

TRAVEL STABILIZATION FUND

The organizers of the Auckland Games have already been advised by one Commonwealth Games Association that it may not be able to send its seven-person team to the Games because a recent currency devaluation has made the cost prohibitive. In the past, there have been reports of countries voting in favour of one city over another simply because of cheaper airline fares. While all nations which felt compelled to boycott the Edinburgh Games were obviously driven by social concern, some have acknowledged privately that travel costs would have made sending a team problematic anyway. Transportation costs can be a difficulty even for industrialized countries; for developing countries they can be overwhelming, and difficult to justify given other social priorities.

Team travel expenses are currently reimbursed by the Organizing Committee of a Commonwealth Games according to the following sliding scale:

For teams numbering:	1 - 10	25%
	11 - 20	20%
	21 - 50	15%
	51 - 70	10%
	71 - 100	7%
	101+	5%

The subsidies are obviously weighted in favour of smaller countries, but size does not always reflect capacity to pay. Moreover, the upper limit of 25% is not likely to be of much use to a country suffering severe economic difficulties. At the other end of the scale, wealthier countries do not really need a travel subsidy. These funds should be reallocated to those in greatest need.

Canada recommends that a travel stabilization fund be established to provide additional travel subsidies to developing Commonwealth countries. The size of the subsidy would vary according to need. Developed Commonwealth partners should be considered ineligible for any subsidy. In some cases, the wealthier countries might be able to assist with services such as charter flights from accessible central locations in various regions.