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Chair

Ms. Julie Dabrusin

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

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• (1520)

[English]

The Chair (Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.)): This will begin our 141st meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. Today we are beginning our new study of indigenous participation in sport.

We have with us the Department of Canadian Heritage. We have Andrew Campbell, the assistant deputy minister for sport, major events and commemorations and Vicki Walker, director general of Sport Canada branch.

Please begin with your presentations.

Mr. Andrew Campbell (Assistant Deputy Minister, Sport, Major Events and Commemorations, Department of Canadian Heritage): I would like to begin the presentation by acknowledging that the land on which we're gathering today is the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe people.

[Translation]

I'd also like to introduce my colleague Vicki Walker, Director General at Sport Canada.

[English]

The Government of Canada has had a long-standing commitment to indigenous people's sport participation, which I will describe to you today.

[Translation]

I want to recognize, however, that indigenous peoples continue to face barriers to participation and representation in the Canadian sport system, at all levels and in all capacities.

The Government of Canada is committed to continuing its support of indigenous sport development in Canada and recognizes the role that sport plays in enhancing the lives of indigenous people by enabling more active and healthy lifestyles and full sports participation.

[English]

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission framed five calls to action around sport and reconciliation. Rather than list them off, I would like instead to speak to them as I describe the actions that the sport Canada branch of the Department of Canadian Heritage is taking to support indigenous people's participation in sport.

[Translation]

Let me begin by outlining the policy foundation that Sport Canada has for indigenous people's participation in sports.

Section 4 of the Physical Activity and Sport Act states that the policy principles are founded in part on "the treatment of all persons with fairness and respect, the full and fair participation of all persons in sport [...]"

One of the key objectives stated in the act is "to facilitate the participation of under-represented groups in the Canadian sport system".

To advance this objective, Sport Canada issued the Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport in 2005, developed in consultation with indigenous stakeholders.

The policy is a vision for an enhanced Canadian sport system that is inclusive of, and adaptive to, indigenous peoples. It aims to continually reduce barriers to indigenous participation, at all levels and across all contexts, and to fully realize sport's potential to drive socio-economic change in indigenous communities.

• (1525)

[English]

I'm now going to turn it over to my colleague, Vicki Walker, to describe the funding from sport Canada and how we are meeting the TRC calls to action. I'll then conclude by discussing how, together with indigenous communities and organizations, we're leveraging the power of sport.

Vicki.

Ms. Vicki Walker (Director General, Sport Canada Branch, Department of Canadian Heritage): For the purposes of advancing indigenous sport participation, there are four key mechanisms. First, there is funding to national sport organizations such as Curling Canada or Swimming Canada. Second, there is funding to national multi-sport service organizations such as Motivate Canada or the Coaching Association of Canada. These are organizations that lead or coordinate services to the national sport community. Third, there is funding through federal-provincial-territorial bilateral agreements. Fourth, there is funding to host sport events.

[Translation]

In 2017-2018 Sport Canada invested over \$450,000 in multisport service organizations to support indigenous sport development and leadership skills in indigenous communities. In the text you have before you, you will note that the figure cited is \$660,000 instead of \$450,000. That is because a portion of those funds is given directly to another organization that deals with this matter; I'll get to it soon.

Included among multisport service organizations spending in 2017-2018 was a contribution of \$800,000 to the Aboriginal Sport Circle, which is the national organization responsible for advancing indigenous sport development in Canada.

[English]

Sport Canada has a long-standing funding relationship with the Aboriginal Sport Circle, which began in 1995. The Aboriginal Sport Circle is recognized as Canada's national voice for indigenous sport, which brings together the interests of the Inuit, first nations and Métis peoples.

The aboriginal long-term participant development pathway, launched in 2016, was developed by the Aboriginal Sport Circle and the Sport For Life Society and was financially supported by Sport Canada.

[Translation]

The purpose of the Aboriginal Long-Term Participant Development Pathway is to increase the percentage of indigenous children and youth who become physically literate, define a pathway for indigenous athletes into high performance sports, and increase the number of indigenous people who are active for life.

Sport Canada also encourages sports participation and physical activity among children and youth by supporting sports participation projects and activities through bilateral agreements with the provinces and territories.

[English]

Since 2003, Sport Canada has contributed \$5 million annually, through bilateral agreements, to promote participation in sport by Canadians. This investment is matched by provinces and territories. An additional \$1 million was invested in 2008, 2014 and 2017 to support provincial and territorial team travel to the North American Indigenous Games.

Through the bilateral agreements between 2012 and 2017, 343,263 indigenous people have participated in activities as athletes and have received training in coaching, leadership and officiating. The breakdown of these participants by gender is 182,695 males, 156,863 females and 3,705 non-identified individuals. Out of this total, 1,801 indigenous women and 3,903 indigenous men received coaching, leadership and officials training.

[Translation]

Budget 2017 announced funding to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action. In particular, the TRC identified a need for stable funding for, and access to, community sports programs that reflect the diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities of indigenous peoples; programs for coaches, trainers, and sports officials that are culturally relevant for

indigenous peoples; and anti-racism awareness and training programs.

• (1530)

[English]

The Minister of Science and Sport announced an increase of funding to the Aboriginal Sport Circle, beginning in 2017-18 in the amount of \$800,000 to support indigenous sport leadership and the promotion of culturally relevant sport programming. This increased funding to the Aboriginal Sport Circle is an important response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which specifically asked for a reduction of barriers to sport participation, an increase in the pursuit of excellence in sport and a building of capacity in the Canadian sport system for the inclusion of indigenous peoples.

[Translation]

Part of the Budget 2017 investment is going toward the Aboriginal Sport Circle to provide additional workshops on the Aboriginal Long-Term Participant Development Pathway to key partners including national sports organizations.

The second component of the Budget 2017 investment increases the offering of relevant sports programming through the bilateral agreements with the provinces and territories, in the amounts of \$1.0 million in 2017-2018, \$1.3 million in 2018-2019, \$1.5 million in 2019-2020, \$1.8 million in 2020-2021, and \$2.0 million in 2021-2022, in contributions under Vote 5. This funding will sunset in 2021-2022.

[English]

Funding directed to the governments of the provinces and territories is being used to increase the operational capacity of provincial and territorial aboriginal sport bodies. Building on the Aboriginal Sport Circle's leadership and guidance, these organizations are well positioned to support community-relevant programs and services. Within this funding, each province and territory receives an amount to help offset the cost of the North American Indigenous Games 2020 team preparation and team travel.

The North American Indigenous Games are a multi-sport games for youth 13 to 19 years old. They showcase unity, sport, culture, youth, volunteerism and teamwork between first nations, Métis, Inuit and non-indigenous communities. They were founded on the principles of promoting healthy lifestyles, building self-image and promoting indigenous role models through sport and culture.

The Chair: Excuse me. You are now at just over 10 minutes. I see that you have a fair bit left. If you want to quickly do some highlights, you can bring out some of the rest in questions afterwards.

[Translation]

Mr. Andrew Campbell: It may be preferable to discuss the advantages of sports for communities, nationally and internationally. Of course, thanks to the investments made in the past, there is something to point to.

[English]

Budget 2018 announced funding of \$47.5 million over five years, and \$9.5 million annually, for use towards culturally relevant sport, to achieve social development outcomes for indigenous peoples and to advance reconciliation.

To be clear, this is not one of those types of activities that Vicki was just talking about, but an extension beyond what was announced in budget 2017.

The design of this initiative has been ongoing over the year, with the Aboriginal Sport Circle and indigenous communities across the country. We are looking at sport for social development initiatives, such as working to keep at-risk youth out of the justice system, helping indigenous youth feel like a part of their communities, and working on such issues as mental health and childhood obesity within indigenous communities. We know that the numbers of students, and their parents and teachers, will be significant throughout the indigenous communities. We are excited to be advancing these initiatives in the coming year.

[Translation]

We are now ready to respond to any questions committee members may have for us.

• (1535)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We will begin our question period.

I yield the floor to Mr. Long for seven minutes.

[English]

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon to our witnesses. They've been very informative presentations. When we talk sports, we're in my wheelhouse. I was one of the principals of the Saint John Sea Dogs, a Quebec major junior hockey team. It was an expansion team that we brought to Saint John in 2005. I was very involved in the Quebec major junior hockey league, in development, recruiting, drafting, hiring, firing and so on.

In my time as president of the Saint John Sea Dogs, among all of the players we brought in from all over the country—actually all over the world, it's safe to say—we had two players who were indigenous youth. It's striking that it was so low, and that as an executive in the league, sitting around members' tables, board tables and governors' tables, we really had no discussion and no initiatives. There certainly was no ill intent there, but looking back now, it's quite remarkable that there wasn't more discussion with respect to minority groups, and in particular, indigenous groups.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission issued several calls to action regarding sport, including the development of a national sports program, initiatives inclusive of indigenous peoples and an elite development program for indigenous athletes. Can you elaborate on some of the steps you've taken to address the calls to action, and what kind of success you've had, or challenges or barriers you've faced?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: One of the elements we are particularly proud of is in direct response to that specific call to action you're referring to. That is, as Vicki mentioned, putting together the long-term participant development pathway, which is a fairly hefty series of documents, with the Aboriginal Sport Circle and Sport for Life. At the same time, we worked on an aboriginal coaching stream with the Coaching Association of Canada, where we're bringing coaches on board from two perspectives. Within that stream, we have indigenous participation, and non-indigenous coaches getting training in culturally sensitive coaching techniques.

Another one of the initiatives we're looking at, with both the Aboriginal Sport Circle and the provincial-territorial-aboriginal sport organizations, is having them build the capacity to start community building, so that the base of the pathway, where you start to move people towards elite athletics, grows.

The last one is through the carded athlete program, where we started to ask people to self-identify. We are having more indigenous athletes continue to self-identify, and get that development.

Mr. Wayne Long: Thank you for that.

Ms. Walker, is there anything you want to add to that?

Ms. Vicki Walker: Your question is interesting, because I think it points to what may have been a barrier to participation.

Research indicates to us that organizations in the mainstream sport system are sometimes not culturally attuned and in a position to welcome aboriginal athletes. There are a number of elements to the work we're doing. Andrew mentioned sensitization for coaches, not only to develop capacity for aboriginal coaches but to help others who take coaching training and officials to understand what they can do to make their environment more welcoming.

This is true also in high-performance sport milieux. We've seen in the past that some athletes will get to a certain level and then may choose not to go any further. Again, research has indicated that we can introduce some things into those environments that are going to be culturally attuned to what aboriginal athletes require to keep them involved.

• (1540)

Mr. Wayne Long: We've had hundreds of players through the organization and have certainly made note of some players who might have had anxiety issues, or this or that. Thinking back now, we did have some indigenous youth come through our program—and some were leaders—but we never gave it a second thought as to the challenges or the barriers they faced.

Can you go back 10 or 15 years and touch on the progress that has been made since? Has substantial progress been made? Or are you looking at this as if we're at the start and moving forward?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I think one of the indicators to look at is that 10 to 15 years ago—I could get you specific dates—there were about three provincial-territorial aboriginal sport organizations, and today we have one in every province and territory. A lot of that building of capacity has come through the Aboriginal Sport Circle. All three of the national indigenous organizations have said that this is the group they would like to have deal with the issue of sport. I think that's really helped because it's given us a pathway within the indigenous community to start moving a lot of these types of initiatives forward.

I think the other one we see on an ongoing basis is the reintroduction of things like the Tom Longboat Awards. The reintroduction of awards like this have allowed indigenous champions to step forward and speak on behalf of their communities. Certainly that was called for in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action, as well.

Significant work has been done as well by different leaders within the Assembly of First Nations. They have an indigenous action group that has brought forward some sport directions for communities to follow. Certainly that's one.

The Chair: I will have to cut it there.

Perhaps you can bring out some of that information with the other questions.

[Translation]

I now yield the floor to Mr. Blaney for seven minutes.

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to welcome all of our witnesses.

I am pleasantly surprised by the commitment shown by Sport Canada and Canadian Heritage to support indigenous participation in sport. In my opinion, this starts with local infrastructure in communities and on reserves.

Before speaking to the witnesses, I would like to underscore the fact that this is the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. We make collegial, in camera decisions about the subjects we study. This allows my New Democratic colleague and I to suggest topics. However, the government has a majority. Even if the committee is independent from the government, some of its members are a part of that government, and as such they make the decisions regarding the topics we study.

I'd like to express a reservation. It would seem much more appropriate to me that the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, of which I have been a member, conduct this study, as its subject matter goes far beyond the scope of the assistance Canadian Heritage provides to indigenous people. Having visited several indigenous communities, I have seen the community infrastructures that really allow indigenous people to develop their skills.

I'd like to mention some facts for the benefit of those who are listening to us and may have some questions about the mandate of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

I'm thinking here of Guy Fournier of the *Journal de Québec*, who is interested in developments in the media. I'm also thinking of the artists who are seeing their sources of income collapse, and of the fact that Facebook is celebrating its 15th anniversary. I note that the Canada Media Fund, whose mandate is to support our culture, is seeing its revenue decrease considerably because the income it receives from cable distributors is declining, and because Internet service providers are not covered by the law. The news is replete with issues of burning concern with respect to the support of our cultural industry and our heritage. I'm also thinking of the repairs to the Quebec Citadel, which we had to storm the barricades for given the government's inaction, so as to ensure that original stone would be used for this heritage building. Canadians are entitled to expect that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage will examine these matters.

We have just seen the government table a bill to amend the Income Tax Act, and people are wondering why the government suddenly wants to subsidize the media, although the law gives us the means to act.

● (1545)

[English]

Mr. Wayne Long: Madam Chair, I have a point of order. With respect, I question the relevance of this.

The Chair: I was going to go there. I was actually just very interested to hear Mr. Blaney's support, once again, for over-the-top providers providing funding into the media funds.

On that note, we have discussed before, Mr. Blaney, that the North American Indigenous Games is in fact funded through the heritage department and this issue does fall within heritage. It is within their mandate.

I accept if you're not very interested in this study, but it is a study that the committee has undertaken. You do have four minutes left if you have any questions.

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Blaney: Very well.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I thank my colleague Mr. Long, and I acknowledge his efforts.

Last week I saw the movie *Indian Horse*, in which indigenous people manage, through sports, to overcome the trauma they suffered in residential schools. It's a work of fiction, but it is close to reality. I remember seeing indigenous athletes, like those from the Kitigan Zibi community, go as far as the National Hockey League.

I deplore the fact that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage decided to study only a fraction of a program instead of the entire program. Sports and indigenous issues fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. I'm beginning to have doubts about the government's will to really tackle the extremely important issues that exist currently with regard to heritage, culture, and the preservation of our heritage buildings. That is what I had to say.

I will turn the floor back to our witnesses and let my colleagues ask their questions.

I'd simply like to add one point concerning the Auditor General.

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Blaney, but if you want to put questions to the witnesses, please do so, because you have less than three minutes left.

Hon. Steven Blaney: Very well, Madam Chair.

I've finished my comments and I will yield the floor to my colleague Mr. Shields.

[English]

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Thank you.

Thank you to the witnesses for being here today.

You ran through a large variety of numbers. Over 80% of it is going to cultural sports; that's a large number. You've got less than 20% in the rest of the sports and organizations. That 80% is a huge drastic change in what you're looking to do.

In my world of sports, and I think I mentioned it at this committee, there's a bust in the former building of Senator Gladstone. I knew of the senator. His grandson is the only Canadian to have won a timed event in the national rodeo finals in Las Vegas. I'm very familiar with that type of sport, the indigenous participation and the youth.

When you're talking about this 80%, you're changing drastically where you're going. Can you explain? I know all the other organizations, but all of a sudden 80% of your funding is going to something totally different.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I will maybe touch on a couple of points there. The funding that we are talking about is additional funding that has come in from—

Mr. Martin Shields: Yes, I've got that "additional", but where is it going?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Within the rest of the funding envelope, so—

Mr. Martin Shields: I know what the rest is, don't go there. I want to know where that 80% is? What are you doing?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: That's going to indigenous organizations to—

Mr. Martin Shields: Cultural.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: —to, one, start to gain capacity in some of those organizations so, as we had said, to help organizations like provincial-territorial sport organizations and—

• (1550)

Mr. Martin Shields: No, you said cultural, the word here is cultural, cultural sports.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Right, sorry, the words that we had in fact used were that they would be culturally relevant and culturally sensitive. In culturally relevant, they still would be sports that you know such as three-on-three basketball, where last year's Tom Longboat winner had come from.

They would still be sports, but we are focusing—and the indigenous communities are focusing—on the types of sport that attract indigenous youth and indigenous participation.

Mr. Martin Shields: That term denotes something totally different, because there are cultural sports that are in their heritage

that are no different from the sports you're talking about: rodeo, basketball, hockey. When you're talking about cultural sports, that's a different denotation. Do you understand why I'm saying that?

The Chair: Unfortunately, that brings you to the end of your time. [Translation]

I yield the floor to Mr. Nantel for seven minutes.

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I thank the witnesses for being here this afternoon.

The study we are doing follows up on a motion that was submitted about two years ago by a member of the committee, who is in fact here, fortunately. The motion reads as follows:

That the Committee undertake a study of no more than seven meetings examining Metis, First Nation and Inuit participation in amateur and professional sport across Canada; consult with the directors of the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) to find best practices on Indigenous participation in sport from across North America; make recommendations which will encourage increased participation in amateur and professional sport as well as increased fitness levels/health of Indigenous citizens, with a focus on youth; and report its findings back to the House.

I wanted to reread this motion, because, like my Conservative colleague, I am well aware that this is a very important topic. Indeed, it is such an important topic that it has spilled over into the territory of the committee. We agree on that; that's very clear.

If I understood correctly, the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission contains five recommendations to Sport Canada, calls to action 87 to 91.

In about one minute, can you tell us what you expect from our committee? What recommendations would you like us to make to help you reach the objectives of the commission's five calls to action?

[English]

The Chair: I just want to flag as a warning that, because they are public servants, there might be some limitations on how they can answer that question.

I open it to you to answer as you wish.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: That's so elegant of you.

[Translation]

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Thank you, Madam Chair.

We are implementing all of the initiatives that were announced in the last two budgets. I believe some of these will help to achieve the goals of the calls to action.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you. This gives us some idea of the information we might have obtained, especially after our chair's warning.

I have read about the beneficial effects, in the sports arena, of the efforts made by communities like the one that welcomed Joé Juneau. As my Conservative colleague said, there is a chain of interventions, clearly. If we want there to be another Carey Price, for example, young people have to be able to play hockey. And for them to be able to play hockey, there has to be an arena. Besides an arena, there has to be a coach, motivated teams, and so on.

It is true that this goes somewhat beyond the scope of our study. That is why I too agree with our Conservative colleague. I hope that during the hour set aside for committee business after this meeting, we will be able to explore the motions I have introduced. I've mentioned them two or three times, but without any results. And yet, I specified that I had tabled motions, particularly the most relevant one.

I am glad to see that the Conservative Party is becoming aware of cultural issues and of the foreign invasion of all of the new platforms we occupy. We indeed managed to have Canadian content on these platforms for the past 50 years. Today, there is an invasion of foreign content.

On this topic, my motion says: That the committee, in view of the upcoming review of the Broadcasting Act and the Telecommunications Act...

• (1555)

The Chair: Mr. Nantel, I simply want to mention that we will have an hour at our disposal after the witnesses' appearance.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Yes, but I would like to read my motion. I am sure it will be of interest to the representatives of Canadian Heritage. Around the water cooler, they talk to the people who deal with these things. So I will continue to read it.

The Chair: Yes, but...

Mr. Pierre Nantel: My motion reads as follows: That the committee, in view of the upcoming review of the Broadcasting Act and the Telecommunications Act, undertake a comparative study on similar legislation concerning broadcasting and telecommunications in other jurisdictions, and on recent reforms in those areas; and that the committee make recommendations and report its findings to the House.

I would like to point out that the Senate is conducting a similar study. These are extremely important issues. Obviously, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is deeply connected to identity. This is, once again, extremely important. I am not an expert on indigenous matters but, in my opinion, a decision could conceivably be made to create a standing committee on achieving these recommendations, those that deal with sport, specifically. Why not?

I am the first to deplore that the barn is on fire. That is what is happening to Canadian content on our screens. I thus expect the government to take a responsible attitude and to agree that the Senate study should have a counterpart here. It is our responsibility to take care of our heritage and to encourage the sports activities of first nations. If anyone shows restraint in the media, it is certainly the first nations.

I don't want to mix all of these topics up, but I do hope that we will be able to discuss these issues during the hour set aside for committee business. I hope that the Liberal Party will agree to defend our system firmly. If I have a few seconds left, I would like to say that if there's one thing I have learned in politics over the past seven years, it is that the most effective way of solving a problem is to first look at what other countries have done to change things. We could simply draw inspiration from everything that has happened in Europe with regard to regulations imposed on Web giants, and the presence of local content in what is offered to spectators. Cutting our young people off from their roots is a very serious issue. Today, eight-year-old children are not exposed to any Canadian content when they borrow their mother's iPad.

The Chair: I simply want to remind everyone that we did a study on women and girls in sport. So, our committee has already studied that topic.

Mr. Vandal now has the floor for seven minutes.

Mr. Dan Vandal (Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, Lib.): I have seven minutes?

[English]

Okay.

Thank you very much for being here.

The first thing I want to say is that when my friend Wayne Long talked about his involvement in sport what he didn't mention is that he's an active amateur boxer who's had several fights recently, and probably has several more bouts lined up in the next few months.

A voice: In the House?

Mr. Wayne Long: No, I've retired.

A voice: He's taking offers presently.

Mr. Dan Vandal: Tell me a little about the whole initiative of sport for social development. I know you didn't get to that part of the presentation, but budget 2018 announced funding of \$47.5 million over five years. When I read the intent, I think it's something that is incredibly beneficial, leveraging the power of sport for improvements in individuals.

Maybe you can spend 90 seconds or a couple of minutes on that.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Yes. We've certainly had lots of groups. As we've gone out and done consultations, we've had lots of great examples come back to us on different groups where they've had sport in the morning, for example, and for the rest of the day the kids have been able to concentrate better in school. We've had lots of empirical pieces come back to us on that.

We have everything from kids' performance being better in school with physical activity to sport actually being one of those elements that help bring at-risk youth, as well as at-risk adults, into an environment where they get social cohesion and social support. From that perspective, there are a number of initiatives, and certainly we've seen this from the indigenous groups that we have been meeting with.

• (1600)

Mr. Dan Vandal: Who are you working with, which indigenous groups?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Obviously the Aboriginal Sport Circle is our main group, but also all the provincial and territorial aboriginal sports organizations. On top of that, we've been meeting with individual organizations with sport, such as some local organizations where we've looked at what they've done. I was talking earlier about Spirit North, a sport group that was taking cross-country skiing into different classrooms.

Mr. Dan Vandal: Can you tell me about the work that sport for social development has done? How much of it is outside of cities? How much of it is in cities?

The reason I ask is that I know a lot of people traditionally think of reserves when we talk about helping indigenous and first nations people. That's absolutely true. However, I come from Winnipeg, and young indigenous people, Métis and first nations, are the fastest-growing demographic in Winnipeg. That's where we need to put a strategy together to provide exercise and to provide self-esteem.

How much of the sport for social development work is divided up between the urban and the rural or reserve?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: There's not a direct number that we can give you on that division. Some of those projects are just coming forward now, so we'll see where some of that ends up.

Right now, we distribute the funds based on a floor approach, where everybody gets the same floor from a provincial sports organization. Then we build on that, based on rural and urban population of indigenous people. Obviously, groups that are further afield sometimes come with further costs, but the hope or the idea is that this would be for the entire indigenous population of Canada, not just on reserve or just in the cities.

Mr. Dan Vandal: That's including urban.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Correct.

Mr. Dan Vandal: Okay.

There's a lot of information in your presentation. I've been reading quickly.

Bilateral agreements have been around since 2003. Lots of money has been invested in partnership with provinces. Are there specific objectives in those bilaterals for engaging youth? How many youth and what types of activities?

Tell me a bit about the bilateral agreements.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: The bilateral agreements do include lots of performance indicators that we have built directly within them.

One of the key ones—sorry that we didn't this bring up—is actually matching. When we are providing funding to provinces and territories, they're in fact matching that and moving that money to the provincial and territorial aboriginal sports organizations. There is a matching element to that.

Mr. Dan Vandal: Does that include the territories?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Yes. It's with each province and each territory.

Mr. Dan Vandal: So each province has to match the amount of resources we put in?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Correct.

Mr. Dan Vandal: Even Manitoba?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Correct.

Mr. Dan Vandal: And Manitoba has signed the bilateral?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: We have an ongoing bilateral agreement with all the provinces and territories, yes.

Mr. Dan Vandal: It sounds as if you keep pretty good records or results from the bilaterals, based on the information you have.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Absolutely.

Mr. Dan Vandal: What's your secret for that? We're working across other departments and we can't seem to figure out where our money is going.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I don't think there is a secret to it. But I think in the area of sport, maybe there's one. It is such an element within society that brings people together. I think that's a place where a lot of organizations and a lot of provincial organizations say it makes a lot of sense to co-invest.

Mr. Dan Vandal: Can you tell me a little bit about infrastructure? Do we fund infrastructure at all—sports infrastructure on or off reserve, or in the cities?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Yes, we do, through the infrastructure program and as well through Indigenous Services. But they would be better placed, both Infrastructure Canada and Indigenous Services, to answer your question specifically around the infrastructure, both on and off reserve.

Mr. Dan Vandal: Can you tell me a little bit about the partnerships with Indigenous Services?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: We work with them on a daily basis, looking at how we can ensure that investments they are making are also ones that we can help augment.

•(1605)

The Chair: That actually brings you to the end of your time. Thank you very much.

We are now going to Mr. Yurdiga for five minutes, please.

Mr. David Yurdiga (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the department officials for coming today.

The first thing I want to talk about is the difference between urban and the more isolated rural communities. As we're all aware, we see a lot of industry or local businesses sponsoring teams or various activities, but we don't see that same sort of fairness in the north. Obviously, there are a lot fewer businesses. They don't have the same opportunity.

I was just curious. Is there an adjustment to compensate for more urban settings compared to the rural, isolated communities? Can you just say briefly what the department is doing to compensate?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: When we look at the formula we use when we're giving money to provincial and territorial governments that then moves on to provincial and territorial aboriginal sports bodies, there is a factor that's built in for the rural nature of that province or territory, because as we know, the costs are higher to do some of those things.

I think the other one that we didn't touch on, but is an important element, is the Arctic Winter Games. The Arctic Winter Games are principally in the north, but in northern Alberta as well. Sport Canada provides a significant amount of the funding toward the Arctic Winter Games and, in fact, has been increasing that funding to ensure that participants can travel to the games.

Mr. David Yurdiga: I'm just looking at indigenous participation in sports. There's such a wide range. A lot of times, from my perspective, I don't know what that includes. I don't know if you have any documents defining what you consider a sport. A lot of times people will consider certain competitions as a sport, like dance competitions. Is that a sport? I'm not sure. I think from my perspective, I need a definition. What does the department currently do? Who are they funding? We don't want to leave anyone out. Some cultural sports are maybe not considered a sport in your mandate.

Can you just elaborate a little bit on what you consider a sport and what's not?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: With regard to the definition of national sports organizations, there is actually a two-page definition, which I didn't bring today, but we can certainly share it with the committee.

Outside of that, from indigenous organizations, and certainly from a social development perspective, it's more what the indigenous community is coming to us and talking to us about in terms of what those types of sporting activities are. For instance, on a national basis, you may not have—I always get the name of it wrong—what is essentially field hockey with a double ball. That's a sport, which, within certain indigenous communities.... Certainly, for sports such as broomball and others, which have female indigenous groups with high participation, we would look towards funding those types of activities as well, through the community saying, "These are important from our perspective in the sport area."

I will say that within the Arctic Winter Games there are games such as pole push, which would not be a traditional sort of game that many of us would have grown up with but is quite a popular sport throughout the north. There's the one-foot high kick, which is a sport. Johnny Issaluk, a great Canadian, has been able to win world championships in that. It would not be on the Olympic agenda, but within the indigenous community it is considered as part of their sport.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you.

I'll share my time with Mr. Blaney.

The Chair: You have 45 seconds.

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Blaney: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

It was Mr. John Chabot. He played for the Montreal Canadiens, the Detroit Red Wings, the Pittsburgh Penguins and he helped rehabilitate young offenders by sharing his knowledge with them.

I'd like to read one last quote from Mr. Guy Fournier. It is taken from today's edition of *Le Journal de Montréal*: "The issues of the digital era are causing great turbulence in a sector that provides thousands of jobs and represents billions of dollars".

If, on behalf of the Canadian government, the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage does not study this, who will? What is our work as members of Parliament if it is not to deal with issues we are mandated to study?

• (1610)

The Chair: Mr. Blaney, your speaking time has elapsed.

It is now Mr. Chen's turn.

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[English]

I'm very pleased to hear from our witnesses today that the Tom Longboat award was reinstated for federal recipients. Can you share with me when that occurred? When was the award not given out?

Ms. Vicki Walker: It was reinstated in 2017 specifically in response to call to action number 87.

Andrew, do you know when it was suspended?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: We certainly have people behind us who might be able to answer that. I'm going to turn to them for one second.

A voice: It was 2012.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: It was in 2012. There you go.

Mr. Shaun Chen: I'm asking because I have a connection to Tom Longboat in my riding. I have a school that is named Tom Longboat Junior Public School. Tom Longboat is, of course, known as the dominant long-distance runner of his time, but what some people might not know is that he was born into poverty. He was forced to attend a residential school at the age of 12. He grew up poor. This is the legacy, the history that has been passed on from generation to generation, faced by indigenous youth.

I look at this issue and I'm new to this committee, I'm a guest today, but I know that the government committee led by Dennis Mills, a former MP who is a predecessor to the Chair's riding, released a report in 1998, and I just want to quote from that report:

Aboriginal people have a poverty rate comparable to that found in developing countries, an unemployment rate among adults of almost 25%, a poorly educated population and a dramatic suicide rate, which among 10- to 19-year-olds, is more than five times higher than that of their non-aboriginal counterparts.... Forty-four per cent of aboriginal people smoke daily, 61% report problems with alcohol abuse and 48% report problems with drug abuse.

I know that there was a significant investment made in last year's budget, \$47.5 million over the next five years, as my colleague mentioned, that is specifically targeted to expanding the use of sport to achieve social mobility in indigenous communities. From my other committee, public accounts, it was a very stark message that our Auditor General, the late Michael Ferguson, shared last year. He described Canada's inability to help improve the lives of indigenous peoples in Canada as "an incomprehensible failure".

We have come a long way, yet there is a lot more work to do. Can you share with me anything that has changed since that 1998 Mills report? What do you anticipate this budget of \$47.5 million will do to turn this around, so that the next auditor general does not come back and say that Canada has again failed our indigenous people?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I'm happy to say the Mills report had four major recommendations that related directly back to sport, and all four of those have been realized since 1998. One of them was the creation of aboriginal sports organizations across the country, and out of that, the Aboriginal Sport Circle was founded. There was a whole series that related to coaching and coaching strategies. With funding from the Coaching Association of Canada and major contributions from the Government of Canada, they've been able to bring aboriginal coaching to the fore. There are aboriginal coaching modules available for everyone, not just if you're indigenous. The government worked to create a funding framework for the North American Indigenous Games. That funding framework is now in place, is moving forward and will be looked at during the upcoming provincial-territorial ministers meeting.

Certainly there have been all of these things as well as adequate funding for sport bodies. We now have the sport bodies in each of the provinces and territories, with the assistance—50%—coming from each province and territory. On top of our dollars, this is giving

them stable and sustainable funding. Out of the Mills report, there were those recommendations and all have been met. That's the type of track record we want to build upon as we look at the types of investments that are now being brought and being asked for.

I think the biggest difference is that now we actually have that capacity and infrastructure within indigenous communities, so indigenous communities are leading indigenous communities to better sport outcomes and better outcomes overall, from a social development perspective.

• (1615)

The Chair: That brings us to an end, but that was a great way to conclude your testimony. I really appreciate you coming and sharing your knowledge with us.

We will be suspending briefly so that we can go to our in camera portion. Thank you.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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