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## BUDGET DISAPPOINTING FOR SPORT

The Federal Budget handed down on Tuesday night was disappointing for Australian sport. While it is good news that existing levels of funding were maintained, there was no additional money made available for direct athlete support for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games, or for the introduction of a national after school sport program.

The Government has missed the opportunity to take a very positive step in the fight against childhood obesity, with no support for a national after school sport program. The government certainly appears to understand the gravity of the problem of childhood obesity and inactivity, but needs to take a stronger proactive approach to finding solutions.

The support of this program would not only help tackle the childhood obesity issue, but also assist sport in increasing participation and further developing junior sport networks in Australia.

The money allocated for the Commonwealth Games should ensure that Australia again hosts a world class event, but the lack of additional funding for direct athlete support is a blow to our athletes, particularly our emerging athletes.

**SIA's media release on the Federal Budget is attached.**

## SIA ELECTION POLICY

As outlined in the last edition of SportSpeak, SIA has commenced preparation of an election policy for sport which will be presented to all major political parties for their response in the lead-up to the election.

A meeting with NSOs was held last Friday in Sydney, and the key issues facing Australian sport now and in the future were discussed.

A number of issues were identified for inclusion in the election policy, and also in the Strategic Plan for Australian sport. These included

- The development of national physical activity standards for schools, to be mandated at a Federal level
- The introduction of a national after school sport program
- An increase in funding for elite programs in recognition of rising costs, and
- An increase in funding for participation, but not at the expense of funding for elite programs

NSOs who were unable to attend who wish to make a contribution to the election policy development are invited to contact me to discuss their views, or email [sarah.lucas@sportforall.com.au](mailto:sarah.lucas@sportforall.com.au)

I urge you all to be involved in the development of our election policy, it is vital that we take this opportunity to bring our case to Government.

## NATIONAL CHILDHOOD OBESITY SUMMIT FINDINGS

In October last year, SIA held the National Childhood Obesity Summit, which was attended by a number of Ministers, Shadow Ministers and delegates from across the sport, health, community and education sectors.

Unfortunately the release of the report from the workshop held during the Summit was delayed significantly by severe illness in the consultant's family, but it is now finalised.

The workshop findings will be incorporated into SIA's Election Policy. A summary of the outcomes has been prepared and will be sent to all NSOs and participants in the coming week.

### **Feedback & Contact Info**

SportSpeak provides a regular news service for our members. For feedback & contributions to SportSpeak please contact:  
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MEDIA RELEASE

# SPORT



INDUSTRY AUSTRALIA

For immediate release

13 May 2004

## BUDGET A DISAPPOINTMENT FOR AUSTRALIAN SPORT

Peak body Sport Industry Australia (SIA) has labelled this week's Federal budget a disappointment for Australian sport.

While existing programs have been maintained, the Federal Government has overlooked both elite athletes and grassroots sport in this budget. The money allocated for the organisation of the Commonwealth Games should ensure that Australia again stages a world-class event, but Australian athletes preparing for the Games will not receive any additional money for direct athlete support. The Government has also failed to do enough to address the growing childhood obesity problem on a national level.

"Support for the athletes, and particularly our emerging athletes, is vital if we are to achieve good results at this, our home Commonwealth Games, and it is very disappointing that there is no new money for athlete preparation. The Government has also missed the opportunity to do something constructive about tackling the high incidence of childhood obesity by introducing a national after school sport program," SIA Chief Executive Sarah Lucas said.

"It is alarming that even the threat of massive increases in the nation's health expenditure in years to come from sedentary lifestyle related diseases is not enough to secure support for a national after school sport program. While the Government appears to understand the gravity of the issue, it needs to take a more proactive approach to solving this problem", Lucas said.

Lucas said that while the health issues arising from an inactive population should be of major concern to any Government, the lack of additional money for grass roots participation would also in time reduce the pool of participants from which our elite athletes emerge, meaning that sport would suffer right across the spectrum.

"A program of around \$40m a year would have seen kids right across the country be given an opportunity to participate in sport, improving their motor skills, social skills and fitness, with the added benefit of ensuring Australia can maintain its position as a great sporting nation", she said.

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*Sport Industry Australia's key purpose is to support and assist our members and the sports industry by providing leadership and influence in the funding, policy formulation, promotion and development of sport in Australia.*