

Dear BC Athletes

Thank you for the fantastic response to our last update. It was great to hear from so many passionate BC Athletes who believe in the power and value of sport.

Before we update you on what has been happening over the last week, it is important to understand how sport is funded in BC. The provincial government is one of the largest financial contributors to sport in British Columbia. Provincial government funding is distributed through a number of funding mechanisms.

- Core grant and project funding is invested through the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport and 2010 Legacies Now to support both sport participation and sport performance. Sport organizations receive these funds to assist them in administering important programs for the benefit of athletes around the province.
- Government funding is also provided to programs and initiatives such as the BC Athlete Assistance Program, Aboriginal Participation, Coach Development and Team BC.
- A significant source of funding for sport comes from community gaming grants. Sport organizations can apply for these grants to pay for travel, entry fees, equipment, programs etc.
- Further government investment is made to host events and build and maintain sport facilities and infrastructure.

As a result of this very diversified system of funding, getting a clear picture how the sport sector is funded can be difficult. BC Athlete Voice is currently developing an online resource to educate athletes on how the BC sport sector is funded. We will be in touch as soon as this is complete.

Until then it is important to recognize the other major supporter of athletes and sport in BC – athletes, their parents and their families! Cuts to sport funding are ultimately absorbed by athletes and those that support them. As such it is important that athletes and their parents remain informed about the current changes to sport funding levels and those that may occur next year.

So what has been happening?

After attending a meeting with the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport we are pleased to share with you the following information:

- Due to the challenging economic times there have been reductions in funding to the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport and therefore the sport sector.
- The recent budget shows a \$6.7 million reduction in funding to Sport, Recreation and ActNow through the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport. A further \$10 million reduction in community gaming grants through the Ministry of Housing and Social Development has already begun to affect local sport clubs and provincial sport organizations.
- The effect that sport will experience with these cuts has been significantly softened by the behind the scenes work of the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport and the Sport and Recreation Branch. Provincial Sport Organizations and Multi Sport Organizations will only see a 2 – 3% reduction to core grant funding for this fiscal year. This will allow these essential sport organizations to be able to continue to support BC Athletes this fiscal year.
- An announcement regarding BC Athlete Assistance Program Funding will be coming in the next two weeks. Athlete feedback has consistently identified this program as a top priority and we continue to work with our partners in sport and education to advocate its tremendous value.
- The Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport also announced that a five year plan for sport in BC is in development and will be released during the winter. No definitive outlook for the next fiscal year has been provided and therefore it is essential to continue promoting the value of investment in athletes and sport in BC.

So what happens now?

Although the meeting last week provided great news in regards to core grant funding for most sport organizations, we are still waiting to hear more about the BC Athlete Assistance Program and other athlete centred programs. It is important for all BC Athletes to stay connected to these updates as potential changes to these programs could have serious impacts. This is also an essential time to continue thinking about how athletes and sport will be supported in 2010 and beyond.

So what happens next?

BC Athlete Voice continues to work with our partners to ensure BC Athletes are represented and have a strong voice. Check out www.bcathletevoice.ca to stay informed and check out our new tools for athletes to get engaged and be proactive in supporting the value of sport. We will be in touch within the next two weeks as more information comes to hand - specifically in regards to the BC Athlete Assistance Program and the role BC Athletes can have in the development of a five year plan for sport in BC.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact BC Athlete Voice at info@bcathletevoice.ca or on 604-333-3660.

Thanks

The Team at BC Athlete Voice