

Media release



FROM THE MINISTER FOR THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES, MINISTER FOR SPORT & RECREATION

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MELBOURNE ANNOUNCES INTEGRATED PROGRAM FOR ELITE ATHLETES WITH A DISABILITY

The Minister for the Commonwealth Games, Justin Madden, has joined with the Chairman of Melbourne 2006, Ron Walker, in announcing the largest ever program for Elite Athletes with a Disability (EAD) at the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

"This is a great outcome for Victoria, and a great outcome for Elite Athletes with a Disability," Mr Madden said.

"The Commonwealth Games are leading the world in terms of integrating elite athletes with a disability into the broader sports program, and Melbourne is committed to advancing this process."

The formal decision on Melbourne's EAD Sports Program was made during a meeting with the Commonwealth Games Federation General Assembly, held in Jamaica this week.

"This announcement is the result of a combined effort between the Government, M2006 and the sports associations themselves. The result follows lengthy consultation between Melbourne 2006 and the Commonwealth Games Federation," Mr Madden said.

"We are building upon the success of Manchester by demonstrating Melbourne's commitment to a fully integrated EAD program," Chairman of Melbourne 2006, Mr Ron Walker, said.

The Melbourne EAD program is set to showcase more events than Manchester, and enable more athletes from developing countries to take part.

"We want the Games to showcase the strengths and values of the Commonwealth Games Federation, including humanity, equality, destiny and fair play," Mr Madden said.

"We want to give more athletes with a disability the opportunity to develop their skills and compete at an elite level. We are especially pleased that the *Melbourne Elite Athletes with a Disability* program will help achieve this objective, particularly in developing countries."

The Chairman of the Commonwealth Games Federation, Mr Michael Fennell said, "I am extremely pleased to see the Commonwealth games EAD program expanding and building on the tremendous success of Manchester."

The Melbourne EAD Sporting Program will comprise 12 events across four sports, including:

Sport	Event
Aquatics – Swimming*	50m Men Freestyle
	100mMen Freestyle
	50mWomen Freestyle
	100mWomen Freestyle
Athletics	100mMen T12 (Visually Impaired)
	200mMen T46 (Amputee)
	DiscusMen (wheelchair)
	100mWomen T37
	800mWomen T54 (Wheelchair)
	ShotWomen wheelchair

Table Tennis	Singles Women – wheelchair open
Powerlifting	Bench Press Men Open

*Swimming disability classifications to be confirmed after the Athens Olympics.

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