



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 25th March 2020

AOC WELCOMES POSTPONED TOKYO OLYMPIC GAMES

The Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) has welcomed the decision by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Japanese Government and the Tokyo Olympic Games Organising Committee (TOCOG) to postpone the Tokyo Olympic Games until next year.

The AOC recognises that the Games' organisers have an enormous task ahead of them to move the Tokyo Olympics to next year but have no doubt that Japan will put on a great Olympic Games.

AOC CEO Matt Carroll says it's a challenging moment in history during tragic times globally, but athletes and sports now have absolute clarity that enables them to focus on a Games in 2021.

"The IOC has received fresh advice from the World Health Organisation. The pandemic is accelerating, and this decision recognises that.

"As President Bach has noted, "Human lives take precedence over everything, including the staging of the Games."

"The Games have never been postponed previously. But I have no doubt that when the world moves past these very difficult times, the Tokyo Olympic Games will provide an opportunity for the world to reconnect in a spirit of unity and hope. Japan is up to the task and they will do a great job.

"In the meantime, we also will work through the implications of the postponement with all our member sports, their athletes and our partners so we can deliver an Australian Olympic Team to Tokyo next year who will make Australians proud.

"Many Australians are trying to cope with vast challenges to their health and their livelihoods. We desperately hope that we can all meet these challenges and that our Australian athletes attending the Games in 2021 can contribute to restoring hope and national spirit," Mr Carroll said.

Australian Olympic Team Chef de Mission Ian Chesterman praised the response of Australia's Olympians and aspiring athletes.

"We know that there has been great relief and acceptance from our athletes with the news from the IOC and Japan. Our athletes have been magnificent working their way through some very difficult times during recent weeks.

"Their world, as athletes and as members of the Australian community, has been turned on its head.

"All along, they have been conscious of the plight of their peers around the globe and the reality here in the Australian community, as we live through these unprecedented events.

“We will continue to communicate with athletes and sports to provide further clarity around the critical issues.

“We understand that those athletes and teams who have qualified will not be required to re-qualify. That will give the athletes some comfort – but we will await further details on that process.

“Our key message at the moment though is to stay safe and keep those around you safe. There are some tough times ahead but at least we now know we have a new goal and the planning will start straight away.”

The AOC is implementing a range of initiatives to promote athlete health and well-being, providing regular communication with information and resources to help them manage.

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