



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS
AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SATURDAY, 9 MAY 2009

HIGH PERFORMANCE PLAN

I will start by updating you on the National High Performance Plan for Olympic and Paralympic sports that we prepared with you all and on your behalf. You will have all received this document.

I have been involved in a number of submissions now with the AOC to Government. The first one was when we got the additional \$10 million for the Super Seven Sports, back in the mid 80's, from Senator Richardson. Then we did the Gold Medal Plan in 1993, which resulted in an additional \$135 million for you the national federations, not us, for the six years leading into Sydney. Then we did another plan to take to Prime Minister Howard at the end of the Sydney Games, which resulted in a continuation of the earlier funding and some additional.

But this, I hope you agree, is by far the most comprehensive plan that we have ever put together. We engaged Craig McLatchey's consultancy company to help us with it and a lot of work went into it from our own staff, Craig (Phillips), Fiona de Jong and others and then you were very involved. We took up a lot of your time post-Beijing and at the Forum we had in early February.

We have a document here that was not easy to put together, in fact it is easier to find out the funding for sports in Great Britain than it is here in Australia. – a little more transparent over there. You will know we have been able to not only work out on a consistent basis what you need, summer and winter sports and Paralympic, to succeed at the next few Games, but also to look at the funding that our major competitors are receiving and therefore point out to Government how far behind we are in that area.

What's happened since? The Minister Kate Ellis wrote to me upon receipt of the document;

'I recognise the amount of work that has gone into the plan from yourself and other stakeholders. I have written to David Crawford enclosing a copy of the Plan, for the consideration of the Independent Sports Panel.' She also talked in this letter of how the Government is keen to continue and strengthen the relationship with the Australian Olympic Committee and work in partnership, for the benefit of Australian sport.

Kate and I then had a lengthy meeting in early April and we went through the document in detail. It was also by then with David Crawford and his Committee and in the Prime Minister's office.

Last night the Prime Minister rang me. You know that he is the Patron of this organisation. He was aware that this meeting was happening today and he has asked me to take this opportunity to thank you all for your contribution to Australian sport and to our country. In respect of the Plan, like Kate Ellis, he wanted me to know that the Government acknowledges receipt of the Plan, the Government acknowledges all of the work that has gone into the Plan, but they will not be responding until they receive the Crawford report, quote; *“We need to put the two together to make a considered response. We could not respond to half.”* And that was the essence of our discussion.

We then had a general discussion about London, including the support we are getting from the High Commissioner, the economy generally and all those sorts of matters. But it was good that he took time out to do that last night.

Brian Wilson, the Senior Sports Advisor to the Minister, is here this morning and delivered a letter, which I will read, from Minister Ellis which effectively reiterates what Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said.

“Please pass on my thanks to the National Sporting Organisations and other stakeholders for their contribution to this comprehensive piece of work.

The Government is pleased to continue to work with the AOC and Australian Paralympic Committee in addressing the needs of Australian athletes in their preparation for the London Olympic and Paralympic Games and beyond.

It is important to highlight that the forthcoming Federal budget will be tailored to the current economic circumstances and the immediate priority to minimise the impact of the global financial crisis. Our emphasis is on protecting Australians from the harshest elements of the global recession and supporting Australian jobs.

The Australian Government does firmly believe that sport has a fundamental and important role to play in our community. We recognise that sport is a positive and integral part of our nation and as the Prime Minister has indicated previously, we are committed to remaining a strong financial partner of sport and working in partnership with you to ensure that Australian sport remains strong and thriving .

‘We have committed an additional \$12.6 million in 2009/10 to support the needs of high performance sport. This additional investment includes \$4.5m in direct athlete support and \$8.1m in additional support to national sporting organisations. Our commitment is also evident by the ongoing development of a European Training Centre in Northern Italy which will provide Australian athletes support whilst training and competing overseas in key international events.

We recognise that sport is facing a range of challenges and the Government remains dedicated to further working with you ... though any further commitments will not preempt the Independent Panel’s expert enquiry into the Australian sports system which is currently underway.

As you are aware on the 28th of August 2008 I announced the appointment of the Independent Panel Chaired by Mr David Crawford to investigate the reforms required to ensure that Australia’s sporting system remains prepared for the challenges of the future.

The Independent Expert Panel will report back in the latter part of 2009 and the Government is expecting to respond to this report before the end of the year. The information that you have provided from the AOC/APC report will certainly assist the Government in forming its response to the review findings.

In the meantime the Government is committed to continue to investigate ways to further benefit Australian sport.

Following our recent discussions, I am committed to investigating the possibility of introducing 6 year funding cycles to assist sports with their long-term planning around Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games.”

As you know, this is something we have been pushing very hard in this document and at other opportunities.

‘I am also committed to working with you to ensure sensible consultation arrangements with your organisation form an important part of any upcoming reforms.

Thank you once again for the copy of your report and on behalf of the Australian Government, we look forward to continuing to work with you in partnership to strengthen Australian elite sport.’

So, things are not happening now as Kate has said, and the Prime Minister has said, our report and your needs will be considered in the context of the Crawford Report which will be before the end of this year.

Suffice to say, I am very pleased to say, it is certainly registering in the highest office in the country and being taken very, very seriously and I thank you again for your contribution.

We will continue to represent your interests in pursuing all of the additional funding that is required and I stress again, and you know, this is not additional funding for the Australian Olympic Committee. We do not seek and we do not receive financial assistance from Government. We are independent. We are doing this on your behalf.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Australia enjoys an outstanding Olympic history. As proud custodian of the Olympic movement in Australia, the AOC remains committed to promoting the Olympic ideals and values to all, through sport. In the lead up to Beijing, the AOC was twice required to consider the extent to which those ideals and values should apply to the standards of behaviour expected of Olympic Team members - off the sporting field. And in Beijing we became aware of one of our Team members having been charged with a criminal offence prior to the Games.

The AOC is proud of the excellent standards and conduct of past and present Olympians and the Executive considered that it had an obligation to protect that reputation.

With the benefit of this experience, the AOC Executive has considered its standard Team Membership Agreement and, for the 2010 Australian Olympic Winter Team, made changes to more clearly outline the standards of behaviour required of Olympic athletes. These include:

- asking athletes to disclose information about any conduct (whether publicly known or not) which may have brought themselves or their sport into disrepute or censure or which would be inconsistent with the best interests, image or values of the AOC or as a result of which would not be in the best interests of the Team;
- guidance on the kind of conduct which athletes will need to disclose – that is, convictions or charges with any serious offence involving alcohol or drugs or any sex offence or any offence which is punishable by imprisonment. Athletes must now disclose any such information from the time they are first recognised in the Shadow Team through to the completion of the Games;
- athletes being required to consent to the AOC conducting criminal record checks; and,
- consideration of any such conduct being determined by the AOC in its sole and absolute discretion. If, for example, an athlete has satisfied a punishment from a conviction and demonstrated continued good behaviour, the AOC may use its discretion to select that athlete.

These standards for athletes will be mirrored in the Team Membership Agreements for officials and have also been incorporated in our amended Olympic Team Selection By-Law.

And we have clarified the decision making process regarding any conduct issues. Prior to an Olympic Games, it is the AOC Executive which decides these issues and it may delegate to a sub-committee. During the Games, the Chef de Mission will have the sole and absolute authority to make decisions regarding conduct. This is necessary to enable decision to be made swiftly in the Games environment.

The changes reflect the view of the AOC Executive that athletes and officials must, at all times, conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in order to be members of an Australian Olympic Team.

The 2010 Australian Olympic Winter Team Membership Agreement for Athletes is posted on the AOC website olympics.com.au.

Representing our nation at an Olympic Games is an honour and a privilege which carries with it responsibilities. And so, I suggest, should representation in your sports at World Championships and other international competitions.

I encourage you, as leaders of your respective sports, to review the changes we have made and consider adopting similar standards for your teams.

AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC FOUNDATION

The stated investment objectives of the Foundation are to protect and grow the capital base whilst providing sufficient income and liquidity to provide a base distribution to the AOC toward its known commitments.

Since receiving the hard-fought Sydney Olympic Games legacy of \$88.48 million in 2000, the AOF has now made cash distributions to the AOC of:-

- \$26.7 million for the 2001-2004 quadrennium; and
- \$28.4 million for the 2005-2008 quadrennium.

Total \$55.1 million

\$25.18 million is budgeted to be received by the AOC from the Foundation over the 2009-2012 quadrennium with \$1.5 million received to date for the first quarter this year.

I repeat my advice each year since the Foundation was established in 1996. The members and Board of the Trustee of the Australian Olympic Foundation - that is, the Australian Olympic Foundation Limited are the voting members of the Executive of the AOC from time to time. That being the case and being mindful that one of the purposes of establishing the Foundation was to separate it from the day to day activities and control of the AOC, we have continued the practice of reporting separately on the Foundation's activities and results.

To that end, the 2008 Annual Report of the Foundation was circulated with the 2008 Annual Report of the AOC. It contains my Chairman's Review. A copy of my report to the Board of the Foundation at its meeting yesterday has been posted on our website and distributed today for your information.

TEAM FUNDRAISING 2009-2012

While the AOC's reliance on traditional fundraising has reduced as a percentage of total revenue since we negotiated the \$88.48 million legacy to the AOF from the Sydney Olympic Games, it nevertheless remains a critical component of AOC revenue and I take this opportunity to sincerely thank our State Olympic Councils, and their 2012 Olympic Appeal Committees, for again agreeing to undertake fundraising and on targets which, if achieved, will raise \$6 million towards the costs of the 2012 Olympic Team.

MARKETING AND LICENSING 2009-2012

I am pleased to report that the AOC and the Olympic Winter Institute of Australia (OWIA) have reappointed Mike Bushell's Sports Marketing and Management Pty Ltd (SMAM) as their exclusive sponsorship marketing agent for terms, in each case, ending 31 December 2016 and with the option for both bodies to extend to 2020.

And the AOC has appointed SMAM as our exclusive licensing agent for the term ending 31 December 2012 again with the option for the AOC to extend.

The AOC's commercial relationship with SMAM dates back to 1986, but before considering a further term the Executive commissioned an independent review of SMAM's past performance, the alternatives of undertaking some or all of our marketing sales and servicing in-house and putting the business out to competitive tender. The clear recommendation was to continue to outsource to SMAM.

I have previously reported that we have been selling sponsorships for terms extending beyond just one quadrennium.

As at 31 December 2008 the AOC had achieved \$29 million in sponsorship sales for the 2009-2012 quadrennium and \$8.2 million for the 2013-2016 quadrennium.

We are in the final stages of negotiation for a further \$3 million, which will get us to \$32 million, and leave \$4 million to achieve our \$36 million sponsorship budget for the current quadrennium.

While we did not anticipate the global financial crisis when deciding to sell sponsorships forward, the tactic has certainly left us in an enviable position and permitted us to commit to the Programs and Funding of \$30.5 million for sports on the 2012 London Olympic program, which we announced on 21 November 2008 and much of which would otherwise have been problematic. It also means we can honour our Programs and Funding commitments of \$6.8 million for sports on the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Winter Games program and announce a continuation, in May next year, through to the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi.

And all while remaining not only independent, but financially independent of Government.

2010 AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC WINTER TEAM, VANCOUVER

With Beijing behind us the focus of the AOC swiftly shifted to the cooler campaign of the 2010 Australian Olympic Winter Team heading to Vancouver, Canada in February 2010.

We are fortunate to have Ian Chesterman leading the Australian Team as Chef de Mission for the fourth occasion. We are expecting a Team of around 30-35 athletes across 10 disciplines. They will be split between Olympic Villages in the city of Vancouver and Whistler and a sub-site at West Vancouver for our freestyle skiers and snowboarders.

The Vancouver Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (VANOC) has done a remarkable job in the planning and preparations for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The feedback from the test events was overwhelmingly positive and we are confident that these Winter Olympics will be most successfully staged.

The AOC, together with sponsor Karbon, have developed the 2010 Team competition uniforms with all the latest science and technology that goes into winter sports wear. In recent weeks we conducted team processing sessions for prospective athletes and officials who had the opportunity to inspect the delegation wear as well as the formal uniforms being provided by Sportcraft. I understand they were most impressed.

The 2008/2009 winter season saw a continuation of the remarkable results being achieved by our winter athletes. 55 World Cup medals and 5 World Championship medals have been won by Australians in winter Olympic events since the 2006 Olympic Winter Games. Much of this success can be attributed to the ongoing work and programs of the AOC's Olympic Winter Institute of Australia (OWIA) and the great support it receives from the Australian Institute of Sport and Sports Commission.

We go into the 2010 Olympic Winter Games with an unprecedented depth of talent and across a wider range of disciplines and events than ever before. I congratulate the winter National Federations (NFs), OWIA Chairman, Geoff Henke, his Board, CEO Geoff Lipshut and all the coaches and support personnel on preparing our winter athletes so well. We know the months ahead will be a tense time for them as they attempt to achieve the required qualifying standards.

I also thank the NFs for their co-operation in developing the nomination and selection criteria. The qualification, nomination and selection processes will continue throughout this year and, in some cases, into January 2010.

I know you will join with me in wishing our athletes all the very best in their final preparations for the Games.

In partnership with our new Olympic host broadcasters, the Nine Network and Foxtel, we look forward to the images of our outstanding Winter Olympians being beamed into the living rooms of Australians and in so doing, providing all Australians with the thrills (and spills) of the Winter Olympic Games. It will be an unprecedented coverage with Nine to show 100 hours of coverage from Vancouver, including daily live telecasts, regular crosses to the Today Show and daily prime time highlights.

Foxtel will provide 1632 hours of coverage of which 340 hours will be live. They will cover every Australian performance live and every Gold Medal event live. They are launching four dedicated channels in high or standard definition named and based around the four venue clusters of Creekside, Cyprus, Whistler and Vancouver. Subscribers can opt to receive the channels on the television platform or online via foxtel.com.au or both. They are also planning a mobile telephone platform. For London the coverage will increase to eight high or standard definition channels.

2010 AUSTRALIAN YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES TEAM, SINGAPORE

In 2007 the IOC decided to stage Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in an effort to better connect with the youth of the world. The inaugural Youth Olympic Games will be held in Singapore from 14 – 26 August 2010 in twenty-five individual summer sports and disciplines and four team sports (men and women). The age range varies by sport, with most athletes being 16 to 18 years old.

To ensure the size of the event is contained, the IOC has imposed a cap on the number of athletes each NOC can send. While NOCs can qualify 123 athletes under the quotas agreed by the IOC with the International Federations, they are limited to a maximum of 70 athletes from the individual sports. The AOC Executive is committed to spreading Australia's representation across all 25 of the individual sports and disciplines and so will be adopting our own quotas. For some sports this will mean not every athlete who qualifies will be selected.

With the addition of two team sports, our Team will total about 100 athletes, who can be supported by a maximum of 35 coaches and other support staff.

We will be providing a more detailed briefing at the conclusion of this meeting.

The YOG will feature a culture and education program integrated with the sports competition. Athletes will be exposed to a variety of activities such as workshops and community projects and various exhibition booths. They will learn about important global and sports issues, contribute to the environment and society, interact with other young people around the world and celebrate the Olympic movement and the diverse cultures of the world.

In November 2008, the AOC selected Victorian Olympic Council President and dual Olympic Gold Medallist, Nick Green as Chef de Mission, AOC Director of Sport, Fiona de

Jong as Chief Operating Officer and Manager Olympic Education, Frances Cordaro as Team Media Director. We wish them well in these key roles.

2012 AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC TEAM, LONDON

It gave me great personal delight to also announce last November that the AOC Executive had appointed Nick Green as Chef de Mission of our 2012 Australian Olympic Team. And yesterday the Executive appointed Craig Phillips as Team Chief Operating Officer and Mike Tancred as Team Media Director.

I am a member of the IOC's Co-ordination Commission for the 2012 Games in London.

We have just completed our fourth inspection and meeting with the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and are most pleased with their continued good progress, particularly the construction of the sports venues and Olympic Village at the Olympic Park site.

There have been some changes to the location of venues since the bid, but all for the better and with only the proposed new venue for boxing at Wembley yet to be signed off by the International Federation and IOC.

The AOC is already receiving great support from the Australian High Commissioner to London, the Hon John Dauth and I know that swimming and athletics have settled on the location of their pre-Olympic training camps in England.

There are many Australians in key positions on the LOCOG staff and I congratulate delegates to this meeting, Alex Gavrilovic and Matthew Curtain on their key appointments as Handball and Weightlifting Competition Managers respectively.

OLYMPIC EDUCATION

Last year more than 14,000 teachers registered with the AOC's a.s.p.i.r.e. school network to participate in Olympic education activities. Following the programs success, specific activities such as Chat to a Champ, Olympic Day and the Village Art program are being offered in 2009.

Chat to a Champ facilitates the opportunity for primary students to talk live to their Olympian heroes using web video conferencing. The initiative is having an exciting impact on the lives of many young Australians. The AOC has purchased laptops with webcams and internet access, which are provided to participating schools for each session. I would like to thank Robin Bell, Amy Hetzel, Steve Hooker, Rebecca Rippon, Jane Saville, Emily Seebohm and Ken Wallace for supporting the program.

The AOC's Winter Olympic education program is well underway. Schools have been invited to join with millions of young people around the world and celebrate Olympic Day in June with a winter theme. They will also be invited to create artwork to hang in the Australian apartments of the Olympic Villages and participate in Chat to a Champ, live from Vancouver.

I am delighted to introduce a new initiative currently in development called Learn from a Champ. This online video resource is a series of short interviews with members of the AOC Athletes' Commission, exploring the highs and lows of their involvement in sport and life. Themed on the a.s.p.i.r.e. values, it will be a wonderful resource for teachers and students to freely access anywhere, anytime at olympics.com.au.

Now in its 17th year, over 750 Australian secondary school students are expected to receive the prestigious Pierre de Coubertin award in 2009. I would like to thank the State Olympic Councils for coordinating the program in their respective states and supporting Olympic education.

Helen Brownlee can be very proud of where we have taken Olympic Education under her guidance.

JOHN D COATES AC
President