

SPORT AND RECREATION MINISTERS' COUNCIL COMMUNIQUÉ

Ministers call for coordinated approach to Sport and Recreation

CANBERRA, 6 June 2008

The safeguarding of Australia's sporting future is of the highest national importance, a meeting of Federal, State and Territory Sport Ministers agreed in Canberra today.

In a global environment of ever-increasing competition, Ministers agreed, at a meeting chaired by Federal Sport Minister Kate Ellis, that it was imperative the Commonwealth, State and Territories find new and better ways to work together to maximise Australia's sporting performance on the world stage.

Ministers welcomed the Commonwealth government's new framework, as outlined in the new directions paper *Emerging Challenges, New Directions*, and pledged to cooperate with the Commonwealth's independent review of Australian sport.

The Ministers agreed that in order to maintain Australia's pre-eminent position on the world sporting stage we need to examine ways to optimise coordination between State, Territory and Federal programs run by the Australian Institute of Sport and the various State and Territory Institutes and Academies of Sport.

Ministers welcomed the Commonwealth Government's recognition of the importance of physical activity in improving health and wellbeing in the community, as demonstrated by the placement of sport in the Federal Health portfolio and by the emphasis on participation in the new sport directions paper.

Ministers agreed that supporting community participation in sport and active recreation is vital. All Governments should continue to collaborate in encouraging grassroots participation.

Ministers also agreed on the importance of sport, physical activity and skills development within the education sector and the associated health benefits to students. Ministers welcomed Education Ministers close examination of the inclusion of sport and physical activity within the anticipated national curriculum. Ministers determined to advise COAG of the urgent need for every child to participate in physical activity as a preventative health measure.

Ministers agreed to work together to advance the position of women in sport. A recent Senate Inquiry into Women in Sport made recommendations that involved all levels of

Government. Ministers agreed that governments need to work together to implement measures that will increase the role, participation rates and opportunities for women and girls in sport.

Ministers emphasised the value of sport in Indigenous communities in terms of health, social inclusion and community building outcomes.

Ministers noted that there is potential for better cooperation on the delivery of programs targeted at increasing the participation of Indigenous people in sport and recreation and agreed to work cooperatively in the delivery of sport and recreation to Indigenous communities.

Ministers committed to work together to remove barriers for people with a disability participating in sport.

Ministers also agreed to work closely together to support Football Federation Australia's bid for the 2018 World Cup. They noted Australia would derive an enormous economic boost from hosting a World Cup, and that the nation would also gain broader benefits in tourism, in trade, in building infrastructure for the future, and in further enhancing our reputation as a sporting powerhouse.