




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (10.02 am): Earlier this month I was pleased to join Townsville mayor, Jenny Hill, the member for Townsville, local Indigenous leaders and the ever present games mascot, Borobi, to unveil a new Commonwealth Games countdown clock on the Strand in Townsville. The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games is increasingly capturing the hearts of the Queensland community.

We will be front and centre stage when the curtain comes down on the Rio Olympics and the world's sporting attention turns to the Gold Coast. It will then be Queensland's time to shine. As one of our games event cities Townsville will have a big part to play. This surfboard shaped timepiece is set to become a tourist attraction and will allow Townsville residents and visitors to experience the journey to the Commonwealth Games and witness firsthand the countdown to 2018. Townsville's very own countdown clock signifies the crucial role the city will play in delivering the biggest sporting event Australia will see throughout this decade, including the generation of greater awareness of the games in regional Queensland.

As a long-time basketball player and fan, I am delighted that the basketball preliminary rounds will be played at the Townsville Convention and Exhibition Centre over the course of the games. To support this, up to \$1 million has been allocated for regional venue upgrades, including for Townsville, while Rydges Southbank Townsville has been contracted as the local athletes village. North Queensland has always had a proud tradition when it comes to basketball. I am very confident that the legacy the community will reap from the games will reinforce the region's reputation as a stronghold in the sport.

Speaking of pride in basketball, it would be remiss of me not to mention the tremendous achievement of the Australian Boomers team overnight in Rio. Taking out an almost 30-point win over Lithuania, the team ranked No. 3 in the world, the Boomers are displaying all the qualities of a team determined to secure Australia's first men's basketball Olympic medal. I know the House will join me in wishing Queenslanders Aaron Baynes and Cameron Bairstow and Torres Strait Islander star Patty Mills all the best for their games ahead. The world is taking notice of the Boomers, and the world will be taking notice of Queensland when the Commonwealth Games is held in just 594 days. While the Opals have not had as good an Olympics as the Boomers, Townsville Fire player Cayla George has been a strong contributor and will look forward to suiting up for the Opals on home soil.

I am confident the games will be strongly supported by the Townsville community. Just as this sports-mad city adopted the Japanese Rugby team when they were based there during the 2003 Rugby World Cup, I am sure locals will embrace the Australian and visiting basketball teams that will play there.

The Palaszczuk government is determined to achieve a lasting legacy from the Commonwealth Games. We want local communities and businesses to capitalise on the opportunities when it comes to tourism, trade and investment. In the big countdown to the games, the Palaszczuk government is working to make sure all people in Townsville and Queensland share the dream.