

## CURRENT VALUE ADDING ACTIVITIES

The purpose here was to identify what ARPASS initiatives, projects, or functions presently provide the most value to its partners and what positives they see in ARPASS' present approach.

ARPASS activities that were identified as providing the most value were unsurprising as they generally represent those functions that ARPASS was created to perform and provided the rationale for the partners to support its inception. They included:

- Cross-sector **communication** and a regional forum
- Quality **Information** to influence decision making in areas of greatest need
- **Advocacy and Legitimacy** that the support of a regional organisation and objective, regional information provides
- Serving as a vehicle for **collaboration** and providing a common ground for discussion and idea generation
- A champion for regional issues with a **regional view**
- A **focus on the 'end-user'** in the community – seeking to identify and meet the greatest community needs regardless of where in Auckland they lay
- Based on quality information, **projects** are identified and **partnerships** are enabled to complete them

### COMMUNICATION

Greater communication was identified as being a particular benefit of ARPASS. Specifically, value was generated by:

- the opening of communication channels between councils, RSTs, and public health organisations
- communication of local issues (and needs) into a regional forum
- provision of a single communication point for Auckland in physical activity and sport sector

COMMUNICATION

INFORMATION

ADVOCACY &  
LEGITIMACY

REGIONAL  
PERSPECTIVE

'END-USER' FOCUS

COLLABORATION

PARTNERSHIP  
PROJECTS

- communication of regional thinking and project collaboration through councillors, officers, and Strategy Director

## INFORMATION

The research and dissemination of quality information was explicitly stated as being of real value. This was identified as being a central ARPASS function with its core responsibility being the generation of quality regional information to influence decision making in the areas of greatest need. Information is seen as high quality if it is research based, objective, and relevant. The role of quality information in the delivery model can be summarised by the process below.

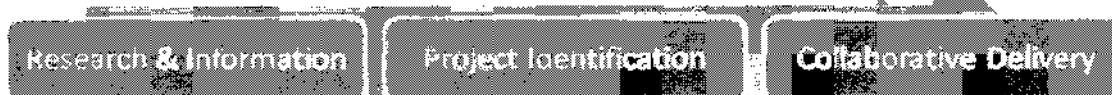


FIGURE 1: INFORMATION IN ACTION

## ADVOCACY AND LEGITIMACY

Quality information and ARPASS' position as a regional organisation with a regional view and a regional mandate provides the RSTs with a valuable source of advocacy and legitimacy for proposals and projects. RSTs feel that this has facilitated their relationship building with councils (both within and outside the ARPASS forum) and increased RST influence. In particular, the information generated by the mapping project provided valuable evidence for regional initiatives. The partners also felt positive about the neutrality and credibility that SPARC support provides ARPASS and that it makes Auckland's regional physical activity and sport challenges part of a national agenda.

## REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE AND COMMUNITY 'END-USER' FOCUS

Furthermore, ARPASS is seen to have provided value through the consistent provision of a regional perspective and being a champion for regional views. It has also had the impact of more deeply engraining regional perspectives in RST thinking (in some cases) than was previously the case. Also, ARPASS' focus on, and advocacy for, 'end-user' community groups was seen as particularly valuable as it puts the need of the community first and then enables the partnerships necessary to meet that need.

## COLLABORATION

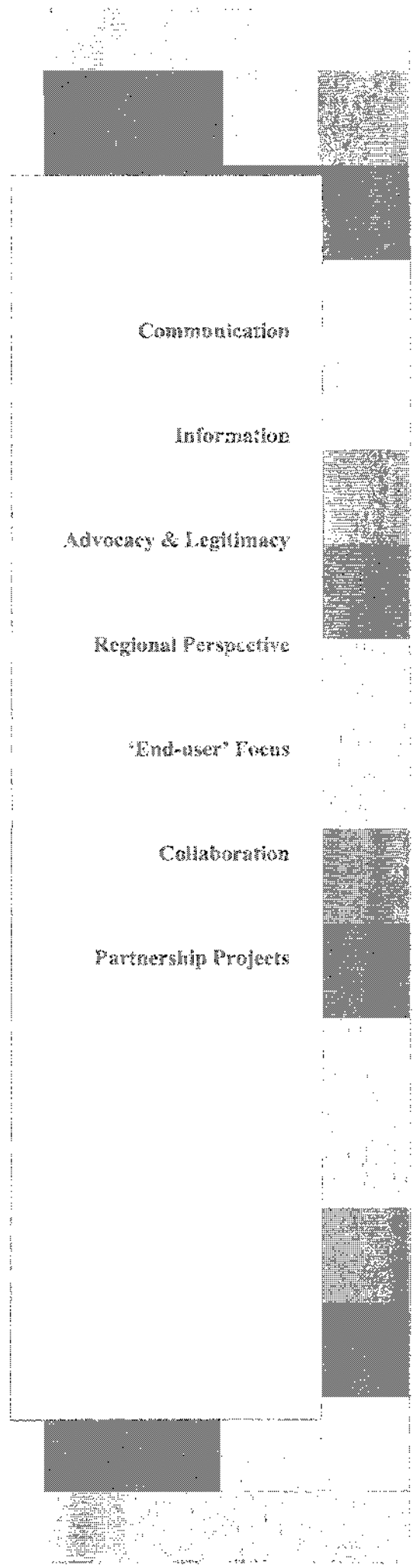
Value was seen in ARPASS' provision of a common ground and a vehicle for collaboration whereby partnerships could be formed around projects as necessary. In particular the use of the GIS maps for project identification and the generation of collaboration ideas was supported.

## PARTNER PROJECTS

The projects that have developed from ARPASS collaboration are seen to have been (are) of significant value. Projects specifically identified include:

- Agenda Auckland
- Greater Auckland Facilities Project-
- GRx
- CoachForce
- Aquatic Facilities
- Paddling Facilities
- GIS Mapping

Furthermore, progress on a model of RST delivery/RST lead agency is being welcomed by the partners as there is a common belief that project delivery should be handed back to the RSTs after the project is identified, designed, and requisite collaboration is in place.



## ISSUES, NEGATIVES, & CONFUSION

The purpose here was to identify activities that did not add value, were of questionable value, or were considered negative, and issues that caused confusion. While the partners generally struggled to find fault with the first two and half years of ARPASS, the following points became apparent.

- **Programme delivery** such as 'CmonGt^'
- Review of [www.playday.org.nz](http://www.playday.org.nz)
- **Confusion around roles** within ARPASS including SPG communication with councils and information dissemination
- **SPARC central body commitment**
- **Alignment of SPARC and ARPASS efforts** within Auckland

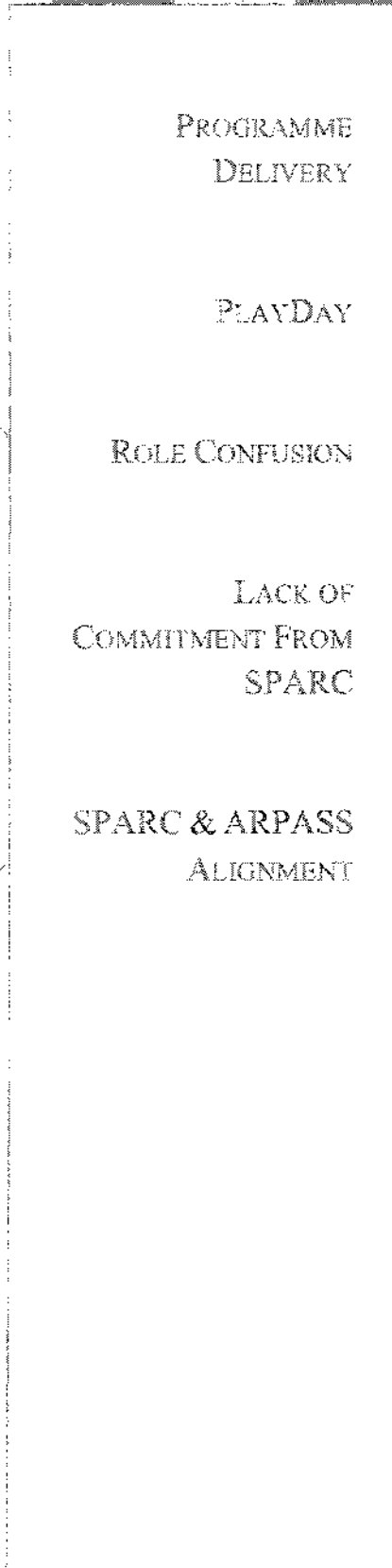
### PROGRAMME DELIVERY

There was a strong message that ARPASS should not be directly involved in the delivery of programmes itself and that this role can be adequately filled by the RSTs and other appropriate bodies. The CmonGt^ programme was cited as an example of an unwise use of ARPASS resources.

### PLAYDAY

On a similar note, the partners questioned the value of the [www.playday.org.nz](http://www.playday.org.nz) website and requested feedback on its progress. They also suggested an evaluation be undertaken to determine whether it is achieving its objective.

### ROLE CONFUSION



There was some confusion around the roles that the different groups within ARPASS are required to fulfil. In particular people were confused about the role of the SPG. While they are responsible for strategic governance, questions were raised regarding the councillors' role in driving ARPASS initiatives within councils and their general communication of ARPASS information at the upper echelons of their respective councils.

### **LACK OF COMMITMENT FROM SPARC**

There was some disappointment at the lack of commitment from SPARC ("Wellington") to what the partners are trying to achieve with ARPASS. While the obvious financial investment is acknowledged, there is a feeling that the progress that has been made has created opportunities that SPARC is failing to exploit. Greater support, in terms of policy and budgeting decisions, would facilitate escalation of tangible outcomes in the future.

### **SPARC AND ARPASS ALIGNMENT**

There was also a feeling that there were times when greater dialogue between the Strategy Director (and/or the partners) and SPARC's Auckland staff would be beneficial to ensure misalignment or duplication of efforts is avoided. Greater dialogue with, or involvement of, SPARC staff would also facilitate greater partnership with SPARC as outlined in the point above.

PROGRAMME  
DELIVERY

PLAYDAY

ROLE CONFUSION

LACK OF  
COMMITMENT FROM  
SPARC

SPARC & ARPASS  
ALIGNMENT

# FUTURE PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The purpose here was to identify opportunities for ARPASS to improve its processes and to outline its priorities for the future. The objective being to maximise the extent to which it delivers on its strategic plan.

This report recommends ARPASS' partners consider its priorities to:

- Moving from a message orientation to an **action focus**
- Providing a regional **voice of Auckland**
- **Regional advocacy and alignment** of physical activity and sport funding in Auckland
- An investigation into functional and structural **regionalisation**
- Addressing **process and partner issues** including communication, role clarification, and commitment.
- Maximising the impact of **current projects**
- Developing ARPASS' role in **generating quality information** upon which, if there is evidence of benefit to the community, its partners commit to act.

## MOVING FROM MESSAGE TO ACTION

Throughout the evaluation process the partners spoke positively of the projects that have been undertaken through ARPASS. However, the primary function of the Strategy Director and the partners has been the communication of the 'regional message', relationship/network building, and establishing trust, credibility, and understanding of ARPASS' roles and function. While this has been essential to the development of ARPASS, it should not remain its primary function. For ARPASS to maximise its impact it must shift its focus to the development and collaborative delivery of projects, programmes (or add value to existing programmes), and aid other organisations to do so.

The foundation that has been laid provides real potential for ARPASS to dramatically increase its impact on the physical activity and sport sector in Auckland by escalating the tangible outcomes of

MESSAGE → ACTION

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RST  
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ORGANISATION  
PROCESS & PARTNER  
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CURRENT PROJECT  
DELIVERY

INFORMATION HUB

the collaboration. Achieving this, however, is not the sole responsibility of the Strategy Director. The onus is on the partners to utilise the information ARPASS generates and the relationships and networks it has developed to deliver on their commitment to the collaboration. Delivering means independent organisations taking interdependent action – this entails independent partners utilising cross-boundary and cross-sector partnerships to achieve more locally. When multiple partners embed this in their thinking, interdependence and a mutual reliance allows the benefits of regionalisation while retaining the benefits of local delivery where appropriate.

‘Taking action’ means different things to different partners and each will know what that is better than anyone. Ultimately it means making use of what has been created under the ARPASS collaboration. For councils it’s using ARPASS information to guide its policy and decision-making and utilising partnerships with other councils and RSTs to implement those policies. For RSTs it’s determining which programmes or functions can be best delivered with a regional approach or cross-boundary partnerships, and determining new programmes or projects that can be achieved through ARPASS partnerships. ‘Taking action’ means partners taking responsibility to act where ARPASS’ mandate ends (see Organisation Process section below for further discussion on this).

However, ‘taking action’ also has another meaning. It means believing in what was bought into when each partner made the decision to invest in ARPASS – a regional process. The partners need to trust this process and support action when there isn’t consensus – allowing initiatives to go ahead even if a partner disagrees with its validity or won’t realise any value from it. It is only with this level of flexibility will ARPASS be able to deliver on its potential.

For ARPASS not to escalate its tangible outputs would be not only a disappointment, it would be poor management and represent a neglected investment. To achieve this escalation requires a realisation that the partners are ARPASS and to hold these expectations of ARPASS means to hold them of themselves.

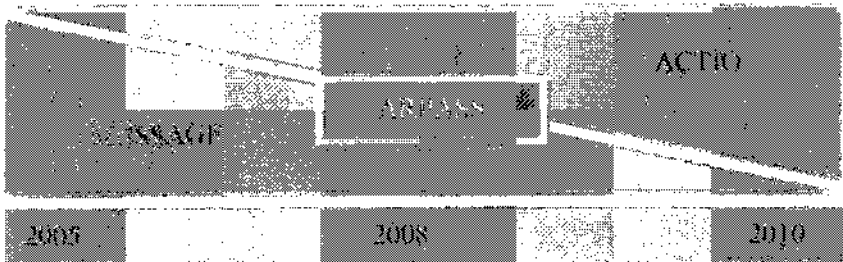


FIGURE 2: PROGRESSION FROM MESSAGE TO ACTION

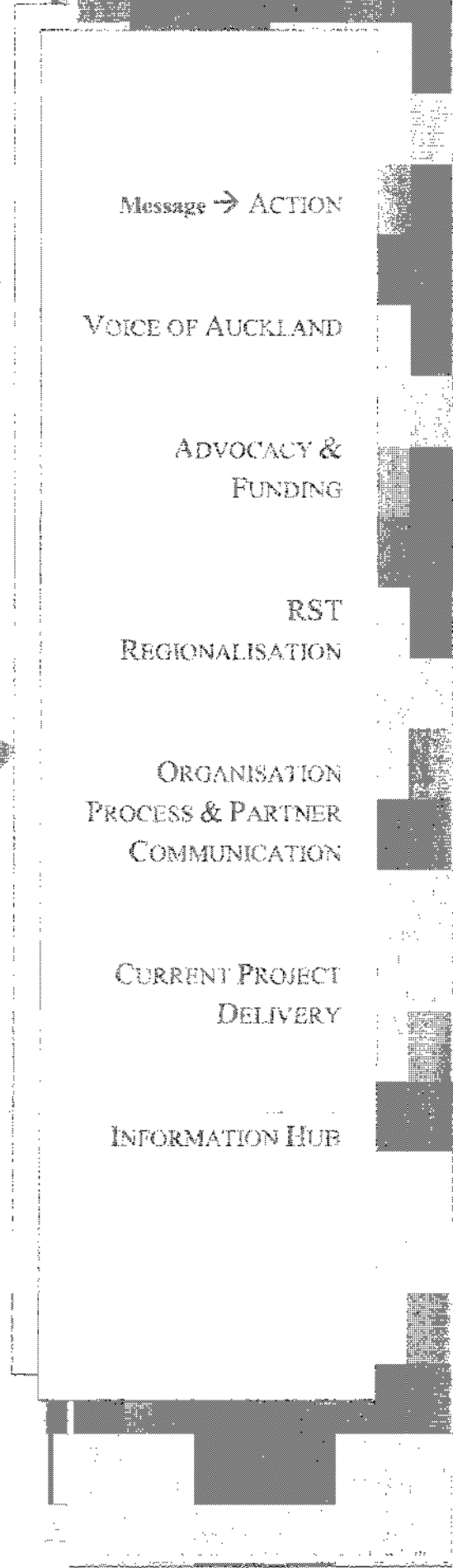
**VOICE OF AUCKLAND**

ARPASS has a responsibility to provide a voice to the physical activity and sport sector in the Auckland Region. One of the first manifestations of that voice will be a submission to the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance. Points to consider include:

- ARPASS can only be the voice of the organisations it comprises.
- The ability of an RST to represent their community is debatable. Sport and leisure organisations and individual sport, recreation, and physical activity participants are, in the main, independent self-organising entities. The ability for RSOs to bridge some of the gap between community and ARPASS is unknown.
- Therefore the basis of a 'voice' may necessarily be the needs of the community as identified by the partners and the regional functions that are believed to be effective in meeting those needs.
- When it come to regional governance consideration needs to be given to the differences between the needs of those in the community that are engaged in organised sport and leisure and those that are not.

**ADVOCACY AND FUNDING COORDINATION**

Outside the traditional central and local government channels, the funding that is available (and potentially available) to physical activity and sport in Auckland, could have a much larger impact than it currently does. In general, funding is presently allocated in fragmented fashion. Funding from the private sector (e.g. ASB Trust) is often done on an application by application basis with inconsistent approval standards and without regional coordination, alignment with other funding, or regional prioritisation.



If this funding was aligned and coordinated effectively it could dramatically increase the impact it has on this sector as it directed using regional information where the greatest need lies, and it would eliminate duplication, and administration costs.

Furthermore, ARPASS' involvement in its partners' funding efforts could ensure proposals were regionally aligned and backed by quality regional information. This advocacy role is particularly pertinent at a time when projects involving the public health and education sectors develop and RSTs consider partnership with organisations in this sector.

## RST REGIONALISATION

The discussion of regionalisation has two main spheres;

- a. regionalisation of RST programmes and programme delivery, and
- b. centralisation of RST management and/or administration

Overall there is a desire among the partners to determine what can be regionalised in these two spheres. In the first the use of collaboration and/or a lead agency approach to addressing the identified needs of Auckland's community was generally supported. As a more regional approach to programme delivery develops, we can expect, and aim for, greater programme consistency and quality and ultimately more effectiveness as regional resources are collaborated and organisational knowledge is shared.

Feelings on what line of thinking should be taken in the second sphere were divergent.

While ARPASS has a mandate to address how partner collaboration can improve outcomes for the community, discussion of RST structure goes beyond that mandate and beyond the scope of this evaluation. However, it was raised during the interviews, and therefore needs to be addressed.

### OUT OF SCOPE – RST CENTRALISATION

Through formal channels such as the RST Alliance there has been considerable discussion in the past regarding the potential benefits (and costs) of seeking some RST centralisation. This report cannot make such recommendations about the structure or process of RSTs. However, it is recommended that the idea be formally investigated.

A review should be conducted to determine what, if any, benefit can be derived from the centralisation of any RST management, delivery, administration, or support services. The basis for this would be to consider the elimination of unnecessary duplication, pursuit of economies of scale and therefore an increase in the impact of each dollar that is invested in this sector through RSTs.

Issues to consider include:

- RSTs are wholly independent organisations
- The community is the most important stakeholder – what serves them best is paramount
- This issue is politically very sensitive
- This issue is politically very relevant given the objectives and boundaries of the Royal Commission
- How can the benefits of local delivery be maintained in a centralised model?
- Although ARPASS does not have the mandate or authority to make recommendations on this, given the RSTs governance role with ARPASS, should ARPASS have a role in leading this

## ORGANISATION PROCESS AND PARTNER COMMUNICATION

As discussed above, a shift in the way ARPASS operates is necessary. To achieve greater tangible outputs will require the ARPASS partners to take responsibility for turning the ARPASS network and information into action.

At the heart of this responsibility is the ARPASS Board. Along with a shift into a focus on increasing the organisation's outputs comes a need for the Board to be more engaged in generating opportunities to produce these outputs. This responsibility is driven by their role as ARPASS Board members and, in most cases, as RST Chairs. They therefore have dual roles in governance and delivery.

Also, to allow the 'action without consensus' that this report advocates requires the development of system whereby decision-making is transparent and documented. This is to ensure that all parties have an opportunity to enter into the decision-making discussion to have a clear understanding as why an initiative is or is not going ahead.

Furthermore, SPARC has a responsibility to strengthen its commitment to ARPASS' efforts in terms of its policy budgeting decisions for the Auckland Region. More support will increase ARPASS' ability to deliver on its strategy. Greater dialogue with SPARC's Auckland staff would facilitate this as well as ensuring SPARC's efforts within Auckland are aligned with those of ARPASS.

While the role of the SPG in providing a communication link with the upper levels of council has been discussed, there is also a need for councils to communicate on multiple levels with each other for ARPASS to have to have the 'influence' it is mandated to provide.

### CURRENT PROJECT DELIVERY

It should be noted that there is considerable 'action' underway and this shift towards more tangible outputs has begun. It is important that once projects initiated, that they are continually supported through to implementation and then continually developed and supported to ensure they provide long-term value. This was identified as being relevant to:

- Greater Auckland Facilities

MESSAGE → ACTION

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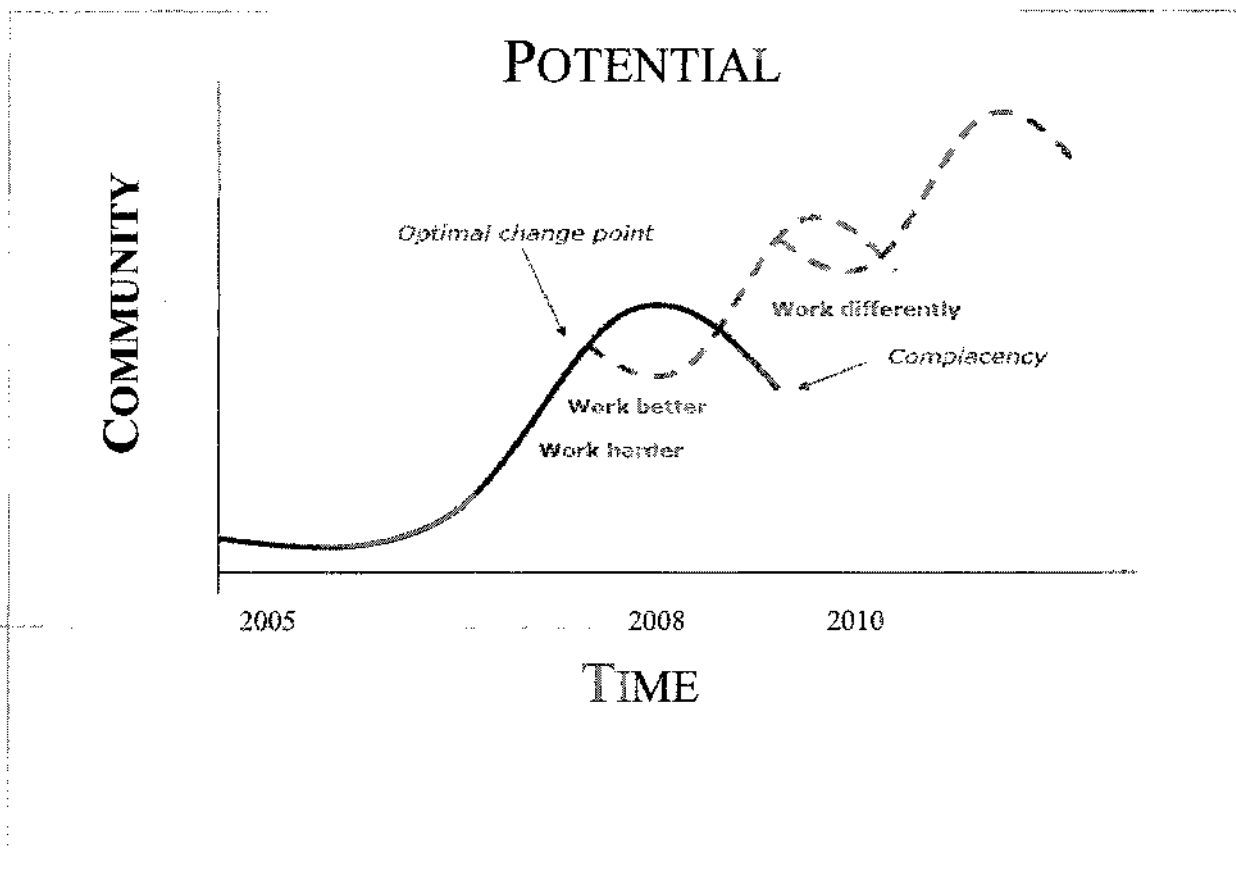
INFORMATION HUB

- Sport Development
- GRx
- CoachForce

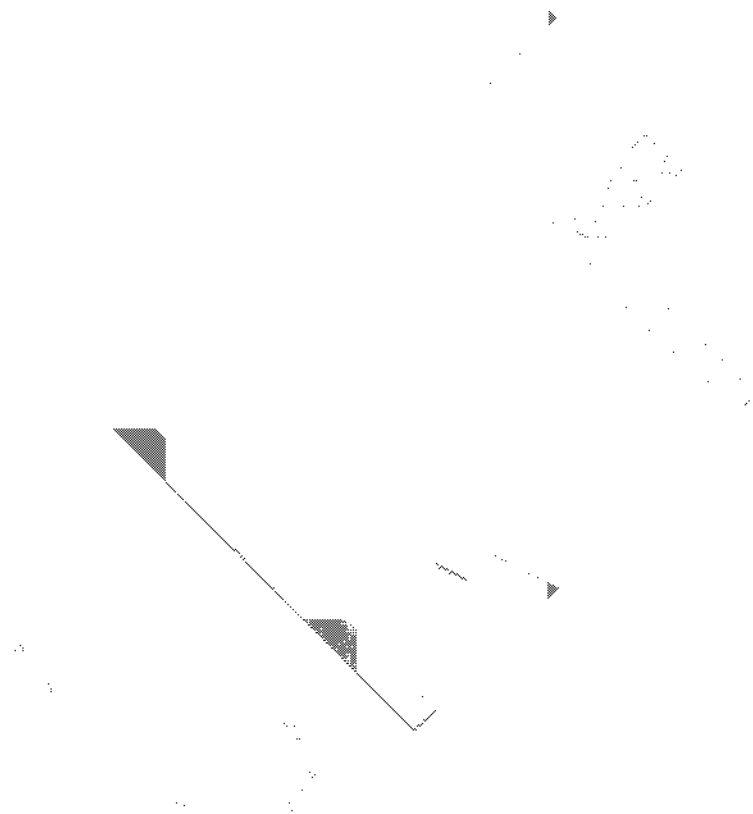
## INFORMATION HUB

There is a common belief that ARPASS' most important function is the generation of information to influence decision-making and facilitate development. Interestingly, in expressing this view, the partners seemed to be excluding themselves from role. One must therefore assume that this is the responsibility of the Strategy Director. For this 'information hub' function to provide long-term value, it must involve the identification and instigation of projects and initiatives for the partners to collaboratively deliver. It also requires a commitment from the partners to let that information have influence -- it must actually be of value.

## REALISING ARPASS' POTENTIAL



The graph above illustrates one of the primary points made by this report –the ARPASS collaboration is at a crossroads. If it continues with its current focus and does not seek to alter its approach, its impact (benefit) on the community will plateau or decline (complacency) and fail to deliver on its potential. It is not enough to work **harder**, there is a need to **improve** the way we deliver a regional approach to physical activity and sport in preparation for working **differently**. The Royal Commission both provides an opportunity to address this, and compels us to do so.



## FUNCTIONS FOR 2010 ONWARDS

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It is necessary to determine what ARPASS functions provide value to the physical activity and sport sector to ensure that these functions remain after 2010. At this point we know that the governance structure will likely change, and that this will have an unknown impact on this sector. While the structure may be beyond our control, a submission can be based around the functions that serve our community. This report is only the beginning of this Post 2010 discussion, but we can tentatively state that the key functions of ARPASS are:

- Regional information generated from community research to identify areas of greatest need
- Advocate for decision-making to be based on quality regional information, and to be aligned with a regional strategy
- Advocate for funding based on quality regional information, aligned with regional strategy, and aimed at areas of greatest need