



Deaf Sports Australia
P.O. Box 8315
Carrum Downs. VIC. 3201

E: info@deafsports.org.au
deafsports.org.au
ABN: 18 006 071 147

Media Release

Deaf Sports Australia Calls for Election Commitment to Fund Deaflympics High-Performance Pathways program

With the federal election on 3 May 2025, Deaf Sports Australia (DSA) is calling on all political parties to commit to funding high-performance pathway programs for Australian Deaf athletes competing in major events, such as the Deaflympic Games. Unlike their Olympic and Paralympic counterparts, Deaf athletes are currently excluded from government-funded high-performance pathways, leaving them to shoulder significant financial and developmental burdens while representing Australia on the global stage.

The upcoming 25th Summer Deaflympics, scheduled for 15 - 26 November 2025, in Tokyo, Japan, marks a historic milestone as the 100th anniversary of the first Deaflympics held in Paris in 1924. Yet, Australian Deaf athletes preparing for this prestigious event are forced to cover their own costs due to the absence of government investment in high-performance pathways for deaf sports.

The Deaflympics is an elite international event recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). However, Australian Deaf athletes face significant funding inequalities compared to their Olympic and Paralympic counterparts. Many Deaflympians are forced to rely on personal donations or forego opportunities altogether.

"My Paralympic and Olympic peers have access to training camps, high-performance coaches, superior facilities, and overseas competition opportunities. I didn't. Where is the equality in that?" says Hannah Britton, Deaf Sports Australia, President.

Phil Harper, Deaf Sports Australia General Manager notes that "despite numerous approaches to past and current Federal Governments making them aware of the barriers and inequality for our Australian deaf athletes not having access to government-funded and supported high-performance programs, nothing has been done."



As Australians prepare to vote on 3 May 2025, DSA calls on all candidates to make a tangible commitment to supporting Australian Deaf athletes competing at the Deaflympics.

By prioritising equality in sports funding, the Australian government will not only demonstrate its commitment to giving all high-performance athletes a fair go but also empower our nation's Deaf athletes to compete at their absolute best.

For more information or interviews with DSA representatives or athletes, please contact:

Email: info@deafsports.org.au

Phone: +61 434603497 (text only)

Phil Harper
General Manager

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