

Knowledge Games: The Achievement of Ignorance in
Managing Olympic and Commonwealth Mega-Events

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Abstract

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The concept of ignorance has been unfairly stigmatised in research and practice, and consequently has not received the attention it deserves as a powerful motivator of behaviour in organisations. To understand the role of ignorance, it must be examined as a productive force rather than a shameful weakness, an achievement instead of a failure.

This thesis develops an understanding of how ignorance is achieved and why it is perpetuated in the context of managing the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, a series of worldwide mega-events that are popular with proponents of urban development, but which have experienced persistent organisational problems in the form of cost overruns, schedule delays, and scope creep.

To do so, this research draws on literature about ignorance from the disciplines of philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and organisational theory, to motivate an embedded case study of Games Organising Committees (OCs) in six host cities around the world. These OCs, which were actively planning the Games during the research, are studied through qualitative research, to develop a dynamic understanding of the role of ignorance in planning the Games. The findings and analysis are presented from two perspectives: the structure of the 'Games system' and of the OC; and, the substance of Games planning in the areas of cost, time and scope.

While other studies have focused on ignorance as necessary, strategic, and inadvertent, the original contribution to knowledge of this thesis is the proposal of a theoretical framework that focuses on the functional and detrimental outcomes of ignorance. This framework is also shown to be useful in understanding why ignorance persists between organisations, and suggests three basic principles for further research: ignorance as a productive force in management; structure as a scaffold for ignorance; and budget, time and scope as catalysts for ignorance.

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List of Acronyms and Terms Used

CGA	Commonwealth Games Association (National Games body)
CGF	Commonwealth Games Federation (international governing body)
CGKMP	Commonwealth Games Knowledge Management Programme
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DA	Development Agency
EKS	Event Knowledge Services
FA	Functional Area, an individual unit within the OC (e.g. transport, marketing)
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association, organisers of the FIFA World Cup
Governing Body	IOC, IPC and/or CGF
HCC	Host City Contract
I-##	Interview identification code for anonymity, unique to each interviewee
IF	International Federation
IPSF	International Paralympic Sports Federation
IOC	International Olympic Committee (international governing body)
IPC	International Paralympic Committee (international governing body)
KM	Knowledge Management
LC	Legacy Company
MOC	Main Operations Centre
NOC	National Olympic Committee
NPC	National Paralympic Committee
OC	Organising Committee, the organisation in charge of coordinating the Games in a host city (refers to both Commonwealth and Olympic Games organisations)
OCOG	Organising Committee for the Olympic Games
OGKM	Olympic Games Knowledge Management
OSC	Olympic Studies Centre
S-##	Observation session identification code, unique to each session
The Games	Summer Olympic Games, Winter Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games
TOP	The Olympic Programme, a sponsorship programme organised by the IOC for companies to sponsor multiple Games
VGM	Venue General Manager
VOP	Venue Operations Planning

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Chapter 1: Achieving Ignorance to Manage the Games

1.1 Time and Time Again

As a child growing up in Montreal, I was aware from a young age that the Olympic Park was a disagreeable topic of conversation. However, it was only much later that I began to understand why it made people uncomfortable. The Montreal 1976 Olympics are remembered as much for the organisational issues that plagued the planning of the event as they are for the sporting achievements of the athletes. The organisers suffered a number of setbacks that resulted in the Olympic stadium being only partially completed for the Games (Montreal Organising Committee for the Olympic Games [COJO], 1978), and costs that were almost 800 per cent over budget (Flyvbjerg and Stewart, 2012). The consequences of the Games were also long-lasting; it took Montrealers and provincial taxpayers 30 years to pay for the Games (Vigor, Mean and Tims, 2004), hence the discomfort of the Games as a topic of conversation.

1.1.1 *Setting the stage*

As “the world’s biggest peace-time event” (Toohey and Veal, 2000: 1), each Olympic or Commonwealth Games (hereafter referred to collectively as ‘the Games’) represents a huge investment of time, effort, and funds. Host cities all over the world have attempted to plan the Games effectively while also achieving long-term benefits through local development (Andranovich, Burbank and Heying, 2001). However, the Games, like many other megaprojects, continue to have a poor delivery record in terms of schedule, scope and budget. More than three decades after Montreal’s organisational debacle, India’s lack of preparation in the areas of security and venue

development at the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games led several athletes to cancel their participation less than two weeks before the event (BBC News, 2010b), and resulted in a cost that was more than 16 times greater than the original budget (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2011). These organisational challenges are not unique to either Montreal or Delhi, and examples are evident throughout the history of the Games. The Athens 2004 summer Olympics, for instance, were similarly problematic, with significant delays in construction that also led to cost overruns (Hellenic Olympic Properties, 2009), and the Barcelona 1992 summer Olympics, though widely lauded for the role in the transformation of the city's urban centre (Chalkley and Essex, 1999), also experienced significant cost overruns (Flyvbjerg and Stewart, 2012).

Despite these challenges, the Games continue to attract numerous bidders, and competition is so fierce for the summer Olympics that a two-stage qualification process has been introduced, with a substantial financial investment required from bidding cities just for the privilege of being considered as future hosts (Theodoraki, 2007). The allure of the Games is stronger than ever, and even the increase in the size of the Games over time (Pound, 2003) has not dissuaded potential organisers.

Most of the Games have also been extremely successful as international sports competitions, which are the primary purpose of the Games, with the arguable exception of those Games affected by boycotts (Toohey and Veal, 2000). Given that Games organisers continually face what seem to be insurmountable obstacles, the recurrence of this success is as interesting as the persistence of challenges in the Games. As mega-events, the Games are staggeringly complex, with multi-billion dollar budgets, a fixed

and immovable timeframe, and the human resource challenges of building and dissolving a Fortune 500 organisation in seven years (International Paralympic Committee, 2010). Planning the Games is an undertaking that is inherently fraught with uncertainty, from complex interactions between local government and international sports organisations, to the need for highly specialised staff who are almost wholly inexperienced, to suppliers who are equally inexperienced at delivering on Games-sized requirements. In some ways, the ability of organisers to continue to deliver world-class sporting events is astonishing, and it is miraculous that the Games ever occur at all.

It is tempting to dismiss the continued problems of delivering the Games as an inherent part of the complexity required by such an ambitious organisational effort, as there is a tendency to treat failures in complex environments as unavoidable and routine, and therefore to be expected. LaPorte suggests that even among management scholars, there is an assumption that complexity creates organisations in which “flawed operations should be considered normal with reasonable likelihood of occurrence” (LaPorte, 1996: 61). However, LaPorte (1996) and LaPorte and Consolini’s (1991) research on high-reliability organisations highlights that many organisations do manage to use complex systems while avoiding major failures, a situation that they suggest is remarkable, but replicable. Interestingly, LaPorte and Consolini’s (1991: 20) work specifically looks at organisations that are “deeply embedded in the public sector,” suggesting that such success could potentially be translated to an environment like that of the Games. In addition to learning from other complex public sector organisations, the Games may also be to learn from other megaprojects; while megaprojects in transportation and infrastructure are often over budget

(Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius and Rothengatter, 2003), Flyvbjerg and Stewart (2012) found that in terms of cost overruns the Games are much more risky than transportation, technology and infrastructure megaprojects. Thus, there is something uniquely dysfunctional about the Games as compared to both other complex organisations and megaprojects.

A plausible explanation for the repetitiveness of time, cost and scope issues in the Games is a lack of knowledge transfer between host cities. By tradition, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) have selected successive host cities from different parts of the world whenever possible. This means that each city therefore begins their planning with a blank slate upon winning the bid, since it may have been years, if ever, since that particular country last held such an event. While the chosen city is guided by and must deliver upon the requirements set out by the IOC and CGF, these are by no means explicit, and must be tailored to the local environment. Accordingly, since 2000, the IOC and CGF have attempted to assist with planning efforts by introducing extensive knowledge transfer programmes to supplement the strict requirements that organisers are required to follow. The Games' knowledge management systems provide new organisers with a wealth of information from previous host cities. However, despite increased access to planning information, interviewees suggest that host cities have either attempted to replicate other cities' plans in a dissimilar social and temporal milieu, or have ignored previous Games' insights as unsuitable and have struck their own path only to find that they have wasted effort on problems that were previously solved. Accordingly, knowledge management has not been the cure that the IOC and

CGF had hoped for in addressing the recurrent problems experienced by the Games.

1.1.2 The possibilities of ignorance

While other possible explanations can be articulated, and many will provide partial explanations for the repetitiveness of planning issues, the goal of this research is to explore the extent to which these repeated challenges and successes are due to ignorance, both strategic and inadvertent, on the part of Games organisers. Ignorance is not a traditional area of study in the field of management, perhaps because the goal of most academic research is to further knowledge, and studying ignorance appears in some way to contravene this goal. However, ignorance is a powerful tool that enables us to assign various weights of attention, memory and preference to different stimuli in our environment, as Tversky and Kahneman (1974) famously demonstrated in their work on how psychological heuristics provide biased short-cuts for making decisions, and as such ignorance deserves the attention of theorists as much as its apparently dichotomous relative, knowledge.

Whereas much has been made of the field of knowledge management (e.g. Nonaka, 1991), the study of ignorance management remains decidedly eccentric. Yet, ignorance can be actively managed and achieved through control and attention, much as knowledge is captured and used. As McGoey (2012: 3) states, ignorance should be considered “not as a precursor or an impediment to more knowledge, but as a productive force in itself, as the twin and not the opposite of knowledge.” With this perspective, ignorance is something that does not occur by accident, but which is achieved through either strategic or inadvertent means. The achievement of ignorance is a

crucial concept for managers to understand, not only because it can be incredibly costly for an organisation, but also because it can be extremely useful. While being ignorant of uncertainties, or potential failures in systems, is a fear of many leaders as evidenced by the growth of the 'risk society' (Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992), strategic ignorance of complications can be a leader's greatest asset, allowing them to focus on the bigger picture and vision to be achieved rather than to be immobilized by a fear that their incomplete knowledge could result in failure.

Ignorance in management is treated in most academic and practical literature as something to be avoided at all costs (Mair, Kelly and High, 2012). Conversely, knowledge is widely perceived to be a positive attribute, an ambition and a goal for individuals, a requirement and a resource for companies, and a necessity for societies. After all, knowledge has been the harbinger of many useful developments for humankind. However, these implicit assumptions of knowledge as 'good' also create negative attributes for its antonym, ignorance. Ignorance is the plight of the uneducated, something to rail against, that we can all agree is 'bad'. Even Socrates opined that there was "one only good, namely, knowledge; and one only evil, namely, ignorance" (Plato c. 380 BCE, as cited in Laertius, 1853: 68). We are exhorted to engage in ignorance 'at our peril' in case critical information is not received and processed (Smithson, 1989). But we are also told that 'ignorance is bliss', as in Douglas's (1995) account of 'necessary forgetting', which permits organisations and individuals to operate more effectively with ignorance of issues that might otherwise derail or overload their operations. So how do we determine the difference between 'damaging' ignorance and 'useful' ignorance, and how do we avoid feeling guilty for exploiting ignorance

that is useful, while also evading perilous ignorance that threatens to pursue us as we flee from it?

These are the questions that have motivated the present study. The original contribution to knowledge made by this thesis is to propose a theoretical structure based on the outcomes of functional and detrimental ignorance, to complement the focus on necessary, strategic, and inadvertent ignorance that has received the attention of studies to date (e.g. Douglas, 1986; Katz, 1979; McGoey, 2007; High, Kelly and Mair, 2012). The 'functional' label is intended to represent ignorance that is useful or even necessary for the achievement of the organisation's aims, whereas 'detrimental' is designated to represent ignorance that has harmful or negative implications if achieved. This distinction is especially useful because it helps to explain why ignorance may persist between organisations, even those that purport to focus on knowledge transfer, and practically helps to focus the efforts of managers in understanding how ignorance can be managed productively. Distinguishing between these aspects of ignorance is crucial in this empirical context, because both ignoring and acknowledging certain types of information can potentially lead to serious financial and societal consequences.

This framework is demonstrated by its application to the context of the Games mega-event. In the course of this thesis, findings from interviews with more than one hundred individuals working on six different Games will be presented in a historical context to show how ignorance can be detrimental to realising the outcomes of time, cost and scope that are the typical measurements of projects (Gaddis, 1959; Atkinson, 1999). Crucially, the findings will also demonstrate that the persistence of time cost and scope

challenges in the Games is also because ignorance is necessary for the Games to achieve organisational, social and political consensus. Thus, the paradox between the function and detriment of ignorance results in its perpetuation from Games to Games.

1.2 Research Context and Study

The context to which the study is applied is that of the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. The study looks equally at the summer Olympic Games, winter Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games, with the objective of both establishing commonalities across the class of global, multi-sport mega-events, and of contrasting them. The contrast is rendered particularly useful because, while each 'type' of Games is similar with respect to the timeframe and broad scope of their activities, they differ in their cost and size characteristics. Some comparative information about the types of Games are shown in Table 1.1:

Table 1.1: Comparative facts about the summer Olympic Games, winter Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games

Games Type	Summer Olympics	Winter Olympics	Commonwealth Games
Year Started	1896	1924	1930
Example Games	Beijing 2008	Vancouver 2010	Delhi 2010
Athletes	10,942	2,566	6,081
Competing Teams*	204	82	71
Sports	28	15	21
Events	302	86	272
Competition Venues	37	15	32
Games-Related Cost	US\$5.5 billion ¹	US\$2.3 billion ¹	US\$1.6 billion ²

¹Source: Flyvbjerg and Stewart (2012)

²Source: Comptroller and Auditor General of India (2011); cost is approximate

*Usually countries, however Olympic athletes from countries without a National Olympic Committee compete independently, and multiple teams compete for some countries at the Commonwealth Games, e.g. England and Scotland.

Thus, the summer Olympic Games are the largest from both the logistical and cost requirements. The Commonwealth Games have a smaller budget but a

greater number of athletes and events than the winter Olympic Games, and are more logistically complex given the number of sports and venues that they undertake.

To render the study manageable, the scope of this thesis is to apply the theoretical concepts of detrimental and functional ignorance to understanding the perpetuation of time, cost and scope challenges in the Games from the perspective of the Organising Committees (OCs), which are unique to each host city. OCs are complex entities that are staffed by thousands of people over a seven-year period for the purpose of achieving one outcome: the successful delivery of a two-week event (Theodoraki, 2007). OCs are the primary entities responsible for the coordination of both local and international organisational entities, and are responsible for staging the Games as an event, as distinct from the construction of venues and infrastructure. They are also the direct recipients of the knowledge transfer efforts initiated by the IOC and CGF to reduce the time, cost and scope challenges that have traditionally plagued the Games, and so are especially involved in the achievement of ignorance that is the subject of this thesis. Further detail about this focus on OCs is described in Chapter 3.

The study involved an embedded case study of six OCs around the world, which were studied through a combination of methods including interviews, observation of events, and participant observation, and supported by historical data collected from documents. This combination of methods has provided a unique insight into the Games, and this specific context provides examples that may ring true for many other mega-events, megaprojects, and organisations in their own right.

1.3 Research Aim and Contribution to Knowledge

The aim of this thesis is twofold. First, it builds on existing literature that suggests ignorance should be considered as a force in its own right (Proctor, 2008; McGoey, 2012; Mair, Kelly and High, 2012), which can incentivise behaviours within organisations. With this in mind, it provides a theoretical framework based on functional and detrimental ignorance, thereby offering a different focus for the field, complementing the motivation-based concept of ignorance as strategic versus inadvertent, to an outcome perspective that does not require interpretation of motives.

This then provides the basis for the second aim of the thesis, which is to develop a more productive view of ignorance that can be integrated into management contexts without the stigma currently attributed to ignorance in business. By doing so, the perpetuation of detrimental ignorance between megaprojects can be limited, thereby providing an opportunity to improve their overall performance. The embedded case study of the Organising Committees of Olympic and Commonwealth Games illustrates this theoretical framework and demonstrates how the perspective of ignorance as a natural component of management practice can be a useful tool.

The purpose of this thesis is therefore in proposing a theoretical structure of ignorance that proposes an outcome focus between functional and detrimental ignorance, complementing the existing focus of the literature on the intent of ignorance as strategic, necessary, or inadvertent. It also shows how this framework is useful in understanding the persistence of ignorance between the Organising Committees of Olympic and Commonwealth Games, despite the increase in knowledge transfer among these groups in the last decade.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The remainder of this thesis is structured into seven chapters that present the extant literature, describe the empirical study and its findings, and suggest how this study can contribute to a productive understanding of how ignorance is achieved in managing mega-events.

In Chapter 2, a review of the literature that is relevant to this study is presented, focussing first on the theoretical constructs of ignorance, knowledge, and knowledge transfer. The broad philosophical and sociological concepts of ignorance and knowledge are discussed, beginning with definitional issues raised by High, Kelly and Mair, (2012) and Proctor (2008), before describing significant theoretical contributions from Nietzsche (1882 [2001]), Polanyi (1958; 1967), Douglas (1995), Cohen (2001) and McGoey (2007), and work on uncomfortable knowledge by Rayner (2012). Second, the focus turns to the empirical context of the Games as both organisations and as megaprojects. Seminal works in this area are discussed, including the sociological value of studying sports management as highlighted by Horne and Manzenreiter (2006) and Toohey and Veal (2000). Third, the collocation of these literatures is examined in studies that have been conducted on ignorance within the empirical context of megaprojects, focussing on Flyvbjerg, Holm and Buhl's (2002; 2005) work on cost overruns transportation megaprojects, and Kutsch's work (Kutsch and Lupson, 2008; Kutsch and Hall, 2010) on ignorance in the Games.

With the findings from the literature as a starting point, Chapter 3 develops the justification for the selected methodology for this study, and the reasoning for the structure of the following chapters. First, it draws together the insights from the literature review to identify the research questions. Then,

it describes the rationale for the embedded case study approach, drawing on Yin (2003), Eisenhardt (1989, 1991) and Flyvbjerg (2006) for insights into the benefits and challenges of the approach. The methods used are outlined, including observation of events, interviews, participant observation, and documentary data, and how these are related in the study. Following this, it describes the practical data collection and analysis considerations, particularly in the areas of gaining access to a relatively large number of research sites in various geographic locations. It also explains the decisions around the study's scope, including the focus of the research on Games OCs. Finally, it concludes with a discussion of the limitations and particular challenges of the study, and on the ethical considerations that informed the research.

The latter half of the thesis explores the findings from the empirical study. These are divided into four chapters, two that focus on the structure of the organisations involved in planning the Games, and two that focus on the substance of the management of the Games. This division between structure and substance provides complementary evidence; like a house, structure is as important as the furnishings in understanding the impression of the final living environment. These two corresponding aspects of the thesis in turn provide a holistic view of the theoretical framework, showing how both functional and detrimental ignorance are achieved in the Games, and why they are perpetuated from Games to Games.

Chapters 4 and 5 present the organisational findings from the empirical study. Chapter 4 begins the process of analysing the empirical data, presenting the findings on the influence of the organisational system of the Games in developing functional and detrimental ignorance. To do so, it first

describes the formal roles of, and connections between, the governing bodies, external organisations and individuals, and local host city and country organisations, which are identified as the primary categories of interest for this thesis. Then, it provides evidence for the importance of informal relationships between these organisations, and how these informal connections can affect the development of ignorance in the OC. Building on these insights, the current knowledge transfer efforts of the Games are described and analysed with respect to how they promote and detract from the achievement of ignorance in the Games. Overall, the chapter provides empirical support that the information asymmetry between different Games organisations creates an environment in which there are incentives for ignorance. Further, it suggests that ignorance that may be functional for one organisation may be harmful for another, but that the formal boundaries between the organisations lead them to operate opportunistically, unless their behaviour is moderated by informal connections, which can be reinforced by knowledge transfer events. However, these same knowledge transfer events can serve to perpetuate ignorance between Games OCs, so balancing this with opportunistic behaviour within the Games system should be considered by organisers seeking to limit detrimental ignorance.

Chapter 5, as the second of the two empirical chapters focussing on structure, builds on this framework of interconnectedness within the Games system, and looks in detail at the internal structure of the OCs. This chapter begins by describing the functional structure that most OCs adopt for the majority of their existence, along with some of the rationale and challenges in using this model. Then, it describes how the formal structure is overlaid with governance and decision-making processes to facilitate cross-functional

cooperation. The chapter concludes by demonstrating that the empirical findings suggest that the challenges of balancing functional and detrimental ignorance between organisations, as highlighted in Chapter 4, is mirrored in the smaller-scale interactions of different groups within the OCs. As such, governance and decision-making processes, acting as the informal connections between these groups, act as modifiers of behaviour related to ignorance within the OC. The commonalities between the structures of OCs are also suggested to play a key role in the repetitiveness of ignorance in some areas from Games to Games.

With this understanding of the structure of the Games system and the OCs, Chapter 6 and 7 focus on the substance of the Games delivery. To do so, they examine the management of three foundational elements in project management: cost, time and scope. Cost is the focus of Chapter 6, which introduces the various pressures that OCs face with respect to determining a budget for the Games during the bid, and delivering to that budget during the Games planning. The chapter begins by providing an overview of budgets, funding, and costs in the Games, describing how the budgets in bids are developed, where the funding for the Games comes from, and why it is so difficult to determine the final costs of the Games. Then, it looks at the role of budgets in OCs, drawing on the concepts of professional jurisdictions and boundary objects to explain how budgets are used for control by staff and by managers. The chapter concludes by demonstrating that the value of achieving and maintaining ignorance in budgeting largely outweighs any advantage gained by transparency in the current OC model, until the final stages of the OC by which time most staff have already moved on. Thus, ignorance in budgets is likely to be a lasting phenomenon of the Games,

unless there is a significant effort to change the way that bids are developed and evaluated.

Chapter 7 moves from a focus on the budget of the Games to the scope and time challenges that the OCs face in their planning. Starting from the perspective that the scope and time are intricately related in planning, the chapter first describes the challenges of scope in the OC, beginning with the outline of OC requirements through promises included in the bid and necessary deliverables as specified in supporting documents. It then discusses how scope evolves through interaction with partners, and through the interdependency between FAs, which result in incentives for ignorance. The chapter then turns to a discussion of time in the OC, emphasising the immovable nature of the Games date as a driving force for staff. It describes the early, middle and late stages of the Games, highlighting the evolution of ambiguity and increase in working hours, and how these can lead to a perception of time that resembles the pending termination of the current world described by millenarian sects. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the value of ambiguity in the bid and in later OC planning, as compared to the detriment of not achieving the time and scope required for the Games, and how the timing of Games dissolution can lead to the perpetuation of issues across Games.

In Chapter 8, the final conclusions of the thesis are presented, beginning with a review of the material and key themes presented in the thesis, before focusing on three principles established through the empirical content. First, the nature of ignorance as a productive force in management is considered, and a conceptual framework that imagines how an organisation managing with this understanding would operate is described. Second, the

way in which the structure of OCs and of the Games system act as a scaffold for both functional and detrimental ignorance is discussed, as is the modification of this structure that could usefully reduce the perpetuation of detrimental ignorance in the Games. Finally, the perspective that the substance of budget, time and scope constraints as catalysts for ignorance in megaproject planning, by promoting a fervour in managing to the requirements of the Games that can be met only by employing functional and detrimental ignorance, is presented. Thus, the Games perpetuate ignorance by mimicking the substance of other Games, without the accompanying understanding of ignorance that would save them from the same challenges and costly mistakes. To conclude, the chapter provides insights into the London 2012 Games, and suggests avenues for further research.

Chapter 2: Foundations of Ignorance and Knowledge

2.1 Theoretical Foundations

The process of reviewing the existing literature provides the opportunity both to build on the work of others, and to inform the direction of a study. To begin, this review considers the theoretical foundations of knowledge and ignorance, exploring definitional considerations of each, as well as their relation to each other. Building on this foundation, the review then considers academic works that have specifically focused on ignorance and related concepts. As yet, the literature on ignorance is relatively diffuse, and so this review casts a wide net to examine the philosophical, anthropological and sociological precedents that are of relevance to this work, rather than focusing on a particular debate in the literature, with the aim of integrating the extant theoretical views to provide an understanding of where this research seeks to contribute to theory. Then, to provide a complete understanding of the theoretical context of the research, the first part of this review concludes with a discussion of organisational learning and knowledge transfer, with particular reference to those authors who have considered how knowledge is not transferred.

2.1.1 Knowledge and ignorance: a dichotomy?

While the focus of this work is on ignorance, it is inevitable that attention should also be drawn to knowledge, which is commonly seen as the antithesis of ignorance. However, it has been argued (High, Kelly and Mair, 2012; Proctor, 2008) that this dichotomous perspective promotes unnecessarily extreme associations of knowledge as 'good' and ignorance as 'bad' (Mair, Kelly and High, 2012). It is therefore necessary to consider this

relationship before proceeding, to ensure that the thesis has a clearly defined focus, and does not omit any of the research tradition in related fields.

The field of knowledge is itself encumbered by definitional issues beyond the scope of the ignorance debate. Starbuck (2006: 74) suggests that, “merely mentioning 'knowledge' raises problems, for anyone with the temerity to write about knowledge has to confront pervasive disagreements about what constitutes knowledge.” Grant (1996) raises a similar issue in his work on developing a knowledge-based theory of the firm:

What is knowledge? Since this question has intrigued some of the world's greatest thinkers from Plato to Popper without the emergence of a clear consensus, this is not an arena in which I choose to compete. (Grant, 1996: 110)

Indeed, there are a wide variety of definitions that have emerged over centuries of epistemological deliberation. Plato (c. 380 BCE), for example, defined knowledge as ‘justified true belief’, while Aristotle conceptualised knowledge as having three components: *techne*, which is technical knowledge or know-how; *episteme*, which is analytical, scientific knowledge; and *phronesis*, which is knowledge of social judgements and decisions (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 2). In comparison, Descartes, Nietzsche, Popper and Foucault have respectively asserted that knowledge is achieved through deduction (Descartes, 1637[1937]), familiarity (Nietzsche, 1882 [2001]), empirical falsification (Popper, 1934[2002]), and power (Foucault, 1980).

Since this thesis does not seek to attempt to resolve the debates about the adequacy of any of these epistemological perspectives, as this is not the focus of this paper, I propose a pragmatic approach to defining knowledge that will be useful for the aims of this thesis. Thus, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED)'s (2009) definition of knowledge will suffice for the purposes herein: “facts, information, and skills acquired through experience

or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject.” While not universally accepted, this is a definition that can be considered applicable for many of the epistemological perspectives listed above. In addition to this definition, since one of the topics of discussion is the perpetuation of ignorance, the definition of knowledge transfer is also of interest to this research. Interestingly, the OED does not contain a definition of knowledge transfer, however Argote and Ingram (2000: 151) define it as “the process through which one unit (e.g., group, department, or division) is affected by the experience of another.” While this definition of knowledge transfer implies an intra-organisational process, this definition can be expanded to include inter-organisational transfer, with the assumption that a ‘unit’ can be any kind of person, group, organisation or social situation, as in the literature on case studies (Yin, 2003).

The definition of ignorance is equally, if not more, problematic than that of knowledge. As Smithson (1989: 6) states in his seminal work on ignorance and uncertainty, “Ignorance, like knowledge, is socially constructed and negotiated.” However, ignorance is not socially constructed in the same way as knowledge; where knowledge has an authority of its own, ignorance is almost always the antonym of knowledge, and carries with it an unfavourable connotation. The OED (2009) sides disappointingly with this dichotomous view, defining ignorance as “lack of knowledge or information.” As Mair, Kelly and High (2012) state in their work on the anthropology of ignorance:

Established ways of thinking about ignorance tend to take knowledge as their primary object and to see ignorance as a purely negative phenomenon, as the null state that obtains when the flow of knowledge is interrupted. In this view, ignorance can have no characteristics and no effects other than those that follow from the absence of whatever knowledge is lacking. (Mair, Kelly and High, 2012: 3)

Taking a different approach, McGoey (2012: 3) states that ignorance should be considered “a productive force in itself,” a perspective also supported by Proctor (2008: 2) who suggests that the lack of research about ignorance is “remarkable, given (a) how much ignorance there is, (b) how many kinds there are, and (c) how consequential ignorance is in our lives.” He has even suggested that the term ‘agnotology’ should be used to describe the study of ignorance, as epistemology is used for the study of knowledge. Proctor also coined the related and descriptive term ‘agnogenesis’, meaning “the deliberate production of ignorance or doubt” (2006: 118). In Proctor’s (2008) view, ignorance can be a native state, the starting point from which knowledge develops and grows; a passive construct, which is either lost or selectively avoided; or a strategic ploy, or active construct, in which ignorance can be a tool. Proctor also describes situations in which ignorance can be virtuous, or “resistance or moral caution” (2008: 20), as in situations where not knowing or forgetting is preferable to knowledge, although this is not explicitly part of his taxonomy. As such, Proctor outlines a subject area in which ignorance has its own purpose as distinct from that of knowledge. In the rest of this book (Proctor and Schiebinger, 2008), as in High, Kelly and Mair’s (2012) book, a number of examples are provided to suggest how ignorance as a subject of study can be a useful concept with explanatory power in numerous situations, from politics, to science, to anthropology. Thus, this research aims to build on the example provided by these works in the attempt to use ignorance as a lens through which to view the management of megaprojects, distinctly from understanding the role of knowledge in the same context.

Proctor's (2008) taxonomy of different kinds of ignorance is similar to that of others who have attempted the same task. Smithson's (1989) more complex taxonomy divides ignorance into two areas: irrelevance, including untopicality, taboo, and undecidability; and error, including distortion by way of confusion or inaccuracy, and incompleteness through uncertainty or absence. However, the primary distinction that Smithson (1989) suggests between irrelevance and error does not account for ignorance that is imposed for the benefit of an individual, or a group, as in Proctor's (2008) concept of 'virtuous ignorance'. Further, it neglects to acknowledge that ignorance can be motivated by intent, as this is a concept that both irrelevance and error fail to capture; knowledge may be relevant and correct but still avoided. Thus, while Smithson's (1989) typology provides a useful starting point for considering ignorance, it is more valuable as an abstract concept than a practicable one.

Other scholars have used definitions that are similar to Smithson (1989), including Zack (1999) who defines ignorance using the four dimensions of uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, and equivocality, and Gross (2010) who defines three types of ignorance: strategic, in which one knows but doesn't want to admit it; nonknowledge, in which one is aware of a lack of knowledge, as in known unknowns; and nescience, or complete ignorance as in unknown unknowns. However, it is unclear in Zack's definition whether ignorance could be both complex and uncertain, while most people could attest to this in their personal experience of ignorance. Gross' (2010) division, by comparison, omits what Rayner (2012) suggests is an important category: the unknown knowns, or 'what we don't know, or can't acknowledge that we know', a concept that is explored later in this chapter.

These taxonomies are therefore limited by their structure to a semantic distinction between types of ignorance based primarily on their origin, as compared with Proctor's (2008) more holistic view that focuses on the reasons for and outcomes of ignorance, which will therefore be used as the definition of ignorance for the purposes of this thesis. Proctor's (2008) focus on outcomes is critical for the purposes of this work, which addresses the distinction between functional ignorance and detrimental ignorance as outcomes, rather than on the psychological or sociological understanding of the person or organisation achieving ignorance. This is a departure from much of the literature on ignorance to date, which has focused on the distinction between strategic and inadvertent ignorance as a proxy for guilt in a range of areas (see e.g. Rappert, 2012). However, it is necessary in this context to attempt to remove the focus on culpability and instead understand how ignorance can be both a positive and a negative force in organisations.

2.1.2 Untruths, silence and uncomfortable knowledge

Despite the ongoing debate over the definition of ignorance, numerous philosophers, sociologists, and anthropologists have addressed the concept with a broad understanding of its meaning. Nietzsche (1882 [2001]), for example, asserts that in the human quest for 'truth', the known is always preferable to the unknown. Nietzsche suggests that this is because unpredictability is fundamentally dangerous in society, and therefore we seek certainty at any cost. He contends, however, that we have confused our desire for certainty with our desire for knowledge:

What do the people actually take knowledge to be? what [sic] do they want when they want 'knowledge'? Nothing more than this: something unfamiliar is to be traced back to something familiar... (Nietzsche, 1882 [2001]: 214)

Nietzsche (1873[1979]) further suggests that because of the focus that we place on certainty, our entire existence is essentially based on 'untruths'. He argues that we discard irregularities in our daily interactions in favour of selecting consistencies, which, though untrue, provide us with certainty about the world. Language is one example of this:

Just as it is certain that one leaf is never totally the same as another, so it is certain that the concept "leaf" is formed by arbitrarily discarding these individual differences and by forgetting the distinguishing aspects. (Nietzsche, 1873[1979]: 83)

Therefore, we have only been able to accept information as 'knowledge' because of our ability to be deliberately ignorant of certain aspects of our environment. In this way, creating the known also requires enacting the unknown by ignoring the boundaries of our knowledge. Thus for Nietzsche, ignorance is not just present in society, but is also crucial for society to function.

This perspective is also clearly echoed in the concepts of 'structural amnesia' (1986) and 'forgotten knowledge' (1995) explored by Douglas. In her arguments, Douglas draws on anthropologist Evans-Pritchard's (1940) discussion of cattle rights in the African Nuer tribe, in which generational conflicts are resolved by selective forgetting of the common ancestry between different members of the tribe. Using this and other examples, she suggests that:

A gap in historical knowledge, even a large one, may sometimes be preferred; knowledge lost may be knowledge well lost... It is not wrong to forget, it is not necessarily sad to forget, and we should not, cannot, strive strenuously to remember everything we ever knew. (Douglas, 1995: 15)

Douglas's perspective on forgetting in society is also supported by other researchers in different contexts. One excellent example is Littlewood's (2009) work on directed forgetting versus spontaneous forgetting, in which he

studies the omission of historical information in two different cultures: a millenarian community in Trinidad and a remote Albanian village. In his work, Littlewood found that neglect is an important part of forgetting, in order to avoid parts of a past that may now seem undesirable to the social community. Similarly, Anteby and Molnar (2012) have applied the same logic to their study of 50 years of internal bulletins at a company, suggesting that:

...forgetting in a firm's ongoing rhetorical history—here, the bulletins' repeated omission of contradictory elements in the firm's past (i.e., structural omission) or attempts to neutralize them with valued identity cues (i.e., pre-emptive neutralization)—sustains its identity. Thus, knowing “who we are” might depend in part on repeatedly remembering to forget “who we were not.” (Anteby and Molnar, 2012: 515)

It would therefore appear that information might be necessarily forgotten in a form of virtuous (Proctor, 2008), if not strategic, ignorance. In applying this idea to the Games, it is worth considering to what extent the culture of the Games community may resemble the anthropological settings studied by Douglas and Littlewood, and the organisational setting of Anteby and Molnar. If so, necessary forgetting could form part of the explanation for the continued challenges of organising the Games.

In contrast to these benign concepts of virtuous ignorance, Zerubavel's (2006) research on silence and denial in daily life suggests that a societal expectation of secrecy can develop around topics that are 'unknowable' in a community:

A conspiracy of silence, whereby a group of people tacitly agree to outwardly ignore something of which they are all personally aware... revolving around common knowledge that is practically never discussed in public, undiscussables and unmentionables that are "generally known but cannot be spoken." (Zerubavel, 2006: 2-3)

In this way, ignorance in society is perpetuated by situations in which individuals tacitly agree to not acknowledge a topic, which Proctor (2008)

would categorise as passive ignorance. Zerubavel uses the children's parable of "The Emperor's New Clothes", in which an emperor is swindled into believing he is wearing a wonderful cloak that only he cannot see while he is actually naked. His subjects perpetuate this fallacy through the societal expectation of silence until an outspoken child breaks this common agreement, which demonstrates how common knowledge can become commonly agreed ignorance. He also suggests that, "what society expects us to ignore is often articulated in the form of strict taboos against looking, listening, and speaking," (Zerubavel, 2006: 26), which can increase one's fear of the unmentionable item. However, Foucault's (1980) discussion of the 'repressive hypothesis' describes how society's perception of an increasing restriction of sexuality in public discourse has rather represented an increase in sexual awareness, in particular about the need to impose silence around the subject. In this way, Foucault (1980) may be seen to suggest that, rather than silencing uncomfortable knowledge, the very strategies employed to conceal it may instead make it more salient through an increase in discussion. Societal secrecy may therefore be more of a situation in which everyone knows what not to know, and thus the unknowable is privately discussable but collectively unmentionable.

This proposition is also supported by Morrison and Milliken's (2000) research on selective silence, which suggests that this situation is prevalent in organisations:

...far too many organizations are caught in an apparent paradox in which most employees know the truth about certain issues and problems within the organization yet dare not speak that truth to their superiors. (Morrison and Milliken, 2000: 706)

While the examples given in their paper support the implication in this excerpt that knowing about the problems on which employees are silent would

improve the organisation's decisions, it is also possible that the superiors have personal knowledge about the same issues that they have chosen to exclude. Nevertheless, the suggestion that silence in organisations is widespread suggests that it is possible that the Games experience some of the same situations. In further empirical work on the topic, Milliken, Morrison and Hewlin (2003) found that the majority of interviewees "indicated that they had been in a situation of feeling uncomfortable about raising certain types of issues," (Milliken, Morrison and Hewlin, 2003: 1465), and further, that "74 per cent [of these] suggested that other employees were aware of the issue and also felt uncomfortable speaking up about it," (Milliken, Morrison and Hewlin, 2003: 1465). Although this research is based on a sample of only 40 interviews in a single company, the high proportion of employees with this opinion suggests that it is an issue due further attention. In contrast to Douglas (1986; 1995) and Littlewood (2009), it is therefore equally possible that the Games organisers may choose to strategically limit their knowledge of uncomfortable areas. This is equally supported by Heffernan's (2012) recent treatise on wilful blindness, which provides both individual and societal examples of why it is tempting to avoid information that is seemingly obvious to others, while also showing the consequences of staying silent. Using examples ranging from the 2008 financial crisis to industrial disasters, she provides evidence of well-known situations in which people should have known better but were unable or unwilling to address their concerns. As such, this work demonstrates both the functionality of ignorance and the detriment that can be caused by it, and provides further compelling examples of strategic ignorance.

By contrast, Cohen's (2001) work on denial in societies where atrocities have been committed suggests three possible explanations for individuals' ignorance that do not rely on broader societal expectation: 1) truth, that people don't know; 2) lying, that they do know but don't want to admit it; or, 3) between truth and lying:

Denial may be neither a matter of telling the truth nor intentionally telling a lie... There seem to be states of mind, or even whole cultures, in which we know and don't know at the same time. (Cohen, 2001: 4-5)

Thus, Cohen (2001) implies that both unintentional and deliberate strategies are responsible for denial. In expanding on this third explanation, Cohen (2001) invokes Sartre's concept of 'bad faith'. Sartre (1958[2008]) suggests that 'bad faith', the term he uses for lying to oneself, is different from lying to someone else, because "the liar intends to deceive and he does not seek to hide this intention from himself," (Sartre, 1958[2008]: 71). On the contrary, in lying to oneself:

I must know in my capacity as deceiver the truth which is hidden from me in my capacity as the one deceived. Better yet, I must know the truth very exactly in order to conceal it more carefully. (Sartre, 1958[2008]: 72)

As such, lying to oneself is a case of both knowing and not knowing simultaneously. Ignorance, therefore, may simultaneously be strategic and inadvertent, hence the issue with this distinction. However, it is proposed that the division between functional and detrimental ignorance could be explored as a more useful construct.

The ambiguity between strategic and inadvertent ignorance has also been called on by political figures. Donald Rumsfeld (2002), former US Secretary of Defence, popularised the idea that there are three levels of uncertainty in planning: 'known knowns', which are the things that we know about; 'known unknowns', which we know we don't know about; and

‘unknown unknowns’, which we don’t realise we don’t know about. However, Rayner (2012) suggests that Rumsfeld omitted another level of uncertainty, which may be the most dangerous to organisations: the unknown knowns, or information that cannot be acknowledged and “which societies or institutions actively exclude because they threaten to undermine key organizational arrangements or the ability of institutions to pursue their goals,” (Rayner, 2012: 108). This threatening information is what Rayner terms ‘uncomfortable knowledge’, a concept that is particularly useful in trying to understand why ignorance is perpetuated in the Games. Rayner’s approach is “to treat ignorance as a necessary social achievement rather than as a simple background failure to acquire, store and retrieve knowledge” (Rayner, 2012: 108), which gives ignorance credit as a productive force in its own right, a concept also advocated by McGoey (2012) and Mair, Kelly and High (2012) as explained earlier in this chapter.

Rayner suggests that uncomfortable knowledge originates in ‘wicked problems’, a term first coined by Rittel and Webber (1973) in the context of urban planning. Prins and Rayner (2007: v) describe wicked problems as those “comprising open, complex and imperfectly understood systems,” as opposed to ‘tame problems’, which are “complicated, but with defined and achievable end-states.” Rittel and Webber (1973: 160) suggest that “planning problems are inherently wicked,” due to the continual evolution of societal priorities involved in addressing them. Accordingly, wicked problems are often issues that involve social policy, and as such are ill defined and not necessarily ‘solvable’:

...diverse values are held by different groups of individuals – that what satisfies one may be abhorrent to another, that what comprises problem-solution for one is problem-generation for another. (Rittel and Webber, 1973: 169)

Consequently, in situations where wicked problems exist, like in urban planning, there can be no clear and definable solution based on one perspective. The result is that, as discussed in Verweij and Thompson's (2006) book, clumsy solutions are developed which take into account multiple views, as opposed to unilateral solutions that are doomed to become, by contrast, elegant failures. In the context of ignorance, however, information that threatens key organisational goals can be seen as troublesome:

In the context of wicked problems and clumsy solutions, uncomfortable knowledge is disruptive knowledge. It may be information or understanding that is available to certain parties, but cannot be acknowledged by others. (Rayner, 2012: 113)

Thus, in the context of planning the Games, wicked problems may arise in deciding what should be done and how the plans should be implemented, with subsequently related uncomfortable, or threatening, information arising between parties. Therefore, there are incentives to avoiding, or strategically creating, ignorance in these contexts.

This active, or strategic, production of ignorance is what Proctor (2008) refers to as agnogenesis. McGoey (2009) builds on a similar idea in her examination of pharmaceutical companies' strategies to not reveal potentially harmful information about their products. In her work, she provides a discerning account of the decisions of both company representatives and industry regulators trying to discredit, and avoid, information about the potentially harmful effects of certain pharmaceutical drugs. McGoey (2007) also highlights the usefulness of exploiting uncertainty, where actions cannot be clearly determined to arise from strategic ignorance rather than from a caution over raising undue alarm. Insightfully, she suggests that:

...the feigning of ignorance whether deliberately or unconsciously, collectively or individually answers the twin demands of appearing transparent while wielding control

over the very information one has an interest in concealing.
(McGoey, 2007: 215-216)

McGoey (2012) builds on the idea of strategic ignorance in a special issue of *Economy and Society*, in which she and other leading authors examine the implications of strategic ignorance in a number of areas, including military casualties (Rappert, 2012), funding for HIV clinics (Heimer, 2012) and the financial crisis (Davies and McGoey, 2012). The collective suggestion of these articles is that there are incentives to misdirection, or strategic ignorance, and thus, the extent of strategy in ignorance may be difficult to determine from external observation.

There is also a body of research on strategic ignorance that has focused specifically on deception and cover-ups in organisations. For example, Katz's (1979) research suggests that strategic ignorance is a useful way to insulate individuals from culpability should they be 'found out'. Through his examination of accounts of cover-ups, he rejects the conventional idea that bureaucratic organisations serve to inculcate passive compliance in staff, suggesting that "people are rarely, if ever, completely passive in responding to expectations... perhaps especially to the expectation that they remain ignorant," (Katz, 1979: 296). Instead, he proposes that participants in cover-ups anticipate that they will one day be discovered, and therefore use strategic ignorance to limit their perceived involvement. Likewise, Fleming and Zyglidopoulos (2007) propose a process model of the escalation of deception in corrupt firms. They suggest that a small, undetected lie can initiate a process "whereby the ease, severity and pervasiveness of deception increases over time so that it eventually becomes an organization level phenomenon," (Fleming and Zyglidopoulos, 2007: 837). Interestingly, they find that organisational complexity has an amplifying effect

on their findings, which may be considered particularly relevant to researching ignorance in megaproject environments like the Games. In cases of strategic ignorance, it is therefore possible that the limited timeframe of the Games may act to perpetuate deception, not only within a single Games, but also between Games if it is not addressed.

Proctor's (2008) view of four different types of ignorance, can be aligned with other concepts of ignorance discussed in this section as shown in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1: Alignment of literature with Proctor's (2008) typology

Proctor's (2008) typology	Similar constructs in literature
Native state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known unknowns and unknown unknowns (Rumsfeld, 2002)
Passive construct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncomfortable knowledge (Rayner, 2012) • Lying to oneself (Sartre, 1958[2008])
Active construct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic ignorance (Katz, 1979; McGoey, 2007) • Deception (Fleming and Zyglidopoulos, 2007) • Denial – lying (Cohen, 2001) • Employee silence (Morrison and Milliken, 2000) • Repressive hypothesis (Foucault, 1980)
Virtuous state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Societal requirement (Nietzsche, 1886[1966]) • Structural amnesia (Douglas, 1986) • Necessary forgetting (Douglas, 1995) • Directed and spontaneous forgetting (Littlewood, 2009)

While there are doubtless other interpretations of the literature that could be provided, this alignment is useful in understanding the various perspectives from which ignorance has previously been studied.

The next section returns to the discussion of knowledge transfer highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, to understand how the perpetuation of ignorance from Games to Games might be achieved.

2.1.3 Organisational learning and knowledge transfer

According to Schulz' (2001) review of the literature on organisational learning, the process of managing knowledge in organisations has been a topic of interest for researchers since at least the mid-twentieth century. He specifically cites March and Simon's (1958) suggestion that the complexity of organisational processes may cause learning to be random rather than strategic as a key point in the initiation of research into knowledge management. Knowledge management as a field became especially popular in the late twentieth century as a new competitive strategy for firms, prompting Nonaka (1991: 96) to suggest that, "the one sure source of lasting competitive advantage is knowledge." The fields of organisational learning and knowledge management are usually seen to be highly interrelated; for example, Argote and Ophir's (2001) review of literature on intra-organisational learning focuses on creating knowledge, retaining knowledge, and transferring knowledge.

Michael Polanyi developed another important contribution to understanding knowledge, which is of particular relevance to this research. Polanyi's concept of knowledge is summarised in the phrase "we can know more than we can tell" (1967: 4). This assertion stems from Polanyi's interpretation of the difference between 'explicit' and 'tacit' knowledge (Polanyi, 1967). Explicit knowledge is that which we know that we know and can communicate to others overtly, for example, directions to a specific location. Tacit knowledge, in contrast, is that which is gathered through personal experience and cannot be easily communicated to others, for example, how to recognise faces. Polanyi (1967) emphasises that tacit knowledge is not merely an advancement of explicit knowledge, for example perfecting a skill to the point that it becomes difficult to describe it at an

explicit level. Rather, he emphasises that "it is impossible to represent the organizing principles of a higher level by the laws governing its isolated particulars," (Polanyi, 1967: 36). In this, Polanyi recalls Aristotle's theory of emergence, which is commonly cited as, 'the whole is more than the sum of its parts' (Aristotle, c. 350 BCE). As such, Polanyi believes that personal, tacit thought is an indispensable element of all knowledge (1958). Therefore, there may be some things that we know intuitively or at a holistic level, but lack a way to explain how we know them or to articulate the parts, and therefore refrain from discussing them.

Polanyi's (1967) distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge has formed the basis for a significant branch of research into the field of knowledge management (Grant, 2007). The use of Polanyi's concepts in this area stems from Nonaka (1991) and Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) work, which suggests ways to translate both tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge in organisations. They suggest four ways in which this can be done: socialisation (tacit to tacit); externalisation (tacit to explicit); combination (explicit to explicit); and, internalisation (explicit to tacit) (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995: 62). As such, their framework has been used to structure knowledge management systems that allow employees both to transfer tacit knowledge through interaction, such as in mentoring programmes, and to capture explicit knowledge through more static means, such as information systems. However, Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) approach has been criticised as being fundamentally different from Polanyi's (1967) concept of tacitness. As Tsoukas (2003) describes, Polanyi's definition of tacit knowledge is when a skilled performer acts without knowledge of the rules required to perform the action. Furthermore, the act of defining the rules

would not be helpful in executing the action, as in knowing the physics required to ride a bicycle, and in thinking about the physics of it one would be less able to perform the action, because it forces attention on to the tacit knowledge that is being employed. In this way, Polanyi suggests that in decomposing tacit knowledge down into explicit parts, one would still not be able to convey the concept as a whole (Grant, 2007). Therefore, in this review we must keep in mind the distinction between explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge, for ignorance may be perpetuated in situations in which the whole is difficult to communicate between organisations and individuals.

In the literature on organisational learning, another line of research that is of interest is the concept of 'mental maps', a hypothesised process through which people plan, implement and review their actions, leading to learning (Argyris and Schön, 1974). Although this view conflicts with other views like sensemaking, which suggests that actions precede cognition (Weick, 1979), it has formed a useful basis for conceptualising how individuals may internalise information. Of particular interest to this research is work that Argyris (1990) has extended from this initial work to suggest that learning occurs first when errors are detected and corrected, and secondly, when this learning is applied to similar situations to avoid errors in the future through the adjustment of the mental maps (Argyris, 1990: xiii). However, his findings suggest that in situations where 'embarrassing knowledge' is present, both initial detection of the error and the application of the learning to future situations are inhibited. Embarrassing knowledge can therefore lead to errors that are not corrected because mental maps are not updated to enable learning (Argyris, 1990). Luhmann (1995) suggests a similar explanation in

his consideration of how individuals deal with the disappointment of their expectations through the limitation of explanations to specific instances:

Explaining away disappointments provides precise results that can be fitted into a cognitive picture of the world and into the enduring knowledge that has been handed down, and it re-establishes the security of expectations in the mode “prepared for change, but without sufficient occasion for it”. (Luhmann, 1995: 333)

Luhmann frames the debate as ‘disappointment’, however the findings are consistent with Argyris’ (1990) ‘embarrassing knowledge’. Baumard and Starbuck (2005) discovered similar findings in their research on organisational learning, which sought to understand what lessons were learned from fourteen strategic failures at a very large telecommunications firm. Their research suggests that managers “saw the large failures as having idiosyncratic and largely exogenous causes”, and that “failures were commonly concealed until they could no longer be hidden,” (Baumard and Starbuck, 2005: 294). Similarly, Cannon and Edmonson (2005: 316) suggest that part of the issue may be the extent to which failures are stigmatised in the business community, and that “failure must be viewed not as a problematic aberration that should never occur, but rather as an inevitable aspect of operating in a complex and changing world.” This statement is as relevant to ignorance as it is to failure; without accepting failure as a potential outcome, learning from failure, embarrassing knowledge, and disappointing results, are unlikely to be incorporated into the individual’s or the organisation’s view on similar future endeavours, and failures will continue to happen. Similarly, without accepting ignorance as a natural part of the practices of both individuals and organisations, it will remain stigmatised and thus unmanageable.

Another useful insight into ignorance from the field of knowledge management is in Argote's (1999) research on organisational learning, which challenges the assumption in knowledge management research that learning develops in a cumulative manner over time in an organisation. Instead, her research question asks, 'do organisations forget?' Using statistical analysis from a case study at aerospace company Lockheed, Argote (1999) finds support for the idea that knowledge depreciates over time. Further, she suggests that, "there are conditions under which it is more difficult to learn and share knowledge within organizations," (quoted in Hinds and Pfeffer, 2003: 3). De Holan and Phillips (2003) also support this view, stating that organisational forgetting is an "indispensable complement" to studies of organisational knowledge, and drawing an interesting parallel between learning curves and processes of knowledge decay. While they do not explicitly draw on the literature on ignorance, their research also categorises organisational forgetting into unintentional and purposeful, a concept that is not dissimilar to the inadvertent and strategic distinctions found in ignorance research.

Hinds and Pfeffer's (2003) account of knowledge transfer aptly titled *Why Organisations Don't "Know What They Know"*, builds on Argote (1999) and Polanyi (1967), suggesting that knowledge transfer is a significant managerial challenge because of cognitive and motivational limitations for sharing information. In particular, they draw on Polanyi's (1967) concepts of explicit and tacit knowledge to suggest that tacit knowledge may be particularly difficult to share because those possessing it may not be able to articulate it clearly enough for novices to understand. In his work on developing a new approach for social science, Flyvbjerg (2001) echoes this

perspective in his discussion of the Dreyfus model of the human-learning process. The Dreyfus model outlines five levels of proficiency in learning: novice, advanced beginner, competent performer, proficient performer and expert (Flyvbjerg, 2001). In analysing this process, Flyvbjerg refers to a:

...qualitative leap from the rule-governed analytical rationality of the first three levels to the intuitive, holistic, and synchronous performance of tacit skills of the last two levels. (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 71).

Thus, another alternative for ignorance may be the distinction between expert and novice knowledge; for example, the expert may be unable to explain certain aspects of the role that are accepted but not formally acknowledged by the organisation.

While many other theoretical concepts are explored in this thesis, those explored in this chapter form the foundation for the theoretical framework that is proposed in Chapter 3. Further theories are presented in the content of the empirical chapters where appropriate. The next section turns to research that has been done in the empirical context of megaprojects and Games organisations, before the final section which will look at the small body of literature in which the theoretical concepts of ignorance and the empirical context of megaprojects have intersected to date.

2.2 The Empirical Context

While the literature reviewed in the previous section has discussed knowledge and ignorance in society and in organisations, we must consider to what extent it is applicable to the empirical context that this research is considering. In seeking to understand the empirical context of the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, this section begins with the broader view, that the Games are evidently organisations of some sort; what sort of organisations they are is a slightly more difficult question.

2.2.1 Megaprojects as Organisations

To explore the nature of megaprojects as organisations, the following definition is used to assist in framing this discussion:

Organizations are systems of coordinated action among individuals and groups whose preferences, information, interests, or knowledge differ. Organization theories describe the delicate conversion of conflict into cooperation, the mobilization of resources, and the coordination of effort that facilitate the joint survival of an organization and its members. (March and Simon, 1993: 2)

This definition is broad enough to describe a wide range of institutions.

Interestingly, it is even broad enough to encompass a system of institutions that are all engaged in coordinated action, and who have differing knowledge about the activities that they are engaged in. It is little surprise then, that it also serves quite well as a context for the organisations involved in planning the Games, which is described in much greater detail as the subject of Chapter 4. However, for the purposes of the literature, it is useful to note that the Games institutions do, by this definition, qualify as organisations. Further, it is useful to note that the study of ignorance defined in the previous section does, in relation to these institutions, also fall within the definition of organisation theories provided by March and Simon above.

Nonetheless, there has been some debate about the extent to which the broader organisational literature can be applied to understanding the atypical environment of projects. Projects are defined in the Oxford English Dictionary (2009) as “ a collaborative enterprise, frequently involving research or design, that is carefully planned to achieve a particular aim.” To this we can add that traditionally, in addition to a particular aim or scope, projects typically have strict boundaries of time and cost that are attributed to achieving this aim. Therefore, although traditional organisations generally do have limits on their expenditures as determined by their income and are

established to accomplish a purpose, projects differ from most organisations that, in most cases, assume an unbounded timeframe for the continuation of their operations. Given these differences, scholars such as Lundin and Söderholm (1995) have suggested that projects should be considered temporary organisations. Van Donk and Molloy (2008) have also suggested that projects are organisations in their own right, and must be treated as such, with all of the requirements of organisation design and planning that other organisations face, but with consideration given for the specific circumstances of the project's environment. These and similar findings have therefore lead to an increasing acceptance of the applicability of organisational theories to the project environment, while still recognising that there are differences in the particular situation faced by projects. As such, this research starts from the assumption that the empirical observations of ignorance in the Games can be characterised by the studies of ignorance in organisations reviewed in the previous section, while also recognising that there may be some important differences in their application.

In addition to the increasing application of organisational theories to project environments, there has been an increasing demand to acknowledge the distinctive nature of megaprojects, also known as programmes or major programmes, due to their complexity and size (Capka, 2004). Thiry (2007: 117) states that, "programs usually cover a group of projects... [whose] management must be coordinated, and... [that] create a synergy, which will generate greater profits than projects could do individually." However, others have suggested that programmes are more than just groups of projects, and are generally much larger and more complex. Recent research by Molloy and Stewart (2012) supports the need for a distinction between the terms project

and programme, as they found that although projects and programmes are similar concepts, they behave differently in their associations with terms such as ‘success’ and ‘failure’. Therefore, it is important to carefully consider where findings from the project and organisational literature can be applied to megaprojects.

Altshuler and Luberoff (2003: 2) use the term megaproject for “initiatives that are physical, very expensive, and public” and “cost at least \$250 million.” Frick (2008) adds a number of distinctive characteristics to their definition:

Colossal in size and scope... *Captivating*... may generate a sense of awe and wonder... *Costly*, in that costs are often underestimated and increase over the life of the project... *Controversial*, as participants negotiate funding and mitigation packages... *Complex*, which breeds risk and uncertainty... [and] laden with *control* issues. (Frick, 2008: 240, italics in original)

Megaprojects are also characterised by extreme risk in the potential of achieving their promised returns (Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius and Rothengatter, 2003). The Games evidently fit these descriptions of megaprojects; a recent study by Flyvbjerg and Stewart (2012) shows that the Olympic Games of the last 50 years were always over-budget with 100 per cent consistency, and since the late 1980s have been consistently over US\$1 billion in 2009 dollars. Further, they generate intense public and media interest in the course of their planning and delivery, and involve an incredibly complex web of stakeholders, which is further discussed in Chapter 4. If the Games are equally eligible to be classed as organisations and/or as megaprojects, the question is then, what is the value of looking at them as one or the other, or as both?

I argue that the value of looking at the Games as organisations comes from the long intellectual history on the subject of ignorance, reviewed above, while the benefit of viewing them through the lens of megaprojects is in

understanding how they may be different to traditional organisations, and therefore may experience ignorance and knowledge in slightly different ways. For example, traditional companies without a time limit on their existence could potentially stand to benefit more from improved knowledge transfer, and can also afford to construct more complex ignorance practices and expectations than a temporary megaproject can. By contrast, megaprojects that experience significantly more public and media attention than an average company may have significantly greater incentives for ignorance than other organisations. Hence, there is a value to looking at the Games from both perspectives.

2.2.2 *Prior research into the Games*

The modern Olympic Games were initiated by Baron Pierre de Coubertin in 1896 as an attempt to revive the spirit of the Ancient Greek tradition (Guttmann, 2002). In 1926, the Winter Olympic Games were introduced in Chamonix, France (Chappelet, 2002), followed by the Commonwealth Games in 1930 as an event exclusively for the countries that belonged to the British Commonwealth (CGF, 2010). As megaprojects, the summer Olympic Games, winter Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games are of equal interest to this research, though they differ in scope and budget as shown in Table 1.1.

Within the broader definition of megaprojects provided in the previous section, mega-events are typically considered a major sub-group of the field, as compared to sub-groups of transportation, technology, or science megaprojects. Roche's (2000) work on 'Mega-Events and Modernity' is considered a seminal work in the area, focusing on the cultural aspects of Olympics and World Expositions (Expos) including political, economic and

sociological factors. In his work, Roche defines mega-events as “large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance,” (Roche, 2000: 1), a description that complements Frick’s (2008) definition of megaprojects outlined in the previous section. Roche (2000) argues that the Olympics and Expos have contributed to the growth of a global culture in the post-war period, and as such have been instrumental in the development of modern society.

In their work on sports mega-events, Horne and Manzenreiter (2006) compile a series of works on the economics, politics and power relations in sports mega-events from a social scientific perspective. They suggest that research into major sporting events has traditionally been treated with disdain as a topic of sociological study (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2006). However, the last two decades have seen an increasing interest in studying sports events from a social science perspective as they have become larger and more complex, thereby creating more significant socioeconomic effects as a by-product of their execution. In particular, they suggest that the development of substantial revenue from broadcasting rights and sponsorship advertising has created a commercial interest in large sporting events, buoyed by a worldwide competition between cities for development and investment funding (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2006). Burbank, Andranovich and Heying (2001) support the finding of increasing competition between urban centres in their work on the political impact of mega-events, looking specifically at the three Olympic Games that were hosted in the United States between 1984 and 2002: Los Angeles, Atlanta and Salt Lake City. Their research finds that limited benefits result from hosting the Games, and suggests that substantial

changes need to be made to the current Olympic delivery model to ensure that any of the promised benefits are realised. Gold and Gold (2007) also support these findings, while looking specifically at urban legacies, as do Chalkley and Essex (1999) in their research on urban development through the Games from 1896 to 1996.

Much research that has been done on the Olympic and Commonwealth Games has focused on three areas: 1) the IOC, especially around politics and scandals (see e.g. Simson and Jennings, 1992); 2) the economic costs and benefits of hosting the Games (see e.g. Kasimati, 2003; Preuss, 2004); or, 3) a specific concern of the Games, such as terrorism (see e.g. Toohey, 2003; Taylor and Toohey, 2007; Qi, Gibson and Zhang, 2009), public health (see e.g. Meehan, Toomey, Drinnon, Cunningham, Anderson and Baker, 1998; Jorm, Thackway, Churches and Hills, 2002), or legacy (see e.g. Searle, 2002; Ong, 2004). The resulting literature is therefore focused on how each of these issues is independently managed in the Games, rather than the management of the Games as a complex whole. Furthermore, most of the research focuses on an individual Games, for example the Sydney 2000 Summer Olympic Games (e.g. Frawley and Toohey, 2009); Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Olympic Games (e.g. Atkinson and Young, 2002) or Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games (e.g. Majumdar and Mehta, 2010), with only a few notable exceptions that have compared Games in a research study (e.g. Andranovich, Burbank and Heying, 2001). Some of these works are extremely valuable as individual cases to understanding the situation of the Games, as in Lowendahl's (1995) insightful study of the Lillehammer winter Olympics. However, the lack of multi-Games research has reduced the ability of researchers to compare findings between Games. This creates a

significant gap in understanding the complete Games organisation, including the interactions between host city Organising Committees (OCs), and between these and the governing bodies (e.g. IOC and CGF), the public, and other stakeholders.

There are, however, some notable exceptions to the focus areas and narrow geographical scope described above which are of particular interest. Toohey and Veal (2000) provide a comprehensive overview of some of the salient sociological factors involved in organising the Games, and suggest that many disciplines can benefit from the study of the Games, including history, economics, politics and sociology. One slight drawback of their work is that, given the dearth of other studies in the area, they provide breadth of coverage over many areas of the Games, rather than depth in any one area. In contrast, Theodoraki's (2007) book on 'Olympic Event Organization' provides a detailed exploration of the structure of the different organisations involved in planning the Olympics, through a number of organisational theories, and effectively describes the unique organisational system of the Games, although she does not look at any particular Games in her work. Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott (2008) provide similar descriptions of the IOC and the broader Olympic system in their book, providing insights into the manner in which all of the organisations involved in the Games interact. However, these works, while very accurate, are largely descriptive, and provide limited insight into the processes by which the organisations manage the Games as megaprojects.

The next section focuses specifically on the areas in which the theoretical literature on ignorance and the empirical literature on megaprojects have previously been usefully combined.

2.3 Uniting Theory and Empirics

One debatable point that stems from the lack of in-depth comparison of Games discussed in the last section is whether the Games are in fact similar enough for lessons learned to be shared between them. As Roche (2000) states:

On the one hand, each Olympic Games is both utterly standardised, in that it is run according to IOC rules... and on the standardised periodicity of its four-year calendar. On the other hand, each Olympic Games is also utterly unique. (Roche, 2000: 135)

This paradox has meant that little learning was seen to be of value when transferred between the Games, especially with the complicating factors of cultural, political and linguistic differences between host nations. However, recent developments, such as the development of an extensive knowledge management system by the IOC and CGF, seem to imply that they disagree with this perspective. How then is knowledge communicated between Games, and what knowledge is most likely to be restricted?

Building on the previous sections in this chapter on the theory of knowledge and ignorance, and on the empirical context of megaprojects, this section discusses research on knowledge and ignorance in megaprojects and specifically in the Games.

2.3.1 Knowledge and ignorance in projects and megaprojects

In support of the work that has been done in organisational learning and knowledge transfer, and on the reasons that learning in organisations can be problematic, research has been done on learning and ignorance in the environment of projects and megaprojects. Research into learning and knowledge transfer in projects and programmes has stemmed from work on both intra- and inter-organisational environments. For example, some

research has looked at 'project-based' organisations (e.g. Prencipe and Tell, 2001), in which a 'parent' organisation is continuous between projects and permanent employees are agglomerated for the duration of the project, while other research looks at knowledge transfer between different organisations working on the same project (e.g. Vaaland and Håkansson, 2003).

The Games have elements of both of these situations; the governing bodies as organisations persist before and after the Games, while the OCs exist only for the time that the Games are being planned, and must work with many different organisations in the planning. Government organisations in the local host city and country are also a mix between these two; while the governments are permanent organisations, they often establish temporary departments with the sole purpose of delivering the Games and working with both the IOC or CGF and the OC in the local host city. Therefore, both inter- and intra-organisational knowledge transfer at the project level are relevant to this study. In their introduction to the Journal of Management Studies' Special Issue on inter-organisational knowledge, Easterby-Smith, Lyles and Tsang (2008) note that:

Knowledge transfer is a complex phenomenon and in practice, successful transfer is often not easy to achieve... Transferring knowledge between organizations brings more complexity because of the multifaceted nature of the boundaries, cultures, and processes involved. (Easterby-Smith, Lyles and Tsang, 2008: 677)

The model that they propose suggests that there are four major components involved in inter-organisational knowledge transfer: 1) the 'donor' or transferring firm; 2) the 'recipient' firm; 3) the dynamics between the firms; and, 4) the nature of the knowledge being transferred. Hence, there are many different components that must be considered in understanding how

information flows between and within organisations. Lindner and Wald (2011) found similarly that:

Due to their uniqueness and short-term orientation, temporary organizations face particular obstacles in their KM [Knowledge Management]. After a project is finished the constellation of people working together is resolved, fragmenting the project knowledge. In contrast to permanent organizations where departments and divisions act as knowledge silos, in temporary organizations routines and organizational memory hardly emerge.” (Linder and Wald, 2011: 877)

Bakker, Cambré, Korlaar and Raab (2011) echo this in their work, in which they conducted a study of 12 cases of knowledge transfer between inter-organisational projects and their parent organisations. They found evidence that it was the permanent organisation’s absorptive capacity that determined the extent of learning in inter-organisational projects, which suggested that, “management should be geared toward a multi-dimensional approach in managing the absorptive capacity of the parent organization” (Bakker *et al*, 2011: 502). This implies that the role of the IOC and CGF in supporting learning between Games is critical for future development, and that the role of ignorance is also likely to be modified by the relationship of the local Games organisers with the international organisations.

Some studies have also looked specifically at ignorance as their subject of interest in the context of projects and programmes. For example, research by Kutsch and Lupson (2008) and Kutsch and Hall (2010) has suggested that the strategic use of ignorance in projects forms a critical part of understanding their nature. In their qualitative study of IT managers, Kutsch and Hall (2010) found that project managers tended to ignore risks that were ‘messy’, specifically highlighting that those stemming from wicked problems were often ignored. This finding provides an interesting connection to Rittel and Webber’s (1973) research of issues in urban planning, and

Rayner's (2012) suggestion that wicked problems can create uncomfortable and threatening knowledge. Furthermore, Kutsch and Hall (2010) found a tendency for project managers to address risks that could be broken down into pieces, rather than retaining their holistic complexity as advised by Polanyi (1967). Moreover, they suggest that some risks are 'taboo' in projects and are therefore ignored from fear of raising undesirable topics, as suggested by Milliken, Morrison and Hewlin (2003). Kutsch and Hall (2010) then used these results to evaluate the effects of ignorance on the perceived effectiveness of project risk management, finding that: "irrelevance [strategic ignorance] seemed to adversely influence the process of the management of risk on the projects our interviewees mentioned," (Kutsch and Hall, 2010: 252). These findings, and their similarity to findings in the broader ignorance literature, give a strong indication that the study of ignorance in projects is worthy of further investigation.

Other researchers have also considered the role of ignorance in megaprojects. One leading example is the work of Flyvbjerg, Holm and Buhl (2002; 2005), which presents the results of a comprehensive survey of transportation infrastructure across project types, geographical locations and historical timeframes. Their study concludes that cost escalation on these projects could not be explained by error, but rather, by either strategic misrepresentation or optimism bias on the part of the decision-makers. Flyvbjerg (2008) has also expanded on the concepts of strategic misrepresentation and optimism bias, which stem from a concept that Kahneman and Tversky (1979) termed 'the planning fallacy'. In this seminal work on psychological biases, they found that people "people underestimate the costs, completion times, and risks of planned actions, whereas they

overestimate the benefits of the same actions,” (Flyvbjerg, 2008: 4). Thus, there is support that unintentional ignorance through optimism may lead to approval of projects that are not likely to achieve the planned outcomes. However, Flyvbjerg, Holm and Buhl (2002; 2005) found that optimism bias could only account for part of the results that they identified, suggesting that strategically misrepresenting costs, schedules and risks is also prevalent in megaprojects.

In addition to these works, research by Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius and Rothengatter (2003) highlights further issues faced by megaprojects. In their research, they find that decision-makers on megaprojects have incentives to ignore or avoid information in the initial stages of project definition and approval:

Project promoters often avoid and violate established practices of good governance, transparency, and participation in political and administrative decision making, either out of ignorance or because they see such practices as counterproductive to getting projects started. (Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius and Rothengatter, 2003: 5)

Therefore, the specific context of megaprojects may enhance the benefits of strategic ignorance in a way that is different from organisations or smaller projects. Further, this highlights the complexities of the bidding process in the Games, and how ignorance may be useful in this part of the megaproject development.

2.3.2 Ignorance in the Games

The Games are particularly interesting from the perspective of ignorance in megaprojects, as they have already attracted attention as being especially problematic. As Cicmil, Hodgson, Lindgren and Packendorff (2009: 83) suggest, “The litany of high-profile project debacles has provided a recurrent theme over the last two decades... and already many predict a

similar story for the 2012 London Olympics.” Flyvbjerg and Stewart (2012) also found that the Olympics have a much higher cost overrun than other megaprojects in the fields of transportation, technology and dams, which suggests that their delivery might be more prone to issues of ignorance.

However, few studies exist that have specifically looked at the management of the Games from the perspective of ignorance. An exception is Horne (2007), who has addressed the idea of unknown knowns in the Games. While the argument offers only a preliminary foray into this area, he outlines several issues that he says are “things we don’t believe we know or remember that we know” (Horne, 2007: 86). One of the areas that Horne highlights is the bribery of IOC officials, as also discussed by Simson and Jennings (1992) and Cashmore (2005), suggesting that this bribery was a form of unknown known in the Games, and therefore was the subject of strategic ignorance on the part of Games committees. Similarly, Horne suggests that the displacement of homeless or low-income housing residents for the Games, as recounted vividly by Lenskyj (2002) and Porter, Jaconelli, Cheyne, Eby and Wagenaar (2009), is an unknown known that is strategically ignored within the Games community because of the negative image that it creates in association with the Games. Horne also highlights local resistance to the Olympic movement as another unknown known, as also discussed by Andranovich, Burbank and Heying (2001) and Karamichas (2005).

However, while these issues are critical to understanding the context of the Games, they are more focused on the social effects of the Games from an ethical perspective than on the characteristics that typify the Games as megaprojects. Within the context of the Games as megaprojects, little focus

has been given to the role of ignorance in strategically or inadvertently contributing to the development of the Games.

2.4 Conclusions of the Literature Review

The existing literature on ignorance provides several insights for this research. For one, it is evident in the literature that the definitions of knowledge and ignorance are unclear (Starbuck, 2006; Smithson, 1989), and that ignorance is often erroneously characterised as the antithesis of knowledge (Proctor, 2008; Mair, Kelly and High, 2012). For the purposes of this research, Proctor (2008) provides a useful taxonomy of ignorance as native state, passive construct, active construct or virtuous state. This taxonomy can usefully structure much of the work that has been done on ignorance, particularly in considering the distinctions between passive, active and virtuous ignorance. The latter is supported by the idea that society has a necessity for ignorance and for collective forgetting (Nietzsche, 1882 [2001]; Douglas, 1995; Littlewood, 2009). Strategic and passive ignorance, by contrast, are studied in a number of different areas, some of which highlight that ignorance is not inherently 'good' or 'bad', but may be deliberate or inadvertent, and this distinction is often unclear (Sartre, 1958[2008]; Katz, 1979; Cohen, 2001). Related research examines avoiding uncomfortable knowledge (Rayner, 2012) and diverting attention from damaging information (McGoey, 2007; Rappert, 2012; Heimer, 2012). Taken collectively, these works also highlight the current focus on the intent of ignorance in the literature; the question answered by these works is why ignorance is used. However, it is also evident in these works that there are varied outcomes of ignorance, in that ignorance can be both intentionally and inadvertently useful, as well as harmful.

Organisational research also suggests that ignorance may be perpetuated by situations that encourage silence (Morrison and Milliken, 2000), that complexity and uncertainty may be complicating factors in these situations (Fleming and Zyglidopoulos, 2007; McGoey, 2007; Rayner, 2012), and that both insiders and outsiders may be complicit in its continuation (Katz, 1979). The literature on organisational learning and knowledge transfer also contributes to our understanding the perpetuation of ignorance. Embarrassing knowledge, disappointing outcomes, or even failure itself may prevent learning and lead to uncorrected errors even after they are resolved (Argyris, 1990; Luhmann, 1995; Baumard and Starbuck, 2005). The lack of learning from failures is also of interest, since failure is stigmatised (Cannon and Edmonson, 2005) in the same way that ignorance has been. Furthermore, knowledge depreciation affects the probability of knowledge transfer over time (Argote, 1999), and the communication of expert information to novices, or of explicit versus tacit knowledge, can be expected to have a significant effect on the success of the knowledge transfer (Polanyi, 1967; Flyvbjerg, 2001). These findings suggest that ignorance in organisations is perpetuated by particular sets of circumstances, which should be considered as potentially relevant variables in this study.

The literature on megaprojects and on the Games also highlighted several important findings to be included in this study. Following van Donk and Molloy's (2008) suggestion that project management requires input from organisation theory, while equally acknowledging Capka's (2004) assertion that megaprojects are distinctive, this research draws on both literatures to provide different and complementary understandings of phenomena of interest. Additionally, as Horne and Manzenreiter (2006) advise, the Olympic

delivery model should be considered to understand where it might be most prone to detriment. Finally, the lack of comparative research of multiple Games at a detailed level highlighted a gap in understanding the challenges of management across Games (Roche, 2000). These findings have therefore influenced the design of this study, as described in the next chapter.

Research that has previously looked at knowledge transfer and ignorance in projects and megaprojects has also provided useful insights. The literature on knowledge transfer emphasised that the connections of parent organisations, similar to the relationship of the governing bodies with the OCs, and intra-organisational interactions within the OCs themselves, may be significant in the determination of the success of knowledge transfer in similar environments (Easterby *et al*, 2008; Linder and Wald, 2011; Bakker *et al*, 2011). Thus, this provides support for the necessity of looking at both inter-and intra-organisational structures in understanding ignorance. Further, research on ignorance in megaprojects by Kutsch and Lupson (2008), Kutsch and Hall (2010) and Flyvbjerg *et al* (2003) found that ignorance can be a powerful driver in projects and megaprojects respectively and as such, that it is an important topic of study in this field. Sports management scholar John Horne (2007) has alone proposed that unknown knowns, a form of ignorance highlighted by Rayner (2012), are a topic worthy of research in the Games.

Based on these findings, this research aims to address ignorance as a wilful and constructive force, separate from knowledge, while also looking at their relationship as complementary. It seeks to challenge the literature's focus on determining intent in ignorance by suggesting a complementary division based on functional and detrimental outcomes of ignorance, which is discussed further in Chapter 3. This division then serves to motivate the

exploration of how and why ignorance is perpetuated, drawing on the literature on organisational learning and knowledge transfer in addition to that on ignorance. Finally, it examines how complexity and uncertainty factor into ignorance, and what the relationship is between insiders and outsiders within the empirical context. To accomplish these aims, this thesis draws on insights from organisational, project, and megaproject research, to advise on the findings that result from this study.

Chapter 3: Investigating Ignorance in the Games

3.1 Framing the Research

The motivation of this research is to develop an understanding of ignorance in the management of the Games, and the literature review has provided a useful foundation for understanding this phenomenon. To build on these insights, this section narrows the research focus to a particular question of interest, with sub-questions to support the structure of the study.

3.1.1 Research question and theoretical framework

By combining the insights from the literature review with the motivation for the study, the following research question emerged as the focus of investigation:

How is ignorance achieved and why is it perpetuated in managing the megaprojects of the Olympic and Commonwealth Games?

To address this question, I propose a theoretical shift in perspective from the concepts of strategic and inadvertent ignorance, which require an interpretation of the intent of the actors, to functional and detrimental ignorance, which instead focus on outcomes. The focus on outcomes provides a complementary interpretation to that of intentionality, to accomplish the aim of understanding ignorance in the empirical context without the usually associated blame or guilt; as discussed in Chapter 2, while ignorance often has negative connotations, looking at ignorance as a concept in its own right requires a different view. By looking at ignorance as both functional and detrimental, we can develop our understanding of how it is achieved.

While the distinction between functional and detrimental ignorance has not been explicitly addressed in the literature, it nevertheless draws on a

firm theoretical basis. Several articles, although focussing on strategic ignorance, also provide support for the distinction between functional and detrimental ignorance. For example, McGoey's (2009) work shows how the uncertainty about the harmful side effects of the drug Vioxx was established by the very pharmaceutical companies who then benefitted from the uncertainty. Thus, ignorance was both strategic and functional in this context for the pharmaceutical company, while the consumers, particularly those who tragically lost their lives through this lack of transparency, experienced the detrimental ignorance. Heimer (2012: 34) also suggests in her work on the operation of HIV clinics in the United States, Uganda, Thailand and South Africa, that there are many circumstances under which "a certain measure of ignorance allowed clinics to get on with their work," for example in adapting funders' rules to local practices. However, she also highlights the detrimental nature of ignorance within the practices of these clinics, for example in adhering to rules regarding informed consent, which are in conflict with the researchers' intent to encourage participation in the study. Thus, functional and detrimental ignorance can be seen as a different way of analysing these cases from the perspective of outcomes, rather than intentionality. Both are useful, and contribute complementary observations to the study of ignorance.

In addition to providing another perspective from which to understand ignorance, the distinction between functional and detrimental ignorance can provide a productive method of 'managing' the perpetuation of ignorance. By reducing the stigmatisation of ignorance, and acknowledging that it is a wilful and productive presence in organisations, managers are not encouraging ignorance, but working with it. If ignorance is functional, its perpetuation can be beneficial for certain individuals or organisations; whereas the

perpetuation of detrimental ignorance, particularly across organisational boundaries, can be costly and harmful to the objectives of the individual or organisation affected by it. However, it is also important to acknowledge that, as shown in the literature, ignorance is a multi-dimensional construct. While ignorance might be functional for one individual or organisation, it may have detrimental effects on another. Therefore, while it is tempting to identify detrimental ignorance as one category to be eliminated, and functional ignorance as another category which should not be, the practicality of implementing such a plan is likely to be much more complex. Nevertheless, obtaining a better understanding of how and why ignorance can be functional and detrimental in Games planning is a quest that has the potential to be both theoretically and practically useful.

3.1.2 Clarifying the research focus

Within the overarching research question, the emphasis is on 'managing' the Games. In this context, managing is an ambiguous term, and the scope of it must be clearly defined. The practice of 'management' has a long history (Grint, 1995), and there have been many different conceptual ideas and definitions of management (Hatch, 2006). Traditional definitions of management describe it as an essentially administrative process; for example, until it was challenged by Mintzberg (1973), Fayol's description of management as "planning, organization, command, coordination and control" (in Sheldrake, 2003: 51) had been generally accepted for almost 60 years. While there are now many definitions to choose from, for the purposes of this study, Reed (1989: 21) provides a compelling definition of management as "a process or activity aimed at the continual recoupling or smoothing over of diverse and complex practices always prone to disengagement and

fragmentation.” This definition has the benefit of providing an insight into the practice of managing as a dynamic and reactive activity, rather than a passive or autocratic one. The concepts of continual recoupling and fragmentation are also useful in the context of our study, given the temporary, changing nature of Games organisations, which evolve and grow rapidly over a seven-year period before disappearing.

Another clarification for the research study is in determining the scope. One of the points identified in the literature on projects and programmes was that comparative analysis across Games would be useful (Roche, 2000). Thus, the organisation that is the basis for this research is the Games Organising Committee (OC). This is because the OC is the primary delivery mechanism for the Games. When the International Olympic Committee (IOC) or Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) awards the Games to a host city, the host city establishes the OC as the local organisation responsible for ‘staging’ the Games. In this role, the OC has primary responsibility for planning the sports events, transportation, athlete participation, logistics, medical, safety and many other aspects of the running of the Games, though it is not typically involved in construction of venues.

While there are many other organisations involved in managing the Games both locally and internationally, including governments, sports organisations, and suppliers, their objectives and engagement tend to change significantly from Games to Games. As such, the Games OCs provide a consistent point of focus from which ignorance can be compared. This also increases the generalisability of the findings, as it not only examines ignorance in individual OCs, but also the perpetuation of ignorance between OCs. By doing so, this research seeks to understand not only how knowledge

is transferred between Games, but also how patterns of ignorance between Games develop and persist. These views have influenced the selection of research sites, as discussed in later in this chapter.

3.1.3 *Sub-questions of the research*

Within this broader focus, it is also useful to define what processes and activities are of particular interest to this study. As stated above, the focus is on comparing Games and understanding how the OC may be involved in perpetuating ignorance from Games to Games. As the findings of the research progressed, I found several themes to be useful in structuring the data from interviews and observations. These themes developed into a range of sub-questions to be explored at greater levels of detail in the project. The four themes are: 1) inter-organisational relationships within the Games system; 2) intra-organisational coordination within the OC; 3) the development and evolution of budgeting and costs within the OC; and 4) the implications of scope and time decisions within the OC. The first two of these themes are focused on the structure of the organisations involved in planning the Games, dealing with questions of how ignorance develops across boundaries between firms and within them. The second two themes are focused on the operations of the OC, specifically looking at how the management of the Games proceeds and develops.

The first theme considered is the interaction between the diverse organisations that plan and deliver the Games. This theme is of interest to assist in our understanding of how the varied interests of the organisations involved in the Games leads them to conceal or ignore information, to either functional or detrimental outcomes. Thus, the sub-questions in this section explore this connection:

- *What are the different organisational entities involved in planning the Games, and how do they interact?*
- *How and why do they share information, and what information do they not share, whether deliberately or inadvertently?*
- *How and why is ignorance between Games organisations functional, how is it detrimental, and why does ignorance between these organisations persist from Games to Games?*

These questions form the basis of the first empirical chapter, Chapter 4, which outlines the basis of the Games as an organisational system.

The second theme of interest aims to understand the structure of the OC itself. Intra-organisational ignorance is particularly interesting because it can act to cannibalise the overall organisation's interests in ways that are functional for the sub-unit of the organisation, but detrimental for the overall purpose of the organisational entity. The sub-questions of interest for this theme are:

- *How is the OC structured formally and how does that relate to informal norms of interaction?*
- *How does the structure of the OC affect how information is shared and how it is not shared?*
- *How is ignorance within the OC functional, how is it detrimental, and why does ignorance within the OC persist from Games to Games?*

These questions are examined in Chapter 5, which considers the internal structure of the OC.

With this broad understanding of the organisations involved in the Games and the internal structure of the OCs, we turn to the substance of the planning. Specifically, Chapters 6 and 7 explore three main outcomes that form the basis for the evaluation of most projects, and which are often known as the 'iron triangle' of project management: cost, time and scope (Atkinson, 1999). Chapter 6 focuses on the first of these, with the aim of understanding

how budgets and budgeting policies act to promote ignorance among staff.

The following sub-questions are considered:

- *How are budgets and costs determined for the Games?*
- *How and why do budgets affect what is shared and what is not shared between the OC and other Games organisations?*
- *How is ignorance functional in budgeting for the Games, how is it detrimental, and why does ignorance in budgeting persist between Games?*

Chapter 7 focuses on time and scope, with particular emphasis on the immobility of the end date of the megaproject, and the flexible and dynamic nature of Games requirements. The sub-questions that are of particular interest to this chapter are:

- *How is the scope of the Games determined, and how and why does it change over time?*
- *How does the Games schedule affect what is shared between Games organisations and within the OC?*
- *How is ignorance of scope functional in the OC, how is it detrimental, and why does ignorance of scope and time constraints in OCs persist between Games?*

The research question and sub-questions are explored through the research design outlined in the next section.

3.2 Research Approach

The research framing defined in the preceding section provides the context for investigating ignorance in the Games. However, to effectively answer the research questions, the first step was to consider what would be the most applicable research methods and strategies to use. Deciding on a research approach requires a consideration of the researcher's philosophical perspective, as well as the subject to be considered. Since the purpose of this research is to explore a complex topic of which there is little prior knowledge,

an overarching qualitative approach was determined to be the best fit for this study (Punch, 1998). Within this general decision, the case study was selected as the specific strategy for this study, with a number of associated methodologies. The rationale for the case study approach and for each methodology is specified in the next sections.

3.2.1 *The case study strategy*

A case study approach was selected for this study because it provides the required flexibility to explore the Games “in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context,” (Punch, 1998: 150). Additionally, studying a topic that is sensitive to discuss with interviewees requires flexibility in the methods that are used to obtain data (Lee, 1993), for which a case study approach is appropriate. Moreover, Starbuck (2006: 144) suggests that one way to get around researching difficult topics is to investigate the situation “with more than one type of data - [this] offers another gentle way to disturb one's thinking.” This also aligns well with the case study strategy, which is an approach rather than a particular method, and allows for a multitude of sources of data to be used to investigate the phenomena of interest (Yin, 2003). The boundaries of the case can be an individual, unit, group, organisation, or social process (Yin, 2003), and the cases are intensive studies that allow for richness and depth that can otherwise be difficult to capture (Flyvbjerg, 2011a). The case study as an approach thereby allows for both analysis and practical understanding of the Games, issues that were highlighted as gaps in the research.

The case study as a methodology has been traditionally criticised for a lack of generalisability due to its focus on a small number of detailed examples. However, in recent years, several leading academics have come

to the defence of the case study approach (Yin, 1981; Eisenhardt, 1989, 1991; Flyvbjerg; 2006). Yin (2003), for example, suggests that the case study is not necessarily meant to be empirically generalisable from an example to a broader population, but instead can provide a detailed illustration of a theoretical construct; in this way, the theory rather than the empirical contribution is generalisable. Eisenhardt (1989; 1991) supports this view in her defence of multiple case studies. Flyvbjerg (2006) comparatively suggests that generalisability in itself may be a false idol that draws attention from the goal of the case study as a useful source of context-dependent knowledge. Further, Flyvbjerg (2011a) highlights that the case study strategy has been critiqued for containing a bias for justification. However, he suggests both that this bias is evident in many types of research, and that falsification rather than verification is the hallmark of case studies. Therefore, he does not believe that the criticisms of case studies justify abandoning the benefits that can be obtained through a detailed study of a defined empirical setting.

On the basis of these arguments, this research has adopted the case study strategy with the goals of establishing a context-dependent account of ignorance in the Games and of providing evidence of ignorance as a theoretical construct. The research also strives to give voice to the experiences of those in the Games to ensure that the reader can interpret the findings independently of their interpretation by the author. For this reason, the empirical chapters draw heavily on quotes from interviews and observations to illustrate the findings. In this sense, the narrative of the thesis may appear to be ethnographic in nature, and indeed ethnographies can be considered a type of detailed case study (Yin, 1981). While the traditional

boundaries of ethnography as a research method require immersion of the researcher into an unfamiliar environment for a significant amount of time (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995), case studies can incorporate aspects of ethnographic practice without adhering rigidly to their structure (Yin, 1981).

Thus, the approach of this thesis is to provide a narrative that draws heavily on quotes from interviews and presentations, and excerpts from field notes to reflect on the observation sessions, while refraining from the detailed thick description that characterises ethnographic fieldwork (Geertz, 1973).

The quotes are illustrative and demonstrate the subject matter that is presented in the arguments, an approach that is intended to provide enough detail for the reader to verify the claims made in the thesis. At the same time, it is intended to act as an analytical, rather than a descriptive case, showing how the theoretical constructs of ignorance are achieved in this context.

Practically, the interviews used in this case are identified with the notation 'I' along with a number assigned to each interviewee (e.g. I-57), while the observation sessions are identified with 'S' and a number (e.g. S-12). This is intended to provide context for the reader's interpretation of the quotes, while protecting the anonymity of the interviewee or presenter. Based on a request from one of the OCs involved in this study, identifying information for OCs was removed from all quotes to ensure that no reputational effects to either individuals or OCs could stem from this thesis. The rationale for this anonymity is discussed in more detail, later in this chapter.

3.2.2 *The Games OC as a case*

The case that is being studied in this research is that of the Games OC, and how it is managed within the broader context of the Olympic system,

a concept that is further discussed in the next chapter. Each host city has a unique Games OC that plans only one Games at a time. However, there are often multiple Games undergoing planning simultaneously, since the Games are awarded seven years before the event itself, and they occur biannually. Thus, there are usually two summer Olympics, two winter Olympics and two Commonwealth Games being planned concurrently. The winter Olympics and Commonwealth Games occur in the same year, on a quadrennial cycle; the summer Olympics are also held every four years in the middle of this cycle, two years after the winter Olympics and Commonwealth Games. Each of these Games has a unique OC, and therefore while the OCs are all operating at the same time, they are at different points in the planning and delivery lifecycle of the project. After the Games are completed, over 95 per cent of the OC is disbanded within three weeks, while the remaining employees close out the organisation within a year of the Games.

The Games OC as a concept therefore presents an interesting subject for a case study, both because the OC is a temporary organisation, and because it exists in multiple sites at once. From this perspective, the OCs are each an 'edition' of the broader organisational concept of a Games OC. Consequently, this research used multiple cases to shed light on a single organisational phenomenon, and has taken the approach of looking at six sites, composed of two OCs from each of the summer Olympic Games, winter Olympic Games, and Commonwealth Games OCs over a period of 18 months, each at different stages of planning and delivery. Given the limited time for this study as compared to the seven-year lifecycle of each OC, sampling a variety of Games during the development process enabled a better understanding of the evolution of ignorance through the different

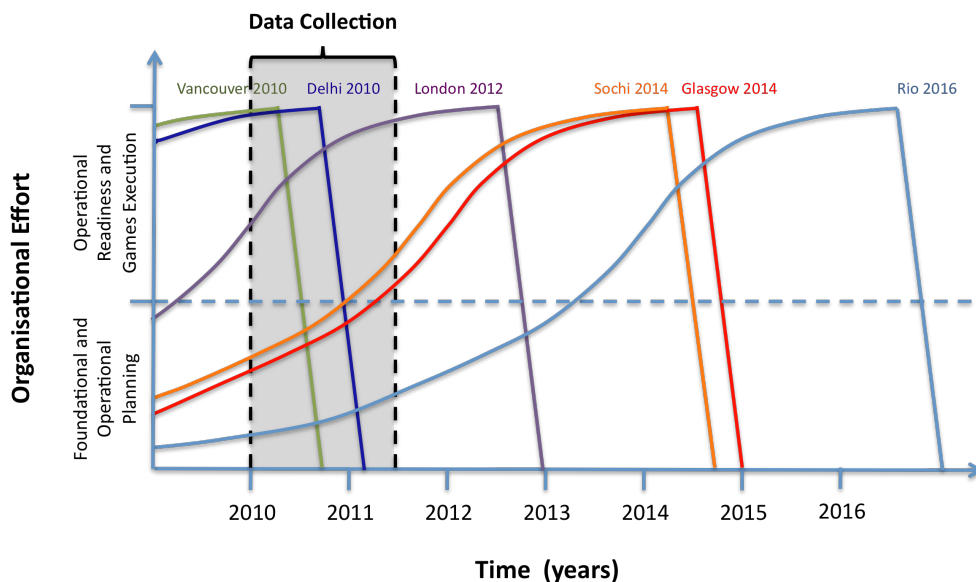
stages of planning the Games. As such, it is closer to the embedded case study design described by Maylor and Blackmon (2005), in which the context is held constant, and therefore systematic patterns can become more evident. I propose that similarities across these different mega-events can therefore be connected as common examples, rather than to be viewed as singular and unconnected phenomena.

While it is possible that this approach could induce a perceived continuity between organisations, by mistakenly interpreting events at different OCs as common across all OCs, the use of historical documents, and the breadth of engagement across the OCs are intended to avert this difficulty. Furthermore, several of the interviewees had worked with multiple OCs, and provided insights into what was peculiar to the OC that they currently worked at as compared to other OCs they had experienced. In this way, the embedded case study was knitted together from different perspectives to form a picture of commonalities and distinctive features of each event. Finally, members of the OCs involved in the study were asked to review the thesis. The feedback I received was that it is an accurate representation of the experiences of OCs with useful insights, for example, "it is an excellent piece of research, with some interesting outcomes," (Personal communication, 25 September 2012). However, concerns were also expressed with regard to the reputational effects of associating the Games in general, and OCs particularly, with ignorance. Interestingly, this response reinforces the experiences highlighted in the literature review, that any association of organisations with ignorance is considered to be entirely negative. It also, somewhat ironically, reinforces the importance of this study,

that learning opportunities are missed by the Games movement because organisations seek to suppress uncomfortable knowledge.

Figure 3.1 shows the overlap of each of these Games during the data collection period, and divides the Games into two timeframes: those in the foundational and operational planning stages, between three and seven years before the Games, and those in the operational readiness and Games execution phase.

Figure 3.1: Data Collection Period



Note: This diagram is not intended to represent the actual progress of the Games, but to suggest the increase in organisational effort of each Games over the course of the project, and to highlight the operational phase of each Games during the data collection window. The S-curve is modelled after Morris' (1981) Project Life Cycle.

The breadth of Games studied at different points in time created a rich story which illustrated how OCs manage their planning and operations efforts. To add to the breadth, a number of research methods were employed to ensure sufficient depth of study. These are discussed in the next section.

3.3 Research methods

To accomplish the goals of the case study approach over this variety of research sites required a significant amount of planning, negotiation, and flexibility. Additionally, to ensure that the results were defensible, this research used several different methods, as recommended by Maylor and Blackmon (2005): 1) observation of events at which multiple Games staff interact; 2) participant observation at Games Organising Committees; 3) interviews with staff in local host city positions; and, 4) documentary data from current and past Games. This section explains the data collection approach and processes for each of these sites.

3.3.1 Observation of events

My first observation was of the interaction of members of different OCs at 'knowledge transfer' events organised by the IOC. After beginning this study in October 2009, I began my field research at the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Games in March 2010 where I attended the 'Observer Programme', which was intended to provide the staff from OCs of future host cities and bid cities with the opportunity to observe Games-time operations, and to benefit from presentations by the current Games organisers and by the IOC, IPC or CGF representatives in attendance. The objective as stated by the IPC for the programme is:

The IPC Observer Programme at Games-time is an essential element of the Paralympic Games Knowledge Transfer Programme, serving Organizing Committees and bidding cities and their related public authorities. Moreover, the programme provides an excellent opportunity for knowledge sharing and hands-on experience. (IPC, 2009: 3)

The difference between the Olympic and Paralympic Observer Programme is minimal; while the first is run by the IOC and the second is run by the IPC, the same people are involved from the perspective of the OCs. The Paralympic

Games occur just after the Olympic Games and involve most of the same functions. However, the environment at the Paralympic Games is much more relaxed from a security and logistical viewpoint, so the organisers are more open to questions, and can reflect on the busy period of the Olympic Games that has already passed.

The Observer Programme in Vancouver consisted of two weeks of one-day workshops, in which there were often two concurrent sessions that participants could choose from. The Observer Programme was comprised of daily sessions of presentations by OC staff and IPC staff, followed by visits to the Games venues. The topics that formed the Vancouver Observer Programme are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Games Observer Programme Schedule

Date	12-Mar	13-Mar	14-Mar	15-Mar	16-Mar
Theme (Venue)	Introductory session: Games Overview, Clients, Planning Integration	Look & Brand Protection (City Tour and Whistler Creekside)	Command, Control and Communications (VANOC HQs)	City Operations (PFH / Vancouver - Tour of the City)	Technology (Technology Operations Centre)
Theme (Venue)	Opening Ceremony (BC Place)	Paralympic Village Overview (PG Village Whistler)	Medical & Doping (Paralympic Village Whistler)	Venue Development & Accessibility (Whistler Paralympic Park)	Athletes' & Sport Operations (Whistler Creekside)
Date	17-Mar	18-Mar	19-Mar	20-Mar	21-Mar
Theme (Venue)	Venue Development & Accessibility (Thunderbird Arena)	Spectators (Vancouver Paralympic Centre)	Transport (Whistler Paralympic Park)	Accommodation (IPC Hotel)	Program Debrief
Theme (Venue)	Paralympic Family (IPC Hospitality Centre / Whistler Paralympic Park)	Media - Press & Broadcast (WMC - Whistler Creekside)	Paralympic Village Overview (PLV Vancouver)	Venue Operations (Whistler Creekside)	Closing Ceremony (Celebration Plaza)

The sessions were focused on different theme areas and were conducted jointly by the IPC and the head of the topic area for the Vancouver Games.

The IPC began with a presentation of its own about the topic in general, after

which the Vancouver team would present their specific experiences, successes, and challenges. The Observer Programme participants, including employees from LOCOG, the Sochi OC, the Glasgow OC, the Rio OC, and the bidding cities then had the opportunity to ask questions about the theme to the IPC and Vancouver staff, either specifically about the Paralympics, or about Paralympic and Olympic planning. Most attendees of the Observer Programme had both Olympic and Paralympic responsibilities in their role; this integrated method of planning has been advocated by the IOC and IPC because sharing resources reduces the cost that would otherwise be incurred by planning two separate events. Following each session, a visit to one of the venues used for the Vancouver Games was organised to highlight the theme of the morning's session; for example, the transport session was followed by a visit to the venue to see how transport operated on site.

My objectives in attending the Observer Programme were threefold: first, to familiarise myself with the context of the Games; second, to make contacts with as many of the future Games OCs as possible; and third, to understand how the participants experienced knowledge transfer at the Games. I asked for and obtained permission to record the presentations and took detailed notes of the questions that were asked by participants from the future host cities. I also took notes observing interactions between members of different OCs in breaks between the events during the daily sessions, and had informal discussions with OC staff. I documented my impressions of these interactions in my field notes immediately following the conversations where possible, and typed them up at the end of each day, as recommended by Maylor and Blackmon (2005).

I had a second opportunity to observe a 'knowledge transfer' event between OCs at the Official Debrief of the Vancouver 2010 Games, which was held in Sochi, Russia, in June of 2010, site of the next Olympic Winter Games. The stated purpose of the Official Debrief is:

An Official Debriefing is held following each Games, where key staff from the organisers brief their successors in a week-long seminar format. (IOC, 2008: 2)

This week-long event is similar in purpose and organisation to the Observer Programme. However, because the Observer Programme is held during the Games in that host city, it can be prohibitively expensive to have a large team from the next host city attend. One of the advantages of the Official Debrief is that it is held in the next host city of the same season (winter or summer) and therefore more staff from that host city's OC are able to attend the discussions because they are not required to travel. The participants from the Vancouver Games were mostly senior staff who had either already completed their roles, but had been contracted to attend the Debrief, or were in the process of dissolving the OC. There were several concurrent sessions, similarly focused on functional themes, and initial presentations were given first by the IOC and then by the leader of that function in the Vancouver OC. Following these presentations, the leader of the same function in the Sochi OC was given the opportunity to summarise what they had learned from Vancouver's experience. Participants in the session were then given the opportunity to ask questions to the IOC, Vancouver, and Sochi staff. As with the Observer Programme, I recorded the sessions and took detailed notes of the questions asked by attendees from other OCs, as well as notes on my personal discussions with them, and my own impressions of the event.

Because the Games were not happening concurrently with the knowledge transfer event, as had been the case in Vancouver, there also

appeared to be more opportunities for the Sochi and Vancouver staff to have bilateral meetings outside of the formal sessions. Therefore, although the formal sessions are the stated reason for the Official Debrief, both sides felt that the informal meetings held outside of the formal programme were more effective venues for transferring difficult knowledge.

The third opportunity for observing a 'knowledge transfer' event was at the Delhi Observer Programme during their Games in October 2010. While the format of the programme was similar to that of the Vancouver Games, this was a particularly interesting opportunity for several reasons. First, it was much more difficult to gain access to; while I had senior support from the Commonwealth Games Federation to attend the programme, the event itself was run by an independent company called Event Knowledge Services (EKS). EKS is in charge of administering the knowledge management system of the Commonwealth Games, and as a private company that receives fees for its services, it appeared to be disinclined to support academic initiatives. However, through insistence, I was still able to attend the presentations.

At these presentations, another major difference from the Vancouver Observer Programme was that consultants led many of the sessions. I heard two explanations for this: one was that the OC staff were too busy addressing the myriad issues that these particular Games experienced (BBC News, 2010a; 2010b); the other was that the CGF did not want the mistakes of Delhi to be repeated at future Games. Regardless of which of these was the case, the presentation of core information by consultants meant that the tone of the delivery, as compared to Vancouver, was much more critical; there were fewer references to what went well, and more time devoted to what should have been done differently, although this could also be attributed to the

challenges that Delhi faced, many of which were reported by the world media (e.g. BBC News, 2010a; 2010b). Another effect of the presentations being delivered by consultants is that they appeared to be more credible to the new OC organisers than the Delhi OC employees. Where both a local OC staff member and a consultant made the presentations jointly, interviewees later suggested that they had more faith in the interpretations of the consultants than those of the local staff (I-62). As with my other observations, I recorded my thoughts during and immediately after the sessions, and typed up my notes at the end of each day for reflection.

While observation of these sessions was useful to understand the context of the Games, make contacts, and observe OC interactions unobtrusively, it is ultimately a research method that relies heavily on my interpretation and perspective of events. Therefore, it was important to triangulate these data with observation and interviews with those who were managing the Games planning.

3.3.2 Participant observation with Games OCs

The second research method employed in this study was participant observation. Participant observation is a method in which a researcher becomes part of the group that he or she is researching, “in order to discern people’s habits and thoughts as well as to decipher the social structure that binds them together,” (Punch, 1995: 189). While I had considered this as an option for my research methods when beginning the study, the opportunity to act as a participant observer developed along with a growing realisation that I needed to experience the Games planning and delivery environments myself to better understand the challenges that interviewees had raised in our discussions.

There is a long tradition in social science of the using participant observation methods, and Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) suggest that insider accounts can lead to rich information that is not otherwise available to researchers, and that being a 'complete participant' is often the only way to gain this understanding. One famous example of participant observation is Goffman's (1968) account of working at a mental hospital as a covert researcher, in which he was able to gain information that would not have been accessible to him as an external researcher. In this case, unlike Goffman (1968), I was overtly known to be researching the Games, and disclosed this to all employees with whom I worked during the course of the research. However, as Lee (1993) points out, the distinction between overt and covert can be blurred at times, as employees become comfortable with a researcher and may forget that they have a dual role. Thus, the benefits of overt participant observation can at times be similar to the extent of what could be achieved through covert research. In my case, I found that with my previous work experience in the consulting industry and my knowledge of the Games from prior research meant that I was readily accepted into the OC. Though the period of work was quite short, I made a point of attending lunches and dinners with staff, and obtained information both through these experiences, and through the formal interviews and meetings that I attended for my internship.

The first opportunity that I had to act as a participant observer was at the Delhi Commonwealth Games in October 2010. I had originally arranged for an accreditation pass for the week leading up to the Games through a contact made via introductions from an executive at the Vancouver OC. An accreditation is a critical document for Games-time, as security measures

require that venues are 'locked-down' with perimeter security for up to three weeks before the Games begin, and those without accreditation are not permitted to enter the OC headquarters, the venues, the athlete's village, or any of the other Games areas during this time. Having obtained the accreditation, I spent my first week in Delhi touring the venues as planned, including the village and stadia, and meeting informally with venue staff to ask about their experiences.

However, on October 1, I was asked if I could also help out the contact person who had arranged accreditation for me by volunteering at the Opening Ceremony two days later. I agreed, and was subsequently asked to attend a meeting with OC staff in the Venue Operations Centre at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium while the Opening Ceremony rehearsal was taking place. The meeting was comprised of both local OC staff, and Games-experienced staff who were all expatriates. The tension between the groups was clear, and the expatriates were openly rude and critical of the plans that local staff had made. For example, the athlete's entry to the Opening Ceremony was the process by which up to 6,000 athletes board a bus in the Athlete's Village, travel to the stadium, enter through a secure entrance, disembark from the bus, go through security checks and enter a holding area while waiting for the Games to start. While the transportation and security aspects had been planned, the process for disembarking the athletes and having them enter the stadium was still unclear, and the expatriates were very critical of the lack of planning in this area. The meeting was eventually split into two, with expatriates planning separately from the local staff. The environment among the expatriates was very negative; they complained about the local staff and generally seemed to believe that it was too late to

resolve any issues before the Games were to begin. The meetings ended without a clear resolution to the issue.

On the day of the Opening Ceremony, there was still confusion about how the athletes would enter the stadium. That morning, at a meeting of the senior team staff, or 'Chefs de mission', the OC executives and CGF confirmed that local police and military had agreed that athletes would not have to be screened by security when they entered the stadium, since they would have been screened upon entry to the village and were travelling directly between the two locations. However, when I arrived at the stadium, I found that the staff 'on the ground' at the stadium had not been informed of the decision. I spent most of the day working with the local staff to find a solution to the issue, although the matter was not resolved until the athletes arrived on site. I spent the rest of the evening assisting with marshalling athletes, and addressing issues as they arose. For example, the athletes were supposed to exit from the stadium through a small doorway; however, the thousands of tired and uncooperative athletes were keen to return to the village. Thus, I organised a group of volunteers to form a human barrier to allow them to exit through an alternative route, without them getting lost. As with my on-site observation, I kept notes of my interactions and impressions of the experience, and typed them up at the end of the day in my field notes.

The experience of observing the final preparations of the Delhi Games, and of participating as a volunteer at the Opening Ceremony, provided me with a new perspective from which to understand the challenges of Games-time coordination.

The second participant observation experience that I engaged in was with the London OC from January to June of 2011. This was a formal

internship that I applied for with the Information and Knowledge Management team. The main requirement of the internship was to develop Knowledge Reports on behalf of the OC, which the OC was required to submit to the IOC as part of the Host City Contract (HCC). This HCC is a legally binding document that dictates the terms of the OC and host country's responsibilities in delivering the Games, so developing Knowledge Reports was an important requirement of the OC's activities. The Knowledge Reports were intended to act as interim knowledge transfer documents for future organisers, to address a concern commonly raised by OCs that the knowledge transfer documents were almost exclusively from the last months of the Games, and did not explain to future organisers how decisions had been made during the planning stages. To develop the Knowledge Reports, I met with senior staff within the OC to obtain details of their activities in the 18-month period before the Games. Then, using a template provided by the IOC (see Appendix E), I prepared a written account of the discussion, and sent it to the staff for their review and edits. The discussions were also beneficial for improving my understanding of the internal operations of a wide variety of functions in the OC. While each of the people I met with in the London OC agreed to be recorded for the purposes of this research, the interviews were primarily to be used for the preparation of the Knowledge Reports. Because of this dual requirement, at the request of the OC I have not included direct quotes, but have instead described the general idea of their experiences in reported speech.

This internship was particularly valuable as a participant observation experience because I was able to observe the experience of being a member of the OC, from attending the new staff orientation seminars, to team

meetings, to emails and interactions with the IOC on behalf of the OC. Furthermore, I was able to interact directly with senior employees across the OC, and to observe the insights that they offered to new OCs about what they thought they had done well and what they would have done differently had they had certain information at the time. While all of the people that I interacted with were aware of my role as a researcher, I was treated no differently from other interns of the OC. These experiences again supported my increasing understanding of the environment of working in an OC, particularly one that is in the midst of transitioning from operational planning to delivery of test events. Again, I maintained detailed notes of my experiences with the OC, and recorded them at the end of every day.

The third opportunity that I had for participant observation was with the Glasgow OC in March and April 2011. For this opportunity, I spent an intensive four-week period working with the local OC for the purposes of developing decision-making and escalation processes, and reviewing the terms of reference of the governance committees that had been put in place to support the planning of the Games OC. For this internship, I reviewed several key documents prepared by the OC and interviewed senior staff to understand their involvement in the development of the documents, to gain their perspectives on what changes they thought should be incorporated. I also attended meetings with executives of the OC where I presented my findings, and received feedback and direction from them on further development of the processes. In addition to these activities, I was asked to attend a meeting with the Scottish government, who are a major partner and funder of the Glasgow Games, as the representative of the OC. The purpose of this meeting was to understand the government's perspective on the

governance forums that they had developed, and to discuss how these would interact with the OC-led governance forums (Chapter 5 contains more detail about the interactions of the governance forums). For the purposes of the research, it was useful to participate in meetings with OC staff and with other stakeholders to understand how the organisations perceived each other, and how they shared, or did not share information. Glasgow was also useful to observe at a much earlier stage of foundational and operational planning three years out from the event, as compared to London and Delhi, which were in the final stages of operational planning, and operational delivery, respectively. This allowed me to gain a better understanding of the different challenges of OCs that occur at various points in delivery, and to contrast and compare their challenges. As with London and Delhi, I kept detailed field notes throughout my internship at Glasgow, which included impressions and observations of my experiences.

The experiences that I had during these participant observation opportunities were useful to augment my understanding of the earlier interviews and the observation of knowledge transfer events that I had attended previously. As such, the immersion in these environments contributed significantly to my understanding of the operation of the Games OC. To add to these experiences, I conducted interviews with members of the OCs to gain the benefit of their experience, as explained in the next section.

3.3.3 Interviews

Interviews were one of the primary research methods employed in this study. The interviews were primarily conducted with members of each of the six OCs, however staff of related organisations were also interviewed,

including government employees, Games critics and staff of Development Agencies involved in the construction of venues.

In total, 109 people were interviewed in 103 interviews. As discussed above, however, whilst most interviews were solely for the purpose of the research, those at the London OC were interviewed for the dual purpose of creating Knowledge Reports for the OC and contributing to the research. While most interviews were conducted with one interviewee, some were held with two people, at their request. Typically, the second person was in the same group within the OC as the first interviewee, but held a slightly less senior position and therefore added to the narrative of the primary interviewee.

I conducted most of the interviews by myself, although in some interviews in Sochi I was accompanied by a translator, and in Brazil I was accompanied by a student who was conducting research on a related topic. Although single-researcher interviews can make the results susceptible to biases on the part of the interviewer or interviewee, it is the “most appropriate method for confidential or sensitive subjects” according to Maylor and Blackmon (2005: 227). However, to mitigate this, I compared my findings to those of another researcher who had interviewed similar people in Sochi, London and Rio, and found a high degree of similarity in the responses that we had received. We were even able to prepare a joint paper on a related topic given the similarity of our findings (*cf.* Müller and Stewart, 2011).

Interviews were generally between 45 minutes and one hour in length, however some interviews were as short as 20 minutes and others were as long as two hours. Most of the interviews were recorded, and all participants were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality in their responses, unless they

were specifically asked for permission to reveal their identities in this thesis. The interviews were semi-structured, and varied between sites as the focus of the research was clarified, and as new developments led to novel avenues of exploration. The interview schedules are included in Appendices A-D. The profile of interviewees is presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Profile of interviewees

Games	Number of interviewees	Per cent Recorded	Levels Interviewed
Vancouver 2010	11	64%	Executive / VP / Director
Delhi 2010	8	75%	Director General / Assistant Director General / Consultant
London 2012*	42	100%	Executive / Director / Head / Manager
Sochi 2014	15	60%	Executive / Head / Manager / Consultant
Glasgow 2014	16	87.5%	Director / Head / Manager
Rio 2016	17	88%	Executive / Director / Manager

*As discussed above, the London 2012 interviews were primarily for the purposes of preparing Knowledge Reports, and were secondarily used to inform this research.

Some interviews were not recorded for one of two reasons:

confidentiality or opportunity. In some instances, interviewees were not comfortable being recorded, but agreed to proceed with the interview and provide information. In other instances, the circumstances of the interview did not allow for recording, as in the case where I interviewed three OC employees on a chair lift, as they had limited time available to meet with me and I deemed that an unrecorded interview was preferable to omitting their insights. In each of the instances where recording was not possible, I took notes during and immediately following the interview, which I then typed up at the end of each day and included in the data analysis. These interviews, where mentioned in the thesis, are not quoted directly, but rather a summary

of the discussion is provided based on my notes, so as not to misrepresent the interviewee.

While I had originally hoped to interview people several times, I found that this was not a practical objective. Interviewees were much more reticent over the phone, and it was difficult to establish a rapport in these circumstances, even where I had previously met the interviewee in person. As such, I decided not to proceed with this plan, and instead decided to use participant observation, as described above. However, the three methods discussed so far all involve current experiences and interpretations of individuals who were heavily involved in the events. Therefore, it was important to also obtain other information sources that could be compared to these accounts, to critically examine whether the findings in these OCs could be extrapolated and shown to be typical of the experiences of OCs of the Games in a more general sense.

3.3.4 *Documentary data*

To address the potential for bias in using only contemporary findings, the fourth and final research method employed was to collect and review documents from the governing bodies, OCs, media, and other parties. Additionally, documents from past Games were collected for the purpose of investigating the commonalities and differences between issues faced by OCs. To do so, information was gathered from the OC's final Official Reports, media articles, government documents and academic references about the evolution of costs and revenues, schedules, scope and other key programme elements in the Games from 1960 to 2016. The year 1960 has been selected as a base year because it is largely agreed to have been the point at which the Games transitioned to 'mega-events' (see Preuss, 2002;

Essex and Chalkley, 2004; Maraniss, 2008). The activity of reviewing this documentation was also useful for the purposes of understanding the terminology, requirements, and general context of the Games planning, and was particularly constructive in supporting and contrasting the interview and informal discussion findings with participants.

The process of obtaining documentary data was not as simple as I expected. While some information is readily available online, a lot of information is quite difficult to access; for example, many Games' bid documents that available online omit financial details. However, the IOC maintains an Olympic Studies Centre (OSC) in Lausanne, Switzerland, which contains a reference library of innumerable documents from the Games. In addition to bid documents, interim and final reports are kept there, as is personal correspondence between the IOC and the OC leadership, and independent audits and reviews conducted of the Games. The data available from the OSC have proved invaluable in understanding the history of knowledge transfer in the Games, and in piecing together the origins of some of the anecdotal evidence obtained through interviews and discussions. One interesting example of a finding from the historical data is how the selection of bid cities has evolved. While the Salt Lake City 2002 Bid Committee was publicly chastised for its involvement in bribery of IOC officials (Mallon, 2000) and initiated a change in policy to prevent contact between IOC members and bid officials, the Official Reports of the Games up until that time clearly demonstrate that attempting to win votes from IOC members by almost any means necessary was widespread and publicly acknowledged. Some OCs even prided themselves on the lengths they went to in order to secure the

Games for their city. Albertville, for example, details the efforts they went through to publicise their bid to the IOC members:

After April 1985, there was practically a crusade to convince the IOC and each of its members... The approach was simple: to make repeated personal contact with each member of the International Committee. (Albertville OC, 1992: 19)

In Booth and Tatz (1994: 12), an official of the Sydney 2000 bid committee is quoted in more direct language: “you shut your eyes and think of Sydney in 2000. We decided that as we had to do it, we would be the best whores you could find between Rome and Marseilles.” These insights lend additional perspective to the other research methods employed in this study.

In addition to documents from the OCs and OSC, I was granted access to the Olympic Games Knowledge Management (OGKM) extranet. Access to this web-based information portal allowed me to understand the scope of information provided from one Games to another. The IOC initiated the OGKM Programme in 2000, following the perceived success of the Sydney 2000 summer Olympic Games. The current definition of OGKM indicates that:

Olympic Games Knowledge Management is the IOC’s programme to manage the transfer of knowledge and experience from Games to Games. OGKM offers future Games organisers a platform of learning through a variety of ways. (IOC, 2008: 2)

While the extranet is only one component of the IOC’s knowledge management programme, which also includes the Observer Programme and Official Debriefs described above, it is an element that interviewees referred to repeatedly when asked about how they obtained information from other OCs. Therefore, it was extremely useful to gain access and to see what information was provided. The OGKM is discussed further in Chapter 4.

The documentary information thereby provided an additional method of triangulation, and also a historical perspective on knowledge transfer in the Games environment. It is, however, critical to remember that documents can be as biased as any other form of research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995), and therefore are suitable as a form of triangulation rather than a source of 'objective' truth. Therefore, in this thesis, the interviews and observational experiences are as valid and crucial to understanding the Games OC as are the documentary data.

3.3.5 *Methods used in each research site*

In summary, a number of different methods were used at each research site, over the 18-month data collection window, as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Summary of research activities

Date	Location	Activity
March 2010	Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observed the interactions of OC staff at the Observer Programme
June 2010	Sochi and Moscow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observed staff at the Official Debrief of the Vancouver Games in Sochi • Interviewed Sochi and Vancouver staff • In Moscow, completed additional interviews and observed operations of the Moscow office, where most of the organisers for the Sochi Games were based at the time
September – October 2010	Delhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toured the venues • Interviewed staff and consultants • Participated in the delivery of the Opening Ceremony • Attended the Observer Programme
January 2011	Rio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewed staff • Observed the operations of the Rio OC office
January – June 2011 (less 4 weeks in Glasgow)	London	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship at the London OC, 2 days / week • Interviewed staff, wrote Knowledge Reports for the London OC • Interacted with other staff at the OC and the IOC

Date	Location	Activity
March – April 2011	Glasgow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time internship with the Glasgow OC • Interviewed staff • Participated in meetings • Attended meetings with the Scottish government on behalf of the Glasgow OC
September 2011	Lausanne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of historical data from Olympic Studies Centre

Given the distributed nature and diversity of interactions that I had in the different OCs, I have different levels of insight into each one. Evidently, given the length of time and depth of study enabled by my internship at the London OC, there are more data on this case than on the others. However, the case study is useful in understanding not only the differences, but also their similarities, of which there are many. Therefore, I have presented the results of these methods as an embedded case study of the Games OC.

3.4 Data Analysis

As described above, most interviews and observation sessions were recorded and later transcribed, with the completed transcriptions comprising over 850,000 words and over 1,500 pages of text for analysis. In addition to these data, detailed field notes were kept on all observation sessions, interviews and participant observation experiences, and these were also included in the data to be analysed.

To analyse the data from these sources I used NVivo, a qualitative research software package. To do so, I developed a basic coding structure with broad categories of investigation, including organisation, budget, scope, time, knowledge, and ignorance, as recommended by Punch (1998). I then went through the interviews in alphabetical order by interviewee to avoid biasing any one OC's data, for example by coding all of the Sochi data in one session, and highlighted portions of the text that related to each of the codes.

I also coded the field notes and observation session transcripts in the same way. This initial analysis provided me with more specific ideas about the final coding structure that should be used. Given this insight, I then developed a more advanced coding structure, which Punch says should be at a higher level of abstraction (1998), and went through every piece of information again, ensuring that the coding was applied consistently. The final coding structure is shown in Appendix E. This method is in keeping with the inductive approach recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994), who advocate an interactive model of data display, data reduction and drawing and verifying conclusions.

While there are mixed views on the value of qualitative research software (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005: 347), the benefit is that it provides a way of structuring the analysis of data from different sources without relying on the memory of the researcher to pick out examples from recordings or from transcripts. On the other hand, the risk of using qualitative research software is that it provides tools for interpreting qualitative data quantitatively; the software allows the researcher to simply add up the number of times that a particular code is used. This, however, would be an inappropriate interpretation of the data; comparing how often each interviewee mentions a word does not necessarily mean that that word is more 'important' or significant to the one who mentions it most often. In my analysis, therefore, I sought to maintain the richness of the data, and used the coding structure to compare pieces of information between Games, between functional areas, and between interviewees. In addition, qualitative software enables multi-code comparisons, for example all areas that are coded for both budgets and

ignorance, which is of significant help in analysing the volume of data available in this study.

Based on the final, coded information, I then examined the different combinations of codes to determine common themes across the four areas of interest defined earlier in this chapter, and to compare interview findings to my observations and experiences. In addition to these data, I also compared the primary findings to secondary sources of documentation. The qualitative historical data were analysed to look for themes, similarities and differences in execution of the events over time, while documents from current Games were used to evaluate public versus private interpretations of the Games.

3.5 Limitations, Challenges, and Ethics

It is an unavoidable certainty that with any research there are limitations to what can be accomplished in the temporal, financial, and geographical realities that are imposed on the project. This section presents a discussion of the limitations that this research has faced, in addition to the challenges of conducting the data, and the ethical concerns faced as part of this research.

3.5.1 Issues and Limitations

As with any research proposal, there are certain issues and limitations inherent in the research design. The research design was ambitious in the scope of the work to be completed, incorporating a wide variety of locations. As such, the time that could be spent in each location was limited, which means that some sites which were geographically closer to my university have a disproportionately high number of observations and interviews. However, this is not unusual for research on the Games, and even the limited comparative study into several Games that has been conducted provides a

better insight into the Games OCs than not having conducted it at all. Furthermore, because of the seven-year timeframe of the Games, it would be impossible to observe one Games throughout its planning cycle during the course of a doctorate, and as such viewing multiple Games across a narrower time window was an appropriate trade-off for the benefit gained.

Another issue, as highlighted in the literature review, was that the sensitive and potentially uncomfortable nature of the information sought makes it inherently difficult to identify and to access. However, the literature provided examples of how others were able to identify uncomfortable knowledge and ignorance (e.g. McGoey, 2007; Rayner, 2012), which provided insights for this research. In addition, I drew on examples from works such as Flyvbjerg (1998), which clearly illustrated interviewing techniques designed to probe for areas in which people are uncomfortable, as well as how to use documents to support this probing. As such, I was able to structure my interviews to allow participants to feel comfortable, and guaranteed anonymity to ensure that they felt they could be open about their observations.

Finally, it is evident that there are limitations to having only one researcher in the field, as the observations that are collected cannot be independently verified. However, as mentioned earlier, I was able to compare my findings with another researcher conducting interviews on similar topics, and found that there was a high degree of similarity in our data, such that we decided to work together on a related research project (Müller and Stewart, 2011). Therefore, this would suggest that my findings are consistent with those of other researchers.

3.5.2 Challenges in research design

Given the ambitious scope of the research, the study has not been without challenges. In particular, access to data collection sites was critical for the successful completion of the study, especially since Games organisations are known for being difficult to access and are sensitive to allowing outsiders to profile the organisation. Therefore, a significant amount of resistance was expected. To overcome this, I began by establishing contact with a 'gatekeeper' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995), and followed this approach with snowball sampling methods for interviews and further access requirements (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005).

The gatekeeper was an existing contact at the CGF, who was involved in the conceptual development of the research and provided ongoing support and guidance from a practical point of view. This original contact led to several other key stakeholders, including the CEO of EKS, the company that is responsible for managing the knowledge database of the knowledge management programme for the CGF. Through an introduction from EKS, I was able to negotiate attendance at the IPC Observer Programme described in the previous section. Through this programme, a number of other key contacts were established within the OCs for all of the relevant organisations, including London, Glasgow, Rio and Sochi. Attendance at the Observer Programme also had the effect of making me more of an 'insider', a known entity who had been vetted by the IPC. This proved to be invaluable in negotiating visits to each of the OCs for interviews. Another contact from the gatekeeper led to an introduction to the Delhi committee, which enabled me to obtain accreditation to that event.

Each of the OCs also had a gatekeeper, and it was necessary for me to renegotiate each time I needed to access one of the OCs. While the early

discussions with gatekeepers required a degree of persistence in order to convince them to let me travel to their OC to conduct research, in most cases, the gatekeeper turned into a supporter of the research, and introduced me to many of the people that I was keen to interview. However, in most cases, the permission to work with the OC came quite late; for example, for the Delhi Games I was granted an accreditation pass on September 13 just in time for my arrival on September 26. This made it difficult to plan and schedule the research, and on several occasions I was required to make plans and then hope that I would be able to negotiate access before or upon my arrival. Fortunately, in some cases, making travel arrangements had the effect of convincing the gatekeeper of the seriousness of my intentions and hence facilitated the negotiations.

Another challenge of the research design was getting participants to discuss topics that were sensitive and potentially critical of their organisation. As such, it was essential to establish trust at the beginning of each interview. Guaranteeing anonymity for all interviewees helped with this, and made the individuals feel that they could be open in their reflections. However, it was important to ensure that the interviewees also understood the research from an ethical viewpoint.

3.5.3 *Ethical considerations*

This research was conducted overtly, which meant that all organisations were aware of my role as a researcher, and I provided them with a summary of my work upon request. However, I did not overtly reveal the full intent of my research. As highlighted in Chapter 1, society views ignorance as a negative construct (High, Kelly and Mair, 2012), and as something to be avoided at all costs. People do not want to be portrayed as

ignorant, but rather wish to appear knowledgeable. Thus, I was concerned that explaining my research using the term ignorance might create a prejudice in their interactions or interview responses, or would confound the findings as they sought to frame their responses in a positive light.

As such, I framed the research with regards to risk and uncertainty, topics that most people are comfortable discussing, and structured my questions around what areas of knowledge were the most difficult to share between themselves and other parties, and what challenges they had experienced in planning and delivering the Games (see Appendices B – E for the interview schedules). This line of questioning then led to a discussion of the areas of interest, without adversely biasing their responses.

While there are many different perceptions of the ethicality of even partially covert research, Lee (1993) suggests that in researching sensitive topics, keeping some aspects of the research concealed from participants may be acceptable, and that researchers must evaluate their own comfort with the different research methods. By providing participants with the opportunity for informed consent, they were aware that they were being studied, of the use of their responses and of the level of anonymity that would be provided to the discussion. Thus, they were not in a position in which they were exposed by providing information that they did not want studied, but rather were unaware of the specific theoretical application of their insights. Further, because the participants did not perceive any risk from participating in the research, either to themselves or to their positions, there was limited harm that could be said to arise through partially concealing the study's focus.

The ethical procedures of the university also require that researchers obtain informed consent from interviews prior to their agreement to

participate. Therefore, all interviewees were informed at the beginning of the interview that any information communicated to me would be kept confidential, unless I specifically requested and obtained permission from them to attribute it to them in the future. After consultation with the university's ethics board (known as Central University Research Ethics Committee or CUREC), it was decided that agreement to participate could be granted verbally rather than in written format. Each interviewee was also offered an additional information sheet on the research, though few interviewees took the sheet with them. The information sheet, though accurate, did not contain any detailed information about the evolving conclusions of the study, to avoid biasing the interviewees, as recommended by Maylor and Blackmon (2005: 282). Please see the appendix for a copy of the information sheet.

However, despite these extensive procedures, one of the OCs that I studied did express concerns over the final version of this thesis. The level of access that I was granted in an organisation that is highly sensitive to public attention meant that I was required to sign a contract acknowledging the confidential and proprietary information would be removed from this thesis prior to publication. Unfortunately, the definition of confidential information became an issue; were the interviews that I had done with OC participants confidential or not? Each of the interviewees consented to being recorded, and was aware that their responses to my questions were to be used for research purposes. However, from the OC's perspective, the interviewees had revealed information 'in confidence' because they perceived me as an internal rather than an external participant. When asked for more details about their concerns, the OC's representative specified that the OC was concerned about the potential reputational effects of some of the quotes if

they were to be made public, and that the association of the Games with the research's focus on the topic of ignorance would put the Games in a negative light. This is an unfortunate perspective, since the purpose of this thesis is precisely to address ignorance as both functional and detrimental.

Notwithstanding the OC's position, it was important for the academic integrity of this research that the insights from this OC remained within the structure of the document. As a compromise, information identifying all OCs has been removed from the quotes in this work, and no direct quotes from this OC have been used.

One of the major ethical conflicts that I faced in this research involved establishing friendships with the people that I worked with in the Games organisations. People frequently went out of their way to assist me in my research, to introduce me to contacts at other OCs, and to present their perspectives in interviews. In general, people were kind and supportive. However, this led to a conflict in presenting data that can be interpreted negatively, as I felt guilty in some cases that I would be presenting data that felt like they had been given to me 'in confidence', even though it was in an interview that the participant knew was recorded for research purposes. To overcome this, I had to remind myself that I firmly believe that the Games can benefit significantly from acknowledging ignorance as a necessary part of their operations, while gaining a better understanding of how and when it can be detrimental, and what they can do to prevent detrimental ignorance from being perpetuated. Nevertheless, not everyone will be unreservedly pleased with the results presented in this thesis, and it has been personally difficult to remain faithful to the data and theoretical approach, while also understanding

the human perspective on topics that are traditionally seen in a negative connotation.

3.6 Conclusions on the Methodological Approach

This chapter has outlined the rationale for the research design of this study, and has described the methods and analysis used in detail in each of the research sites. Within the overarching approach of an embedded case study, the Games OCs were examined at six sites, over a period of 18 months. Several research methods were used for triangulation, including observation of knowledge transfer events, interviews, participant observation, and documentary data. The data were analysed using qualitative research software, following recommended procedures for coding and interpretation of the data.

In the course of this study, I found that using a variety of research methods is vital to the richness of the conclusions that can be made after conducting a complex research project such as this. No single research method was found to be superior, and all contributed to a greater understanding of the research environment. The interviews provided information that could be critically analysed and therefore provided the greatest insight into the topic of ignorance. Even informal interview opportunities were found to be valuable, as long as they were faithfully recorded soon after they took place, and they sometimes offered more unedited commentary. Participant observation provided important context for the interviews and helped me to gain credibility and access 'inside the tent', to what is generally a tight and secure environment that is sensitive and uncomfortable with close examination. Access to documentary evidence provided a good opportunity for correlation of the research findings and

established the historical context of the current findings, thus anchoring them in a broader social environment.

To future researchers embarking on similar work, I would suggest that the decision to conduct an embedded case study was useful to provide the breadth sought in this paper. However, it is worthwhile to consider that six research sites means negotiating, planning, analysing and synthesising data from a wide variety of geographical locations, which was a challenge that I found particularly taxing. Additionally, the number of different methods used, while all useful as noted above, led to a proliferation of information that was especially difficult to distil into the findings presented in the next chapters. Nevertheless, the difficulty of the task makes it no less useful in the finished product, and the selected methods have served to provide innovative insights into the theoretical concepts of ignorance in the context of the Games.

Based on the methodological strategy presented in this chapter, the next chapter discusses the findings and theoretical implications of the study, focussing on the broad organisational structure of the Games 'system'.

Chapter 4: Ignorance in the Games System

4.1 Organising the Organisations

Organising the Games is not a task that is undertaken by a single organisation. Instead, it is the result of the concerted efforts of people at many different organisations that provide the necessary time, effort and skill to stage such a complex event. To understand how ignorance is achieved in planning the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, we must first understand what different organisational entities are involved in the exchange of information on Games planning, how they interact, and what kind of information they share or do not share. Consequently, this first empirical chapter is focused on describing and analysing the broad structure of, and relationships between, the organisations involved in planning and delivering the Games.

I will begin by describing the formal roles of Games organisations and the connections between them. The concept of the informal system of organisations is then introduced, to understand how it also influences the achievement of ignorance in the Games. Following this, the methods by which the Games currently manage knowledge between these organisations are explained, and the chapter concludes with a discussion of how the current system of organisation for the Games contributes to the development and perpetuation of functional and detrimental ignorance.

4.1.1 'Reading from different playbooks'

As discussed in Chapter 2, March and Simon (1993: 2) define organisations as “systems of coordinated action among individuals and groups whose preferences, information, interests, or knowledge differ.” In the

Games there is not just a single organisation involved in coordinating actions, but rather a diverse web of organisations that interact to deliver the final event, each of which has different preferences, information, interests, and knowledge. These organisations may therefore be ‘reading from different playbooks’, an idiom that means each one is potentially following a plan that addresses their own best interests at the expense of what may be best for the overall delivery of the Games. To neglect to consider the role that these different preferences generate between the organisations involved in planning the Games, and the processes by which OCs obtain, share, and withhold information, would provide only a partial picture of the organisational environment within which these organisations operate.

Extensive research has been conducted on inter-organisational relationships, originally stemming from what Oliver (1990) suggests is an:

...increasing acknowledgment that organizations typically operate in a relational context of environmental interconnectedness and that an organization's survival and performance often depend critically upon its linkages to other organizations. (Oliver, 1990: 241)

In the case of the Games, there is a high level of interdependency between organisations that are involved in delivering the Games. This interdependency leads them to act cooperatively in some cases, while their differing interests lead to opportunistic behaviour in other cases. Thus, we must examine to what extent the interdependencies of Games organisations counter the otherwise opportunistic behaviour in which they may engage, and subsequently, what their incentives are for achieving functional versus detrimental ignorance within the Games system.

Given this high level of interdependency, Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott (2008) propose a view of the Games organisations as an ‘Olympic system’, which contains both formal and informal connections among a

network of actors. They suggest that this network is a critical component of the long-term development of the Olympic movement, given that, by nature, both the OCs, and the relationships between them and other Games organisations, are transient. The connections between these organisations are continually evolving in relation to each other and to the work that they are each required to do, as Theodoraki (2007) describes:

...the governance of the Olympic Movement, the Olympic Games management model, and the actual processes involved do not develop independently. Guidance from the IOC, consultants as well as national institutional frameworks, predispose towards or, in some cases, even dictate organizational behaviour. (Theodoraki, 2007: xvii)

In their respective research on the organisation of the Games, both Theodoraki (2007) and Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott (2008) have suggested several different categorisations of these groups. Theodoraki (2007) shows a complex web of stakeholders that interact in the organisation of the Games, including media, government, city communities, nations and regions, sports bodies, contributors (e.g. volunteers), internal stakeholders and others (e.g. lobbyists). Similarly, Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott (2008) suggest a system of nine categories of actors and two regulators. However, these authors are both focused on describing the broader Olympic system, rather than focussing specifically on the OCs as I have chosen to do in this study, and as such their interpretations contain more detail than is required for this purpose. Therefore, using their descriptions as a basis, I have combined and simplified these categories to reflect only those stakeholders who are directly involved in organising the Games; for example, the athletes and the public, while relevant as members of the broader Olympic system, are not involved in the organisation of the Games. The three main categories of organisation that this thesis relies on are characterised by their function in

the Games: (1) the governing bodies; (2) the external organisations consisting of consultants and service providers; and, (3) the organisations of the local host city and country.

4.1.2 Who are the players in Games organisation?

The first category of governing bodies consists principally of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Paralympic Committee (IPC) for the Olympic Games and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) for the Commonwealth Games. The IOC and CGF are each responsible for the overall continuation of the Games, the process of selecting host cities, and in the case of the IOC, the negotiation of contracts with major sponsors, including broadcasters (Theodoraki, 2007). The IPC is responsible for ensuring that the incremental effort required to host the Paralympic Games is conducted to the appropriate standard for disabled athletes. In addition to these three organisations, the International Federations (IFs) for each sport are another group of governing bodies that are responsible for establishing regulations for their sport and for organising worldwide single-sport competitions. Well-known IFs include the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF). A third group of governing bodies are the national committees, called National Olympic and/or Paralympic Committees (NOCs/NPCs) or Commonwealth Games Associations (CGAs), which coordinate their country's involvement in international sporting events by selecting athletes across multiple sports to represent the country. In some smaller countries, the NOC, NPC and CGA are the same body. The governing bodies assist in transferring information between Games by providing continuity in the regulations by sport and by

country, regardless of where the Games are being held. In addition, the IOC, IPC and CGF provide a number of knowledge management programmes to each Games, which are discussed later in this chapter.

The second category is that of external organisations and individuals, including sponsors, consultants, service providers, suppliers and contractors, who often work with multiple types of Games in different locations at the same time. The sponsors are companies that generally have global presence, and some twelve companies have negotiated sponsorship deals with the IOC to provide services to multiple Games as part of The Olympic Programme (TOP), which has been in place since 1985 (Preuss, 2004); these include broadcasters, technology providers, and food and beverage providers. Consultants are companies or individuals with expertise in one or more areas of the Games, who work on a contract basis to support the Games organisers. Individual consultants are often referred to as ‘Games gypsies’; these individuals generally work with one Games for several years until it is complete before moving to the next Games, usually in a similar role. One long-serving Games employee suggested that the position of career Games staff is becoming increasingly formalised; while she used to be considered an “event junkie”, she is now an “event professional” (I-93). The service providers, suppliers and contractors are staff hired for their services, either for planning or executing the Games; for example architects to design the venues or security staff to secure the venues at Games-time.

Due to their role in multiple events, the external organisations are integral to the transfer of information between Games. One external organisation, Event Knowledge Services (EKS), which started as a division of the IOC and was later developed into a separate company so that it could

provide services to other mega-events, is now responsible for collecting, storing and granting access to the Commonwealth Games' knowledge transfer materials. Despite the convenience of being able to hire experienced people who have worked at other Games, there are often inherent conflicts with external organisations. For example, consultants often have an incentive to release limited information to OC staff or governing bodies so that they can continue working with subsequent Games. Furthermore, global companies with prior experience in Games planning may not have experienced resources available locally, which some OCs have identified as an issue:

We have lots of blue chip consultant groups like PWC, Deloitte, Ernst & Young... so I thought well, they should have an area there for Olympic Games and Paralympic Games where you can find all the information. But it's not like this because parts of the groups are hired to do a part of some of the Games, another part is dealt [with] by others so you have to be very careful and to do really a good tender because everyone says, 'oh we have Olympic experience' and when you go and see, no-one has done [what you need to do]... when you go there, it's not that way. (I-26)

Thus, the external organisations may not have the knowledge that they purport to have, even when they claim that they have Games experience. In some ways, it may appear to be in their best interest to conceal their ignorance so that they can obtain contracts with OCs; however, it can also be detrimental to their business to overstate their experience and fail to deliver.

The third category of Games organisations is comprised of entities in the local host city and country. The foremost of these is the Organising Committee, also referred to as 'OC' or 'OCOG' for the Olympics (e.g. 'the Delhi OC'; 'LOCOG', which stands for the 'London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games'), which is responsible for the staging of the Games in the host city and has responsibility for everything from arranging accommodation, to marketing the Games, to coordinating transport

(Theodoraki, 2007). In addition to the OC, host country organisations include the Delivery Authority (e.g. 'the Olympic Delivery Authority' or 'ODA' in London, and 'Olimpstroy' in Sochi), which is usually established by the host country government as a separate organisation from both the OC and from the host government, with the responsibility to develop, build and deliver the venues required to host the Games (Theodoraki, 2007). In some recent Games, there has also been a Legacy Company, which is responsible for planning the long-term use of the venues post-Games (e.g. the 'Olympic Park Legacy Company' or 'OPLC' in London). These three organisations are often created at different times and in slightly different ways; for example, in London, LOCOG was established by the Host City Contract, signed immediately after the city won the right to host the Games in July 2005 (IOC, 2005) but was not officially given the mandate to organise the Games until its first board meeting in October 2005, while the ODA was established in March 2006 by an act titled the 'London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act' (UK Legislation, 2006). The OPLC, which is a public sector, not-for-profit company established by the Mayor of London and departments of the national government was not established until May 2009 (UK Parliament, 2011).

Bid Committees that submit formal host city bids to the IOC and CGF also form part of this third category of organisations and are generally referred to by the name of the city and the year of the Games that they are bidding for (e.g. Munich 2018). For the Olympic Games, due to the level of interest from multiple cities since the Los Angeles 1984 Games, there is also an extra pre-bid category of Candidate Cities, and the Bid Cities are selected from these candidates by the IOC Executive Board (IOC, 2003). The winning

Bid Committee is the precursor to the OC; however, in practice it is common for only a few people from the Bid Committee to stay on to work in the OC. This is because there is often a gap of several months between the presentation of the bid and the initiation of the OC, during which time staff have found other jobs (I-26; I-66). This can be both positive and negative for the OC; on the one hand, there is a risk of losing the knowledge that has been acquired by the bidding committee, while on the other hand, the OC has the opportunity to select those employees that are best suited for the positions available on the OC, rather than having to find roles for all those who worked on the bid.

In addition to these groups set up specifically for the Games, existing government departments at the national, regional and municipal levels often establish teams (e.g. the Government Olympic Executive or GOE in London) to perform any incremental activities required to support the Games in the city. For example, the Games require additional police efforts, street cleaning, transportation, and planning permissions from local and national governments.

4.1.3 Justifying the research focus

Proportionally, the effort of staging the Games is skewed primarily towards the local host city and country organisations. Of these, the OC is the most publicly visible party with respect to the execution of the Games and is also the party over which the governing bodies have most control, because they provide a large portion of the OC's revenue stream via broadcasting and sponsorship contracts. The focus of many of the knowledge transfer efforts of the governing bodies is therefore concentrated on the OCs in particular. Further, the OCs are the most transient of organisations involved in planning

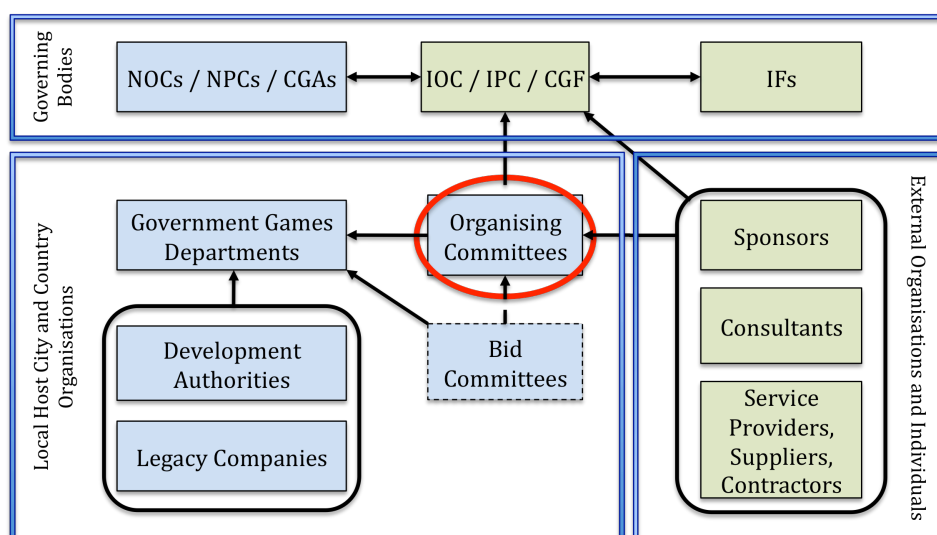
the Games. Thus, the effects of ignorance should in theory be confined to each OC. However, as highlighted by a senior member of one OC, this is not the case:

When we heard the Torino Debrief... the Games people said, this is the same presentation we gave or we heard from Salt Lake to Torino, and so Games to Games you actually have the exact same challenges. So we heard that and we said well we're going to fix them all, we're not going to have those same challenges, and we did, we had exactly the same challenges. And so when we were talking to Sochi, they'd say that's crazy, if you just plan this way you won't have the challenges. Well, good luck with that, seriously, good luck! (I-2)

Thus, the repetitiveness of challenges between the Games suggests that this is an area worthy of further investigation. Due to these reasons, the OCs are the primary focus of this research, while the other organisations' are considered with respect to their interactions with the OC.

The primary organisations involved in planning the Games are shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Categories of organisations involved in delivering the Olympic and Commonwealth Games



Legend

- National Organisations
- International Organisations
- Focus of this research
- Reporting relationship
- Evolutionary relationship

The large boxes in this diagram show the main categorisations that have been used above, while the specific organisations are shown within these boxes. Additionally, national and international organisations are identified for clarity. From this diagram, we can see that the national and international companies work closely together, and that several stakeholders have multiple allegiances with respect to their reporting relationships. As mentioned earlier, the complex interplay between each of these organisations' preferences, information, interests, and knowledge contributes to the development of functional and detrimental ignorance within each organisation. Thus, one organisation's functional ignorance could be detrimental for another; the example provided above of consulting companies that have limited local knowledge but some global experience is just one manifestation of this.

Based on this understanding of the formal connections between the Games organisations, next we turn to a discussion of how the organisations involved in planning the Games are connected informally, and how this can influence the outcome of knowledge-transfer efforts.

4.2 The Informal Games System

In this section, I will explore how the Games are organised informally, and how this influences the development of knowledge and ignorance among the organisations involved in planning the Games. To do so, I will begin by introducing the concept of informal relations between organisations involved in planning the Games.

Since the advent of 'formal' organisational structures based on rational assumptions of organisation (Simon, 1947; Weber, 1947; Taylor, 1911), authors have argued that various forms of 'informal' organisation are equally critical to behaviour in firms (Galbraith, 1973; Scott, 2003). Durkheim

(1933[1984]), for example, argues that unattended social needs created in an overly specialised division of labour can lead to the disintegration of organisation. Scott (2003) describes this view as that of the ‘natural systems’ theorists, who argue that informal structures are created as a result of the behaviour of individual actors within an organisational setting. This is in contrast to the view of ‘rational systems’ theorists, who suggests that organisations are objective entities to be controlled and coordinated in the absence of social considerations (Scott, 2003).

In this research, I take the view that while the formal, legally defined boundaries of the Games organisations are as outlined in the last section, the ‘informal’ integration of these organisations is equally critical to understanding the organisations. This follows Bittner’s (1965) advice:

It has been one of the most abiding points of interest of modern organisational research to study how well the programmatically intended formal structures of organisations describe what is going on within them, and what unintended, unprogrammed, and thus informal structures tend to accompany them. (Bittner, 1965: 239)

At the level of individual organisations, Krackhardt and Hanson (1993: 104) refer to this as “the company behind the chart,” and Mintzberg (1980: 326) similarly describes ‘horizontal decentralization’ as the “extent to which power flows informally outside [the] chain of line authority,” which he believes is a critical design parameter in determining how an organisation operates. Conway (2001) also suggests that the informal organisation can be a source of tension within the organisation. While these readings emphasise the intra-organisational nature of informal interactions, Reve and Levitt (1984: 22) suggest that similar connections exist in inter-organisational relationships on projects, and that formal relationships “must be augmented by working out informal relationships to bridge the many contractual gaps that are bound to

appear.” As such, it is useful to examine how the formal connections between the groups of organisations previously described in this chapter are supplemented by informal connections between members of the groups involved.

4.2.1 *Informal boundaries between OCs and other parties*

The informal boundaries between OCs and other parties vary significantly depending on which party is being considered: governing bodies; local host city and country governments; or external organisations and individuals. The level of informal integration between the different categories of organisations also changes depending on the location of the Games; for example, countries with larger National Olympic Committees (NOCs) or Commonwealth Games Associations (CGAs), like the USA or Australia, can leverage past experience to informally help the OC and the government in Games planning (Frawley and Toohey, 2009). Similarly, countries that have large pools of Games consultants may be better placed to benefit from the informal information and support available in these groups, than those who would have to invest time and potentially funds in getting consultants to assist in their country’s planning efforts. However, there are some commonalities to the informal boundaries that exist between the majority of OCs and external parties.

The governing bodies are both ‘supervisors’ and ‘clients’ of the OCs to a certain extent, which stipulates some of the interactions between their organisations. Formally, the IOC, IPC and CGF monitor progress of the OCs through ‘Coordination Commissions’, which were established for the 1992 Games (IOC, 1998), and Project Reviews, in which they are updated on the

progress made towards delivering the Games, from construction, to Games-time planning, to budgets. According to the IOC:

The IOC acts as coordinator between all partners involved in organising the Games. This applies to technical, economic and political issues... Because of its position of stewardship, the IOC helps to provide the perspective of the Games as an ongoing process, not a series of isolated events. (IOC, 1998: 18)

Thus, the governing bodies provide input to direct the Games, while also admonishing OCs in the areas that they are under-performing. However, their role is somewhat more complex than what is described in this excerpt. While the Games host cities are selected by the IOC, and are supported through the provision of financial and information resources, the Games operate primarily as a franchise (Theodoraki, 2007), rather than as a subsidiary of a parent organisation. While the IOC and CGF are responsible for overseeing the staging of the Games and ensuring that “the event is run smoothly and that the principles and protocol of the Olympic Charter are followed,” (Theodoraki, 2007: 112), the organisation and delivery of the Games is ultimately left to the host city. The governing bodies also have roles as clients, in which they can be particularly demanding. This can create conflicts with the OCs, particularly around financial priorities. For example, when the OC is preparing its plans for the transportation to be provided at the Games for the governing bodies, athletes, staff and media, these parties are involved in determining the level of service. While relationships with transport customers usually involve a customer paying for the level of service that they want, for example between a limousine and a taxi, in the Games the OC must provide a number of transport options for different customers, and must pay to provide these. The customers, such as the governing bodies and athletes’ representatives are incentivised to request more expensive transportation options, for example

on-demand versus regularly scheduled transport, while the OC seeks to provide the service within the budget (I-69). Consequently, the conflict between the priorities of governing body staff and the OC can affect their ability to deliver within budget.

Informally, therefore, the governing bodies end up having a multi-dimensional relationship to the OCs, particularly in the area of sharing information:

The IOC is there, I mean, they want to guide you but they don't want to tell you what to do so it's a very fine line with the IOC. They might say what not to do but they won't tell you what to do you know so the resistance a lot of times and them telling you 'no, no this is the right way', they don't want say that because then if it goes wrong they don't want to be part of the problem, right? (I-30)

There is, therefore, a fine line between the governing bodies' desire for the Games to succeed in the host country, and their aspiration to maintain a 'non-interventionist' approach to their detailed planning and monitoring. In this example, the conflict between the governing bodies' allegiance to their own best interests and those of the OC is resolved in the interests of the governing organisation. The governing body organisations therefore have a dual role in most interactions with OCs; they provide support and assistance through expert advisors, but also demand services that must be delivered. Informally, the governing bodies are also more communicative, using their experience to provide guidelines and suggestions for OCs, where formally they might be unwilling to do so. Thus, the balance for governing bodies between providing information and engaging in ignorance, whether functional or detrimental, is muddled by the dual nature of their relationship.

The boundaries between OCs and the government are similarly complicated. The government also has a dual role in interactions with the OC; formally, as funders, they have a certain level of control over and input to the

OC's activities while, as signatories of the Host City Contract, they are also partners with the OC, since they are responsible for delivering critical Games infrastructure. At the local level, the OC is required to interact with the government to gain planning and event permission, to get them to agree to provide certain services during the Games such as policing, and to ultimately ensure their support for plans made by the OC. The OC staff are often involved in interactions with different people from the government on each of these; indeed, community and government relations are major areas of focus for OCs. The government can also act as a significant party in maintaining continuity in the planning programme; where staff in the OC may not carry on after the bid, may change frequently, or may leave the industry after the Games, the government staff are frequently more stable:

I think the fact that we have access to the people who were involved in the bid is brilliant, especially when I first started, all of the information was made available and all of the people that were involved were very willing to still be involved and get involved and help out where they could... it worked pretty well because all of the same people were still around, still involved from the Games partners' perspective.
(I-58)

Similarly, the government, as partners of the OC, can benefit from their interaction because of the OC's explicit focus on the Games, which is often not the case for government staff. One OC, for example, made the decision to take on responsibility for managing the schedule of the entire Games team, including various government organisations, to ensure that all milestones for the delivery of the Games were on a common master plan (I-76). However, this relationship is substantially different from the relationship that other areas in the same OC have developed with the same government organisations. Working with the government can be challenging for the OC, given the

conflicting objectives of funding and delivering. This is particularly true given the different timelines to which each organisation works.

Because we are in the business of making plans for the Functional Areas, we always have a very quick turnaround time; we often jump to the same conclusion in thinking that the same philosophy will apply for our budgetary approvals as far as the public authorities are concerned. But it is not going to happen, I think that's where we have to be very careful and probably build up a couple of months extra cushion at every point where it is required. (S-15)

These diverse interactions, which often themselves have several different layers of involvement with the same parties, mean that the OCs are constantly challenged on their formal organisational boundaries with informal pressures to coordinate or to withhold information. Thus, ignorance that is formally functional may be detrimental to the informal relationships between the OC staff and their government counterparts.

There are also differences in the informal boundaries between OCs and external organisations such as sponsors and suppliers, depending on whether they are local sponsors who have negotiated with the OC, or The Olympic Programme (TOP) sponsors who have negotiated agreements with the IOC (Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott, 2008). TOP sponsors have specific rights that the IOC negotiates. These include exclusivity on the use of their products over competitors in the OC offices. In one example, an interviewee recounted an incident in which a TOP sponsor insisted that either their office products be used in the OC's head office, or that generic products by competitors were removed, despite the fact they were a premium supplier, typically costing approximately 100 times more than their generic competitors, and that no discount was offered for using the sponsor's products (I-74). This is not to say that the relationship with TOP sponsors is always a negative one; indeed, TOP sponsorship is an extremely lucrative source of funding for

the OCs, through the IOC's administration of the long-term contracts (Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott, 2008). Rather, it is the interaction with the sponsors who act as both suppliers and funders, which can create tension in both formal and informal interactions with the OCs.

Conversely, suppliers that are not sponsors have a very different relationship with the OCs: some suppliers even have staff that are co-located in the OC's offices, working directly with the OC staff over a period of years to coordinate efforts. While this can create challenges for coordination, the perception of their involvement is as a part of the overall team, rather than as an external participant. In some FAs, like technology, suppliers have even worked in the OC's office, with desks formally allocated to their staff, and together have developed a coherent view of the milestones and dependencies for the entire group of OC and supplier requirements, which is a significant challenge (I-75). The suppliers therefore have a slightly different relationship from sponsors within the OC; while they are formally 'external' bodies, the proximity of their internal working relationship, and their requirement to co-deliver on numerous parts of the activities of the OC result in them being perceived more as partners or co-workers than as external parties. This perception then affects the role of ignorance between these groups; while sponsors' expectations must be 'managed,' suppliers are often privy to information that is not strictly permitted to cross organisational boundaries, again proving that ignorance within the Games system is multi-dimensional.

4.2.2 Informal Boundaries between OCs

While the informal connections between different external groups are directly relevant to the knowledge available to the OCs, the informal

relationships between OCs are somewhat different because there is no formal connection between OCs. They are managed independently as events in their own host cities. However, the relationships between OCs can be very significant to the members of these organisations by affecting what information they receive, and what is withheld, about how to plan the Games.

Therefore, although the OCs are engaged in similar activities initiated by the IOC or the CGF, and have similar relationships with the governing bodies and external organisations, they are generally considered to be completely separate entities. This is partly due to the institutional context of each of the OCs. They operate with different contractual and governmental requirements, and often in different languages and/or with different cultural expectations. However, the significant amount of overlap in their activities makes information sharing extremely valuable for the OCs:

In the early stages of planning, when you don't have the expertise on board, probably the best bit of budgeting you usually can get for certain FAs [Functional Areas] is just from looking at previous Games... At least you've got a marker down, you've not missed anything, and ok it might move depending on what, where your service levels end up and things like that... it's very easy, I think, when you develop that budget in the early days for an OC to have actually just completely forgotten about certain things they have to spend money on. So you know the level of detail in the [other Games'] budget information was really useful to almost just go down it line by line, count by count and just double check that we've got at least some provision in for all these kind of things and there's no huge gaping holes. (I-62)

Despite this, there is no compelling reason to encourage two OCs to work together. From the perspective of the earlier OC, providing information to the next OC is largely without benefit, or even detrimental. The cost of knowledge transfer is significant, and the return is primarily altruistic. Some OCs have suggested that capturing information is a positive legacy that can allow OC staff to feel that their hard work will be shared and used by others, which it

would not otherwise be, however this philanthropic ideal is not shared by all. This imbalance also then affects an experienced OC's desire to share with new OCs; if one did not receive the benefit of information from another OC, they are unlikely to want to provide that to another OC. Thus, ignorance can be perpetuated by a single OC operating opportunistically.

The relationship between OCs is not that of typical competitor organisations, nor is it the relationship of different departments or regional divisions within the same company. Equally, it is not the same as two different projects or programmes directed by the same company, nor that of comparable projects being operated by competitors. Instead, it represents a considerably different interaction between organisations from what is typical in either organisational or project environments. Thus, it is clear that the informal boundaries in the 'Olympic system' (Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott, 2008), between the OCs and external organisations, and between the OCs themselves, serve to influence the actions of the OCs, and to determine their desire and ability to obtain, share, and retain information.

To address some of the organisational boundary issues highlighted here, the IOC and CGF have introduced extensive knowledge management programmes to encourage information sharing between OCs. However, they have met with mixed success, partly due to these perceived distinctions between OCs. The knowledge management programmes, as well as the perceived need for this intervention and impacts of this approach to knowledge management, are explored in the next section.

4.3 Knowledge Management in the Games System

To understand how information is shared, or not shared, in the Games, this section reviews previous research on knowledge transfer in

megaprojects, then describes the knowledge management programmes that the IOC and CGF have established for the purposes of sharing information between OCs, as well as some of the challenges that are present in the current programmes.

4.3.1 Knowledge Transfer in Temporary Organisations

The Games represent a significantly different organisational form from the traditional firm-based studies in the organisational theory literature (e.g. Coase, 1937; March and Simon, 1958; Katz and Kahn, 1966), and from the temporary parent-sponsored organisations that most project and programme literature focus on (see e.g. Lundin and Soderholm, 1995; van Donk and Molloy, 2008). Because the IOC essentially licenses the Games to the OC as a franchise, the Games operate mostly autonomously from any one ongoing organisation, but rather within a system of organisations (Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott, 2008), as discussed in the last section. Therefore, the Games present a rich opportunity to consider the challenges of knowledge transfer from multiple perspectives. Intra-organisational transfer of best practices within the OC, for example, presents considerably different challenges and opportunities from inter-organisational transfer between OCs or between the OC and external organisations. Easterby-Smith, Lyles and Tsang (2008: 677) suggest that this inter-organisational transfer “brings more complexity because of the multifaceted nature of the boundaries, cultures, and processes involved.” Furthermore, the complexity of knowledge transfer across the number of organisations that are involved is a critical consideration of the work that needs to be completed.

As temporary organisations, OCs face a considerable challenge from the point of view of knowledge transfer, given that each OC will only ever

conduct one Games. Douglas (1995: 16), drawing on the Durkheimian tradition, suggests that, "When an organisation disintegrates, the forms of knowledge that have been called forth by the effort to organise disintegrate too," which is a particularly salient issue when Games organisations have a predictable and concrete date by which they must disintegrate. Similarly, Lindner and Wald state in their work on project knowledge management success factors:

Due to their uniqueness and short-term orientation, temporary organizations face particular obstacles in their KM [Knowledge Management]. After a project is finished the constellation of people working together is resolved, fragmenting the project knowledge. In contrast to permanent organizations where departments and divisions act as knowledge silos, in temporary organizations routines and organizational memory hardly emerge. (Lindner and Wald, 2011: 877)

Therefore, while knowledge transfer in this environment is particularly critical because of the short timeframe available for making decisions and because of the complexity of the effort to be achieved, the opportunities for building on lessons learned are limited for each individual OC. OCs have a vested interest in getting as much information as possible from the previous OC, but are dis-incentivised to provide lessons learned to the new OCs. This process of transferring knowledge to new OCs also requires a level of honesty about what could have been done differently. This is a considerable challenge since OCs are in general very sensitive to information being communicated to those outside of the OC, particularly given the interest that the media has in the programme, as well as the political sensitivity of the Games themselves.

Because of these issues, there have been calls throughout the time that the Games have been established for them to be held in a single, permanent location, eliminating the model of rotating host cities (Essex and Chalkley, 1998). Greece lobbied strongly in the 1890s for hosting a single,

permanent location, however they were overridden by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who:

...established the principle that the Olympics should be hosted in different locations every four years as a means of promoting and diffusing the Olympic spirit of freedom, progress and equality throughout the world. (Essex and Chalkley, 1998: 189, discussing Grupe, 1991)

Proponents suggest that the economic benefits of having a one-time cost in one location would mean that the facilities could be world-class, and could be built to accommodate the requirements of the Games, to avoid leaving 'white elephants', or empty stadiums, in host cities. However, others have suggested that this would go against the Olympic ideal of encouraging sporting development in countries around the world. Further, some economists have suggested that the no one city should benefit from stimulus of economic development and urban regeneration of the Games. However, no studies have conclusively shown a net economic benefit from hosting the Games (Flyvbjerg and Stewart, 2012).

4.3.2 Current Approach to Knowledge Transfer in the Games

In response to these challenges, the IOC and the CGF have introduced a number of 'knowledge transfer' programmes to encourage the sharing of information between OCs, as described in Chapter 3. The Olympic Games Knowledge Management (OGKM) Programme was initiated in 1998, aiming to build on the processes created by the Sydney 2000 summer Olympic Games. The current objective of OGKM is "...to manage the transfer of knowledge and experience from Games to Games. OGKM offers future Games organisers a platform of learning through a variety of ways," (IOC, 2008: 2). To accomplish this aim, the OGKM programme is made up of several parts: (1) an extranet with over 25,000 reports, videos, and photos

from previous Games; (2) Technical Manuals for selected functions; (3) Observer Programmes and Official Debriefs for OCs to interact and ask questions around Games-time; (4) a secondment programme for OC staff to fill short-term positions at other Games; (5) seminars and workshops led by the IOC; and, (6) access to experienced advisors and a Research Services Team. The Commonwealth Games also use a knowledge transfer programme based on the same structure as the OGKM, called the 'Commonwealth Games Knowledge Management Programme' (CGKMP) but with information specific to the Commonwealth Games, and on a smaller scale.

This study looks at four of these modes of information exchange, as described in Chapter 3: the Extranet, the Observer Programme, the Official Debrief, and the Research Services Team. The Extranet is the most easily accessible method of knowledge transfer, and mostly contains documents from past Games. The documents are a miscellaneous collection, from different functional areas, time periods, and with varying levels of background information as to how they were developed. For the summer Olympics, these are mostly from the Sydney 2000 Games, with some additional documents from Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008. For the winter Olympics, there are documents from Salt Lake City 2002 and Torino 2006, however the majority of documents are from Vancouver 2010. While I was not able to access the Commonwealth Games Extranet, conversations with OC members suggest that the Manchester 2002 and Melbourne 2006 Games are the primary sources of data, with only very limited information available from Delhi 2010. OC members attributed the reason for the lack of data from many of the Games to the desire of the CGF not to have the planning processes of these

Games repeated. However, if this is the case, this eliminates the opportunity for OCs to learn from error, which can be even more important than learning from success (Baumard and Starbuck, 2005). It is also likely that many of the working documents from Athens, Beijing, Torino and Delhi were not available in English, so they did not get transferred to the IOC or CGF at the end of these Games. The Extranet is typically used more often at the beginning of the Games, when there are a lot of unknowns and any and all information is useful for the OCs (Müller and Stewart, 2011), especially to provide them with starting points.

In comparison to the static environment of the Extranet, the Observer Programme provides future organisers with the opportunity to interact with the current organisers during the two-week period of the previous Games of the same season (summer or winter); for example, Rio 2016 was the primary recipient of the London 2012 Observer Programme during the London Games; while the Sochi 2014 and Pyeongchang 2018 winter OCs also attended, they were not the primary audience. The Observer Programme is organised by the OC with input from the IOC, IPC or CGF. Typically, it is designed as a programme of presentations and visits to different venue sites, where the current organisers give the presentations to future organisers in conjunction with the relevant governing body representative. The site visits provide participants with the opportunity to see how each venue runs and to observe the different functions during the Games.

The Official Debrief is a similar programme, in that it unites OC staff from the most recently completed Games and the next Games in a common location for the purpose of sharing information about the conduct of the Games. The Official Debrief occurs approximately four months after the

Games and is usually held in the location of the next Games of the same season; for example, the Vancouver 2010 Official Debrief was held in Sochi, Russia in June 2010 (the Vancouver Games were in February and March). The location generally allows more people from the new OC to attend the Debrief than the number of people they are able to send to the Games in the city of the experienced OC for the Observer Programme.

The Research Services Team, located at the Olympic Studies Centre (OSC) in Lausanne, Switzerland, provides support to organisers and researchers looking for consolidated documentation on the Games. They maintain a library of Olympic documents, including Candidature Files and Official Reports, as well as correspondence between the IOC and OCs during Games planning. They are very knowledgeable about the Games, however they are mostly useful to identify where information can be found, rather than in consolidating materials. One Research Services team member suggested that OCs do not use their services extensively, which they postulated was because of either a lack of awareness, or due to their geographic location, which makes it difficult for OCs to interact with them directly.

One of the key strengths of the OGKM programme is the multi-faceted nature of 'knowledge transfer' that it attempts to provide. As discussed in Chapter 2, there are two forms of knowledge according to Polanyi (1967): explicit knowledge, which can be communicated to others overtly, for example, directions to a specific location; and tacit knowledge, which is gathered through personal experience and cannot be easily communicated to others, for example, how to recognise faces. While the Extranet and Research Services Team are primarily useful for explicit data, the 'experience' programmes attempt to transfer tacit knowledge, which cannot

be communicated by oral or written communication, but must be experienced by the individual in order for them to be able to learn it. As such, the OGKM is employing multiple and complementary approaches or methods to share information between OCs.

OC members suggested that the different programmes provided by the OGKM have been useful to differing degrees. For example, the written documents available on the Extranet provide non-native English speakers with more time to reflect on the concepts, rather than the verbal knowledge transfer used in the Observer Programme and Official Debrief. However, many of the criticisms with respect to interpreting data are also directed primarily at the knowledge Extranet, in which information is documented by one OC, transferred to the IOC for review and then uploaded to the Extranet, before being interpreted by another OC. Thus, the IOC is an active party in the knowledge transfer, and is an audience that is considered by the OCs when producing their documents. Conversely, the interaction of the Observer Programme is considered of value to many participants because it is less censored:

I think that certainly the Observer Programme is of fantastic value because it allows you to really come in and see things that you cannot see at a venue, or the way that a team is operating, you can't ever envision that, no one can describe that, you kind of really have to get in and see it. (I-6)

However, other OC members mentioned that the timing of the Observer Programme limits its usefulness to new members of the OCs, or for bidding cities, rather than for host cities that have already made most of the critical decisions about staging the Games.

4.3.3 Challenges with existing knowledge transfer programmes

A primary issue with the 'knowledge transfer' programme is the nature of the Games themselves. As each 'edition' of the Games (summer Olympic, winter Olympic and Commonwealth) happens only once every four years, and in a variety of languages given the geographic distribution of the Games, the data stored on the Extranet take a long time to develop into a complete and accurate database of information. As one interviewee described, this requires OCs to make significant assumptions about what recent quantitative information to use; apparently, it was difficult to get information from Beijing and information from Athens was 'haphazard', so Sydney, which took place almost a decade ago, is the most recent summer Games that can be used for quantitative estimates (I-79). Therefore, information contained in written sources can be stale, or irrelevant. In an environment that changes as quickly as that of the OC, which is constantly growing and changing with an ever-approaching deadline, stale or irrelevant information can be detrimental to the ability of the OC staff to make properly informed decisions. Moreover, where data are available, OC members are not always confident about the comparability of the data included in the documents, due to cultural differences in the way the Games are planned in different countries:

It was difficult to get a huge amount out of it because the way they structured Delhi was just completely different. A lot of things, which the OC might traditionally pay for because of budgeting pressures they've tried to make other bodies pick up the tab for, effectively. And we were never 100 per cent confident the numbers that they were getting communicated were necessarily the right numbers. (I-62)

Thus, ignorance in this context can be particularly detrimental to the OCs planning during the crucial early stages, particularly because it is at these stages that contracts may be established based on incorrect or incomplete information.

In addition to problems with the existence of data, the type of information that is contributed can sometimes be difficult to interpret, or misleading. Many interviewees commented that it was difficult to understand similarities from other Games without appropriate context. In one example, an OC employee who had worked at a previous OC suggested that there is no 'single source of truth' in numbers from the IOC. For example, she highlighted that the staffing numbers provided by the Games she had worked for previously showed only 25 per cent of the total accredited staff, as the others were hired by the OC's recruiting partner for only very short timeframes. Thus, while the total number is technically correct, it would not allow future OCs to plan for similar issues in staffing (I-47). It can therefore be very difficult for OCs to understand the data from other OCs in the absence of context about what those numbers mean, what is included, or excluded, or what is assigned to different organisational areas in a particular OC. Similarly, it can be difficult to know what another OC did deliberately versus accidentally, and therefore there can be a disparity between strategic documents and final documents that is not necessarily accounted for:

You don't really know if they arrived at that point by accident or if they meant to – especially the things that happened later. In my mind I have an assumption that some of the things that happened later happened because they hadn't thought of them earlier or they weren't able to do them sooner rather than they always had a plan to do them at that time. It is a bit rushed at the end. Every Games seems to report in their TOK [Transfer of Knowledge] that they left certain aspects of it too late. (I-57)

Thus, functional ignorance is demonstrated on the part of one OC in concealing information, generally to avoid criticism from the governing bodies, government, or auditors, while it is clearly detrimental to the planning of new OCs. Again, opportunistic behaviour in these situations wins out over altruistic behaviour between OCs, a finding that is not surprising, but certainly relevant

to understanding the achievement of functional and detrimental ignorance by various stakeholders in the Games.

Another challenge with the OGKM is that the involvement of third parties such as the IOC and Event Knowledge Services (EKS) in transferring information between OCs means that the data that OCs decide to share is done with these additional audiences in mind (I-98). Even in the environment of the Observer Programme sessions and Official Debriefs, in which the OCs are ostensibly supposed to be able to share information verbally, the format of transfer is a formal presentation by the outgoing OC to the incoming OC who sits in the audience, with a representative of the IOC or EKS also presenting and mediating the discussion. Therefore, there is little desire for outgoing OCs to highlight any mistakes that they may have made, for political and reputational reasons. Given the intense media interest about the Games, there can also be reluctance on the part of the host OC to share any potential issues with future organisers during the Observer Programme. For example, one interviewee described the knowledge transfer session for his FA in Beijing as a tour of areas that they were not permitted to go into. Thus, while the IOC requires OCs to provide tours to future host city OCs, the current OC can choose to offer more or less detail in each situation. This is evidently frustrating for the staff of future OCs, who see limited value in this charade, particularly in the cultural context of some OCs that particularly try to prevent information from being communicated (I-82). Furthermore, in response to a question about why certain useful information might not be documented by OCs, one interviewee replied that documentation of information was restricted in some OCs because they were reluctant to reveal anything but a 'good news story' (I-40). Indeed, the aforementioned objection to the information

contained in this thesis demonstrates this point: the OC was more concerned about the potential reputational damage, even though such a risk was small when seen in the context of the thesis, than the potential to learn from it. Again, this shows how functional ignorance on the part of one OC can be detrimental to another.

As the franchise owners, the governing bodies also often prefer to act as the mediator for the OC's questions, to ensure that incorrect planning is not proliferated by unmonitored communication between OCs. As such, communications between OCs, while occasionally happening directly between counterparts at two OCs, are more often executed in a formal way through the Knowledge Management teams of each OC, in cooperation with the Knowledge Management team at the governing body. Therefore, interviewees suggested that the 'best' way to get information from other OCs is in person, particularly in bilateral meetings, so one can ask specific questions and get honest, unrecorded answers (Müller and Stewart, 2011). To date, facilitating the bilateral knowledge transfer process has not been a focus of the OGKM; rather, it has happened tangentially to the other programmes that are in place. For example, a number of bilateral meetings were held between participants at the Official Debrief of the Vancouver 2010 Games in Sochi, which did not form part of the official proceedings. Similarly, knowledge transfer documents that I had prepared during my internship with LOCOG resulted in emails and phone calls from staff at other OCs who had follow-up questions on the material; the fact that these individuals approached me directly suggested that they had not yet established contact with their counterparts at LOCOG. Interviewees also suggested that they often made contacts with the other OCs by chance, on Observer

Programmes or at workshops organised by the IOC; generally, staff seemed reluctant to initiate the contact via email or phone if they had not previously met their counterparts in person at one of these sessions. This result was similarly identified in related research conducted with Martin Müller (Müller and Stewart, 2011).

Boschma (2005) likewise points out that transferring information is more complex than simply putting people together in the same location; rather, there needs to be an underlying relationship that allows the communication of information which may, at times, be very sensitive for one or both parties to share. Therefore, arranging Observer Programmes or Official Debriefs that take place over a short time period may not be sufficient to support tacit learning between OCs:

It wasn't easy to get information or get access to people, and obviously the [Delhi] Games had their issues so people weren't that open to meet with us and tell us the truth... [at a session on the Observer Programme] we had an external consultant come in and say these were some of their issues. I don't think he was saying everything was bad and wrong but here were some areas for improvement, here were some lessons learned, and then we actually had someone come in from the OC say 'no it was great, no problems, everything was wonderful and here's what we did'. And you're sitting thinking, well, obviously I know which one I'm going to sort of listen to and believe, so therefore what was the value of the other presentation? But again that's just a culture thing, they don't like to say 'no' or 'we can't do it'. (I-55)

For this reason, many interviewees suggested that the secondment programmes, where staff from the less experienced OCs work in the more established OC in the final months before Games-time, are perceived to be much more valuable than other knowledge transfer programmes, as they allow trust to be built between OCs. Furthermore, the experiential nature of the secondment allows for knowledge transfer in cases where written or oral knowledge transfer could be difficult due to cultural or linguistic barriers.

Research by Halbwirth and Toohey (2001: 99) supports this finding that in the Games, rather than sharing knowledge 'freely', "individuals value 'their' information. Knowledge is perceived to be power and some equate this to job security." In particular, consultants and former OC employees who are interested in being hired by new OCs have an interest in only giving away a limited amount of knowledge without being paid for it. Several interviewees expressed concerns that their counterparts at other OCs would not provide answers to questions because they were interested in obtaining consulting contracts following the completion of their roles in the current Games (e.g. I-43). Thus, while some participants may be willing to share indiscriminately, others may engage in functional ignorance by holding back or sharing only a sub-set of information that does not threaten their ongoing involvement in the Games, or which does not expose them to potential criticism.

Given these challenges of the knowledge-sharing forums introduced by the governing bodies, the assumption of benevolent, effortless information sharing between Games organisations must be cast off. In this context, ignorance can be considered "not as a precursor or an impediment to more knowledge, but as a productive force in itself," (McGoey, 2012: 3). As such, there are distinct advantages to both not telling, and to not knowing certain information, which are further explored in the next section.

4.4 Ignorance in the Games System

Building on the discussion of the formal and informal boundaries of the organisations involved in planning the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, and on the structure and challenges of the knowledge transfer programmes currently in place, this section discusses how these factors also lead to ignorance within the Olympic system. We first explore how ignorance

can be functional in this context, and then how it can be detrimental. Finally, we consider how 'patterns of ignorance' may be created through the perpetuation of detrimental and functional ignorance in the Games system.

4.4.1 Functional ignorance between Games organisations

Given the organisational configuration and knowledge structure of the Games, how might ignorance between OCs, and between OCs and other organisations be productive or functional for the Games? Much research into knowledge management has started from the rational model, that knowledge must be managed to 'fix' organisations:

A core tenet of any organizational learning project is that without detecting and correcting errors in "what we know" and "how we learn," an organization's knowledge deteriorates, becomes obsolete, and can result in "bad" decisions. (Fahey and Prusak, 1998: 265)

However, drawing on prior research as outlined in Chapter 2, such as that done by Douglas (1995) on necessary forgetting and by Heffernan (2012) on wilful blindness, it is evident that there are certain circumstances under which ignorance is useful for the purposes of the individual or organisation that is ignorant. Similarly, some degree of necessary forgetting or wilful blindness may be necessary for the successful continuation of the organisations involved in planning the Games. In this section, we first examine the value of ignorance from the perspective of the new OC, and then on the part of the experienced OC or external organisation. As mentioned previously, this is not to say that functional ignorance on the part of one organisation is necessarily to the benefit of all of those within the Games system, but rather that ignorance can be of use to one party even when it may be detrimental to another. Ignorance is a multi-dimensional construct that does not follow a strict classification, much as we might like to impose one on it. However,

understanding the incentives for ignorance can provide a useful insight into how and why it is a productive force in Games organisations.

From the OC's perspective, not knowing can be useful, because as soon as the organisation 'knows', or reveals something, there is a chance that it will be shared, manipulated, and criticised, or prove to be otherwise damaging to the OC. For example, numbers are in constant evolution during the growth of the OC, a concept that is explored in detail in Chapter 6:

As the Organising Committee gets more mature, it's natural that for example we don't have all the numbers, there are things that are unknowns. So keep some meat, or some flexibility, to play with the numbers. Whenever they publish something there's this, they can be criticised because they are changing their numbers. (I-35)

In this way, ignorance can be employed strategically by OCs to prevent criticism of their planning. There is precedent for this concern: the city of Denver was scheduled to host the 1976 Winter Olympics, until a public referendum held in 1972 prevented the OC from raising the required public Games financing (Gold and Gold, 2007). However, openly acknowledging the strategy of avoiding information about costs would be considered unpalatable for OCs since, given their heavy reliance on public funding, there must be a perception of openness on the part of those planning the Games. Therefore, ignorance in the case of avoiding cost overrun information is a functional tool deployed to prevent outside organisations from engaging in critique. Rayner, Lach and Ingram (2005) have found similar organisational incentives for ignorance in their work on why weather forecasters have been reluctant to adopt short-term climate forecasting. They identified a number of structural reasons for this resistance that differed substantially from the reasons provided by the weather forecasters themselves, who suggested that short-term forecasts were unreliable, despite evidence to the contrary. Thus,

providing alternative reasons for avoiding information performs the dual role of confirming the organisation's seriousness about their work while simultaneously avoiding the discomfort of knowledge.

Another aspect of functional ignorance in the Games is with regards to what is termed 'absorptive capacity', or the amount of information that an individual or organisation can process in a given time (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990). Using this framework, Lane and Lubatkin's (1998) study finds that:

One firm's ability to learn from another firm is argued to depend on the similarity of both firms' (1) knowledge bases, (2) organizational structures and compensation policies, and (3) dominant logics. (Lane and Lubatkin, 1998: 461)

Thus, both the basic absorptive capacity of the OC, and the underlying similarity of the OC to the knowledge-transferring body, whether that is another OC or a different organisation, can have a significant effect on learning. Absorptive capacity is in this sense a functional response to cognitive overload; people simply cannot absorb too much information at once, particularly if the basis of that information comes from an organisation that is structured in a very different manner.

Interestingly, there can also be wilful blindness on the part of the OC to resist attempts at receiving knowledge transfer, based on the goal of achieving individuality. Heffernan (2012) discusses wilful blindness in her book, using classic examples of psychology experiments, which show ignorance generated by confirmation bias and attention limitations, and high-profile cases of organisational ignorance, including naval disasters, medical negligence and corporate deception. The book provides compelling examples of how prevalent wilful blindness is in many aspects of society and individual behaviour. For example, she provides an insightful analysis of the testimony from executives at BP, who were seemingly blind to the practices prevalent in

the company that ultimately led to the deaths of their employees, a situation that Heffernan refers to as “structural blindness [which] was built into the way that BP did business,” (Heffernan, 2012: 222).

While the consequences of wilful blindness in OCs are generally less serious than this example, there is no reason to assume that OCs are any different from the rest of society in this respect. Thus, the assumption that knowledge transfer in the Games will only result in positive developments for the ‘receiving’ OC may be incorrect, since there is a propensity for at least some parts of the OCs to not want to know what other OCs have done. As one interviewee suggested, while using a previous OC’s research, evidence, and data is useful, it must be weighed against the need to deliver a Games that is appropriate for your particular social, political, cultural, and economic milieu, making it ‘sing’ for your city and country (I-68). Therefore, aside from any attempts for the governing bodies to introduce knowledge sharing programmes, ignorance of some aspects of this transfer may be required to produce the Games in the particular environment that a new OC is facing. Ignorance is in this context not a negative, destructive force, but a powerful, creative force that drives the host city and country to deliver something bigger and better than anything they have ever done before.

Ignorance can also be potentially productive if it assists in constructing an organisational consensus on how to proceed with plans. As Rayner (2012) suggests, ‘clumsy’ solutions are often constructed in societies where contradictions exist between different worldviews. Similarly, many OCs are faced at the beginning of their organisational development with what may seem to be a monumental task, with very different ideas of how to go about tackling it. Excluding knowledge in favour of fuzzier but mutually agreeable

concepts may therefore be a required step in the process of establishing the OC. This is similar to the arguments that Sunstein (1994) presents with regards to 'incompletely theorized agreements', in which he suggests that practical matters of law, being decided by a number of individuals with possible disagreements at a theoretical level, can still be enforced when the solution to the question is the same, regardless of the reasons for doing it. External stakeholders are also likely to hold conflicting views of the purpose, requirements, and preferred way to plan the Games, depending on their purpose, requirements and role in society. Therefore, gaining clarity and alignment on stakeholder objectives, as commonly recommended in project and programme management texts (see e.g. Morris and Pinto, 2007) may actually have the unintended effect of calling these worldviews into conflict. Ignorance, in this case, may be the preferred option to avoid this clash until the OC has established a clear internal direction that can then be used to frame clumsy solutions with stakeholders.

From the perspective of the governing bodies, external organisations, and governments, there may be information that is either strategically or inadvertently withheld for reasons that might not be in the OC's stated best interest. For example, governments may have goals that take precedence over the efficient management of the Games; sharing security plans may be helpful from the perspective of the OCs, but from the government's national security perspective, they may prefer for the OC to convey only limited information, given that it could potentially be of ancillary use to other host country governments (I-88). In this way, the parties involved in the Games invoke broader goals than those that are explicitly stated. Similarly, sponsor and supplier organisations may restrict information from the OC that is

commercially beneficial to the company, or may display ignorance of potential options for the OC, in order to achieve benefit for their organisation. In this case, the overall effect of the ignorance may be detrimental to the Games system, but would be functional for the organisation employing it.

Experienced OCs also employ ignorance in deliberately not communicating information to new OCs, to shelter their OC from the potential effects of negative press, or censorship by the governing bodies. As mentioned above, anything that is published by OCs subsequently becomes a potential source of critique. The experienced OC receives very little benefit from fully communicating to new OCs; as long as they complete the knowledge transfer requirements imposed by governing bodies, there is little incentive for the information transferred to be especially complete. Further, there is a cost to capturing information, both psychologically and financially; OC members must be convinced of the value of assigning resources to record information that will only be of use to future organisers. In a traditional organisation, there may be reasons like goodwill towards other projects, or the possibility of future work to support the need for knowledge capture, but this is not the case in OCs. Therefore, ignorance is more functionally useful to them than knowledge transfer. However, OCs are sometimes able to share things informally that they would not be comfortable communicating through formal channels. For example, one interviewee noted that documents were less useful than talking to other OC staff and asking questions about the things that they couldn't document. Thus, while the official line was that everything had been done well, the 'off-the-record' information provided details of the problems they had experienced (I-40). Without the

communication mechanisms provided by informal relationships between OCs, the information may therefore be lost from the Games system.

Therefore, while it may be in one party's best interest to promote ignorance in some areas, it is clear that it may not be of benefit to all parties in the system of Games organisation. Equally, if each individual organisation within the Games system operates to maximise their own benefit, the overall impact of this ignorance may in fact be detrimental to the future continuation of the Games. The next section builds on the discussion of detrimental ignorance.

4.4.2 Detrimental ignorance between Games organisations

While there can be benefits to not sharing information between organisations, there can also be detrimental effects for both individual OCs, and for the Games system as a whole. As described in the literature review, Zerubavel (2006) suggests that in areas of knowledge in which there is a societal expectation of secrecy, the most important social knowledge is 'knowing what not to know', or what not to acknowledge. Similarly, there are certain topics that are not discussed in the 'knowledge-sharing' forums organised by governing bodies. One interviewee suggested that the original presentations prepared by Sochi staff for the Official Debrief of the Vancouver Games had been 'softened' over several drafts edited by the IOC, for example by changing 'problems' to 'missed opportunities', so that there were fewer criticisms of Vancouver (I-98). While this could potentially be attributed to the IOC's attempts to promote a positive environment at the event, it is evident that this could lead to the elimination of potentially useful critique and open debate about how the Games should be planned. Other staff at the

Debrief also thought that the formal structure of the programme hindered their ability to transfer knowledge, suggesting that:

Often in the presentations... you'll see it's so vague that the people who know what happened know what it means, but the new people, the people you're presenting to, might not understand what that really is talking about. (I-2)

In the same way, expectations about what should not be shared can influence the OC's interactions with government partners, suppliers, and sponsors.

Perceptions of formal organisational boundaries that exist between these organisations can create an expectation that information should not be shared, leading to an antagonistic relationship:

The [government ministry] and the delivery agencies never really submitted complete construction programmes; we really couldn't get good information from them. So we were on our own to try and develop a real analysis, a credible analysis of what was going on. Since we were developing our own baseline, it created a real 'us' versus 'them' situation. (S-17)

This perception of distinct barriers between organisations that are tied to delivering the Games together can be detrimental to the overall delivery of the programme.

OC staff also expressed frustration about the lack of information available in some areas. In Chapters 6 and 7, we explore the bidding and cost estimation processes in more detail, however for the purposes of this chapter it is relevant to note that the IOC restricts information available to OCs during the bidding stages:

During the bid they don't give any guidance or information. We only have the manual and we have to work with this. Again, we didn't know anything about the [documents] and I was in charge of the [documents]. What kind of document do we need to prepare? ... they didn't allow us during the bid to have access to the [documents], only the bid books but not the [supporting documents] and it was hard and we had to check a lot with [other OCs] and what they did in the past. (I-25)

While there are often good reasons for restricting information that may be deemed confidential, particularly before the new host city has been elected and is 'officially' part of the Games system, without good information on which to build the plans for the bid, there are bound to be omissions on the part of the Bid Committee. Given that the bid is a legally binding document, these omissions are then inherited by the OC, which is required to deliver to unfounded specifications. This form of ignorance can thus be very detrimental to the OC's ability to successfully plan their Games.

In other situations, detrimental ignorance may not be strategically controlled, but merely the result of a lack of time or resources on the part of the experienced OC. As one interviewee suggested, employees are simply too busy to gather information during the preparations for the Games that would be useful for new OCs, and end up providing general numbers rather than specific ideas or measures of the effectiveness of the investments (I-95). Another interviewee suggested that the cost of recording the information is not in the interest of the OC to incur on behalf of future Games, particularly when the OC is undergoing significant budget scrutiny (I-39). This loss of information at the boundaries of the Games organisations can be detrimental to the overall future of the Games if it is perpetuated between OCs. This is discussed in the next section.

4.4.3 Perpetuation of ignorance from Games to Games

It is evident that functional and detrimental ignorance are at play in the formal and informal exchanges of information between the organisations involved in planning the Games. What is less clear is whether these organisations understand the extent of the interdependencies that are present between them, and how their ignorance may lead to the perpetuation of

ignorance from Games to Games. In some cases, where ignorance is functional, this may be desirable; however, when detrimental to one or multiple Games organisations, it can lead to patterns of ignorance between Games that are ultimately not resolved:

...if you think of [the previous OC] trying to tell us and warn us. So I met with [the previous OC] a lot... and I had the attitude of, 'these were their challenges, but there's a better way to implement or execute'. And when I was doing the transfer to [the next OC], I had lived through it and thought 'ok, those are challenges regardless of how you implement or execute, it wasn't that someone did it wrong'... [But] when I met with [my counterpart at the next OC] three years ago, their attitude was 'we'll just implement it better.' And we were saying 'well, that's great, but it doesn't really work that way'. (I-2)

The ignorance in this situation is not necessarily about recognising what the constitutes potential challenges, but the optimistic belief that they can be easily fixed by focused attention, or better planning, or by having a different culture than the previous OC. In this way, new OCs seem to attribute failure in experienced OCs to endogenous causes in the experienced OC, rather than exogenous situations that could also affect their own planning, as evidenced in Cannon and Edmonson's (2005) work on learning from failure. However, in most cases, the previous OC has believed that they could do the same, and has instead made the same mistakes as their predecessors. Therefore, ignorance in this situation is exemplified by the lack of understanding that all of these things have been taken into account by previous OCs, and have not worked. This ignorance of the candour of other OCs can lead to a false sense that something different is being tried, only to lead to the same challenge that another OC has faced:

We tried a different approach to just figuring out how much stuff you need, so we called them needs assessments at the time, and we did, what everyone does is, you say to every group how much do you need of computers, tables, chairs, people, cars and they come out with probably five

times what the end result is. And so you spend the whole time trying to get down from this sort of huge need, down to the reality, and we always know what the reality is because those numbers get transferred from Games to Games and yet the next Games does the same thing. (I-2)

Thus, OCs may spend time attempting to fix problems that other OCs have already encountered and solved, instead of building on prior experience.

However, it is also evident that the problems faced by most OCs cannot be easily resolved; rather, the problem set in a new political, social, economic and environmental context may have similar roots and ultimately the same solution, but require a different process to achieve the result. This is evidently a challenge for anyone working in an OC to accept:

We're making the same mistakes that they did. So you actually start thinking 'well this is stupid.' ... [But] say you just moved all VANOC to Sochi right now, or all of Beijing to London, would they be able to start from a higher, say stage 2 for example, not from stage 1? And I'm sure in some areas they would, and they wouldn't make the same mistakes, but in some areas you still would... asking everybody the question of what do you want, or what do you need, leads you to that stupid situation where you over-budget, you over-resource, and then you come to the stage where you have to cut it back, and then you go back actually to the same numbers that Torino had, which at first you thought you'd do differently essentially or something. I haven't come to terms myself with that situation, but it's, you know, it's happened every single time. (I-10)

A common way to try and respond to these challenges is to place an emphasis on improving and increasing knowledge transfer. However, as has been discussed in this chapter, knowledge transfer is of limited use in areas where ignorance stubbornly persists. Given the lack of a 'single source of truth' in many areas as initiated by the IOC, OCs make up what they believe to be the best way to do things:

There's certainly some key lessons and when you go through a Games you often think, especially if it's your first time, I find you often think that 'jeez, these are done, every two years there is a major Games, shouldn't there be a

better guide or a better way to a roadmap in terms of coming out? (I-6)

However, the solution may not be to introduce better knowledge transfer, but rather to focus on understanding the role of ignorance in planning. Accepting that ignorance is a natural, and in some cases necessary part of the planning process provides an opportunity to understand it and potentially to manage the ways in which it might be detrimental.

While this may seem counterintuitive, since a central feature of ignorance is that it is not acknowledgeable, understanding that it is present but unseen allows for many more opportunities than just ignoring one's own ignorance. For example, accepting that formal oral or written communication is significantly more likely to be edited for the purposes of functional ignorance, regardless of knowing what that ignorance is, could allow the Games organisations to plan opportunities for informal information exchanges, as compared to the standard formats that are currently employed.

Regardless of whether the ignorance is functional or detrimental, the perpetual nature of ignorance may mean that instead of trying to embrace or remove ignorance, it is in the best interests of OCs and all Games organisations to understand that ignorance is a part of the planning process. By accepting ignorance as an inherent requirement to achieve the end goal of successfully staging the Games, OCs might just have to accept the iterative nature of the process and understand that it is likely to produce rework.

4.5 Conclusions on the Games System

This chapter has described the system of formal and informal relationships between organisations involved in planning the Games, and outlined several ways in which these relationships can lead to functional and detrimental ignorance. First, the dual roles that many parties hold in planning

the Games leads to a situation where the benefits of knowledge provided by one role are mediated by the required ignorance of another role. In these cases, ignorance often wins out over transparency, since providing too much information is usually more dangerous than concealing information.

Second, the knowledge management programmes that have been introduced to improve information flow within the Games system suffered from the assumption that knowledge transfer is entirely useful, and that it can happen without first establishing relationships, which Boschma (2005) suggests is a flawed assumption. Because of this, the benefits of ignorance lead to a lack of contextual information in documents and presentations that prevents accurate assessments of comparability by the new OC. Third, the mediating role of the governing bodies, external organisations and individuals, and local host city and country organisations in delivering on knowledge transfer objectives are affected by their different interests. As described through examples from observation of events and interviews, knowledge transfer is directly affected by the mediation of knowledge by external parties, governing bodies, and individuals with personal agendas that may run counter the interests of the Games. This then creates a situation in which information is edited and filtered for secondary audiences, to the extent that the messages intended for communication may be rendered unclear, thus encouraging ignorance between organisations.

Given these three issues, there are significant opportunities for OCs to achieve both functional and detrimental ignorance. The usefulness of ignorance on the part of experienced OCs, and the wilful blindness, to use Heffernan's (2012) term, of new OCs, work together to promote functional ignorance between Games. Furthermore, the benefits of organisational

consensus on vague and ambiguous goals, and the desire for Games organisations to pursue alternative priorities, mean that ignorance is also of functional value within the Games system. However, the censorship of information by governing bodies and external organisations, and the perception of barriers between Games organisations, can be significantly detrimental to the planning and delivery of the Games themselves. Calls for even greater knowledge transfer to reduce these issues are unlikely to resolve the challenges experienced by the Games; new OCs are unable to grasp the applicability of experienced OCs to their own situations. In some cases, the applicability may not even exist, and some problems are likely to continue despite the significant investment in knowledge transfer.

In the context of the Games, it is clear that there is no simple answer; each Games organisation will operate in its own best interests, and the ultimate objective of having to deliver the Games in a tightly defined time span is not the highest priority of the organisations actually involved in the planning. However, removing the barriers that perpetuate detrimental ignorance, as in the example of promoting bilateral rather than group meetings between OCs, and understanding the reasons for functional ignorance between Games organisations could assist in developing at least a partial solution to the management of the divergent Games system.

Chapter 5: Ignorance Inside the Organising Committee

5.1 Organising the OC

In the last chapter, the system of Games organisations was discussed, with emphasis on the formal and informal relationships between the different stakeholder groups that are involved in planning the Games. To this end, the Organising Committee (OC) was treated as a 'black box', the details of which were not specified. In this chapter, we open the box and examine the internal structure of the OC. The OC is a highly complex organisation with numerous internal functions that interact in disparate ways; one interviewee even dismissed the idea that the environment was simply 'dynamic' and instead described it as a 'juggernaut' that was somehow moving forward (I-41). As in Chapter 4, we begin with an examination of the formal structure that is followed by most OCs, as well as the semi-formal structures and informal arrangements that support them. To do so, the particular forms of governance and decision-making within OCs are considered, with a view to how these structures aim to facilitate intra-organisational knowledge sharing, and to what extent they may also promote ignorance. In concluding, the ways in which functional and detrimental ignorance are perpetuated between OCs are illustrated.

5.1.1 Some notes on the theory of organisation design

The macro-level theory of organisation design tends to focus on the perception of where the organisation fits into its environment. Scott's (2003) analysis of the development of rational, natural and open systems perspectives, as discussed in Chapter 4, provides a good overview of how these paradigms align and where they differ, emphasising that they stem from

different underlying assumptions and so cannot disprove each other. At the meso-organisational level, typical organisation design configurations are oriented around a different company priority: products, services, processes, geographies, functions, or a hybrid or matrix of these (Daft, 2001). The decisions on which of these to adopt is based on a combination of the industry in which the organisation operates, the organisation's strategic priorities, and its task requirements, which is essentially a contingency approach to determining the 'best' design for the organisation (Daft, 2001). At the micro-organisation level, design typically focuses on aspects such as formalisation of policies and procedures, specialisation of tasks, hierarchy or layers of management authority, centralisation of decision-making, professionalism of staff, and ratios of different categories of personnel (Daft, 2001).

While these concerns characterise most organisations, as discussed previously in this thesis, the OC is not a normal organisation, and therefore does not correspond well to traditional organisational classifications, particularly because it evolves rapidly during its seven-year existence. At the beginning of the OC, it may be said to resemble a product orientation, in which groupings of staff are made by organisational outputs, or required tasks to be completed in the case of the OC. Later, however, it more closely resembles an orientation by functions, in which professional specialisation dictates the make-up of the different departments. In the last year before the Games it changes to a geographic orientation, based on the different venues for the Games, a transition that is discussed later in this chapter.

Another way of looking at the OC is through idealised types. Mintzberg (1980) proposed a radical redefinition of organisational types into

idealised organisational forms: the simple structure, the machine bureaucracy, the divisionalised form, the professional bureaucracy, and the adhocracy. In addition to the broad 'forms,' Mintzberg's (1980) organisational framework also suggests that there are different parts of any organisation, which we can usefully employ in our description of the OC: (1) the operating core, or employees who contribute directly to producing the company's main outputs; (2) the strategic apex, or senior managers who direct the organisation; (3) the middle line, or middle managers; (4) the technostructure, or technical support staff; and (5) the support staff, who provide indirect support to the rest of the organisation. The relative proportions of these five basic parts of the organisation change depending on the type of organisational form adopted by the organisation. Mintzberg's (1980) conceptualisation of organisations has been largely lauded in academia, but is still relatively rare in practical application.

Some researchers have, however, managed to identify organisations that exemplify these organisational forms. Slack and Parent (2006) suggest that Mintzberg's adhocracy may be appropriate for sports event organising committees, although they do not explicitly extend this to Games OCs. The adhocracy, according to Mintzberg (1980: 337), enables organisations to "fuse experts drawn from different specialties into smoothly functioning project teams," which is a surprisingly accurate description of the organisational environment of OCs. The advantage of the adhocracy, as identified by Slack and Parent (2006: 102) is that it "can respond rapidly to change" and "promotes creativity by bringing diverse groups of professionals to work on a specific project"; the drawback being that its flexibility creates highly politicised work environments without clear lines of authority. Despite

this useful categorisation, it must be noted that Mintzberg's (1980) types are idealised, and therefore unlikely to appear in their exact forms in any organisation. The OC could also, therefore, be represented as a professional bureaucracy, in which professionals are the operating core of the organisation and control their own work with the assistance of a large support staff. Slack and Parent (2006) describe the advantage of the professional bureaucracy as minimising conflict through the use of professional standards while providing staff with the opportunity to exercise autonomy, and the disadvantage as creating coordination problems for professionals that have trouble interacting with other professionals. As explored in this chapter, these challenges are also familiar to the OC. It is therefore possible that the OC may experience aspects of both of the adhocracy and professional bureaucracy configurations, or might move between these two configurations at different points in planning.

For our purposes, it is useful to remember these challenges as we seek to determine how the OC acts to plan the Games. Drawing on these theoretical contributions, in addition to those identified in the literature review, we begin by providing a detailed overview of how OCs organise their work and their staff.

5.1.2 The formal structure of the OC

Most OCs follow a common organisational design, while incorporating some modifications for particular requirements of the local environment, such as a dedicated government relations team in highly regulated countries. In the early stages of the OC's establishment, employees often perform multiple functions, and it is not uncommon for one Director to be in charge of many diverse priorities. This structure tends to evolve over time, and in the middle

stages of OC planning, they are usually organised by Functional Areas (FAs), such as Sport, Technology, or Ticketing. This FA orientation allows the organisation to employ staff with specialised skill sets; for example, the Transport FA employs transportation industry experts to organise bus transportation for athletes and liaise with the city's bus companies, and the Ceremonies FA hires entertainment industry experts to organise the opening and closing ceremonies (Theodoraki, 2007). The experts in each of the FAs must also work together in areas in which they are dependent on each other; thus, the organisation more closely resembles the adhocracy as described by Mintzberg (1980).

The growth of the OC over the seven years of planning is exponential, with a significant increase in staff numbers between one and two years before the Games. This is a significant challenge for any organisation, and the OC is no exception:

We are 100 people now and in [4 years] we are going to be 4,000. In the short time, you don't have the same chronology of a company that is going to mature. [If you have] 85 years then you can mature your procedures, your operations, your doctrine – here, no. You have five years to come from zero to 4,000. They must be focused on the same direction, know the same strategy pillars and so on. This is the big challenge. (I-34)

Thus, one of the critical early processes that the OC must develop is for initiating staff into the organisation, to accommodate this growth. The purpose of the organisation also evolves over the course of planning. Where the early years are focused on starting up the company and establishing processes, the middle years are focused on running the company as it plans the Games. In the final year of the OC, the organisation is largely dismantled, with a purpose entirely focused on the operational delivery of one final product: the Games. One interviewee described how the management of one OC was

conducted functionally separately, which he noted was an 'odd way of running a company,' and that the OC would have to change as it transitioned to operations, given the different financial dynamic required in that organisation (I-69). The challenges of the OC managing the increase in staff and the evolution of the organisation's purpose are therefore a significant challenge for the organisation, and is a driving force behind many organisational decisions that happen during the planning stages, as discussed later in this chapter.

Due to the high level of interdependency between the FAs, they are therefore required to work closely together to achieve their goals. For example, decisions made by the Logistics FA can affect how quickly the Medical FA tests the blood samples of athletes for doping, when the Sports FA sets up the marathon barriers, and how the Catering FA will distribute food at venues. This interdependency is a challenge because FAs are often staggered in their development, depending on when they are required to start planning, as some aspects of the Games require longer development times than others. However, entering into the OC after it is already well developed can create challenges. As one interviewee described, FAs do not have the required detail to provide reliable estimates in the early stages of the programme when there is time to capture information, and can only provide clear estimates in the last few months before the Games, when the FAs that needed the estimates have nearly finalised their planning (I-79). Different levels of knowledge and varied maturity of plans between these FAs are an unavoidable consequence of this development. Additionally, the staggered start dates combined with a high level of interconnectedness can be difficult

when some FAs are too under-staffed to provide the right level of feedback and input to other FAs that require information from them.

Because of these challenges, the OC must judge the necessity of bringing in staff early enough to get the work done, against budget pressure to delay hiring until the last possible moment. Achieving this balance is a constant challenge for the OC, which continues throughout the organisation's existence:

It is really a difficult task in finding that right balance of when to bring certain people in and staff up certain functions but that is one of the lessons we learned, you push back your hiring in some of your key operational functions, it really forces a lot of decisions late in the game. That can be quite daunting and stressful, and when you look back on it, you may have misallocated resources but at the time it made sense. A year out, [you think] why did we spend that back then, when we now need it for something else? (I-6)

Due to the combination of the intense budgetary pressure to deliver the Games, and the pressure to have enough resources to support other FAs that are dependent on one's FA, FAs are frequently in conflict with respect to balancing budget and staff requirements. Debates between the FAs over this topic are frequent, and are often difficult to resolve given the high level of specialisation in each FA, and the ambiguity of the responsibilities for required activities between them. One example that was highlighted by an interviewee was in defining the difference between sports equipment and overlay (which are temporary elements that supplement existing infrastructure); is the sand used in beach volleyball sports equipment or overlay? Because these activities are the responsibility of different FAs, the outcome of this decision will affect the budget and scope of each FA, and so this largely semantic argument can generate significant conflict. While the OC ultimately has to deliver the sand, budget conflicts between FAs can therefore lead to delays in preparation while the scope is sorted out (I-46). Thus,

ignorance caused by ambiguity in roles can be a source of conflict, and as highlighted by this interviewee, can be detrimental to the achievement of the Games. Budget issues are one area of conflict that can cause the overall shared objective of delivering the Games to be diverted, and disputes between the FAs can overcome the broader concerns of the OC. This conflict between budget and scope is covered further in Chapters 6 and 7, however for the purposes of this chapter, it is useful to understand how fundamentally these considerations can affect organisational interactions within the OC.

In addition to the tensions between FAs, the senior management structure of the OC is also instrumental in developing a well-functioning OC. Senior staff tend to be hired first in OCs, to set up the strategic goals and objectives of each FA before staff are hired to assist with planning, and ultimately with delivery. However, interviewees highlighted that it is important for the management structure to keep pace with the 'frenetic' rate at which the organisation grows, to ensure that it does not end up 'top-heavy,' with an excess of managers; the management structure should remain fluid and evolve from the beginning of the organisation through the middle stages of planning and to the final operations stages (I-82). As such, the OC needs to keep a clear focus on developing both the senior levels, and the more junior levels, as the organisation grows. Since the organisation is constantly evolving over the course of planning for the Games, at no point is it a 'static' environment in which processes and structures are clearly determined and unchanging. Rather, the organisation continues to evolve in a dynamic and sometimes unbalanced way. In some OCs, for example, some of the basic

principles of organisation design, like span of control, are not fully planned, creating issues with the decision-making processes in the organisation:

How could the OC function with this structure? The answer is it couldn't and it didn't. It did not function. ... [The CEO] couldn't get things done: he couldn't seem to get decisions made, for a number of reasons. The result was that... the CEO here had 28 direct reports. In any organisation – it doesn't matter what the organisation – that is just not sustainable. (S-19)

The role of governance and decision-making processes in promoting ignorance is discussed later in this chapter, however this quote highlights the importance of formal structure, even in a dynamic and rapidly changing environment like an OC. It is clear that the CEO in this situation would necessarily have been ignorant of important activities in the OC; how could anyone be expected to manage 28 independent senior-level individuals effectively? Thus, improperly executed formal structure can be seen to lead to detrimental ignorance. It is also worth considering, however, whether there might be another level of ignorance at work in this situation; the CEO presumably realised that he could not accommodate the established structure, however he did not change the roles of the staff reporting to him. Thus, it is possible that he felt that ignorance in this situation was functional; that by limiting his capacity to have more than a superficial knowledge of the breadth of the issues within the organisation, he was also insulating himself from culpability.

Staff at other OCs also observed that their organisations were developed in informal ways that did not align to the formal organisational policies. Rather, the organisation of the OC was determined by a combination of personalities and availability of personnel. For example, as one interviewee described:

You're supposed to set up a certain structure but every country wants to put its own stamp on it, and in reality I wonder if it's – I would really look at whether or not that makes sense, because our structure changed over and over based on, a little bit based on personality. And so we ended up with this really kind of weird structure, in some cases things that were stuck together that actually didn't fit together, but the person who's running them, was running both. (I-2)

The informal relationships within OCs can therefore have a significant effect on the formal structure as well, and the formal structure may end up be more the result of individual negotiation than of a deliberate attempt to determine the appropriate structure for the organisation. Since the development of organisational structure can have a significant effect on how knowledge flows within a company, by determining who reports to whom and what tasks are the responsibility of each individual director, informal preferences for organisational development may have been aligned to suit the strategic priorities of individuals.

5.1.3 Transitioning the OC to operational delivery

The FA orientation of the OC is only in place until approximately one year before the Games, which is referred to as 'G minus one year', or 'G-1', in the OC. From this point on, the organisation is responsible for delivering 'test events', or single-sport competitions, which are conducted to ensure that the venues, which are locations in which the sports events will be held, are ready for the Games. In addition, functions such as the Medical FA use the test events as a 'dry run' for the plans that have been developed for use during the Games, to ensure that there are no flaws in the approach that will be used, for example by setting up first aid stations at these events.

Since the test events are conducted at the venues, the staff, who have worked up until that point within FAs, are then reorganised into the

geographical orientation that they will be deployed at during Games-time. This process is called 'venueisation' in the Games community (Theodoraki, 2007: 148). This means that, for example, the person from the Transport FA who will be responsible for the Athlete's Transport Area at the Olympic Village during the Games will become part of the Olympic Village Venue Team during test events. The impacted employee will also now report directly to the Olympic Village Venue Manager rather than the Transport FA Manager. The purpose of venueisation is to break down FA 'silos' that have been created through the planning process, and to move towards the distributed decision-making structure that will be required during the Games:

[The purpose of] venueisation is to create some independent cells, because 95 per cent of the day to day problems at the venues must be decided in the venues, not going to the central [leadership], as we are now [doing] in the planning and the initial phase. (I-34)

The venue teams are extremely useful for decision-making during Games-time, as the venues must be able to operate autonomously to react quickly to situations that occur during the Games, rather than having individuals at diverse sites throughout a city reporting to a functional leader at a remote and central location. Staff from support functions like Finance and HR are usually either re-deployed to venue roles, or they will help to maintain centralised command centres like the Main Operations Centre (MOC).

However, venueisation is not without issues in its implementation. The extent to which this re-organisation is maintained after the test events varies from OC to OC; some OCs maintain the venue orientation at the OC head office when staff return after test events, while others return to their original FAs groupings to refine plans based on test event feedback:

One of the most unnatural things we did, and I think I have heard this time and time and time again when I talk to people who have done previous Games... the biggest

mistake I think we made was we tried to force, after the sport events were over and test events were over, we then forced everyone back into the office environment for that last year, mainly because the venues weren't ready... We allowed them to trickle back into their functions and to dissipate into the OCOG and what that did is that it disbanded teams that could've had a really good opportunity to form and take that venuisation, make it grab hold and make it last right to Games-time... I think we lost a lot of momentum coming from the test events to Games time. (I-4)

This means that much of the benefit of creating the venue teams one year out from the Games can be lost during this transition back to the office. The reasons for the OC to decide to venueise or remain functionally organised are varied; some OCs may not think there is a benefit to maintaining the new organisation until the Games, or may not think it makes a difference:

I don't think that everyone bought into the process... what happened was some of the executives and some of the senior leaders of the OCOG didn't buy into what venuisation was all about. So we would have a venue team forming and we would have certain functions, key functions that would hold back their person and say 'no, no you can't, don't attend venue team meetings, I'll send my regional guy'. (I-4)

Other OCs, or staff within OCs, however, may believe that maintaining a venue-oriented organisation could result in a disintegration of OC culture to a venue-specific culture that may be distinct from the rest of the organisation, thereby challenging the 'seamless' experience that many Games attempt to provide between the varied venues at the Games. As stated in one interview, while it is tempting to send teams to the venues as soon as the OC officially takes responsibility for them, there is a risk of staff going 'native' and developing their own culture. Accordingly, this can lead to them forgetting or missing out on discussions and decisions at head office (I-50).

Therefore, there are varying opinions as to the extent of venuisation that is appropriate for an OC, and different ways to approach venuisation that will have diverse effects on the transfer of knowledge and the achievement of

ignorance between FAs. It is possible for individuals to 'forget' their allegiance to other areas of the organisation, which may be interpreted as a mechanism to promote functional ignorance of accepted norms within the sub-group of the venue that may be threatened by the policies of the larger organisation. However, a lack of trust between employees at the venue level can equally lead to strategic ignorance, if the employee perceives a benefit to concealing information from the venue team. This could then have a detrimental effect on the operation of the venue at Games-time. Thus, necessary and detrimental ignorance can stem from decisions made about when and how to support the venuisation process.

5.1.4 'Bums in seats': Staffing the OC structure

In conjunction with the evolution of the organisational structure over time, there is also an evolution in the staffing profile of the OC (Theodoraki, 2007). The OC starts off with relatively few staff who each have a broad scope of responsibility. As the organisation grows, the level and scope of responsibility of the initial staff tends to decrease as new employees are hired at both senior and junior levels. This growth can cause tension within the OC, particularly when someone who has been responsible for the initial development of plans for a particular function has to relinquish that responsibility. However, it can also ensure that staff at the senior levels have experience across multiple FAs, and can encourage integration or identify gaps between FAs. Getting 'bums in seats,' or hiring staff into required positions, is a central concern of the OC.

Staff in OCs have a wide variety of professions and backgrounds. Generally, OCs are primarily staffed by host country nationals, for three reasons. First, it is evidently less expensive to employ people locally, as they

do not need to be re-located, and can work in the language of the country. Second, one of the reasons that OCs invest in the Games is to improve the skill base of the local community in Games-related areas, including construction, event planning, and professional specialties. Third, local staff often have specific skills that can be of use in the local country, for example knowing how to work with government staff and supplier expectations, which can be difficult for foreign nationals to learn. This is particularly true at senior levels, where interactions with the leadership of other companies or with the government require fluency in the local language, and a deep understanding of the system (I-92). This appears to be slightly less problematic between some countries, particularly those that are English-speaking, with a significant amount of staff transfer between recent Games held in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia.

In addition, some OCs, like Rio, also look to hire staff with previous experience at similar events, like the Pan-American Games or Asian Games, or even international events like Formula One or the FIFA World Cup. The similarities of multi-sport events mean that these staff can usually adapt to the unusual environment of the OC more quickly than staff that have only worked in traditional organisations. Furthermore, since local host country staff have generally not had the experience of planning a Games before, staff with previous Games experience are considered highly valuable. As such, an industry of previous Games organisers has built up, in which these Games 'nomads' move from one Games to another in similar roles, to assist in planning. As one interviewee with previous Games experience suggested:

...many people only do one Games and never again.
Because I was involved in [repeated events] you always
have the opportunity, or you had an opportunity to right the
wrongs or to be smarter or to do things better the next time

around. Most people don't get to do that in a multi-sport Games because they are held in a different city every four years and many people won't follow them around. They won't necessarily have the opportunity to do the same thing again. (I-63)

Employing people with Games experience can be particularly helpful in addressing the need for tacit knowledge to be acquired by new Games. As discussed in Chapter 2, tacit knowledge is difficult to transfer between individuals because it is primarily experiential in nature, rather than descriptive (Polanyi, 1967); thus, it can be easier for new OC staff to emulate experienced staff rather than trying to learn from scratch.

However, despite the benefits of this experience, there can be some difficulties in hiring staff from one Games to work on another. For example, it can be difficult to determine the extent of experience that a consultant has had on another Games. With the dispersal of staff following the Games, referrals may not be possible and the experience itself may be taken at face value. Thus, the value of Games experience may be of limited use:

It's dangerous, people say I've done a Games, yeah you've done a Games operationally, you've not done a Games in terms of the development of an OC, which, not being a Games person can be a bit frustrating, everyone talking about 'you don't have Games experience.' Doesn't matter, I don't need Games experience at this point in time, because this is about an organisation evolving, developing and getting ready for something and planning out the big programme. So, and we've got enough subject matter experts who have done a Games, you don't need a whole raft of them. So just I think it's getting the right skills at the right time for an OC as well. (I-55)

The scale of the Games is another major factor in the experience of consultants, and sometimes approaches from other Games cannot be scaled up for the Olympics. For example, staging the FIFA World Cup is a much less complex endeavour than hosting a multi-sport Games; with several host cities in the host country, a much longer timeframe for conducting the World Cup,

fewer athletes, and only one sport being played, it is not substantially comparable from an organisational perspective. Thus, hiring staff from other events can be problematic if they are not able to adapt their experiences to the environment of the Games. Finally, Games nomads may also be perceived negatively if they suggest copying plans from former Games; as discussed in Chapter 4, host nations often want to be seen as distinct in their approach to the Games, and may resist efforts to become too similar to other Games. However, while avoiding existing information that may compromise creativity could be seen as a form of functional ignorance, the OC may also require a longer development process for an activity that could be simplified through the consultant's input, which could be detrimental for the overall development of the OC. Thus, this is another example of ignorance that can be both functional and detrimental.

Another significant challenge for OC staffing is that the different FAs also have very different requirements for their employees. Some FAs are highly professionalised, and require deep expertise in the local environment. For example, the Government Affairs FA will be more or less important in different OCs, depending on the relationship of that FA with the government; in some countries, like Brazil and Russia, it is considered absolutely necessary to have a team with full-time responsibility for managing government interactions, while in others, engagement with the government may happen on a more ad hoc basis. However, given the level of government funding in most recent Games, it is likely that this area will continue to grow. Similarly, local events experience in the host city is more commonly required in FAs like ceremonies, where knowledge of the local market may outweigh the advantage of prior experience in a Games OC. In London, this even led to

the creation of a Ceremonies organisation at arms-length from the OC, to enable it to make decisions more quickly and to procure products and employ local staff more rapidly than in the rest of the OC. Furthermore, there are other FAs that require professional certifications, as in the corporate areas like Finance, or in the Medical FA, where some team members must have medical qualifications. Still other FAs require low-skilled staff with little experience, but have significant demands for quantity of staff, as in the Cleaning FA. Finally, there are other FAs in which deep industry expertise is more useful, like in the Transport FA. However, hiring experienced staff into these departments does not necessarily guarantee that they will be able to translate their knowledge to a Games environment. The OC is not a typical organisation, and has requirements that are substantially different from those experienced in most other organisations. One interviewee highlighted that OCs are particularly unusual because each FA is staffed by specialists who understand the tasks of the FA, but who do not necessarily understand the end product of the Games. This can be frustrating for staff in other FAs because while each person may be operating to a very high standard in their field, they may do so without a full understanding of what ultimately needs to be delivered (I-45). Relying on expertise within a specific field does not therefore guarantee that the necessary planning will take place; understanding the specific requirements of delivery of the Games is therefore a substantial component of the OC's staffing requirements. Thus, the OC is faced with myriad requirements in their staffing, which are not straightforward, and require a huge breadth and depth of knowledge in many different areas.

Working in the environment of the OC therefore creates some significant challenges in staffing. Given the constraints of public funding, OCs

do not offer premiums for jobs either; rather, they are generally competitive for the industry, but rely on the brand of the Games to attract people:

An OC doesn't traditionally pay lots of money so sometimes it is difficult to attract the right sort of people, people really need to be motivated by the opportunity of working for an OC sometimes to join, because you won't get rich by working for an OC. (I-63)

Moreover, the organisation must maintain high standards of recruitment to ensure that they do not violate the terms of their funding. The organisation is therefore in a constant struggle between accountability to public funders and agility for FAs. One of the main complaints of staff across various FAs and OCs was the long lead time of up to six months that is often required to hire new staff in an OC, which results from the need to follow due process in recruiting for positions because the OC is publicly funded. This is particularly challenging when it is difficult to identify in advance when the staff will be required. In one OC, staff highlighted that the organisation lacked a sense of 'planning flow,' and so assumptions around when to recruit staff had to change dynamically as the organisation's planning cycles evolved. When combined with the six-month timeframe for recruiting, this created subsequent challenges in over-working existing staff (I-79).

Planning for staffing can therefore be extremely difficult when the understanding of the balance between scope and time is evolving. The long wait to hire staff can lead to significant difficulties on the part of managers looking to staff up their functions. This is particularly problematic as the Games draw closer, given that the future of the employment contract is limited to the end of the Games, regardless of how well the employee performs in that position. The problem is exacerbated even further when the host city or country experiences a poor economic climate, as many OCs have recently faced, so people are more likely to accept long-term jobs than short-

term contracts of 6 to 24 months (I-52). Balancing the hiring of the right person at the right time for the right cost and in the right timeframe for the Games is therefore a critical consideration for the OC:

People is probably one thing that's driving a lot of stuff just now, there's a lot of work to be done but it's do, you do it with what you've got... or you just bite the bullet and get a specialist in and it gets done very well and very quickly. But then that contradicts, that challenges your on-budget piece but it supports your on-time piece. (I-55)

In one OC's case, staff in the OC agreed that this balance was not achieved, and inexperienced staff were frequently hired for critical positions within the OC. According to one of the consultants brought in to assist in the final stages of planning:

Someone would argue that within the Games environment you could defer a whole lot of things if your strategy was to employ experienced people to deliver because it's okay we'll plan, we'll plan, we'll plan, here's what they need to do and at whatever point bring in experienced people to deliver that plan and then let them go. Then you could probably do it in year/month whatever the circumstances are, but in this case we didn't have experience and we didn't have developed plans, we only had time running out and they just hadn't appointed people across the board. There were people but not in the right spots doing the right things. (I-16)

This lack of planning and coordination created significant issues in the final delivery of the Games, and can be used as an extreme example of how important the right balance of staffing is to completing the Games on time, on budget and with good quality for the scope that has been agreed upon by all of the Games partners.

Overall, then, staffing can be seen as a major challenge of the OC, which has serious consequences for getting the work done to deliver the Games. In this context, having the right knowledge is a balance between experience that is relevant within the peculiar environment of the Games, and appropriate experience in the functional speciality and local environment.

Ignorance of either of these areas can lead to detrimental effects for the execution of the Games, as can the issues of budget, timing and skills when selecting staff.

Building on this background, the next section explores the internal mechanisms of the OC, to understand how ignorance is functional and how it is detrimental within OCs.

5.2 Making the organisation work

The formal hierarchical structure of an organisation is only one component of effective organisational design; to be fully functional, this must be overlaid with the required lateral processes, or horizontal linkages, for it to function effectively, including meetings, teams, task forces and/or the creation of other cross-organisational activities and groups (Daft, 2001). This section explores these linkages, focussing specifically on the governance structures and decision-making processes within the OC.

5.2.1 Collecting data on governance and decision-making

As described in Chapter 3, to achieve a better understanding of the working environment within OCs, I undertook internships with the London 2012 Olympic Games and Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Organising Committees, to complement the other work that I had done. Given the participatory nature of this portion of the research, I have presented this section in first person to account for the reflexive nature of this work.

The internship that I undertook at the Glasgow OC required me to accomplish two main objectives set by the Chief Operating Officer: first, a review of, and assistance in refining, the OC's 'Governance Forums' terms of reference; and, second, support in mapping 'decision-making and escalation processes' within the OC. Based on findings from these two objectives, I was

later asked to complete a third objective, to identify issues with the current governance structure that had been established. The next sections will first present my experiences in this role, and will then discuss further input received through other research methods.

5.2.2 *The role of Games governance forums*

The Governance Forums to which the first objective refers are a number of cross-functional committees that are superimposed on the formal organisational structure of the OC. As mentioned previously, these horizontal linkages are useful in a functional structure to alleviate the otherwise siloed environment that can develop in these organisations (Daft, 2001). These cross-functional forums are common in OCs, and are intended to provide both coordination and oversight of interdependent activities. Interestingly, the structure of the cross-functional forums do not appear to have evolved significantly over time; the Rome 1960 OC reported that there were committees at a number of levels, similar to the current structure of the Glasgow OC. However, the volume of meetings has certainly increased; while the Rome 1960 OC reported that “the total number of meetings held during the four years of preparation amounted to 344 in number” (Rome OC, 1960: 49), I counted approximately 575 meetings annually, or 2,300 over four years for the Glasgow OC staff. This is not surprising, however, given the growth in complexity of the Games and subsequently of the size of the OCs over the last 50 years.

Cross-functional forums are also an opportunity to ensure that the impacts of decisions made by one FA are communicated to and discussed with the FAs affected by the decision. In the Glasgow OC, there were three levels of Governance Forums: Steering Groups, Coordination Groups, and

Delivery Teams. Each of these was intended to operate at a different level of decision-making and as such required the participation of different levels of staff in the OC. The intent was that Steering Groups were focused on strategic priorities and attended by Directors; the Coordination Groups were primarily at a senior working level to oversee the operational delivery of strategic priorities; and the Delivery Teams were composed of operational employees who coordinated plans of work for tasks that were conducted by multiple FAs.

During the four weeks that I worked with the Glasgow OC, I had the opportunity to observe a number of phenomena in attempting to achieve the objectives that I was set. To achieve the first objective of refining the terms of reference for Governance Forums, I met with a number of individuals to see what documents existed for these forums and to identify any gaps across them. It became apparent through this process that the different levels of forum lacked clarity and coherence in their membership and objectives. This may have been the result of an evolutionary approach to the governance forums; while some forums were created because they seemed like they were likely to be required, for others, as an issue emerged that had cross-functional impacts, a meeting was organised to discuss with the various people involved at that time, and was then formalised into a forum. Thus, the development of the forums and their participation seemed to have evolved to the point of formalisation, and then attendees continued to participate despite the evolution of their roles or of the requirements of the OC.

Based on the findings regarding the lack of alignment of the terms of reference of the OC, I was also asked to identify issues with the current governance structure. This added brief led to subsequent discussions of the

governance forums that existed outside of the OC, which primarily included various interactions with the Scottish government and with the Glasgow City Council, as well as with members of the UK government and other involved parties like the UK Border Agency (UKBA) and transportation companies. These entities had also set up a number of organisations and committees to manage their involvement in the Games and to oversee the delivery items for which they were responsible, for example, delivering venues and monitoring the budget of the OC. Individuals within the OC therefore participated not only in their own FA, and in governance forums within the OC, but also in forums with these third parties. The complexity of their involvement therefore increased substantially, and the boundaries of the OC organisation were, indeed, much more flexible than had originally been suggested, as discussed in Chapter 4.

One of the issues with OC governance is that the governance structure of the Games organisations is extremely complicated. While some OC staff expressed a desire to ‘simplify’ the governance structure, those who attended the governance meetings in question frequently disagreed with this perspective. In contrast, meeting attendees suggested that the OC cannot be simplified to the point where it resembles a ‘normal’ organisation, or even a ‘normal’ project environment. On the contrary, the complexity of the interactions that an OC has to contend with is an integral part of its existence. Furthermore, it is clear that the method of addressing this complexity is not clear; there is little direction on how to develop the inner workings of the OC, and it is difficult for OCs to adapt those guidelines that are available, due to the different challenges that each OC faces. In one OC, for example, different

decision-making bodies have emerged that have overlapping responsibilities for decisions:

In our case we create additional levels of management... For example, we have a budget, we approve a budget, but to start spending money we [have to] initiate a project, so [we] prepare more papers to approve it on Project Committee and only after that, can we spend our money, our budget. Before [they] approve, we provide many information for this budget, we should second time prepare other information in project about the same? Why we do, why we need to do it, why we need to spend such kind, such sum of money, twice? Budget Committee, one view, from Project Committee another view, [but really] it's the same. (I-12)

Thus, Governance Forums can equally be a hindrance to an OC's planning of the Games, rather than a tool for clarifying responsibilities and gaps in planning.

5.2.3 How ignorance affects OC decision-making processes

In completing the objective of mapping decision-making and escalation processes, through meetings and interviews with OC staff, I identified five major types of decisions that would have to be made by the Glasgow OC: (1) decisions on whether schedule 'milestones' had been completed adequately; (2) decisions with cost implications; (3) decisions affecting third parties; (4) decisions with an operational impact; and (5) decisions with a reputational impact on the OC. In my discussions with OC staff, these decisions were perceived to be of descending importance within the OC; that is, decisions with cost implications had to be escalated to senior levels fairly quickly, while decisions with a reputational impact could potentially be addressed at a lower level committee.

I presented these findings to a selection of senior managers of the OC team, which led to an informative debate about the difference between having the authority to make a decision and having the knowledge to make the

correct decision. For example, even though the authorised financial decision-making limits of the OC were clearly defined based on the role of staff, these senior managers expressed a concern that employees who officially occupied certain positions in the OC might not have the appropriate information to make the decisions that the policies of the OC permitted them to make. In other words, employees who had the right to make financial decisions were ignorant of information that would be required to make such decisions effectively. This discrepancy points to a critical challenge for OCs with respect to decision-making and governance processes; in this instance, it would appear that either the policies should be amended to reflect the abilities of the staff, or the employees in question should be given a position of lesser responsibility. Otherwise, this is clearly an area that detrimental ignorance can cause serious harm to the OC.

One of the most challenging aspects of decision-making for employees in OCs is that in the early stages of the organisation, decisions must be made in the absence of the people who will ultimately deliver on them during the Games. As the organisation grows, the people who made the original decisions may take on new responsibilities, or may relinquish responsibility over some areas when new staff with specialised skills are hired. In this process, new staff, who are ignorant of the reasons for prior decisions, can question the justification for those decisions that have already been made (I-88). This suggests that there is an iterative quality to learning within OCs; one staff member may acquire key knowledge, but it may not be passed on within the FA during periods of growth at the OC. While processes and diagrams developed early in the OC's development can be useful as communication tools, if they are not maintained and used in the OC's daily

interactions, they are of no assistance to employees who join the OC at a later stage of development. This also recalls Argote's (1999) and De Holan and Phillips' (2003) work on organisational forgetting discussed in Chapter 2; while the OC may seek to maintain knowledge, it is not simply a one-way process. Thus, knowledge decay through the growth of the OC should also be considered in the development of knowledge management plans for the organisation. Additionally, it is possible that, as Flyvbjerg (2001) notes in the Dreyfus model, experienced OC staff may find it particularly difficult to convey their knowledge to novices. This could be another reason that decisions are questioned when new staff are employed; not only are they unfamiliar with the context, but there may be communication barriers between these two groups.

To add to the difficulty of keeping new employees informed about prior decisions, the high level of interdependency between FAs means that the timing of decisions affects the ability of other FAs to deliver on their commitments. However, as previously mentioned, the pressures of time and budget need to be balanced with staffing requirements, and with the level of comfort that different FAs will have in planning with fewer employees. As several OC employees pointed out, it is not always the case that hiring more people earlier on would necessarily make planning the Games easier for the OC:

I think it's an easy out to say to do it earlier. I don't think earlier means smarter, necessarily. I think the time pressure forces you to be smarter in some cases if you don't have the time. Because you don't have the time to fuss and take time, and this depends on cultures too, but I found we were way better in the last six months because we needed decisions made, and two years out you can say 'oh let me think about it' and 'why don't we talk to this person, get back and think it out,' and then six months out you're like 'no I need it, this is the decision, good or bad,' but at least you

have somebody and you move forward and everyone knows what the decision is. Difficult to do that when you have a lot of time. (I-2)

In addition, this suggests that there may be further issues with the governance model traditionally employed by OCs. Where many OCs favour cross-functional committees to ensure that all relevant parties are informed, it can also mean that parties that do not necessarily need to be involved, or do not have sufficient knowledge to participate, may initiate actions that can delay decisions. This issue is applicable both within the OC and between the OC and external organisations.

The decision-making processes used by the OC in planning the Games are also substantially different from those used during the Games, also called 'Games-time'. The Games-time decision-making structure is known as Command, Control and Communications (C3), which tracks problems and associated decisions that are taken throughout the Games, and monitors the implementation of the selected resolutions. As described at an Observer Programme:

[Decision-making] is a normal process which happens in every organisation, also in the early years of an organisation, but the difference in the early years of an Organising Committee to the later years or Games-time let's say is that at the beginning you've got lots of time... but when you come closer to Games-time, everything is going so fast and you have to put in place a structure which can really react very quickly and which is able to take decisions quickly, to implement, to assess the impact of this decision. (S-1)

At a certain point of the planning cycle, processes must therefore evolve from the traditional consultative governance structure that had characterised the OC to that point, to the more flexible, matrix structure that is required for the organisation to be agile and make decisions quickly at Games-time. This requires a significant shift at all levels of the organisation:

Our biggest thing was decision-making. So we had set up a structure where people would get in disagreements over who is responsible... to change from this structure where our Vice Presidents were making decisions, at Games-time we didn't want that. We wanted the functions to make those... and that is an organisational shift. (S-1)

Therefore, the interdependencies of the decision-making and governance structures within the OC must be clearly defined during the lead-up to the Games. This also has interesting implications for the role of knowledge during the Games. Recalling the situation at Glasgow in the early years of the OC, if decision-making authority is maintained only at the highest levels of the organisation in a rigid, hierarchical structure, this could lead to potential issues in the delivery of the Games, especially as Games-time approaches. As such, developing appropriate decision-making knowledge at all levels of the organisation that will be required to do so at Games-time is a logical progression of the requirements of the OC, since maintaining ignorance at these levels could have detrimental consequences later in the Games delivery.

5.2.4 Governance and decision-making processes in the OC

The findings around governance and decision-making through participant observation and other research methods suggest a few important conclusions. First, the lack of direction implicit in the growth of the governance structure of the OC suggests that informal growth is a significant component of the OC's development. In particular, the forums led by groups external to the OC may develop with limited definition and without an overarching goal. Thus, the broad governance structure clearly resembles Mintzberg's (1980) 'adhocracy' structure, in which power is decentralised and there is mutual adjustment between groups. Further, even in the short time since the Games had been won by the city, it was clear that there were

diverse perspectives about the need for the Governance Forums, both internally and externally; while some OC employees felt that the governance forums were an inefficient use of their time and required too much administration, others were firmly convinced about the value of the forums and were convinced that the Games would not be able to happen without their involvement. This tension led to various levels of engagement and participation with the Governance Forums, which directly affected how effectively they could make decisions. It also affected what information the forums had access to; ignorance can be initiated in these forums by non-participation as easily as knowledge can be.

A second observation is that the decision-making process within an OC is the result of complex negotiations between FAs and external parties. Decision-making in an OC is not a straightforward chain of events in which clear options are proposed, a decision is made, and the decision is carried out. Rather, in many cases the OC is not fully aware that a decision has been made, or what the impacts may be. The people affected by the decision are sometimes not consulted, and may only find out after the decision has been acted upon and can no longer be changed. Further, while the OC is typically governed as a hierarchical structure, the discussion regarding the difference between official roles and unofficial access to knowledge suggests that hierarchy may not be the most important factor in decision-making. Rather, the informal connections of those 'in-the-know' in certain FAs is much more critical than the relatively simple determination of who is in charge of a particular area. Equally, these then are the critical paths through which ignorance can be maintained within the OC. Thus, the discussion about whom in the OC has the required knowledge for decision-making suggests

that those who do not know, but might make decisions anyway because of official authority, are not necessarily aware of their ignorance.

These observations therefore suggest that there are significant differences between the observed structure, and the cross-functional and cross-organisational relationships that are required to plan the Games. This aligns with Krackhardt and Hanson's (1993: 104) assertion that "much of the real work in any company gets done through this informal organisation with its complex networks of relationships that cross functions and divisions." The governance and decision-making processes within an OC are therefore critically important in determining which information is shared within the OC and by the OC to external organisations. These highly complex and interdependent functions of the OC are overlaid on the traditional organisational structure, and play a significant role in how ignorance is formed and perpetuated in OCs. The next section looks at ignorance within the OC in detail.

5.3 Ignorance in the OC

Using the information in this chapter as a basis, we can now explore the ways in which ignorance is used organisationally inside the OC. For this purpose, I draw on the findings presented so far, in addition to offering views about how ignorance is functionally useful within the organisation, and how it may be detrimental to the organisation. Finally, I explore how ignorance in OCs is perpetuated between Games.

5.3.1 *Functional ignorance*

As described in Chapter 2, Littlewood (2009: 113) suggests that societies "engage in selective editing of the past, choosing and discarding particular events and knowledge to deal with current dilemmas." Within the

OC, this situation may be realised when parts of the organisation either unknowingly or purposefully do not share knowledge with other parts of the organisation, for their benefit or for a perceived benefit to the organisation.

As outlined above, one of the areas of tension in an OC can be between FAs and senior management. In this sense, there can be activities that the FAs engage in with limited knowledge of the senior management:

We plan to create not only negative risks, and it's a new [idea] in the Organising Committee, but also positive risks, opportunities, and we plan to manage these opportunities. It's our plan. Our management don't know about it. (I-5)

Thus, even ideas that may have merit must be concealed to a certain extent.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Morrison and Milliken (2000) and Milliken, Morrison and Hewlin (2003) have studied the concealment of objectives or ideas from senior management in their work on 'organisational silence'. While their study focuses on the negative aspects of silence, there is equal evidence that the omission of details may be more advantageous than their communication. For example, Van Dyne, Ang and Botero (2003) suggest that employee silence may be desirable in some situations, particularly where it is directed at promoting organisational cooperation or protecting organisational secrets.

Additionally, it may be useful to give FAs more flexibility in planning other activities before the final decisions are required. Therefore, it may be of use to maintain ignorance until the point at which disagreements will be resolved, and action can be taken. One example provided by an interviewee was in relation to determining the level of security that would be required for the Games; while one level of service had been agreed upon, he expected that at some future point in time, a decision would be made to increase the level of security, to meet enhanced counter-terrorism requirements. He

specified that the team could ‘see it coming’ because it was a common issue that had happened in another OC as well, however they chose not to address it until it became an issue (I-41). Thus, ignorance in this context was useful for the FA, so that they could avoid planning for it until they were absolutely required to do so. In this sense, new priorities closer to the Games were also likely to come with additional funding; therefore, the ignorance was functional.

Furthermore, there is often an incentive to keep information sharing to a restricted group if there is any chance of it being misinterpreted. Employees will therefore generally choose to promote ignorance instead of knowledge transfer, unless they can clearly communicate all required caveats, and know how the information will be used. OC staff are no exception:

We found that people would never report their challenges because it was writing it on paper and they didn’t know where the paper was going and so... [instead] we did one-on-one meetings with the middle management of the team, and had just a conversation, they did not have to fill out a report, and my team, I had a staff person create a dashboard, so she would take notes and then once a month, within a few days usually of the meeting we’d create a dashboard and say these are your top ten issues, and this is where you are in your planning... and that became much more successful because people were happy to talk about their challenges. They just don’t want to write them down.
(I-2)

In this example, withholding information was seen as the best option for FAs when they were unable to convey the context of the knowledge. As discussed in Chapter 4, Boschma (2005) suggests that communicating sensitive information in particular requires an underlying relationship, which was addressed by the modified reporting process used in this situation. This quote also emphasises the difference in sensitivities to different mediums of knowledge transfer; written documents are inherently more subject to suspicion in OCs than are oral communications, given the inability of their creator to control who accesses them (Müller and Stewart, 2011). Thus, the

possibility for misinterpretation lends itself to withholding information, and thereby engaging in functional ignorance.

In addition to employees selectively withholding information for their benefit, senior management must also decide how to define who 'needs to know' which information within the organisation. An organisation that shares indiscriminately is not efficient, and employees may try to involve themselves in decisions that aren't necessarily required:

I don't think you would ever talk to anyone who feels they know enough about everything that is going on, especially in our kind of organisation and you know, for the management team, they need to decipher what they think people need to know and what they don't need to know and there are different levels of information that should or should not be communicated, which is absolutely the way it should be. So yeah, I think that's an ongoing challenge and going to be quite difficult, but sharing information makes people feel empowered and knowledgeable and involved in a process and therefore they have a much more vested interest and take on more ownership and responsibility for what they are doing. (I-58)

Therefore, ignorance is employed by senior management to restrict knowledge to those who need it, and to prevent those who do not from unnecessary distraction. This is hardly a surprising finding; most organisations would undoubtedly have situations in which their managers choose not to share information with subordinate employees. In an OC, however, the sensitivity to media or public attention means that managers are likely to be even more careful when managing information. As such, ignorance for managers in OCs may be even more useful than it would be in other organisations.

5.3.2 *Detrimental ignorance*

While ignorance may be useful to those who employ it, either strategically or inadvertently, it can equally be detrimental in many situations.

One area of detrimental ignorance that is prevalent in OCs is in the complexity and variety of staffing arrangements highlighted earlier in this chapter. As previously stated, the right staff must be hired at the right time and within the budget of the OC to ensure that it continues to operate successfully. While most OCs are reasonably successful in this endeavour, there are always issues in determining the optimal combination of time and money for the staffing requirements of the OC. Some Games, however, find these challenges insurmountable, and end up with a very difficult situation in which ignorance is prevalent. Staff in one OC, for example, highlighted that organisational boundaries were used to limit responsibility in the OC, due to a general lack of experience:

In every Functional Area, it is staffed by people who have never worked in that area before so people do not have the skill set required to do the job... Every FA is the same. That is as simple as it gets. I think that the very, very senior guys in the department have an idea about the area or at least they have the experience to bluff. But it is staffed at PO [Project Officer] level and Director level even, with people who have never worked in that area. They have no guidance and no direction and responsibility to deliver so it is chaos. (I-17)

Thus, both ignorance and inexperience combined to prevent the OC from moving forward. The detriment of this to the OC is the inability of the organisation to recognise and address issues as they arise, and therefore leads to further complication of the issues that need to be addressed.

In this OC's case, these issues were apparently further compounded by staff not wanting to acknowledge the issues that they were facing, and by a culture in which the sharing of information was restricted.

Knowledge is power so it is hard to get information from people. I have definitely had instances where information has been withheld because it gives that person some leverage. The biggest difficulty apart from lack of expertise and experience is not wanting to take responsibility, again I think that is a cultural thing, and so if you don't have enough

decision making operational perspectives means that people aren't really empowered here and they don't feel empowered. They certainly don't act as though they are in power so every decision has to be approved by ten people. That has been a real challenge. (I-17)

Furthermore, the lack of experience meant that middle management was alleged to be largely ineffective, and the people involved in planning the Games were often unable to make decisions without escalating them to the highest levels of the OC:

Here, the culture seems to be 'don't tell anyone', or people don't notice until it is too late. For project management to work you really need to be very open. We have a problem, how do I solve the problem. Because my problem is your problem if I can't deliver to you, so we need to solve this... one of the biggest problems here was that there is no mechanism for trying to get things solved. There is no management group – we have a Chairman, we have a Secretary General, we have a Director General, we have a CEO, every now and then there will be meetings led by the Chairman, every now and then he wouldn't and then the Secretary General just takes over. There was no group that regularly sat down and dealt with issues and you could never just go in and say ok we need this and this and this. Not at any stage. Not even now. (I-16)

This lack of a centralised decision-making system, as discussed above, is extremely dangerous for an OC, without which it cannot identify and resolve programme-wide issues. In this case, ignorance was employed detrimentally to avoid responsibility and accountability in the OC, with significant consequences for the effective planning of the Games. When all of the employees operate opportunistically, the outcome for the OC as a whole must suffer.

Another useful insight into detrimental ignorance in OCs comes from Katz' (1979: 296) work on cover-ups in organisations, in which he asserts that, "complex organizations are based on expectations of ignorance which separate occupants of different ranks and specializations and separate insiders from outsiders." Within OCs, the governance of information sharing

and restriction between FAs, from the FAs and senior management, and from senior management to FAs is a constant balancing act. The 'need-to-know' philosophy is both required for the appropriate functioning of the organisation, and detrimental to the continued development of information and ideas between the different groups:

The sharing of information in an organisation is fundamental to make sure our Games is a success and I think sometimes something that people don't necessarily think they need to work at, and that it just happens and I think that is probably because the people or the management team in organisations are getting access to a lot of the information. So they don't realise that it needs to be worked at and almost forced to spread information and pass it on more widely and that becomes more difficult as the organisation grows into the machine that it becomes at Games-time, but decisions are made and changes are made so quickly that making sure you've got effective ways to communicate down the information becomes really, really important. (I-58)

Given the importance of information flow within the OC, interactions between OCs are at the heart of the effective functioning of the Games. Even in OCs that are largely successful, ignorance between FAs can be detrimental to the intended functioning of the OC. This is particularly difficult for FAs that act as service providers to other FAs in the OC; these FAs are often at the centre of integrating the others, which can prove a difficult task. As stated by one interviewee, whose FA was responsible for providing coordinating services to the rest of the organisation, other FAs 'don't necessarily play nicely together.' Because of this, they may push for what their FA wants as compared to what another FA may need, which leaves the integrating FAs in the middle of their disputes (I-40). Each of these disputes can lead to the detriment of the development of the OC's plans. However, ignorance that is systemic within the OC poses the greatest concern for the development and effective continuation of the Games.

5.3.3 *Perpetuation of ignorance in OCs*

Systemic ignorance within OCs can be both functional and detrimental, as in the instances of ignorance described above. However, the idea itself is somewhat more difficult to conceptualise than systemic ignorance between OCs as described in Chapter 4. How is it possible for OCs to repeatedly omit similar information about their own operations, when they operate as functionally independent units? Is it possible that something about the nature of the OC is itself inherently promoting both functional and detrimental ignorance? As outlined in the literature review, many organisations and societies have expectations of secrecy (Morrison and Milliken, 2000; Cohen, 2001; Zerubavel, 2006). Certainly, the examples described here, while illustrative of the particular organisation of the OC, could be applied to many other temporary and permanent organisations.

Organisational design is particularly challenging for OCs, which are constantly growing over their seven-year lifecycle, with substantial changes happening frequently. However, because the organisation lacks a future, there is little time or desire to rectify any issues that develop within it. Instead, the organisation's leadership may choose to avoid issues in the design rather than address them, in order to avoid disruption of the planning process. However, this can have negative consequences for the organisation, for example, from the point of view of some senior employees, who may feel sidelined by changes that are made in the evolution of the organisation. One interviewee highlighted a situation in which a Director of another department established an FA within his area that essentially duplicated the tasks of her FA. From her perspective, the reason for this was to increase the importance of the Director's department within the OC, and because he had a stronger personality than the Director of her department, he was permitted to do so.

This had the effect of duplicating tasks, making the OC less effective as a whole (I-76). Thus, as in this example, the organisation may ignore duplication of functions at late stages of the OC, thereby permitting stronger personalities to develop their preferred organisational structure, which usually gives them additional power in the organisation. Since all OCs experience the same short timeframe, these kinds of behaviours appear to be more likely in this context.

Functional ignorance within OCs may equally be the result of organisational factors rather than a specific action taken on the part of OCs to promote it. As discussed above, there are advantages to not acknowledging information to senior management, or to other FAs, for as long as possible. Returning to the discussion of Nietzsche (1882 [2001]) in Chapter 2, who asserts that necessary ignorance is a common part of everyday life, it may be that OCs are not unique in this circumstance, but are rather aware of the benefits of ‘turning a blind eye’ to the same degree that all of us are in our interactions. As such, the perpetuation of this behaviour is not unusual, but rather, completely usual: the only unusual aspect of it is that we are not more aware of it happening (Proctor, 2008). This research therefore seeks to point out that perpetuation of ignorance is a useful, necessary activity in organisations, to be acknowledged by managers rather than ignored. This is not to say that the ignorance itself can necessarily be identified; however, being open to its existence provides different alternatives for managing. In one example, an employee highlighted that ignorance is perpetuated due to the inexperience of many new OC staff, explaining that it is a ‘natural tendency’ for people to want to over-scope in their first OC experience, as a safety net to hedge against the unknown. By acknowledging this tendency

both in others' and in her own behaviour, this employee suggested that it was then possible to manage the ignorance and 'push back': showing people why it was a bad idea to hire too many people because this can also cause people to leave when they have nothing to do, and thus create the opposite problem (I-47). This then shows how understanding the role of ignorance can lead to better management of its outcomes, and the achievement of functional ignorance can be reinforced in positive ways, while limiting the damage that can be caused by detrimental ignorance.

Finally, it is evident that the balance of functional and detrimental ignorance is difficult to achieve in an OC, or probably in any temporary organisation. The perpetuation of both forms of ignorance within OCs is quite probably inevitable. Thus, rather than focussing solely on knowledge within organisations, ignorance deserves to be given equal attention. By doing so, organisations can have a better chance at understanding functional ignorance, and mitigating detrimental ignorance, rather than ignoring both and hoping that it works out for the best.

5.4 Conclusions on Ignorance in the OC

This chapter presented findings from within OCs, opening the 'black box' of organisation. The formal structure of the OC aligns closely to Mintzberg's (1980) concept of the adhocracy, and is made up of different FAs with specialised knowledge. These FAs evolve over time, starting out as primarily functional, before evolving in the last year to a geographic, venue-based structures. The FAs are highly interdependent, relying on each other for the delivery of critical information and resources; thus, they need to work together closely. However, their different rates of development can cause issues that may impede this cooperation. The structure of senior

management also needs to align to the challenges of running an evolving and changing organisation that can be like hanging on to a 'slippery seal,' with evolution that is often directed by personality rather than formal intent.

These challenges in structure are heightened by the complex requirements of rapidly staffing the OC with highly specialised staff, and with a variety of staff who have a combination of local expertise and Games experience. However, OCs often have difficulty in recruiting the numbers and variety of qualified people within budget and at the right time, which subsequently creates significant challenges in how they are going to be able to achieve their goals. Understanding the formal organisation of the OC is necessary to be able to understand how ignorance is useful, and how it is detrimental to the organisation, and how it is perpetuated between OCs.

The formal structure and staffing of the OC are supported by internal arrangements, which assist the organisation in functioning effectively. Those examined in detail in this chapter are governance and decision-making processes. These are presented in light of an internship that was conducted with the Glasgow OC, which highlighted the considerations of how to develop a suitable governance structure and accompanying decision-making processes, as well as by drawing on OC employees' perspectives on governance and decision-making. One of the interesting findings from this study was that the governance processes, while critical to the functioning of both the internal OC and the OC's government partners, were developed in an iterative manner. This led to decision-making that was highly contextualised, with a misalignment between the authority of the person making the decisions, and the extent of the knowledge that they had to make them.

This examination of the internal structure of OCs in this chapter has demonstrated many of the benefits of functional ignorance in this environment. The competing needs of FAs and the siloed structure of the organisation create a situation in which ignorance between them is often perceived as the best course of action. Similarly, employees keep information from their managers, and managers restrict information from their employees to achieve their goals of developing their part of the Games, or preventing information leakage respectively. In these ways, there are good reasons for each of these parties to refrain from sharing information. Nevertheless, this behaviour can also lead to detrimental consequences for the OC as a whole. Organisational boundaries may be used to limit responsibility within the OC, and between OC employees and external employees, to the overall disadvantage of the organisation. What is more problematic, however, is when this detrimental ignorance is perpetuated from one OC to the next, because of the similarity of their challenges. While the same situation can also lead to the perpetuation of functional ignorance, this balance may be difficult for OCs to achieve.

To explore this further, the next chapter will specifically consider the substance of budgetary challenges in the OC.

Chapter 6: Public Funds and Private Interests

6.1 Ignorance in Evaluating the Costs of the Games

While the last two chapters have discussed the role of ignorance in relationships between Games organisations and within the Organising Committee (OC), this chapter shifts the focus to budgets, an area that is of particular interest to the Games organisers. The Games are conducted with intense public scrutiny over their cost, and understandably so; since a significant portion of the funding comes from the public sector, there are often questions raised as to whether the expenditure is worthwhile and whether it represents a wise investment of public funds as compared to other needs. Further, cost is one element of the 'iron triangle' of project management, the other two being time and scope (Gaddis, 1959; Atkinson, 1999), which are discussed in the next chapter. Many other measures of project management success have been proposed in the literature, including benefits, value, and quality, which could usefully be discussed here as well. However, for the purpose of furthering the discussion of ignorance, interviewees have confirmed that these three attributes of project management are particularly salient in the context of the Games.

This chapter therefore starts with an overview of the different sources of costs and funding as a background for understanding the comparisons of costs in the Games, including how budgets are determined in the bid. The next section explores the role of budgets in OCs, and how this role can influence ignorance between Functional Areas (FAs). Finally, the chapter examines budget-driven ignorance in the Games, and how this ignorance can be functional and detrimental, as well as how it may be perpetuated between Games.

6.1.1 Theory of budgeting and costing

To begin a discussion on budgeting, it is useful to have a history and description of budgeting. While the concept of budgeting is familiar to most laypeople today, Miller and O'Leary (1994) find that the concept of budgeting was largely absent from the discussion of accounting until 1930. Its introduction changed the way that costs were determined, from an outcome focus, to a comparison of the variance of costs against projections. As Wildavsky (1964[1979]) usefully describes:

In the most literal sense a budget is a document, containing words and figures, which proposes expenditures for certain items and purposes... Presumably, those who make a budget intend that there will be a direct connection between what is written in it and future events. Hence we might conceive of a budget as intended behavior, as a prediction... The budget thus becomes a link between financial resources and human behavior to accomplish policy objectives. Only through observation, however, is it possible to determine the degree to which the predictions postulated in the budget document turn out to be correct. (Wildavsky, 1964[1979]: 1)

This description provides several useful considerations for budgeting in the Games. First, the idea that budgets can both contain expenditures for items, such as salaries and equipment, and be purpose-driven, such as for the goal of developing sustainable food guidelines, is useful in that it calls attention to the estimation factor that is a critical component of budgeting in the Games. As demonstrated later in this chapter, budgets can be established with only vague ideas and intentions, but can take on strict dimensions after they are approved. Thus, Wildavsky's definition is also useful in that it emphasises the role of the budget as a prediction, and as a driver for human behaviour, as well as the tenuous link that is often present between predictions and final results, or expended costs.

Hofstede (1968) also provides useful insight into the nature of budgeting, and begins his discussion on the 'game of budget control' by specifying two types of budgets: budgets for planning purposes, which are objects of control, and budgets for forecasting purposes, which are a way of supplying information. He states that:

Although different writers and practitioners put different stresses, there is common agreement that budgets are a management tool to facilitate the management task of leading the business towards its goals. (Hofstede, 1968: 22)

Thus, in Hofstede's view, budgets are tools for managers to direct activity.

Hopwood (1978) also suggests that Hofstede's was the first attempt to recognise the importance of organisational context in budgeting, moving beyond the traditional focus on budgeting driven by individuals. The understanding that accounting, and budgeting, are social processes conducted within the environment of an organisation was considered a critical advancement for the field, enabling it to "attend to the complex interplay between ways of calculating and ways of managing social and organizational life," (Hopwood and Miller, 1994: 1).

In this tradition, it is also possible to extend the concept of accounting as a social practice to conceive of budgets as tools for other purposes, or 'boundary objects' (Star and Griesemer, 1989), which can delineate the role of managers from that of their subordinates. In her study of behaviour at a semiconductor equipment manufacturing firm, Bechky (2003) describes how different documents and tools at the firm held epistemic status, conveying knowledge from one professional jurisdiction to another. Bechky found that in particular, drawings and machines were used to bridge professional specialisations that would otherwise have had limited interaction. In the Games, budgets can be conceptualised using these concepts as a tool for

managers to communicate their intentions to highly specialised staff. Where the senior Games staff may have less knowledge about the particulars of delivery, they are nevertheless able to communicate the size and scope of the effort desired in each area through budget constraints. This concept is explored later in this chapter.

Another body of literature has specifically examined the role of ignorance in budgeting. Brüggem and Luft (2011: 399), for example, conducted a simulation to assess the value of misrepresenting budget forecasts within a company. They found that individuals attempting to receive funding “will weigh the disutility of misrepresentation against the expected utility of receiving project funding.” This suggests that the value of strategic ignorance in budgeting may be greater than the value of accuracy, thus encouraging such behaviour. Although Brüggem and Luft (2011) conducted their research in the experimental environment of a simulation with 80 business school students, other researchers have found similar results in natural settings. For example, Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius and Rothengatter (2003) concluded in their research on megaprojects that:

...project promoters often avoid and violate established practices of good governance, transparency and participation in political and administrative decision making, either out of ignorance or because they see such practices as counterproductive to getting projects started.” (Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius and Rothengatter, 2003: 5)

As such, ignorance in megaprojects may be encouraged by the desire to participate in such large and exciting endeavours. The Games are certainly an environment that creates visions of grandeur for some people; many politicians want their names to be associated with large projects, or with the generation of jobs and spending that are associated with such grand plans. Others involved in planning megaprojects may suffer from optimism bias

(Flyvbjerg, 2008), believing that they can achieve greater benefits from their megaprojects than other similar projects have done. Kahneman and Lovallo (1993: 17) first suggested that “Overly optimistic forecasts result from the adoption of an inside view of the problem, which anchors predictions on plans and scenarios,” or in other words, believing that plans will come true, no matter what they say. In applying these concepts to budgeting in the Games, we can therefore expect that unrealistic budgets may be prepared particularly in situations where a host city is especially convinced that concealing some costs will be beneficial to winning the project.

With this basis in theory, we turn to the empirical findings to understand what happens with budgets, costs and funding in the Games. For clarity, budgets are the documents used in Games planning; costs are the substantive charges for items used in the Games delivery; and funding is the source of revenues that pay for the cost of the Games.

6.1.2 Funding in the Games

To understand the impacts of budgets in the Games environment, this chapter first explores the categories of Games costs, and how these costs are funded. There are three main categories of costs for the Games, as defined by the International Olympic Committee (IOC): (1) OC costs, which typically cover items directly related to staging the Games, such as sports equipment, signage and catering; (2) non-OC direct costs, which are incurred by the host country specifically for the Games, such as stadia and other sports venues like rugby fields; and, (3) non-OC indirect costs, which are typically investments that were already planned by the host country government but that have been accelerated for Games purposes, for example airport and road upgrades (IOC, 2004). In addition to these three categories

of costs, there are also direct and indirect costs incurred by non-governmental institutions in most countries, for example hotel refurbishments or infrastructure installed by local businesses. However, these data are not usually publicly available, and therefore are not generally included in the final costs, particularly since they are incurred by private companies. For comparison purposes, Table 6.1 compares the amounts budgeted in each of these areas in the bids for each type of Games:

Table 6.1: Comparison of estimated OC, non-OC direct and non-OC indirect costs at bid

Games	OC budgeted costs at bid	Non-OC direct budgeted costs	Non-OC indirect budgeted costs
London 2012 summer Olympics ¹	US\$2.5 billion	US\$4.3 billion	US\$11.5 billion
Sochi 2014 winter Olympics ²	US\$1.5 billion	US\$3.7 billion	US\$5.5 billion
Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games ³	US\$141.0 million	US\$266.7 million	

¹London Bid Committee, 2005a: 103-104; all costs in 2004 USD

²Sochi Bid Committee, 2007: 101-102; all costs in 2007 USD

³Indian Olympic Association, 2003: 174-176; all costs in 2003 USD

Therefore, while the magnitude of the costs is different for each type of event, they all represent significant investments of funds.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the Bid Committee, which is the organisation that formally represents the city applying to the IOC or CGF to host the Games, develops the budget in the bid. The Bid Committee can be formed by any group of citizens, by the National Olympic Committee (e.g. the United States Olympic Committee, USOC) or Commonwealth Games Association, or by the government, and all have been done depending on the impetus driving the desire for the city to host the bid. In principle, no matter who forms the Bid Committee, it then needs to consult with the host

governments to ensure support for the bid. However, this is a more recent development, and bids like the ones for the Montreal 1976 and Los Angeles 1984 Olympic Games did not have federal government support when they were submitted.

The bidding process has evolved over time, with respect to both costs and income. The required financial information has evolved from the simple 1960 Games question of “How will the Games be financed? How much money will be required and who will provide it?” (IOC, 1955: 49) to the complex 2012 Games Candidate City Questionnaire which contained 12 questions and sub-questions, and templates for details of projected revenues and expenditure, capital investment, and cash flows, with particular specifications of 27 categories of expenditure (IOC, 2004). However, these categories are still relatively general; Games workforce, for example, is one single category. Therefore, even this added level of detail does not ensure a complete understanding of the costs and therefore does not address the issue of ignorance on the part of Bid Committees.

It is also very difficult to estimate the costs of some of the requirements for the Games. First, the gap in time between the development of the bid and the delivery of the Games creates significant difficulties in estimating the budget: “when you’re budgeting something during the bid for something that’s going to happen 8 years down the road it’s hard to get real good numbers,” (I-30). Moreover, the people on the Bid Committee often have only a general idea of what needs to be done in each specialised FA to actually deliver the Games. In one example, an OC employee who was working at another sports-related agency during the bid described a phone call he received asking for a cost estimate for a particular Games

requirement. At the time, he asked a few questions about the specifications, and gave an approximate estimate over the phone for the average cost of one unit provided under normal market circumstances. However, he has subsequently found that the Games are not 'normal market conditions' and the desired service simply cannot be purchased in the required quantity from any existing company. Therefore, while the initial estimate was technically correct, it omitted other related costs of staffing a much larger organisation to deliver the service, with all of the related costs (I-43).

In contrast to the budgets that host cities propose for the Games, which are generally publicly available in the bidding documents, determining the costs of the Games and the way these are funded is a more complex undertaking. The funding required for the Games is a combination of public and private sector financing, and the model of funding for the Games has varied substantially over time, from Games that are almost exclusively government projects, such as Montreal 1976, to Games that are almost entirely privately funded, such as Los Angeles 1984 (Preuss, 2004). Private sources of income for OCs include broadcasting rights, corporate sponsorship, licensing, and ticket sales, which are added to government funding and special financing means such as coins, stamps, and lotteries, as well as non-financial revenues such as goods-in-kind from corporations and voluntary work from residents (Preuss, 2004). Of these sources of revenue, broadcasting rights have evolved the most since 1960 and are now the primary source of revenue for OCs, with sponsorship as the second most significant source for most Games (Preuss, 2004). As the broadcasting and sponsorship revenues are often part of a multi-Games package negotiated and paid through the IOC to the OCs, they are one of the main ways that the

IOC has to control the OCs' behaviour. While these revenues are used to offset the OC's cost of staging the Games, other costs are born directly by the host city and country with little tangible revenue to offset them. The IOC and Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) typically require bidding cities to provide guarantees from the local, regional and national governments to cover any OC cost overruns, in addition to providing any facilities and infrastructure that they have outlined in the bid (Preuss, 2004). The reluctance for the Games to release accounting of true costs can therefore be attributed to the tension between public and private sources of funding that forms the revenue base for most OCs, as discussed in the next section.

6.1.3 *'Guess'-timating the cost of the Games*

A further source of contention in determining Games costs is in identifying where the costs are recorded. As Whitson and Horne (2006: 87) suggest, "the calculation of sports mega-event profits and losses is seldom transparent, and always complicated by what 'other costs'... are included in the accounting." This is highly related to which organisation is paying for the costs, and it is not unusual for costs that were originally going to be paid by one organisation to be moved to the budget of another organisation or department, or to private companies (I-96). Thus, when compiling a final account of the return on investment, many researchers have found that it is nearly impossible to determine the exact nature of the costs, who paid for them, and what surplus there may be as a result of the outcomes of the Games.

Recent research by Flyvbjerg and Stewart (2012) found that every Games since 1960 has been over budget, with an average cost overrun of 179 per cent after the data are adjusted for inflation. Whether this is because

of strategic or inadvertent ignorance is debatable; what is not, is that the extent of cost overruns represents a significant risk to host cities that are planning to invest in hosting a Games. To address the issue of cost overruns, one must therefore consider the underlying assumptions of what exactly the budgets set out in the bid are intended to do.

The Candidate City Questionnaire suggests that the purpose of bid budgets is to provide an estimate for the IOC to evaluate the “reasonableness of the financial plan/budget developed to support the operations of the Olympic Games” (IOC, 2004: 93). This purpose can be compared to bids in other large projects, in which the organisation selecting the bid will ultimately incur the costs of their selection. In the case of the Games, the governing body is selecting a bid that the bidding organisation will have to pay for, thus there is no discernible incentive for them to choose the most achievable budget; rather, their purpose is only to verify that the financial plan is reasonable to accomplish the scope of the project as specified in the bid. Moreover, discussions with those involved in the bidding process suggest that developing a budget to meet the IOC’s requirement is done without a full understanding of the implications on the part of the bidding organisation:

If you are a bidding city you really bid blind. You’ve got manuals and that sort of stuff but you don’t really know what are the pitfalls that you are going to hit at different stages and what sorts of things you might have to budget for and resource or what are your challenges going to be along the journey. You just sort of put in the bid, win the bid and go ‘oh shit, what do I do now!’ (I-61)

While some information is available with respect to budgets at the bid stage, the knowledge required both of the Games and of the local environment is extremely difficult to come by. As such, the bid in many ways exemplifies the three forms of ignorance identified by Rumsfeld (2002), with known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns, to which we should also add

Rayner's (2012) unknown knowns, or those things that cannot be acknowledged by the bid. In this state of ignorance, it may be tempting to argue that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the bid to produce an accurate picture of the expectation of what the Games will cost.

However, this estimate is the basis by which the success of the Games is judged, and which commonly forms the basis for further investigations into cost overruns. Therefore, there is an inconsistency in the production of the bid data, which appears to be intentionally erroneous on the part of some people, unknowingly incorrect in the minds of others, and seemingly an unknown known for many others. Since bid budgets are universally underestimated (Flyvbjerg and Stewart, 2012), some combination of these types of ignorance must be responsible for this situation. For example, necessary forgetting is particularly important in cultures in which accurate histories can create problems for current social situations, like the Nuer tribe's cattle rights (Douglas, 1986; Evans-Pritchard, 1940), as described in Chapter 2. In the Games, necessary forgetting, or functional ignorance as I have termed it, may be a function of the culture of the Games. Thus, the useful ignorance of bidding cities with regards to the consistent overrun of budgets by OCs may represent historical information that has been neglected in favour of current socially preferred logic that supports their perspective.

It is also conceivable that Bid Committees are not focused on, or even concerned about, determining the actual probable cost of the Games; indeed, there is little incentive for them to do so. Since many of the Bid Committee employees will not be delivering the Games themselves, as discussed in Chapter 5, their sole focus is to win the Games. One interviewee explained

that since the bid is a competition, the Bid Committee does what is necessary to secure a favourable outcome rather than what is necessarily best for the host city, and candidly observed that in his estimation, ‘there hasn’t been a Games in history where the bid budget has been the cost of the Games’ (I-91). At another presentation during an Observer Programme, one of the presenters remarked to an audience of future Games organisers, “there are lies, damn lies, and bid books,” (S-17). These comments thereby suggest that the information contained in bid books is widely known to be at least somewhat fictitious. Therefore, the bid developed for the Games represents the ‘winning cost’ rather than a carefully considered projected budget.

Since the host city and country governments are required by the IOC to ‘guarantee’ that they will cover any cost overruns incurred by the OC, it could be assumed that the government would have a greater interest in determining the probable cost of the Games. However, the government rarely has enough information to decide whether the Games are adequately budgeted; the budgets for the most recent Games of the same edition (summer or winter) are not released until the year after the bid is awarded, in many cases. The next section discusses the Games that have experienced the greatest cost overruns and the investigations that governments have conducted into the costs of the Games.

6.1.4 A game cities don’t want to win

The cost overruns experienced by Games have not gone unnoticed by governments, particularly in those countries that have hosted Games in which extreme cost overruns have occurred. In many countries, investigations into the costs of the Games are executed either during the planning for the Games, or in the years following the Games.

The Montreal 1976 Games have most exemplified the potential for cost overruns in the Olympics. There are a number of factors to which this situation has been attributed, starting with the fact that the bid was originally submitted without a guarantee of federal funding. This was due to a number of political factors present in Canada at the time, which led the federal government to adamantly state that it would not fund any cost overruns. However, this was not anticipated to be an issue, since Jean Drapeau, Montreal's optimistic mayor at the time of the bid, stated when Montreal won the bid in May 1970 that he "expected it would only cost [CAD] 120 million," (CBC Archives, 1973); presumably this was an amount that could be accommodated within the city budget. Mayor Drapeau also famously stated that, "the Montreal Olympics can no more have a deficit than a man can have a baby," (CBC News, 2006). Despite this confidence, the costs of the Games escalated wildly over the course of planning, and the city and province were left to cover the final overrun of the Games (Chalkley and Essex, 1999). This overrun caused major problems for the IOC and for the future of the Olympic Games, as Booth (2011) describes:

Montreal concluded the 1976 games with an estimated debt of over C\$1 billion and, not surprisingly, other cities balked at hosting. Lord Killanin, the then IOC president, identified the problem when he said that Montreal's financial problems 'undoubtedly frightened potential hosts, who believed that it was no longer possible to stage the Games at a reasonable cost'. (Booth, 2011: 371)

Accordingly, there were few cities that would consider hosting the Games following Montreal's experience, and Los Angeles, as the only bidder, was selected for 1984 despite the fact that the federal government did not support its bid (Toohey and Veal, 2000). Nevertheless, Los Angeles managed to complete the Games with an entirely self-financed model, drawing largely on existing infrastructure, and thereby reinvigorated interest in hosting the

Olympic Games. Interest in hosting the Games since Los Angeles has been so intense that the IOC has since had to introduce a second screening process to identify 'Bid Cities' from a larger group of 'Candidate Cities', given the extraordinary interest that each round of bidding generates (McIntosh, 2000).

Following the Montreal Olympics, the provincial government of Quebec set up an independent commission in 1977, the year after the Games, to conduct an extensive investigation into the overruns. The commission's four-volume report carefully tracks the escalation of costs from CAD120 million in the bid through each updated budget to the ultimate costs of CAD1.65 billion, including follow-up costs to complete construction and convert venues from their Games-time functions (Canadian Olympic Association, 1980). The commission found that the cost overruns were the result of significant issues in administrative irresponsibility, including abandonment of the concept of a 'modest Games', the absence of a global budget from the start of planning, the absence of a clear direction in the project, and the use of unnecessarily luxurious and extravagant items (Canadian Olympic Association, 1980: 32-35). The report names several organisations as complicit in creating these issues, including the City of Montreal, the OC, the architect, the unions, the contractors and suppliers, the Canadian Olympic Association and the International Sports Federations, and makes recommendations for how the conditions that created the opportunity for cost overruns can be rectified in the future by the provincial and federal governments of Canada. It is interesting to note that although Canada has successfully hosted two winter Olympics and two Commonwealth Games since 1976, it has not yet hosted another Summer Olympics, though Toronto

was a bidding city for the 1996 and 2008 Games. In the IOC's Evaluation Report for the 2008 Games, the Toronto bid's assessors commented that:

Overall, the Commission was uneasy about the manner in which the budget was produced and presented, and its structure. Potential pressures exist on both revenues and expenditure but the budget is nevertheless achievable. (IOC, 2001: 47)

This suggests that perhaps the lessons have not been learned as completely as they could have been. While we can only speculate about intent, the detriment of allowing a bid to proceed without adequate consideration of past experiences is certain.

Investigations have also been conducted into various aspects of the planning in several other host cities. For example, Sydney conducted an examination of the bidding process for the 2000 Summer Olympics following the IOC bribery scandal (Sheridan, 1999), in which more than 20 members of the IOC were accused of accepting bribes. Similarly, the increase in London's budget in 2007 was the subject of an investigation by the House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, which sought to understand the reasons for the substantial increase in the expected cost of government investment in the Games, which increased from GBP2.4 billion when the bid was awarded to the city in 2005, to GBP9.3 billion in 2007 (UK House of Commons, 2006-2007). In Delhi, the Auditor General also engaged in a significant investigation following the 2010 Commonwealth Games, to investigate the reasons for the budget overruns that they experienced, finding that the Games cost almost 16 times the projected cost at the time of the bid (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2011). It is therefore possible that Delhi will be to the Commonwealth Games what Montreal was to the Olympics. The Commonwealth Games had only two bidders for the 2018 Games; therefore, Glasgow's success in 2014 may be a determining factor in

the future of the Commonwealth Games, as Los Angeles was for the Olympic Games. These investigations collectively show that the reasons for cost overruns are of interest to the general public of host cities and nations, and are not overlooked after the Games. As such, there is an established record of cost overruns that is available to future OCs; what is still not clear is why these continuing investigations 'after the fact' do little to influence the future course of events. Hopefully, they have encouraged the countries under investigation and others to carefully consider the implications of putting bids forward.

The burgeoning costs of the Games have also been of increasing interest to the governing bodies. In 2003, the IOC commissioned a study on Games costs, which was led by Richard Pound, an IOC member with a reputation for honesty gained through his work on anti-doping. Pound found that "the Games have reached a critical size, which may put their future at serious risk if the size continues to increase," (Pound, 2003: 10). The result of the study was a series of wide-reaching recommendations regarding how the Games should be planned, managed and executed, with estimates of the potential reduction in costs that could be achieved through implementation of the recommendations. However, the total cost savings estimate is not included in the publicly available version of the report.

From a historical perspective, there is also considerable information available with respect to how the Games have evolved from the point of view of the OCs. The Official Reports of the Olympic Games since 1960 reveal in some cases startlingly honest accounts of the challenges faced by OCs:

The formulation by the Committee of an estimate of expenses was the object of long and detailed examination. It was however recognised that the Committee could not draw up an estimate of expenses in the technical sense of

the expression. In fact, even when proceeding with the utmost caution, a serious estimate of expenses could not be prepared on a programme of events still not finalised and on an organising plan still in the course of study. (Rome OC, 1960: 30-31)

Why the OC did not use the knowledge of the previous Games' costs is open to debate; perhaps they felt that the previous Games in Melbourne in 1956 would not adequately reflect their costs, or they may simply not have had access to these costs for comparison. Prior to the introduction of a formal knowledge management system between OCs, the Official Reports represented the most common source of written knowledge transfer between Games, and generally provided a reasonably straightforward account of potential areas of concern for the Games. This pattern has continued throughout subsequent Games, with those Games that came in even close to budget still highlighting concerns about the overall cost of the Games:

One cannot talk about a conception and not mention the cost factor. Indeed in modern industrial societies to a great extent it has become the general practice to develop good and some not so good ideas and let the public raise the necessary funds to execute them. This practice may be acceptable if there is an indubitable social need standing behind the planning. Whether the staging of the Olympic Games was such a need will surely raise doubts. Therefore, no conception for the Olympic Games should be formulated without consideration of ways and means of raising as great a portion of the money as possible by the OC. The first, a rough superficial estimate of the financial needs came into a life of its own in the same way that famous authors admit that the characters they have invented develop their personalities during the writing process. It is very much the same way with ideas. They continue to develop quite by themselves, especially when great personalities and artists have been enlisted to plan along, such as happened in Munich. The Olympic Games in Munich cost 1,972 million DM [Deutschmarks]. Such figures are frightening, but are as confusing as the still greater sums officially expended for the Games in other cities since the greater part of this money had been used to completely renovate these cities. (Munich OC, 1972: 29)

The collective evidence from these various documents suggests that there is substantial historical information available to OCs on the nature of cost overruns in prior Games, and in some cases on the precise extent of the overruns. However, it may be that it is difficult to interpret and collate the disparate data that are available, or as highlighted by one participant, to apply any lessons learned to the current OC's situation.

6.2 The Role of Budgets within OCs

This section discusses how cost overruns develop within the OCs, by focussing on how budgets are perceived, managed, and changed over the course of planning. In particular, it explores the concept of budgets as jurisdictional tools, the value of concealing budgets, and why budgets constitute uncomfortable knowledge.

6.2.1 *Budgets as jurisdictional tools*

As discussed in Chapter 5, the internal organisation of OCs is based around FAs, which have specialist knowledge in the particular area that they are working to deliver. Budgets in OCs are also traditionally organised by FAs, although some OCs have experimented in aligning budgets by other dimensions, for example by projects. The original FA budgets are derived, as described above, from the allocations determined in the bid. Therefore, the starting point for any FA is to validate the assumptions made in the bid, and to determine any gaps or overestimates in the original budget that was developed. However, this does not happen consistently across all FAs, because each FA starts at a different time in the development of the OC, and therefore the FA specialists are often not hired until long after the bid budget has been prepared and approved. Many interviewees commented that this can lead to gross underestimations of the costs for the FA to deliver their

portion of the Games, particularly in the areas that require specialist knowledge to understand the intricacies of how it works (I-53). This returns to an issue highlighted in Chapter 5, where the specific knowledge of individuals in certain areas is required to be able to validate the assumptions that are made by other parts of the OC in the development of plans for the Games. As such, some FAs that start later in the OC's development are faced with a budget that is unrealistic for the scope that has already been determined.

Depending on the approach of the OC to adjusting budgets, it can then be more or less difficult to change the budget; for example, some OCs regularly adjust funds between different related FAs, while others have more strict processes for transferring budgets. Similarly, the timing of changes can affect the OC's willingness to consider the change. One interviewee, who had only recently joined the OC, mentioned that staff in his FA had insisted for four years that their workforce budget needed to be twice what had been allocated. He felt that one of his first priorities was then to clarify the requirement for an increased workforce budget, which from his perspective had been underestimated from the beginning and simply needed to be returned to its rightful level. However, he was repeatedly asked to 'justify' his position for increasing the budget; a position that he thought was fundamentally flawed (I-69). In this interview, his frustration was evident, and it is clear that other specialists may experience similar frustrations when arguing for the budget required for them to achieve the scope that they have been set. When FAs are under-resourced, the high level of interconnectedness between the FAs means that there are knock-on effects within the OC, in which FAs are not able to adequately support each other in their preparations. Due to the conflict that is engendered by the resource

allocation process within the OC, a situation arises in which FAs struggle for budget and requirements specifications against other FAs. Since the different FAs have different objectives within the broader goal of 'delivering the Games', conflict between the different roles and requirements of the FAs emerges. One interviewee explained that while he had 'fought very hard' for both the workforce and operational budgets for his FA, the dependency that his FA had on other FAs who had been less successful in fighting for resources and so were 'budget locked' and 'maxed out,' meant that his FA could not make progress in some areas because these other FAs could not support their requirements (I-79). Given the high degree of interdependency between many of the FAs, it is not surprising that the conflict between FAs is related to both delivery of specifications and to costs. Drawing this back to Brügggen and Luft's (2011) findings, we can therefore expect that in an environment of competition for funding between FAs, ignorance of costs is functional, since the value of being ignorant and inaccurate is greater than the value of being accurate but not receiving funding.

There is an additional conflict within OCs with respect to delivery of venue-based requirements within budget. Due to the functional orientation of the OC that is maintained until the last 12-18 months of planning, the budgets are generally attributed to FAs. One major challenge mentioned by all OCs is that the budgets usually do not change when the organisation shifts to a venue-based orientation. The Venue General Managers (VGM), who have the overall responsibility for delivery at the venue, and in some cases managing an employee and volunteer staff of more than a thousand people, do not have accountability for the budgets of their site. Rather, the budgets for each of the individual functions, such as catering and technology, continue

to be managed by the FA Managers. This naturally generates conflict, as each VGM must negotiate with their FA representatives to make changes that they determine are necessary due to the financial implications on the FA budgets. As described in one interview, this is a 'known issue' in OCs, however a resolution has not yet been found. From this interviewee's perspective, while in most organisations senior staff would have budgetary control and authority to state that something has to be done, it is much more difficult for VGMs to do so because they do not have accountability for the budget of their venue, and have to go through fairly strict change control processes to request modifications (I-50). As another interviewee suggested, the lack of authority for VGMs is the result of the OC's inability to establish the right level of trust in the organisation's governance structure, as discussed in Chapter 4:

...to trust the Venue GM that they have the right information to make the right decision. They're not going to go out and spend money all over the place like a crazy person because they think that's the right thing to do. They are only going to do what is right for their team, and so I think having the trust in the Venue GM that they're going to make the right decision, they are going to be fiscally responsible, they are going to take into account all the impacts of that decision and they're going to make the right decision. (I-4)

This conflict is virtually inevitable when budget accountability is not allocated to the people responsible for the ultimate delivery of the product or service. As Hofstede (1968) suggests, budgets in this sense are a tool of management control and if management cannot control them then they are hampered in their ability to execute control over the employees reporting to them. This structure encourages employees to maintain allegiance to their FA Manager rather than to their Venue Manager, and FA Managers may then choose to functionally ignore requests from Venue Managers that are detrimental for their budgets. The presence of this challenge in all OCs

suggests that this is an area in which the perpetuation of ignorance occurs, due to the similar fiscal set-up of most OCs.

6.2.2 *The value of concealing budgets*

In addition to FA discord, budget conflicts can create tension between the professionals in the FAs and the senior management and support staff of the OC, due to accountability for achieving the budget. Senior management in this context refers to the level of managers above the FAs; in the London OC, for example, 'Heads' were in charge of managing individual FAs, and Directors managed several FA Heads. Thus, Directors are the 'strategic apex' of the organisation, to use Mintzberg's (1980) term introduced in Chapter 5, and operate across multiple areas of the OC, making decisions at a strategic level that are then communicated to FAs. Many staff expressed a feeling of frustration with iterative, inaccurate estimates of scope developed by the senior management of the OC. One interviewee said that he could not understand how his OC could have underestimated one critical requirement so drastically in the three years before the Games, such that four times the amount of the item was ultimately required to meet demand. Moreover, the huge impact that this underestimation had on the budget that this interviewee was managing was particularly upsetting to him (I-74). In these situations, it is evident that an OC employee might feel that they are working to deliver what is requested of them, but that the targets for what they have to deliver keep changing, and therefore they are not able to be successful. Likewise, support staff in FAs with cross-functional responsibility, such as Finance and Procurement, can also be the focus of similar discord in the FA, as evidenced by comments suggesting that these departments had elected not to put items into the OC's overall budget because '*they* could not afford it' (I-69). Thus, the

Finance FA, which has the responsibility for budgeting, was accused of making decisions about FA budgets, and thereby treading on the professional authority of the specialised staff in the FA.

From the perspective of the FAs, support functions in this sense are often perceived to ‘meddle’ in areas without a proper understanding, which thereby leads to discord in the OC when the support FAs required cooperation on other OC matters, as is often the case. This role is also in direct conflict with the facilitation role that many of the support staff espouse that they are trying to play within the OCs, rather than appearing as an enforcing body:

What we really tried to emphasise with the organisation is Finance isn't there just to cut budgets, what we are there to do is to help balance, so really what we're trying to do is allocate resources. (S-21)

These examples clearly show that there can be differences within OCs with respect to the decisions that are made around budget, and that these decisions can be highly politicised within the OC, leading to conflict within the OCs.

Consequently, mistrust of senior management and support FAs can increase incentives for functional ignorance between FAs and these bodies, which can be detrimental for the OC as a whole. Indeed, as discussed in the next section, it was commonly known that many FAs would ‘hide’ funds from Finance or senior management by inflating expected costs, in case their budget predictions turned out to be inaccurate. Budgets in this instance are not an instrument of senior management control over staff as suggested by Hofstede (1968), but are rather a tool used by operational managers to protect and advance their own interests against their own senior managers. In this sense, Bechky’s (2003) description of documents holding epistemic

status in an organisation appears to be applicable; budgets are used both to enforce strategic plans, and for FAs to protect their interests. In this sense, FA managers may feel that concealing their budgets is a form of functional ignorance that is in the best interests of the OC, in order for them to be able to deliver on vague or changing requirements.

This raises another budget-related challenge for FA staff, in that they feel hampered by the conflicting priorities of overall budget restrictions when considered against the need for the Games to be delivered regardless of the consequences for budget. The delivery focus of the organisation and the intensity of the work environment contribute to the belief that regardless of what funding is available, the work 'must be done'. However, this leaves employees in a difficult position with respect to achieving their budget and scope targets within the set timeframe. One interviewee suggested that the budget had been revised so many times that it was 'complete nonsense' and had items completely missing from it. However, he also stated that he believed the money would 'magically materialise' because the work would have to be done. From his perspective, no one would say that they had preferred for him to stick to budget and deliver an inferior service; delivering the Games properly and 'breaking the budget' would, however, ultimately be rewarded, and so this is what he planned to do (I-69). The frustration on the part of this interviewee could clearly be detected, and the establishment of a mentality focusing on the FA versus either the OC or the broader coalition of Games partners, is symptomatic of a dysfunctional relationship. In particular, it is clear that this could contribute to the consistency of cost overruns found in the Games (Flyvbjerg and Stewart, 2012).

This represents a different type of ignorance, which can be attributed to the OC as an organisation not wanting to acknowledge the uncomfortable knowledge that some areas may not be able to deliver the scope desired within the budget that has been set out. While the final costs for the London Games will not be published for some time, it will be interesting to see what the final costs are for FAs of the OC as compared to the budgets outlined in the bid.

6.2.3 *Uncomfortable knowledge of budgets*

Budgets are one of the most violently contested, heavily politicised, and generally sensitive topics in OCs. Before one interview with a CFO of one of the OCs, I was even warned not to mention budgets; this in itself is telling of the expectation. Interviewees across all OCs, except one, consistently mentioned budgets when I asked about the most difficult parts of their positions. Employees at the exception suggested that budgets were not tracked in the last eighteen months of planning (I-99), a finding that is in itself very surprising for a megaproject of this size.

Given the general experience of the OCs, however, it is therefore not surprising that budgets were also the area in which most people believed they would get in trouble for sharing information in interviews, though the reasons for this reluctance varied. Some were concerned about internal perception within the OC over sharing details of budgets. One interviewee pointed out that budgets in OCs are highly confidential, and that he expected that other staff would have been upset about his candid interpretation of the OC's budgetary challenges, because most OCs 'go bust', or do not meet their budget targets. However, since he had been hired into the OC to replace someone, and was still relatively new to the role, he felt that he could

describe the situation that he had 'inherited' with relative impunity, where others would not have been able to do so (I-69). Therefore, these other staff could be said to be uncomfortable that knowledge about which there was a societal expectation of secrecy, to use Zerubavel's (2006) term, would be shared. Other interviewees were more concerned about sharing information about costs, due to the negative public perception of the Games that could result if the costs were released, particularly in areas that were related to funding by other organisations. As another interviewee stated, the enormous expense of mounting a Games requires a certain level of secrecy, because any figure that is made public would not have the required context, and so would be compared to what else could be purchased for that amount of public funding, for example hospitals or teachers. He also suggested that human nature is such that one will only confess to what one is required to confess to, and therefore where possible people will not reveal what costs for one's FAs will be delivered by another FA or what the costs of capital works were, because the FA's headline figure is big enough without these additions (I-82). From this perspective, ignorance is functional because it permits Games organisers to plan without having to justify every expense incurred. Providing detailed budgets to the public would, in this sense, remove the control of the FA staff in determining what to do, and instead create an environment in which it is acceptable, and expected, for public consensus to determine their activities. While it is easy to imagine how difficult it would be to perform any task under intense scrutiny by the public, there is also a question of whether the public is suffering from this ignorance; given that the money spent on a Games is so often greater than expected at the time of the bid, and that

overruns are guaranteed to be covered by the host country government, this may be a valid line of inquiry for citizen's groups in future host cities.

It was also quite common for interviewees to ask me to turn off the recorder in order to impart information that they felt was sensitive, which was almost exclusively budget-related. In one example, an interviewee explained that even though one Games' construction budget in the bid was greater than the total of the last three Games combined, the government had already spent approximately four times that amount on construction costs, with very little construction completed (I-101). This secrecy was requested even though the story was confirmed by media reports (ABC News, 2009). In another example, I was asked to turn off the recorder so an interviewee could tell me that police had stolen 700 meals from a venue. While it is not surprising that these details could not be 'officially' imparted, the additional requirement of secrecy on top of the anonymity guaranteed in these interviews highlights the sensitivity of the OCs with regards to budget information.

Given the secrecy and sensitivity of budgets, it is also therefore not surprising that the achievement of ignorance is widespread in the way that the OCs plan and protect the finances of their organisation. The next sections explore in more detail how this ignorance can be functional, how it can be detrimental, and how it is perpetuated between OCs.

6.3 Budget-Driven Ignorance

Drawing on the insights from this chapter, this section explores the ways in which ignorance can be useful in budgeting, how ignorance of budgets can be detrimental to OCs, and why budget-driven ignorance is perpetuated between Games.

6.3.1 Functional ignorance

Concealing costs in budgets is one of the most evident examples of functional ignorance with regards to the Games. As shown in this chapter, ignorance about budgets can be useful for many parties. Bid committees find it advantageous to not acknowledge prior Games' cost overruns; FAs find it useful not to reveal expected costs in the hope that when they do come to the fore, they will also come with a budget; and, OCs and governments conceal costs from the public to avoid judgement over what the money is being spent on. However, there seems to be a larger functional objective at work as well, in the sense that the Games cost is perceived as flexible, and thus highly debatable. As one experienced Games consultant advised future host and bid cities at an Observer Programme:

The Games will cost what the Games cost. I've never known a Games that don't go over. So anyone who is in here from the Finance side, cover your ears. But the worst is, and I have seen it happen, is that six months out, three months out from the Games, when – excuse my language – but everyone's nuts are on the line, basically, suddenly money's made available and you actually struggle to spend it because it's just too late to spend it. Or if you do spend it, you're not getting efficiency... everyone should be working towards a budget, but there's occasionally when you find that an extra ten per cent will deliver such a better product that I would encourage you all to consider that. Commonly what happens is that quite big chunks of contingencies get held centrally and they're released in the last months. But also I would say, just generally to anyone in the Games, from my experience, if you spend a billion dollars and it's unsuccessful, that's a waste of a billion dollars. But you spend 1.2 billion and it's very successful, then it's extremely good value for money. And no one ever really cares. (S-17)

This advice, provided by a presenter at an Observer Programme, no doubt carries a message that will be remembered by many of the new organisers in the audience, particularly since it was not contradicted by any of the governing body staff in attendance. In the case of the Games, the value of uncertainty about the cost of the Games is invaluable, which echoes the work

of many leading scholars who have suggested that there is a significant value in strategic ignorance (e.g. Katz, 1979; McGoey, 2007; Heimer, 2012).

Moreover, OC employees suggest that while budgets are often treated as 'static', they are more evolutionary, developing over time as the scope and design of activities change. Therefore, they suggest that concealing information until it is confirmed can provide a more consistent message for the public to focus on, rather than a varying message that could provoke mistrust in the management of the OC:

The budget evolves as well, so as the Organising Committee gets more mature, it's natural that, for example, we don't have all the numbers, there are things that are unknowns... So I think that a budget in an Organising Committee is a fluid thing, usually. (I-35)

Achieving the balance between releasing enough information about budgets and costs to be accountable for public funds, and concealing enough information to be able to provide a consistent and reassuring message to the public, is therefore a challenge for all OCs. This is also at least part of the reason that most OCs operate at arms-length from the host city and country governments, or create separate organisations in which money can be spent with more discretion, as in the case of the separate ceremonies production company that was established by LOCOG.

It is also evident in interviews and discussions with OC employees that they feel responsible for protecting the reputation of the Games through being functionally ignorant of costs that are incurred by other Games partners, such as the government. For example, one interviewee referred to a promise that the government had made in the bid to deliver a certain level of service, which turned out to be more expensive than anticipated, and thereby created a need to keep the government's cost of delivering that service out of the public sphere (I-51). Thus, even though the OC itself was not affected by

the promise, the employee perceived that revealing this information would be negative for the overall reputation of the Games. Whether it is human nature or not, it is clear that there is an advantage to avoiding such criticisms in the lead-up to the Games, since the presumed success of the Games may be used retrospectively to justify any budget overruns. While the investigations noted earlier in this chapter can sometimes highlight the issues that occurred in the management of the Games, a fairly small portion of the organisation is generally involved in these inquiries, and the individual benefit of ignorance far outweighs any general savings to be had from acknowledging costs at an earlier date. Thus, the individual benefit of ignorance is similar to the escalation of deception in organisations recorded by Katz (1979) and Fleming and Zyglidopoulos (2007), as discussed in Chapter 2.

However, during the course of this study, it was also clear that there are benefits to not sharing the 'full story' with funders, particularly with respect to government. This is of mutual benefit, since the OC is able to operate more quickly and with less oversight and control than government departments, and the government also gains the functional benefit of ignorance, as the distance of the OC allows them room to deny any knowledge of increasing costs until such time as they are committed to being spent. As suggested by Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius and Rothengatter (2003) with regards to megaprojects in general, and by Andranovich, Burbank and Heying (2001) with regards to mega-events in particular, decision-makers in government are also often interested in capitalising on the opportunity presented by projects like the Games to push through ambitious development plans that would otherwise be problematic. Too much transparency about costs could therefore compromise these projects. This can also have detrimental effects, however,

if the government does not adequately plan for the risks that can arise in these megaprojects:

Initially when we submitted the budget to the government, we wanted a provision of 10 per cent contingency but the government was not keen to provide such a contingency because the basis of our re-evaluation budget was on factoring all conceivable expenditure, across Functional Areas and to the last level. So therefore they were vehemently against providing any contingency but with a lot of persuasion initially a 3 per cent contingency approved... [Second speaker] We tried to convince the government, we had discussions even on a higher number than 10 per cent, [but they said] 'that's just not going to happen because you guys have done a detailed exercise, and that's what it's going to be. Keep it at best to 3 per cent.' And actually even at 3 per cent, when we finally got the approval that got completely wiped out, because the approval was also... less than what was projected. (S-15)

Compared to the average cost overrun for Games over the last 50 years of 179 per cent, reported by Flyvbjerg and Stewart (2012), even the target of 10 per cent seems highly optimistic. Therefore, there is an interesting game to be played between the OC and the government with respect to functional ignorance. While the OC may realise that certain costs are unrealistic, it may take additional time to get increases approved; and while the government may realise that it will need to increase the budget, it must be seen to be in control of spending, and so may wait for politically appropriate times to adjust funding. One interviewee said that he felt there was an 'inevitability' to the drama of getting support for the budget required for his FA, even though from his perspective as a professional, the cost was clear three years prior to the budget being approved. However, since the funding is from the public purse, there was a political necessity in reviewing and disputing the budget, and engendering confidence among the politicians that the plan for the FA was good value for the money that was going to be spent (I-82).

With regards to functional ignorance, it is therefore clear that ignorance in budgeting is an extremely useful tool in OCs. It can, however, also be detrimental to the Games as a whole, as discussed in the next section.

6.3.2 *Detrimental ignorance*

In addition to the ways that ignorance about budgets may be useful to OCs, it can also be very harmful for the OC, the Games, and for the host city and country. In particular, the use of strategic tactics like denial, dismissal, diversion, or displacement, to borrow the terms that Rayner (2012) uses to describe the actions that organisations may take to neutralise uncomfortable knowledge, in the context of budgets can lead to dangerous cost overruns. Flyvbjerg (2011b) has even suggested that the costs of the Athens 2004 Games may have contributed to Greece's current financial crisis, and the 100 per cent consistency of overruns for Games costs reported by Flyvbjerg and Stewart (2012) is also cause for concern for any cities considering hosting the Games in the future.

Many of the Games have resorted to one or more of Rayner's (2012) strategies to avoid the uncomfortable knowledge of Games overruns before, during, or after the Games. For example, Montreal 1976 did not reveal the expected overrun until only a few months before the Games; until that point, Mayor Drapeau was engaged in actively denying any cost overruns, with projected costs doubling first between April 1974 and February 1975, and again between February 1975 and August 1976 when the Games were held (Canadian Olympic Association, 1980). By contrast, London 2012's Games announced an early increase of their budget in 2007, only two years after winning the bid. However, this revised budget became the baseline by which

future performance was judged, with subsequent news articles referring to the Games being 'under budget' (BBC News, 2012a), a result which is clearly misleading, particularly in the context of Rayner's (2012) displacement of focus. It should also be noted that the original bid budget, which formed part of the public documents of the Games, was removed from the London website shortly after the revised budget was created, while other bid documents remained publicly available.

This is not to say that ignorance in the Games is entirely deliberate; on the contrary, many costs are likely to be unknown unknowns at the time of the bid. For example, the IOC can transfer costs to host cities after the Games have been awarded, but before the Host City Contract has been signed. This can create problems, as one interviewee described, because these new activities can be complex and costly, but have not had specific budget amounts allocated to them, because at the time the budget was created there was not a good understanding about what had to be done (I-48). The main issue with ignorance in this sense is that the governments of the host city and country are already committed to the Games, and particularly at the sensitive time of contract-signing, are virtually obliged to follow through with any demands issued. This recalls the findings of Cantarelli, Flyvbjerg, van Wee and Molin (2010) on lock-in in megaprojects, in which early decisions to participate in large projects lead to cost overruns later in the project development. This translates into significantly greater risk of overrun throughout the Games:

In terms of budget development, you're never going to really nail down your budget until you start putting contracts in place so it's always going to have risk right up until near the Games. (I-62)

This was echoed in comments during one of the Observer Programmes, where one of the staff explained the budget overrun in their department, which was heavily dependent on external organisations spending costs at Games-time:

I don't think we had a lot of extra at the end, cause we went, you go through so many budget cuts that you're taking stuff out. In fact as we got closer, like I remember some stuff and it would be like – I got a [large] bill I never thought I would get, and I need some money, right. So those things are going to happen, obviously along the way. (S-3)

Of course, the question that arises from this statement is, if something is 'obviously' going to arise, why isn't it accounted for in contingency funds? Thus, even for explanations of costs that are theoretically unknown, there is still an extent to which not reporting expected costs may be strategic.

Finally, there are other costs that are unknown and potentially detrimental to the overall development of the Games, which can be based not on a lack of information, but on omissions from the information that is available. One OC highlighted that in some areas they stuck so closely to the specifications provided by the governing bodies that they thought they had covered all possible costs:

I met with all the functions while they were developing their budgets to make sure that what was listed in the Technical Manual, that they were actually budgeting and planning for. So it was a very helpful tool. I think there were things in the Technical Manual that came up, that we weren't aware of. And we hadn't budgeted contingencies for that. So I think a learning for us was that we were very rigid when we read the Technical Manual and it said this is what you had to provide, that's what we budgeted for. Not thinking that there were some things outside of that scope or that there were other things that were going to pop up or come up. So, it tested our creativity. (S-10)

Therefore, the information and the tools that were provided by the IOC to the OC led the OC to believe that there was significantly less uncertainty than was the case.

The situation with respect to detrimental ignorance in the Games resembles that explored by Rayner (2012) in his work on unknown knowns, “which societies or institutions actively exclude because they threaten to undermine key organizational arrangements or the ability of institutions to pursue their goals,” (Rayner, 2012: 108). While much of the work on ignorance in organisations has focused on the organisation as an actor in a holistic sense, we could take these examples as evidence that the boundaries between FAs may cause them to think of themselves as different and separate ‘organisations’. In doing so, FAs would potentially perceive other FAs, OC senior management, or support FAs as being ‘threatening’, and thereby exclude information from these sources that could undermine their individual goals. This detrimental ignorance would be considered functional on the part of the FA. Certainly, some of the behaviour that is enacted by FAs could be said to undermine the overall organisation in favour of the FA’s intentions. Thus, the Games are faced with significant hazards as a result of ignorance in the cost of the Games. Why then, do we see the same patterns of cost overruns and budget conflict repeated with such consistency? The next section attempts to address this paradox.

6.3.3 Perpetual ignorance between Games

The Games are subject to considerable pressure, from both external organisations and internal conflicts, over the course of their planning. As has been highlighted in the previous two chapters, the complex interactions between Games organisations and the OC, and between FAs within the OC can lead to serious issues in the planning and execution phases. In this chapter, it has become clear that the role of budgets as a source of conflict is a significant concern for OCs.

A number of the costing challenges have been highlighted in this chapter. First, the process by which initial budgets are developed during the bid, and then updated at a later date by specialists with expertise in the required FA engenders a situation in which the original budgets are almost invariably inaccurate. This problem is then compounded by the lack of reliable data that are available from other Games. Even when cost data are shared, the context of the data is often missing, and can lead to unreasonable estimates for the next Games. In one example, an interviewee described the budget that she had inherited as ‘nowhere near the reality of what was required’, particularly because the labour rates and infrastructure costs in other host countries, which were used as the basis of the interviewee’s OC’s labour and infrastructure costs, were substantially different (I-53). In this way, no two Games can ever be the same because the challenges that each OC faces will be particular to that country, and are not necessarily comparable. This is also compounded by cultural differences between countries, and by differences in circumstances at the time that the Games are planned and conducted. As one interviewee pointed out, the costs of the Games cannot be simply transplanted from one to the other, because of the importance of having a nuanced understanding of the host city and country’s situation:

It’s hard to compare budgets of different Organising Committees. At the moment we know the whole budget of [the previous OC] but we don’t have the detailed financial plan. And even if we have it, it would be really hard to compare because we have different items, so how to bring down [the] budget is different from OCOG to OCOG. So what you can see is that, for example, the budget of [the previous OC] is M, [and] the budget of [our OC] is N. And N is more than M. You ask why? And we can say, the buildings are new, there are no experienced workforce, and so on, but is it proportional? This is a huge challenge... money’s quantitative, but the explanation is more qualitative. (I-8)

Thus, the qualitative explanation is often missed in favour of the relatively straightforward costs. As discussed previously in this chapter, however, the costs themselves are hardly straightforward either.

The main factor that seems to mitigate this risk in the Games is experience, although as highlighted in Chapter 4, Games experience can be both beneficial and detrimental. The experience of having participated in the same area in another Games provides the context that is otherwise missing from the static transfer of financial documents between the Games. One interviewee who had worked at multiple OCs described how her experience allowed her to provide input to her FA about underestimations in the knowledge transfer from the previous Games. As an example, she described an exchange with her boss where she suggested that staffing numbers were going to be higher than estimated, since to preserve their reputation, the previous OC had aligned reported budgetary amounts with the reported plans, rather than reporting the actual costs and staffing requirements (I-47). Thus, protecting the Games' reputation also affects the costs that are recorded; aligning the 'public' outcomes with the supporting documentation creates a pattern of ignorance in which critical information is not shared between OCs, or within the broader Olympic community. Returning to Chapter 4, the presence of boundaries between the different organisations involved in planning the Games can lead to a potentially damaging situation in which the entire system is perpetuating partial truths, which are self-fulfilling.

Another consideration in understanding how budgetary issues persist across OCs is the complexity of defining prior Games' costs to begin with. As outlined at the beginning of this chapter, the costs of the Games are

extremely difficult to interpret, and the final numbers are heavily influenced by politics. Even within the OC, it is difficult to clarify the final budget for an activity, given the high level of interconnectedness that exists between the FAs. It is even more difficult to isolate costs across multiple delivery organisations, particularly when there is a disincentive in many areas for this to be accurately collated. As one interviewee stated, budgets are ‘a complex construction of cross-functional interfaces,’ which therefore renders a simple answer to the question of ‘what did it cost?’ nearly impossible to answer.

Even in situations where it is desirable to justify expenses, it may be complicated to isolate costs, because some items are paid for by other FAs and other items or capital costs are paid for by the government, that most people are not incentivised to do it (I-82). There is equally a disincentive from the OC’s perspective to incur the costs of recording the contextual information necessary to accurately determine where the costs have been incurred. While this may be somewhat counter-intuitive, the level of accounting that would be most useful for other OCs incurs a cost in itself that current OCs are poorly placed to pay for. Because of this, some information is not accurately recorded at Games-time; not because they couldn’t do so, but because it is expensive to do so. Indeed, it is difficult to justify an expense that only benefits other OCs when budgets are tight (I-39).

The current mitigation for this has been to introduce knowledge-sharing and knowledge capture requirements into the Host City Contract, however contractual arrangements have long been shown to have a detrimental effect on sharing (Malhotra and Murnighan, 2002). Thus, there is a paradoxical challenge that is currently unresolved within the Games: OCs must have better information to improve budgetary accuracy, however there

are disincentives both for the experienced OCs to share this information, and for the new OCs to take all of the information into consideration. Ignorance is therefore of mutual benefit to both the experienced and the new OC; as such, it is unlikely that the patterns of ignorance in budgets between OCs will be changed.

This is not to suggest, however, that there is not a readiness on the part of many individual OC employees to achieve, or at least to better estimate, their budgets. In particular, it was clear that for many those involved in the planning, the responsibility for public funds is still an important element of delivering the Games. In some OCs, the budget is clearly a priority:

We are largely publicly funded. We are deficit funded. So we need to make as much money as possible from commercial revenue as every Games does... and if the sponsorship money doesn't come through then we need to find more ways to save more money. If you imagine that time is obviously fixed and quality needs to be relatively fixed then cost is the only variable that you can really apply any meaningful adjustment to, and it is difficult to condition any organisation this far out to have a budget and an expectation of spending that money, that all that money may not actually be available to you and, even if it is, it is not a target, it is a budget and you should spend less if you can.
(I-57)

However, the OC is equally aware that the challenge of achieving the budget will not be easy to meet, and as such, that there may be trade-offs with respect to the scope of what is delivered in order to meet the budget that has been set:

It's been made quite clear to us that there won't be any more money made available. I'm sure that's made clear to every Games, I don't expect they'll want to go back for any more money, so on that basis, the next thing you need to look at is service levels and priorities, and really thinking of out the box what we can deliver with the money we've got.
(I-62)

The best chance that OCs have of coming closer to budget may lie in the focus on a common goal. A senior manager at another OC suggested that the

perspective of the OC may actually be a significant determinant of how the budget can be managed:

It shouldn't be a budget decision, it should be the ability for the individuals to make the decision and what is the right thing to do... And then, it doesn't matter where the budget comes from. Centralise the budget if you have to. It really doesn't matter. So it always comes back to who is going to pay but I think at the end of the day if you stay focused on what we're trying to deliver and let the decisions flow out from that then you're always going to be successful. (I-4)

This common focus and the ethical framework of the 'right thing to do' may then be a way of reducing some of the detrimental ignorance that originates in the conflict between FAs, and potentially between Games partners.

These findings are particularly interesting when considered within the broader context of the perpetuation of ignorance between Games. With remarkable consistency, interviewees highlighted that the challenges that they faced in budgeting were not unique, and indeed were in some cases well known within the Olympic system:

They say that every Organising Committee has a financial crash 12-15 months before the Games because it's more or less like this: you've got the money in the beginning... and then when you really need the money which is during the test events, then you say well 'ok... I spent money here and I would have been doing better if I [had] spent this money on these services and not on [those] ones,' so another question I ask is well, 'if you are consultants and you go from Games to Games, why don't we have an opportunity here to develop a programme in order to avoid this financial crash?' But it's impossible because everyone follows the same thing, so I don't know if it's a disease or what, and the answer I heard is that every time, from Games to Games you have a new reality, new situation, new country, et cetera, and people... So it's kind of unavoidable. (I-26)

The perception of the unavoidable nature of budgetary issues within the Games is in itself an interesting finding of this research. Are the Games actually fated to repeat the mistakes of their predecessors, even when the knowledge is available to clearly identify those mistakes? Kahneman and

Lovallo (1993) would suggest that this is an example of adopting an 'inside view', or solely relying on plans to forecast expected costs rather than comparing to prior experience. Thus, Games organisers may put too great an emphasis on the uniqueness of the current situation, thereby eliminating the benefit to be gained by collating lessons learned from the past. This behaviour is also similar to that suggested by Rayner (2012), when organisations are confronted with uncomfortable knowledge, which is isolated due to its threatening nature. Thus, ignorance of costs may be avoided and thereby perpetuated because it is threatening; while the costs are threatening because of the perpetuation of overruns.

6.4 Conclusions on Ignorance in Budgeting

This chapter focused on the substance of budgeting in understanding the role of ignorance in the Games. To do so, it first highlighted the nature of funding in the Games, which is a mix of public and private financing, which leads to difficulties in determining what funds have been spent on the Games. It then emphasised the difficulty in determining the appropriate budget for the Games, given the lack of specialist expertise available during the bidding period, and in determining the final costs of the Games, which are spread out over multiple organisations. The lack of clarity around the final costs of the Games poses a significant problem because of the prevalence of public funding for the Games, which therefore generally requires a higher standard of accountability and transparency than private corporations. However, this chapter also demonstrated that, despite the difficulty, it is well known within the Games that budgets are severely underestimated. Investigations, audits, and even the Official Reports of OCs have highlighted the challenges. Thus, there are alternative incentives for Bid Committees to avoid or conceal the

knowledge that their budget is likely incorrect. Within the operation of the OC, the chapter also demonstrated the role of budgets in jurisdictional disputes between the different parts of the OC. Through this interpretation, budgets can be seen as tools that fuel competition between FAs for limited resources. Using Bechky's (2003) concept of workplace artefacts, budgets can also be seen as a communication mechanism, which FAs exploit to promote their desire for additional funds, and managers use to push back on employees' requests.

The difficulty in researching budgets was also emphasised; while it is one of the key topic areas mentioned as a challenge by interviewees, it was also the area in which they were most uncomfortable sharing their insights. Thus, ignorance in this area can be at least partly attributed to a general desire not to reveal the challenges in this area, due to a 'societal expectation of secrecy' (Zerubavel, 2006). Functionally, ignorance in budgeting is necessary for FAs and OCs to avoid uncomfortable questions from people who will inevitably have differences of opinion on the wisdom of the amount expended in this 'wicked' area of public spending (Rittel and Webber, 1973). However, this ignorance can be detrimental when it leads to over-spending, or when functional ignorance by the FA leads to detrimental effects in the OC as a whole, although the focus of many OCs on achieving the ultimate aim of delivering the Games can help to off-set this last challenge.

Due to the 'undiscussable' nature of true costs in the Games, as well as the risk that the Games incur by recording complete costs, ignorance in budgeting is likely to be perpetuated in both functional and detrimental ways. However, conducting research into the costs of the Games, and encouraging honesty in the bidding process, are two ways to begin addressing this issue.

Chapter 7: Too Much to Do, Not Enough Time to Do It

7.1 When the lights go on

While most megaprojects are focused on achieving the planned outcomes and meeting the deadline, in the Games, there are special requirements in the areas of both scope and schedule. From the schedule perspective, there is very little, or no, flexibility in the ultimate delivery date. While some megaprojects are able to cope with slippage, the Games are fundamentally unable to change the delivery date of the programme:

...it's not a construction role where you have delays and slip... Broadcasters have paid the use rights fees to start on time, and the lights are going to turn on and those people are going to be here so it's the Organising Committee's job to be ready. (S-17)

While time is at a premium throughout the Games, the pressures of scope are equally extreme and require phenomenal coordination and management in a variety of areas, from infrastructure upgrades to complex logistical planning and stakeholder coordination, thus scope is another element of successful delivery. The requirements for the Games are determined through a number of key documents and legal agreements, and changes to these requirements are required to go through many stages of approval. Therefore, delivering the Games is not simply a matter of completion, but whether the right things are completed 'when the lights go on'.

In these two critical areas of Games planning, I first explore how they are defined in the Games context, and discuss how and why ignorance is constructed in these areas. Subsequently, I explore the various ways in which this ignorance is functional, for example in the face of the overwhelming complexity of requirements at the beginning of the Games, and when ignorance can be detrimental, as when people avoid addressing the

uncomfortable knowledge that they cannot deliver the desired scope within budget. Finally, I consider how ignorance in scope and time is perpetuated within the system of the Games.

7.1.1 Theory of scope and time

Time and scope have long been listed as two of the most critical factors to control in projects, along with cost (Gaddis, 1959; Atkinson, 1999). As Artto and Dietrich (2007: 13) suggest, “when discussing the management of time, the literature too often emphasizes the aspect of just doing the work efficiently instead of the more strategic dimension of doing the right things.” Thus, time and scope are entangled in the delivery of projects.

In the context of the Games, time is of paramount importance because it is fixed in a way that is not experienced by most organisations and projects. Compared to other projects, which can traditionally trade off between the three elements of cost, scope and time (Gaddis, 1959; Atkinson, 1999), for example by paying less for something if you are willing to wait for it, or getting a simpler deliverable for a reduced cost, the date of the Games is set out in the bid. After the host city is elected, other dates begin to be enacted around this timeframe; other competitions are scheduled so as not to conflict with it, countries around the world begin planning their participation, and Olympic legislation in areas like visas is enacted for that period of time. Thus, time becomes a very significant constraint in planning the Games. Rayner (1982) provides an interesting perspective on the concept of time in his work on millenarian sects. Rayner suggests that the expectation of the end of the world with the impending millennium served to foreshorten the group’s expectation of the future (Rayner, 1995), because they believed so strongly in the firmness of this timeline that there was no need for them to

behave otherwise. Rayner (1982) thus proposes that time is an ordering concept, which can be affected by the social constraints imposed on it. These social constraints can then affect an individual or organisation's perception of time, and influence their behaviour. Applied to the concept of the Games, this would suggest that the constantly impending nature of the final event could have a limiting effect on the ability of the staff to see beyond short-term goals, although this may be modified by the perception of their life after the Games. While this idealist view of time as conceived by Kant (Janiak, 2009) can be contrasted to the Newtonian view of absolute time as a fixed and sequential structure (Rynasiewicz, 2004), time as an absolute concept would still provide a seven-year perspective into which OC employees would introduce the numerous requirements to be completed before the Games. Thus, the perspective of time as a threat is consistent regardless of the preferred ontological perspective.

Scope in the Games is a slightly different challenge. While certain agreements on scope are set out in the bid, many are vague or inspirational in nature. As such, there is significant flexibility in the specifics of delivery, while the frame of the scope is reasonably clear. Nevertheless, the scope of some aspects of the Games may be unclear to new organisers, who have not experienced an event or project of similar size to the Games. Thus, scope can be uncertain either in its specifications, or in the interpretation of those implementing it. In their work on uncertainty, ambiguity and complexity in project management, Pich, Loch and de Meyer (2002) demonstrate that decisions made without sufficient understanding of the adequacy of information that they contain may result in sub-optimal decisions for the overall project outcomes. Framed slightly differently, if employees do not

realise the extent of their ignorance, they are likely to make decisions that are not optimal for the OC.

The next sections will explore the perceptions of scope and time in the Games in more detail, emphasising the role of ambiguous information and a fixed delivery date for the Games in driving behaviour.

7.2 Determining scope

This section explores the challenges of the OC in delivering on scope. First, the determination of scope is discussed, with a focus on how the scope of the bid is established. Then, the challenges of scope changes during planning are highlighted.

7.2.1 Delivering on ambiguity

While the host city is selected seven years before the Games, the bid is developed for up to three years prior to this selection. As such, the scope described in the bid is determined up to ten years prior to the delivery of the Games. The exact process of determining what scope will be defined in the bid is somewhat mercurial. To some degree, it depends on who is involved in the developmental stages of the bid, which can range from business representatives, to former athletes, to city planners. Former athletes may emphasise the legacy of sports stadia and facilities, while municipal business leaders might focus on attracting new business interest, and city planners might be interested in re-developing part of the urban centre; while all of these might be different from what the host country government's objectives are in supporting the bid.

There are, however, some clear guidelines that help to define the boundaries of the Games. Bidding cities are required to complete a document titled the 'Candidate City Questionnaire', which is submitted to the

International Olympic Committee (IOC) or Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) for consideration. Over time, the Candidate City Questionnaire has evolved, particularly as the Games have increased in complexity. The questionnaire in 1960 had a total of 13 questions; in comparison, the 2012 Games Candidate City Questionnaire was divided into 17 themes with varying levels of required detail (IOC, 2004). In total, there are over 200 separate questions that must now be completed by the Candidate City. In older bids, responses to each question were limited to one or two paragraphs, as in the following example of the complete financial details provided in the Rome 1960 bid:

The Italian National Olympic Committee [C.O.N.I.] has its own financial resources which are derived from Totalisator Betting on Professional Sports Events. The C.O.N.I is independent economically and would therefore make its own financial arrangements for the Games for which a total sum of Lit. 12.000m. (over \$18M.) has been calculated part of which has already been spent to build the Olympic Stadium whilst further sums have been allocated to build the Olympic Sports Palace, the Olympic Swimming Pools and the Cycling Track. About Lit. 6,000M. would be allocated to the Olympic Villages, the preparation of other facilities and the expenses of organisation. (IOC, 1955: 49)

The increase in the number of questions has had obvious effects on the level of detail that is provided by bid cities in these documents. Recent editions of the bids include several hundred pages of details on plans, commitments, and resources to convince the IOC members that the city would be able to deliver the Games, and that it is an attractive place for the Games to be hosted, generally for socio-political, legacy, or developmental reasons. The Rio 2016 Olympic Games bid book is over 500 hundred pages long in 3 volumes, with the Sports questions alone requiring 160 pages.

However, there are still many areas in which the bid documents are not detailed. For example, some supporting Functional Areas (FAs) are

mentioned only as a line item in the bid, or in some cases not detailed at all. One interviewee mentioned that test events are only mentioned as one or two sentences in the bid documents, while the OC's experience is that they represent a complex series of negotiations with a number of stakeholders, and the OC is often required to rewrite various earlier agreements to accommodate them (I-48). This omission is not surprising; the IOC members voting on the next host city are unlikely to require extensive knowledge of operational details other than that there will be provisions for them, unless there is a major issue with that area in the bid city such as a lack of accommodation for tourists. However, given that this level of detail is not required by the IOC, this may suggest that the bid cities do not consider fully the implications of delivering these substantial components of the Games until after they have already committed to the bid.

In the areas that are defined to a greater degree, the specifications in the bid document and presentations can range from the quite specific to the very amorphous, as one interviewee described:

There are some commitments that are really very, very well specified. So, for instance, you have to deliver, a hundred per cent of the catering of the Olympic Village should be organic food, for instance. So this is really easy to understand so you have to tell your supply chain to just buy organic food or organic ingredients. It's easy. There are some ones like 'integrate the whole world in the joy of the Games'. So that's not easy to put it in a plan, it's very broad. (I-26)

These variations can cause major problems in the required scope during the planning and operations phases of the OC. Delivering on clearly specified scope is not easy and requires significant effort in planning; delivering on vague aspirations is even more difficult. In addition, some areas that are defined in the bid may also change in scope over the course of planning. One interviewee described the example of how the scope of his FA expanded to

become deeper and richer than had originally been envisaged, which was partly because of the evolution of broader social expectations for the area, thus requiring a greater investment on the part of the OC (I-89). Therefore, given the ambiguity in the bid, and the evolution of planning over the course of the Games, it is not altogether surprising that the final product of the Games often ends up being substantially different from what was originally envisaged.

In OCs, it can also be useful to maintain uncertainty about changes between the bid and the planning of the Games, to avoid excessive questions over the decisions that are made in planning for the Games. Concealing information can be not only useful, but also necessary for the OC in order for it to maintain control over decisions rather than having to gain approval for public funds for every change to the budget, particularly when parties outside of the OC make the changes:

Decisions are very political and we committed in the bid to deliver some things, and at that time these commitments were in line with the plans of the city, the plans of the state, and the plans of the federal government. But things changed, things will change, the governments will change, so we have to be very careful in this. (I-25)

Thus, the OC must balance the need to deliver on bid commitments while also adjusting to new governmental requirements. However, the OCs do not have limitless flexibility in their delivery; indeed, there are some commitments to which they are held very strongly, particularly those that are specified by the governing bodies.

In addition to the documents and presentations prepared by the Bid Committee, there are several other key documents that encompass the range of commitments to which the host city must deliver, and from which the OCs must determine the scope of their requirement. The host city contract (HCC)

is one such document. Signed by the host country's leadership, the host city's leadership, the OC leadership, and any other substantial funding partners, the HCC has evolved over time to include a huge number of specifications for delivering the Games. As a point of reference, the HCC for the Vancouver 2010 Games is 61 pages long and contains detailed requirements for more than 70 categories of specifications. However, there are often commitments contained within these myriad requirements that may not be feasible for the OC to deliver. While the HCC can therefore be helpful for an OC to determine the scope of what needs to be delivered, it is not a foolproof document and can introduce more challenges than the clarity it is meant to add. Further, interviewees highlighted how some of the requirements of the governing bodies may need to be neglected if they are unreasonable for the OC to deliver (I-56).

In addition to the HCC, Technical Manuals are provided by the IOC and CGF for some of the larger FAs, which further specify delivery and operational requirements, including some expected service levels. Although formally included in the knowledge management programme, the Technical Manuals are more formal than other knowledge transfer materials, in that the OCs are obligated to deliver on the work specified within them. However, many interviewees noted that the specifications included in the Technical Manuals sometimes contradict each other or the HCC, which can also cause significant confusion in the scope of work to be completed. Furthermore, the Technical Manuals are sometimes outdated, depending on when they have most recently been updated, especially since they are provided to the OC when they win the bid and there can be substantial changes in some areas

over the seven years of planning. Therefore, they are often taken as ‘guides rather than bibles’ (I-80).

Despite offering some additional specifications on the scope of the OC’s requirements in delivering the Games, the HCC and Technical Manuals are therefore not a single source of ‘truth’ when developing plans and priorities. As such, the OCs combine bid commitments, HCC requirements, and Technical Manual advice to develop an outline of their plans, but must supplement this with considerable additional information from other sources.

In addition, due to the lack of specificity in OC requirements, there are some areas in which the delivery requirements of the OC overlap or are unclear with respect to the delivery requirements of other organisations involved in planning the Games. Clarifying these obligations with the government or other delivery partners can be difficult, particularly when they are also funding part of the OC’s commitments:

...getting clear delivery obligations of when they are going to do something and then documenting that has been quite difficult because you are not in the same relationship that you are in with a normal contractor... because of the relationship, and the funding, and they are members of the company... (I-56)

Due to the unusual relationship between Games partners, it is very unlikely that any of the parties involved would sue each other, however it is equally important to understand which parties are delivering what requirements, or portions thereof. These overlapping requirements are particularly difficult to negotiate given that the governing bodies have very little control over the government to deliver its portion of the work; most of the influence of the governing bodies is therefore exerted through the OC when they are not being delivered to the desired scope, or when plans are running behind schedule.

Therefore, there are many commitments that are the responsibility of other parties, but which the OC must track. For example, the required infrastructure for the Games is usually administered through a separate Development Agency (DA). The DA usually has a reporting relationship to the OC, however the OC does not generally have authority over the DA to ensure that they are achieving the milestones required by the OC. This was highlighted as a major issue in one OC:

...the [DA] was developing a monthly construction report that they gave to the Organising Committee, but typically it said 'we're 17 per cent completed', but it never said 17 per cent completed compared to what. It didn't give them any kind of breakdown on where the budgets were... (S-17)

This led to significant issues for the OC in delivering the Games, for example where delays in construction had carry-on effects into many other areas in the OC. As such, there was insufficient time to install the required temporary furnishings that must be added to the permanent facilities for the Games, as described by one interviewee:

...in this case obviously the timelines have not been met. What's happened is that what [the developer] had to complete by March and you will find that he was still [working on] 'til September. Now that gives you very little time thereafter... And that can sort of be resolved only if the timelines are met so let's say, if the developer completes the work on time, he moves out, then the furnishing, furnisher comes in, they complete the job, move out on time, and then the cleaning companies should come, and that should be the flow. But obviously there's been a mix up there. (I-21)

This is evidently a major issue for the OC, even though it is technically outside of their area of responsibility. Thus, relationships with partners can contribute to the ambiguity over scope and contribute to changes in OC programmes.

7.2.2 Constant change: evolving Games scope

The lack of clarity in the scope of the Games in the early stages of the OC can amplify effects later in the planning process. As plans develop, changes inevitably arise, some of which are substantial variations. For example, one interviewee described how the number of defined 'venues' kept changing. He described how competition venues and large venues like the athlete's village, the International Broadcast Centre (IBC), the Media and Press Centre (MPC) and the Uniform Distribution and Accreditation Centre (UDAC) often evolved in the early stages of delivery, while non-competition venues like training facilities, logistics warehouses, fleet depots, transport sites, and hotels were often in flux until several months before the Games. Together, these create a substantial and uncertain scope (I-41).

The high degree of uncertainty that exists up until the Games is therefore a critical consideration in understanding the ignorance of those involved in planning the Games. It should also be noted that this situation is not uncommon for OCs, and that changes of venue, and in particular confirming non-competition venues, often occur up until the last stages of planning. Changing the venues to be served affects everything from transportation, to logistics, to volunteers, and this in turn has effects on cost and time to deliver the different services. In addition, there are many other areas in which plans change, which may be relatively small changes, but given the substantial nature of this scope, these changes can have multiplicative effects within the OC. Thus, as one interviewee described, it is nearly impossible for some FAs to plan anything in isolation; preparing food, for example, requires cooperation from the catering, procurement, logistics, and off-site waste management teams at a minimum (I-89). Given the interdependencies between FAs within the OC as discussed in Chapter 5, it is

especially critical that FAs notify the right people of changes they have made, to avoid gaps in planning. While in many cases changes are communicated appropriately, the sheer number of changes and decisions that impact on others means that there are still numerous changes that happen without the full knowledge of affected FAs. Another interviewee described how the success of her FA was reliant on the planning and delivery of services from the Catering, Transport, and Medical FAs, which sometimes made decisions without the interviewee's FA's knowledge. This separation of responsibility means that some FAs are uncertain about what services they can expect from other FAs at Games-time, which can have ensuing impacts for their planning efforts (I-47). Managing these changes is a huge undertaking, and from a major programme perspective, understanding the dependencies, documenting these, and tracking changes that have impacts is a monumental task.

One OC's master schedule has over 6,000 individual milestones that are tracked centrally (I-98), which does not include the tracking at the level of the individual FAs, nor the milestones of partner organisations. In some ways, it seems inevitable that gaps will develop in planning for the Games that may only be identified quite late in planning. However, it is difficult to determine whether the creation of these gaps is intentional or accidental. In some cases, there may be challenges in identifying impacts and dependencies and in informing those affected within an OC. In other areas, it may be deemed necessary on the part of one FA not to highlight changes that could bring them into conflict with other FAs, until such time as there is they are committed to a certain path. These gaps that develop over time can become acrimonious, especially when they have budget implications for the FAs

involved. In one OC, an interviewee described that the development of operating plans for each FA resulted in a detailed list of not only what the FA would provide, but what they were not planning to provide. These exclusions helped to highlight the gaps that had to be filled by other FAs, however, they also created frustration and discord between FAs when there was a disagreement about who should be providing a required service (I-48). While the ultimate delivery of the Games may supersede the individual boundaries of FAs, who increase their scope to address such gaps, as discussed in Chapter 6, this can have significant impacts on budget for the FA, as well as on schedule. The issue of schedule is discussed in the next section.

7.3 The Concept of Time in the Games

Time, in most megaprojects, is a concept to be 'managed'. It is a constraint, like budget and scope, which contains certain assumptions and can be manipulated to the requirements of the planner. However, the concept of time in the Games is quite different from other megaprojects; it is a finite entity, with a determined end date not unlike that of the millenarian sects described by Rayner (1982: 248) who operate with a "conviction that the present epoch is finite and known to be ending shortly." In the Games, time as a constraint is in contrast to the 'normal' time constraints experienced by other organisations:

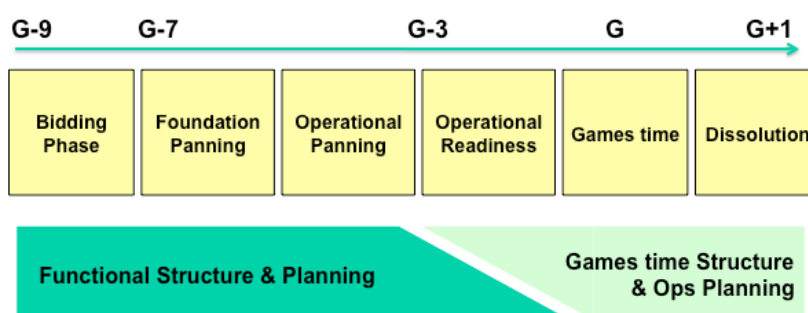
Usually in the industry as we say, you plan for everything, for any solution and you deploy it to be there forever or until it becomes obsolete or you need expansion or whatever. In Games-time it is completely different. You have to plan, plan, plan for years to operate only for weeks. This is a paradigm that you have to break. (I-36)

In most megaprojects, time is one of three main variables that programme managers have at their disposal to manipulate in order to achieve their objectives, along with cost and scope (Gaddis, 1959; Atkinson, 1999). In the

Games, however, as noted above, time is not treated as a variable, since the Games must happen within the timeframe proposed in the bid. This is due to the commitments that are made by other parties outside of the purview of the OC based on the advertised date. National Olympic Committees (NOCs) start planning training and transport for athletes, volunteers arrange to take vacation from their workplaces, and suppliers turn down other contracts in favour of delivering for the Games, to name just a few. While Games cancellation insurance is commonly purchased (S-4), the reputational implications of cancellation not only for the OC, but also for the host city and country and the Games themselves would be immeasurable. The only time that a Games has been cancelled was the case of the Denver 1976 Winter Olympics, when a public referendum prevented the required funding from being released (Gold and Gold, 2007); Espy (1979) suggests that Avery Brundage, the IOC President at the time, believed that this could even be the death knell for the winter Olympics as a whole. Thus, not only the OC, but also the governing bodies have an incentive to prevent cancellation.

There are several phases that all Games OCs go through, as shown with accompanying timeframes in Figure 7.1; note that the timings for each phase are referred to as years before the Games in Games terminology, for example ‘Games minus nine years’ or ‘G-9’:

Figure 7.1: Phases of Games Planning



Source: S-1, Vancouver Observer Programme, March 2010

The challenges of these phases are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

7.3.1 'Finding your feet': the early stages of the OC

The bidding process can take up to three years for each bid, and many host cities and countries bid several times before winning a bid, sometimes over as much as a 20-year time period. When the bid is awarded to the host city, which generally happens seven years before the Games, at G-7, this marks the start of the transition period between a Bid Committee and an Organising Committee. This transition in itself can be quite challenging to negotiate; there are significant legislative and financial details to be agreed before work can officially begin on planning the Games. This period can take several months, and as there is usually no budget for this transition period, many people who were involved with the bid may be required to take on other employment rather than waiting to see if they have been selected for the OC:

...there is a gap, the transition phase [is] really complicated because no one knows what is going to be the position that you are going to have in the OCOG or if you are going to have a position there and there was a kind of three months period to settle this situation of what will be the recruiting process, what will be the pay scale, what will be so, it was, lots of people also asking got another job because [they] couldn't be waiting until a decision. (I-26)

In some OCs, hiring from the Bid Committee is common, while in others, very few people remain when the OC is officially inaugurated. Additionally, hiring at OCs tends to start with senior people, who can take longer to find or to recruit from their current positions. This means that in particular, more junior staff working on the bid may not be able to wait for the OC to start hiring.

I am pretty sure that most people who worked on the bid would have been delighted if they could have moved over had there been a job for them but that just wasn't the

case... [The CEO] was recruiting, it was going to be senior posts first which obviously not many people could have went for so people were forced into looking for other employment. (I-67)

One of the main timing challenges from an OC perspective is therefore that the knowledge accumulated by those employed in the bid committee, including assumptions made when determining the scope and budget for the bid proposal, can be lost very quickly after winning the Games. However, it is very difficult to hire anyone in the early days of the OC, particularly given the pressure to ensure that the right people are selected for the ongoing operations. This paradoxical situation creates an opportunity for ignorance at a critical point in planning, when the Games programme is moving from a conceptual phase to a design phase, in conventional programme management terminology.

Once the OC is established, the first few years are considered to be the 'Foundation Planning' phase, in which the OC is allowed to 'find its feet', or determine the framework of the organisation. This is the time in which the OC's vision, strategy and policies are produced, which will direct the OC as an organisation for the remainder of the Games. Typically, the OC team at this stage is fairly small, and is composed mostly of senior staff with broad responsibility for many FAs.

...by the nature of an OC, you start off small and then you build up. You can't afford to staff up too early, but there's a lot of things you've got to do in preparing... because it does take careful planning and organisation and to get the designs on the approvals, and all these things take, you've got to allow time for all of these. So it seems in some ways long, on the other hand, for me, it's not far away at all. We don't have much in the way of slippage time. It's okay time-wise, but it's not what I'd call generous. (I-64)

During this time, the OC is typically engaged in collecting information from other OCs, governing bodies, industry experts, and consultants. Outside of

the OC, this is the time in which construction typically begins. While a Development Agency (DA) that is separate from the OC typically manages the construction, interviewees emphasised that enough staff must be available within the OC to ensure that the designs will match with the final requirements for the Games, rather than simply for legacy management. Otherwise, venues may be designed without consideration of how they would operate at Games-time, and end up being built in a way that is incompatible with safety requirements during the Games (I-103).

Similarly, a challenge of timing in OCs is that each FA is established at a different time in the planning cycle. This is partially determined by how far in advance the FA is required; while some FAs are not required until closer to Games-time, others are required to start very early in the planning phases. There is no clear determination of when each FA should start however, and to some degree it is up to the OC's executive to determine at what point each should begin. This can be difficult, given that an OC's executives are unlikely to have the breadth of knowledge required across all FAs to be able to determine when they should begin. To address this, the governing bodies and consulting companies are able to provide suggestions to the OC; however, this advice can at times be in conflict. As discussed in Chapter 5, the start date of a FA is also somewhat determined by the availability of qualified candidates to lead and staff the FA. In some FAs, this can be a significant challenge; the skills requirements for staff can be considerable, and the lead-time for recruitment can be daunting. Thus, as one interviewee highlighted, staff in some FAs do not have the required knowledge, or experience in the OC, to provide information to other FAs who are dependent on them (I-77). This rolling establishment of FAs can have adverse effects on other parts of

the organisation as well. For instance, the Venue Operations Planning (VOP) process, in which the detailed operations for each venue are discussed, requires that each FA participates to provide their input. When the FA is not fully staffed, or is inappropriately staffed, this can lead to gaps in determining the optimal solution for Games delivery:

The operations and overlay planning were really not integrated into the delivery process until about a year out. The knock-on effect on that meant that changeovers with the construction and the variation cost of the overlays are staggering. And it could have all been averted if they were to have started early. (S-17)

Due to the varying start dates for the different FAs, in addition to the general constancy of pressure, many OCs find that they are unable to plan adequately within the seven-year timeframe.

The Foundation Planning phase lasts from G-7 until approximately G-4, at which time the organisation transitions to Operational Planning. G-4 is also when that Games' predecessor, either summer or winter, will have completed their Games, and as such the governing bodies' attention changes to the next Games from G-4. During this phase, the biggest risk to the programme is in making the correct decisions to support the later growth of the organisation. To do this, OCs require data and insights from past OCs, which can be limited during this time period, when the previous OC is ramping up to Games-time delivery, followed rapidly by dissolution.

7.3.2 'Nailing things down': the OC's middle stages

The Operational Planning phase is that in which the OC is focused on developing the detailed plans for the Games, and confirms many of the decisions and contracts required for the Games. In this stage, more employees are brought on, and integration of plans between FAs begins in earnest. There is also a shift in planning, from planning the organisation to

planning the Games themselves, which requires an increase in staff and a concentrated effort on decision-making for major Games-time policies and contract preferences:

...three years out, the [focus was] to shift the organisation from a business planning point of view to operational planning. So less of the how to run the business and more how do you actually run the event. And then set up the structure of how do we plan for that because up 'til then people might've been planning for, I need 20 buses and they're going to cost x amount of money, but at the Games we are going to run this route, and we're going to run every 10 minutes and we need two drivers, so it's that sort of shift. (I-2)

Thus, the specificity of the scope is greatly increased at this stage of the planning process. Returning to the insights of Pich, Loch and de Meyer (2002), this would suggest that staff will be better able to make decisions that are in the best interests of the OC, as the ambiguity and uncertainty of their work decreases. However, the complexity that is still inherent in planning can still result in complications in determining the nature of these 'best interests.'

The transition to operational planning can be quite difficult for OCs, as the delivery date for their Games are still temporally distant, yet they are also the 'next in line' to deliver them. Many of the senior employees in the OC will attend the Observer Programme at the preceding Games, in which they observe the Games in operation, and more OC employees will attend the Official Debrief three months after the previous Games, in which they receive feedback from the preceding OC about what went well and what they would change (see Chapter 3 for more details). However, it can be difficult to obtain adequate information in these forums about what needs to be done four years before the Games to prepare adequately for Games-time. As one interviewee stated, the middle years are often the most difficult for an OC. While the Observer Programmes at the previous Games allow you to see the end

product, it can be difficult to conceptualise how to get there. In this way, the Observer Programmes do not necessarily provide information about what should be done four years from the Games, rather than what needs to be done at Games-time (I-89). Thus, the individual FAs that make up the OC may be in danger of being somewhat unfocused in this stage if the end product required of their FA for the Games is still ambiguous. It is important to note that although this is the Operational Planning phase, there is still a large focus on planning rather than operations in most FAs. This is because the organisation is generally not engaged in delivering any programmes at this point, but only in developing plans. This phase typically lasts until G-18 months, at which time test events begin.

The Readiness phase gradually transitions from the Operational Planning phase between 18 and 12 months before the Games, and continues until approximately 6 months prior to Games-time. A major component of the Readiness phase is the completion of test events. Test events are a major change for the OC, because they represent the beginning of the ‘venueisation’ process, as described in Chapter 5, in which the OC moves from a functional to a venue-based hierarchy. Venueisation happens in conjunction with test events at the Games venues, which are single-sport competitions that are held to test the plans that have been prepared for Games-time. Because test events are held independently and with fewer participants, they are considerably less complex than hosting the Games itself. Furthermore, there are fewer spectators, less pressure from broadcasters and sponsors, and more simple coordination requirements for the smaller number of athletes. At the same time, it is an opportunity for the OC to start integrating the venue teams in which staff will be working at Games-time. From the time that

venueisation begins, staff in Functional Areas start to report not only to their Functional Area manager, but also to the Venue General Manager (VGM) to whom they will be reporting at Games-time. The VGM can therefore also be evaluated prior to the Games:

...right after the sports events, so a year out, probably 14 months out, we started to venueise the teams. The [test] events were a good lesson for us because you can just see people under pressure and then you make your decisions whether or not certain people are going to make it, or not make it. And you learn very quickly after the [test] event whether they're going to make it or not. And you adjust your team at that point. (S-7)

This can allow senior managers to select the most appropriate staff for Games-time, and to test how different teams work together. However, as mentioned in Chapter 5, one of the major challenges in doing this is in balancing the development of venue teams with the existing FA teams in the OC.

In the Readiness period, the Sports FA in particular, and some other FAs like Spectator Services and Catering, can test their Games-time plans in a smaller, less complex environment. Testing also happens outside of test events, and is critical for the Games programme, from the villages to the venues to the Main Operations Centre (MOC). Testing is extremely important in the Games, more so than in other megaprojects, because of the time pressure during the delivery period. Delays in the construction of the athlete's village, for example, can create major issues if testing is not completed in time:

They actually had no time to test anything, we just moved in and conducted the Games. We had some old infrastructure, those rooms were alright, but the new rooms that were constructed, we couldn't test anything so sometimes the water was not coming [out of the taps], sometimes the taps were falling off, because they were done with haste, in a great hurry, so this was a problem. (I-18)

Thus, while in most megaprojects there can be a series of implementations, the Games occur over a very short timeframe, which is less than one per cent of the overall time spent planning the event. As mentioned previously, the Games cannot be delivered later than the specified date, which therefore creates a situation in which testing is significantly more important to the delivery of the event:

The main thing is that, it is completely different that you have to plan because it is only one shot. It's really the most critical mission I believe, because you have to plan and act specifically at one point. Usually in the industry you have a soft launch or something and then you start doing, you may correct things along the way – you can't do that and the only way of doing that is really testing, getting prepared. So that's why all those steps are so important – test events – and all these planning phases so I think it's really key for success. (I-36)

Delhi, however, was unable to stage test events due to delays in constructing their venues, which were several months late. As such, the Pan-Asian Championships, which were scheduled as test events, had to be cancelled (S-17). This lack of testing meant that there were several issues with the Games that were reported in a number of negative press stories (e.g. Times of India, 2010), which subsequently harmed the reputation of the Games. The time required for testing is therefore extremely important, and as such requires an even earlier timeframe be held in the perceptions of the organisers, to ensure that they have their plans ready early enough for these events. However, test events also act as a fallback plan for organisers who are not adequately prepared; where detrimental ignorance has created delays in planning, these will be evident several months before the Games, rather than at Games-time itself.

Following the test event period, the OC consolidates lessons learned from test events and makes final changes to the plans for Games-time based

on these lessons. During this period, some OCs maintain their venues orientation, with a direct line of reporting to the VGM and a 'dotted-line' reporting relationship to their FA lead. The focus in this stage is on finalising all requirements, confirming contracts, hiring Games-time staff, and training volunteers. The final few months of the OC are very busy, and often require long hours from all staff to complete the remaining work before the Games:

...in the last six months before the Games the pace of the requirements, everything gathers speed and pressures and [it's] crazy... This was the impression that I got from [another OC] that everything was very nice and quiet in two years before and it's just very civilised and then year of the Games came, aaaah. (I-27)

This means that staff are operating under more intense pressure, which human factors research suggests can lead to a suboptimal understanding of challenges (Heffernan, 2012). Thus, we may expect to see an increase in detrimental ignorance during this time, in areas that staff are not able to address due to either psychological avoidance or strategic ignorance.

During this time, the organisation also increases its staff by an exponential amount, which is a significant challenge in any organisation. Indeed, the extent of this growth would be debilitating in many of the most well managed organisations. One OC, for example, planned to grow from 1,400 to 6,000 people in the final 15 months prior to the Games (I-84). This increase is another source of ignorance within the organisation, since the knowledge within the organisation, by necessity, becomes more distributed and is retained less in the individuals who started with the OC early in its lifecycle.

7.3.3 Final stages: Games-time and moving on

Games-time is the next major phase in the timeline of an OC, in which the plans are put into action and judged for their success. While most FAs will

be in operation during the two-week period of the Games, and possibly slightly before and after that time, the 'go-live' or operations start date for Games operations varies by FA. The Villages FA, for example, is usually in operation for almost 14 months before the Games, the typical time at which the developer completes construction and transfers the responsibility for the village to the OC. They also 'go live' earlier than other FAs, because they must be prepared to receive the athletes prior to the Opening Ceremony (I-80). Thus, the Villages FA will require support from other interdependent FAs at a much earlier date than the rest of the OC. This can be a significant issue for FAs that do not realise how different start dates can be across the organisation. FAs may also have different profiles for when they are busy and when they are not, which do not conform to the standard Games-time window. Logistics, for example, has a different rhythm to its operations, because it is very busy before the Games to set up the venues, quieter during the Games, and then very busy again for the dissolution of all of the venues (I-42). However, despite this variation, most FAs focus on the Opening Ceremony as the date that Games-time begins.

From the Opening Ceremony to the Closing Ceremony, the focus of the OC is evidently on delivering the Games. Many staff are situated in venues, delivering services for the Games, while only a small cadre of staff and managers are left in the Main Operations Centre (MOC) to monitor reports from all venues and to coordinate any Games-wide issues. However, while it is clear that the Opening Ceremony is a major milestone, having too much focus on this date can lead to a lack of preparation for other required activities:

...it is a common mistake made by a lot of Organizing Committees, there is so much focus on the date of the

Opening Ceremony, because publicly that marks the start of the Games, but a lot of the athletes, the team officials... arrive into a host city a good couple of weeks before the Opening Ceremony and unfortunately in Delhi they just were not ready to receive the team officials and the athletes when they ordinarily would've arrived to prepare for a Games. (I-58)

As such, the challenges of Games-time stem from not having a full understanding of the requirements of the OC during, before and after this period, and thereby developing insights into how this can affect other operational decisions. This lack of understanding about the timing of Games-related activities is consistent across Games, as mentioned above; in essence, it appears to be easier for planners to conceptualise a unified timeframe for the Games, rather than a more loosely defined time period in which different FAs have different critical dates. It is possible that this lack of acknowledgement of earlier dates is a form of functional ignorance that is employed by FAs to deal with the impending timeframe of the Games; however, this lack of understanding can have a major financial impact on the OC as a whole if it is not clearly addressed.

The Games themselves are high-stress for those who staff them, requiring early mornings and late nights. Staff compared the time at the Games to 'doing battle', focussing on the short timeframe in which they were required to perform 'superhuman' activities, after which they would be able to lay down their work and rest. Managers frequently espoused the need for employees to be balanced during this time, and to rotate between themselves to ensure that they did not 'burn out'; however, in practice it was uncommon for any of the staff that I interviewed to have taken more than one day off during the Games.

For many employees, the Games finish within a few days of the Closing Ceremonies. For others, there are necessary tasks involved in

closing down a company; settling accounts, finalising records, and completing knowledge documentation on the execution of the Games, which form the final Dissolution phase of the Games. During this time, the organisation is effectively reduced to a tiny fraction of its Games-time size, from up to 6,000 people for some Games to less than 200 people within three weeks after the Games (I-74). This rapid decrease in staff is significant from the perspective of knowledge retention; since most people leave the organisation rapidly after the Games, there is little or no opportunity to gain their feedback. Clearly, this limitation would be a major contributor to the perpetuation of ignorance between Games.

The dissolution period is also the time in which the Games legacy takes over. There has been an increasing focus on legacy from the governing bodies in recent years, which is a more concrete and long-term outcome than the Games. The legacy is what the government 'gets' out of the effort of the Games (S-24); it is their long-term return on investment. There are many different types of legacy that can be left from the Games, from the physical infrastructure to establishing new standards for construction to cultural changes in the host country:

You have two types of legacy: the tangible legacy – the infrastructure, the stadiums, the way the traffic lanes [work] and so on; and, intangible legacy – that the culture, what the Games impose to the school curriculums to put the sport as obligations and so on and the opportunity for the poor, social inclusion. (I-34)

Legacy is therefore an interesting issue in the Games, as it forms a significant part of the rhetoric, but is not the focus of most of the people in the OC. This disparity therefore creates friction between language and action both within the OC, and between the OC and external organisations. Though the consideration of legacy will not form part of this thesis, since it is outside of

the scope of the OC, it nevertheless is an interesting area to consider exploring in future research on ignorance.

7.3.4 *The ticking clock*

Following from an understanding of the different phases of planning for the Games, it is clear that given these various constraints, the perception of time is a major influence on behaviour in the OCs. It is a constant driver for everyone within the organisation, even several years before the Games. As one interviewee described, there is a countdown to the Games that is measured in days rather than years. From her perspective, if something is not finished on one day, that means there is one less day until the Games begin to get it done; if two weeks are lost, the effect of that delay could be that something else gets done two weeks late, and ultimately something is not done before the two-week period of the Games. Thus, a period of two weeks cannot be lost, even three years before the Games (I-53). Again, this is very similar to the structure of time presented by Rayner's (1982) work on millenarian sects; there is a sense that time is ticking down to a finite date, after which there is no need to plan because it is irrelevant. Thus, there is a sense of pressure that is prevalent throughout the planning timeframe for the Games.

However, there are different perspectives to how much of this pressure is justified; on the one side, there are those who believe that planning the Games is a major undertaking requiring a significant investment of time. As one interviewee stated, a billion dollar business needs time to be put together, and time invested at the beginning could be well worth it when the Games arrive (I-70). On the other hand, there are people currently

working in the Games who suggest that this pressure may be a fiction, and that the Games could actually be planned much more quickly if needed:

You know, if you really asked yourself a question, 'could you organise the Games in two and a half years?' You probably could. I'm not kidding – Delhi actually to a degree, how much had they done two years out, or 18 months out? And the event itself, ok, look at transport, but the actual sports themselves went ahead, got broadcast. Probably if there'd been bums on seats it would've been an even better success but it all happened, and maybe Delhi's done it in about a year. (I-62)

To add to this, it has been suggested that the seven-year lead-time of the Games has created an industry to support it; the need to fill the vacuum of time means that OCs may end up creating more work than required (I-91).

Finally, it is worth considering whether the time constraints are as serious as they are sometimes made out to be. At the Vancouver Official Debrief, it was suggested that the construction programme was successful in part because they were never specific about dates for venue completion, using a season as a target rather than an actual date. Thus, ignorance of the final dates of completion in this sense was functional for the OC.

7.4 Ignorance in Scope and Time

Now that a foundation has been laid to understand the areas in which ignorance is present within the scope and timing of the Games, we return to the main focus of this chapter. We want to understand how ignorance is achieved in the Games, looking specifically at scope and time as sources of ignorance. Scope and time are intertwined within the Games environment; the scope and focus of effort changes depending on what point the OC is at in the Games planning process. Therefore, I discuss these two factors together as they relate to ignorance. We use this basis of understanding to

explore how ignorance is functional, how it is detrimental, and how it is perpetuated within planning for the Games.

7.4.1 Functional ignorance

In her work on structural amnesia and forgotten knowledge, Douglas (1986; 1995) suggests that there is a 'comfortable convenience' in forgetting quite recent information, and that this is not in itself a negative thing; she suggests instead that "knowledge lost may be knowledge well lost," (1995: 15). Uncertainty and ambiguity in the Games can be said to begin in determining the scope of the effort in the bidding process. At this early stage of the Games planning, most Bid Committees are faced with a lack of clarity regarding how the Games can be delivered in their host city:

There were sections when we didn't do any planning but you still had to have the logistics budget in your budget but we never even looked at logistics during the bid and you had to throw a number in there... the budget we did made sense but we didn't have all the details or the lots or the companies and so the budget wasn't realistic, yet [the FAs] were kind of being held to it, so it was kind of like 'ooh'.
(I-3)

Because early estimates are required for the bid, they are developed; however, they are by no means developed with the degree of knowledge required to result in an accurate assessment of the final cost. For some cities, the Games align with a concise plan for urban development; for others, the Games represent an opportunity for enhanced global prestige (Chalkley and Essex, 1999). However, even for those cities that have a clear concept of the objectives to be achieved through hosting the Games, the deliverables are often vague and intangible, as in the projected legacies outlined in the London 2012 bid:

The Mayor of London's plan for the city, adopted in 2004, provides the framework for spatial development to 2016... The London Plan identifies staging the 2012 Games as the

‘major catalyst for change and regeneration in east London, especially the Lea Valley, leveraging resources, spurring timely completion of already programmed infrastructure investment and leaving a legacy to be valued by future generations’. Without the Games, change would still happen, but it would be slower, more incremental and less ambitious from a sporting, cultural and environmental perspective...

The Olympic Park will provide local people with significant improvements in health and well-being, education, skills and training, job opportunities, cultural entitlements, housing, social integration and the environment. (London Bid Committee, 2005b: 23)

This imprecision can, however, be helpful in the bidding process, as it allows host cities to propose a grand vision of what the Games can achieve in their city, without the corresponding difficulty of determining exactly how to deliver on that vision. Furthermore, it allows many others to agree with this vision, by interpreting vague principles in a way that is synonymous with the desires of each of the widely varying groups of stakeholders involved in the bidding process, from the bid country government, to the governing body electorate, to the general public of the bid city. What a bid committee means by ‘regeneration’ can, for example, be interpreted in the way that each stakeholder desires, while at the same time neglecting to acknowledge interpretations that are inconsistent with their preferred view. As discussed in Chapter 4, this concept is similar to Sunstein’s (1994) ‘incompletely theorized agreements’, in which individuals are able to disagree at a theoretical level while agreeing on the practical solutions to resolve the issue. As such, it may not matter what the reasons are for different groups to support the Games, if the end result of supporting the Games is still achieved. Groups that oppose the Games may also have difficulty identifying specific plans and goals with which they can disagree, or that could be used to galvanise opposition to the Games. Therefore, a high degree of ambiguity and uncertainty at this stage

may be necessary to align these disparate interests and focus on winning the bid, since this is the entire focus during this initial period. As one interviewee suggested, the bid is a competition, so you do what is necessary to secure the vote rather than what is necessarily best for the host city (I-91).

Furthermore, as with many megaprojects, it is very costly to investigate requirements and develop detailed plans for the Games without the guarantee that the Games will be staged in that city. Therefore, there is a certain degree of ignorance, in the form of uncertainty, which is inherent in the bid, which is not in the economic interests of the bidding cities to resolve. The main mitigation for this uncertainty is generally the introduction of large contingencies to cover increases in scope following the bid. However, as we have seen in Chapter 6, these increases fail to account for the level of uncertainty that exists within the scope of the initial budget; otherwise, there would be at least some OCs that were able to achieve the Games within the budget set out in the bid.

After winning the bid, uncertainty and ambiguity continue to form a necessary component of planning in the OC. The scale of the effort required to host the Games is staggering, and there are many unknowns that arise over the course of planning. Many interviewees described a situation of being pressured throughout the planning process, due to constraints on hiring staff, interdependencies between FAs, and the pressures of budget. As such, there are some aspects of planning that are not attended to until they need to be addressed; for example, as budgets evolve, the scope of delivery may be cut in operational budgets without corresponding discussions between FAs. Given the FA interdependencies discussed earlier, this can mean that gaps develop in planning:

We had 52 functions at that point, the [dependency] matrix was unbelievably complicated and so some people jumped in, did it really well, met with every individual function and documented it all. For other functions it was just so overwhelming, they maybe weren't even resourced, maybe that function didn't really exist or they weren't far enough along in their planning... so by the time we were two years out, the economic crisis had come through, we had changed a lot of plans, and so people had an expectation from early conversations that 'you're going to provide this for me at Games time', well 3 years later, or 4 years later, that had long been cut out of someone's budget or planning, and yet nobody knew that. (I-2)

However, for some OCs these gaps may be advantageous in the short-term; for example, they can allow services to be increased in one area while there is a known decrease in another that can be resolved through increased funding at a later date when the gap is identified, thereby avoiding across-the-board cuts to multiple service areas that would otherwise be required. One example mentioned earlier in this thesis was that of the 'surprise' of the security fence; staff knew that authorities would realise that a more secure perimeter would be required for the venues, but waited for them to acknowledge it to ensure that there would be additional budget allocated to address the requirement (I-41). Therefore, there are incentives to this ignorance between FAs, and between FAs and the management of the OC; if inconsistencies can be temporarily 'avoided', or knowledge can be temporarily 'ambigued', uncomfortable decisions can be delayed to more convenient times. Scope can thereby be maintained in a temporary reality that is constructed by one group in the OC, which is inconsistent with the reality of the scope expected of that group by the rest of the OC.

Similarly, in working with multiple stakeholders, it can also be in the best interests of the Games not to reveal certain 'knowns' until late in the Games. Certainly, from a funding perspective, as the Games approach there is a greater lock-in on the part of the host city and country, as they are legally

required to fund any cost overruns as per the Host City Contract. One interviewee stated that OCs will always have to have more money than is put forward in the bid budget, and that the money is usually acquired through the process of educating the government about the requirements of hosting the Games, and gaining their confidence through this education (I-82).

Additionally, as the Games' delivery date nears, expectations by the host city and country population, the media, and the governing bodies, contribute additional pressure on the host city and country to deliver a safe and impressive festival. Last-minute funding increases are therefore often in areas that will have major reputational effects on the Games: security, ceremonies, and venue completion, which are difficult to argue against when the Games are on the country's doorstep. While transparency is often promoted as the goal of many OCs in their interactions with the public, another component of functional ignorance relates to the media's attention to all aspects of Games planning in a host city:

The public is very interested in what you do and there's a great deal of scrutiny on things which I think is good, it keeps you on your toes, but it certainly makes life challenging as well. At least in the environment we had, I think the media had a tendency to find negative stories a heck of a lot more interesting than positive stories, so they were looking for things to write and say about us. (S-21)

As such, there are functional ambiguities that are employed by OC staff in dealing with the media; for example, one individual suggested that it was advantageous to use general timings rather than specific dates because it "kept the media off [his] back," (S-22).

Each of these forms of functional ignorance suggests that there are advantages to having different interpretations of scope between the OC and other groups at different points in the planning process. However, it is clear

that functional ignorance forms only one part of the story of the Games. I turn now to examine how ignorance can be detrimental, rather than functional.

7.4.2 *Detrimental ignorance*

Rayner (2012) suggests that uncomfortable knowledge lies on the boundaries of the organisationally knowable and not knowable because it is potentially dangerous to the organisation. As such, uncomfortable knowledge is isolated and avoided, rather than addressed. This avoidance, however, can lead to situations that are detrimental to the overall progress and delivery of the Games. With regards to scope and timing, some of the most common examples of detrimental ignorance are in the areas of FA interdependencies, but are also found in interactions between the FAs and OC management, and between the OC and external parties.

As mentioned in the preceding section, ignorance can be a functional strategy to cope with the complexity of FA interdependencies. However, this is not always the case; for the FAs on the receiving end of gaps in service delivery, it can be difficult to deliver on expectations. Furthermore, a lack of communication about what services other FAs will require can mean that the OC ends up being under strain at the busiest point of its existence. One interviewee expressed his frustration at the repetitiveness of unknown unknowns that arose in planning, drawing on an example in which the government thought the OC was delivering a particular training programme, but the OC was unaware of their assumption. As he said, in the OC's ignorance, they did not know to ask about the programme. Each of these unknowns that arose meant that budget and staff had to be spread more thinly to try and accomplish the tasks of the OC, and at a certain point the resources were simply insufficient (I-71). This ignorance in this sense is

clearly detrimental to the organisation, though it is unlikely to have been a strategic omission in this case. Nevertheless, the OC is harmed by the collective ignorance that is exhibited in this example.

There are, however, situations in which FAs deliberately restrict information available to the OC's management, with the intention of protecting their individual interests through the creation of ignorance. This is particularly problematic for the OC, because this creation of ignorance destroys the ability of the OC to operate effectively in planning for the Games:

Now that we've finished and we can look back at it, this was the beginning of when people started building secret contingencies into their budget... everybody did it in one form or the other, [and] one of the challenges for myself and our team was to determine who was building in more. (S-21)

Moreover, the OC management reinforces these issues when strategic ignorance is engaged in at the senior levels. Issues around scope and time can be particularly problematic because they are politically sensitive. However, the development of a culture at senior levels that promotes detrimental ignorance can further this behaviour at all levels, creating a cycle of ignorance. One interviewee described this as a 'sea of green' culture, in which status reports were always positive and the OC did not report negative expectations in case the report was leaked to external sources. However, the interviewee was of the opinion that under-promising and over-delivering was a better approach, since there should be no harm in setting expectations when something was not going well. By contrast, if everything is portrayed optimistically, when a problem arises there is more publicity than might otherwise have been generated. Given that OCs face significant challenges, honesty and openness can provide others with the opportunity to assist, and so the OC should not have a 'fear of being open' (I-76). As suggested by this

participant, strategic ignorance can be especially damaging when others could assist in addressing issues in scope.

As Zerubavel (2006: 2-3) suggests, a societal expectation of secrecy can create a situation in which “a group of people tacitly agree to outwardly ignore something of which they are all personally aware.” This communal preference for ignorance can then lead to a lack of understanding about what needs to be done until it is too late to address the issues, thereby creating an issue with timing, which would otherwise not have needed to be created:

To use [this OC] as an example, clearly Overlay was never going to be done in time but [they said], ‘the venues will be ready, the venues will be ready, the venues will be ready’ but they weren’t, and there was no ‘hang on, we now have to do what was two months work in two weeks, so we all need to gear up with more people and trucks and whatever else’. Recovery you can do, but you just need to know.
(I-16)

When a lack of time becomes an issue, mistakes can be made in trying to solve timing issues in ways that are not effective for the overall delivery of the Games:

In this case we didn’t have experience and we didn’t have developed plans, we only had time running out and they just hadn’t appointed people across the board. There were people but not in the right spots doing the right things. (I-16)

Detrimental ignorance is therefore a major issue in planning for the Games, whether inadvertent or strategic in motivation. However, neither is it in the interests of the Games to avoid ignorance altogether; functional ignorance must be balanced with detrimental ignorance to achieve the goals of effectively planning the Games. Next, I consider how ignorance in scope and time, both detrimental and functional, persists between Games.

7.4.3 *Persistent ignorance*

In addition to considering how ignorance is both functional and detrimental in the Games, we must consider how ignorance in the areas of scope and time is transferred between OCs and between Games, and therefore persists over time. As outlined in Chapter 4, the primary interaction between OCs is for the ostensible purpose of transferring knowledge. However, there are also incentives for ignorance to be 'transferred', or knowledge to be withheld, in these interactions, and it is because of these incentives that we then see patterns of repeated ignorance between Games in these areas.

One area in which knowledge transfer fails, and therefore promotes these patterns of ignorance, is in not requiring the Bid Committee to clearly communicate the scope decisions they made to the OC. As discussed earlier in the chapter, few people who work in the Bid Committee stay on when the OC is established. As such, there is a significant gap that creates ignorance from the very beginning of the OC establishment:

One of the challenges we have had in here is that there has been a really, really, really poor transfer of knowledge from bid team to OC. There was a massive disconnect. The bid team did not stay and start working on establishing the OC and I think that was a huge mistake... I just think we were incredibly inefficient for the first 2 years of being an OC because for a third of that there was kind of nobody here. For a third of that time there was a minimal staff none of whom had delivered a Games before and then for a third of the time we had still a very small staff and we were working with very, very little. The [FA] handover notes from the bid team were, frankly, [useless]. (I-66)

Additionally, there is very little information available from other sources about how to proceed from the bid to the OC, which therefore promotes the development of ignorance from the time that the OC begins. The complexity

and sheer amount of decisions that the OC is faced with upon establishment creates a situation in which it is difficult for it to know what to do first:

When you become an OC it's... 'what do we do now?' and the IOC doesn't have, they don't give you like a transition manual saying look these are the type of things that you should be looking at, everything from statutes to form the Organising Committee, to closing up your bid books to-. I find that that transition is seems like every OC is doing it their own way and that there could be, perhaps some way to help OCs in that early stages because you're like 'we got the Olympic Games now what do we do?' (I-30)

Thus, OCs begin with a blank slate rather than a clearly defined set of procedures.

Once the OC is established, the knowledge management programmes of the governing bodies begin to operate. With these programmes, there is an expectation on the part of the OCs that information is entirely constructive. However, it is not that simple; as Nietzsche (1873[1979]) suggests, knowledge does not come without interpretation. It is in this interpretation that patterns of ignorance emerge. In the Games, due to the highly tacit nature of the knowledge being transferred, it is very difficult to communicate the nuances of the data:

So when they say what's your budget, well the budget, you can't answer, it's not one number it depends on a million other things. How, what did you do, to what degree, you know what kind of level of food were you serving were you serving, how often, so it's not, so you can say I spent x number on food, but unless you know what you got for it, it means nothing. And the problem with the Games, not the problem but a challenge with the Games is that, [with] the budgets you can't do a cookie cutter because it doesn't work the same for every country, countries work differently. When you don't do a cookie cutter, you try and compare numbers in a cookie cutter way and it isn't 'til you're way down the path that you realise like I thought we needed x amount for [this activity], what we didn't realise is that the city in this other Games paid for 90per cent of [the activity], so the Committee only had to pay for the additional, so actually the budget if you're doing it entirely yourself is 20 times as much, so that's that the difficulty. (I-2)

Because of this difficulty in interpretation, issues that happen in one OC consistently overlap so that other OCs experience the same challenges and benefits from ignorance that previous Games have done.

Evidently, the benefits of ignorance are not problematic when they are shared between OCs, even when they are strategic; rather, it is the ignorance that is detrimental that is cause for concern when it persists between OCs, as in the example of the security fence. Detrimental ignorance that persists within the Games system is therefore a significant concern for OCs, while functional ignorance that persists between Games is desirable. The line between one and the other is, however, hard to perceive, particularly when the information is on the boundary that Rayner (2012) describes between organisationally knowable and not knowable.

7.5 Conclusions on Ignorance in Scope and Time

In this chapter, we have explored issues of scope and time in the Games. OCs are faced with significant ambiguity about the scope defined in the bid, leading to inevitable conflicts in the host city commitments, challenges in determining and monitoring the scope and progress of partners, and internal complexity rendering the overall management of dependencies within the OC extremely difficult. Increasing scope is a slippery slope for OCs, leading them to spend more of their scarce resources of time and money to achieve their plans. Once some things are agreed to, this also leads to domino effects in other areas, requiring ever-increasing commitment on the part of the OC as a whole. As a result, scope changes are an integral component of planning for the Games, and an inherent area in which ignorance is both required and potentially damaging.

Time is also a major issue in the Games, since the entire organisation is focused on a fixed end date from very early in the planning and development of the Games. In the early stages of the OC, the loss of knowledge from the Bid Committee staff and the staggered start dates of the different FAs can encourage both functional and detrimental ignorance of the ultimate requirements of the Games. In the middle stages of planning, a reduction in ambiguity can be useful in planning the Games, but the perception of time until the Games can present challenges in finalising requirements. This is offset as the Games get closer and staff begin working long hours, which can encourage both functional and detrimental ignorance as coping strategies for increasing stress. In the final stages of the Games, staggered start dates for different FAs can cause problems with interdependencies, and the rapid dissolution of the organisation can mean a significant loss of knowledge to pass on to future OCs. Thus, the perpetuation of ignorance is achieved between Games.

Functionally, ignorance of time and scope constraints can be useful during the bidding stages to gain agreement through diverse parties, and to avoid uncomfortable knowledge of cost overruns at previous Games. Similarly, functional ignorance is equally useful during the planning of the Games to ensure that funding is made available when delivery requirements are increased. However, it is clear that with respect to the schedule and scope of the OC, ignorance is as multidimensional as it is in budgeting, and in determining the structure of the organisation and its relationships with external parties. Thus, even ignorance that seems to be functional to one part of the OC may have negative consequences for the OC as a whole. As in the example of the venues not being in ready on time for one OC, the strategic

concealment or inadvertent avoidance of time and scope issues can have disastrous effects on the OCs. In particular, established myths in the organisation such as the 'sea of green' culture, or a consistent underestimation of requirements, can create systemic problems within an OC that have multiplicative effects throughout the organisation, and to other OCs that may copy their approach. The repetitiveness of similar issues between Games is a significant issue for the governing bodies of the Games to address. From a theoretical perspective, the difficulty of determining the boundaries between functional and detrimental ignorance in the areas of scope and time does not diminish the importance of attempting to do so.

Chapter 8: The Challenge of Ignorance

8.1 Ignorance in the Games

The aim of this thesis has been to develop an understanding of how ignorance is achieved and why it is perpetuated in managing the megaprojects of the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. To do so, it has drawn on the existing literature regarding knowledge and ignorance, starting from the suggestion that ignorance has been unfairly stigmatised (High, Kelly and Mair, 2012), and that it deserves to be studied as a “productive force” in its own right (McGoey, 2012: 3). To inform the research, insights gleaned from a variety of works on the role of ignorance in society and in organisations were grouped using Proctor’s (2008) typology of ignorance. Nietzsche’s concept of ignorance as a social necessity, and Douglas’ work on structural amnesia (1986) and necessary forgetting (1995), served to demonstrate the concept of ignorance as a required, or virtuous state in Proctor’s (2008) typology. Studies of knowing what not to know (Zerubavel, 2006) and knowing more than we can tell (Polanyi, 1967) provided examples of Proctor’s (2008) passive construct of ignorance, while actively excluding uncomfortable knowledge (Rayner, 2012), and strategically wielding ignorance as a tool (Katz, 1979; McGoey, 2009) can be characterised as active constructs (Proctor, 2008). However, the categorisation of ignorance in these studies focuses largely on ignorance as necessary, strategic or inadvertent; while this provides a useful understanding of the circumstances under which ignorance occurs, it reinforces the view of ignorance as a negative construct that has no place in management.

To address the question of ignorance being perpetuated in the Games this thesis also explored the literature in the area of knowledge management,

which was popularised as a potentially sustainable source of competitive advantage by Nonaka (1991). Research in this field has productively expanded into considering the reasons that organisations have failed to learn, for example by suggesting that employees may fail to incorporate embarrassing knowledge into their mental maps (Argyris, 1990), or that disappointing outcomes or failures are likely to be explained away as specific instances rather than systematic problems (Luhmann, 1995; Baumard and Starbuck, 2005). Moreover, the stigmatisation of failure in business means that it is even more unlikely that any useful lessons learned would be implemented in practice even if they were identified (Cannon and Edmonson, 2005). Research also suggests that cognitive and motivational limitations for sharing information can seriously affect the success of knowledge transfer efforts in organisations (Hinds and Pfeffer, 2001), and in projects (Bakker *et al*, 2011), while Linder and Wald (2011) suggest that temporary organisations, such as Games OCs, face particular challenges due to the unique and time-constrained nature of their business. Thus, the failure to effectively transfer knowledge within organisations may be perpetuated by avoiding the ways in which knowledge is inhibited within organisations. The perpetuation of ignorance between organisations is another concern of this research.

Using the theoretical literature as a foundation, this thesis proposed that a categorisation of ignorance by outcome, rather than by intent, might prove complementary to the productive development of discussions on ignorance in organisations. While studies of necessary, strategic, and inadvertent ignorance have been crucial to developing an understanding of the motivations behind ignorance, it is difficult to transfer these insights to

practice because of their implicit focus on culpability. By shifting the emphasis from the intent of ignorance, the term itself may be re-focused to a productive discussion of the ways in which it can be helpful to individuals and organisations, and the ways that it may be harmful. This understanding, that ignorance is functional in some areas and detrimental in others, would allow organisations to focus on developing an approach to either support, or to refrain from interfering in the former, and limiting the damage that can be caused by the latter. In contrast, avoiding ignorance altogether as a management concept can lead to the perpetuation of both functional and detrimental ignorance, to the overall disadvantage of the organisation.

To assess this theoretical framework, this research has explored the empirical context of the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. The Games themselves have been the focus of significant academic research, most recently entering the sociological field in research by Roche (2000), Toohey and Veal (2000) and Horne and Manzenreiter (2006). However, academic research into the Games has suffered from a lack of comparative studies (Roche, 2000), and from a focus on either macro-level analysis of the Games as a phenomenon (e.g. Simson and Jennings, 1992; Toohey and Veal, 2000; Preuss, 2004; Theodoraki, 2007) or micro-level analysis of specific topics at the Games level (e.g. Toohey, 2003; Meehan *et al*, 1998; Searle, 2002). Therefore, there has been a need to understand the operation of the Games at a broader and more comprehensive level, combining macro- and micro-level analyses, which this research has sought to address.

Related research on projects and megaprojects has suggested that ignorance is a useful topic of study in this environment. In particular, research by Kutsch and Lupson (2008), Kutsch and Hall (2010) and Flyvbjerg *et al*

(2003) has pointed to the need for a better understanding of the effects of strategic ignorance in determining and assessing project risks (Kutsch and Lupson, 2008; Kutsch and Hall, 2010), and in identifying the reasons for cost escalation in megaprojects (Flyvbjerg *et al*, 2003). Horne (2007) has also initiated research into ignorance in the Games, specifically calling attention to unknown knowns, which Rayner (2012: 108) suggests can “threaten to undermine key organizational arrangements or the ability of institutions to pursue their goals.” Furthermore, the Games in particular have been highlighted as being unusually problematic from the perspective of cost overruns; with an average overrun of 179 per cent of the projected cost at the time of bid (Flyvbjerg and Stewart, 2012). Thus, applying the theoretical concepts of ignorance to the empirical context of the Games is supported by the literature as a worthwhile endeavour.

The empirical study that is presented in this thesis was thus formed with the objective of studying how ignorance is achieved, and why it is perpetuated in the Games. An embedded case study was selected as the primary approach to the study, with a focus on the Games OCs as the case in question. Six Games OCs that were planning their respective Games during the timeframe of this research were studied: two Summer Olympics, London 2012 and Rio 2016; two winter Olympics, Vancouver 2010 and Sochi 2014; and two Commonwealth Games, Delhi 2010 and Glasgow 2014. The research methods that this study employed at these sites were qualitative, and included observation of interactions between OCs, interviews with members of the OCs, and participant observation of OCs. In addition to these, documentary data for the Games since 1960 were compiled and analysed to understand the extent to which contemporary trends are

representative of historical planning in the Games. While all the research methods were found to be complementary and useful, the use of multiple methods to triangulate data was found to be particularly important in the investigation of a topic like ignorance, which is subject to considerable sensitivity on the part of the interviewees.

8.1.1 Discussion of the empirical findings

The results of the empirical study were presented within two broad areas, structure and substance, which contained four themes: coordination within the Games system; the organisation design of the OC; the use of budget and cost information; and, the conception of scope and time. Each of these themes was explored in detail to understand how ignorance can be functional for the Games organisations and processes, how it can be detrimental for these, and why ignorance is perpetuated from Games to Games.

As suggested by the literature review, the empirical findings demonstrated that ignorance has many uses for individuals and organisations planning and delivering the Games. Concepts including necessary forgetting (Douglas, 1995), wilful blindness (Heffernan, 2012), and strategic ignorance (McGoey, 2007) provided useful comparisons to the situations of Games organisations. Findings from the empirical research showed that ignorance was a natural state of affairs in many different parts of Games organisation, and that resistance to knowledge transfer in many areas meant that it was unlikely to be reduced. Further, knowledge transfer was found to be a false idol in circumstances where context and opportunism meant that relying on information from other organisations, or other FAs within the OC, could cause greater harm than good. Moreover, findings from interviews and observation

sessions also revealed that OCs engaged in strategic ignorance as a way of managing their limited resources, banking on delayed ignorance to produce a more constructive solution than early knowledge. Likewise, the value of 'not knowing' frequently outweighed the potential costs of providing information across inter- or intra-organisational boundaries. These incentives for silence or avoidance encouraged ignorance that was counterproductive to the overall aims of the Games, providing a toxic environmental context that turned on itself.

Detrimental ignorance was therefore supported by the empirical findings, drawing on concepts such as the societal expectation of secrecy (Zerubavel, 2006), cover-ups (Katz, 1979) and uncomfortable knowledge (Rayner, 2012). One particularly virulent example of detrimental ignorance was found in the bidding structure of the Games, which reinforces the development of highly inaccurate budgets for the purposes of winning the right to host the Games, while simultaneously locking countries in to the requirement to fund any cost overruns. Similarly, detrimental ignorance was identified in the duality of relationships between Games partners as both friend and foe, and in the urgency created by scope and time constraints that lead to false pretences for development of Games plans. Detrimental ignorance was also seen within the structure of the OC, in the struggle of FAs to establish their own domains and protect their boundaries from threatening information, as suggested by Rayner's (2012) work on uncomfortable knowledge, through avoidance and strategic ignorance. This boundary protection, however, was shown to create an adversarial relationship in some OCs, leading to issues that were problematic for the OC as a whole. Thus, the findings showed that detrimental ignorance was often rooted in functional

ignorance; where one party believed it was acting in the best interests of the organisation, the benefit of hindsight and observation of a wide variety of FAs allowed for a different perspective.

Given these findings, the originally proposed framework of functional and detrimental ignorance should be reframed. While the original theoretical proposition suggested a dichotomous separation between functional and detrimental ignorance, the findings suggest that the multi-dimensional nature of ignorance cannot be forced into a convenient classification. The experience of studying ignorance is messy, complex, and wicked, to use Rittel and Webber's (1973) term. Nonetheless, the distinction between functional and detrimental ignorance did provide some usefulness in describing the Games context. By identifying the situations in which functional ignorance can lead to detrimental ignorance, these motivations were more readily understood, and appropriate action could be taken to structure the organisation or the work in such a way as to reduce detrimental ignorance.

Thus, while ignorance in itself is largely an unobservable construct, its effects can be identified, as in the examples provided in this thesis. With a focus on these effects, rather than on blaming those who engage in ignorance for their behaviour, motivations for ignorance as compared to knowledge can be more readily understood and managed. Understanding the cases in which individuals act, according to the incentives set out for them, in favour of ignorance over knowledge provides the opportunity to consider whether knowledge is really preferred and by whom. If such an understanding of the general case can be understood, then the incentives for knowledge can be improved to balance the incentives for ignorance.

By furthering this understanding, this research showed how the perpetuation of detrimental ignorance from Games to Games could also potentially be reduced. Increased transparency in Games cost overruns may lead to higher bids, and thereby reduce the incidence of future cost overruns; Flyvbjerg and Stewart (2012) suggest that the Games over the last decade may be establishing such a trend. Similarly, understanding the effects that the traditional structure of OCs and the Olympic system have on knowledge sharing and the incentives for ignorance can provide a starting point for future OCs and other Games organisations to modify their interactions to form more productive relationships between and within each organisation.

In addition to these possibilities, the findings of this thesis have also demonstrated several basic principles that may be of use to future researchers seeking to investigate ignorance. The three basic principles which this thesis seeks to add to the advancement of knowledge on ignorance, the Games, and megaprojects, are each elaborated in the next sections: 1) ignorance as a productive force in management; 2) structure of OCs and of the Games system as a scaffold for both functional and detrimental ignorance; 3) understanding the substance of budget, time and scope constraints in megaproject planning as catalysts for ignorance.

8.1.2 Ignorance as a productive force in management

Drawing on McGoey's (2012) view of ignorance as a productive force, this thesis has extended the concept in applying it to the management of the Games. Ignorance in this sense creates its own momentum, building upon itself and constructing the path that it ultimately follows. As such, ignorance is not the opposite of knowledge, but rather a dynamic entity that compels action, and inaction. Understanding the power that ignorance has in any

organisation then requires a different set of expectations for management, allowing space for functional ignorance while counteracting the strength of detrimental ignorance. If we were to imagine an organisation in which ignorance was viewed as a productive force and accepted as a driver of behaviour, or what might be called an 'ignorance-aware' organisation, what could that organisation look like?

We have argued that the individual drivers of organisations operating in a highly interdependent way leads to ignorance that supports opportunistic motives. We can therefore imagine that the 'ignorance-aware' organisation would carefully consider the drivers of its partner firms, whether suppliers, funders, monitors, or sponsors, in order to determine the ways in which ignorance might arise and mitigating those ways in which it was detrimental. In the case of the Games, this organisation would acknowledge the effect of governing body supervision of OC interactions, and provide additional support for OCs to communicate directly. With this change, there would equally need to be an acceptance that some communication of 'negative' or undesirable information may occur; however, the risk of this happening should be weighed against the developmental opportunities of confronting the perpetuation of ignorance between the Games.

Second, the ignorance-aware organisation would consider how it designs incentives for working across the business, and for achieving the business' objectives. It would advocate transparency of organisational processes where possible, and would seek to align governance and decision-making policies with the espoused design of the organisation. In the Games context, many of these conditions exist in the OCs, particularly in those, like Vancouver, that have accepted ignorance and developed ways to work with

employees to develop better strategies for accessing uncomfortable information; an example would be the one-on-one status meetings introduced in place of a risk management tool (I-2). However, there are other ways in which detrimental ignorance can be further reduced in OCs through organisation design. Providing a gradual transition for staff through a matrix reporting structure as the Games approach is a way to increase venue allegiance while not unduly limiting the influence of FA Managers. Similarly, assigning accountability to those responsible wherever possible is a good policy, for example by providing Venue General Managers with discretionary budgets early in the development of the OC. OCs often rely on the experience of those that have gone before, however addressing their issues before adopting their strategies is critical for managers seeking to move beyond the challenges of past Games.

Finally, the ignorance-aware organisation would need to understand the role of budgets, time and scope in driving behaviour. Allowing budgets to retain their role as control mechanisms, and as jurisdictional artefacts, is not in itself problematic. However, the combination of an intense focus on budgets, in a severely constrained timeframe and with ever-increasing scope, is likely to drive competitive behaviour within the firm. Thus, the ignorance-aware firm would set out to understand these challenges and to provide mitigations for detrimental ignorance where possible. In the OC, this would likely result in a complete re-think of budget allocation procedures in the Games, as well as a revised conceptualisation of how the Bid Committee can more adequately support the OC.

8.1.3 Structure as a scaffold for ignorance

To add to the perspective of ignorance as a productive force in management, this thesis has also provided evidence to suggest that the structure of an organisation or group of organisations can act as a scaffold for ignorance. In the theme of coordination within the Games system explored in Chapter 4, ignorance is achieved by maintaining boundaries between different organisations that are intricately involved with each other in planning the Games. Each of the organisations must deliver on their Games commitments, while also sustaining their own business priorities. Moreover, these highly interdependent organisations often have multiple relationships with each other, providing both support and reproach to their Games partners. This conflict of roles leads to opportunistic behaviour by all Games organisations, which, although functional to their organisation, can be detrimental to the objective of delivering the Games.

This dynamic is mirrored in the design of the OC organisation, as discussed in Chapter 5. The requirements of the highly specialised FAs are even more intertwined than those of the Games organisations, while operating in an environment that also has limited resources. Thus, ignorance is achieved in the OC by avoiding boundary-threatening knowledge, and strategically limiting the information available to 'outsiders', as seen from the perspective of each group in the OC. Again, this omission of information can be beneficial for the individual group, but often has disastrous consequences for the OC, and, ultimately, for the Games.

Due to the similarity of structures used in different Games, both within the OC and between the OC and other organisations, it is therefore not surprising that analogous problems occur in the OCs' interactions. Reinforcing the areas in which this is productive, and changing the areas in

which the current structure supports the creation of detrimental ignorance, is crucial for future OCs to avoid the same issues. Thus, understanding the nature of structure as a scaffold for ignorance can provide useful solutions for managers.

8.1.4 Budget, time and scope as catalysts for ignorance

The final outcome of this research is the consideration of the substance of megaproject planning, in the areas of budget, time, and scope, as catalysts for ignorance. The theme of achieving ignorance in budgeting, explored in Chapter 6, is related to the broader topic of achieving ignorance in the OC, with budgets used as boundary objects in jurisdictional disputes between professions within the OC. Thus, management use budgets to control activities, and staff use them to ensure that they can deliver upon their requirements. The intense focus on budgets exhorted by most OCs, given their reliance on public funding, ensures that ignorance in budgeting is widespread. This contributes to both functional and detrimental outcomes, and guarantees that ignorance is perpetuated between OCs that devote similar status to the role of budgets and costs in the Games.

Similarly, ignorance in scope and time within the OC is achieved through the perception of imminent danger and threat on both of these fronts, as described in Chapter 7. Scope and time are closely connected in this state, with one supporting the other in a bicephalous relationship. The FAs are constantly fighting scope creep from other FAs, from parties outside the OC, and from their own members, while at the same time becoming increasingly aware of the fixed Games' deadline. The deadline is used to justify both action and inaction, creating a suspended state of time in which members are constantly under siege and fighting against a foe that, for lack

of a substantive character, grows and morphs into a fearsome creature. Ignorance is a weapon against this antagonist, wielded strategically and inadvertently to stave off the anxiety that it engenders in OC staff. However, this ignorance can equally turn on the user, and cause harm to the FA, to the OC, or to the Games delivery as a whole.

Again, the repetitiveness of these experiences across OCs helps to explain the persistence of ignorance in these areas. Because OCs are always faced with the iron triangle of budget constraints, increase in scope, and a fixed timeframe (Gaddis, 1959; Atkinson, 1999), ignorance will continue to fill its role as a buffer between these pressures. While there are many more considerations that can be put into place in measuring the success of the Games as a project, these three criteria are the fundamental substance by which all Games are evaluated. Understanding the catalysing nature of these elements, and planning for the ways in which they can perpetuate detrimental ignorance, should be a focus for future studies.

8.2 The London Games

The London 2012 Summer Olympics are the most recent Games to have been delivered during the timeframe of this thesis, and, as such, I would be remiss not to include a retrospective consideration of the outcomes of these Games, particularly given the insights presented in this thesis.

Overall, the general consensus of the media and politicians is that the Games were a resounding success (The Guardian, 2012). Despite the concerns before the Games in the areas of transport and security, there were no major incidents during the Games. In a city as large and complex as London, it can certainly be considered quite a feat in itself that the city was not overly negatively impacted by the Games.

The two most public issues that the Games did experience were in the areas of ticketing and security. The ticketing issue is a common one that again is perpetuated from Games to Games, and manifested itself at the London Games in the form of empty seats on camera, when tickets were not available for people to buy. This created a lot of bad will in the first few days of the Games, however it was solved fairly rapidly with a ticket re-allocation process that seemed to alleviate most of the problem (BBC News, 2012b). It is extremely difficult to allocate tickets in a way that is perceived to be fair by all of the residents of the host city and country and by the athletes around the world whose families are keen to watch them perform. However, the IOC strictly controls the Olympic Games ticketing policies, weighing in on which groups are entitled to which tickets, and therefore, the organisers had limited leeway to address the issues that they faced.

Security was a much more significant issue for the Games, as LOCOG Chairman Sebastian Coe admitted (Inside the Games, 2012b). On July 11, only two weeks before the Games were scheduled to start, G4S, the private contractor that had been hired to provide security staff for the Games, announced they would fall short of the number required by approximately 3,500 of 10,500 promised staff (BBC News, 2012c). What is of particular interest to this research is the nature of the timing of this announcement. While this is only speculation, and does not stem from the research findings, the quality of planning that I observed during my time at the London OC across all FAs makes it seem unlikely that a shortfall of this magnitude was discovered less than a month before the Games, as was suggested by the G4S CEO (BBC News, 2012d). It is, perhaps, conceivable that the OC was unaware of the shortfall, however this is also questionable given the mixed

messages from the national government (BBC News, 2012e) and municipal government regarding when they 'knew' about the shortage; the former cited surprise while the latter indicated that " 'everyone' involved in the Games knew there was a problem 'ages ago'," (London Evening Standard, 2012). Thus, it seems evident that functional ignorance is at play to some degree within this situation. In some ways, it is unlikely that it would be on the part of G4S; acknowledging the shortfall earlier may have allowed them to save face in delivering the Games, while late acknowledgement later led to a cancellation of their bids for security contracts with the Brazil 2014 World Cup and Rio 2016 Olympic Games (Inside the Games, 2012a). However, it is equally possible the wilful blindness (Heffernan, 2012) led them to be unable to acknowledge the extent of their shortfall until it was no longer able to be avoided. Nevertheless, it also seems possible that the government may have ignored warnings that G4S may not have been able to deliver in order to serve other purposes, for example by allowing the government to add additional security through heightened troop presence at the Games venues, an objective that would potentially have caused a negative public reaction before G4S's admission of the shortfall.

While it is unlikely that the sequence of events will be revealed in the short term, longer-term investigations may unravel the situation that occurred. What could be seen as a positive development is from a personal email that I received from a G4S executive shortly after the news media had published the G4S story:

There are many things that have gone exceptionally well within this project, but some critical systems and process failures has had very damaging effects. We want to ensure that the entire G4S organisation learns from this process. (Personal email communication, 26 July 2012)

Thus, it is possible that the company is seeking to learn from its failure to adequately manage ignorance. What remains to be seen is the extent to which the causes of the shortfall are attributed to endogenous causes, like ignorance, or exogenous causes, as has been found in other similar research (Baumard and Starbuck, 2005; Cannon and Edmonson, 2005).

8.3 Ideas for Future Research

The concepts presented in this thesis are intended to provide motivations for theoretical research and practical ideas for bringing the concept of ignorance into mainstream organisational theory and practice. A conceptual framework has been presented, with initial evidence from a specific embedded case study showing that the framework shows potential merit.

In closing, it is clear that one of the avenues for future research would be to explore a specific example of ignorance in the Games, such as that of the G4S security staff shortfall elaborated above. This study has chosen to trade the breadth of the embedded case study approach for the deep understanding provided by a single case study. However, for ignorance to be understood, case studies, interviews, and many more types of studies could be conceived to determine the wider applicability of the research.

With respect to the broader findings of the study, initial support has been provided for the concept of ignorance as a productive force in management. This, combined with a division between functional and detrimental ignorance as proposed in this paper, or another division moving away from the negative perceptions that strategic ignorance engenders in managers, could be studied in a limitless number of contexts, from traditional organisations, to smaller projects, to other megaprojects.

Further, the specific findings on the structure and substance of ignorance in megaprojects must be verified through additional studies conceived by others with a view to studying the field. Only by producing collective, reproducible results can we verify the value of this theoretical framework.

Finally, this research has touched on a number of related areas that it has not been able to explore in depth. The field of Games study needs more researchers to conduct comparative research, including both current and historical data, to ensure that the uniqueness presented by individual Games can gain from the benefit of the lessons learned by the class as a whole. Studies on the costs and benefits of the Games need to continue, as do comparisons of the legacy of the Games in different cities around the world. In this way, we can produce scholarship that will be both academically relevant and practically useful to countries around the world that are planning to host the Games in the future. This final quote, from the Montreal Organising Committee, demonstrates both the perpetuation of challenges, and the consistency of success of the 'greatest show on Earth':

The Games of the XXI Olympiad at Montréal were in many ways unique, although in others they shared much the same experience as their predecessors. True to form, throughout the story of Montréal's candidacy many familiar chapters were relived: the problems, the many false starts, the frenzied joy and, just when almost all hope had been abandoned, the success of the venture. (COJO, 1978: 6)

As a native of the city of Montreal, the city infamously renowned for its challenges in staging the Games, I hope that this thesis has contributed at least in part to providing other cities with the tools they need to avoid the same problems, by understanding the nature of ignorance involved in hosting the Games.

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Appendices

- A. Games Host Cities 1960 – 2016
- B. Interview schedule used for Vancouver 2010, Sochi 2014, and
Delhi 2010 Games
- C. Interview Schedule used for the Rio 2016 Games
- D. Interview Schedule used for the Glasgow 2014 Games
- E. Interview schedule used for the London 2012 Games (based on
IOC template)
- F. Final NVivo coding structure
- G. Participant Information Sheet

Appendix A: Games Host Cities 1960 – 2016

Year	City	Country	Games Type
2016	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	Summer
2014	Sochi	Russia	Winter
2014	Glasgow	UK	Commonwealth
2012	London	UK	Summer
2010	Vancouver	Canada	Winter
2010	Delhi	India	Commonwealth
2008	Beijing	China	Summer
2006	Melbourne	Australia	Commonwealth
2006	Torino	Italy	Winter
2004	Athens	Greece	Summer
2002	Manchester	UK	Commonwealth
2002	Salt Lake City	USA	Winter
2000	Sydney	Australia	Summer
1998	Nagano	Japan	Winter
1998	Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	Commonwealth
1996	Atlanta	USA	Summer
1994	Victoria	Canada	Commonwealth
1994	Lillehammer	Norway	Winter
1992	Albertville	France	Winter
1992	Barcelona	Spain	Summer
1990	Auckland	New Zealand	Commonwealth
1988	Calgary	Canada	Winter
1988	Seoul	South Korea	Summer
1986	Edinburgh	Scotland	Commonwealth
1984	Sarajevo	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Winter
1984	Los Angeles	USA	Summer
1982	Brisbane	Australia	Commonwealth
1980	Moscow	Russia	Summer
1980	Lake Placid	USA	Winter
1978	Edmonton	Canada	Commonwealth
1976	Innsbruck	Austria	Winter
1976	Montreal	Canada	Summer
1974	Christchurch	New Zealand	Commonwealth
1972	Munich	Germany	Summer
1972	Sapporo	Japan	Winter
1970	Edinburgh	Scotland	Commonwealth
1968	Grenoble	France	Winter
1968	Mexico City	Mexico	Summer
1966	Kingston	Jamaica	Commonwealth
1964	Innsbruck	Austria	Winter
1964	Tokyo	Japan	Summer
1962	Perth	Australia	Commonwealth
1960	Rome	Italy	Summer
1960	Squaw Valley	USA	Winter

Appendix B: Interview schedule used for Vancouver 2010, Sochi 2014, and Delhi 2010 Games

- 1) Can you tell me about your role in the Games?
 - 2) Can you give me some background about your work history and how you got to this position?
 - 3) What do you enjoy most about your role?
 - 4) Can you tell me more about what you are responsible for in your role?
 - 5) Who do you interact with on a regular basis (daily, weekly, monthly) either within the committee or outside? How do their responsibilities relate to yours?
 - 6) How are decisions made within the committee?
 - 7) How does information move through the committee? Who usually gets information first? How is it distributed?
 - 8) How about informal information? How do rumours spread?
 - 9) Do you refer to any specific information from previous Games committees?
 - a. What information do you find most useful?
 - b. Where did you find this information?
 - c. Which Games do you tend to most rely on for information? Can you think of any reasons that this information is more useful than other Games?
 - 10) How is the budget managed within the committee? Who is responsible for the budget?
 - 11) How is the schedule managed? Who is responsible for the schedule?
 - 12) How are risks managed for the Games? Who is responsible for risks?
 - a. How much time do you spend planning for these risks?
 - b. Are these risks related to the earlier concerns that you mentioned?
 - c. Do you think these are the 'right' risks to be managing?
 - 13) What do you enjoy least about your role?
 - 14) What are you most concerned about achieving in your role? What keeps you up at night?
 - a. Who is responsible when things go wrong?
 - b. How do you personally deal with these concerns?
 - c. How frequently do you think about these issues?
 - d. Do you think these issues are likely to happen?
 - e. Do you remember when this was first brought to your attention?
 - f. What were the circumstances (when, how, who)?
 - 15) How do you think the committee will deal with these concerns?
 - 16) Are there concerns that you had in the past that have now been resolved?
 - a. If so, how were they resolved?
 - 17) Do you have a plan for how you will keep track of your activities for future Games?
 - a. How much time do you currently spend on this?
 - b. What information do you think would be most useful for someone doing your job on a future Games committee?
 - 18) How much do you feel you can rely on your prior experience to help you with this role on the Games committee?
 - 19) How do you feel about the Games at this point in the planning process?
 - 20) What interested you about this research that led you to participate in this interview?
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Appendix C: Interview Schedule used for the Rio 2016 Games

- 1) Can you tell me about your role in the Games?
 - 2) Can you give me some background about your work history and how you got to this position?
 - 3) What do you enjoy most about your role?
 - 4) Were you involved in the bid?
 - a. How do you think the current design of the Games compares to the bid?
 - b. What changes have been made and why?
 - 5) Have you participated in any of the IOC's knowledge transfer programmes, such as the Observer Programme, Debriefs, or Workshops?
 - 6) Do you refer to any specific information from previous Games committees?
 - a. What information do you find most useful?
 - b. Where did you find this information?
 - c. Which Games do you tend to most rely on for information? Can you think of any reasons that this information is more useful than other Games?
 - 7) What do you enjoy least about your role?
 - 8) What are you most concerned about achieving in your role?
 - a. Do you think these issues are likely to happen?
 - b. Do you remember when this was first brought to your attention?
 - c. What were the circumstances (when, how, who)?
 - 9) What information do you think would be most useful for someone doing your job on a future Games committee?
 - a. In your opinion, in what areas are people most likely to not want to share information?
 - b. How do you know this? Have you withheld information?
 - c. Why do you think this is?
 - 10) How much do you feel you can rely on your prior experience to help you with this role on the Games committee?
 - 11) How do you feel about the Games at this point in the planning process?
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Appendix D: Interview Schedule used for the Glasgow 2014 Games

- 1) Can you tell me about your role in the Games?
- 2) Can you give me some background about your work history and how you got to this position?
- 3) Were you involved in the bid?
 - a. How do you think the current plan of the Games compares to the bid?
- 4) Have you participated in any of the IOC's knowledge transfer programmes, such as the Observer Programme, Debriefs, or Workshops?
- 5) What information, if any, do you use from previous Games committees?
 - a. Why is this information useful?
 - b. Which Games do you tend to most rely on for information? Why is this more useful than other Games?
- 6) What are the biggest challenges facing you from now until Games-time?
 - a. Your team?
 - b. The Organising Committee as a whole?
- 7) Is there any information from other Games that would have been helpful but was not available to you?
 - a. In what areas do people tend not to want to share information?
 - b. Why do you think this is?
 - c. Have you withheld information?
- 8) How do you feel about the Games at this point in the planning process?

Appendix E: Interview schedule used for the London 2012 Games (based on IOC template)

Section 1 – Context

- 1) Scope: What areas will be covered by this knowledge review?
- 2) Out of scope: What areas are under your functional area that will not be covered in this review?
- 3) Client Relevance: What other internal clients (e.g. functional areas) and external client groups would be informed by this knowledge review?
- 4) Phase Relevance: What phases will this knowledge review cover (e.g. G-7 to G-3, or G-3 to G-1)? Start from date that functional area was established or last KR.
- 5) Event Relevance: Is this knowledge review relevant for the Olympic or Paralympic Games, or both?
- 6) Definitions: are there any functional area definitions or abbreviations that would be helpful to define for this review?

Section 2 – Functional Overview

- 1) Overview
 - a. Please describe your functional area in 1-2 sentences.
 - b. Please reflect on any changes you have had to the mandate of your functional area over the period of this review.
 - c. Please predict what will change for your functional area in the future.
 - Please describe the _____ for your functional area.
 - Please reflect on how the _____ for your functional area have changed over this period.
 - Please predict how you expect the _____ for your functional area to change in the future.
- 2) Key Facts and Figures
- 3) Objectives
- 4) Assumptions
- 5) Strategic Direction

Section 3 – Relationships

- Please describe the _____ for your functional area.
 - Please reflect on how the _____ for your functional area have changed over this period.
 - Please predict how you expect the _____ for your functional area to change in the future.
- 1) Internal Relationships
 - 2) External Relationships
-

Section 4 – Planning, Implementation and Delivery

- Please describe the _____ activities for your functional area.
- Please reflect on how the _____ activities for your functional area have changed over this period.
- Please predict how you expect the _____ activities for your functional area to change in the future.

- 1) Core Activities
- 2) Key Generic Processes
- 3) Deliverables and Milestones
- 4) Risk Management
- 5) Quality Assurance
- 6) Games Time
- 7) Paralympic
- 8) Dissolution

Section 5 – Resources

- Please describe the _____ resources for your functional area.
- Please reflect on how the _____ resources for your functional area have changed over this period.
- Please predict how you expect the _____ for your functional area to change in the future.

- 1) Information Seeking
- 2) Finance
- 3) Cost Drivers
- 4) Workforce
- 5) Technology
- 6) Logistics

Section 6 – Learnings and Recommendations

- 1) What have your key successes been to date? What are the contributing factors for these successes?
- 2) What have been your major challenges, issues and risks?
- 3) What are your main Lessons Learned?
- 4) What would you recommend as a better practice for this functional area?
- 5) What are your recommendations for future OCOGs in this functional area?
- 6) What big surprises or material differences were identified as your plans evolved in the G-7 to G-3 and G-3 to G-1 time periods?
- 7) What are some of the ways that your function reduced complexity and/or cost as your team moved through the planning phases?

Section 7 – Documentation

- 1) What documents have been most critical for your functional area over this time period?
- 2) Could you provide me with examples or templates for these documents?

Additional

- 1) Were you involved in the bid?
 - a. If so, how do you think the current design of the Games compares to the bid?
 - b. What changes have been made and why?
- 2) Have you participated in any of the IOC's knowledge transfer programmes, such as the Observer Programme, Debriefs, or Workshops?
- 3) Do you refer to any specific information from previous Games committees?
 - a. Which Games do you tend to most rely on for information? Can you think of any reasons that this information is more useful than other Games?
- 4) What do you think are the biggest challenges ahead for your functional area?
- 5) What information do you think would be most useful for someone doing your job on a future Games committee?
 - a. In your opinion, in what areas are people most likely to not want to share information? Why do you think this is?

Appendix F: Final NVivo coding structure

- Knowledge and Ignorance
 - Ignorance
 - Learning
 - Transfer Programmes
- Organisation
 - Boundaries
 - Between OCs
 - Between OCs and external groups
 - Within OCs
 - Decision-making
 - Staffing
- Budget
- Scope and Complexity
 - Bid scope
 - Changes
- Time/Schedule
 - Bid to OC
 - OC to 4 years before Games
 - 4 years out to venuisation
 - Venuisation to Games
 - Legacy

Appendix G: Participant Information Sheet

Study: Management of the Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games: How can host cities address the risks and uncertainties of major programme management?

Lead Researcher: Allison Stewart, Doctoral Student, University of Oxford

Contact: allison.stewart@sbs.ox.ac.uk

Purpose of the study: The management of the planning and execution of major event programmes like the Olympic, Paralympic or Commonwealth Games involves navigating a myriad of complexities. The duration of these programmes, their substantial cost, and their profile and impact on a wide variety of stakeholders create an environment that can lead to sub-optimal outcomes if host cities are not provided with necessary information. When combined with the ongoing uncertainty over the planning horizon of the Games and the increasing complexity of their delivery, the need to manage the risk inherent in these events is intensifying. This research will seek to understand the needs of the OCs and provide both immediate suggestions for current OCs and long-term improvements for future host cities to reduce the impact of these risks.

Participant Selection: You have been selected to participate in this research as a member of a committee or organisation affiliated with the Olympic, Paralympic or Commonwealth Games.

Participant Involvement: Your participation in the study may include on-site observation, interviews, or providing documents for analysis, as well as follow-up over time using surveys and informal discussions.

Questions: Please feel free to ask the research any questions that you may have about the study before you decide to participate.

Withdrawal: You may choose whether to participate and, if you agree, you may withdraw from the study without penalty at any time by advising the researchers of this decision.

Ethical Approval: This project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee. Data will be stored confidentially and will be accessible only to researchers on the project. At the end of the project, data will be stored for a period of ten years in a secure location.

Benefits: The OCs participating in this research will receive ongoing updates on our work, and will have the opportunity to receive specific feedback based on the findings in the form of a presentation and summary report to the OC once the research is complete. This feedback will provide specific suggestions to improve programme management and to reduce costs and risks for current OCs.

Risks: There are no anticipated risks to being involved in this study.

Complaints: If you have a concern about any aspect of this project, please speak to the lead researcher, Allison Stewart, (allison.stewart@sbs.ox.ac.uk) who will do her best to answer your query. If you remain unhappy and wish to make a formal complaint, please contact Dr. C. Ballinger, IDREC Secretary for the Social Sciences Division (ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk), who will then direct your complaint to the appropriate body.
