



# Harnessing the positive momentum for active Australian women

A nation of active women and girls has far reaching benefits, including fewer physical and mental health issues and better economic, social and equality outcomes. In 2013 Women Sport Australia (WSA) launched the **Charter For Active Australian Women**, outlining a framework for change. The objective was greater participation of women and girls in sport, not just playing but managing, coaching, reporting and leading.

There has been significant momentum in recent years however there is still so much work to do. The November 2017 AusPlay data reveals that although women are just as active as men, they are less likely to do sport-related activity and more likely to cease this activity in their mid-teens. Further, 65 per cent of women 15+ do not meet physical-activity guidelines.

This plan sets out the key actions Women Sport Australia continues to advocate for to effect lasting change.

# Pay equality and living wage for elite female athletes and staff

Too many elite professional female athletes are forced to compromise their careers because they have to juggle work and sport to survive financially. This adds unnecessary pressure, stunts their potential, chances of success and risks premature retirement.



## Call For Action:

- The Australian Olympic Committee, Sport Australia and sports Ministers at federal and state level must ensure all funded sporting organisations provide evidence of pay equity and conditions for women and men, on and off the field, and provide elite female athletes and female support staff with a living wage.
- Progress to be measured by requiring funded organisations to annually and publically report on female wages and benefits compared to male counterparts.
- WSA will support and advocate for progress outlined in the Male Champions of Change – Sport **Pathway to Pay Equality** report, released in February 2019.

# Equal access to facilities and amenities on and off the field

Access to suitable infrastructure and support amenities for competition and training is critical to growing female participation, from the grass roots to elite level. Lack of female-friendly facilities have been identified as a key barrier to participation. All tiers of government have a role to play in planning and funding appropriate infrastructure by consulting and partnering with sports organisations, clubs and communities.



## Call For Action:

- Design and planning for all new sporting facilities and upgrades to existing facilities, whether public or privately owned or funded, to accommodate female participation, ensuring gender balance in the construction and allocation of facilities and support amenities.
- The federal government to establish women's sport and recreation guidelines and funding to help address existing gender infrastructure gaps - based on mapping of existing and planned sports infrastructure across all States.
- The federal government to encourage and promote non-government funding for sporting developments through the charitable status granted to the Australian Sports Foundation and ensure all infrastructure projects and upgrades meet the needs of women and girls.
- Sporting associations and sports facility managers to guarantee fair share access to women's teams and sportswomen and female support staff at optimum days and times.

# Equal media time and space for women's and men's sport

Sport Australia 2014 analysis showed women's sport accounted for only seven per cent of total TV sport coverage and six per cent of print news. It made up only nine per cent of total Australian sports news coverage. Nielsen 2017 analysis showed televised men's sport in Australia reached 9.4m people while women's sport reached only 4.7m. However, despite this big gap there was a growing interest in watching women's sport.

A 2018 survey across eight key world markets (US, UK, France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Australia and New Zealand) found 84 per cent of sports fans were interested in women's sports. Of those, 51 per cent were male, confirming women's sports attracts a gender-balanced audience.

## INTEREST IN WOMEN'S SPORTS



66%

of the population interested in at least one women's sport



84%

of general sports fans are interested in women's sports



49%  
female

versus



51%  
male

Equal media coverage, and more female sports commentators and reporters will create a bigger profile and audience for women's sport, showcase more female role models and encourage more girls and women to actively participate in sport.

## Call For Action:

- The federal government to show transparency in its decision-making criteria and allocation of funding to media platforms and organisations to broadcast and publish more women's sport, especially around the \$30m already allocated to FOXSports. The federal government to also encourage and provide incentives for free-to-air networks and platforms to broadcast and cover women's sport, especially the ABC and SBS.
- The media industry to be encouraged and incentivised by government to ensure women's sport is given equal time and space.
- Funding to be provided to Sport Australia or other bodies/watchdogs (eg. Women Sport Australia) to monitor and publish data on the level of women's sport coverage in the media.
- Publicly-funded media to report annually on the number of women employed in sport at all levels and the percentage of space and time dedicated to women's sport. Private media companies to be encouraged to do the same.

\*U.S., U.K., France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Australia and New Zealand

Source: Nielsen Sports Women's Sports research 2018

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WOMEN PARTICIPATING  
AND LEADING IN SPORT

# Championing role models in women's sport

Female role models in all areas of sport - on the field, supporting on-field competition, in administration, in leadership and in the media - are key to increasing participation of women and girls in sport.

Leadership in sport doesn't just include board and committee members, CEOs and administration but also coaching, officiating, managing and sports medicine support.



## Call For Action:

- The federal government to continue its “Girls Make Their Move” campaign to increase awareness of women and girls’ participation in sport, particularly for younger women.
- VicHealth to continue its “This Girl Can” campaign and work with other States to expand this campaign.
- Sport Australia to continue providing funding for sport leadership grants and scholarships and mentoring programs for women.
- All organisations with 100+ employees are required to report gender diversity to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency. As part of funding criteria, Sport Australia requires NSOs to report annually on progress with the board gender equality target, set at a minimum of 40 per cent female, and to disclose gender representation at executive level. This should be broadened to include gender representation of team management, coaching staff, officials, and media. This data should be published annually by Sport Australia and archived on its website and other portals eg. the Clearing House for Sport and Women Sport Australia.
- Sport Australia and the Office of Sport to mandate all funded organisations publicly advertise vacant board positions, selection criteria and timeframe for applications via Women On Boards or similar portals.
- Sport Australia to mandate sporting organisations provide funding and opportunity for aspiring females employees to attend mentoring and leadership courses provided by Sport Australia, Women Sport Australia or similar.
- Office of Sport in each State to host at least an annual women-in-sport networking event.