



Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory

Standing Committee on Economics,
Industry and Recreation

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into barriers and opportunities for participation in community sports in the ACT

Submission number: 080

Submitter: Amber Collins

Date authorised for publication: 1 October 2025

From: LCommitteeEconomics@parliament.act.gov.au
To: [LA Committee - Economics](#)
Subject: submission received
Date: Tuesday, 23 September 2025 11:57:23 PM

Full Name and/or
Organisation:

Amber Collins

Email address:

Suburb:

Phone number:

Please select one of
these statements:

I understand that the committee may publish my submission along with my name, but without my contact details, unless I request that it be withheld or my submission be made confidential., I would like to be contacted about making my submission confidential or having my name withheld if published.

Do you feel you have
enough opportunities to
participate in sport in
your local community?:

Yes

Why/why not?:

Yes, however I find access to the ones I particularly enjoy (open water swimming), limited due to lack of year round water testing and safe entry sites at Lake BG.

Why do you like to
participate in sport?:

Physical fitness, Spending time with people/Socialising, Mental health & wellbeing, Other

If you selected 'other',
please provide further
details::

Sense of community

Does your local
neighbourhood offer
opportunities for you to
participate in sport,
organised or not?:

No, not enough

Please tell us about
your experience
participating in
community sport. For
example, what sports
you play, do you
volunteer for local
clubs, etc:

-Swimming with Canberra open water swim club/ Sunday social swimmers

Why is community
sport important to
you?:

It allows a place to share joy and fitness with like minded people. It forms a community. It creates a safe place for exercise without judgement.

What stops you from
participating in as
much sport as you'd
like to?:

It's too expensive, Lack of facilities , Lack of disability access

If you selected 'other'
please provide any
details::

What do you see as the
biggest barriers to
participating in
community sport in the
ACT and how would
you remove them?:

1. Lack of All-Year Water Quality Testing • Current testing is seasonal, so swimmers cannot be confident about safety in cooler months. • This discourages consistent year-round use of the lake for recreation. 2. Scrivener Dam Not Included in Monitoring • Scrivener Dam, located at the western end of the lake, is not included in regular testing. • As the control point for water flow out of the

Is there anything else
related to participation
in community sports in
the ACT which you
would like to add?:

Would you be
interested in speaking
to the Committee about
your experience at a
public hearing?:

Yes

I understand that I
cannot share my
submission until the
Committee publishes
it.:

Yes

From: [Amber Collins](#)
To: [LA Committee - Economics](#)
Subject: Inquiry into barriers and opportunities for participation in ACT sports
Date: Wednesday, 24 September 2025 12:18:47 AM

Hi there,

I have just completed my web form, however the summary was missing much of my response for the questions relating to the largest barriers and suggestions to overcome.

I thought I would email through my complete response to this question, as this issue is very important to me, and the larger swim community. The below is in relation to swimming in Lake BG.

1. Lack of All-Year Water Quality Testing

- Current testing is seasonal, so swimmers cannot be confident about safety in cooler months.

- This discourages consistent year-round use of the lake for recreation.

2. Scrivener Dam Not Included in Monitoring

- Scrivener Dam, located at the western end of the lake, is not included in regular testing.

- As the control point for water flow out of the lake, its exclusion leaves a critical gap in understanding overall lake health and downstream safety.

3. Unsafe or Inaccessible Swim Entries

- Many popular swim spots are rocky, steep, or have submerged hazards.

- This deters swimmers and creates risks of slips, cuts, and other injuries.

- Other recreational lakes provide sandy beaches or jetty-style entries, which are more inviting and accessible for children, older adults, and people with mobility limitations.

4. Lack of Lifesaving and Safety Equipment

- Key swimming areas currently have no AEDs, rescue stations, or emergency communication points.

- This creates hesitation for families and reduces the ability to safely host larger events.

- Orange City Council provides a strong model with Lake Canobolas, where AEDs, rescue tubes, and emergency phones are installed at swimming spots.

5. Absence of Showers and Basic Amenities

- Most swimming spots lack outdoor showers, meaning swimmers cannot rinse off after being in the lake.

- This is a hygiene issue (removing algae, bacteria, or debris from skin) and a practical barrier for people swimming before work or school.

- Showers are a standard feature at many coastal beaches and inland lakes, encouraging higher participation and making swimming part of everyday routines.

5.

6.

—

Recommendations for Removing These Barriers

1. Year-Round Water Quality Monitoring

- Expand ACT Government testing to all 12 months, with transparent public reporting.
- 2. Include Scrivener Dam in Monitoring Program
 - Add Scrivener Dam to routine testing, to provide a complete picture of water quality across the lake system.
- 3. Invest in Safe Access Infrastructure
 - Install sandy beach areas or jetties at high-use sites to provide safe, welcoming access.
 - Prioritise rocky or hazardous areas for upgrades, with universal access design in mind.
- 4. Install Lifesaving & Safety Stations
 - Place AEDs, rescue tubes, and emergency call points at major swim sites.
 - Promote this as part of Canberra's broader commitment to water safety.
- 5. Provide Showers and Basic Facilities
 - Install outdoor freshwater showers at key swimming spots.
 - Ensure facilities are low-maintenance, sustainable (e.g., solar-powered pumps, timed water flow), and positioned to complement existing amenities like toilets and change areas

Lake Burley Griffin is one of Canberra's greatest public assets. With modest investment in monitoring, safety, and infrastructure, it could become a truly inclusive, year-round swimming destination that supports community wellbeing, recreation, and active lifestyles.

Kind regards,
Amber