

Coaching and Officiating

Coaches are an integral part of sport. They are motivators, skill developers, guides, mentors and community role models. It has been shown that coaches have a significant impact on a player's decisions about life-long involvement in physical activity.

Officials – referees, umpires, judges, timekeepers and scorers – apply the laws and rules of the sport and make decisions on infringements, time and score. They ensure that the game or competition is conducted fairly, in accordance with the rules and in a safe environment.

Coaches and officials help participants gain the maximum benefit from their physical activity.

PARTICIPATION IN COACHING AND OFFICIATING¹

In the 12 months to survey in 2006, 67,900 Western Australians aged 15 years and over were involved in organised physical activity as a coach, instructor or teacher; 66,000 as a scorer or timekeeper and 51,100 as a referee or umpire. Note that a person could have more than one type of involvement.

Participation rates were similar for Western Australia and Australia.

Participation in coaching and officiating roles – 2006^{(a) 2}

| Type of involvement | Western Australia | | Australia | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Number of involvements | Participation rate (%) | Number of involvements | Participation rate (%) |
| Coach, instructor or teacher | 67,900 | 4.2 | 658,500 | 4.0 |
| Scorer or timekeeper | 66,000 | 4.1 | 615,800 | 3.8 |
| Referee or umpire | 51,100 | 3.2 | 381,200 | 2.3 |

(a) Participation in the 12 months to survey

Participation in coaching and officiating by sex³

In Western Australia, there were more male than female referees or umpires.

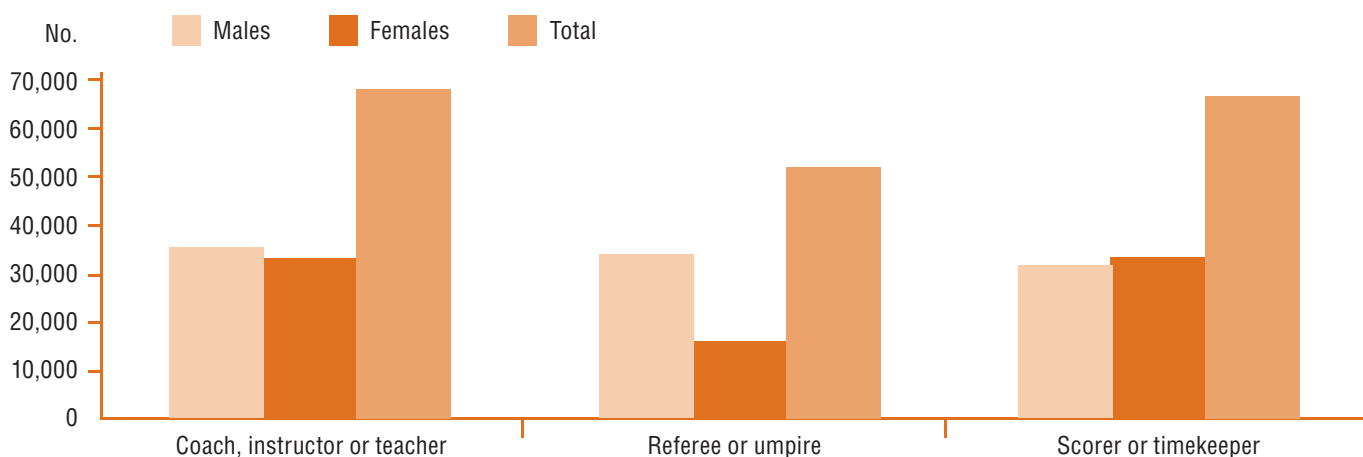
Participation in coaching and officiating roles by sex: Western Australia – 2006^(a)

| Role | Males | Females | Total |
|------------------------------|--------|---------|--------|
| Coach, instructor or teacher | 35,000 | 32,900 | 67,900 |
| Scorer or timekeeper | 32,700 | 33,300 | 66,000 |
| Referee or umpire | 33,700 | 17,400 | 51,100 |

(a) Participation in the 12 months to survey

Coaching and Officiating

Number of people involved in coaching and officiating roles by sex: Western Australia – 2006^(a)



(a) Involved in the 12 months to survey

Unpaid involvement in coaching and officiating⁴

In 2006, the majority of people involved in a coaching or officiating role were volunteers. The proportion of people with only unpaid involvement was higher for scorers and timekeepers than for other roles.

People in coaching and officiating roles – proportion with only unpaid involvement – 2006^(a)

| Type of involvement | Western Australia (%) | Australia (%) |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Coach, instructor or teacher | 73.5 | 78.0 |
| Scorer or timekeeper | 94.4 | 95.7 |
| Referee or umpire | 79.8 | 78.5 |

(a) Proportion of people who participated in the 12 months to survey

Involvement in school or junior sport⁵

For males in 2006, rates of involvement in school or junior sport were higher for coaches, instructors and teachers than for those in other officiating roles. However for females, rates of involvement were higher among referees or umpires.

People in coaching and officiating roles – proportion with non-playing involvement in school or junior sport: Western Australia – 2006^(a)

| Type of involvement | Males (%) | Females (%) | Total (%) |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Coach, instructor or teacher | 73.5 | 66.6 | 70.2 |
| Scorer or timekeeper | 45.9 | 64.1 | 55.1 |
| Referee or umpire | 56.2 | 81.5 | 64.8 |

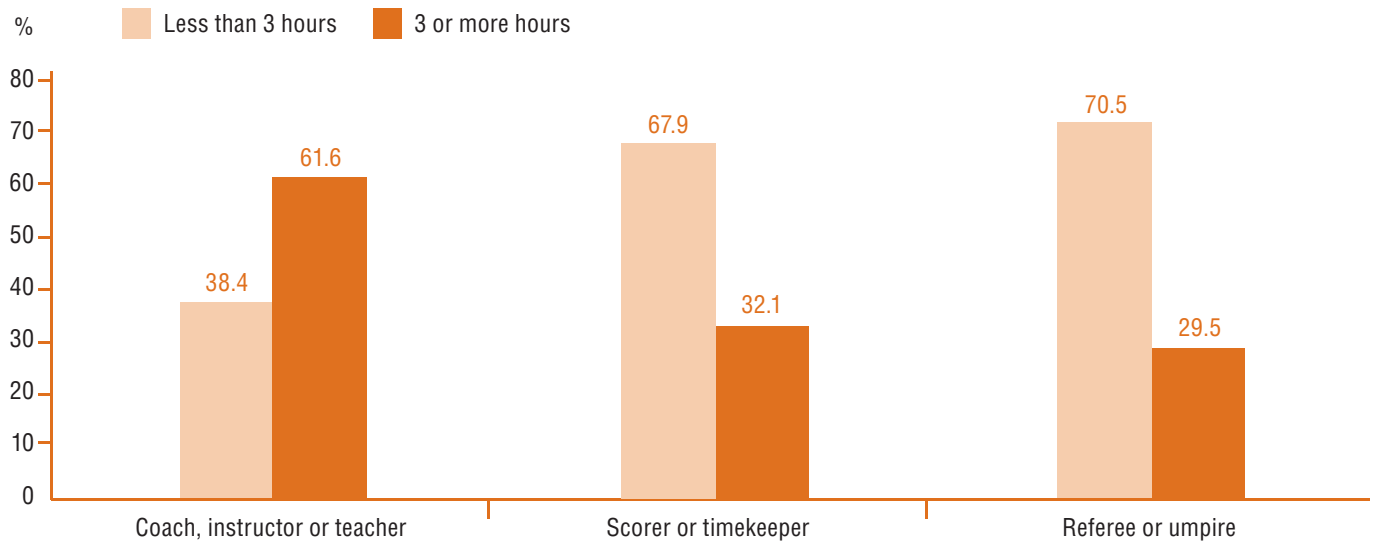
(a) Proportion of people who participated in the 12 months to survey

Coaching and Officiating

Hours per week⁶

In 2006, most coaches, instructors or teachers worked 3 hours or more per week. In contrast, the majority of those in officiating roles worked less than 3 hours per week.

Hours per week in coaching and officiating roles: Western Australia – 2006^(a)

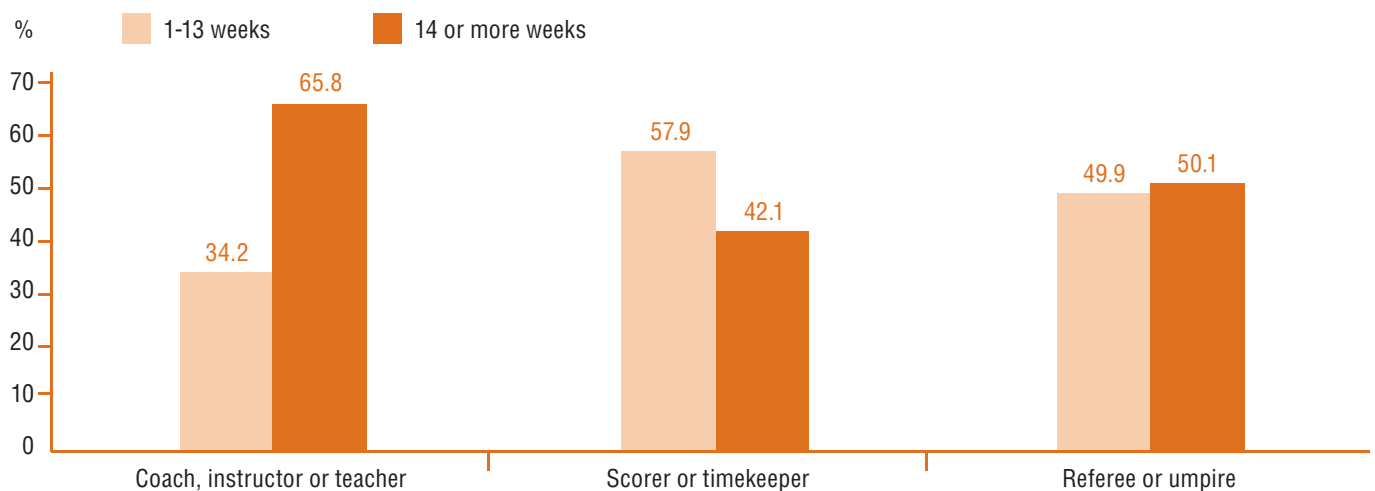


(a) Proportion of people who participated in the 12 months to survey

Number of weeks involved^{(a) 7}

In 2006, two thirds (65.8%) of coaches, instructors or teachers worked 14 or more weeks in the year. In comparison, most scorers or timekeepers (57.9%) worked 1 to 13 weeks.

Number of weeks involved in coaching and officiating roles: Western Australia – 2006



(a) Proportion of people who participated in the 12 months to survey

Coaching and Officiating

Qualification related to role⁸

In 2006, just under half (47.3% or 32,100) of people who were involved as coaches, instructors or teachers in the past 12 months had a qualification related to their role. The proportion was slightly lower for referees or umpires (40.4% or 20,700 people).

Reasons for coaching⁹

Some of the reasons why people coach are:

- Enjoyment;
- Recognition;
- Winning;
- Helping others;
- Sense of control;
- Seeing players improve;
- Seeing others have a good time;
- Doing something worthwhile; and
- Putting something back into sport.

Reasons for becoming an official¹⁰

From a 2002 survey on harassment of sports officials, reasons why Australians chose to become an official were:

- For the love of the game or to give back to their sport;
- Natural progression from competition, particularly when they became too old to compete or had to retire due to injury;
- They saw officiating as a means to keep the sport running;
- To gain knowledge of the rules; and
- There was no one else to do it.

In addition, former athletes, parents and then athletes were considered to be the most likely people to become officials.

- Many considered that former athletes became officials because they did not succeed or struggled in the competitive environment;
- Some considered officiating as an avenue to elite competition that was otherwise unobtainable; and
- Parents generally helped out because there was an identified lack of officials in their sport or they had children competing.

Reasons for not becoming an official¹¹

In 2002, 66% of survey respondents would not consider becoming an official because they had other preferences or commitments or were simply not interested. In addition, 12% of survey respondents believed that there was too much harassment of officials.

Why coaches and officials leave¹²

Reasons why coaches and officials leave include:

- They only want to be involved for a short time;
- They didn't know what they were getting into;
- They don't want to put up with the abuse;
- Costs of being involved;
- Lack of club support;
- Poor recognition; and
- Concerns about legal liability.

Coaching and Officiating

Retention of coaches and officials¹³

It is very difficult to get long term commitment from coaches and officials at the club level. Acknowledgement, recognition and reward are important.

Retention strategies include:

- Overseeing and supporting coaches and officials;
- Feedback and review – opportunities to review and comment on performance;
- Appropriate job roles to level of skill and experience;
- Recruitment – to ensure most suitable coaches and officials are chosen;
- Letter of offer – recognition of importance of role from beginning;
- Induction;
- Training and education;
- Designated page on club website;
- Recognition; and
- Exit interviews.

Endnotes

- ¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2007). Involvement in organised sport and physical activity. (Cat. no. 6285.0). Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p15.
- ² Ibid. p15-16.
- ³ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2007). Involvement in organised sport and physical activity. (Cat. no. 6285.0), 'Table 8 – State tables for Western Australia', data cube: Excel spreadsheet. Viewed 04/04/2008. <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6285.0Apr%202007?OpenDocument>
- ⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2007). Involvement in organised sport and physical activity. (Cat. no. 6285.0). Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p15-16.
- ⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2007). Involvement in organised sport and physical activity. (Cat. no. 6285.0), 'Table 8 – State tables for Western Australia', data cube: Excel spreadsheet. Viewed 04/04/2008 <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6285.0Apr%202007?OpenDocument>
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Australian Sports Commission. (2004). Beginning coaching, third edition. Canberra, Australian Capital Territory: Australian Sports Commission. p5.
- ¹⁰ Australian Sports Commission. (Unpublished). Officiating – year of the official 2003, Research - Australian Sports Commission harassment of officials survey results 2002. Provided by Australian Sports Commission, 2008.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Australian Sports Commission. Why coaches and officials leave. (20/03/2008: date of retrieval). http://www.ausport.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0006/145995/Why_coaches_and_officials_leave.pdf
- ¹³ Australian Sports Commission. Retention of coaches and officials. Viewed 20/03/2008. http://www.ausport.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0008/145988/Retention_of_coaches_and_officials.pdf