

Coast in Commonwealth Games bid

August 22nd, 2008

THE Queensland Government has today announced its intention to put the Gold Coast forward to host the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Premier Anna Bligh made the announcement at a Gold Coast Bulletin business lunch held at the Gold Coast Arts Centre today.

"We have formally contacted the Commonwealth Games Association to express our interest," said Ms Bligh.

"They have indicated that in the next few months they will decide whether Australia will bid for the 2008 Commonwealth Games or future Commonwealth Games, so I was keen to put our hand up early."

Gold Coast Mayor Ron Clarke, himself a Commonwealth and Olympic athletics medalist, Gold Coast Bulletin Editor-In-Chief Bob Gordon, Southport MP Peter Lawlor and 1984 Olympic gold medalist Glynis Nunn-Cearns will play key roles in promoting the bid.

Premier Bligh said the Gold Coast's international profile made it an ideal contender to host the Games.

"The Gold Coast is recognised as one of Australia's favourite destinations and a world-class icon," she said.

"I can think of no better place to host the best the Commonwealth has to offer."

The Gold Coast will be up against Perth, which also officially announced its bid today, while Canberra has also announced its intention to attempt to secure the event.

Premier Bligh said it was a big challenge to secure the Games but the pay-offs would be enormous.

A new aquatics centre and an athletics stadium would be built to bolster existing infrastructure which includes Skilled Park Stadium and the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre.

"However, while these projects are significant there is no doubt more work will need to be done if we are to be successful in our bid," she said.

Ms Bligh said a successful Commonwealth Games bid would put Queensland on track for a future Olympics bid.

The bidding process for the 21st Commonwealth Games will begin in 2010 with the Australian Commonwealth Games Association notifying the Commonwealth Games Federation of the intended bidding city from Australia.

The formal lodgment of bids to the Commonwealth Games Federation will take place in 2011.

The Commonwealth Games Evaluation Commission then visits the bidding cities and produces a detailed report.

National representatives from Commonwealth Games associations will then meet at a general assembly in 2011 and vote on the winning city.

Brisbane hosted the Commonwealth Games in 1982, beating bidders Lagos, Kuala Lumpur and Birmingham.

The next two Commonwealth Games will be held in Delhi (2010) and Glasgow (2014).