

Monday, 22 February, 2010

## **MELBOURNE TAKES THE LEAD WITH WORLD DANCE CHAMPS**

All the glitz and glamour of international dancing will be on show in Melbourne when the world's best dancers kick up their heels at the IDSF World DanceSport Championship Standard.

Sports Minister James Merlino said Melbourne had reaffirmed its title as the sporting capital of the world by securing the prestigious International DanceSport Federation event in 2012.

Making the announcement at Hisense Arena today, Mr Merlino said winning the rights to the world's leading Standard DanceSport event was an Australian first and formed part of a long-term strategy for staging international DanceSport events in Victoria.

The Standard discipline includes the Waltz, Tango, Viennese Waltz, Foxtrot and Quickstep.

"Victorians are proud of our major events and the World DanceSport Championship Standard promises to be another exciting addition to our international sporting calendar," Mr Merlino said.

"The 2012 World Championship is expected to generate more than \$6 million in economic benefits for Victoria and attract more than 3,000 interstate and overseas visitors.

"We are delighted this will be the first ever international Standard DanceSport event staged in Melbourne with competitors, officials and coaches expected from over 50 countries."

Mr Merlino congratulated DanceSport Australia and The Australian Dancing Society, who in partnership with the Victorian Major Events Company, secured the World Championship for Melbourne ahead of strong international competition.

International DanceSport Federation President Carlos Freitag said it was a privilege to announce Melbourne, Australia will host the world's most prestigious Standard DanceSport competition.

"Melbourne's reputation for hosting world class events was confirmed by the successful staging of the IDSF World DanceSport Championship in the Ten Dances in 2004 and in the Latin discipline in 2008," Mr Freitag said.

Event Director Margaret Lonsdale said the popularity of DanceSport in Australia continued to grow both as a participation and spectator sport evident in the numerous high-rating television shows and growth in dance studio registrations.

Mr Merlino said the World DanceSport Championship Standard will be held at Hisense Arena in December 2012 in conjunction with the Australian DanceSport Championship.

"The Brumby Labor Government is proud to support events like DanceSport that place Melbourne in the national and international spotlight, boost tourism and promote sport," he said.

"These DanceSport Championship events not only build on the booming popularity of dance, but reinforce Melbourne's status as the world sporting events capital."

For more information on the International DanceSport Championship go to <http://www.idsf.net>