

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2015 - 16, 3 March 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000265

OUTCOME: 10 – Sport and Recreation

Topic: Equitable Travel Policy – Para-Athletes

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Peris, Nova

Question:

Will the Department require NSOs to fly Paralympic athletes in the same class of travel as able-bodied participants in the same sport, and if so how will this be implemented?

Answer:

The gender-neutral travel policy is focused on ensuring more equitable travel conditions for males and females. Applying the policy to the Paralympics, it would be expected that male and female Paralympians in the same sport would be entitled to the same travel and accommodations standards.

The Australian Paralympic Committee (APC) organises and funds travel for athletes to the Paralympic Games. The APC practises and supports gender-equitable travel for its athletes.

In regards to class of travel, the specific needs of individual athletes are taken into consideration.

In a further bid to give Australia the best chance of success at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, the APC, the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), Rowing Australia and Qantas have partnered on an innovative project to improve athlete comfort on flights.

Supported by the AIS's Competitive Innovation Fund, custom-made travel seats are being developed by APC and AIS engineers to fit the personal needs of Paralympic athletes. This is being done within the regulations of airline safety.

The initial focus is on athletes with a range of postural needs, such as those with excessive height, spinal scoliosis, spinal cord injury and neurological impairments.

The project is aiming to deliver travel seating to more than 50 athletes in time for travel to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.