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## New AIS investment approach for sport stability and agility

The AIS has announced decisions under its recently launched high performance investment framework to give Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sports longer term funding stability, which includes an additional boost of \$6.7 million to 12 high performance programs over the next two years.

Winter sport, women's Olympic teams and Para-athletics are among the biggest beneficiaries of funding increases, to be introduced at the start of 2019.

Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sports will also benefit from a new longer term approach to funding. Instead of annual grants to sport, for the first time the AIS is providing longer-term funding commitments to give sports more stability and certainty to plan ahead.

Funding for a majority of priority sports will be a combination of longer-term baseline funding that enables better planning and continuity, and contestable impact resourcing that provides the system a level of agility to seize new opportunities.

Using this approach, the majority of Olympic and Paralympic sports will have current funding levels guaranteed through to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics. Winter sports – Olympic and Paralympic - will have full funding extended through to December 2020, and their baseline funding through to the 2022 Games in Beijing.

AIS Director Peter Conde said the investment framework provided more certainty for sports, balanced with an important element of flexibility to make performance adjustments to fund new sports and new performance initiatives.

"The AIS is making these funding changes now to increase the probability of success at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics but also to get a head-start on athlete pathways for the future Olympic cycles," Conde said.

"The contestable portion of funding allows the AIS and sports to respond to new opportunities in performance. The AIS has also established a Strategic Projects pool that will be invested into sports for targeted campaigns or project support ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics.

"This funding will be complemented by new and enhanced support programs delivered by the AIS, including a strong emphasis on athlete wellbeing, applied technology and innovation, performance under pressure, and professional workforce development."

Under the framework, investment will be clearly focussed on Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sports. Conde said success would not be measured solely by Australia's final position on medal tables at the multi-sport events.

"We will certainly continue to support Australian athletes to provide the best chance of international podium success, but the emphasis will be on the number of Australian medallists across a breadth of sports.

"This means the AIS will continue to strongly invest in Australian teams, which reflect as only one medal on a traditional medal table but ultimately produce multiple medallists. We are also supporting sports to focus on athlete wellbeing and their connection with communities."

Funding boosts to 12 high performance programs will be initiated on 1 January 2019, with three women's Olympic teams to benefit. Australian women's Football (\$800,000 increase over two years) and Rugby Sevens (\$605,000 increase over two years) will receive boosts, along with the women's softball team (\$400,000 over two years) which returns to the Olympic program in 2020.

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In a boost for winter sport, the Olympic Winter Institute of Australia (OWIA) will receive a funding increase of almost \$2.3 million over the next two years and Para-Winter sport \$512,500 over two years. Para-athletics will also be boosted by \$600,000 over the next two years.

Other programs that will receive immediate funding boosts for the next two years include: Diving (\$460,000); Shooting (\$400,000); Men's Hockey (\$262,500); Surfing (\$200,000); Modern Pentathlon (\$110,000); and Archery (\$100,000).

As part of a strategic review process that will eventually cover all sports, the AIS will engage with four sports during coming months. Their funding beyond existing commitments will be confirmed in mid-2019, which is the usual funding timeframe. These sports are able-bodied athletics, water polo, volleyball, and gymnastics.

A small number of sports and organisations facing reductions in high performance funding will have a transition period, with no changes to apply until 1 July, 2019.

"Having advised these sports and organisations about our funding decisions, we are giving them time to digest the information and advise their athletes and stakeholders before public announcements are made," Conde said. "We will consult with these sports and other system partners on the transitions required as a result of these decisions. We are confident that these changes will not impact on Olympic or Paralympic podium success.

"Together with a \$10 million Tokyo 2020 support fund announced by the Australian Government in December 2017 - previously distributed to sports - these changes will best position Australian athletes and teams for podium success in 2020 and beyond."

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