As the Olympic Games are the largest and most popular multisport event in the world and have been in existence for over a hundred years, it stands to reason that there should be a wealth of practitioner knowledge and vast corpus of academic research about: their management; the complex web of organisations associated with their planning and celebration; the impact they make, both in the community where they are staged and also more globally; and the legacy they leave behind in these communities. Yet, despite their global prominence, until recently ‘mega events’, such as the Olympic Games, have attracted relatively little research attention relative to other fields of study. This may be because ‘as a cultural phenomenon they appear to fall within and between a number of distinct and unrelated disciplines and areas’ (Roche, 2000: 5). However, since Roche’s comment, there has been a growth in sport and event scholarship in general and particularly regarding the Olympic Games. This increase in academic attention has grown both in terms of its quantity and scope. In all of these research areas, but especially in terms of the latter, recent academic emphasis has broadened the variety of disciplines and perspectives of the scholarship that now examines the Olympic Movement (see Warning, Toohey and Zakus, 2008).

Disciplines provide an accepted means of categorising research on the Olympic Games and they have largely determined the range of topics selected for study, the theoretical frameworks brought to bear on a topic and the research methodologies used (Toohey and Veal, 2007). According to Toohey and Veal, (2007) most humanities and social science disciplines and sub-disciplines, including history (arguably the first area of Olympic scholarly enquiry), economics, philosophy, politics and sociology, have contributed to better understandings about the Olympic Games. For example, economic analyses of the Games have become increasingly common and are now used by many cities to determine the feasibility of bidding for Games and as one, but by no means the only, means of evaluating their impact and legacy. Sociological research on the Olympics has examined the relationship between the media and the Games, the place of women in the Olympic Movement, as well as many other areas, especially within critical and cultural studies frameworks. Examining the legacy of the Games in a host city has incorporated historical, economic, sociological, urban studies, management and political analyses.

Another discipline that has evidenced an increase in scholars examining the Games is sport management, itself a fairly recent discipline. However, it is one that is growing in stature and now has a corpus of sound scholarship that can inform Olympic practitioners and academics alike. These links between academe and Olympic managers is important for the former to have real world relevance and the latter to advance practice. Part of the growth of sport management research on the Games can also be attributed to event management literature. These two areas of scholarship overlap, even though both can exist independently. Indeed, the boundaries between many of the disciplines that investigate the Games are blurred. This is not problematic per se, but does mean that scholars may need to broaden their Olympic gaze beyond
their home disciplines to be able to be cognisant of the range of relevant and recent work in areas other than their own.

Following the brief provided by the International Olympic Committee, Centre for Olympic Studies, this paper seeks to examine recent research on the topics of Olympic Games Management and Legacy by: analysing the topic; providing a review of relevant literature; and discussing three different and developing Olympic management research streams (risk management, knowledge management and legacy management). It will focus on some of the latest research in these areas, specifically looking at alternative and emerging studies, rather than more established and well known approaches. By doing this it seeks to anticipate future research directions.

This approach to moving knowledge forward can be explained by the information transfer cycle, which is depicted in Figure 1 below. According to this model, information and knowledge are created from the application of new techniques, new insights, and/or new research to existing information and knowledge (Warning, 2007). It is predicated on links, acceptance and/or rejection of past practice and may result in paradigm shifts.

Scholarship advances based on previous works and paradigm shifts in Olympic scholarship have meant that even these relatively new research streams are evidencing changes in their theoretical approaches. It is these changes that firstly create tensions with accepted research and practice, but can ultimately lead to new research directions as well as innovative, reflexive and responsive management. This, to me, is the potential of Olympic studies: not just a broadening of the disciplines that examine it, but conceptual alternatives leading to advances within these disciplines that can be applied to the management of the Games by various stakeholders.
Sport management

Sport management is a new and multidisciplinary field that integrates the principles of management to the sport industry (Lussier and Kimball, 2004; Covell et al, 2003). Research on more generalised management, although older, is still relatively new in terms of comparison to established academic disciplines. Management only became a generally accepted area of scholarly enquiry in the twentieth century. Central to much of the early management research was the examination of the functions of management and the roles of those who perform this. For example, in his seminal work, Henri Fayol suggested that the five functions of a manager are to plan, organize, command, coordinate and control to ensure organizational success (Fayol, 1949). Henry Mintzberg (1980) suggested that instead of conceptualizing management by functions it could be better understood by analysing the roles that managers perform. He determined that there were ten roles of a manager. These were: figurehead, leader, liaison, monitor, disseminator, spokesperson, entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator and negotiator (Covell et al, 2007). Even in the relatively short period since this influential research was conducted, our understanding of management and sport management has advanced and is now much broader in scope. The external and internal environments in which sport organizations exist have also altered. In terms of the former, Covell et al (2007) suggest that the most significant change is that contemporary sport organizations are too complex to be managed by managers alone and that responsibility is now more diffused throughout organizations. The Olympic Movement provides many practical examples
of this, such as the management philosophy of the Sydney Olympic Games, which was to devolve many decisions down to operational units.

In terms of the external environment, the forces of globalization that have accelerated in the last twenty years have meant that effective sport management has to be strategic and plan for changes on both global and local levels, not merely be reactive to events. Thus, contemporary sport management commonly involves the application of techniques and strategies that are also used in other commercial businesses as well as in government and non-profit organizations. Sport managers must employ strategic planning, manage human resources and deal a range of interconnected stakeholders. The strategic management process involves an overlap between preparation and opportunity (Hoye et al, 2006). ‘In strategic planning, management develops a mission and long-term objectives and determines in advance how they will be accomplished’ (Lussier and Kimball: 2004, p. 82). ‘However there are some aspects of strategic management, organizational structure, human resource management, leadership, organizational culture, governance and performance management… are unique to the management of sport organizations’ (Hoye et al: 2006, p.11). This is why sport management can stand alone as an academic discipline and why effective sport managers must understand the unique environment of sport.

Although sport management research has advanced and expanded its subject matter, Pitts (2001, p.1) argues that sport management needs to open out its dominant paradigms, “beyond the passive acceptance of constructed definitions and positions about sport management and its content without question. Thus, it is both necessary and prudent to view sport management beyond the traditional view of managing sports”.

The Olympic Games not only utilise sport management principles in their operations, but from an academic perspective, they also have a strong nexus to the discipline. For example, Frisby (2005 p.7) notes how the Olympic Games can provide rich insights into sport management research. ‘This involves questioning taken-for-granted knowledge and examining the complex relationships between local forms of domination and the broader contexts in which they are situated. This requires an understanding of how material and economic arrangements are enforced by contracts and reward systems.’ Similarly, Rosner and Shropshire (2004, p. 204) note that, ‘the business of the Olympics is a combination of organizations… each wields a certain degree of power and all must, sometimes with difficulty, work together to stage the Olympics’ (Rosner and Shropshire, p. 204). This is important as the Olympic Games involve the combination of a complex web of organisations that need to work together effectively. Thus, stakeholder theory, which will be mentioned in greater detail later, is an applicable theory that Olympic managers can utilise to ensure more effective outcomes.

While the work of the IOC and other many organisations within the Olympic Movement is ongoing, Olympic sport competition management and operations (such as that practiced by OCOGs) can be thought of in terms of beyond sport management. It can also be categorised as ‘event’ management. Some sport events are run by governing bodies themselves and in other cases by organisations formed specifically for that purpose, but with strong links to the parent body, which still has the final signoff. The Olympic Games fall into the latter category. Toffler (1990) called event
organisations ‘pulsating organisations’ because their structures grow then shrink. Hanlon and Jago (2000, p. 96) described their organisational characteristics as:

- ‘flexible
- flat, with a horizontal emphasis in terms of differentiation
- highly formalised
- decentralised, particularly during the peak stage of the event
- having teams of people in functional units: managers, operators and external support personnel
- innovative within a complex environment
- regularly transforming the internal structure
- needing to satisfy personnel.’

Thus, sport management and also event management are both areas of study that are growing in stature and scope, can overlap in their content, and provide understandings to Olympic practitioners on how the Games can be best organised to meet the needs of the 21st century. In both discipline areas, current scholarship is focussing on strategic rather than reactive management of the event and also looking at alternative and innovative solutions to long standing problems. This does not imply that all current practices are not working. Rather, it suggests that we can advance knowledge by innovation and building on previous best practice, as demonstrated by the information transfer cycle. By examining emerging research, Olympic Games knowledge can be advanced by investigating and implementing some innovative approaches to solve long-standing issues in Olympic Games management.

The first of these areas to be considered here is the area of risk management, in this case, specifically as it relates to terrorism. The majority of research and practice in this area has looked at technology as providing the only solution to Olympic security; however alternatives viewpoints demonstrate that understanding the context and cultural values of the host city and Olympic spectators is also necessary to achieve a balance between ensuring security for the Olympic family and enjoyment for those attending the Games. This view is intended to supplement the technologically driven approach rather than replace it.

**Risk Management**

Risk is concerned with the dangers that we identify, confront and control (Giddens: 1998). In recent decades, risk has become notorious as a litigious concept and one that has greatly affected management practices and approaches. Currently, effective management assumes that risk management strategies are incorporated into an organisation’s planning and operations. A comprehensive risk management plan includes: administrative issues; the identification of risks; approaches to managing identified risks; a continual evaluation and review of risk management practices (Miller: 1997, p. 259).

Risks can be managed in a way to reduce the likelihood of their occurrence. ‘Four approaches are (1) transfer, (2) reduction, (3) retention, and (4) elimination/avoidance. These are referred to as risk management approaches versus control approaches, as it is unlikely that management will be in a position to control loss. Rather, the aim is to manage risk and reduced associated losses’ (Miller, 1997: p. 263-4).
Risk management, although practised by the nonsport industry for decades became an increasingly essential requirement and directly related to the solvency and success of any sport business in the last two decades… Risk management has recently become an integral facet of sport business management for three primary reasons. First, the recognition of governmental immunity as a viable defence has diminished…. Consequently public entities… became more exposed to litigation. Risk management serves as a viable way to retain costs and better management product quality. Second, sport-related litigation continues to escalate… third, insurance coverage became prohibitive (Miller: 1997 p. 257).

More specifically, in terms of security management of sport events, as a form of risk management, ‘safety and security have always been a key function of stadium and arena management, with venue managers needing to keep their venues safe and secure within a broad risk management perspective’ (Sweaney: 2005. p. 22). However, since 11 September 2001 (9/11) the threat of terrorism has brought risk management to the forefront of mega sport event planning. While there has been considerable scholarly enquiry into the causes and effects of terrorism, as it relates to tourism and events in general (cf Hall, Timothy & Duval, 2003) there has less research in terms of terrorism, risk management and the Olympic Games (Toohey and Taylor, 2008).

Terrorist-based risk associated with sport is not without substance, as there were 168 terrorist attacks related to sport between 1972 and 2004 (Clark, 2004; Kennelly, 2005). Academic inquiry into sport violence has mostly overlooked this. Instead it has primarily investigated the causes and effects of violence perpetrated by players and spectators, especially hooligans (Atkinson & Young, 2002). Moreover, most of these studies have been located in discourses of sport sociology and/or psychology and criminology, investigating the cognitive, affective and overt behavioural aspects of violence. Implications drawn for sport management have primarily been associated with crowd control, risk management and athlete management (cf Whisenant, 2003; Kennelly, 2004; Rubin, 2004; Toohey and Taylor, 2008). However, as Elliot, Frosdick and Smith (1999, p.26) note, ‘the stadia industry has something to learn… from the research that has been carried out by academics in the areas of safety culture and crisis management’ One aspect of this is to begin understanding ‘risk as a multitude of perceptions about the source and level of threat or danger’ (Frosdick, 1999, p. 38), rather than assuming all spectators react to perceived security risks in the same way.

After the Black September group’s attack on Israeli athletes and officials at 1972 Munich Games, terrorism has affected the management of all subsequent Olympic Games. Johnson (2001) claims the Munich attack was the defining moment in the growth of modern terrorism. The international attention achieved by the attack demonstrated that terrorism could be an effective tactic in challenging governments or raising international awareness of a cause (Johnson, 2001).

From Munich on, the Games have instigated ever increasing sophisticated security planning; however, while this may have prevented some attacks, it has also resulted in some Draconian effects for athletes, officials and spectators. For example, the 1976
Games security was so intrusive that the ‘Village might well have been a prison camp’ (McIntosh, 1984, p. 26). Despite this, the security framework developed for these Games has provided the paradigm for all ensuing Olympic operations (Kennelly, 2005).

Yet, regardless of these measures, terrorists have continued to target the Games. The most serious of these, post Munich, was at the 1996 Atlanta Games where a bomb, planted in Centennial Park by an American, anti-abortion extremist, killed one spectator, resulted in a journalist who was covering the event dying of a heart attack, and over 100 more spectators being injured. These instances demonstrated that terrorism at a sporting event did not have to occur within the confines of Olympic venues to impact on the Games (Toohey, 2008).

Since the 11 September 2001 (9/11) terrorism attacks in the United States, the risk management implications of terrorism at mega sporting events has meant Olympic organizers have had to spend considerably more on security, making the hosting of the Games less appealing to or possible for many nations. Also the perceived risk of terrorism has been cited as a reason for low spectator numbers at the 2004 Olympics, thus affecting revenue from ticket sales, and it also negatively influenced the experiences of those who attended (Cashman, 2004; Taylor and Toohey, 2006).

The Games’ management challenge is to consider the different needs of Olympic spectators, the safety of the event, ensuring that the experience lives up to spectators’ expectations. While it may be difficult to achieve this balance there may be some positive outcomes from these circumstances. As Faulkner (2001, p. 137) noted, crises can have transformational connotations and may lead to innovation and the recognition of additional markets.

Thus, from an Olympic sport management perspective, studies that look at the effects of Olympic security on Games management, specifically relating to spectator, official and athlete experiences add a new dimension to the more traditional research that has been conducted on technical solutions to security.

**Information and Knowledge Management**

Another innovation in sport event management practice and research has been in the area of knowledge management. Knowledge management has emerged from a variety of other disciplines, such as human resource management, information technology, information management and communications, to become an entity in its own right.

Information and knowledge are core management resources necessary for organisational success, for example in proving results instantaneously at the event and disseminating information to the public in a timely manner. Thus they must be part of strategic planning (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002). The management of sport by necessity includes sophisticated uses of information, but information management is rarely recognized as a formal component of sport and event management. Sporting events include many information actions and processes. There is however another dimension; that of knowledge. Sport like any business is operating in a complex and global market. Sport management needs to be adaptive to change, effectively manage risk, integrate technology advances and build stakeholder intimacy. Knowledge management can assist in achieving these goals. It is a multi
disciplinary approach that assists organizations to achieve operational excellence in complex environments (Halbwirth and Toohey, 2005).

Sports organisations which manage events need to use knowledge to operate proficiently. An example of how this can occur will be explained in greater detail in section four. There are many challenges that such sporting organisations are facing in our contemporary global sporting environment characterised by:

- unpredictability and rapid change
- information overload
- demands for accountability and transparency in decision making
- financial reliance on sponsor and broadcast organisations
- growth in contract and short term employment patterns
- increased flexibility and power of information technology
- interconnectivity and reliance between organisations
- efforts to improve efficiency and decrease complexity (Halbwirth and Toohey, 2001).

For reasons such as these, many other organisations, regardless of the industry and community sector in which they operate, are recognising the importance of information, knowledge and learning as key strategic and operational resources and processes. However, for these capabilities to effectively contribute to goals and objectives of an organisation, they need to be actively and professionally managed. This includes utilizing the information that is stored in systems (electronic as well as hard copy), as well as the knowledge that is reflected in people and their networks within the organization. It also involves leveraging knowledge in the internal and external business environments for strategic advantage and financial outcomes. Since the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, the International Olympic Committee has embraced knowledge management. It has transferred information from one Games to the next, so that organising committees have not had to ‘reinvent the wheel’, but can learn effectively from the successes and failures of previous Games. Similarly, the IOC itself had looked internally to improve its own knowledge and successfully restructured its organisation to acknowledge how important knowledge management is to its own operations.

According to Halbwirth (2008):

Each Games organiser works within a specific information environment effected by regulations and legislation, national culture, strategic goals, resourcing levels and availability of technology. There is therefore no ‘right way’ to manage information and knowledge. Each Games will bring a unique approach.

There are, however some common themes:

- Establishment of a central coordinating information and knowledge management unit/department operational through the Games lifecycle from Candidature to Dissolution.
- While technologies enable the management and distribution of information it is the effective coordination and management of, not just the information technology, but also of people, culture, processes and content, that allows the organisation to fully leverage its information and knowledge assets.
The information and knowledge environment of the Organiser is characterised by exponential growth, constant change and diversity in a much shorter time frame than a normal business. Therefore, it is essential that information and knowledge management decisions and implementations reflect the short, intensive nature and legacy opportunities of the Games.

Legacy
Effective organisation of any sporting event does not culminate at the conclusion of the competition. There is the need for a well-planned wrap up phase and there should also be questions about the benefits, if any, that the event has left the host community that should be investigated by various stakeholders. This section looks at this latter aspect. Specifically, it raises the issue of when and how these benefits should planned. Recent advances in scholarship have gone beyond the current benchmark of post event economic evaluations to champion the triple bottom line impacts. The latest innovation has introduced an even more proactive strategy, advocated by Chalip and O’Brien (2007), that of leveraging.

Despite these academic advances, the issue of legacy has only fairly recently been brought to academic and practitioner attention. This is a necessary and overdue addition to Olympic Studies scholarship and Olympic Games practice. In the more generalised events and sport literature the concept of investigating legacy has more commonly been termed ‘impact’. The majority of early studies of impact focussed primarily on its economic aspects.

However, the impacts of mega and hallmark events are now typically measured on a multitude of indices including economic, tourism, commercial, physical, socio-cultural, psychological and political impacts. To completely assess an event’s impacts should require more than evaluating their short and medium-term economic and cultural benefits. It also requires a long-term evaluation, possibly even 10 years on or more, of the sustainability and durability, in other words the success, [sic] of the regeneration and legacies that were created as a result of staging the event’ (Faulkner & Raybould, 1995).

To date, use of a long term review has not been common practice in Olympic cities. Moragas et al, The Keys to Success (10 years on) stands as an exemplar to other Olympic cities as to what can be done.

The IOC has implemented the Olympic Games Global Impact study. Its principle objectives are:
‘to measure the overall impact of the Olympic Games; to assist bidding cities and future Olympic Games Organisers, through the transfer of strategic direction obtained from past and present Olympic Games, to identify potential legacies and thereby maximise the benefits of their Olympic Games; and to create a comparable benchmark across all future Olympic Games… For every OCOG the OGGI study covers a period of 11 years. The study commences when a city’s official Olympic candidacy is announced by the National Olympic Committee (NOC), two years
prior to when an Olympiad is awarded to a Candidate City, and concludes two years after the staging of the Olympic Games. Throughout the 11-year time-frame, the OGGI study requires an OCOG to collect data at specified intervals and to produce four OGGI reports’ (Olympic Review: 2006, http://multimedia.olympic.org/pdf/en_report_1077.pdf).

The question of who should consider legacy and take responsibility for it has not been settled. However, through the OGGI and other initiatives that the IOC has recently begun to suggest to OCOGS (and even to prospective candidature cities) the imperative for host communities to consider and proactively prepare, from early in their existence, and certainly long before the Games are even held, a long-term sustainable, post-Olympic legacy for their community. This is a change from previous IOC and OCOG’s strategies, where the Games were the focus of an OCOG’s preparations and little thought was given to wrapping up after athletes and officials had left. As a consequence, post Games planning has been, at best, ad-hoc and perceived as optional, rather than essential. In some cases, for example, Montreal after the 1976 Olympic Games, host cities have been left with large financial debts to repay or underused facilities to maintain. Their post Games planning has been focused on repayments or ensuring that they are not left with white elephants, rather than implementing more positive legacy outcomes (Toohey, 2008).

As a function of this new IOC approach, planning for a legacy is now also a requirement of the Host City Contract that the successful Bid city must sign with the IOC after being awarded the Games. Part of the rationale behind the IOC’s advocacy of greater legacy planning by Games organisers has been to offset the Games’ escalating cost, size and complexity. Also, as staging an Olympics comes at a significant cost to the governments that host them, it makes sense that host communities will want to maximize their return of investment. One logical strategy to achieve this is ensuring that an Olympic ‘legacy’ remains in a host city long after the event (Cashman, et al 2004: Toohey, 2008).

Even without much planning each Olympic city gains a material legacy through Olympic related construction of new and remodeled buildings and sports facilities, as well as museums, archives, repositories, souvenirs, memorabilia and monographs. But there is also an intangible legacy that Cashman refers to as an ‘Olympism’ legacy. This consists of the Games’ staff and volunteers’ intellectual capital produced, the memories that the population has experienced because of the Games and the physical skills of the Games’ athletes. He argues that, together the tangible and intangible legacies represent a substantial asset, and can provide educational, sporting and humanising benefits for the host nation. One practical way that the Olympism legacy has been implemented is by the Games’ workforce onselling its knowledge, products and services to future mega-events organizers, as discussed in the previous section.

The promise of legacy has now become heavily featured in applicant city bid documents, despite the fact that not all legacy promises will translate into outcomes. It also is an important argument used to win local support for cities as they, in turn, seek to win the votes of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) members. But, in the successful host cities the legacy issue tends to recede into the background in the
years before the Games, amid the more immediate preoccupations with budgeting, planning and organising the event itself (see Cashman et al., 2005). After the event, the question of the legacy once again becomes an issue for the host community, especially when it is realised that some of the expected Olympic benefits have not materialised and, additionally, that not all related expenditures cease with the extinguishing of the Olympic Flame. To date, there is no single successful formula for event legacy planning (Cashman, 1998).

The IOC has also engaged seriously with legacy in an academic way, beginning with a ‘legacy symposium’ in Lausanne in 2002 (Cashman et al., 2004). The conclusions of the 2002 IOC International Symposium on Legacy of the Olympic Games, 1894-2000, stated:

After hearing papers talking about different experiences from games and cities, the idea emerged that the effects of the legacy have many aspects and dimensions, ranging from the more commonly recognized aspects – architecture, urban planning, city marketing, sports infrastructures, economic and tourist development – to others that are just as, if not more important, but that are less recognised. In particular, it is necessary to point out the importance of so called intangible legacies, such as production of ideas and cultural values, intercultural and non-exclusionary experiences (based on gender, ethnicity or physical abilities), popular memory, education, archives, collective effort and voluntarism, new sport practitioners, notoriety on a global scale, experience and know-how, etc. These intangible legacies also act as a motor for the tangible ones to develop a long-term legacy (IOC, 2004: p.2).

Cashman (1998) offered a more condensed categorisation of seven main categories of Olympic legacy. These are as follows:

- Economic (direct & indirect)
- Built environment (non-sporting)
- Information & education
- Public life, politics & culture
- Sport
  - Elite performance
  - Mass participation - the 'trickle down' effect
  - Financial support
- Built sporting infrastructure
- Sporting symbols, memory, history.

When thinking about these categories, it is clear that it is not the Games organisers who stand to benefit or lose from an Olympic legacy. Similarly, the perspective on a legacy’s success depends on who is making the assessment. As the Olympic Games involve a complex web of stakeholders then each of these may have a different perspective. Essentially, a stakeholder is any organisation or person has something to gain or lose through a relationship and thus can affect or is affected by others involved (Kennelly, Toohey and Zakus, 2007). Stakeholder theory is based on the premise that an organisation’s ability to best achieve its goals and thus endure is determined by how it adapts to and influences the changing needs, goals, motivations and perceptions of the parties with which it interacts internally and externally.
Stakeholder theory is based on two premises: that stakeholders have legitimate interests and that the interests of all stakeholders are of intrinsic value. The theory has been applied in a variety of research contexts, including sport management. Applications of stakeholder theory to sporting organisations have revealed that there is often a complex network of contiguous stakeholders and an even more convoluted grid of those whose link is more distal (Hoye and Cuskelly). The Olympic Games has multiple stakeholders and can advance or be constrained by their agendas.

The use of a stakeholder approach is relevant in the context of examining the legacy of the Olympic Games, just as it is for other aspects of Olympic management. For example, a host city and nation’s tourism industry has been a major potential beneficiary of staging the Olympic Games. The event is seen to be a catalyst for driving tourism before, during and after the Games. However, according to Masterman (2004, p. 84), ‘while some authors agree that tourism is a benefit of events (Getz, 1997) and that every destination should formulate an event tourism plan to enable it to contribute to the national economy (Keller, 1999), others doubt whether the growth levels achieved in the short-term out of event tourism are sustainable over the long term (Hughes, 1993) and that tourism therefore cannot be viewed as a potential event legacy’.

Taking a slightly different perspective, Graham Brown notes the difficulty of assessing legacy effects of tourism in relation to the Sydney Olympic Games:

Accurate measures of the impact of the Sydney Olympic Games on tourism are not available as little research to specifically examine this issue has been conducted. As with the case with most major events, considerable effort was spent to gain support for and justify the bid and to ensure that the event could be staged successfully. However impact analysis received less attention as people with relevant knowledge move on to work on the next event (Brown, 2000, p. 149).

For any Olympic legacy, tourism or otherwise to occur, strategies need to be implemented appropriately during the event planning stage. This is not just the responsibility of Games organisers but should be planned by every stakeholder who will benefit. What is problematic for estimating Olympic legacy is that an Organising Committee of an Olympic Games (OCOG) disbands two years after the Games. Many of its stakeholders have a more permanent tenure and are thus more able to influence longer term public perceptions. This is especially apposite as an organisation’s stakeholders can also include parties with which the organisation may not necessarily want to deal, such as the groups who oppose the Olympic Games, or in the case of Sydney’s Olympic legacy, its critics, such as those disagree with spending additional money to ensure the legacy is ongoing (Toohey, 2008).

Even with careful planning successful legacy in all areas is not guaranteed. For example during the Sydney Olympic Games, tourism authorities implemented a well funded, proactive and long term tourism plan to leverage from the 2000 Games. However, the effects of 9/11 and the SARS panic, neither of which had an Olympic connection, both negatively impacted international travel and meant that the predicted number of inbound tourist to Australia did not eventuate. Legacy assessments are frequently influenced by the perceptions of those who make them. There is also the
likelihood of insufficient time having passed when the pronouncements are made to make any meaningful judgment. There may also be question of objectivity depending on the stakeholder relationship (Toohey, 2008).

In general terms, evaluating legacy has until recently been focussed on economic benefits. Yet event impacts extend beyond economic ones. ‘A growing body of literature explores sport event leveraging…. However, the overwhelming majority of this work focuses on leveraging for economic development, particularly through tourism and destination branding. What remains less understood is how sport events might also be leveraged for the development of social and environmental benefits for their host communities (O’Brien and Chalip, 2007, p. 319).

According to Fredline, Raybould and Jago, (2005, p.3), ‘in more recent times, however, there has been recognition that the evaluation of events must be more broadly-based and consider a range of perspectives. Triple bottom line [TBL] reporting, which considers the economic, social and environmental domains, has become a well-recognised term in the business environment. However, little has been done as yet to apply the principles of triple bottom line reporting to the events sector.’ Hede (2005) notes that there is a relationship between TBL and Stakeholder Theory ‘predicated on the fact that the impacts of special events are pertinent to their stakeholders. By focusing on the social, environmental and economic outcomes of events within the context of Stakeholder Theory, it is proposed that special events can then be managed to enhance the outcomes for their stakeholders’ (Hede, 2005, p. 14).

In terms of conducting event evaluations Chalip (2004, 2006) argues for the need to shift the traditional ex post focus to an ex ante focus. In other words changing the current preoccupation with looking back at event outcomes (i.e. legacy and impact evaluation), to a more strategic approach that looks forward to planning how a host community can derive benefits from sport events (O’Brien and Chalip, 2007, p. 319). One of the challenges of this approach is the ability to identify exactly what are leveragable assets.

‘An event leveraging perspective represents a shift from the traditional impact-driven, outcomes orientation, to a more strategic and analytic focus. Event leveraging has an inherent learning aspect, where impact is pertinent primarily as a tool for evaluating leveraging strategies, rather than an event evaluation tool per se. The event is evaluated by capacity to leverage and by quality and outcomes of applied leveraging. Thus, rather than the traditional ‘build it and they [benefits] will come’ approach to sport events, the purpose of event leveraging is to be proactive in planning for the creation of specific event benefit types for the host community, and taking strategic measures to make those events sustainable.’ (O’Brien and Chalip, 2007, p. 320)

O’Brien and Gardiner (2006) have demonstrated that pre Olympic training of visiting teams can be one such asset (Kellett, P., Hede, A & Chalip, L. 2008). According to Masterman (2004, p. 47), ‘it is essential that any potential long-term benefits intended as attributable to the event be comprehensively covered by strategies that ensure that long term success’. This is a good example of strategic sport event management.
Skinner and Edwards (2005, p. 416) note, ‘sport management researchers should be encouraged to take more methodological risks and embrace more eclectic research approaches. Zakus utilizes this approach when he suggests that historical analyses can inform Olympic sport management. He calls for ‘a detailed theoretical analysis of the Olympic Charter. A thorough content analysis of different versions of the Charter, and changes implemented throughout the 108-year history of the Olympic movement, will help inform the current knowledge of global sports administration and development. ‘A document such as the Olympic Charter is important for understanding the IOC as an organization, as well as its history, and its ability to remain a leading force in global sports management’ (Zakus, 2005, p. 13). Such research is useful because as Masterman (2004, p. 24-25) notes, there are ‘several areas of concern for the future of sport events. One is the development of some sports at the expense of others… the drive for success and commercial gain is having an effect on the integrity of sport.’

In terms of future Olympic risk management research as it pertains to terrorism, Toohey and Taylor’s 2005 study of the Athens 2004 Olympic spectators’ perceptions of the balance between safety and security provided respondents’ suggestions for ‘best-practice’ in sport event safety and security management under five categories: Visibility e.g. ‘Security needs to be seen’; Resilience e.g. ‘Be tough on terrorists’; Communication e.g. ‘brief spectators in advance’ and ‘ensure the [host] language plus English is understood by security’; Restraint/caution e.g. ‘Don't judge spectators by their ethnic appearance’; and Minimalism e.g. ‘security is too much’, and ‘too intrusive’. This list is reflective of the different expectations and perceptions of risk and safety of event attendees that need to be considered to ensure that Olympic events are both secure and enjoyable.

Therefore, the choice of safety and security methods to be used at mega sporting events, especially at the Olympic Games, is open to reconceptualization and repositioning. While there is a legitimate and central place for technological solutions as part of risk management in sport event management, organizers also need to understand the range of emotional responses by consumers to these solutions and the reasons for both positive and negative reactions. As Doodie (2004) argues, too much reliance on technical solutions can actually heighten the sense of risk. Yet, perhaps sport can offer one of the best sites of resistance to risk society’s confines if event organizers are more aware of how to strike an acceptable balance between the risk management necessities created by and through the precautionary principle and the cycle of cynicism and disengagement created by the culture of fear. This proposition requires more field- based research to explore these issues across different events, countries and contexts. Frosdick (1999, p. 138) suggests that, “cultural analysis has an important role to play in the study of management in general, including the management of public safety and order”. One aspect of understanding the context and culture of terrorist risk at sport events is to begin understanding “risk as a multitude of perceptions about the source and level of threat or danger”.

There are a number of ways that empirical research in the Olympic Games can be used to develop better event operational procedures, as well as enhancing macro level
strategies in the current terrorism-alert risk society. Firstly, there is the value of using theory that emanates from another discipline, such as overviewed here, to better understand sport event attendance. There is also a concomitant need to develop a sport-focused research agenda in this area (Chalip, 2006) that is, uncovering theory that is specifically grounded in the sport phenomena, but may also then have relevance to other industries (such as tourism). Olympic organizers can then work towards ensuring that spectators have positive and safe experiences. These experiences should be imbedded in understanding the cultural contexts of the consumers as well as the host city and nation. The management of risk should not be exclusively based on technological solutions that may ultimately exacerbate spectators’ perception of risk and decrease their desire to attend the Games.

In terms of future legacy research, according to Cashman (2006 p. 273), ‘the post-Games period is as fertile a field for Olympic research as the pre-Games period or the Games themselves… there has been a dearth of post-Games analysis’. The value of research conducted by academics is that it can be conducted past the Olympic Games Global Impact (OGGI) studies commissioned by the IOC which conclude two years after the Games. While research can add value to understanding the Olympic Movement in this period, ‘the majority of event planning theory recommends the use of post-event planning and yet in practice event managers are all too quick to move on and not commit funds or time to this important undertaking. There is also in practice a perception that there is only one form of evaluation, that which is conducted post-event’ (Masterman, 2004, p. 220). Yet, as Masterman (2004, p. 220) notes, there can be three phases of evaluation, pre-event research and feasibility, iterative evaluation and the monitoring of an event in progress, and post event evaluation’. Ignoring any one of these can result in hosting an event that is unsuccessful or the provision of a legacy that does not reach its potential.

‘It is essential that any potential long-term benefits intended as attributable to the event be comprehensively covered by strategies that ensure that long term success’ (Masterman, 2004, p. 47). Because of their importance, cost and ability to transcend the everyday, it is imperative that all Games stakeholders work together to achieve their potential.

References


