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Liberty Mutual Signs On As Official USOC Sponsor Through '16 Rio Games

By **Tripp Mickle**, Staff Writer, SportsBusiness Journal Published November 8, 2012



Liberty
Mutual

Liberty Mutual has signed on as the official property, life & casualty insurance company of the USOC, replacing Allstate. The deal announced today will cover the '14 Sochi and '16 Rio de Janeiro Games. The agreement is valued at \$15-20M over that period and makes Liberty Mutual one of the highest level sponsors of the USOC alongside AT&T, BMW and others. It is a modest increase from the \$10-15M over

four years that Allstate paid. Liberty Mutual will not be able to activate its sponsorship until next year but wanted to announce the deal early because the company is in the middle of celebrating its 100th anniversary. Liberty Mutual Senior VP/Corporate Communications Paul Alexander said, "Building brand awareness is really important to our aspirations. We want to go from being the No. 6 brand globally in property and casualty insurance to the No. 3 brand. There are few opportunities that stick with our responsibility positioning as well as sponsoring the U.S. Olympic Team." USOC CMO Lisa Baird said, "They're a marketing driven company. They're really doing some incredible things. I love what they did with responsibility as a platform and it's a natural fit with our platform and our athletes. That's why we're excited about this." Alexander said that Liberty Mutual will develop an activation plan for Sochi over the next three to six months. He said it will evaluate whether it needs to hire an agency for the Olympics. It is a domestic sponsor of the '14 FIFA World Cup in Brazil and work with Octagon there. The USOC deal and the World Cup sponsorship are Liberty Mutual's two largest deals. It also has NGB sponsorships with USA Hockey and USA Wrestling. 21 Marketing represented Liberty Mutual in negotiations with the USOC and will do strategy work for the company. Ketchum is working on its public relations.

ANY INTEREST? The USOC deal began with an e-mail that Baird sent Alexander several months ago when it became clear that Allstate would not return as a sponsor. The two had worked together when Baird was at the NFL and Alexander was at Campbell's Soup. She asked him if Liberty Mutual would be interested in partnering with the USOC if a sponsorship became available, and he said it would. The USOC hosted Liberty Mutual execs at the London Games and took them to the organization's training centers in Lake Placid, Colorado Springs and Chula Vista, Calif. The USOC's Mitch Poll and Michael O'Connor closed the deal. In addition to the agreement with Liberty Mutual, the USOC has a Paralympic sponsorship with The Hartford, its official disability insurance partner, and Olympic and Paralympic sponsor Highmark, its medical insurance partner.

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