



SOFTBALL

National Participation Report 2012 - 2013

INTRODUCTION

The Active After-school Communities (AASC) program is continuing to provide sporting opportunities for primary school children across Australia. During the 2013 Financial Year, the AASC program invested approximately \$20m into grassroots sport with an estimated \$150,000 of that being allocated to softball programs. For the same reporting period, the AASC delivered over 28,000 programs and engaged approximately 760,000 participants.

With the importance of participation being pushed further up the sporting agenda, the AASC program is working closely with sporting organisations to identify opportunities that will attract children to sport and provide a platform for their ongoing participation in sport.

This report provides an overview of the key data that demonstrates the AASC's contribution to softball in Australia pertaining to the period July 2012 to June 2013. Although not as detailed as previous publications, this report outlines summary headline data which reflects the AASC's continued ability to signpost children to softball and provide support for the sport's grassroots participation objectives.

PERFORMANCE DATA

The data provided below depicts the overarching, national softball performance data and offers a comparison against the previous reporting period. Three performance areas have been selected:

1. Number of programs – a breakdown of the total number of AASC softball programs conducted in Australia;
2. Number of participants – a breakdown of the total number of participants who took part in AASC softball programs;
3. Number of coaches – a breakdown of the total number of coaches who delivered AASC softball programs, identified by coach category.

Programs

The table below shows the number of AASC softball programs conducted within each state or territory for the current reporting period.

State/Territory	2011/12 total	2012/13 total	Change +/-
NSW	182	164	-10%
VIC	76	77	+1%
QLD	106	138	+30%
SA	44	33	-25%
WA	91	73	-20%
TAS	30	34	+13%
NT	16	17	+6%
ACT	17	28	+65%
TOTAL	562	564	0%

(All data is correct at the time of grant application)

The total number of programs remains flat for this reporting period with an increase in the ACT being offset by a decline in both SA and WA. In the absence of a dedicated focus on promoting softball programs, this level of performance should be expected.

Participants

The table below shows the number of children participating in an AASC softball program within each state or territory for the current reporting period.

State/Territory	2011/12 total	2012/13 total	Change +/-
NSW	5272	4857	-8%
VIC	1943	1926	-1%
QLD	2956	3933	+33%
SA	980	863	-12%
WA	2222	1783	-20%
TAS	787	901	+14%
NT	516	620	+20%
ACT	579	991	+71%
TOTAL	15255	15874	+4%

The total number of participants also remains flat but highlights the strength of the performance in the ACT with an additional 412 extra children being exposed to the sport.

Coaches

The table below provides a breakdown of AASC community coaches who delivered softball during the current reporting period.

Category	2011/12 total	2012/13 total	Change +/-
Sporting clubs	118	115	-3%
Community members	143	158	+10%
Internal (e.g. teachers)	129	133	+3%
Private providers	37	14	-62%
Students	47	53	+13%
TOTAL	474	473	0%

The total number reflects a 0% growth on the previous reporting period. Of note is the significant reduction in the number of community coaches representing private providers delivering softball.

SUMMARY

This report is intended to provide a summary of the relationship between the AASC program and softball in Australia. The data aims to show the value of the AASC program to Softball Australia, in addition to demonstrating its potential for future participation opportunities.

Whilst it is acknowledged the data does not address key issues such as the number of AASC participants who have continued to play softball after taking part in the AASC program or the true number of participants who attended each softball session, it does clearly show a sustained appetite for primary school aged children to play softball. It also reflects the influence of the program to drive the sport at a grass roots level and provide access to a high volume of potential, long-term softball participants.

The AASC program is currently developing its data capture and reporting capabilities with an aspiration of collating more accurate performance information. The improved data collation will enable enhanced reporting and provide sports organisations a clear reflection of their grass roots growth. It is anticipated this will contribute towards participation objectives and support participation strategies.

The AASC looks forward to engaging with softball in the future as we look to align our participation objectives and begin to deliver shared sporting outcomes.