



AUSTRALIAN TEAM PERFORMANCE REVIEW

SUMMARY REPORT

19 August 2011

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REVIEW CONTEXT, PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Cricket Australia's vision is for cricket to be Australia's Favourite Sport.

To help achieve this, one of CA's strategic pillars is to "Produce the best teams, players and officials in the world". This includes two objectives for the Australian Cricket Team:

- To be the number one ranked team in all game formats
- To be the favourite team in Australian sport

Recent performances by the Team, however, have seen us slide to No.5 in the ICC Test Rankings and convincingly lose the 2010-11 Ashes series to England in Australia.

The CA board commissioned this review of the Team's performance to arrest and reverse this decline.

The primary objective of the Review is to make recommendations to the CA Board that will position the Australian Cricket Team to return to leadership in all three formats of international cricket – Tests, ODIs and Twenty20.

More specifically, the Review Panel was asked to:

- Understand the causes of the Australian Cricket Team's recent performance decline in Test matches, culminating in the 2010-11 Ashes defeat
- Recommend changes required to deliver sustained success, including
 - Restoring Australia as the number one team in Test cricket within four years
 - In the shorter term:
 - Qualifying for the inaugural ICC World Test Championship (2013)
 - Regaining the Ashes that same year
 - Winning the 2015 ICC Cricket World Cup (ODI)
 - Winning the 2012 and 2014 World Twenty20

The scope of the review encompassed all elements of the Australian Cricket Team's operations and, where appropriate, the systems which support it: for example the Centre of Excellence; state competitions; talent identification and development processes etc..

The scope of the review is limited to the men's team and the male High Performance system, however doubtless many of the findings will apply to the Southern Stars and female High Performance system as well.

REVIEW PROCESS

The review commenced in April 2011 and has included:

- Fact-based analysis of team and individual player performance
- Analysis of relevant previous reviews and documentation relating to Team Performance and the High Performance System, including:
 - 2005 Ashes Review
 - 2007 England Cricket Review (Schofield Report)
 - 2008 High Performance Review
 - 2009 Player Pathway Review
 - 2009 Ashes Review
 - 2009 and 2010 “Developing and Keeping Champions” reviews (EI Corporate)
 - 2010 draft National High Performance System Strategic & Structural Review (Gemba)
 - Numerous other documents, such as national and state selection policies, various planning documents, Individual Player Plan templates etc.
- Review of formal written submissions from:
 - Each of Cricket NSW, Cricket Victoria, Queensland Cricket, the WACA, the SACA, Cricket Tasmania, Cricket ACT and NT Cricket
 - The Australian Cricketers’ Association, which in turn surveyed its current and past player members, of whom 84 current and 160 former players responded
- Approximately 60 interviews with key stakeholders inside and outside the High Performance System, including:
 - A selection of Australian players, including the Captains and Vice-Captains
 - A selection of team coaching and other support staff, including the Head Coach
 - Other international or former international coaches
 - Members of the National Selection Panel (NSP), including the Chairman
 - A selection of CA Directors and managers
 - Representatives of the Australian Cricketers’ Association (ACA), including the CEO and President
 - A selection of experts from State Associations, including a mix of CEOs, cricket managers, coaches and players
 - Selected former Australian players
 - Selected leaders with relevant experience from other sports
 - Selected cricket media
- Review of various ad hoc written submissions from interviewees, members of the cricket community and other interested parties, plus relevant media commentary

The review has been conducted by a 5-person panel comprising:

- Don Argus (chair)
- Allan Border
- Malcolm Speed
- Mark Taylor
- Steve Waugh

Cricket Australia CEO James Sutherland participated as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the review group and secretariat functions were performed by the CA Strategy team (Andrew Jones, Sachin Kumar and Katie Craig).

Otherwise the review has been conducted at arm's length from CA and State Associations and all discussions and submissions have been treated as strictly confidential.

An independent review of the cultural aspects of the Team and contracted Australian players has been conducted in parallel by international leadership advisory firm Heidrick & Struggles and a verbal report on their findings will be provided to the Board.

THE FACTS OF OUR PERFORMANCE DECLINE

The process from which these recommendations evolve has been founded on fact-based data and analysis, and has established a need for change.

The decline in performance of the Australian Test team is indisputable:

- Australia has only won 5 of its past 11 series
- This period includes losses to South Africa at home, India away (twice) and the consecutive Ashes losses to England (away and home)
- With the exception of the away win against South Africa in 2008-09, our wins in that period have come against lower-ranked opposition
- This compares starkly with Australia's era of dominance from 1995-2007. In this period, Australia won 35 series, drew 3 and lost only 5
- In the meantime, Australia's ICC Test ranking has slipped from No.1 to No.5

Statistics show that our batting, and particularly our bowling, have declined in the past 4 years. Specifically, we have scored fewer, and conceded significantly more, runs per wicket over the past 4 years than in our era of dominance.

Our top 6 has had the tendency to underperform in key Tests, and our batsmen have failed to dominate key series in the way they did previously, for example in 2006-07.

Our bowling against the leading teams has also been sub-standard, with typically only 1 or 2 bowlers beating a benchmark of 30 runs per wicket. In the past 2 series, against India and England, we have really struggled. Indeed, we have taken 20 wickets only twice in our past 9 Tests.

Currently, we have no batsmen and only 1 bowler (Mitchell Johnson) in the top 10 in the world in Test Cricket.

The overall picture is of a Test team that lacks dominant performances with the bat, and has not found replacement bowlers anywhere near the calibre of McGrath and Warne, or indeed an attack that can take 20 wickets consistently. The ODI team is still ranked No.1 but exited from the 2011 World Cup at the quarter-final stage, our worst result since 1992.

Fielding performance is more difficult to measure statistically (an issue we will return to) but the strong belief of the stakeholders consulted is that our fielding – both ground fielding and catching – has markedly declined.

In developing the recommendations, we have searched for specific causes of the decline of the performance of the Australian Cricket Team. While not exclusive, they do reveal a picture that complements the fact-based data in the report.

In summary, the Australian Cricket Team is a team in transition and one could argue that the transition/succession process has not been as effective as one would expect.

That said, change is constant and difficult to lead. Cricket is not exempt from that phenomenon. Our system was extremely successful for two decades, and we had many all-time greats in the team. Now, however, times have changed, and we must change too.

In high-performance organisations, measurement and accountability are a way of life and all leaders in the organisation must learn to link those measurements to high-performance outcomes. Clear, quantifiable goals are indicators of success and implementation of these is a recurring theme in the recommendations outlined for Cricket Australia – and Australian Cricket.

In saying this, the panel acknowledges that major change has already occurred. Team leadership has changed since the 2010-11 Ashes and 2011 World Cup, with new Test, ODI and T20 Captains in place and also new fielding and bowling coaches. The panel trusts this report helps, rather than hinders, these leaders.

CAUSES OF OUR PERFORMANCE DECLINE

What has caused this decline in performance? And what can we do to reverse it?

In summary the panel believes that the issues are in two categories:

- Issues with the team specifically
- Issues with the High Performance system in general

The major issues with the team have been:

- Poor performances by the leading players
- Poor basic skills generally
- Confusing selections
- Inadequate succession planning
- An ineffective coaching structure (one could conclude that the coaching has been more reactive than proactive)
- Poor team culture
- Lack of accountability for these issues and team performance generally

The major issues with the High Performance system have included:

- Misalignment of goals between CA and States
- Lack of co-ordination between CA and States in the development of players, including:
 - Lack of accountability for skill development
 - Lack of clarity about the role and performance of the Centre of Excellence relative to the role and performance of States
- A sub-optimal incentive structure
- Some issues with:
 - Format and scheduling of the pathway competitions
 - Quality of coaching
 - Our approach to injury management and prevention, especially for fast bowlers
 - Lack of succession planning for players and administrators

To address these issues we must:

1. Take immediate action to improve the team's operations

- 1.1. Implement the right organisational structure for the team and High Performance system generally
- 1.2. Ensure we have the right people in the key roles, especially selections and coaching, and improve performance review of players and administrators
- 1.3. Improve the selection function
- 1.4. Improve players' basic skills
- 1.5. Improve team culture

2. Take longer-term action to align the High Performance system

2.1. Align the goals of CA and States

2.2. Align each element of the agreed High Performance strategy

2.2.1. Increase the strength of supporting competitions

2.2.2. Co-ordinate talent identification and development better, via:

- Improved selection (as above) and talent management processes
- Clearer roles for, and greater accountability of, the Centre of Excellence and States
- An agreed approach to injury management

2.2.3. Improve the quality of coaching at all levels

2.2.4. Align player incentives with desired results

2.3. Develop a succession plan for players and administrators

The rest of the Summary Report sets out the main recommendations under each of these headings plus background to the recommendations where appropriate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE TEAM'S OPERATIONS

1.1. Implement the right organisational structure

Three key issues need to be addressed in the current Team and High Performance structure:

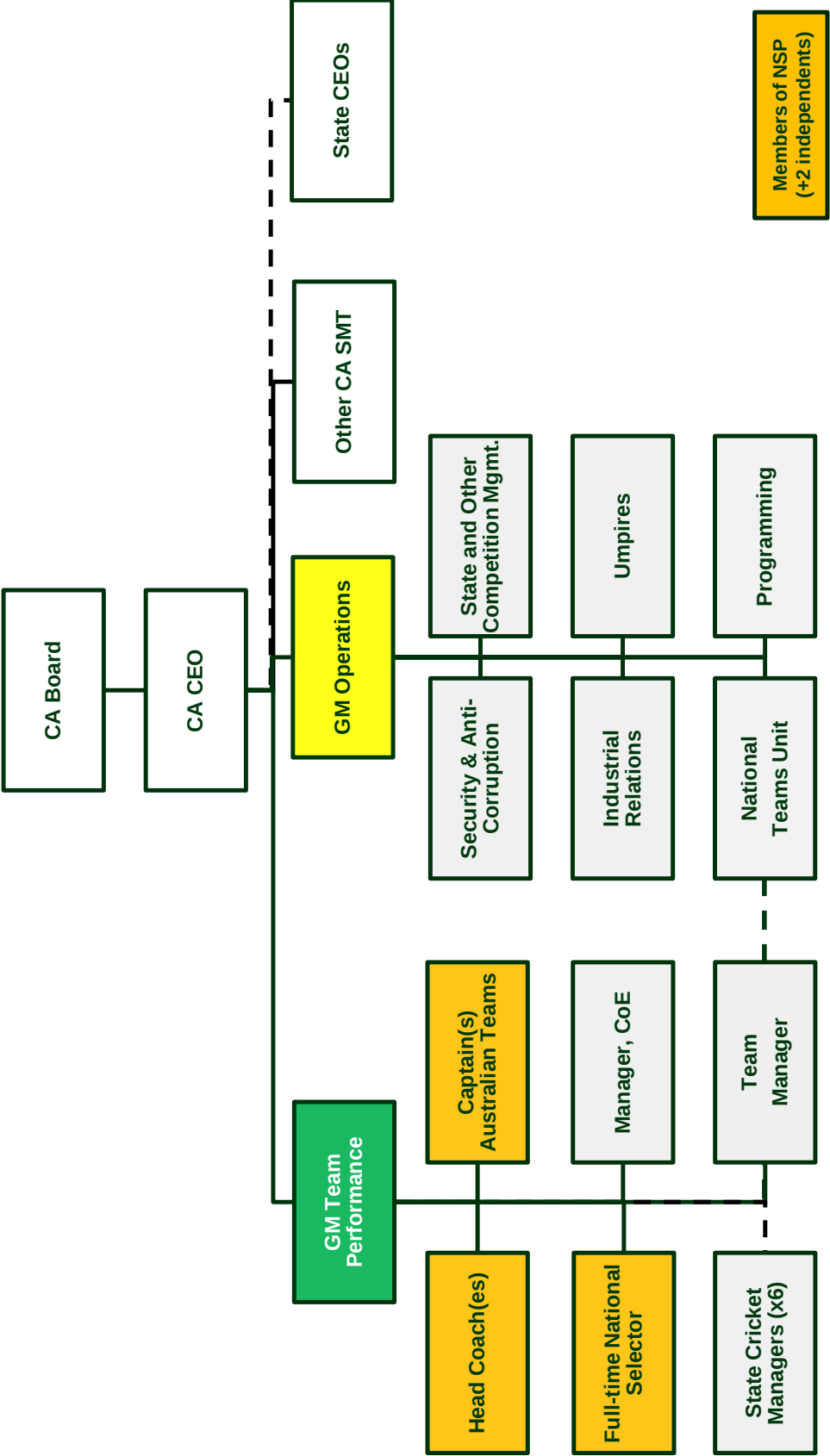
- No one person is currently accountable, or has full authority for, the performance of the Australian Team
- The structure of the National Selection Panel is sub-optimal
- There is a structural disconnection between the Team, COE and States

To address these issues, the panel makes three core structural recommendations:

- Create a single point of accountability within CA for Australian Team Performance. That should be a new role entitled "General Manager, Australian Team Performance"
- Restructure the National Selection Panel to include the Head Coach and Captain. Also make the Chairman of Selectors role full-time. (This role should also be re-titled "National Selector")
- Formally link the States and CA by a system of matrix management, designed to increase accountability and encourage collaboration

The proposed structure is set out on the next 2 pages and explained thereafter.

TEAM PERFORMANCE REVIEW: PROPOSED STRUCTURE FOR ELITE CRICKET FUNCTION AT CA (1/2)



TEAM PERFORMANCE REVIEW: PROPOSED STRUCTURE FOR ELITE CRICKET FUNCTION AT CA (2/2)

What's different?

1) New role of GM Team Performance

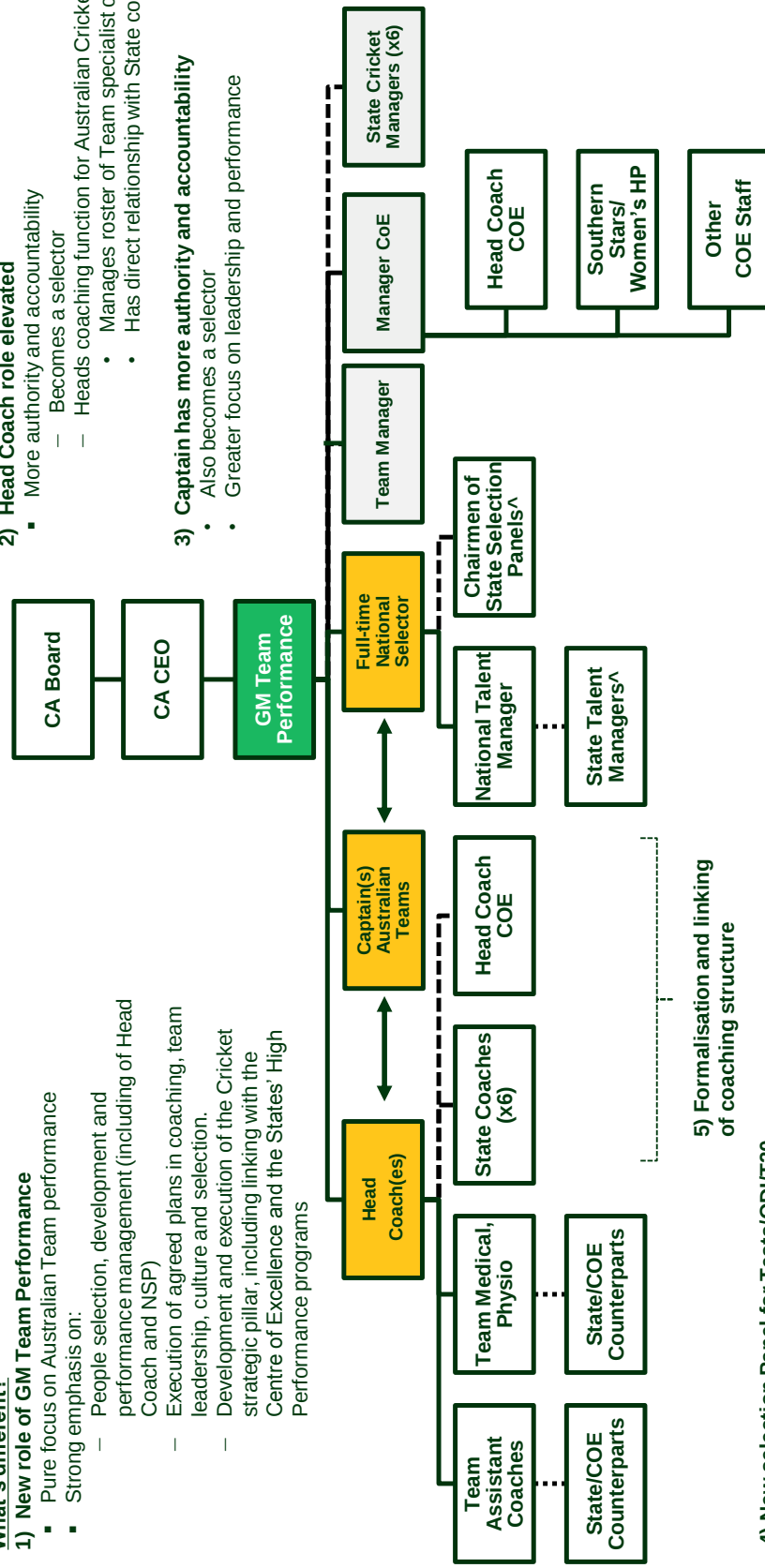
- Pure focus on Australian Team performance
- Strong emphasis on:
 - People selection, development and performance management (including of Head Coach and NSP)
 - Execution of agreed plans in coaching, team leadership, culture and selection.
 - Development and execution of the Cricket strategic pillar, including linking with the Centre of Excellence and the States' High Performance programs

2) Head Coach role elevated

- More authority and accountability
 - Becomes a selector
 - Heads coaching function for Australian Cricket
- Manages roster of Team specialist coaches
- Has direct relationship with State coaches

3) Captain has more authority and accountability

- Also becomes a selector
- Greater focus on leadership and performance



5) Formalisation and linking of coaching structure

4) New selection Panel for Tests/ODI/T20

- NSP includes Captain, Coach, full-time National Selector and 1-2 independents
 - Having Captain and Coach provides greater accountability
 - Having 1-2 independents provides coverage of State cricket and independent thinking
 - Full-time selector has greater responsibility for managing the talent pool (focus on the top 25)
- NSP picks squad; Captain, Coach and Selector-on-duty pick team

6) Matrix management

- Direct link from national to State structures generally
- ^ STMs to chair State Selection Panels where possible

Members of NSP
(+2 independents)

1.1.1. Create a single point of accountability within CA for Australian Team Performance

Creating a single point of accountability is critical. It will be achieved via the new role of “General Manager, Australian Team Performance”.

This role is different to the current GM Cricket role in that it is singularly focused on team performance, rather than the numerous operational responsibilities the GM Cricket must also attend to, for example competition management, umpiring, programming, security, anti-corruption, team logistics, industrial relations, the COE redevelopment, operations budget management etc..

Effectively, we are proposing that the GM Cricket role be split into two:

- The GM Team Performance will (obviously) focus solely on team performance, with accountability increased accordingly¹
- The GM Operations will focus on the operational aspects of Australian elite cricket plus other management responsibilities as capacity allows

The GM Team Performance role will have a strong emphasis on:

- People selection, development and performance management
- Execution of agreed plans in coaching, team leadership, culture and selection
- Development and execution of the elite cricket pillar of CA’s Strategy for Australian Cricket. This includes linking with the Centre of Excellence and the States’ High Performance programs

The Australian Team Head Coach, Captain and Chairman of Selectors would all report into this role. The Team Manager would too. (He would also link to the GM Cricket Operations and National Teams Unit on budget, logistical and other administrative matters).

Other key reports would include the Centre of Excellence Manager and the State Cricket Managers (or equivalent) of the 6 States, via a matrix management approach.

Other key roles

While the GM Team Performance is ultimately accountable for the performance of the team, the Captain, Head Coach and Chairman of Selectors roles remain critical. It is those roles the GM Team Performance will focus their attention on most.

- The Captain’s role remains vital. He takes joint responsibility with the Head Coach for the day-to-day performance of the team.² He remains the leader on-field and among the playing group and is the principal spokesman for the team. He is responsible for working

¹ Of course the CEO and ultimately, the Board, remain accountable too but in a day-to-day sense they devolve this accountability, and corresponding authority, to the GM Team Performance.

² Again, this authority is devolved, in this case by the GM Team Performance.

with the Head Coach to develop the vision and strategy for the team and must set the standard of effort, attitude and performance for his side. He must focus intensely on leadership, performance and developing a winning culture, as discussed in the team culture section.

To ensure appropriate authority and accountability, the Captain also becomes a selector, with exclusions for ranking of the Australian contracted players and discussions around captaincy and/or his own place in the side.

- The Head Coach role must be elevated. He must lead the team's planning, preparation and coaching staff and take joint responsibility with the Captain for the day-to-day performance of the team. With the Captain, he is also responsible for developing the team's vision and strategy and must create a High Performance culture in, and environment for, the side. To ensure appropriate authority and accountability, the Head Coach also becomes a selector.

In addition, the Head Coach must lead the overall coaching strategy and function in Australian Cricket. This includes:

- Working with State Coaches and the Head Coach of the COE to develop strategies to improve coaching and player development across Australian Cricket, including if appropriate articulating a desired style of play
- Formulating personalised plans for key individuals, with emphasis on skills, physiology and psychology
- Rigorous succession planning

The panel also sees merit in the possibility of separating the shorter and longer forms of the game. This will ensure appropriate attention is given to, and planning done for, each Test, ODI and T20 series or tournament. It will ensure assistant coaches have appropriate development opportunities, while keeping the Head Coach role manageable and the incumbent fresh.

Consideration should therefore be given in the future to:

- Delegating selected ODIs and/or ODI series to an assistant coach; and/or
- Appointing a separate Coach for T20

Both initiatives would assist with coaching succession.

- The Chairman of Selectors – to be re-named the “National Selector” – is akin to the “HR Manager” of the Australian Team, with critical responsibility for
 - Selection of national teams, COE squads and contracted players as currently (in conjunction with the National Selection Panel)
 - Performance management of the top echelon of players in Australian Cricket. This includes:
 - Communication of selection policy and strategy

- Evaluation of, and communication with, individual players³
- Co-ordination of player development plans (skills, psychology and physiology)
- Succession planning

To fulfil this role optimally, the panel believes it must be done on a full-time basis.

³ This is a responsibility of the Head Coach as well, however in practice communicating frequently with players outside the current squad is difficult for the Head Coach when the team is touring and playing.

1.1.2. Restructure the National Selection Panel

As is clear from the foregoing, the panel recommends a change to the composition of the National Selection Panel to increase the authority and accountability of the coach and Captain.

- The NSP for Tests/ODIs/T20 should consist of:
 - A full-time National Selector (who will chair the panel and retains a casting vote)
 - The Test/ODI/T20 Captain as appropriate
 - The Head Coach
 - 2 independent, part-time selectors, who:
 - Provide coverage of all formats of State Cricket (and BBL as required)
 - Preserve the independence of the NSP
 - Potentially should also each have a specific area of expertise/influence (i.e. Test/ODI/T20)
- The NSP would be responsible for picking the squad for a match or tour, with the Captain, Coach and Selector-on-duty picking the day's team
- The NSP should be appointed by the CEO and GM Team Performance and confirmed by the Board. The NSP would then report to the GM Australian Team Performance
 - The GM Team Performance would be responsible for “curating” the panel
 - Ideally members should have the appropriate mix of skills and experience, including a mix of batting and bowling expertise
 - However the overriding objective is to get the best people
 - The GM Team Performance would also be empowered to evaluate the performance of the panel and the individuals on it
- Ideally NSP members would also be free from potential or perceived conflicts, for example professional or Board roles in State Associations. However, the first priority is to get the best people for the job
 - Perceived conflicts of interest were raised as an issue by some stakeholders, and the panel agrees that they should be minimised where possible
 - However, there was no evidence these had influenced any selection decisions, hence the focus must be on getting the best selectors available
- As mentioned above we would also change the title of the Chairman of Selectors to “National Selector”, or similar, to ensure that the position does not appear to be superior to the Head Coach and Captain in the hierarchy
- We have also recommended separating the national selection and national talent management functions to ensure greater focus in both areas (national selection being focused on the short-medium term, and national talent management being focused on the medium-long term). The National Talent Manager will therefore report to the National Selector and focus full-time on that role rather than divide their time between talent management and selection

1.1.3. Link the States and CA formally by a system of matrix management

The success of the Australian Cricket Team is not just critical to the health of Cricket Australia. It is critical to the health of all Australian Cricket, including State Associations:

- It is the Australian Team that fans watch and care about the most. For example, 7.9 million viewers tuned in to the 2010-11 Ashes at some stage
- Consequently it is the Australian Team that underwrites the appeal and financial health of the sport

The team's success in turn depends upon the efforts of multiple organisations, including Cricket Australia and States. Historically the federation of competing States has provided Australian Cricket a competitive edge, and it will continue to, but we need an operating model for the federation that works in a changing environment. In the panel's view, the operating model to deliver the High Performance strategy requires closer alignment of States with CA. Co-ordination of our efforts should not be left to chance.

Therefore, as shown in the proposed organisation structure, State and COE coaching and other staff should be directly linked to their national counterparts via matrix management. This is designed to increase accountability and encourage collaboration.

To avoid ambiguity or doubt, matrix management is a methodology that high-performance organisations master to achieve collaborative outcomes and it is recommended that Cricket Australia should embrace these principles to ensure the strategy and operational plans are delivered in a consistent and coherent manner.

The panel notes that matrix management has already been applied with success, for example to:

- National Talent Management, via the State Talent Manager system
- Rehabilitation of CA-contracted and COE players, via the Case Manager at the COE

The panel recommends extending this philosophy to all other areas of High Performance (and, as appropriate, beyond) including the coaching, strength and conditioning, medical and operations areas.

In the panel's view, this concept should also extend to the Cricket Australia and State CEOs, i.e. the link between CA and States via their CEOs should be formalised via matrix management. The panel is aware that States are separate bodies, legally and historically, but if States and CA don't collaborate at all levels, the strategy for Australian Cricket – including the High Performance strategy – will not be delivered.

1.2. Ensure we have the right people in key roles

It is imperative we have the right people in key roles, especially the GM Team Performance, coaching and selections. We must also improve the performance review of players and administrators.

The panel recommends that:

- The appointment process for the new GM Team Performance start immediately. This process should be conducted with the assistance of an independent recruiter with the final decision to be made by the CA CEO and confirmed by the Board
- Key positions be reviewed with immediate effect. In the short-term applicants should be sought for the positions of Head Coach (which will be an upgraded role encompassing selections and the national coaching function) and selectors (including the new full-time National Selector role). The effect of this is that these positions will be declared to be open and a wide-ranging search will be carried out to seek the best persons for these positions. These key appointments will be made by the CA CEO and the new GM Team Performance and confirmed by the Board
- Ideally these appointments would be in place in time for the upcoming South Africa series, but in any event, no later than the start of the home summer. In each case, incumbents are entitled, and welcome, to apply
- As a key part of their ongoing role, the GM Team Performance will evaluate all personnel in the team structure, and ensure:
 - The right people are in every role
 - Contracts are structured appropriately, with appropriate KPIs, remuneration and incentives aligned to both the specific role and the overall performance of the team
 - There is appropriate accountability and performance
- This extends to other key roles in the elite cricket department, including in the Talent Management network, State Coaching structures and at the COE

1.3. Improve the selection function

There was significant negative feedback from numerous stakeholders about our selection function. The evidence also shows that we have not handled succession planning well.

The panel has already proposed restructuring the selection panel, and opening all positions on it, to enforce and increase accountability for team performance.

The panel has also recommended that the National Selector become a full-time role, and function as the “HR Manager” of Australian Cricket, managing our top talent more actively than we are at present – in particular by communicating proactively with those with the potential to play for Australia, whether they are currently in or out of the team.

As part of this role, it is critical that the National Selector, in consultation with the Captain and Coach, clarify and communicate the NSP’s strategy and selection criteria.

From the panel’s perspective:

- It is critical that superior performance is rewarded at all levels. Players must earn their positions in the time-honoured way of making runs, taking wickets and showing that they are ready to play at the next level
- At the same time, potential cannot be overlooked: there must be room for some intuition in selections
- Players must be held accountable when they are not performing. This has been an issue in recent years
- Development plans regarding skill, physiology and psychology are critical, and will allow more mature conversations to take place with individuals

In short, the NSP must adopt best-practice principles for organisations of all kinds. Players across Australian Cricket, like people in any business or sport:

- Need to know what is required to get to the next level
- Must direct their efforts accordingly
- Must be acknowledged and rewarded if they perform at the level required
- Must be held accountable if they don’t
- Must be given appropriate feedback along the way, including encouragement, acknowledgement of their strengths and full and frank assessments of what they need to improve

This is not the case at present across Australian Cricket, or at least not to the desired level.

1.4. Improve the Australian Team's skills

The evidence from the Ashes and other recent series is that our basic cricket skills are lacking in key areas, in particular:

- For batting
 - Batting for long periods
 - Batting against the moving ball
 - Our approach to playing spin
 - General batting technique in some instances
- For bowling
 - Building pressure
 - Bowling to an agreed plan
 - Spin bowling and captaincy of spin bowling
 - Swing bowling, including generating reverse swing
- For fielding
 - Overall fielding, especially catching
 - General athleticism
 - This has extra significance as in the panel's view fielding standards reflect the attitude and professionalism of the team
- For our overall approach:
 - Building batting and bowling partnerships
 - General game sense/match awareness and cricket expertise, including the ability to problem-solve during the course of a match

These shortcomings clearly exist at Australian level. They must also exist at State level because that is where the Australian players are developed.

The panel is not in a position to make recommendations to remedy each of these skill gaps specifically. Instead, the Australian Head Coach, in collaboration with the State Coaches and the COE coaching staff, should urgently complete a coaching strategy and blueprint to remedy the inadequacies revealed in the consultation. Best practice transfer is not embedded in the culture of Australian Cricket, and it must be embraced urgently. The new matrix management approach will assist this.

Of course, players must also take accountability for their own performance. If our team is to be the best in the world, our players must aspire to be the best in the world and do the work necessary to achieve this.

For catching and fielding specifically, the panel recommends introducing explicit measurement of catching and fielding efficiency for all first-class and international players and teams. These should also feed in to player rankings/performance incentives.

One simple measure would be catches taken as a percentage of chances created. Chances could be weighted by difficulty if required. The same could be done for run outs. Measures of this nature have been standard practice in baseball and other sports for decades and should become standard in Australian Cricket.

1.5. Improve the Australian Team's culture

Another theme to emerge from the interviews was the lack of a strong culture in the current Australian team.

There was also negative commentary about the broader culture in Australian cricket. The attitudes reported are quite different to those needed to be successful at elite level.

Remedying these issues is clearly critical, and requires immediate and concerted effort. To do so:

- The team's leaders need to be made aware of the situation and their roles in creating it. A 360-degree feedback process is needed, followed by "adult conversations" with each individual spelling out how they are perceived and, where necessary, agreeing required changes to behaviour as part of an overall development plan (skills, physiology and psychology)
- Senior players including the Captain and Vice-Captain should receive mentoring by an external professional at least every 6 months and at least for the first 2 years of their tenure. The Captain should also actively seek and use the counsel of his Vice-Captain, which is an important role and should be more clearly defined
- Armed with this awareness, senior players and staff must lead by example. They must perform strongly on the field but also role model the desired behaviours and enlist the other opinion-shapers in the group to do the same. They must also increase the level of trust and honesty within the group
- The team's leaders must also set a clear direction for the side. Potentially this has been done at the recent Players' Camp, but if not, it needs to be. This includes:
 - Setting out what the leaders are trying to achieve
 - Setting out how to do so, including articulating clear roles and expectations for each of the players and staff in the group
 - There also needs to be a formal induction process to the side, as recommended in an earlier review by EI Corporate
- To reinforce this direction, the selectors, including the Captain and Head Coach, must ensure the right people are in the team in terms of skills, attitude and character
 - This should be communicated as part of the explicit selection strategy
- The Captain and Head Coach must also ensure the team is learning, quickly and actively
 - A culture of improvement and learning is critical to any high-performing organisation
 - It is particularly important for the Australian Team now (and High Performance system more generally) as there are few if any players in total command of their games. This mastery needs to be built as actively and quickly as possible.
 - What we want to see is a hunger to play, a hunger to improve, a hunger to win and a hunger to be the best in the world

- This means creating and using learning opportunities for each individual and the team as a whole, inside and outside match situations. Spending more time talking about cricket after the day's play was an example suggested often, but there will be many others
- The desired attitudes and behaviours must be reinforced with formal mechanisms, for example:
 - Appropriate performance metrics, targets and review processes, including:
 - Clearly communicated benchmarks for performance. These may vary by player depending on their experience level
 - In-depth individual reviews at a minimum every 6 months and, for some players, more frequently. These reviews should cover skills, psychology and physiology and, where necessary (e.g. for psychological/leadership issues), be conducted by a highly skilled independent professional. These reviews should be development-orientated and include “adult conversations” as required
 - There should also be facilitated reviews of the team's performance after every series with independent experts used as required
 - Appropriate rewards, recognition and consequences, including:
 - Selection and de-selection as appropriate, and in line with performance
 - Aligned financial incentives
 - The MOU should be restructured to reinforce these standards.
 - How this might be done is discussed later in more detail.

The GM Team Performance and the Head Coach then have the responsibility for communicating these objectives, strategies and desired attitudes and behaviours throughout Australian Cricket.

Again, the matrix management structure proposed facilitates open collaborative discussion to achieve the desired outcomes.

2. LONGER-TERM ACTIONS TO ALIGN THE HIGH PERFORMANCE SYSTEM

As well as addressing immediate issues relating to the team's operations, we need to take action to ensure sustained success in future. We must ensure our High Performance system is fully aligned and managed for maximum performance.

In particular we need to:

- Align the goals of CA and States
- Align each element of the agreed High Performance strategy:
 - Increase the strength of supporting competitions
 - Co-ordinate talent identification and development better, via:
 - Improved selection and talent management processes
 - Clearer roles for, and greater accountability of, the Centre of Excellence and States
 - An agreed approach to injury management, especially for fast bowlers
 - Improve the quality of coaching at all levels
 - Align player incentives with desired results
 - Develop a succession plan for players and administrators

2.1. Align the goals of CA and States

The panel believes CA's goals – as set out in the draft Strategy for Australian Cricket – are sound. They must be acknowledged, adopted and constantly reinforced across Australian Cricket, including by all States, teams and contracted players. Furthermore:

- Producing Australian players should be subject to an explicit KPI for each State Coach, Selector, Cricket Manager and High Performance staff member
- Each State Association should target producing Australian players at least in proportion to their State population
- States' performance should be audited and supported by a financial reward, for example an incentive system whereby States are rewarded for each first-class and Australian player they produce
- CA and States should ensure that the financial incentives for playing longer-form cricket, especially four-day and Test Cricket remain attractive to both players and States. For example, by:
 - Ensuring that Test (and to a lesser extent ODI) players are comfortably the best-paid players in Australian Cricket. Players must be paid a premium to play Tests. They should also be paid a premium if they make significant progress towards regaining Australia's position as No.1 in the world in Tests
 - Ensuring that the balance between payments to State (Shield and Ryobi Cup) and BBL players is appropriate. Again, Shield matches should attract a premium
 - Ensuring that prize money for CLT20 does not distort incentives for players and States
 - For example, CLT20 prize money accruing to individual States (via their teams) could be capped and the balance pooled or allocated to prize money for the Sheffield Shield
 - Similarly, prize money accruing to players could be pooled or allocated to the performance-based remuneration proposed later in this report

Regarding incentives across formats, the panel is concerned that the introduction of separate structures and in particular, separate owners, for Big Bash League teams may create problems in future.

Put simply, private owners will not have the same objectives as CA, so introducing them to the Australian cricket system risks compromising the achievement of CA's goals. For example, private owners have a strong incentive to expand the Big Bash regardless of its impact on international or State Cricket. This may compromise our goal of being No.1 in Test Cricket.

To alleviate this risk it is critical that CA:

- Maintains control of scheduling
- Maintains control of player payments and the allocation between formats

The risks from private ownership must also be fully assessed.

In addition to performance incentives, match scheduling must continue to support the production of long-form players. This issue is addressed in more detail in the section on supporting competitions.

2.2. Align each element of the agreed High Performance strategy

2.2.1. Increase the strength of our supporting competitions

The panel believes that, overall, our pathway structure is sound. It has been the lack of co-ordination and accountability for player development in that pathway – plus issues with attitude, culture, leadership and succession planning – that have been the more important causes of our performance decline.

That said, the panel agrees that the pathway should be modified in view of the constructive comments we have received.

In doing so, the panel acknowledges the strategic importance of T20 for attracting new fans to cricket and the scheduling challenges presented by the resulting expansion of the Big Bash League and the presence of Champions League T20 in September/October.

At the same time, the panel notes international cricket, and Test Cricket in particular, remains the highest priority. CA will therefore need to be creative about its domestic scheduling, with the balance of BBL fixtures – which attract new fans – and first-class fixtures – which develop players for international cricket – to be carefully managed.

The panel recommends that we structure the first-class program with attention to the following scheduling imperatives:

- We should retain a 10-round Sheffield Shield competition
 - There should be multiple Shield rounds leading into the First Test each year
 - We should also retain the Shield final if possible, particularly if sides are at full strength. This needs to be examined on a season-by-season basis depending on the prevailing schedules
- Subject to this, the Big Bash League can be scheduled to maximise fan interest, e.g. over December/January
 - Where long-form cricket is required in this period, it can be achieved via Grade cricket, 2nd XI fixtures and/or Australia A
- CA should retain the discretion to direct Players of National Interest (PONI) to play one format or another.
 - For example, the panel has no objection to PONI being taken out of Shield matches to play Australia A: this will test the depth of the Shield
- We should do more to use players' time effectively throughout the year
 - State players are contracted for 12 months (including 6 weeks of annual leave) but play in Australia for only half that period. In the panel's view they are under-utilised
 - Their schedules are also much lighter than players in international cricket, which arguably does not prepare them adequately for the step up

- For example, consideration should be given to:
 - Scheduling 1-2 Sheffield Shield rounds in what is now the off-season (1-2 Sheffield Shield rounds prior to touring could also provide solid preparation for the 2013 Ashes campaign)
 - Holding some or all of the Ryobi Cup as an off-season carnival, based perhaps at the COE and/or northern Australia
 - Reducing the rest periods between games so that Shield matches, for example, can be played on a slightly shorter cycle. Even if this means that fast bowlers need to be rested periodically, in general batsmen and spinners should benefit from the regularity and volume of cricket
 - These cases should of course be managed individually.
 - However other sports, such as baseball, have different splits between roles of different intensity.
- Note that the panel is also generally less concerned about reductions in the volume and/or timing of the Ryobi Cup, given the greater importance of Test Cricket and the opportunity to develop 50-over players via Australia A and the 100+ ODIs played between World Cups
- We should also ramp up Australia A and use it as a genuine national 2nd XI
 - Continue to strengthen the program in the off-season to create as much international exposure as possible, i.e. playing against international sides and playing in different conditions
 - There may be some in-season play as well (e.g. against England Lions in 2012-13)

Regarding the levels that feed in to first-class cricket, we should:

- Review the structure and parameters of the Futures League/2nd XI competitions
 - The panel understands that the Futures League was designed to fill a perceived gap in the pathway for players aged 19-23 (i.e. between U19s and State/State 2nd XI cricket)
 - Last season Futures League was therefore a 6 round competition with 3-day games, and permitted teams only 3 players of 23 years of age or over. 2nd XI matches occurred on an ad hoc basis.
 - However feedback about the Futures League age restrictions was very strongly negative, both in relation to the standard of the competition and its effect on Grade cricket
 - The panel's preference, therefore, is that the Futures League revert to a 2nd XI competition
 - However, given that new "6+6" restrictions have been announced for the 2011-12 season, we recommend "6+6" be trialled this year and the Head Coach and/or GM Team Performance make a call on the format for 2012-13
 - Futures League should also ideally be a 4-day competition as long as participants are still able to play club cricket (the panel understands that workload issues may need to be managed on a case-by-case basis)
 - The panel acknowledges that this approach has been taken for the 2011-12 season

- However, if Futures League is interfering unduly with club cricket, consideration should be given to playing 3 longer days (e.g. 105 overs), to replicate 4-day cricket more closely and also encourage the use of spin bowling
- Consideration should also be given to splitting the competition into two groups of 4 and adding a composite team from the COE/NT/States
 - This would allow a reduction in the number of games (if desirable) and assist in alleviating the imbalance of talent discussed below
 - Again, the panel acknowledges that the competition will consist of 4 games rather than 6 for the 2011-12 season
- Recognise Grade cricket as a vital part of the pathway system and do everything possible to keep it strong
 - In particular, take steps to retain outstanding senior players in Grade cricket, for example:
 - Establishing whether, and researching why, senior players seem to be departing the game younger than previously (this will require survey of former players, not just current players, as current players inherently accept the prevailing conditions of the competition)
 - Limiting hours/volume of play as appropriate and/or scheduling Grade cricket to suit social and community changes
 - Possibly offering small financial incentives, for example to former first-class players with coaching accreditation, via the Player Payment Pool (PPP)
 - Developing appropriate policies regarding player payments in sub-district competitions
 - Also reinforce that State players are not exempt from Grade cricket and should play as often as possible
 - A “graduation” mentality among players – i.e. a belief that once they have played at a higher level, they are no longer obliged to play, or were above, the previous level they played – is unacceptable.
 - Also ensure facilities and coaching are of as high a standard as possible
- Review the composition and structure of the national under-age competitions (e.g. U17s and U19s) to ensure:
 - Sufficient long-form cricket is being played
 - Currently there are 3 x 2-day matches, 2 x 50 over matches and 2 x T20 matches, to give players exposure to all formats
 - Our preference would be to change the mix back to be mainly long-format, with T20 introduced via club cricket and the “Baby Bash”
 - Sufficient opportunity is being given to players from the most populous States (and where appropriate, specialist players from smaller States), as discussed below

The panel also believes that Australian Cricket must consider innovative ways of dealing with the geographical imbalance of talent resulting from the widely varying populations of States.

Consideration should be given to:

- A loan system at first-class level, perhaps managed by the National Talent Manager
- Mechanisms to encourage States to export underutilised talent, for example:
 - State Talent Managers being required to recommend players for transfer at the end of the season where it is unlikely they will be selected by their current State
 - Financial incentives for States for each first-class player they produce, regardless of whether the player plays for that State
- Inclusion of a further team or teams in pathway competitions (and/or more flexible use of the ACT, NT and composite COE sides at age level) to ensure the best players in the country are getting an opportunity

Pitches

There was a significant amount of unfavourable commentary in our interviews about the pitches at Shield level in 2010-11. This may be a one-off issue.

There is merit, however, in reviewing our first-class pitch strategy on a national basis. Key principles should include:

- Each pitch should offer a good balance between bat and ball. The toss should not be decisive
- Each pitch/State should be unique, depending on local soil, history and climatic conditions. For example the WACA should be bouncy, the Gabba assist fast bowlers early on etc. This allows Shield players to develop their skills in different conditions
- Each pitch should offer conditions similar to conditions found at Test level in Australia or elsewhere in the world

2.2.2. Improve the co-ordination of talent identification and development

2.2.2.1. Improve selection and talent management processes

As discussed in earlier sections, we need to manage our talent pool more actively and transparently. Key actions suggested include:

- Restructuring the National Selection Panel
- Clarifying the national selection strategy and criteria
- Increasing the proactivity of our communication to players, especially Players of National Interest, and managing their development against agreed individual plans for skills, physiology and psychology
- Considering a loan system and other mechanisms to address the natural geographic imbalance of talent

Consideration should also be given to seconding players to the English County leagues and potentially other countries to prepare our players for differing conditions and to assist in developing appropriate skills.

The panel also acknowledges the recent initiatives in this area, including the creation of the national talent management system and the recent implementation of Individual Player Plans co-ordinated by the COE.

2.2.2.2. Clarify the roles, and increase the accountability, of the Centre of Excellence and States

The COE was a recurring topic in stakeholder interviews and submissions, with mixed views expressed on its role and performance.

Unsurprisingly, the concerns go the other way as well. Some COE and National Coaching staff (as well as some Australian players) feel that several State programs are inadequate for preparing players for international cricket, for example, in relation to players' physical conditioning and fielding.

To address these issues:

- We need to commit to a clear role for the Centre of Excellence with an agreed plan set in a collaborative manner with the Head Coach, State Coaches and COE coaches
- We need to make sure the quality of the COE programs – including the quality of coaches – is outstanding
- We must ensure there is mutual accountability between the COE and States
 - States to COE for development of players and meeting national standards
 - COE to States for delivery of a high-quality experience
- This must occur within an environment of co-operation, remembering our overarching goal to be No.1 in the world

The panel agrees that the COE's role is to manage and support the development of Players of National Interest. The logic for this is straightforward:

- The national team is the main source of fan interest and income for the game
- CA is the body ultimately accountable for the national team's performance
- Therefore CA, via the Australian Team staff and the COE, is entitled to take responsibility for managing the development of current national team players and those who may play for the national team in future – that is, Players of National Interest⁴

This is akin to a major corporation taking responsibility for succession planning and talent management of its top echelon of managers, but deploying those managers on sites and in roles all over the business.

However, because the COE has direct access to PONI who are State players only 4 months of the year, while States have them for 6, management of PONI in practice requires collaboration between CA and States.

We would therefore like to see closer collaboration between the COE and States, for example the COE hosting State squads for pre-season matches – and the schedule should

⁴ To be clear, PONI include current CA contracted players, selected State players, COE scholars and potentially even some even exceptional younger players. The unifying criterion is players who are playing, or may well play, for Australia. Players will move in and out of this category depending on their perceived potential, observed rate of development and attitude, and actual level of performance.

reflect this. The COE can be better utilised by the State bodies as part of an agreed national plan.

The COE's role as development manager for Players of National Interest has several other implications:

- CA, via the Head Coach of the Australian Team and the COE, has ultimate accountability, hence the authority to develop a plan for each PONI that unleashes their individual potential (i.e. Individual Player Plans). This includes skills, physiology and psychology
- This authority includes the right to make the call on whether PONI should go to the COE (obviously subject to the player's consent)
- However this right comes with a corresponding obligation: to make the experience an outstanding one
 - We therefore need to ensure the COE staff has, and has access to, the appropriate skills. This includes past Test players with appropriate accreditation on a consulting basis (this is discussed further in the Coaching section)
 - We must also ensure the COE is providing an outstanding experience by evaluating its performance based on agreed qualitative and quantitative measures
- To the extent States take responsibility for PONI at different times they must assume accountability to CA for their work with those players (this issue was also discussed in the Structure section)
- To co-ordinate the activities of the COE and States we should continue to:
 - Use Individual Player Plans, developed collaboratively for PONI by Australian Team staff, COE staff and States
 - Define, refine and enforce appropriate National Standards for key aspects of the game
- States retain full responsibility for identifying and developing their other contracted and pathway players (i.e. players who are not, or not yet, PONI) according to agreed National Standards and other best-practice player development principles

2.2.2.3. Improve our approach to injury management

Numerous stakeholders – including medical, physio and strength & conditioning staff – fear that we have pursued the wrong approach to injury management, in particular to managing the injury risk to fast bowlers.

- Evidence suggests that the rate of injury has not increased, but the seriousness has, resulting in a net decrease in the availability of fast bowlers at first-class level
- Many stakeholders feel that our generally conservative approach to “workload management” for young fast bowlers has compromised both skill development and their ability to build bowling fitness to the degree required at first-class and international level
- Many also acknowledge that we don’t have definitive data either way, but most feel “something must be done”

Clearly this issue needs to be sorted out quickly. While the panel does not have the medical expertise to make definitive recommendations, we make the following comments:

- Feedback suggests that fast bowling injuries are and have been caused by a combination of factors:
 - Absolute match schedule and workload
 - Changes in workload and intensity (e.g. shifting between from T20 to Shield)
 - Intrinsic factors such as age, bone density and skeletal strength
 - Bowling action
 - Lower proportion of overs being bowled by spinners
- The ‘gut feel’ of most of the fast bowlers we spoke to, and others, was that:
 - Fast bowlers should be screened for the intrinsics above
 - Workloads should be graded accordingly, with a bias to building players up over time through regular bowling (plus core strength work etc.) at higher levels than currently
 - Workload management should be focused as much on changes in workload than absolute volumes
- Medical professionals in Australian Cricket have also previously recommended:
 - Allowing a substitute player in Shield matches
 - Adopting a “squad” mentality to fast bowlers at State and international level

The relevant staff – Sports Science and Sports Medicine professionals, plus Coaching staff – must review the current position and set a clear direction in this area.

Regarding Sports Science and Sports Medicine generally, when compared to other professional sports it is not clear whether we are adopting best practice. We have already discussed the need to co-ordinate the various physiological disciplines (strength and conditioning, physiotherapy, medical etc.) nationally via matrix management. All supporting functions should also be able to articulate best practice and introduce it into the cricket model if appropriate.

2.2.3. Improve the national coaching system

It is critical for the development of elite players' skills, physiology and psychology that they have the right coaches available to assist them. The panel queries whether we do, given the performance decline of the team in the past 4 years.

Stakeholders generally agreed that we need to increase the quality of coaching at all levels, but expressed concern that we don't have a strategy to do so. In particular, we need to:

- Clarify of the role of the coach and our coaching philosophy
- Review the coaching curriculum and accreditation process to ensure appropriate standards are in place
- Make better use of former international players, with appropriate coaching qualifications and experience, to mentor elite players
- Develop, publish and manage a clear coaching pathway from under-age teams to national team level

The panel recommends:

- That the role of the coach and coaching philosophy be resolved by the Australian Head Coach in collaboration with the State Coaches, COE Head Coach and National Talent Manager – effectively, as one stakeholder put it, a National Technical Committee
- Development and publication of a national elite cricket curriculum
- Implementing a proper evaluation of coaches at elite and pathway levels, to assist in maintaining standards and allow adequate succession planning
 - Improved performance management of players and their skills will help in the assessment of coaches: measuring a group of players' improvement (or otherwise) is a good proxy for measuring a coach's value-added
- Developing, publicising and managing a genuine national coaching pathway, again accompanied by a robust system for assessing, deploying and retaining top coaching talent, with rigorous accreditation standards
 - This may include an accelerated pathway for former players, much as is done with umpiring
- Specifically increasing the involvement of past players in coaching and mentoring roles.
 - To the extent extra funds are made available to do this, players must have appropriate qualifications and experience to ensure this money is spent wisely

2.2.4. Align our incentive systems, including the MOU

The panel has real concerns, shared by many stakeholders, that the MOU is not fully aligned with the current needs of Australian Cricket. In particular it rewards relative performance among CA-contracted players, but not absolute performance of the team and its players against international peers.

The result is that today's players are being paid substantially more in real terms than their counterparts in the dominant teams of recent times, despite far inferior results.

A number of stakeholders have suggested that this is negatively affecting the culture of Australian Cricket, in that players can make a very comfortable living without necessarily achieving excellence. Indeed more than one stakeholder described the emergence of an old-style "county cricket mentality" in pockets of Australian cricket.

The panel therefore strongly believes that the MOU needs to be adjusted to give greater emphasis on performance. This will be a separate project of itself but the key principles should include:

- Tying players' pay to absolute performance
 - Players' base pay should generally be reviewed, and standardised for each format with a premium for Tests
 - Additional payments should then be made via
 - Match payments
 - Team performance payments, to be based on match wins, series wins and the team's world ranking in the relevant format (Test, ODI, T20)
 - Individual performance payments, for example to be based on individual world ranking in the relevant format
 - This means Australian players will be paid more when the team is (and they are) performing well and less when it isn't (and they aren't). They will also receive a direct benefit for achieving a high world ranking
 - Again, there should be a premium for Tests
 - There should also be an extra payment for team leaders (as there is currently)
 - Similarly State players should be paid more when they and their teams perform and less when they don't
 - This will enhance the competitiveness at Shield level: at the moment there is too much money being paid to players just for being selected and turning up to play
- Moving away from a fixed share of revenue going into the PPP if required, although to be clear the panel does not wish to deny players appropriate reward for excellence
 - Instead, a range should be adopted based on the level of performance and benchmarked appropriately to other sports

These principles are standard in the corporate world and should be applied to Australian Cricket at the earliest opportunity.

The panel also recommends:

- A review of the number of CA contracts. Our view is that in the current environment there should be fewer
- Creating new funding pools and/or contract categories for:
 - Players of National Interest (paid by, and accountable to CA)
 - Scholarships and programs for promising juniors (to help manage the threat from other sports)
- There may also be scope to use the PPP to fund coaching and mentoring by former players (as outlined above)
- Reviewing the injury payments system so it does not create perverse incentives and/or overly generous payments (e.g. it could employ a sliding scale)

2.3. Develop a succession plan for players and administrators

As stated earlier, succession planning has been an issue at team level. The panel believes a much more active, accountable and specific approach to talent management and succession planning is required. This revolves around:

- Clear development plans for each player (skills, physiology, psychology)
- Clear responsibility for implementing those plans across CA (including the COE), State staff and the player himself
- Accountability for implementing those plans, via:
 - A system of matrix management with the GM Team Performance at the top
 - An incentive system which rewards team and individual performance

These principles apply equally to coaches, functional specialists, administrators and other staff across Australian Cricket.

- Again, measurement and accountability must become a way of life
- It follows that opportunities must be created for top performers in every discipline as part of a robust process of succession planning

ACTION PLANS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

Should the Board decide to adopt the panel's recommendations, then clearly each recommendation must be incorporated into an action plan, with clear accountability for delivery.

In the short-term, the most critical actions are to:

- Initiate recruitment of the GM Team Performance
- Initiate recruitment/selection of:
 - Head Coach
 - National Selector
 - 2 Independent Selectors

We recommend the Board authorise these actions immediately.

For the balance of the recommendations, CA management must develop a clear implementation plan, with explicit timelines and accountabilities, as quickly as possible.

INDICATIVE COSTINGS

The panel has not attempted to cost its recommendations. Undoubtedly some will require additional investment, for example the GM Team Performance role, and there may be trade-offs to be made. However some initiatives will come from existing funds, while others, for example the shift towards performance-based pay, may free up some funds in the short-term. Still others, such as the introduction of a matrix management approach, should require no extra investment, merely changes to management processes and mindsets, and should result in considerably increased co-ordination and productivity.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the performance of the Australian team has declined significantly. The statistics show that this is more than a one-off event: the decline has been evident since 2008. While the retirement of great players clearly had an effect, many other issues have impeded our transition to a new era of success. These include issues with the team specifically, and issues with the High Performance system in general.

These issues must be addressed with vigour and purpose to restore the reputation of Australian Cricket, drive growth in fans and participants, and allow continued reinvestment in the game. In short, they must be addressed to ensure cricket is Australia's Favourite Sport.

On the positive side, the panel strongly believes that there is abundant talent in Australian Cricket, and we will be successful if we harness it properly. This will require a concerted effort by each individual player, by the team's leaders and by every person involved in the High Performance system in Australian Cricket.

Simply put, we need to re-dedicate ourselves to the task of being the best in the world, put the best possible people in charge, give them the authority necessary to make decisions, allow them to hold people accountable for their performance, and align everyone's goals and

incentives to those of the Australian team.

Of course, those assuming this responsibility must also be held accountable themselves. The Board has a unique opportunity to lead this transition.

In closing, the panel would like to thank all those who have contributed to the review. We would also like to thank the Board for the opportunity to be involved in such an important project for Australian Cricket. We look forward to seeing the team return to the top as quickly as possible.