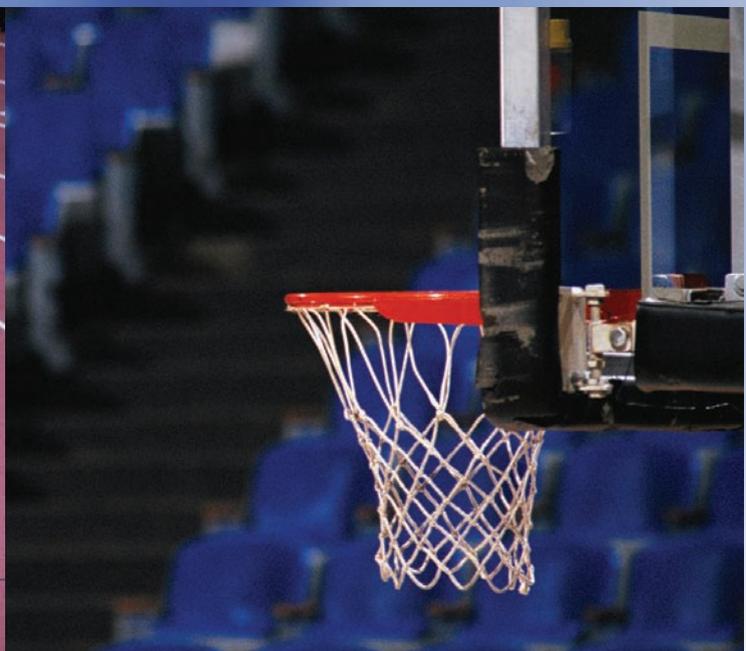


# *Management Plan Guide*

## SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

MAY 2008

2nd EDITION



A guide for sport and recreation planners, facilities owners and managers



Department of Sport and Recreation  
Government of Western Australia



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Enquiries or comments may be directed to:

Manager, Facilities Development  
Department of Sport and Recreation  
PO Box 329 LEEDERVILLE WA 6903  
or  
info@dsr.wa.gov.au  
www.dsr.wa.gov.au

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This directory is produced by:

Department of Sport and Recreation  
246 Vincent Street, Leederville, Western Australia 6007  
PO Box 329, LEEDERVILLE WA 6903  
Telephone 9492 9700  
Facsimile 9492 9711  
www.dsr.wa.gov.au

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Contributors to this edition:

R. Didcoe and B. Clarkson, Department of Sport  
and Recreation.

## **Disclaimer**

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This booklet was prepared with a view to outlining the Department of Sport and Recreation's requirements for a Management Guide. However, any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed herein are guidelines only and should not be expressly relied on by project proponents.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Amidst a backdrop of increasing demands on government budgets, sport and recreation facilities are being asked to become increasingly financially self-sufficient. Business plans, feasibility studies, life-cycle cost plans, design aspects, construction processes and the operational asset management of facilities are being placed under more scrutiny than ever before. This applies to both local government owned facilities and community based facilities.

The management of a facility plays a crucial role in its continued successful operation. Management planning will impact significantly on design, administrative and financial considerations and occurs in the initial concept stages of planning for a facility. The two most crucial factors in successful management are financial control and effective service delivery to ensure a smooth operation.

In order to determine what 'success' means, organisations need to identify, in conjunction with the community, what outcomes it would like to achieve through its sport and recreation facility. These financial and social objectives reflect the overall vision for sport and recreation provision within the community.

In order to remain relevant and to be an ongoing success, managers of sport and recreation facilities need to plan ahead, anticipate change and modify services accordingly.

Without a management plan in place, organisations run the risk of being ineffective, vulnerable to changing trends and wasting valuable resources. A management plan is designed to deliver a project — not only during the set-up phase, but also for the lifetime of the project.

Your management plan is a resource that everyone involved in the facility can work to. However, there are a number of key principles that should be considered. The information provided in this guide will assist facility managers to achieve efficient management practices, which will ultimately increase the likelihood of a successful facility.

## 2.0 WHAT IS A MANAGEMENT PLAN?

A management plan is a formal planning tool that aims to design the future operations of the facility. It is a written document that outlines:

- the aims and objectives of the facility — what are we trying to achieve?
- the strategies used to meet the objectives — how will we achieve it?
- the evaluation methods used to measure performance — how will we know if we are achieving it?

A good management plan will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of your facility. It identifies who your clients are, what services are on offer and why. It will provide you with short and long term goals, improve the quality of your services and products and enable you to manage a more successful operation.

Specific outcomes of a good management plan include:

### **Identification of corporate direction**

How the facility fits into the broader corporate direction of the parent organisation.

### **Systematic forward thinking**

Management is forced to evaluate the consequences of alternative strategies and tactics.

### **Identification of customers and competitors**

Services and products are tailored to meet customer needs. New opportunities and competitive advantages are discovered.

### **Formation of realistic goals**

A clear statement of what the organisation/facility does and where its key stakeholders want it to be.

### **Co-ordination of action and resources**

The amount of human and financial resources needed to launch or operate a facility (previously identified in the Feasibility Assessment) is reviewed and finalised.

### **Production of financial forecasts**

The financial requirements for any capital works, and for all operational activities are detailed. Cash flows and balance sheets are projected for the next 1–5 years.

### **Risk minimisation**

Potential problems and risk associated with managing the facility are identified and ways of overcoming or mitigating them are detailed.

### **Formation of Performance Indicator**

Ways of measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of the facility are established.

## 3.0 DEVELOPING A MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 3.1 Vision statement

A vision statement is the first step in the planning process followed closely by the development of a mission statement.

A vision statement is a vivid description of a desired outcome that inspires, energises and helps the organisation create a mental picture of your target. It could be a vision of a project or goal.

Vision statements are often confused with mission statements, but they serve complementary purposes.

### 3.2 Mission statement

The next step in preparing a management plan is to develop a mission statement for your facility. The mission statement is a clear statement of what the facility does and the way in which it will be managed. The mission statement describes:

- purpose of the facility — what is our business?
- why it exists — what is our underlying philosophy?
- what it has to offer — what services or products do we provide?
- who will use it — what is our target group?

It is important to ensure that all personnel are committed to the mission statement. Encourage input into the planning process from all levels of management, not just senior staff. It is also important that whatever vision and mission is developed, it reflects the aspirations of the stakeholders.

A mission statement which truly reflects a shared vision will create unity and commitment within your organisation.

### 3.3 Goals

Once the mission statement has been agreed to, the next step is to work out how to achieve it. It is important to identify the goals that will enable you to achieve your mission. Goals reflect what you aim to achieve and give direction to the operation of the facility. They are usually broad statements that have no timeframes.

For example, following are the mission statement and goals of a sporting club with its own facility.

#### **Mission statement**

Highfields Sports Club will offer and promote sport within the community and will provide facilities regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, degree of ability or disability.

#### **Goals**

- Members will be encouraged to become involved in all aspects of sport, and liaisons with schools, local authorities, leagues, sports associations and clubs will be strengthened.
- To increase participation in sport, Highfields will nurture opportunities for members and the community at large in the following areas:
  - youth development
  - player development
  - coach/leader development
  - umpire provision and training
  - administrator development
- To promote hockey and other sports represented at Highfields at all levels through the provision of an infrastructure that facilitates performance.
- To advance the pursuit of excellence through access to high quality playing areas and coaching of the highest standard.

### 3.4 Major initiatives

With the goals in place, the final step is to set out major initiatives. These are the specific actions needed in order to achieve the goals. It is helpful to arrange and focus on these in key performance areas.

Collectively, your objectives form an action plan and detail specific actions that will be taken at a particular time in order to achieve a defined outcome.

Initiatives should:

- be specific to a goal
- be attainable — challenging but not too difficult
- have a timeline
- address specific issues such as financial performance and efficiency
- have clearly defined outcomes
- be quantifiable — they can be measured using performance indicators
- delegate responsibilities beyond the manager
- be used as a day to day management tool

Together your initiatives should form an action plan showing:

- what has to be done
- when it has to be done
- who will do it

### 3.5 Key performance areas

Clearly detail all the assumptions made to determine the goals and major initiatives. Key performance areas (KPA) focus on general areas of operation within a facility, where a desired outcome is required over the period of the management plan.

Focus areas are those specific operational areas within a key performance area. For example, a focus area within a key performance area of finance would be operational budgets.

An example of goals/initiatives for a sporting facility that is run by a sport or club is shown below:

| KPA                                   | Focus Area                | Goal   |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Administration                        | Office administration     | Produce agendas for and minutes of meetings            |
|                                       | Corporate governance      | Develop a governance manual                            |
| Marketing                             | Sponsorship               | Obtain t-shirt sponsors                                |
|                                       | Fundraising               | Increase fundraising monies by 20%                     |
|                                       | Merchandise               | Sales of branded sport specific equipment              |
|                                       | Promotions                | Produce registration flyer to be distributed           |
|                                       | Communications            | Produce monthly newsletter                             |
| Participation and athlete development | Events                    | Organise gala day                                      |
|                                       | Participation development | Increase player numbers by 10%                         |
|                                       | Juniors/schools           | Increase team numbers                                  |
|                                       | Coaching                  | To have five Level 1 and two Level 2 coaches qualified |
| Finance                               | High performance programs | Increase number of players in rep teams by 5%          |
|                                       | Operational budgets       | Produce yearly operating budget                        |
|                                       | Cash flow forecasts       | Provide a 12 month cash flow budget                    |
|                                       | Financial reporting       | Produce balance sheet and profit and loss statements   |
|                                       | Banking                   | Set up EFT facilities at club house                    |

An example of the goals/initiatives of a larger recreation facility is outlined below:

| KPA                                   | Focus Area  | Goal   |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Customer Services                     | To provide successful arts/cultural festivals and programs, to encourage community participation, creativity and interaction  | Organise and promote a minimum of five community festivals/events annually   |
|                                       |   | Maintain and develop affordable school holiday arts and crafts activities and other programs for children  |
|                                       |   | Resource and provide free/concessional programs and facilities for disadvantaged groups  |
| Community Service                     | Provide affordable venues for artists and the community in general and identified target groups in particular   | Resource and provide free/concessional programs and facilities for disadvantaged groups  |
|                                       |   | Provide space, resources, advice, referrals and promotion for performers, artists and other groups to assist and encourage them to organise events and projects at the centre    |
|                                       |   | Provide a community pottery and qualified tutors   |
| Asset and resources management        | Provide space, resources, advice, referrals and promotion for performers, artists and other groups to assist and encourage them to organise events and projects at the centre | Assess carefully any significant proposal to use the centre and monitor, control and review the activity to minimise any social and environmental impacts on the local area      |
| Efficiency and cost management        | To effectively co-ordinate the hire of centre spaces to maximise use of space, generate income for Council  | Supplement income from community use with commercial hire of the venue   |
| Organisational growth and development | To provide effective publicity and promotion for the centre activities and provide information, advice and referrals for other community services and the arts                | Maintain and develop effective communication and media plans, including production of a monthly newsletter, publicity leaflets, posters, banners, press releases and advertising |
|                                       |   | Pursue sponsorship opportunities   |
|                                       |   | Provide advice to centre hirers on promoting activities  |

An excerpt from the Waverley Council Management Plan 2000–2003

## 4.0 GETTING STARTED

All sporting facilities require a management plan. Preparing a management plan is not a difficult task, however it will require a considerable time commitment. It may be practical to develop your management plan in stages, adding to it and refining it over time. This is extremely important, particularly when the organisation is seeking funding in the future for their facility.

To be able to complete each of the components as outlined in Section 5 of this kit, you need to gather a broad range of information on your facility. This process of researching and questioning will enable you to set your goals and devise a number of objectives to achieve those goals.

When preparing a management plan consider the following:

- keep it simple and easy to read — refrain from using industry jargon
- don't be selective and repeat information unnecessarily
- support your claims and use examples
- seek a second opinion — managers of similar facilities are an invaluable resource
- examine similar projects to learn from their experience

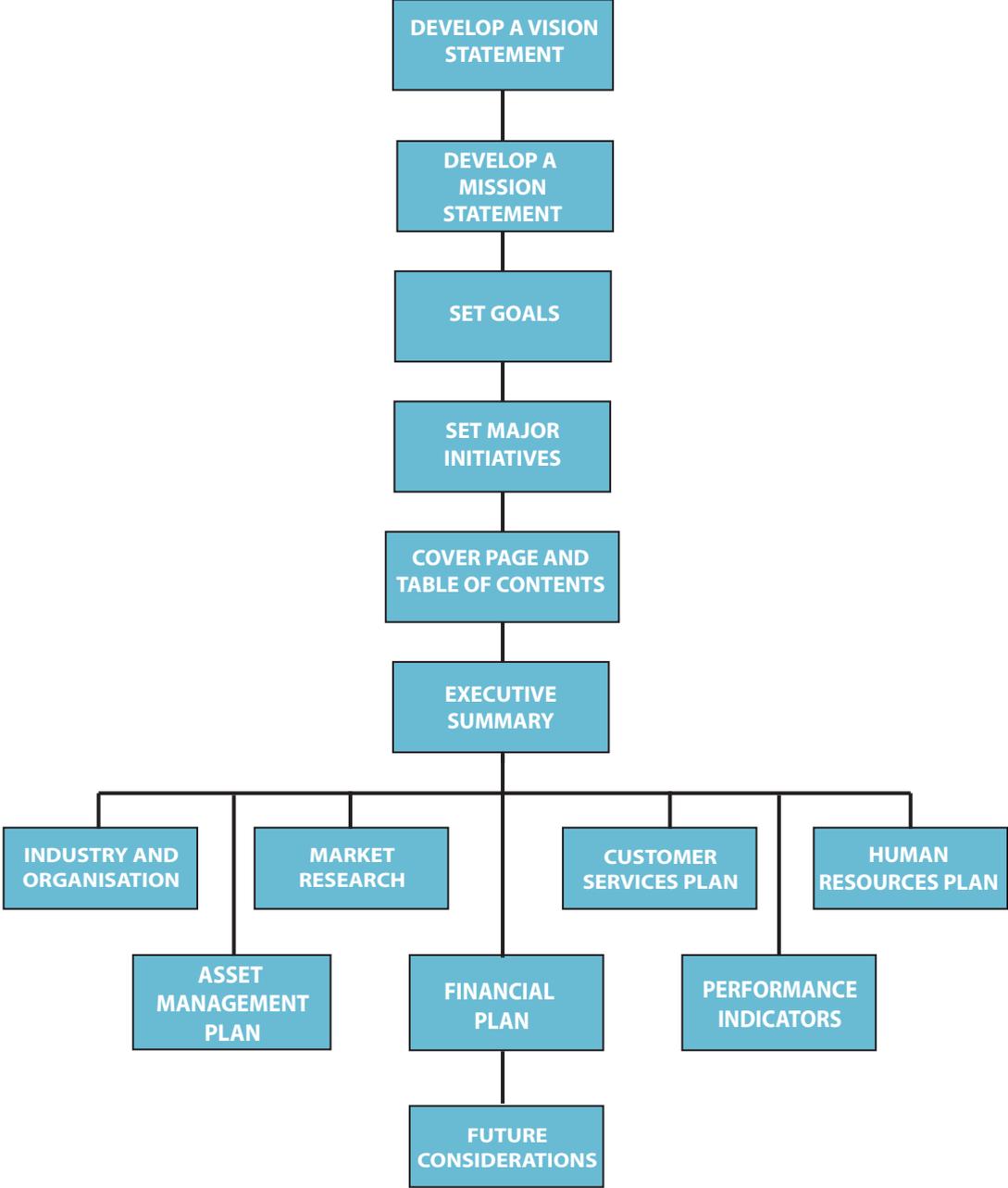
The responsibility for developing a management plan for a sporting or recreation facility lies with the facility manager. However, it is critical that all staff and volunteers are given the opportunity to input their ideas. It may also be appropriate to seek input from other organisations and key members of the community such as representatives of local government, local sporting clubs/associations, local businesses, youth workers and co-ordinators of other community facilities.

Through adopting an open planning process you are more likely to:

- provide needed and relevant services
- attract high usage levels, producing optimum financial and social returns
- service a diversity of users
- encourage happy, motivated and committed staff to goals and outcomes
- develop a sense of ownership towards the facility
- generate support from local community and volunteers

The flowchart on the next page outlines the process for developing a management plan.

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING A MANAGEMENT PLAN



## 5.0 WRITING A MANAGEMENT PLAN

Although each management plan is relevant to a particular facility and its core business, there are a number of key components that must be considered. These are:

- executive summary
- industry and organisation
- market research
- customer services plan
- human resources plan
- asset management plan
- financial plan
- future considerations

A checklist of topics to be included in the management plan is summarised below.

### 5.1 Executive summary and recommendations

The executive summary provides a brief overview of the key components of the management plan and incorporates recommendations. Keep your main points in mind as you write the summary. You do not need to include every point in the summary, but ensure that the major ideas are covered succinctly. This summary should be able to be read and understood as a separate document from the management plan.

An executive summary is always at the beginning of a management plan.

### 5.2 Industry and organisation

This section of the management plan provides an assessment of influential trends in the sport and recreation industry relating to your facility and background detail on the organisation. This includes:

- **Review of the recreation industry**  
The current status and prospects of the sport and recreation industry relevant to your facility, i.e. any new services, developments, trends/factors which may affect your facility.
- **Description of your organisation**  
A short overview of historical milestones and past achievements of the organisation.

- **Operational philosophy**  
How the proposed facility (if applicable) is consistent with current operations of the organisation. The financial, social and equity philosophy of your organisation and how these ideals and values impact on the operation of your facility.
- **Mission statement**  
The purpose of the facility, the target market and type of services to be offered (as referred to in Section 3 of this guide).
- **Critical success factors and issues facing the organisation**

### 5.3 Market research

Market research is a difficult section to prepare but one of the most important when developing a management plan. Collecting statistics and market research data will help you meet the needs of existing and potential customers and gain a greater understanding of your industry. Once you have a clearer understanding of market trends you are then able to implement practices to help your business grow.

This component should provide an analysis of your competitors, customers and the marketplace. It should:

- Demonstrate that the facility will have a substantial market in a growing industry.
- Provide data that proves attendance and revenue projections can be achieved despite the competition.
- Identify who your competitors are, their strengths and weaknesses and how they are likely to react to competitive pressure.
- Provide data on your existing customers and usage patterns. Identify your target groups — their size, particular needs, why they use your facility and how much they are willing to pay.
- Analyse the market in which you operate and create a market niche for your facility. Evaluate the services/products being provided by your competitors and look for gaps within the market place. Broaden the boundaries of the market by envisioning services/products that do not yet exist. Seek out opportunities that will enable your facility to make a difference — the potential to offer something new!

## 5.4 Market research methods

Each market research project varies and involves five basic steps:

### Step 1: Define the problem

Write down in simple terms what you need to know and how you will use the information. Based on the problem definition, develop a set of research objectives. Data is collected to satisfy these objectives. A large survey or research process is not necessary to obtain good, useful information.

### Step 2: Work out how to collect the data

There are two types of data, primary and secondary. Secondary data is much quicker and cheaper to collect as it has already been collected and often in a form which can be readily used:

- Internal data collected for other purposes such as financial reports, attendance figures, membership details, player registration cards.
- Government publications such as census data, household expenditure estimates and industry reports.
- Academic journals, newspapers, published market research reports.
- Trade publications such as directories and magazines.

Primary data is obtained by observation, experimentation and survey. Observation is an effective way of collecting information about customers. All that is required is observing what customers do before, during and after participating in a program.

- Observation is the most effective way of collecting information. It involves watching what people do before, during and after participating in a recreation program.
- Surveys, using a questionnaire, can be conducted by telephone, mail, email, personal or group interviews. This is the common method used for collecting information.
- Experimentation is the least used method of collecting data. It could be used to test reaction to two different types of program, by offering a group of customers the chance to participate in both activities and measuring their response.

### Step 3: Collecting the data

Secondary data is easy to collect as it is readily available. Collecting primary data can be time consuming and costly. To ensure the results are valid and reliable, it is recommended to obtain expert help to design the questionnaires, select the sample and determine the size. If any of these tasks are done incorrectly, the whole study may be worthless.

### Step 4: Analyse and interpret the data

Statistics must be carefully evaluated. There are many software programs available to allow thorough analysis of the data and cross comparisons. For straightforward questionnaires, a simple spreadsheet would be adequate.

### Step 5: Report the findings

The final step is to document the findings, reach conclusions and make a series of recommendations.

## 5.5 Customer services plan

This section provides a description of how you intend to sell your programs and services to your potential customers. This includes:

- Target markets — describe your targeted customers and your lower priority customer groups.
- Programs and services — describe the features of the programs, pricing strategies and services to be offered to each target group. Include a proposed program timetable and details of any permanent bookings. Consider how future programs will be developed.
- Marketing strategies — how you plan to promote your services and facilities to your target groups. Include advertising methods, fee schedule and discounting strategies, standards of presentation, methods of quality control and desired image.
- Other services — information on the range of services to be offered such as kiosk and merchandising, crèche and disabled facilities, locked facilities, security services and equipment hire.

## 5.6 Human resources plan

This section provides an outline of the organisational structure, levels of authority and strategies for maintaining a high standard of management.

This includes:

- Organisation Structure — details of staff structure, lines of authority, number of staff and qualifications required, job descriptions, employment contracts, staff rosters, relief staff, external professional support and volunteer involvement. A flow chart of the organisation's staffing levels is a good example of this. Also include the structure and role of any committees.
- Training Opportunities — provide information on proposed training and professional development programs; prospects for career development and multi-skilling.
- Administration — describe day-to-day operational procedures, booking and enrolment procedures, hours of operation, safety and emergency procedures.

## 5.7 Asset management plan

An asset management plan is critical to the management of a facility. To protect the high capital investment and ensure the reliable operation of your facility, a preventative maintenance program must be established. In your management plan include a physical description of your centre and detail strategies for building maintenance. It should include:

- Asset inventory — details with various components/areas within the facility, key design features, rental or leasing arrangements for buildings, plant or equipment.
- Maintenance schedule — provide building maintenance schedules, procedures for rectifying faults and repairs, plant and equipment replacement schedules, purchasing systems, security features, inventory control systems and conditions of use policies.
- Energy consumption program — outline specific cost saving technologies, plant and equipment monitoring systems, quality control features.

The Department of Sport and Recreation's Asset Management Guide January 2004 has the information to assist organisations with developing an asset management plan. This is available through the Department of Sport and Recreation's website on [www.dsr.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au) or the nearest office to you.

## 5.8 Financial plan

Past, present and projected financial data must be presented to assess the viability of the facility, including:

- Past and projected financial statements covering the previous 12 months and the next two years. Include cash flow statements, profits and loss statements and balance sheets.
- Show the level of sales required to meet budget expectations.
- Clearly outline all assumptions made.
- Outline risk factors and contingency plans, i.e. shortfalls in attendance levels, increases in interest rates, cost escalation on major expenditure items, loss of key staff or reductions in competitors' fees.

## 5.9 Future considerations

All facilities face problems and all future projections are based on assumptions. This section outlines any future considerations that impact on your facility including:

- How your management plan links into the strategic or long term vision of your organisation.
- What resources will be required to determine future programs and directions.
- What resources will be required to remain competitive in a technological sense.
- What building extensions, modifications or upgrades to your facility will be required in the future.

Prepare for surprises — identify and assess possible risks and how you will deal with the situation should any of these risks actually occur. Risk is defined as the chance of something happening that will have an impact on objectives. It is measured in terms of consequence and likelihood.

## 5.10 Performance indicators

This section describes how you intend to measure your performance and whether or not you are achieving your objectives. Gather only information that can be used. Information that can be monitored on a regular basis includes:

- Daily attendances and user profile information (age, sex, demographics, time of use).
- Weekly checks of cash flow, operating costs, number and nature of complaints, suggestions and compliments received, number of injuries and accidents that occurred.
- Monthly checks of financial reports, attendance figures, meter readings of services and maintenance checks.
- Quarterly checks of stocks levels, gross profit margins on various product lines, satisfaction ratings of customers obtained via surveys of ratepayers, residences and users.

## 6.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Once the management plan has been developed, it is important that it does not gather dust on the shelf and become rapidly out of date. Although a management plan is prepared with a three to five year period in mind, it must be updated on a yearly basis to be relevant. Future changes within the sport and recreation industry, the organisation, the target groups, the marketplace and broader community will impact on the operations of your facility.

An implementation plan should be completed after the management planning process is completed. Implementation plans are working documents to be reviewed at regular intervals.

Implementation plans state:

- key performance areas
- goals
- objectives
- action required
- people responsible for taking action
- dates by which actions must be completed
- progress reports

### Tips for implementing a plan

- Successful strategy formation is transferred to successful implementation by the organisation through embracing change from the corporate governance level right down to a functional level.
- The plan is communicated to the people and organisations involved in the delivery of the plan.
- Policy and procedural changes are made in line with new or modified strategies.
- Financial, human and physical resources are allocated to the strategies outlined in the plan.
- The values and ethics of the organisation correlate to the strategies and those who are involved in the implementation process.
- A plan is an active document; hence changes to strategies may need to be embraced before a strategy is implemented.
- The risks involved with managing the various strategies formulated need to be considered as part of implementing the plan.

Below is a sample of an implementation plan for a softball association.

### SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

| Performance Area                     | Goal   | Objective   | Strategy                                      | Date         | Responsibility  | Progress Report                                   |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|--------------|-----------------|---|
| Administration                       | To establish communication pathways that embrace all members                   | To upgrade reporting systems and communication channels | Create a club contact list for each affiliate | 31 July 2004 | Office staff    |   |
| Marketing, promotion and scholarship | To obtain sponsorship for the Association, its events, program and publication | To develop appropriate sponsorship packages             | Staff and board to develop corporate contacts | Ongoing      | Staff and board | Several proposals drafted and under consideration |

## 7.0 REVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

For management plans to remain effective, the organisation will need to review and amend it regularly. This requires processes that ensure the plans remain a dynamic working tool for the organisation.

Goals and objectives will need to be refined, modified and in some cases, rewritten. Identify the people in the organisation who will be responsible for monitoring.

Tips for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the management plan:

- Ensure specific timeframes have been allocated for the implementation of strategies.
- Develop formal reporting procedures for the identified person to comply with — reporting procedures can be assigned to an action plan group or person, or they can be built into established reporting processes.
- Check progress regularly in relation to what is set out in the management plan. This should be included as a regular item on management meeting agendas.
- Modify the management plan if it is not possible to achieve some of the goals that have been set.
- Establish a planning sub-committee to review the whole management plan each year to check whether the organisation achieved goals for the year and to add another year to the management plan. The organisation should be constantly planning three to four years ahead.
- If the changes to the management plan are not major, a simple way of approaching the review is to treat the previous year's plan as a draft and circulate it for amendment and for addition of the information for one year further ahead.

## 8.0 CONCLUSION

Good management doesn't just happen — it needs to be planned. Achievable goals and major initiatives need to be established and followed, sound methods in accounting, budgeting and pricing must be adhered to, and maintaining current knowledge of client needs and aspirations must be a priority.

The importance of flexibility in terms of programming and staffing cannot be overstated. Equally important is the need for ongoing evaluation and assessment, to ensure services are aligned with current trends and developments in the industry and local government.

By developing a management plan, you will become more effective, efficient and relevant in your service provision, maximising the use of resources while creating meaningful recreation opportunities for your community. Planning your management is smart and will take you down the road to success!

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**Department of Sport and Recreation**  
Government of Western Australia

**METROPOLITAN**

246 Vincent Street,  
Leederville WA 6007  
PO Box 329, Leederville WA 6903  
Telephone (08) 9492 9700  
Facsimile (08) 9492 9711  
Email [info@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**GASCOYNE**

4 Francis Street, Carnarvon  
PO Box 140,  
Carnarvon WA 6701  
Telephone (08) 9941 0900  
Facsimile (08) 9941 0999  
Email [gascoyne@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:gascoyne@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**GOLDFIELDS**

106 Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie  
PO Box 1036,  
Kalgoorlie WA 6430  
Telephone (08) 9022 5800  
Facsimile (08) 9022 5899  
Email [goldfields@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:goldfields@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**GREAT SOUTHERN**

22 Collie Street  
Albany WA 6330  
Telephone (08) 9892 0100  
Facsimile (08) 9892 0199  
Email [greatsouthern@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:greatsouthern@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**KIMBERLEY**

**Broome**  
Unit 2, 23 Coghlan Street  
PO Box 1476, Broome WA 6725  
Telephone (08) 9195 5750  
Facsimile (08) 9192 2436  
Email [kimberley@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:kimberley@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**Kununurra**

Government Offices  
Cnr Konkerberry Drive  
and Messmate Way, Kununurra  
PO Box 1127, Kununurra WA 6743  
Telephone (08) 9166 4900  
Facsimile (08) 9166 4999  
Email [kimberley@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:kimberley@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**MID WEST**

Mid West Sports House  
77 Marine Terrace, Geraldton  
PO Box 135, Geraldton WA 6531  
Telephone (08) 9956 2100  
Facsimile (08) 9956 2199  
Email [midwest@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:midwest@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**PEEL**

Suite 3, The Endeavour Centre  
94 Mandurah Terrace, Mandurah  
PO Box 1445,  
Mandurah WA 6210  
Telephone (08) 9550 3100  
Facsimile (08) 9550 3199  
Email [peel@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:peel@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**PILBARA**

Unit 2, 3813 Balmoral Road, Karratha  
PO Box 941, Karratha WA 6714  
Telephone (08) 9182 2100  
Facsimile (08) 9182 2199  
Email [pilbara@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:pilbara@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**SOUTH WEST**

80A Blair Street, Bunbury  
PO Box 2662, Bunbury WA 6231  
Telephone (08) 9792 6900  
Facsimile (08) 9792 6999  
Email [southwest@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:southwest@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**WHEATBELT**

**Northam**

McIver House  
297 Fitzgerald Street, Northam  
PO Box 55, Northam WA 6401  
Telephone (08) 9690 2400  
Facsimile (08) 9690 2499  
Email [wheatbelt@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:wheatbelt@dsr.wa.gov.au)

**Narrogin**

John Higgins Centre  
Clayton Road, Narrogin  
PO Box 54, Narrogin WA 6312  
Telephone (08) 9890 0464  
Facsimile (08) 9890 0499  
Email [wheatbelt@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:wheatbelt@dsr.wa.gov.au)