



**commonwealth
sport**

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United Kingdom

18th September 2023

The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT, 2600

Attn: Tim Gartrell, chief of staff to the Prime Minister
s47F [@pm.gov.au](mailto:s47F@pm.gov.au)

Dear Prime Minister

Australia and the Commonwealth Games

We were pleased to quickly reach a fair settlement with the Victorian Government, and now remain focused on finding a solution for 2026 that is in the best interests of athletes and the wider Commonwealth Sport Movement.

We are working with Commonwealth Games Australia to actively explore opportunities to keep the 2026 Commonwealth Games, and their legacy benefits, in Australia. We plan to accelerate dialogue with potential hosts in the coming weeks and look forward to discussing this further with you.

Australia has always been a valued member of the Commonwealth Games Movement and has a proud history with the Commonwealth Games, hosting the main Games five times between Sydney in 1938 and the Gold Coast in 2018, as well as playing host to the Commonwealth Youth Games in Bendigo in 2004.

Australian athletes have excelled, too. The Commonwealth Games has delivered countless iconic moments including Cathy Freeman draped in the Australian and Aboriginal flags at Victoria 1994, teen sensation Ian Thorpe winning four gold medals at Kuala Lumpur 1998, and Kerryn McCann enthraling a packed MCG for marathon gold in 2006.

We would welcome your support in seeking another Australian city, or indeed cities, to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games. We believe it would be an inclusive and meaningful addition to Australia's "green and gold runway" of major sporting events over the decade to 2032, support strategic engagement across the Pacific and further afield, and showcase your country's hard-won reputation as a destination for world-class major sporting events.

It is clear from the response we have had in the last few weeks that there is huge enthusiasm and support for the Games. Australia's recent experience with the Gold Coast in 2018 is a great example of the transformational impact of hosting a Games on a city and wider region. Recent hosts have reported significant returns on investment, from employment and infrastructure, inward investment and tourism, to culture and sporting legacies.

Commonwealth Games Federation

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We continually strive to adapt and evolve our Games model. Our Strategic Plan provides potential hosts with new flexibility to be innovative and creative in delivering the Commonwealth Games, which we believe will make the Games more accessible to more hosts, including opening up the potential for new sport formats, multi-city or multi-country proposals.

My colleagues and I would welcome an opportunity to meet with you, or your representatives, as soon as possible, to discuss how we can work together on an Australian solution for 2026.

Most respectfully

s47F

Dame Louise Martin DBE

President

Commonwealth Games Federation

CC: The Hon. Anika Wells MP, Minister for Sport - Anika.Wells.MP@aph.gov.au

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Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

27 September 2023

Dear Prime Minister,

RE: Australia's preparedness to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games

On 28 August and 8 September, Commonwealth Games Australia (CGA) was called to appear at the Senate Inquiry into Australia's preparedness to host the Commonwealth, Olympic and Paralympic Games.

To the fullest extent possible, our evidence detailed the cancellation of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games and the settlement reached with the Victorian Government.

We appreciate that the inquiry has a political undertone and, ever conscious of this, will shortly be seeking an opportunity to meet with you (or your representatives) to discuss a way forward in a collaborative way.

We are steadfast in our belief that the 2026 Commonwealth Games, and their legacy benefits, should remain in Australia.

The cancellation of the Commonwealth Games came as a great shock to our movement, and it leaves a significant gap on the green and gold runway to Brisbane 2032.

As the second-largest multi-sport event in the world featuring 72 nations, and the only event of its size that brings together able-bodied and para-athletes, we deliver an unrivalled opportunity to a host city or state.

Further, for Australia to be successful at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, our athletes, their coaches, and the support personnel around them must develop their ability to compete and succeed on the world stage through the Commonwealth Games.

We have also received overwhelming feedback from across the Commonwealth, particularly from the nations of the Pacific and New Zealand, that an alternative host in Australia must be found.

For the athletes of the Pacific, a Games in Australia is a home Games. They provide athletes a competition opportunity in their own backyard and ensure Australia's ability to engage with neighbours who are vital to their foreign policy strategy. On the Gold Coast in 2018, 327 athletes represented the twelve island nations and territories of Pacific.

The Commonwealth Games also have the potential to feature cricket, shooting and archery, delivering an Indian audience of billions to Australian products and businesses enthused by the recent signing of the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA).

No other nation was more engaged on social media during Birmingham 2022 than India, which accounted for more than 50 per cent of the digital traffic. Indian Prime Minister Modi also regularly posted on his channels during the Games.

Australia's Commonwealth Games Team reflects a modern Australia like no other national team. Of the 429 athletes that competed at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, 230 were female, 71 competed in para-sport, 59 were born overseas and 10 were of First Nations heritage.

No other team in our nation looks more like Australia.

The 75-strong team that recently competed at the Commonwealth Youth Games saw athletes selected from every state and territory, representing 63 local sporting clubs and 58 high schools.

Both teams topped the medal tally.

We are committed to delivering inclusive, impactful, and sustainable Games that unite and inspire.

The Australian Sports Commission's own analysis confirmed that more than 70% of Australians followed Birmingham 2022, with 67% of those reporting that the Games made them feel proud and interested in participating in sport.

We acknowledge that state government support is critical to the delivery of a 2026 Games in Australia, however recognising the important role the Federal Government plays, we seek your leadership in making this a reality.

At Gold Coast 2018, the direct Federal Government investment of \$206 million delivered a \$2.5 billion increase to the Queensland State Domestic Product, including a \$1.8 billion boost to the Gold Coast. We are confident your support for a 2026 host can achieve this again.

Regards,

s47F

BEN HOUSTON

President

Commonwealth Games Australia

CC: The Hon. Anika Wells MP, Minister for Sport
Senator, the Hon. Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Senator, the Hon. Don Farrell, Special Minister of State and Minister for Trade
Tim Gartrell, Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister
s47F, Senior Adviser to the Prime Minister