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HANSEN OFF TO AUSTRALIA TO PROMOTE CANADA AT EXPO 88

Rick Hansen leaves Vancouver today for Brisbane, Australia to begin his official duties as Commissioner General for Canada at EXPO 88. Mr. Hansen will be in Australia for three weeks during which time he will meet with EXPO 88 organizers and launch an Australia-wide campaign to promote awareness of Canadian participation at the international exposition.

"I am really excited about EXPO 88 and very proud to represent Canada", Mr. Hansen said. "This will be my first visit to the EXPO 88 site to see first hand how things are coming along. After the success of our own EXPO 86, Australians expect our pavilion to be impressive. We are not going to disappoint them".

The \$9 million Canada Pavilion has seven separate areas: two 350-seat theatres, an underwater "sound and light" show, a fitness arcade, an exhibit hall filled with sports and leisure items, the Adventures British Columbia Theatre, and a restaurant.

Canadian entertainers will perform daily at the pavilion's Thunderbird stage. There will also be a gala performance on Canada Day that will feature some of our country's top artists.

"EXPO 88's theme is Leisure in the Age of Technology and we are trying to show Australians how we spend our leisure time. The films, the exhibits and the entertainment package we are planning are first-rate", Hansen said.

While in Brisbane, Mr. Hansen will sign the formal participation contract with the exposition authority on behalf of the Government of Canada.

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Canada

In addition to Brisbane, Mr. Hansen will visit Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra to promote Canadian participation at the international exposition. He will call on Australian government officials in the three cities and take part in a variety of special events and interviews.

Rick Hansen was named Commissioner General for Canada at EXPO 88 last November. The internationally-known wheelchair athlete wheeled some 3,000 kilometres of his famous 40,000-kilometre "Man in Motion" World Tour in Australia between January and March, 1986.

EXPO 88 is the international highlight of year-long Australian Bicentennial celebrations to mark the 200th anniversary of European settlement "down under".

EXPO 88 opens in Brisbane on 30 April and continues until 30 October. Some 45 governments and 15 private corporations will have pavilions there.

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