

## **The countdown is on—100 days until the Invictus Games in Sydney**

The Australian competitors for the Invictus Games Sydney 2018 (IG2018) are in the final stages of their preparation as we begin the countdown, with just 100 days to go until the opening ceremony on 20 October 2018.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel, Darren Chester, said that Australia will be proudly represented by 72 current and former Australian Defence Force personnel competing in 11 sports over eight days.

"These Games honour the service and sacrifice of the men and women who defend our freedoms and values. It is a chance for all Australians to show their respect for the courage and determination our team members have shown and cheer them on as they compete on the world stage," Mr Chester said.

"These games also recognise the significant contribution that family and friends make in supporting our veterans.

"The word 'Invictus' means 'unconquered' and reflects the team's fighting spirit and what they can achieve, post injury. Australians can be proud of this team and I look forward to cheering them on in October."

The Minister for Sport, Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie said sport has the capacity to break through barriers and change lives.

"These service men and women have represented their country on the battlefield and are now representing their country on the sporting field," Minister McKenzie said.

"The Sydney games will attract more than 500 competitors from 18 nations and are a celebration of our Defence Force men and women and an opportunity for all Australians to thank them for their service.

Minister McKenzie applauds the spirit of the Games and its competitors. As His Royal Highness The Duke of Sussex, said last year "*Invictus is about the dedication of the men and women who serve their countries, confronted hardship and refuse to be defined by their injuries*" every single competitor in these games has overcome physical and psychological adversity to be here – they are the pride of their Nations and we are honoured to have them here to compete in Australia.

Australia will have competitors in various events including archery, athletics, indoor rowing, powerlifting, road cycling, sailing, sitting volleyball, swimming, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, and wheelchair tennis.

Family and friends attending the event can participate in a dedicated program of activities over the eight days.

The Australian Government is very proud to be a key partner in the running of the Games which was founded in 2014 by His Royal Highness The Duke of Sussex. The Invictus Games have gone from strength to strength with the largest ever number of competitors from across the world competing in 2018.

Details about how to buy tickets are available at:

<https://www.invictusgames2018.org/the-games/tickets/>

**Media Contacts:**

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*Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) can be reached 24 hours a day across Australia for support and free and confidential counselling. Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 8 8241 4546). VVCS is a service founded by Vietnam veterans.*

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Please see the following files attached:

[Chester Media Release - Minister addresses RSL Queensland State Congress.pdf]

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