



Media Release

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Australia's chances of more success in Olympic sport have been boosted further by a cooperation agreement sealed today between the Australian and Russian Olympic Committees.

The agreement signed in Sydney today by Russian Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) Alexander Zhukov and the President of the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) John Coates is timely with the Russian Black Sea Resort, Sochi, hosting the next Winter Olympics in 2014.

"Signing of the Memorandum of cooperation is very important step for our organizations. We have much to share with each other" Mr Zhukov said. "The exchange of experience and knowledge, cooperation in the field of scientific and technical maintenance will give us new opportunities. I believe that mutually advantageous collaboration between Russian and Australian Olympic committees will benefit development of sports in both our countries and Olympic movement worldwide" he said.

Under the agreement both countries will take part in bilateral competitions and foster cooperation in the field of athlete preparation, coaching and other specialist areas in sport.

"Russia is dominant in Winter and Summer Olympic sport and our athletes, coaches and sport's specialists will learn a great deal from them courtesy of this partnership" Coates said.

"Teams and individual athletes will compete in bilateral and multilateral events being held in both countries. There will be an exchange of coaches, medical and sports personnel and training camps will be organised using sports facilities belonging to the Russian federations and here in Australia" he said.

An invitation has already been extended to Russia to compete at the 2013 Australian Youth Olympic Festival in Sydney.

But it is in Sochi where our winter Olympians will benefit from the partnership. It is hoped our athletes will train at the new venues being built prior to the start of the Games in 2014.

The Chef de Mission of the Australian Winter Olympic Team, Ian Chesterman, visited Sochi recently and described the facilities and infrastructure being built as "mindblowing".

Australia is looking to build on the success of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics where Torah Bright won gold in the Women's snowboard halfpipe, Lydia Lassila gold in the Women's aerials and Dale Begg Smith silver in the Men's moguls.

12 new events have been added to the program in Sochi and Australia is excelling in one of them... slopestyle.

Anna Segal from Mt Buller in Victoria won the gold medal in slopestyle ski at the 2011 World Titles in Utah back in February while another Australian Russ Henshaw won the bronze medal in the men's event.