
Assistance for the Olympic team

On 23 January 1979, Cabinet considered a submission from Home Affairs Minister Robert Ellicott on Commonwealth support for the 1980 Australian Olympic team. Ellicott reminded Cabinet of Australia's poor showing at Montreal in 1976 and noted that the Moscow games would be costly because of the need for athletes to acclimatise through pre-Olympics training and competition in Europe. Finance was unenthusiastic, but Cabinet agreed to provide \$300,000 for pre-event training and a further \$500,000 for the Australian Olympic Federation on a dollar-for-dollar basis (Submission 2884; Decision 7499, not printed here).

Selected document

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[A12909, 2884]

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Submission No. 2884
Copy No. 54

FOR CABINET

Title	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE 1980 OLYMPIC AND 1982 COMMONWEALTH GAMES TEAMS
Minister	R. J. Ellicott Minister for Home Affairs
Purpose/Issues	To determine the level of Commonwealth support to the Australian Olympic Federation in its preparations for the 1980 Olympic Games with ongoing benefit to the 1982 Commonwealth Games team.
Relation to existing policy	A submission canvassing possible general financial assistance for the 1980 Olympic and 1982 Commonwealth Games, including pre-event training was required by Decision No 7270. This is consistent with previous Decision No 3384 of 19 July 1977 and No 4739 of 28 February 1978.
Legislation involved	NO
Urgency: Critical/significant dates	To be announced by Prime Minister on 10 February 1979 at launching of Olympic Appeal
Consultation: Ministers/Depts consulted	Prime Minister and Cabinet; Finance; Foreign Affairs
Is there agreement?	NO - Dept. of Finance disagrees with providing additional funds in 1978-79
Cost	
- this fiscal year	1978-79 \$100,000
- year 2	1979-80 \$700,000
- year 3	1980-81 -

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Public Presentation - Minister's Proposals

<p>1. (a) When and where is the decision to be announced?</p>	<p>During the tea break of the Sixth Cricket Test in Sydney on Saturday, 10 February 1979.</p>
<p>(b) Is a draft press statement attached?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>(c) How widely is the announcement to be circulated?</p>	<p>Nationally through T.V., Radio and Press</p>
<p>2. (a) Is a press conference considered necessary?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>(b) What media opportunities will be taken?</p>	<p>Announcement will be live on national television and is expected to be reported on national news</p>
<p>3. What supplementary material is required for backgrounding journalists, Members and special interest groups?</p>	<p>Nil</p>
<p>4. (a) What prior consultation with State Governments or other official bodies is required?</p>	<p>Nil</p>
<p>(b) Which special interest groups should be advised of the announcement?</p>	<p>Australian Olympic Federation</p>
<p>5. What general or sectional support can be expected?</p>	<p>Support of general public and national sports associations can be expected</p>
<p>6. What criticism is anticipated and how will it be answered?</p>	<p>The Confederation of Australian Sport may be critical that additional funds have not been provided for other than Olympic sports. This can be explained by reference to the special nature of the Olympics and the funds made available to these other sports through the Sports Development Program.</p> <p>It may draw adverse comment from groups in Australia averse to holding the Games in Moscow and Australia's participation in them. This could be overcome by explaining the benefits to be gained by participating.</p>

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1. CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES: As the majority of Commonwealth Games sports are common to the Olympics (ATTACHMENT B) this submission concentrates on the 1980 Olympic team as any assistance will benefit both Games teams. Specific assistance for the preparation of the 1982 Commonwealth Games team will be sought at a later stage and probably in the 1980-81 Budget context.

2. Traditionally, the Commonwealth provides assistance to help field Australian Olympic teams. This has always been in the nature of 'self-help' and has not really constituted a major proportion of costs. For the 1976 Games in Montreal, the Government provided \$250,000 towards travel costs, the total budget being in the vicinity of \$800,000.

3. Australia did not do well in Montreal and greater Government assistance was sought. The introduction of the Sports Development Program in August 1977 has assisted to some degree. The preparation, transport and participation costs of the Australian teams for the Winter Games in Lake Placid, U.S.A., in February 1980 and the main Games in Russia in July 1980 require special additional help. At the same time assistance for these Games could be seen as part of Governmental support for a national sports training program which was designed to encourage and improve the performance of our athletes not only in the Olympics but at other times. I believe such a program is highly desirable and I hope to bring back more positive recommendations in relation to such a program after discussions with the Sports Advisory Council.

4. For its part, the Australian Olympic Federation (AOF) began planning immediately after Montreal. It reorganised its administrative structure; decided to assert itself over its affiliated sports bodies to take an active role in planning and preparation for 1980; forced its affiliates to plan ahead; prepared a budget to carry out these plans - \$2.5m over the 4 years leading up to Moscow (ATTACHMENT C);

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and introduced a marketing/franchising plan with which it intends to raise \$1.0m towards this budget.

3. The Sports Advisory Council has recognised that transportation costs and pre-event training and competition costs constitute the major problem to Games' teams. My discussions with the ACF confirm this. Because of cheaper international fares, the ACF expects some reduction in its budgetted overseas fares from \$840,000 to something above \$750,000. In addition, it has budgetted for \$1.0m as forward planning grants which is for pre-Games training.

6. These costs are much higher than for previous Games because of the ACF's decision to alter team travel arrangements. In the past, all team members were expected to fly on a chartered aircraft from Australia immediately before the Games commenced. In 1980, the ACF will allow teams to travel independently to other parts of the world for pre-Games competition en route to the Games. They will then meet in Frankfurt and travel together to Moscow. This approach will allow sports to gain important international competition in Europe and for our teams to acclimatize to the Northern summer, e.g. the majority of the Equestrian team expects to move to England in January 1980 for 6 months training on the European circuit.

7. In addition, the USSR authorities have invited 30 Australians to participate in a major sports Festival in Moscow in July 1979 - the Spartakiade. In all, 2,000 foreign competitors will attend. Estimated transport and outfitting costs are \$75,000. Accommodation will be met by USSR. This has not been budgetted for by the ACF or the sports associations. However, it would give invaluable experience to those who attend.

8. In considering our approach, I am convinced that the Commonwealth's contribution should be both significant and identifiable. In addition, it should be made in such a way that it will help the ACF's fund raising efforts.

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9. Our initiative of introducing pre-event training grants for the recent Commonwealth Games in Edmonton was warmly welcomed by sports although some found it too late to be of maximum benefit. Because of its new forward planning, the AOF is in a better position to use such grants for training camps for national squads, overseas training tours for selected athletes, conduct of special competitions, out-of-season competition in the northern hemisphere, and, of course, involvement in the Spartakiade.

10. I am, therefore, seeking special allocations for the AOF of \$100,000 in 1978-79 and \$200,000 in 1979-80 for pre-event training. These grants would be clearly identified for this purpose, would include costs for the Spartakiade, and would supplement grants made by the AOF under its own grant scheme.

11. In addition, some form of grant towards transport and other costs is appropriate. To meet its budget of \$2.7 million, the AOF expects to raise \$1.0 million from marketing and franchising with the balance coming from public subscriptions. I believe that a \$1 for \$1 subsidy up to a maximum of \$500,000 for funds raised other than by marketing and franchising would encourage public donations and greatly assist the AOF.

12. OPTIONS: Alternatives considered included making a once-and-for-all \$10 million grant to the AOF or meeting full transportation costs. I discarded the former as impractical and the latter because it is too open ended and it would fluctuate from Games to Games. I prefer the option proposed because the pre-event training grants are for a specific purpose and are easily identified while the \$1 for \$1 subsidy has an inbuilt incentive for the AOF to raise the balance of its requirements.

13. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS: These grants are special grants over and above the Sports Development Program allocation. In 1978-79 \$100,000 would be required under Additional Estimates. The balance of \$700,000 would be required by the AOF in 1979-80

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as the Games are in July 1980 and all costs will have to be met prior to the Games. If the Government did not wish to make the full amount available in 1979-80 the ACF would, no doubt, accept a Government guarantee that the balance would be provided early in July 1980.

14. CO-ORDINATION: The Departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet and Foreign Affairs agree with the recommendations.

15. The Department of Finance notes that by Decision No 4739 of 28 February 1978 Cabinet agreed, inter alia, that the Sports Advisory Council be asked to consider the best way of including future Olympic and Commonwealth Games assistance within the Sports Development Program. Cabinet further noted, in Decision No 7270 of 28 November 1978 that the then Minister for Environment, Housing and Community Development was to ask the Sports Advisory Council to investigate and make recommendations for a National Sports Program which would cover Olympic and Commonwealth Games assistance. Action on this proposal has not yet been completed.

16. In any event, on budgetary grounds, Finance does not support the provision of funds additional to the Sports Development Program for pre-event training in 1978-79.

17. Similarly, in future years, provision for this purpose should be made from whatever funds are allocated in the Budget to the Sports Development Program.

18. TIMING: The Prime Minister is to launch the ACF public appeal for funds on 10 February 1979 and is to announce the Commonwealth's contribution at that time (ATTACHMENT A).

19. RECOMMENDATIONS: It is recommended that Cabinet

- (a) approve special grants to the Australian Olympic Federation for pre-event training and competition for Australia's 1980 Olympic team of \$100,000 in 1978-79 and \$200,000 in 1979-80;

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- (b) approve a further grant to the Australian Olympic Federation in 1979-80 on a \$1 for \$1 basis up to a maximum of \$500,000, for funds raised by the Federation over and above its marketing and franchising program;
- (c) agree that these grants be announced by the Prime Minister when he opens the Olympic Federation's public appeal for funds;
- (d) agree that a further submission be brought forward, at an appropriate time, which suggests appropriate Commonwealth support for the 1987 Commonwealth Games team.

R. J. Elliott

12 January 1979

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