



Minister for Health and Aged Care
Minister for Sport
THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP

Media Release

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Paralympians to make Australia proud

Minister for Sport Sussan Ley today wished Australia's 178 Australian athletes the very best for the 15th Paralympic Games in Rio, saying the country would be cheering them on.

"Our Australian Paralympians have shown tremendous drive, skill and resilience to be selected for this team and I have every confidence they will go on to do Australia proud over the coming weeks," Ms Ley said.

"The Paralympic Games is a great opportunity for the world to salute your talents and for every person with a disability to see the opportunities available to pursue sporting dreams and be the best they can.

"Australia will have 178 athletes competing across 16 sports. We have some wonderful ambassadors, led by experienced team captains Kurt Fearnley and Daniela Di Toro, while more than 80 athletes will have the thrill of competing at their very first Paralympic Games.

"It will be fantastic to see the enormous range of the athletes wearing the green and gold over the coming days from the team's senior competitor – Libby Kosmala in shooting – to 13-year-old track and field athlete Tamsin Colley.

"We look forward to watching you all compete, celebrating your achievements and hearing your inspirational stories."

The Australian Government, via the Australian Sports Commission and AIS, has significantly raised Paralympic funding in the approach to Rio. Of the \$64 million invested in Paralympic sports over the past four years, more than \$13 million has gone directly to athletes as part of dAIS grants to help support their training.

"The Australian Sports Commission and AIS have also provided their expertise to ensure our athletes arrive in Rio in the best shape," Ms Ley said.

"A great example of this ingenuity was a joint project between the AIS, Australian Paralympic Committee and Qantas to develop custom seating, enabling athletes to be individually fitted and relieve travel soreness on long haul flights.

The Paralympic Games run from September 7-18 with some 4350 athletes from 160 nations competing in 22 sports. For the first time para-canoe and para-triathlon will be on the competition schedule.

The Rio Paralympics will also feature more female competitors than ever before with 1650 females in the Games, up 10 per cent from London.

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