward its other strategic directions.

Recommendations

The Activities and Delivery Approach section of the Profile cannot be finalized as written based on the analysis above. The consultants recommend the following solutions:

Recommendation #5: Reconsider the SRC governance structure to give delivery partners a voice without creating a conflict of interest. Whatever structure is chosen should enable regular, two-way communication between the SRC and the delivery partners. This mechanism needs to involve face-to-face interaction two to four times a year so that delivery partners can actively participate in the SRC's planning, monitoring and other sector-wide activities.

Recommendation #6: Work with stakeholders to map out roles and responsibilities and a new delivery approach. The consultants recommend that the SRC use a facilitator to guide this discussion so that all stakeholders have an equal voice and the discussion is managed from an objective perspective.

As a start, the consultants recommend (and the majority of stakeholders confirm) that the focus of the entire sector should be to move toward a culture of activity. Within this sector, possible roles are as follows: MACA could take the lead role on policy and legislation; SRC could take the lead role on identifying needs, gaps and directions to improve sector efficiency, while funding the delivery partners to implement their own mandates; and the delivery partners could take the lead role in delivering sport and recreation programs within their own mandates, while working regularly with the SRC to help shape the sector.

Recommendation #7: Develop a new Strategic Plan for the SRC after first obtaining general agreement from stakeholders about roles and responsibilities within the sector. The new plan should be developed with the input of all affected partners, keeping the re-confirmed mandate and capacity in mind.

Target Audience

Draft Profile

The target audience of the SRC is two-fold. Its primary target audience is the organizations that it funds. Currently, this primary target audience includes the ASCWA, BDSRA, MRA, NWTRPA and the SNF. SRC's secondary target audience is the residents of the NWT who participate in the programs provided by the organizations the SRC funds.

Analysis

When all data is analysed together, the consultants believe that the above description of SRC's target audience is accurate. However, a few issues related to the SRC's target audience emerged and warrant further discussion. These issues include:

- Background documentation often identifies that the target population is for all NWT residents, but there is concern that those residents who are not participating in sport and recreation are not actually being targeted.
- There is a perception among some stakeholders that most resources are currently targeted in certain areas only (i.e. sport, larger municipalities, youth).

Recommendations

The target audience section of the Profile can be presented as written with a minor addition to include a tertiary audience – those NWT residents who are not participating in sport and recreation programs and services. By adding this third target audience, SRC can influence the need to provide opportunities for all residents of the NWT to access sport and recreation programs and services. Note that this is a general recommendation, but is not considered critical for the evaluation framework project to move forward unless significant changes to the delivery approach are made.

Resources

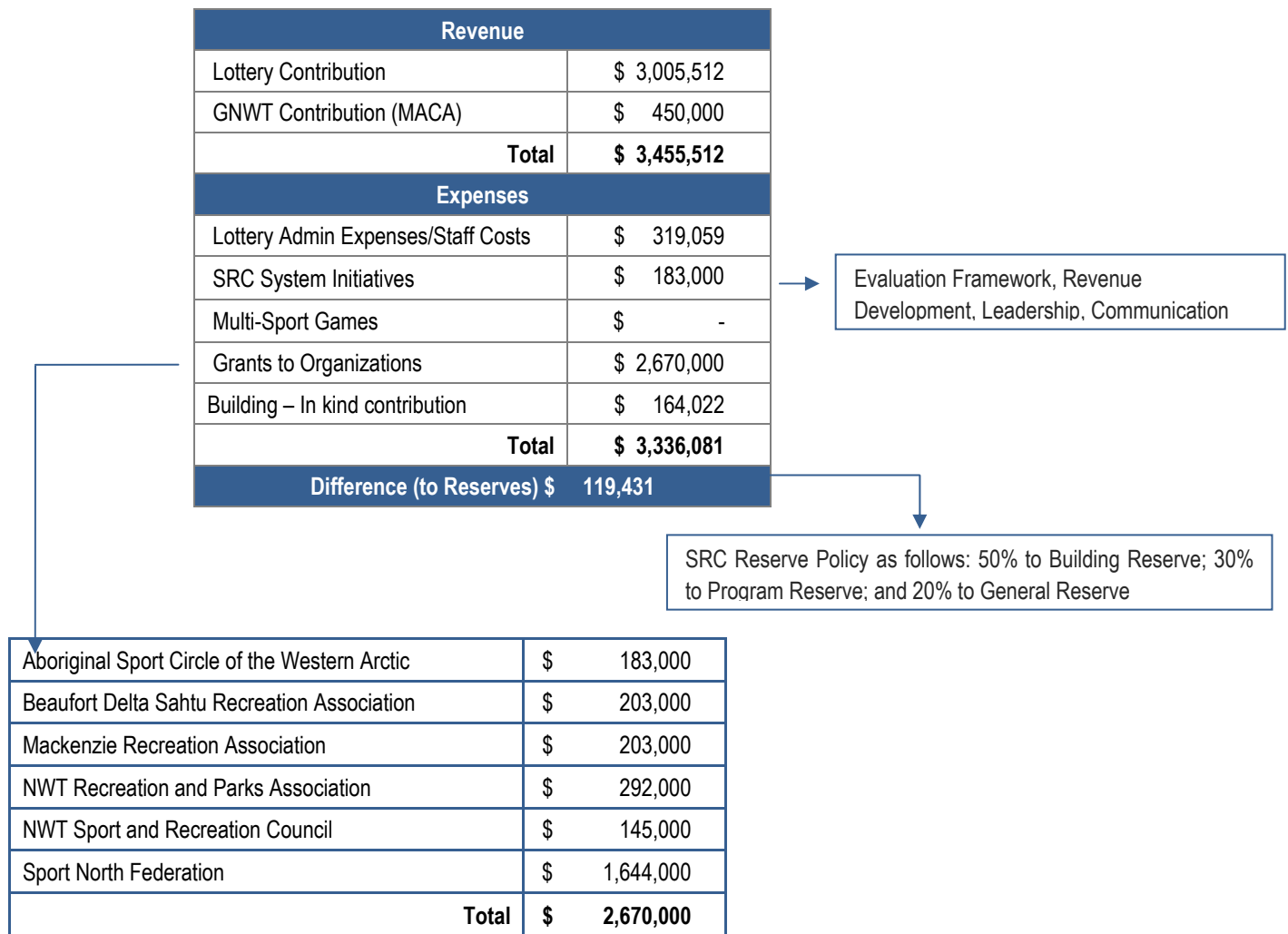
Draft Profile

This section of the Profile includes both human and financial resources dedicated to the SRC to implement its activities. With respect to human resources, the SRC staffs two full time positions: a General Manager and a Research and Development Coordinator. The SRC is also planning to employ two additional full time positions: an Administrative Assistant and a communications-focused position. The SRC Council is comprised of 13 members who make the organization's decisions and set its overall direction. The SRC also relies on the organizations it funds to implement sport and recreation activities as per their respective mandates.

With respect to financial resources, the SRC generates revenue of approximately \$3.57 million per year, the majority of which (approximately \$3 million) comes direct from lottery revenue with the remainder coming from MACA in a grant. Of this revenue, SRC spends approximately \$3.45 million, the majority of which (approximately \$2.67 million) is distributed to the delivery partners¹⁵ for program and service delivery. This delivery partner disbursement represents about 77% of the SRC's total expenditures, the majority of which (62%, or \$1.6 million) is provided to the Sport North Federation.

Should surplus revenue occur, it is disbursed as per the SRC Reserve Policy as follows: 50% to Building Reserve; 30% to Program Reserve; and 20% to General Reserve. Figure 2 below identifies the budget including revenue, expenses, and projected reserve funding for 2008-2009.

FIGURE 2: SRC 2008-2009 APPROVED BUDGET



Currently, there is no funding formula or set of criteria to determine the amount of funding each delivery partner receives, although the SRC plans to develop a mechanism and policy for this purpose and a related accountability/reporting plan. In the absence of these mechanisms, the SRC has distributed lottery funding based on

¹⁵ \$145,000 of this funding is disbursed within SRC for general operations related to staff, board and committee costs.

historical figures. Each of the delivery partners blends the funding it receives from the SRC into its core programs and services and, in some cases, distributes a portion of that funding to other groups in the system. Few, if any, organizations designate the SRC funding for specific programs, activities or outcomes. This means that most organizations are currently unable to determine the results directly attributed to the SRC funds because the SRC funds only a portion of their operation.

Analysis

Based on an analysis of the data, the consultants believe that the above description is accurate and reflects the resources (both human and financial) as they currently exist for SRC. However, a few issues related to SRC's resources emerged and warrant further discussion. These issues are as follows:

- The consultants understand that the SRC wants to move away from distributing funding based on historical levels and, instead, fund programs based on the priorities it establishes through strategic planning, thus potentially impacting the amount of funding organizations receive. Some delivery partners agree with this concept but caution that implementation will be challenging and fragile.
- Similarly, it is unclear how delivery partners will be expected to report on priorities and outcomes related to the funding they receive from SRC, when SRC funding is blended into the core operations of these organizations. Most believe that the SRC should fund the organizations to achieve their own mandates, but not dictate what those mandates look like. Note: more about accountability reporting is discussed in the next section.
- It is the perception of some stakeholders that the historical distribution of funding is not equitably based on program and service delivery in the sport and recreation sector, and some partners feel they are not appropriately compensated for the amount of work that they do.
- MACA provides some funding directly to delivery partners and municipal governments, which leads to confusion related to roles and responsibilities within the sector. This subsequently results in confusion about reporting responsibilities and accountability.
- Most stakeholders feel that the SRC should access additional resources, beyond lottery dollars, to distribute to partners for program and service delivery.

Recommendations

The resources section of the Profile can be presented as written above based on the analysis, if the delivery approach of SRC remains the same. However, if the delivery approach changes based on the recommendations identified earlier, this section of the Profile should be adjusted accordingly.

The SRC should consider the following activities as part of its ongoing priorities, although the consultants do not believe these actions are required immediately in order for the evaluation framework project to move forward.

- Implement a funding mechanism to distribute funding based on sector priorities and needs. Work directly with partners to develop an implementation plan that recognizes the sensitivity of this issue.

Accountability

Draft Profile

Accountability speaks to the responsibility of an organization to demonstrate that it has undertaken the activities it said it would, it has spent its funding as expected, and it has achieved certain results by employing its resources to anticipated outcomes. It could be argued that accountability is part and parcel of each of the profile sections described above. For simplicity sake and for easy reference, accountability is discussed here as a separate section of the profile.

In early 2008 the SRC identified that the sector needed to become more accountable for the money it spends and the activities it undertakes, yet accountability within the current sport and recreation sector remains limited. The consultants believe there are three levels of accountability, none of which is currently defined.

First, the SRC should be accountable to the Minister. As this report has indicated, this reporting relationship is not currently occurring to the extent that it was anticipated. Second, the SRC Council is accountable to the groups it represents – NWT regions and the areas of sport and recreation in general. To date, the SRC has not developed a performance measurement plan to allow it to accurately report on accountability matters specific to regional, sport, or recreation activities.

The third level of accountability in the sector is the accountability of delivery partners for how they use funds received from the SRC. Few delivery partners, however, designate the SRC funds for specific outcomes or programs, instead blending the funding into their core operations. This means that many delivery partners are currently unable to identify achievements that are the direct result of SRC funding only. At this time, delivery partners are only able to report on activities as a whole, regardless of the funding source.

Analysis

- Some stakeholders question what authority and/or influence the SRC should have over delivery partners' activities, especially where the SRC only funds a portion of their budget and considering that delivery partners were not involved in setting the SRC's strategic plan. The perception among stakeholders is that the SRC can only hold the delivery partners accountable for the lottery funding they receive, and this can only occur once the delivery partners have had an opportunity to participate in the planning process.
- Once the SRC identifies which direction it wants to take, only then can it focus on attainment of outcomes and accountability towards them. The perception among some stakeholders is that, eventually, if delivery partners are unable to provide evidence towards the achievement of outcomes, SRC should have the authority to pull back funding.

Recommendations

The consultants believe that an accountability plan goes hand in hand with defining roles and responsibilities. To that end, the following recommendations are made:

Recommendation #8: When meeting with stakeholders to discuss roles, responsibilities and structure (recommendation #6), thoroughly discuss the issue of accountability and seek buy-in for the eventual development of an accountability plan. A plan would address performance measurement and reporting requirements.

Recommendation #9: Delay the evaluation framework project until the issues in this report have been addressed.

Summary of Recommendations

The following is a paraphrase of the recommendations provided throughout this report. These are the actions the consultants feel the SRC and its staff need to undertake before a Profile document can be finalized and used for the purposes of an evaluation framework. Below the recommendations, the consultants have included a few general suggestions, but these are not considered essential to completing the evaluation framework project.

Recommendations to Complete the Profile

- Recommendation #1: Review the results of this report and develop a plan to implement the approved recommendations. (page 8)
- Recommendation #2: Confirm the content, breadth and boundaries of the SRC's mandate with the Minister of MACA, paying particular attention to accountabilities and roles. (page 8)
- Recommendation #3: Revise the mission statement so that it summarizes the re-confirmed mandate but does not exceed it, or do away with a mission statement entirely. (page 8)
- Recommendation #4: Work with MACA to implement the necessary mechanisms to gain more autonomy within the re-confirmed mandate. (page 8)
- Recommendation #5: Reconsider the SRC governance structure to implement a two-way communication mechanism with delivery partners without creating a conflict of interest. (page 13)
- Recommendation #6: Work with stakeholders to define roles, responsibilities and a new delivery approach within the mandate and roles confirmed by the Minister. (page 13)
- Recommendation #7: Develop a strategic plan for the SRC based on the defined delivery approach. (page 14)
- Recommendation #8: Discuss the issue of accountability with stakeholders and build buy-in for an eventual performance measurement and reporting plan. (page 18)
- Recommendation #9: Delay the evaluation framework project until the issues in this report have been addressed. (page 18)

General Suggestions

- Recognize that capacity should dictate how much is attempted by the SRC in any given year.
- Document the decisions and changes that are made with respect to the above recommendations.
- When defining the target audience for the SRC, include those NWT residents who are not currently participating in sport and recreation programs.
- Implement a funding mechanism to distribute funding based on sector priorities and needs.

Conclusion

The goal of the *Commitment to Excellence: Evaluation Framework* project is to create an evaluation framework that demonstrates how SRC activities, partners and funding are expected to work together to achieve selected outcomes. As a result of analyzing the data for the Profile component of the framework, the consultants have discovered discrepancies related to fundamental matters such as roles and responsibilities, governance and accountability. These discrepancies have been outlined in this report as they relate to the various components of the Profile. As well, the consultants have recommended several actions they believe the SRC must take before the Profile can be finalized and used for evaluation purposes.

The next step to moving forward requires the SRC to consider the findings and recommendations presented in this report carefully and to make a work plan to address each one. Until such time, it is the recommendation of the consultants that the Profile document and the *Commitment to Excellence: Evaluation Framework* project be placed on hold. Pushing forward without first resolving the underlying issues will result in an expensive and immeasurable framework that will ultimately lead evaluators to arrive at the same conclusions presented within this report.

Appendix A: Description of SRC Stakeholders

Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic (ASCWA)

ASCWA's mission is to "promote and enhance community wellness and cultural awareness through sport and recreation". ASCWA is involved in initiatives such as the North American Indigenous Games, increasing Aboriginal involvement in all NWT Sport Programs, Fun on Ice, the Aboriginal Coaching Manual, and the Archery program.

Beaufort Delta Sahtu Recreation Association (BDSRA)

The BDSRA supports the delivery of a broad base of recreation and sport opportunities for all residents in the Beaufort, Delta, and Sahtu regions of the Northwest Territories.

Mackenzie Recreation Association (MRA)

The MRA's mission is to enhance the quality of life for residents of the Mackenzie Region by fostering and supporting the development of recreation, sport, youth, volunteer, culture, traditional events, facilities, and leadership.

NWT Parks and Recreation Association (NWTRPA)

The NWTRPA is a non-profit organization that works with communities spanning the NWT to promote healthy and active lifestyles. The NWTRPA's main programs focus on recreation in the area of aquatics (workshops, seasonal aquatic recruitment), and trails (Trans Canada Trails, Trail Building Fund).

Sport, Recreation, Youth and Volunteerism Division of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA)

MACA's Sport, Recreation, Youth and Volunteerism division is part of the Government Northwest Territories. Its goal is "healthy, educated people living in safe communities, who are able to contribute and take advantage of life's opportunities". Some of MACA's current programs are: Get Active NWT Summer/Winter, Healthy Choices, the Active Living Coalition and Active Living for Special Populations. MACA utilizes the RDOs within the region to deliver sport and recreation programs for municipalities.

Sport North Federation (SNF)

SNF represents all Territorial Sport Organizations within the Northwest Territories (NWT). They are dedicated to the development of sport at every level in the NWT. SNF's offers programming in the area of: coaching development, awards & scholarships, athlete development, and Team NWT's involvement in various multi-sport Games.

Background Documentation

Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic. (no date). Retrieved from <http://www.ascwa.com>

Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic. (no date). *Who we are in the North*. Yellowknife: Author.

Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic. (2009). *Business Brief*. Yellowknife: Author.

Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic. (2009, February 20). SRC Evaluation Framework Focus Group. (J. Carey, Interviewer)

Beaufort Delta Sahtu Recreation Association. (2006). *4-Year Business Plan and Budget*. Norman Wells: Author.

Beaufort Delta Sahtu Recreation Association. (2009, February 18). SRC Evaluation Framework Focus Group. (J. Carey, Interviewer)

Canada Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute. (2002/2003). *Physical Activity Levels Across Canada*. Retrieved February 28, 2009, from Canada Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute: <http://www.cflri.ca>

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. (n.d.). *Sport, Recreation, Youth, and Volunteerism Division*. Retrieved from <http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/sport/index.html>

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs - Recreation and Sport Coordinators. (2009, February 18). SRC Evaluation Framework Focus Group. (J. Carey, Interviewer)

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. (2003 - 2006). Various Correspondence. Yellowknife, NT: Author.

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, GNWT. (2004). *NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Backgrounder*. Yellowknife: Author.

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, GNWT. (no date). *Recreation and Sport in the NWT*. Yellowknife: Author.

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, GNWT. (2003). *The Northwest Territories Sport, Recreation, and Physical Activity System*. Yellowknife: GNWT.

Government of the Northwest Territories. (June 6, 2003). *Hansard*. Yellowknife: Author.

Government of the Northwest Territories. (2000). Legacy and New Directions. *NWT Sport and Recreation Partners* (p. 66). Yellowknife: Government of the Northwest Territories.

Government of the Northwest Territories. (no date). *Recreation and Sport in the NWT Summary of Consultation Process and Proposed GNWT Actions*. Yellowknife: Author.

MACA - Sport, Recreation, Youth and Volunteerism Division. (2009, February 13). SRC Evaluation Framework Focus Group. (J. Carey, Interviewer)

Mackenzie Recreation Association. (2009). *2009-2010 Draft Action Plan*. Fort Simpson: Author.

Mackenzie Recreation Association. (2009, February 20). SRC Evaluation Framework Focus Group. (J. Carey, Interviewer)

Mackenzie Recreation Association. (2008). *Business Plan*. Fort Simpson: Author.

NWT Bureau of Statistics. (1994/1995). Physical Activity Index. Yellowknife, NT: Population Health Survey.

NWT Bureau of Statistics. (1996/1997). Physical Activity Index. Yellowknife, NT: Population Health Survey.

NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners. (2009). *Commitment to Excellence Evaluation Framework Phase 2 - Data Review and Analysis Terms of Reference*. Yellowknife: Author.

NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners. (September 2008). *Commitment to Excellence Phase 1: Evaluation Framework Report*. Yellowknife: Author.

NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners Constitution. (2005). Yellowknife, NT.

NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners. (2008). *Council Orientation Manual*. Yellowknife: Author.

NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners. (2007, April 28). Outcomes Planning Sheets. Yellowknife, NT: Author.

NWT Sport and Recreation Council. (2009, February 13). SRC Evaluation Framework Focus Group. (J. Carey, Interviewer)

NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners. (2008). *Renewed Strategic Plan 2006-2009 Year 3 (2008-2009)*. Yellowknife: Author.

NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners. (2006). *Strategic Plan 2006-2009*. Yellowknife: Author.

NWT Recreation and Parks Association. (2008). *Logic Model*. Yellowknife: Author.

NWT Recreation and Parks Association. (2008). *Report on Training Needs for Recreation Leaders in the NWT*. Yellowknife: Author.

NWT Recreation and Parks Association. (2009, February 11). SRC Evaluation Framework Focus Group. (J. Carey, Interviewer)

NWT Recreations and Parks Association. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nwtrpa.org>

NWT Sport and Recreation Council. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nwtsrc.com>

NWT Sport and Recreation Council. (no date). Application Form. *Call for Board Members for the NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners*. Yellowknife, NT: Author.

NWT Sport and Recreation Council. (no date). Council Member Nomination Form. *Call for Board Members for the NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners*. Yellowknife, NT: Author.

NWT Sport and Recreation Council. (no date). *SRC System Snapshot - Draft 1*. Yellowknife: Author.

NWT Sport and Recreation Council. (2006-2009). Various Briefing Notes. Yellowknife, NT.

NWT Sport and Recreation Council. (2005-2009). Various Correspondence. Yellowknife, NT: Author.

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2009). Active Living at Work. Retrieved from <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/>

Sport North Federation. (2008). *Sport North Annual Report 2007-2008*. Yellowknife: Author.

Sport North Federation. (2009). *Strategic Plan 2009-2014*. Yellowknife: Author.

Sport North Federation. (2009, March 10). SRC Evaluation Framework Focus Group. (J. Carey, Interviewer)

The Sutcliff Group Incorporated. (2009, March). *Government of the Northwest Territories: Review of Multi-Sport Games FINAL REPORT - Executive Summary*. Toronto, ON: GNWT.

Terriplan Consultants. (2002). *NWT Recreation and Sport Board Partners' Workshop October 26-27, 2002: Developing the Strategic and Operational Framework of the NWT Recreation and Sport Board Workshop Summary Report*. Yellowknife: Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

Terriplan Consultants. (2003). *NWT Recreation and Sport Board: Final Recommendations Report*. Yellowknife: NWT Recreation and Sport Partners.

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. (2002). *Guidance for Strategic Approach to Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks*. Ottawa: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. (2001). *Guide for the Development of Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks*. Ottawa: Treasury Board Secretariat.

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. (2005). *Preparing and Using Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks*. Ottawa: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.