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Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References
Committee reports:

Australia's preparedness to host the Commonwealth,
Olympic and Paralympic Games

Interim Report (September 2023)

Second Interim Report (December 2023)

and

Final Report (April 2025)

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Introduction

The Australian Government (the Government) is providing a response to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee's (the Committee) interim, second interim and final reports of the inquiry into *Australia's preparedness to host the Commonwealth, Olympic and Paralympic Games*.

On 30 March 2023, the Senate referred the matter to the Committee for inquiry and report by 1 September 2023. The Committee's inquiry was subsequently extended to 6 May 2025.

The Government notes that there were no recommendations in the final report, with 24 recommendations raised in interim reports. As the Committee's final report notes, several of the recommendations have been addressed since their release and the Government continues to work collaboratively with stakeholders to make the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games a success for all Australians.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games coming to Brisbane in 2032 provides a unique opportunity to engage Australian communities, reinforcing unity, health and wellbeing and celebrating an enduring love of sport. The Government is working to maximise the impact of hosting this pinnacle global event, and secure a range of benefits for Queensland, Australia and the broader Oceania region.

Collaboration across all Games Delivery Partners¹ will be fundamental to successful planning, delivery and maximising the positive impacts of the Brisbane 2032 Games. The Government speaks from experience. Its recent success in hosting major international sporting events in Australia, notably the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, was based on genuine engagement and collaboration with delivery partners and other key stakeholders.

Government contributions to the Brisbane 2032 Games include direct financial support, record investment in venue and transport infrastructure, in-kind provision of operational services in areas of Commonwealth responsibility (including for instance, national security arrangements, intellectual property rights protection, and anti-doping arrangements).

The Government is also considering strategic opportunities to leverage the Brisbane 2032 Games to achieve broader policy priorities in areas such as trade and tourism, diplomacy, community sport participation, inclusion, reconciliation and high performance sport.

The Government would like to thank the Committee for its work in preparing the interim, second interim and final reports. The Government acknowledges the additional comments and dissenting reports made by the Labor Senators and Australian Greens.

The Government is making unprecedented investment towards Australia's next Games in Brisbane and will continue to work with Games Delivery Partners to ensure this once-in-a-generation opportunity delivers positive outcomes for Australia.

¹ Games Delivery Partners: Australian Government, Queensland Government, Brisbane City Council, Sunshine Coast Council, Gold Coast Council, South East Queensland Council of Mayors, Australian Olympic Committee, Paralympics Australia, Brisbane 2032 Games Organising Committee, Games Independent Infrastructure and Coordination Authority.

Australian Government Response to Recommendations

Key Theme: 2026 Commonwealth Games

Interim Report Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Australian Government takes on a facilitation and coordination role in order to salvage the 2026 Commonwealth Games being held in Australia. Before the end of 2023, the Australian Government should:

- *establish an intergovernmental forum, through National Cabinet or a bespoke mechanism, bringing together representatives from all three levels of government, business associations and community groups, to examine options to salvage the Commonwealth Games;*
- *direct the Departments of Health and Aged Care and Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts to produce low, medium and high funding options for the Australian Government that would enable the Commonwealth Games to be salvaged and hosted in 2026; and*
- *subject to the above, and in coordination with any other relevant stakeholders, including Gold Coast City Council and other local governments, enter into discussions with Commonwealth Games Federation and Commonwealth Games Australia about prospects for hosting the Games, including a reduced or decentralised Games if necessary.*

Interim Report Recommendation 2

If stakeholders cannot agree on an approach to salvage the Games, the committee recommends that the Australian Government develops a policy to address the missed opportunities and impacts from the cancellation of Victoria 2026. The policy, developed in consultation with National Sporting Organisations and National Sporting Organisations for People with Disability, should:

- *identify which sports and disciplines have been disproportionately impacted by the cancellation, for example those that were relying on 2026 as a pathway to the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles (LA 2028) and Brisbane 2032, or which have not yet featured at the Olympics and Paralympics (for example, netball);*
- *enable paralympic athletes to access classification events internationally; and*
- *address a shortfall in infrastructure which will not now be funded.*

Interim Report Recommendation 4

The committee recommends that the Australian Government encourages the Victorian Government to prioritise the delivery of its \$2 billion alternative rural and regional funding package, including by publicly releasing full details on where funding will be allocated, what projects it will be allocated to, and accountable timeframes for delivery.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 16

The committee recommends that the Australian Government lead the development with interested stakeholders of an Australian bid to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games. Additionally, the committee recommends the Australian Government provide public reasoning for any decisions made on the proposals.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 17

The committee recommends the Australian Government comprehensively review, and report to Parliament, the missed economic, social, and legacy opportunities following the cancellation of the 2026 Commonwealth Games. This review and report should include the impact on Athletes and the proposed regional host communities of Bendigo, Ballarat, Gippsland, and Geelong.

Government response**The Government notes Interim Report Recommendations 1 and 2 and Second Interim Report Recommendation 16.**

Glasgow will host the 2026 Commonwealth Games. The Government considers these recommendations require no further action.

The decision to host a major sporting event is a matter for state and territory governments. It is a state and territory government that enters into a host contract with the event organising body and is responsible for delivery. The Government cannot produce funding options to support events without a host jurisdiction or host contract in place.

The Government notes that prior to the first public hearing of this Senate Inquiry, all state and territory leaders had publicly ruled out bidding for the 2026 Commonwealth Games. This position was confirmed on multiple occasions in meetings between the Australian and state and territory governments at various levels.

There were no changes to the Government's funding for National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) and National Sporting Organisations for people with a Disability (NSODs) as a result of the Victorian Government's decision to withdraw as host of the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) works closely with Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sports to support athletes, coaches and performance support staff in the lead up to their pinnacle sporting events. More information on the Government's investment in support of Australia's high performance athletes and pathways can be found under the 'high performance funding' key theme.

The Government does not support Interim Report Recommendation 4 or Second Interim Report Recommendation 17.

Unilateral funding decisions taken by state and territory governments remain matters for consideration by those state and territory governments and parliaments.

The Parliament of Victoria held an inquiry into the 2026 Commonwealth Games bid and produced a comprehensive final report in April 2025². The report includes information both on the status of the Victorian Government's rural and regional funding package, and the impact of the Victorian Government's withdrawal as host.

² [Reports - Inquiry into the 2026 Commonwealth Games Bid - Parliament of Victoria](#)

Key Theme: Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games – Infrastructure**Interim Report Recommendation 5**

The committee recommends the Australian Government works with the Queensland Government, affected communities and Olympics Games organising bodies to urgently review the decision to host Athletics events at the Gabba stadium and the associated plans to demolish the East Brisbane State School and temporarily remove community access to Raymond Park. The review should consider the feasibility of alternative options, including using existing infrastructure, and work to find a solution that is acceptable to these communities.

Interim Report Recommendation 6

If the result of a review of the Gabba stadium decision still requires the demolition of the East Brisbane School, the Queensland Government should work with the local community to build a new school in closer proximity to the existing school than the proposed Coorparoo school.

Interim Report Recommendation 7

The committee recommends the Australian Government works through an intergovernmental forum, such as National Cabinet, to explore the most cost-effective solution for hosting the canoe slalom events at the Brisbane 2032 Games. If it is feasible to host the events at the Penrith Whitewater Centre in New South Wales, including with refurbishments, this option should be prioritised over building a new facility.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 3

The committee reiterates its recommendation in the first interim report and recommends that the Australian Government works with the Queensland Government to halt the redevelopment of the Brisbane Cricket Ground (Gabba) until such time that a review of the business case and a socioeconomic cost benefit analysis of the decision to redevelop the Gabba has been completed. This business case should consider the costs of relocating the East Brisbane State School, as stated in the first interim report, as well as the additional costs of displacing sporting codes that currently use the Gabba.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 8

The committee recommends the Australian Parliament consider amendments to the Infrastructure Australia Amendment (Independent Review) Bill 2023 to expand Infrastructure Australia's functions to include nationally significant social infrastructure and provide a greater level of overview for the Brisbane Live Arena project.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 9

The committee recommends the Australian Government work cohesively with the Queensland Government to ensure completion of the Sunshine Coast Direct Line from Beerwah to Maroochydore. To de-risk the delivery timelines the project should be delivered in 2029–30 as set out in the March 2022–23 Budget to ensure the rail is operational well in advance of the Brisbane 2032 Games.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 10

The committee recommends the Australian Government provide greater clarity and transparency on the delivery of infrastructure projects for the Brisbane 2032 Games, or for projects that will have an impact on the Games. As part of this work the committee also

recommends that the business case for the Brisbane Live Arena be put to Infrastructure Australia for assessment to ensure it meets the Australian Government's infrastructure priorities.

Government response

The Government notes Interim Report Recommendations 5, 6 and 7, and Second Interim Report Recommendations 3, 8, 9 and 10.

As the Committee's final report notes, several of the recommendations made in the interim and second interim reports have been addressed.

The Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) on the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games³ outlines the framework for the Government's enduring partnership with the Queensland Government on Games venue projects.

The venue infrastructure projects the Government is investing in can be found in the IGA.

The Queensland Government is responsible for working alongside the International Olympic Committee to finalise the location of Olympic sports based on sporting and host contract requirements.

The Government currently administers a number of measures to ensure transparency and clarity around delivery of infrastructure project for the Brisbane 2032 Games. Accountability mechanisms are prescribed in the IGA and the Government's investment in venue infrastructure is supported by project validation reports (or business cases) and independent assurance work to ensure value for money and long-term community benefits.

Milestones for project payments are outlined in the related Federation Funding Agreement (FFA) published online at: www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au.

The IGA's rigorous, self-contained arrangements give a high level of assurance over the projects, including joint Australian and Queensland Government selection of design and delivery partners, review under the Queensland Gateway Review process, independent health checks, and a requirement for the Queensland Government to provide updates and advice on project issues.

On Second Interim Report Recommendation 8, the *Infrastructure Australia Act 2008* already defines 'nationally significant infrastructure' as including social infrastructure.

The Government is working collaboratively with the Queensland Government on transport projects necessary to help with the movement of athletes, officials and spectators for the Brisbane 2032 Games.

The Government will consider funding requests as part of its usual budget processes.

³ Published on Federation.gov.au. The IGA is subject to updates. Further information can be found in the 3 July 2025 media release <https://minister.infrastructure.gov.au/c-king/media-release/2032-games-infrastructure-funding-deal-confirmed>.

Key Theme: Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games – Regional Queensland and legacy

Second Interim Report Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with the Queensland Government to undertake a review of the potential benefits and opportunities on offer across regional Queensland to support the Brisbane 2032 Games, improve sports outcomes, and subsequently boost regional development. This review should:

- *include an audit of all sporting infrastructure in regional Queensland to assess the quality, size, and location of venues to maximise use of venues including through multi-use facilities, reduce duplication and identify infrastructure gaps that act as a barrier to sport participation and high performance outcomes; and*
- *build on the work of the Local Government Association of Queensland's sports inventory project.*

Second Interim Report Recommendation 2

The committee recommends against any further upgrades to sporting infrastructure in Brisbane to replace events displaced by the construction of Olympics infrastructure. Instead, the committee recommends that:

- *the Australian Government and the Queensland Governments work with affected sporting codes to upgrade infrastructure outside of Brisbane to provide more tangible legacy outcomes from the 2032 Games; and*
- *the Australian Government establishes a 2032 Olympics Rural and Remote Queensland funding program to ensure that areas outside South East Queensland receive equitable funding for essential infrastructure and community facilities to maximise and broaden the benefits of the Brisbane 2032 Games.*

Second Interim Report Recommendation 4

The committee recommends that the Australian Government works with the Queensland Government to update the Brisbane 2032 legacy strategy, Elevate 2042, to include specific focus areas on regional infrastructure and tourism. This work should also consider consolidating the four separate focus areas that currently target environmental issues (Focus 7, 8, 9 and 10) and ensure focus areas are adequate to support a lasting legacy following the Olympic Games.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 6

The committee recommends that the Australian Government actively engage with the Queensland Government to:

- *undertake a housing needs analysis in Games locations, with a view to mobilising all levels of government and stakeholders in the housing industry to coordinate responses in identifying opportunities to increase housing supply without impacts to housing affordability; and*
- *agree a co-funding arrangement that ensures the athlete's accommodation is converted into social and affordable housing when the Games conclude.*

Government response

The Government notes Second Interim Report Recommendations 1, 2, 4 and 6.

The Government has committed up to \$3.435 billion for Brisbane 2032 Games venue infrastructure, outlined in the IGA. This commitment includes capped funding for regional venues identified by the Queensland Government as necessary for Brisbane 2032 Games events and legacy outcomes.

The Government also has a range of open and competitive grants programs for capital works projects available to regional communities throughout Australia.

The Government is committed to improving opportunities for community participation in sport and physical activity across Australia. The Play Our Way grant program – a \$200 million investment giving women and girls greater opportunity to access, participate and stay involved in sport and physical activity – is a clear example of this commitment. Australia's National Sport Strategy 2024-2034, *Sport Horizon*⁴, will guide the Government's investment in Australia's sport sector to drive healthy, active and connected communities.

The Government supported the development of *Elevate 2042*⁵ in 2023 and is committed to ensuring the Brisbane 2032 Games have broad legacy impacts not just in South East Queensland, but across Australia and the Pacific. This already includes focus areas targeting the tourism sector and greater housing accessibility and affordability in target locations. *Elevate 2042* and subsequent implementation plans are the collective work of all Games Delivery Partners. Any changes to its focus areas will be at the discretion of that cohort.

Location, design and funding of athletes' villages are a matter for the Queensland Government. The Government notes the intention of Queensland to convert a portion of these villages to a mix of housing types following the Brisbane 2032 Games.

⁴ [National Sport Strategy 2024-2034](#)

⁵ cdn.giica.au/documents/ELEVATE 2042 Legacy Strategy FULL LENGTH.pdf

Key Theme: Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games – Governance

Second Interim Report Recommendation 5

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with the Queensland Government to appoint a regional Queensland community leader to the board of the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee. The community leader should act as a liaison for consultation, decision-making and ensure effective regional representation.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 7

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with the Queensland Government to explore options to improve transparency and accountability mechanisms. As part of this process, an independent and integrated Olympic Coordination Authority, with representation from all three levels of government should be considered as an alternative governance arrangement.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 13

The committee recommends that the Australian Government undertake more frequent meetings with the whole-of-government Inter-Departmental Committee to discuss arrangements for visas in the lead up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and any other upcoming events to ensure swift access can be provided to athletes, coaches, and officials, particularly from neighbouring Pacific Island nations.

Government response

The Government notes Second Interim Report Recommendations 5, 7 and 13.

As the Committee's final report notes, several of the recommendations made in the interim and second interim reports have been addressed since their release.

The governance for the Brisbane 2032 Games is set out in the *Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Act 2021* (Qld). Under the IGA, the Government has accountability mechanisms as well as protections for governance arrangements to ensure the Government's representation in Brisbane 2032 Games matters.

The Government continues to work collaboratively with the Queensland Government to ensure representation on Brisbane 2032 Games governance forums remains relevant and appropriate to its level of investment and areas of responsibility.

The Government has also committed to supporting the hosting of the Brisbane 2032 Games through delivery of operational support services, including in relation to national security, visas, telecommunications and so on. To support the delivery of these commitments, the Office for Sport convenes regular Interdepartmental Committee meetings. The frequency of these meetings may increase in the lead up to the Brisbane 2032 Games, however, is currently fit for purpose.

Key Theme: Major sporting events funding and policy

Interim Report Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Australian Government develops guidelines for future major sporting events which make Commonwealth funding, regulatory, policy and operational support conditional on state and territory governments being required to notify the Australian Government well in advance of cancelling, or making major changes to, a major sporting event for which hosting rights have been awarded.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 11

The committee recommends that the Australian Government through the Office for Sport, progress the establishment of a national strategy for major sporting events in collaboration with all governments, sporting associations and event organisers to maximise Australia's sporting events calendar and the subsequent participation, economic, social, and legacy benefits.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 12

The committee recommends that the Australian Government develops guidelines for future major sporting events which make Commonwealth funding, regulatory, policy and operational support conditional on state and territory governments providing concrete, measurable evidence of the legacy benefits for the community, and evidence that they have undertaken timely, adequate, and meaningful consultation with communities before making decisions on venues and infrastructure.

Government response

The Government notes Interim Report Recommendation 3 and supports in principle Second Interim Report Recommendations 11 and 12.

The Government will not seek to replace or duplicate the role of states and territories as host governments for major sporting events.

Where the Government is supporting the funding and/or delivery of events, it expects close collaboration with the organisers and host state and territory governments, including clear and timely communications. Funding agreements between the Government and event organisers already contain clauses relating to 'changes with material effect' for major sporting events and appropriate notice periods to the government in these circumstances.

The Government developed *Sport Horizon* with and for the Australian sport sector. It sets a collective vision and priorities for sport in Australia over the next decade.

The focus of *Sport Horizon* is on sport, including organised sport, development pathways and high performance. Given the health and wellbeing benefits of an active lifestyle and emerging pathways into sport, *Sport Horizon* also seeks to leverage opportunities created through active recreation and physical activity in schools and the community.

Sport Horizon will maximise the opportunities created by the decade of major sporting events leading up to and including the Brisbane 2032 Games.

In 2024 the Government published the *Major Sporting Events Legacy Framework*⁶ to provide guidance to sporting organisations seeking support. It helps the Government consider which proposals offer the greatest return on investment and broadest legacy impacts in line with strategic objectives.

⁶ [Major Sporting Events Legacy Framework | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#)

Key Theme: High performance funding**Second Interim Report Recommendation 14**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government review current funding mechanisms and investment levels for Australian Sports Commission funded Commonwealth, Olympic and Paralympic Games sports and their associations to ensure funding levels are appropriate and sufficient to meet the needs of athletes and their teams to produce successful outcomes in upcoming major events including Paris 2024 and through to Brisbane 2032. This review should also recognise additional para-athlete qualification requirements.

Second Interim Report Recommendation 15

The committee recommends that the Australian Government does not relocate the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) from Canberra. Any funding that would be required to relocate the AIS should instead be invested into upgrading the current AIS location in Bruce, Canberra to ensure the facility is fit-for-purpose and can support the needs of Australia's athletes leading up to and beyond the Brisbane 2032 Games.

Government response

The Government notes Second Interim Report Recommendation 14 and supports Second Interim Report Recommendation 15.

In the 2024-25 Federal Budget, the ASC received a record investment of \$283.5 million to support athletes, coaches and support staff starting preparations for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games cycle. This is the largest ever investment from the Government in Olympic and Paralympic sports to help Australian athletes achieve success on world stages. This new funding is in addition to existing \$102.8 million annual ASC base high-performance funding and brings the Government's total high-performance investment to \$489.0 million over two years.

This boost to high-performance funding will strengthen Australia's position as a world leading sporting nation in the lead up to the Brisbane 2032 Games. It will create more opportunities and better development pathways for high-performance athletes to thrive, win well and inspire the next generation of healthier Australians.

The investment provides support for recruitment and retention of athletes, coaches and leadership personnel; ensures athletes have the day-to-day resources, support and guidance for training and preparation to achieve international success; and supports access to appropriate domestic and international competitions. Programs that will support high-performance athletes now, and in the lead up to, the Brisbane 2032 Games include:

- High-Performance Grants to national sporting organisations (\$118.5 million).
- Olympic and Paralympic Fund (\$40.5 million to cover increased competition costs).
- Performance Pathways and Athlete Pathways Grants (\$51.9 million) to support athletes to reach their potential.
- Paralympic sport uplift to address systemic and structural barriers to performance including para-athlete qualification requirements (\$54.9 million).

- Direct Athlete Support Grants to assist with cost-of-living pressures (\$17.6 millions). This provides direct financial support to more than 900 athletes across 30 NSOs/NSODs training in Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sports.

The Government also announced \$2.058 million investment on 22 June 2025 to support the Australian Team for the Milano Cortina 2026 Paralympic Games.

On 10 May 2024, the Government announced a \$249.7 million investment to upgrade AIS facilities in Canberra to ensure they are modern and world-leading. This investment followed the *Independent Review into AIS Infrastructure* and will see the construction of three new high performance sport facilities at the existing AIS campus.

The ASC anticipates construction to be complete by early 2027 to enhance athlete preparations in the leadup to the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Brisbane 2032 Games and beyond.

The ASC is connected with the ACT Government to participate in preliminary discussions regarding the Masterplan for the broader Bruce, Australian Capital Territory precinct.