



2008 PACIFIC SCHOOL GAMES
CANBERRA

30 November - 6 December

Media Release

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Pacific School Games attracts huge international interest

Already, 14 countries have indicated their interest in attending the 2008 Pacific School Games (PSG) to be held in Canberra in November-December 2008.

These countries responded positively to letters requesting their expression of interest, saying they are interested in coming and would now be working towards getting their teams ready for this large international sporting event.

Initially a test event for the Brisbane Commonwealth Games in 1982, Australia has hosted the PSG seven times. It is now the largest sporting event for school students in the region.

General Manager of the 2008 PSG, Mr Ron Burns, said they were extremely pleased with the overwhelming response from so many countries this early in proceedings.

"We still have more than a year and half to go so to know already that we have 14 countries committed to coming gives us a great head start. We expect that as we get closer and conduct more promotional activities we will receive even more enquires from other countries," he said.

The PSG attracts teams from every Australian state and territory and is open to nations from around the Pacific rim including Asia, Pacific Island nations and even from as far a field as Canada and the United States (Hawaii). Some, like Papua New Guinea, have attended every PSG held.

"As this is the first time hockey will feature as a sport in the PSG, it may be that we will particularly seek to involve countries which field strong hockey teams – Malaysia being an obvious example," said Mr Burns.

On a recent promotional visit to Samoa, where he presented a paper to the Chefs de mission of the Pacific Games Associations, Mr Burns said that interest from the Pacific nations attending was overwhelming, with countries such as Fiji, Solomon Islands and Micronesia expressing immediate willingness to be involved.

"Ironically we received the Solomon Islands official confirmation just hours before the Tsunami hit their shores," he said.

The countries who have indicated so far that they will be attending are: Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Macau, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norfolk Island, Niue, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Wales.

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The Pacific School Games is an international sporting event for primary and secondary school students aged from ten to nineteen. The 2008 PSG in Canberra will feature the sports of Diving, Hockey, Swimming and Track & Field conducted at the Australian Institute of Sport, the Canberra National Hockey Centre and the Canberra Olympic Pool. The event will attract around 7,000 visitors to Canberra and will involve Canberrans from the school, sporting and general community.

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