

Message from the Secretary of State (Amateur Sport) - Bill C-12 Royal Assent

I have the great pleasure to announce that Bill C-12, an Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport, has received Royal Assent.

The new Act, which replaces the 1961 Fitness and Amateur Sport Act, is the result of extensive consultations with stakeholders from the Canadian sport community. It modernizes how the Government of Canada supports this community and will contribute to Canada's efforts to become a leading sport nation.

The Act seeks to increase participation in sport at all levels, ensuring a seamless progression from playground to podium. It also supports drug-free sport so all athletes can participate on a level playing field.

One of its key provisions is the creation of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre, which provides for a fair, efficient, transparent and affordable mechanism to resolve disputes between athletes, coaches, and their National Sport Organizations, without resorting to judicial procedures.

Sport Canada will be consulting with the sport community on the selection guidelines for the Board of Directors of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada. Sport Canada will also work closely with partners to facilitate the transition from the interim ADR-sport-RED program to the permanent Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada. The Centre is expected to be fully operational by the summer of 2004.

This legislation opens up a new era for sport in Canada, one that should see a very positive evolution of the Canadian sport culture.

If you have any questions or require more information, please contact Jennifer Wesanko at (819) 994-9909.

Paul DeVillers