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PRIME MINISTER

FURTHER SUPPORT FOR COMMONWEALTH SPORT

Australia will extend its existing successful programmes assisting the development of sport in the Commonwealth.

Australia will provide an additional \$1.8 million to assist development of South Africa's Protea Sport programme and work with South Africa to extend this programme to other parts of the Commonwealth in Africa.

As part of Australia's commitment to ensure Commonwealth sport prospers we will also provide \$1.35 million to work with Caribbean countries to extend support for junior sport development.

These programmes will run until 2006.

The Commonwealth has a proud record in sport at the elite level and, equally importantly, as part of its work for community development. As a strong sporting nation Australia is an active supporter of Commonwealth sport and the major donor for sports related activities.

But more can be done to ensure Commonwealth sport prospers in the internationally competitive sporting arena.

These measures will help to broaden sports development so the Commonwealth Games remains a competition of international stature and wide interest.

In building for the future now, we not only encourage tomorrow's athletes but ensure all our young people the benefits of sports participation.

Australia has a \$3 million sports development programme for the South Pacific. This programme aims at ensuring the South Pacific countries have every opportunity to participate in the Sydney 2000 Olympics and strengthens the Commonwealth focus on the benefits of sports development. Subject to review this programme will be extended until 2006.

To help the Commonwealth position itself, Australia also is willing to support a working group of the CHOGM Committee on Cooperation on Sport to develop a

Commonwealth wide strategy on sports development and ensure greater integration of donor efforts.

The package reflects Australia's commitment to sharing with others the expertise in all aspects of sports development provided by hosting the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

As nations we can only gain from the sense of national identity and community that sport offers.

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