The Governance of the Olympic Games in Canada

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“I look at our situation and think we are a very good model of how to do these events. This is, to me, very good for the Canada brand of being reliable, being trustworthy, keeping your promises, being on time and on budget, being responsible about the things that really matter to the public.”
Purpose

- To understand the governance of the Olympic Games in Canada
Good Governance

Accountable

Consensus oriented

Participatory

Follow the rule of law

Effective and Efficient

Transparent

Responsive

Equitable and Inclusive

(Source: http://www.rcc.int/pages/70/good-governance)
Olympic Governance Principles

- Accountability
- Democracy
- Autonomy
- Transparency
- Social Responsibility
Theoretical framework

Borgason and Musso (2006):
Methodology

- 3040 document pages analyzed
- Network analyses for network governance structure and process
- Content analysis for coordination mechanisms
Network Analyses

OCO’88: Most involved, important, controlling information flow and powerful actor

IOC: also involved, controlling information flow and powerful

Mun. Gov.: also involved, important and powerful
Network Analyses

VANOC: Most involved, important, controlling information flow, and powerful actor

Fed. Gov.: 2nd most involved, important and controlling information flow

Mun. Gov’ts: also involved, controlling information flow and powerful
Network Analyses

• Both Games: efficient and effective network
  – Low transitivity
    • Weak ties = opportunity and less redundancy
  – Small number of core actors
  – Low density

• Canadian OCOG and governments are now central actors in terms of:
  – Overall importance
  – Degree of involvement (number of linkages)
  – Controlling the flow of information
  – Power
Coordination Mechanisms

Structure
- Continuity between bid & organizing committee
- Appropriate leadership (business, sport & event skills)
- Formal partnership agreements
- Flexible organizational structure
- Coordination structures (e.g., working groups)
- Information gathering & dissemination structures
- Partner structures
- Co-location*

Process
- Relationship building
- Open communication & transparency efforts
- Informal discussions
- Seeking information from experts
- Targeted programming for stakeholders
- Test events
- Other: national/provincial approach & legacies/sustainability
Canada’s Approach to Olympic Games Governance

(Source: iStock photo 27424266)
1. Canada-wide planned & coordinated stakeholder engagement

(Source: iStock photo 41166734)

(Source: http://www.ndr.org.ng/need-to-deepen-nigeria-democratic-governance/)

2. Appropriate leadership

(Source: iStock photo 19449925)

(Source: iStock photo 18491641)

(Source: iStock photo 50637868)
3. OCOG structure

4. Knowledge

5. A willingness to innovate
Discussion & Implications

- Meets calls by Chappelet & Kübler-Mabbott (2008) and others regarding **good governance practices**, such as:
  - Formalized partnerships/agreements
  - Transparency, performance, accountability, trust, and direct stakeholder participation
  - Establishment of independent organization (OCOG)

- Not an entirely unique approach (cf. London 2012)

- Interestingly, no Olympic delivery authority
  - Requires further examination

- Elements of model found in 2015 Pan Ams and Women’s World Cup, Canada 2015
Delimitations

• Delimitations:
  – Network is relative & based on data obtained
  – Inter-organizational focus instead of intra-organizational (corporate governance)
Summary

- 5-part Canadian approach to governing major sports events
  - Canada-wide stakeholder engagement
  - Leadership
  - Structure
  - Knowledge
  - Innovation
Merci / Thank you

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