

CHAPTER 6

LEISURE AND SPORT

6.1 Leisure - what is it and why is it important?

6.1.1 Leisure encompasses numerous activities - some enjoyable and relaxing, others challenging and fulfilling. Leisure pursuits range from taking time out to relax mind and body to vigorous physical exercise; from reading a book or doing nothing, to participating in organised and competitive sport.

6.1.2 Just as the activities that comprise leisure are various, so too are the benefits that result from them.

6.1.3 Regular physical activity has been recognised as one of the key factors in the prevention of health problems - particularly heart disease, stress, obesity and, in women, osteoporosis.

6.1.4 For many women, leisure activities - whether they are active or passive - are an essential break from everyday routines and responsibilities. The Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education describes this type of leisure as recuperative, and as being 'used predominantly to save sanity and/or regenerate to face another year'.¹

6.1.5 It is through leisure activities that many women make social contacts, or gain access to educational or creative pursuits, which provide the intellectual challenges and stimulation often denied in their working lives.

6.1.6 Involvement in leisure can also help develop an individual's self-confidence. A confidence in one's own abilities can arise from a championship winning performance in sport, or from the acquisition of a skill or level of knowledge that was previously thought to be unattainable.

¹ Evidence, p.S2304

6.1.7 Not only does the individual benefit from leisure, through feelings of freedom, enjoyment and self-satisfaction, but the wider community also benefits, by virtue of a more healthy and fulfilled populace. From these sentiments, considerable social and economic advantages can flow.

6.1.8 In considering the access that women have to sport and leisure, many submissions have taken the approach of focussing on equity in sport. It has been argued that, although sport is only one component of leisure, it is particularly significant and can be seen to be an indicator both of equity in leisure and of equality in the wider community.

6.1.9 Sport is an integral and prominent part of the Australian lifestyle. It has also played a leading role in shaping our national character. Most of our national heroes are sportmen or sportswomen and each weekend, millions of Australians watch or play sport.

6.1.10 As a major social institution, sport both reflects and reinforces a range of community attitudes. The majority of the evidence to the Committee on the importance of sport identified that sport, particularly its coverage by the media, reinforces stereotypical role models for men and women. In this role model, men are often the active participants whereas women are portrayed as spectators.

6.1.11 This perception may contribute to the lower participation rates in sport by women with the consequential impact on the overall levels of women's health. Given the importance of sport to the Australian ethos, it may also explain in part why women do not enjoy equal status with men.

6.2 Participation in Leisure

The State of Play

6.2.1 In 1975 the Commonwealth Government, through the then Department of Tourism and Recreation, published a study titled 'Leisure: An Inappropriate Concept for Women?'

6.2.2 The study found that many women, because of their dual commitments as workers in the paid economy and as home-makers, had no time for leisure. Moreover, when women did manage to find time free of work they felt guilty about using that time for themselves. This was especially true for those women who were full-time home-makers.

6.2.3 The study concluded that, for many women, leisure was an inappropriate, or at least an inaccessible, concept.

6.2.4 It might have been expected that the development and widespread use in Australian homes as various labour saving appliances eg microwave ovens and automatic dishwashers will have increased the time available for leisure.

6.2.5 But a recent study on time use, *Juggling Time, How Australian Families Use Time* published by the Office of the Status of Women, shows that despite the increasing use made of domestic technology there has been little change to the amount of time women spend in unpaid work. In fact, the amount of time women now have available for leisure activities has decreased by one hour since 1974. On average, women currently spend just over 32 hours a week in leisure activities.² Women spend most of the time remaining in each week in either paid work (22 hours); in unpaid work (36 hours); or in fulfilling personal needs such as sleeping, eating and grooming (74 hours).

6.2.6 The available evidence also suggests that the way in which women use their available leisure time is different from the way in which men use theirs.

6.2.7 Many submissions to the inquiry supported the view put by the Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education that:

Women's 'leisure' is usually in some form of community service related to family responsibility; school; hospital, etc related work. A meeting or canteen duty is legitimised time away from home. Women who work are not 'encouraged' or 'permitted' to be involved in sport or leisure if it will interfere with their perceived primary role as carer for spouse, children, family, house and garden.³

² Exhibit No.104(viii)

³ Evidence, p.S2304

6.2.8 As described by Denese Gray in her submission to the inquiry, for many women leisure includes a range of sometimes laborious and demanding activities. Leisure does not always equate with relaxation.⁴

6.2.9 Information from the recreation participation surveys conducted by the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories confirms the view that women's leisure has a different focus to men's leisure.

6.2.10 The most recent of these surveys indicate that women have a much lower rate of participation than men in sport (whether it be informal or organised) and that participation in home based recreation activities is higher for women than for men. Similarly, the surveys show that men are much more likely to use 'active' sports facilities (such as playing fields, indoor sports centres, gymnasias, golf courses, and tennis and squash courts, while women are more likely to use 'passive' recreation facilities (such as libraries, parks, playgrounds, museums, galleries and school facilities).

6.2.11 The focus of women's leisure is highlighted most sharply by the data which indicates that only 10 per cent of Australian women participate in competitive sport and that, for women, competitive sport does not feature in the list of the top twenty leisure activities.⁵

6.2.12 Some other information which describes the current state of play for women in Australia is listed below:

- . the proportion of men to women participating in recreational sport and regular physical activity is 2 to 1;
- . among the number of people who are registered sports participants (that is, people who participate in competitive sport) women are outnumbered by men by more than 3 to 1 - there are 1.5 million registered sportswomen compared to 6.5 million sportsmen; and

⁴ Evidence, p.S3679

⁵ Evidence, p.S3829

twice as many adult males as females engage in physical activity of sufficient intensity, duration and frequency to have a beneficial effect on heart and lung performance.⁶

Attitudes to Leisure

6.2.13 One possible interpretation of the recreation participation survey data is that, generally speaking, women have a preference for 'passive' leisure pursuits and a comparative disinclination to participate in organised sport.

6.2.14 As Dorothy McLeod says, in her submission to the inquiry:

... not all women want to play sport or want to have their leisure organised.⁷

6.2.15 Research conducted by the Australian Institute for Family Studies also tends to confirm the view that women's higher rate of participation in 'passive' rather than 'active' leisure represents a clear choice or preference. The Institute has found that, despite the gender inequality that exists in the time available for leisure, most Australian women say that they are satisfied with their leisure.⁸

6.2.16 Submissions from the NSW Government and from Justice Elizabeth Evatt, the President of the Law Reform Commission, suggest that an explanation for the comparative disinclination to participate in sport can be found in the competitive nature of sport. For many women, striving to win at all costs and achieve physical superiority bears no relationship to their concept of leisure.⁹

6.2.17 Justice Evatt suggests that more women would be attracted to participate in sport if competition did not play such a dominant role and if the highest value in sport was accorded to individual participation and not winning.¹⁰

⁶ Compiled from surveys conducted by DASET, the Australian Sports Commission and the National Heart Foundation

⁷ Evidence, p.S3674

⁸ The Institute points out that the results of their study do not show whether women are satisfied with their activities simply because they have accepted that they do not have much time for leisure, or because they are satisfied with the leisure time they get (Evidence, p.S3628)

⁹ Evidence, p.S3361 and p.S4223

¹⁰ Evidence, p.S3661

6.2.18 It must be acknowledged, however, that a very significant number of women do participate in organised sport and find great satisfaction in achieving through competition.

Barriers to Leisure

6.2.19 The reasons for the differences in leisure time available to men and women, and for the different use made of leisure time are various and often inter-related.

6.2.20 The most frequent and fundamental reason that women have less leisure time than men is that women, not men, have generally assumed responsibility for domestic duties.

6.2.21 In a submission from the University of Adelaide Academic Women's Affirmative Action Group it is argued that 'more than any other single factor [domestic responsibilities] restricts participation in sport and other leisure activities.'¹¹ The Australian Family Association agree with this proposition, pointing out that 'it has long been known that for the average woman to have to work in both the market economy and the household economy means excessively long hours and thus not much time for leisure or sport'.¹²

6.2.22 Other factors which limit the opportunities women have to participate in sporting and other leisure activities are described by the Equal Employment Practitioners in Education Committee in their submission to the inquiry. They include:

- . a lack of self-confidence [by women] and [an unwillingness to accept] ... their right to leisure and fitness;
- . a lack of facilities, especially facilities which cater for women's needs, for example, facilities with flexible session times, child care and which are secure from physical threat or harassment;

¹¹ Evidence, p.S535

¹² Evidence, p.S96

- . a lack of support [particularly for girls in sport] through the education systems; [and]
- . a lack of appropriate coverage in the media.¹³

6.2.23 A number of submissions argue that the most significant barrier to participation by women in sport is the prevailing stereotypes and structure of sport. Brian Stoddart, in his presentation to the Committee's *Equity for Women in Sport*, seminar, notes that sport and its structures are reflections of our culture, and that just as women have had little power in any of the major institutions in our society, they have also little power in sport.

6.2.24 Because sport has a substantial administrative and organisational structure at the local, regional and national levels the barriers to access and equity are more visible in sport than in other areas of leisure. It is, of course, easier to develop strategies to overcome barriers if the barriers themselves are readily identifiable.

Possible Consequences

6.2.25 The lower participation rates by women in sport and active leisure has identified consequences as detailed in the submission from the Australian Sports Commission. This included:

- . The aerobic fitness of girls on average declines after the age of 12. (ACHPER Health and Fitness Survey)
- . The performances of pre-pubescent girls tends to be on average inferior to those of boys of the same age in various performance measures of fitness, except in the area of flexibility. No significant physical differences at this early age explain the performance differences. (The Australian School Fitness Test)
- . There is a positive relationship between self-concept and sport involvement. (Donovan Research 1988, Roberts, et al 1981, Stein and Hoffman 1978)

¹³ Evidence, p.S460. See also the submission from Louise Dressing and Helen Clarke (Evidence, p.S3794)

- . Girls in general have lower self-esteem and more negative self-concepts than boys. (Taylor 1981, 1982, Edgar et al 1974, Connell et al 1975)
- . Women and girls who are involved in physical activity have a higher level of self-esteem than women and girls who are not. (Robertson 1981, Poole 1983)
- . An individual's self-esteem and self-concept are closely linked to the appearance and function of their body - girls are more critical of their bodies than boys, especially at adolescence (Bardwick 1971, Fisher 1964)
- . Concepts of body image develop at a very early age and strongly influence the activities in which boys and girls participate. (Dyer 1986)

6.2.26 Access to leisure can be described as a clear indicator of a woman's quality of life: the less leisure, the less quality of life. The following sections of this chapter consider each of the barriers to participation that have been identified and, by proposing a series of recommendations to improve access and equity in active leisure, aim to provide the opportunity for a significant improvement in the quality of life for Australian women.

6.3 Encouraging Greater Participation

Introduction

6.3.1 The access and equity problems facing women in leisure and sport are in most respects, not very different from the problems confronting women in society generally. While women carry a disproportionate responsibility for the unpaid work associated with home and family matters, it will be difficult to achieve gender equity in many areas of community life - including leisure or sport.

6.3.2 But just as other areas of inequity and discrimination call for multi-faceted responses, so too does the pursuit of equity in leisure and sport. During the inquiry a number of specific approaches to improving access and equity for women in leisure and sport have been suggested. Some of these are considered below. Some of the suggestions call for continuing commitments to education and awareness campaigns, while others call for immediate government intervention.

Increasing the Number of Girls in Sport

6.3.3 One of the most striking features about the participation of women in sport is the alarmingly high rate at which young girls drop out from active participation. It has been suggested that up to 60 per cent of the girls who are involved in sport at school drop out on leaving school or, later, on getting married.

6.3.4 If there is to be a significant change in overall participation rates for women, it is essential that more be done to make involvement in sport more attractive for young women. As attitudes in relation to sport are developed at an early age, this requires action at both the primary and secondary school level.

6.3.5 Many submissions were critical of the lack of commitment displayed by State and Territory education authorities toward encouraging girls to take up or stay involved in sport.

6.3.6 In particular, it was said that the prevailing culture about sport at many schools in Australia does not encourage girls to participate. The educators have allowed a masculine culture to pervade school sport:

Girls perceive sport to be a male domain and they have no belief in their own ability or in their right to join in.¹⁴

6.3.7 It also appears that quality physical education is no longer a part of every school curriculum. Budgetary constraints and pressure from other curriculum areas has meant that, in many schools, less time is now devoted to sports education.¹⁵ Some State education systems have reduced their number of specialist physical education teachers. According to the Australian Sports Commission, the rapidly diminishing number of physical education specialists in primary schools is a major problem facing sport in Australia.

6.3.8 It is the responsibility of the State and Territory education systems to create a more receptive and supportive environment in school so as to help encourage more girls to take up and stay involved in sport.

¹⁴ Evidence, p.S3998

¹⁵ Australian Sports Commission, *Annual Report*, p.63

6.3.9 Different approaches have been adopted in each system. For instance, the Northern Territory Education Department has proposed a number of strategies to encourage higher participation rates for girls in sport. These include:

- . training and support for teachers to develop skills in physical education program management;
- . support for the appointment of physical education specialists in primary schools;
- . introduction of student choice of co-educational or single sex classes for physical education in junior secondary school;
- . appointment of an equitable number of female physical education teachers to physical education faculties in high schools to ensure positive role models for girls;
- . development of a national core curriculum in sport and physical education;
- . informing careers counsellors of the options available to girls in sport and appointment of role models to counselling positions;
- . setting aside 'girls only' areas like ovals, courts, sufficient grassed areas within schools for sport and leisure activities a couple of times a week; [and]
- . reorganising duty rosters to ensure that physical education teachers on yard duty encourage girls to organise and participate in games and sport.¹⁶

6.3.10 The development of a national core curriculum in sport and physical education as part of the National Curriculum Project, is argued, by Marie Osmar from the University of Western Australia among others, to be essential if girls are to develop more competence and confidence in their sporting skills.¹⁷

¹⁶ Evidence, p.S4069. NOTE: The New South Wales Government, in its submission, describes some similar strategies that are currently being pursued by the NSW Department of School Education, (Evidence, p.S4225)

¹⁷ Evidence, p.S3783

6.3.11 The importance of quality physical education being an integral part of every school curriculum is also emphasised by the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. In particular, the Council recommends that the current moves to create national curricula in a range of subject areas should be:

... carefully monitored to ensure that physical education maintains its rightful place ... and is taught by qualified teachers with affirmative action to promote female physical education teachers.¹⁸

6.3.12 The crucial role of schools in redressing the gender imbalance in sport has also been recognised by the Australian Sports Commission which, in May 1991, launched the 'Active Girls Campaign'. The Campaign is aimed at increasing the number of adolescent girls participating in sport by:

- . producing promotional resources targetted at girls, parents, teachers, coaches and sport organisers; and
- . developing and delivering in-service programs for primary school teachers.

6.3.13 The campaign has been highly praised in submissions to the inquiry and according to the NSW Government would appear to be fulfilling an important educative role in highlighting the particular needs of girls in sport.¹⁹

The Portrayal of Sportswomen in the Media

6.3.14 In 1985 the Federal Government's working group on Women in Sport reported that:

The coverage of women's sport by all media in Australia at the moment is grossly inadequate.²⁰

6.3.15 Evidence presented during the course of the Committee's inquiry suggests that there has been little, if any, change since 1985. Information provided by the Australian Sports Commission shows that:

¹⁸ Evidence, p.S3731

¹⁹ See the submission from the NSW Government (Evidence, p.S4224)

²⁰ Exhibit 21(i), p.11

- (a) between 1980 and 1988, newspaper coverage of women's sport was virtually unchanged - increasing very slightly from 2 per cent of total sports coverage in 1980 to 2.5 per cent in 1988; and
- (b) in 1988, only 1.3 per cent of television sports coverage was devoted to women's sport - 56.8 per cent of television sports coverage focussed on men's sport, 39.8 per cent on mixed sport and 2.1 per cent on horse and dog racing.²¹

6.3.16 By not giving a more balanced coverage of the achievements of our sportswomen, the media is ensuring:

- . that efforts and excellence of Australia's sportswomen will continue to be known by only a few;
- . that women's sports organisations and individual sportswomen continue to find it difficult to attract and retain corporate sponsorship and;
- . that Australian women will continue to be denied access to stories and images of sporting excellence to which they can relate and aspire.

6.3.17 In their submission to the inquiry the Women's Cricket Council detail the difficulties that they have experienced in obtaining media coverage of the Australian Women's Cricket Team - despite the fact that the team is ranked first in the world in both Test and one-day competitions. According to the Council, the consequences of not receiving adequate media coverage are that they continually struggle to attract sponsorship and that potential new players, particularly at the junior level are not aware that women can play cricket in international competition.²²

6.3.18 The Tasmanian Government in their submission, highlight the importance of the link between sports promotion and sports participation:

²¹ Evidence, p.S2194. See also Equity for Women in Sport Seminar, p.185

²² Evidence, p.S1993

The leisure and sport pursuits that individuals choose are often related to their knowledge and understanding of available activities and a perception of what is 'appropriate' for them.²³

6.3.19 This relationship can be of particular importance with respect to girls who, it is argued, are much more likely to take up a sport if, firstly, they have some knowledge of it and secondly, they have - as visible role models - the women who play that sport. It is, for example, understandable that young girls - who see only men's cricket on television, hear only about men's cricket on the radio, and read about only male men's cricket in newspapers - would be forgiven for thinking that cricket is not a game played by girls.

6.3.20 A number of submissions make the point that women's sporting organisations have not had the opportunity to develop experience and expertise in dealing with media outlets, and that more and better coverage would be given if journalists were provided with regular and newsworthy stories. While there is undoubtedly improvements in the level of professionalism to be made by sporting organisations in media relations, an overwhelming proportion of submissions argued that the main reason for imbalance in sports reporting is the attitudes of, and judgements made by, most sports journalists.

6.3.21 Robin Ho, in her paper to the Committee's seminar on *Equity for Women in Sport*, summarised the views of many when she listed the main 'reasons for the bias in the coverage of women's sport' as being:

- . Firstly, the dominance of men as sports journalists and concurrently the lack of women as sports journalists, particularly women sports journalists in positions of decision making and authority;
- . Secondly, ignorance on the part of male commentators regarding women in sport and their achievements;
- . Thirdly, a reliance on traditional areas of sports coverage and the belief that women's performances are second rate; [and]

²³ Evidence, p.S2802

Fourthly, limited media resources in terms of both time, space and personnel.²⁴

6.3.22 The two arguments raised most frequently in defence of the current 'balance' of sports reporting are:

- (a) that the viewing and reading public are being given what they want - they do not want more extensive coverage of women's sport; and
- (b) that because women's sport is less combative, and because male athletes are faster and stronger, women's sport is less exciting and intrinsically less interesting.

6.3.23 Jim McKay has made a thorough study of the media coverage of women's sport and he argued, in his presentation to the *Equity for Women in Sport* seminar, that these arguments are fallacious. In his analysis, it is not the public which determines what will be reported - it is largely the media owners, managers, workers and sponsors. Mr McKay suggests that if viewer or reader interest was a key determinant, then logically commercial media would devote more time to sports like netball, which has the third highest participation rate in Australia. Instead of netball 'we can regularly see coverage of ostrich racing, rock and roll wrestling, darts, dog trials and arm wrestling from overseas'.

6.3.24 Mr McKay also disputes the claim that because women's sport can be less combative it is not as good, or as interesting as men's sport:

Although Jeff Fenech cannot defeat Mike Tyson, we do not consider him to be any less of a champion. Darts, lawn bowls and snooker are hardly combative, but they get regular coverage. Many people are uninterested in combative sports and prefer to watch aesthetic events like men's and women's figure skating, diving and gymnastics.²⁵

6.3.25 Moreover, says Mr McKay, the media has shown with its coverage of sport, such as basketball, sailing and snooker that it is possible to create viewer interest in the sport.

²⁴ *Equity for Women in Sport Seminar*, p.187. See also the submission from Lynne-Marie Freh (*Evidence*, pp.S2009-2027)

²⁵ *Equity for Women in Sport Seminar*, p.21(2)

6.3.26 Ms Ho also rejects the view that the media's sports reporting accurately reflects public interest. In doing so she not only criticises the amount of time spent covering women's sport, but also the nature of much of the reporting that occurs.

6.3.27 Ms Ho argues that the dominant ideology in sport is one of patriarchy, and that sports reporting both reflects this ideology and reinforces sport as a masculine activity. This means that only those women's sports which are considered to be traditionally feminine are seen as being appropriate and acceptable. This limited and stereotypical coverage of women in sport means that non-traditional women's sports are labelled as 'unnatural, biologically dangerous and definitely unappealing to the spectator. What is perceived as unnatural is either excluded or demeaned [in any media coverage]'.²⁶

6.3.28 A third characteristic of the media coverage of women in sport is that much of the coverage diminishes the sporting achievements of Australia's sportswomen by highlighting non-sporting attributes or accomplishments. For example, many sports reports will comment on or draw attention to, either directly or indirectly, a sportswomen's physical appearance or her role as wife and mother. This, in Ms Ho's analysis, is consistent with the patriarchal ideology as it focuses on the ability of sportswomen to maintain their traditional supportive roles as wife and mother, or on their sexual appeal, rather than their sporting achievements.²⁷

6.3.29 It should be pointed out that some media outlets have made notable efforts to improve the gender balance in sports reporting. In the print media, both *The Adelaide Advertiser* and *The Canberra Times* devote more attention than counterpart rival metropolitan daily newspapers to the coverage of womens sport. In broadcasting, ABC Radio and ABC Television provide a far wider range of coverage of women's sport than any other Australian electronic media outlets. In 1991, for example, ABC Television covered the World Netball Championships, the Australian Women's Hockey Championships, the Daikyo Ladies Masters golf tournament, the play-offs and finals of the Women's National Basketball League and ten one hour programs, called 'Goal Attack', featuring action from the Mobil Interstate Netball series.²⁸

²⁶ Equity for Women in Sport Seminar, p.188

²⁷ See also comments by Denese Gray, (Evidence, p.S3680)

²⁸ Evidence, p.S3824

6.3.30 The Australian Sports Commission has recently announced a new media initiative designed to secure more and better television coverage for women's sport. The initiative will involve the Sports Commission working in partnership with women's sports organisations, corporate sponsors and a television production company to produce video coverage of women's sports events. These packages will then be provided to all television networks free of charge for use as news items or sports feature stories. As well as improving the chances for more and better coverage of women's sport, it is hoped this initiative will help women's sports organisations acquire the skills and experience needed to secure sponsorship and attain media coverage in the future.

6.3.31 Submissions to the inquiry have suggested that a number of other strategies should also be adopted.

6.3.32 One approach that has been applauded in some submissions is the recent decision by the National Working Party on Portrayal of Women in the Media to include the portrayal of sportswomen on its agenda.

6.3.33 The Working Party was first established in 1989 and is made up of representatives from the media industry, governments and community organisations. Over the last few years it has focussed on the portrayal of women in advertising. The aim of the Working Party has been to develop, within the media industry, a greater understanding of women's concerns about the portrayal of women in media - particularly in regard to sex-role stereotyping.

6.3.34 The recent decision by the Working Party to include women in sport on its agenda presents another opportunity to consult with key players in the media and continue the process of educating and sensitising the media about these concerns.

6.3.35 While continuing efforts to encourage attitudinal change through consultation and education are essential, the Committee has been urged to recommend immediate government action to confront the problem of imbalanced coverage of women's sport.

6.3.36 Specifically, it has been suggested that it is within the power of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal and the Affirmative Action Agency to take action to improve the coverage of women in sport.

6.3.37 There are two possible courses of action involving the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal. The Tribunal is responsible for the granting, renewal suspension and revocation of licences to broadcast. Under the present broadcasting regulations, radio and television companies must satisfy a series of criteria in order to be licenced to broadcast or to have their licence renewed. One of the key criteria is that they provide an 'adequate and comprehensive service'. When considering whether to renew a broadcaster's licence the Tribunal seeks public comment on the performance of the broadcaster in meeting the licence conditions. These licence renewal hearings would provide the Tribunal with an opportunity to consider whether the current imbalance in the media coverage of women in sport represents the provision of 'adequate and comprehensive service' by individual broadcasters.

6.3.38 The second approach focuses on the radio and television program standards which are determined and maintained by the Tribunal. At present, the program standards require licence holders to comply with various conditions, covering matters such as the local content of programs and the broadcasting of children's programs.

6.3.39 Over the years the Tribunal has modified its program standards in response to specific community concerns. For example, the children's television standard was instituted when the Tribunal concluded, after an extensive public inquiry, that the television licence holders had not demonstrated a sufficiently strong commitment to children's programs. Similarly, the Tribunal has recently announced an inquiry into the need for more specific provision to be made in the television program standards for the broadcast of social documentaries.

6.3.40 Before exercising its power to determine program standards, the Tribunal is required to hold a public inquiry. Such inquiries can be initiated in one of three ways:

- (a) by a decision of the Tribunal itself;
- (b) at the direction of the Minister for Transport and Communications; or
- (c) on request from a member of the community.

6.3.41 It would be possible, by any of these means, for the Tribunal to inquire into the portrayal of sportswomen in the media so as to assess whether the existing coverage is 'adequate and comprehensive', and to consider whether a specific program standard would help redress the present imbalance.

6.3.42 The *Broadcasting Services Bill*, which was introduced in Commonwealth Parliament in November 1991 and is presently the subject of extensive community consultation, provides that the Tribunal will be replaced by the Australian Broadcasting Authority. It is intended that the Authority have similar powers to grant and review broadcasting licences. The Authority will also have the power to determine program standards, although in some instances this power is intended to be used only as a safety net to support industry codes of practice.

6.3.43 As described earlier, many consider the heart of the problem to be the attitudes of, and judgements made by, sports journalists and editors. One way of seeking to change these attitudes is to ensure that media organisations, have in place effective equal opportunity programs. The educative role that such programs can play, and the encouragement they can give to the employment of more women as journalists, editors and producers, could all help to change the culture in sports journalism.

6.3.44 At present it would seem that there is considerable gender imbalance in sports journalism. A survey of a nationwide listing of media organisations shows that there is not one female sports editor in the 21 metropolitan newspapers across Australia nor in any of the 21 metropolitan radio stations.²⁹

6.3.45 The majority of media outlets and particularly radio stations have less than 100 employees. This means the organisations are not required to have equal opportunity programs pursuant to the Affirmative Action Legislation.³⁰

²⁹ Margaret Gee's Media Guide (1990)

³⁰ Evidence, p.S3825

Sponsorship

6.3.46 As noted above, one of the biggest barriers facing women's sports organisations in attracting and retaining sponsorship is a lack of media coverage. Potential sponsors are reluctant to spend money on sports which cannot guarantee a high public profile for themselves or their products.

6.3.47 Very few businesses consider sponsorship to be a donation. Most businesses see it as an investment from which they expect a return. In the words of Ron Burke, the General Manager of Corporate Affairs for Mobil Australia:

Sponsorship involves the active pursuit of publicity for a company or its goods and services. It is commercially driven support.³¹

6.3.48 Improving the media's coverage of women's sport is thus of crucial importance if women's sport is to attract more sponsorship. Similarly sponsorship is essential to women's sport gaining prominence in the commercial media.

6.3.49 A number of the presenters at the Committee's Equity for Women in Sport seminar agreed that sports administrators generally have not been successful in presenting women's sport as an attractive package to potential sponsors. It was argued that sports organisations must either enhance their own marketing, advertising and presentation skills, or employ qualified public relations assistance.³²

6.3.50 The sponsorship of women's sports by companies such as Mobil Australia and Johnson and Johnson, however does confirm that it is possible to profitably link women's sport and commercially driven sponsorship.

Recognition for Sportswomen

6.3.51 The Sportswomen's Association of Australia notes in its submission that sports awards are an important way of recognising the achievements and outstanding performances of women in sport. Since 1979 the Association has being

³¹ Equity for Women in Sport Seminar, p.135

³² See evidence from Lynne-Marie Freh (p.111), Terry O'Donoghue (p.123) and Brett Davis (p.132) at the Women in Sport Seminar

conducting the Australian Sportswomen of the Year Award. The Award is given at the state and national levels and was originally conceived as an affirmative action measure because the Association believed that women were not sufficiently recognised in other sports awards.³³

6.3.52 In 1991, the Commonwealth Government launched the Prime Ministerial Women and Sport Award scheme. This award is to be given annually in recognition of exemplary practices in supporting women and girls in sport. It is intended that the award will recognise school or local initiatives to encourage greater participation; community based programs to help women with special needs pursue their sporting activities; and high quality media coverage of women' sport.

Improving Access to Childcare

6.3.53 The issue that is raised perhaps most frequently as a barrier to increased participation by women in sport and leisure is a general lack of childcare facilities at sporting and recreational facilities.

6.3.54 The priority given childcare in submissions to the inquiry is reflected in an analysis of submissions that was prepared for the Committee by Dr Marian Sawyer. Dr Sawyer reports that:

The majority of people putting submissions into this inquiry feel that the provision of affordable, quality child care is ... [an essential pre-condition] for equal opportunity for women. It does not matter where these submissions are coming from: whether they are coming from sporting organisations, from women in tertiary education or from women in other employment.³⁴

6.3.55 Among the strategies that have been suggested to improve access to childcare for women wanting to participate in sport were:

- amending the *Sex Discrimination Act* to make the provision of childcare compulsory for sporting clubs or associations;

³³ Evidence, p.53685

³⁴ Sex Discrimination Legislation Seminar, p.112

- insisting that national sporting organisations commit themselves and their sports to the provision of childcare; and
- providing government assistance to ensure that childcare facilities are provided at all community sport and recreation centres.

6.3.56 A number of submissions supported the making of amendments to *Sex Discrimination Act* to include childcare as one of the benefits of membership of a club. It was argued that by doing so sporting clubs would be obliged to provide adequate childcare for their members. The suggestion has not, however, been universally endorsed. The Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW has pointed out that 'it would be a departure from the existing philosophical approach of the Act to impose a positive obligation on clubs to provide childcare. The Act, as it is presently drafted, obliges clubs and other services providers to treat men and women equally. It does not impose any positive obligations on clubs or service providers'.³⁵ Second, the Australian Sports Commission implies that an amendment of the Act to this effect would place a unique responsibility on sporting clubs because 'the provision of childcare [is not] a benefit necessarily provided (via legislative requirements) by employers or educational institutions'.³⁶ And third, the Western Australian Commissioner for Equal Opportunity argues that the proposed amendment to the Act would not in fact have the effect of requiring clubs to provide childcare. In the Commissioner's view childcare already falls within the definition of a benefit of membership of a club.³⁷

6.3.57 An alternative approach is currently being developed by the Australian Sports Commission with the publication of gender equity guidelines for national sporting organisations. The guidelines are described in more detail in the following section, but essentially they call on national sporting organisations to develop gender equity for their sports and to implement specific strategies to ensure progress towards gender equity.

6.3.58 One of the key aspects of the Sports Commission's gender equity guidelines are that they acknowledge the limiting effect that family responsibilities can have on the opportunities for women to participate in sport or to involve themselves in sports administration or coaching.

³⁵ Evidence, p.S3780

³⁶ Evidence, p.S4192

³⁷ Evidence, p.S4147

6.3.59 To help overcome these barriers the guidelines call on national sporting organisations to develop policies and strategies for the provision of childcare in their sports.

6.3.60 Specifically, the Commission proposes that national sporting organisations should:

... adopt a childcare subsidy policy to support women who would find it difficult to participate fully because of their family commitments and limited financial means; [and]

... provide childcare at all seminars, workshops and meetings.³⁸

6.3.61 While national sporting organisations have a crucial role to play in developing policy on childcare, the implementation of policy and the actual provision of childcare, will primarily be the responsibility of state, regional and local sports organisations. As the Sports Commission notes:

... the question of funding, for both the education process required and for the provision of care itself, will be central to the willingness of organisations to pursue the matter.³⁹

6.3.62 Concern about the cost implications of requiring sporting clubs and associations to provide child care was expressed in a number of submissions. The Australian Association of Women's Sport and Recreation was concerned that it may well be counter-productive if regional or local sporting organisations were required to provide childcare without assistance or additional facilities. In these circumstances, 'the groups may no longer be able to exist and there will be fewer opportunities to participate'.⁴⁰

6.3.63 In recognition of those concerns, the Commission has indicated that it will be providing additional funding support for national sporting organisations to help them establish affirmative action measures, such as the provision of childcare. Submissions to the inquiry argued strongly that there is no more important special

³⁸ Australian Sports Commission, *Towards Gender Equity in Sport*, p.12

³⁹ Evidence, p.S4190

⁴⁰ Evidence, p.S3702. See also the submission from Jenny Williams, the Women's Advisor to the South Australian Department of Recreation and Sport, (Evidence, p.S3651)

measure than the provision of childcare. It was said that better provision of childcare would help lift participation in all areas of sport and at all levels.

6.3.64 It is important also that childcare become a major consideration in the design and establishment of sporting and recreation facilities.

6.3.65 Although state and local government authorities are primarily responsible for the construction and maintenance of community sport and recreation facilities, the Commonwealth plays a role through its Community Recreation and Sporting Facilities Program.

6.3.66 The Program was introduced in 1988-89 to provide supplementary financial assistance to help State and local governments and community groups finance the construction of sport and recreation facilities.

6.3.67 The Program is administered by the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories. According to the Department's latest annual report:

Funds have been provided to 382 project, [since the Program was introduced] ranging from the installation of new playground equipment ... to the development of multi-purpose indoor recreation centres.⁴¹

6.3.68 The Committee has been advised that 'the provision of childcare facilities has been incorporated into the recommended guidelines for sports facilities funded through the Program'.⁴²

6.3.69 Similar provisions should also be incorporated in the funding guidelines of state and local governments. In this regard, the Committee notes that the South Australian and Western Australian Governments have, in recent years, run funding programs for the provision of childcare at sporting venues. The Western Australian Ministry of Sport and Recreation advised the Committee that:

⁴¹ Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories, *Annual Report*, 1990-91, p.23

⁴² Evidence, p.S4192

Over the next three years, \$15 million would be available [through the Community Sporting and Recreation Fund] for the development of new, and the upgrading of existing, sport and recreation facilities. All major projects will be required to show a commitment to the provision of childcare.⁴³

6.4 Gender Equity in Sports Administration

6.4.1 There are very few women in senior positions in the decision making structures of sport. By and large, men continue to occupy the senior positions in government sports agencies and in the administrative structures of individual sports.

6.4.2 Moreover, those few women who are in positions of influence, and who are concerned about the gender inequity in sport, find that they spend a disproportionate amount of time just ensuring that women's issues are given the consideration they warrant. As a consequence, these women risk being marginalised and being considered to have little interest or expertise in issues other than those concerning women.

6.4.3 The extent to which women are under-represented in the major decision making bodies in sport is shown in the following table, which is based on information provided by the Australian Sports Commission.

⁴³ Evidence, p.S3774

Table 1: Number of Males and Females Employed in Major Sporting Organisations

Organisation	Males	Females
Australian Sports Commission		
Board of Management	9	3
Institute of Sport Coaches	48	12
Institute of Sport Head Coaches	15	2
Sports Science/Sports Medicine	27	7
National Sporting Organisations		
National Executive Directors	65	12
National Coaching Directors	58	14
Australian Olympic Committee		
Members of the Executive	9	1
International Sports Delegates	49	5
Forward Planning Commission	5	1
Medical Commission	6	0
Legal Commission	4	0
Justification Commission	6	1
Finance Commission	4	0
Marketing and Public Relations	4	0
Athletes Commission	7	4
Education Commission	7	1
Australian Commonwealth Games Association		
Office Bearers	3	0
Executive Sport Delegates	10	0
Second Sport Delegates	8	2
Confederation of Australian Sport	6	2
Total	350	66

6.4.4 One of the claims most frequently made to explain this inequity is that there are simply not enough women with the skills and experience to be senior sports administrators. This assertion has been vigorously denied in a number of submissions which note that sport, particularly for children and amateurs, is heavily dependent upon the unpaid contributions of women. In fact, as Janis Ross from the Victorian Department of Sport and Recreation, points out:

... women often run men's sporting organisations, particularly at a local level.⁴⁴

6.4.5 The difficulty is that the value of these contributions, perhaps because they are unpaid, is largely unrecognised.

6.4.6 Another significant barrier for women seeking to progress in sports administration is that fewer women than men are well versed in the system of networking, patronage and lobbying which often determines who will be appointed to the boards of management and other key decision making positions.

6.4.7 The importance of having influential mentors or patrons was highlighted in evidence from the Australian Olympic Committee. When questioned on how the Olympic Committee exercises its policy of 'total equality of opportunity' the Secretary-General replied:

When our Executive Board Members, and people such as our President and I are privately representing the Olympic movement at sporting functions or even privately and socially, ... we can say: so and so does an excellent job as an administrator - why don't you nominate her for something higher up, and why don't encourage her? We can say that privately, and lead by example, I guess.⁴⁵

6.4.8 A number of submissions have suggested that the best way of ensuring that sporting organisations commit themselves to improving gender equity is for the Government to make sports funding conditional upon the introduction and implementation, by national sporting organisations, of policies for the achievement of gender equity.

6.4.9 One proposal, put forward by Josephine Tiddy the South Australian Commissioner for Equal Opportunity, is that the Australian Sports Commission develop a Senior Sports Plan along the lines of the Junior Sports Plan now in operation in South Australia.

⁴⁴ Evidence, p.S3807

⁴⁵ Evidence, p.1552

6.4.10 Such a plan would be negotiated between the Commission and national sports organisations. It would contain a general policy statement, as well as guidelines specific to each sport; would be based on the equal opportunity principles; and would cover areas such as skills development, talent identification facilities, equipment, representative sport and sports administration.

6.4.11 The Commissioner also suggested that the Plan should include an implementation and evaluation strategy and should indicate that sanctions would be applied for non-compliance.⁴⁶

6.4.12 The Australian Sports Commission has for some years required that national sports organisations develop a three year sports development plan which outlines the approach that each organisation will take to the type of matters raised by Commissioner Tiddy. In addition, the Sports Commission has recently decided to require that equal opportunity policies and practices become part of each sports development plan. To help sport organisations develop these policies and practices the Sports Commission has prepared a series of guidelines, published under the title 'Towards Gender Equity in Sport'.

6.4.13 The guidelines call on national sporting organisations to accept responsibility for redressing the present inequities in sport and propose a model for the development of gender equity plans. Broadly, the guidelines suggest that national sporting organisations:

- (a) collect and analyse data on the status of women in their sport;
- (b) review the impact on women of all policies;
- (c) set realistic goals and targets;
- (d) develop affirmative action measures to remedy the under-representation of women in areas such as administration; and
- (e) monitor and evaluate the progress made in improving gender equity.

⁴⁶ *Equity for Women in Sport Seminar*, pp.49-50

6.4.14 The particular affirmative action measures suggested by the Sports Commission are directed toward achieving goals such as 'increasing the number of females on executive boards of management and formal leadership positions'.⁴⁷

6.4.15 The Sports Commission's guidelines place considerable emphasis not only on setting targets but also on reviewing progress toward achieving these targets. The guidelines envisage that sporting organisations will both monitor their own progress, and that progress will also be periodically evaluated 'by an objective person or group external to the sport in order to provide an outside view of the effectiveness of the plan in addressing gender equity issues'.⁴⁸

6.4.16 The guidelines also link the achievement of gender equity goals to the continuation of Commonwealth funding. The link is made in two ways. The first is in the form of some additional funding support for sporting organisations to help them develop equity plans and establish special measure programs. The second is the Sports Commission's intention to make effective gender equity planning a necessary criteria for funding within three years.⁴⁹

6.4.17 The first link has been made out of a realisation that 'unless funding can be provided to support the required special measures ... the programs will simply not be put in place'.⁵⁰ The second link has been made as an indication of the Commonwealth's determination to ensure gender equity in sport. It has been argued that such links are essential if sporting organisations are to be encouraged to make a real commitment to gender equity reforms in their sport.

6.4.18 While the Commission's guidelines make the point that ongoing levels of funding are dependent on a commitment to gender equity, the evidence to the Committee suggests this point has not been fully appreciated. Possible sanctions are not described in detail in the Commissions guidelines and this may lead to misinterpretation or doubt on behalf of national sporting organisations.

⁴⁷ Australian Sports Commission, *Towards Gender Equity in Sport*, p.12

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p.11

⁴⁹ Evidence, p.S4190

⁵⁰ Evidence, *ibid*

6.5

Gender Equity in Sports Coaching

6.5.1 Just as women are under-represented in sports administration, so too are they under-represented in sports coaching. As the following table shows, this is particularly true at the elite level:

Table 2: Proportion of Male and Female Sports Coaches in Australian 1990-91

	Male	Female
National Coaching Accreditation Scheme		
Level 1 Coaches (introductory level)	69%	31%
Level 2 Coaches (intermediate level)	82%	18%
Level 3 Coaches (elite level)	91%	9%
Australian Coaching Council		
Council Members	83%	17%
Technical Committee Members	70%	30%
Australian Institute of Sport		
Head Coaches	83%	17%
Coaches	86%	14%
National Sporting Organisations		
National Coaching Directors	78%	22%
National Team Coaches	89%	11%

(Source: Australian Coaching Council, *Sports Coach*, Oct-Dec 1991, p.15)

6.5.2 The proportion of women in the three levels of coaching expertise reflects similar patterns of female participation in paid employment, larger numbers at the lowest level and relatively few at the highest. The evidence indicates that the reason for this distribution reflects the same experience in paid employment, namely that the structure of coaching is based on model where a coach does not have family

responsibilities which 'interrupt' the gaining of qualifications or the time that can be devoted to the sport.

6.5.3 During the course of the inquiry both the Australian Sports Commission and the Australian Coaching Council, which is responsible for the co-ordination of coaching development in Australia, developed a number of initiatives to encourage more women to take up or continue in coaching.

6.5.4 Four of the potentially most significant initiatives have been:

- . the publication by the Coaching Council of 'Women in Coaching' guidelines, which are designed to help national sporting organisations identify and develop gender equity coaching policies and sponsor specific programs on the role of women in coaching;
- . the production, by the Coaching Council (in conjunction with the Sports Commission), of an access and equity plan, which describes how the Council will encourage national sporting organisations to better understand access and equity issues, and how the Council will improve gender equity within its own organisation and in the provision of its services;
- . the publication, by the Sports Commission, of 'Towards Gender Equity in Sport' which calls on national sporting organisations to take affirmative action to improve participation by women in all areas of sport, including sports coaching; and
- . the instigation, by the Sports Commission, of a special scholarship program for women coaches which enables scholarship holders to work with the head coach in various AIS sports for between six and twelve months.⁵¹

6.5.5 It is to be hoped that the constructive mix of direct action, education, financial support variously employed in these initiatives, will in fact lead to a greater number of women coaches - particularly at the elite level.

⁵¹ In 1990-91 six special AIS Coaching Scholarships were made available to women, compensating for the situation that for other coaching scholarships only 3 put of 13 successful applicants were women, *ibid.*, p.4188

6.6 Gender Equity in Sports Funding

6.6.1 A number of submissions have argued that the sports funding policies of the Commonwealth operate to the disadvantage of women, and that this undermines both the Commonwealth's legislative commitment to equal opportunity and the steps currently being taken to encourage gender equity in sport.

6.6.2 This disadvantage is said to arise principally in two ways. First, from the significantly higher level of funds committed to elite sports rather than sports participation; and second, from the fact that there are far fewer elite sports women in receipt of assistance than there are elite sports men.

Funding for Sports Participation

6.6.3 The Commonwealth's sports funding policies are administered by the Australian Sports Commission. The Sports Commission's most recent annual report shows that in the financial year 1990-91:

- . 37 per cent of the Sports Commission's budget was directed toward the provision of services and funding for elite athletes;
- . 30 per cent was directed to activities such as support for teams travelling overseas to competitions, grants to national sporting organisations and support for the development of coaches; and
- . 9 per cent of funds were directed toward encouraging increased participation in sport and to programs specifically for women in sport.

6.6.4 The remainder of the Commission's budget goes toward the provision of sports science and medical services, marketing and corporate services.

6.6.5 As discussed earlier in this chapter, there is a great need to encourage more women to participate in active leisure pursuits. The programs being developed by the Sports Commission, and some of the strategies being discussed by the Sport and Recreation Minister's Council, will provide a chance for improvements to be made in participation rates for women. However, as the funding breakdown shows,

much of the Council's effort is directed at elite sports rather than overall participation levels.

The Distribution of Elite Funding

6.6.6 The Sports Commission, through the Australian Institute of Sport, provides scholarships for 17 sports. Eleven of these 17 are funded as mixed sports. Of the 6 single sex sports, 5 are funded as men's sports only (soccer, water polo, volleyball, rugby union and cricket) and 1 is a female sport (netball).

6.6.7 According to the Sports Commission's annual report, there are 506 scholarship holders: 336 of whom are male and 170 of whom are female. In those sports in which the AIS provides scholarships for both males and females, the distribution of scholarships is 191 for males and 146 for females. In single sex sports, the distribution is 145 for males and 24 for females.⁵² This means there are almost twice as many male scholarship holders as there are female scholarship holders.

6.6.8 A similar gender imbalance can be found in other areas of the AIS elite sports program, including the National Sports Program and the Sports Talent Encouragement Plan.⁵³

6.6.9 The irony of this situation is that, despite receiving less funding and having fewer opportunities for competition in both the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, it is female athletes who have proportionately won more medals for Australia. In Olympic competitions between 1948 and 1988, women have won 42 per cent of the medals won by Australians. This is despite the facts that women comprised only 19 per cent of the total number of team members and had only 22 per cent of the events in which to compete. In Olympic track and field competitions women have won 11 of the 14 gold medals that Australian has won since 1948.

⁵² Australian Sports Commission, *Annual Report 1990-91*, p.18

⁵³ The way in which the gender imbalance operates in the funding of elite sport and in the funding of elite athletes under STEP is described in more detail by Margaret Timpson in her presentation to the *Equity for Women in Sport* seminar (pp.91-92)

6.6.10 In one of its submissions to the inquiry The Sports Commission told the Committee that an Elite Women's Sport Advisory Committee had recently been established to advise the Institute of Sport on matters of gender equity. The Advisory Committee will:

... review current AIS programs, policies and practices for hidden gender biases [with the aim of achieving] ... a more even representation of women among scholarship holders, and elite athletes and coaches receiving assistance through Institute grants programs.⁵⁴

6.7 Sport and the Sex Discrimination Act

Scope of the Act

6.7.1 The Commonwealth's Sex Discrimination Act contains a number of provisions relevant, or potentially relevant, to women in sport. These provisions make it illegal to discriminate on the basis of gender in:

- (a) employment (for example, in sports administration, coaching or refereeing);
- (b) the provision of goods, services and facilities (for example, in gaining access to community playing fields);
- (c) the terms and conditions of membership of a club; and
- (d) the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs.

6.7.2 The Sex Discrimination Act does not address all of the matters which women in sport (such as the media coverage given to women in sport, the under-representation of women in sports administration or the lack of child care facilities at sporting venues) but it does offer some legal guarantees to help overcome discriminatory behaviour in sport.

⁵⁴ Evidence, p.S4189

6.7.3 Equal opportunity legislation in general, and the Sex Discrimination Act in particular, was widely supported in those submissions which focussed on women in sport. Many submissions argued that Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation is crucial in achieving equity for women in sport:

The changes [that have occurred] in employment, mostly initiated by legislative requirements ... lend strength to the conclusion that legislative support is essential for women's progress in sport ... those who are involved in sport should take heart. It is happening at work. It can happen at play.⁵⁵

6.7.4 Notwithstanding these sentiments, the Sex Discrimination Commissioner has reported 'that very few women have lodged complaints relating to sport since the Act became law in 1984'.⁵⁶ To publicise the Act and its powers the Commissioner is in the process of finalising a series of guidelines on how to use the powers of the Act to tackle discrimination against women in sport.

6.7.5 During the course of the inquiry, various comments were made about the operation or intent of specific provisions of the legislation. The provisions which attracted particular comment were: Section 39 (relating to exemptions for voluntary bodies); Section 25 (relating to the definition of a club); and Section 42 (relating to exemptions on the grounds of strength, stamina or physique). Another matter that was raised in evidence is the Sex Discrimination Commissioner's power to initiate investigations.

Exemptions for Voluntary Bodies

6.7.6 The Sex Discrimination Act provides for certain bodies or actions taken in particular circumstances to be exempted from the operation of the Act. One such exception is contained in Section 39 of the Act which says that it is not unlawful for a voluntary body to discriminate against a person on the grounds of sex, marital status or pregnancy in connection with their admission as members to that body, or to discriminate in the provision of benefits or services to members of that body. A voluntary body is defined as an association or other body (whether incorporated or

⁵⁵ Evidence, p.S3677

⁵⁶ Sex Discrimination Commissioner, *Women, Sport and the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act: draft guidelines on how to use the Act to tackle discrimination against women in sport*, p.1

unincorporated) the activities of which are not engaged in for the purposes of making a profit.

6.7.7 Many sports clubs would presently fall within the definition of a 'voluntary body' and thus are exempt from the operation of the Act. This means that it is not unlawful for many sporting clubs or associations to discriminate against women.

6.7.8 The Tasmanian Government, in their submission to the inquiry, expressed the concerns of many others who made submissions when they said that 'the voluntary bodies exemption has been used to restrict women's access to membership, facilities and benefits of sporting clubs'.⁵⁷ As this is the very type of behaviour that the legislation was intended to discourage, a number of submissions have argued that it is central to the achievement of the object of the Act that this exemption be removed.

6.7.9 Although this approach is widely supported in submissions, a note of caution was sounded by the Victorian Commissioner for Equal Opportunity and the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board that, while the present exemption is too broad, to remove it entirely and expose all voluntary bodies to the provisions of the Act may not be desirable.⁵⁸

6.7.10 The Anti-Discrimination Board suggested that the present broad exemption should be replaced with a more narrowly defined exemption. The Board's reason for recommending that the exemption not be removed entirely was to:

... allow organisations such as the Nursing Mothers Association and lesbian or feminist organisations to confine their membership to women. ... An alternative would be to retain the exemption but provide that if a voluntary body occupies Crown land or receives financial assistance from the Commonwealth, it cannot discriminate.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Evidence, S.4167

⁵⁸ Evidence, S.4146 and Evidence, p.S3779

⁵⁹ Evidence, p.S3779

The Definition of a Club

6.7.11 Section 25 of the Act renders it unlawful for a club to discriminate on the basis of a person's gender in determining who shall be admitted as a member or in deciding on the terms and conditions of membership.

6.7.12 A club is defined as a body which:

- (a) is an association of at least 30 members;
- (b) provides and maintains facilities from its own funds; and
- (c) sells or supplies liquor for consumption on its premises.

6.7.13 This definition excludes many small or local sporting clubs.

6.7.14 One way of ensuring that women have greater access to protection of the Act in their dealing with sporting clubs is to adopt the approach taken by equal opportunity legislation in some of the States and broaden the definition of a club to specifically include sporting clubs or associations.

Exemption on the Grounds of Strength, Stamina or Physique

6.7.15 Another exemption from the operation of the Act is described in Section 42. This Section states that it is not unlawful to exclude persons of a particular sex from participation in any competitive sport in which the strength, stamina or physique of competitors is relevant.

6.7.16 The evidence given to the Committee on the operation of this section has represented quite different opinions. On the one hand, it has been strongly argued that the provision prevents women from participating in certain sporting events and that this inhibits, not promotes, equal opportunity. On the other hand, some submissions argue that it is desirable and not discriminatory to have separate sex sporting competitions where strength, stamina or physique is relevant.

6.7.17 The original purpose of the exemption was not to deny sportswomen the opportunity to compete, but to ensure that women were not disadvantaged in competitions which rely on strength, stamina or physique. At the time the

legislation was enacted it was felt that if mixed-sexed competitions were to become widespread and replace separate sex competitions women may win fewer contests and receive less recognition.

6.7.18 There was, however, strong evidence put to the Committee that the Section 42 exemption should be removed or revised.

6.7.19 The Queensland Department of Tourism, Sport and Racing highlighted the disadvantages that can arise from the current provisions:

In some sports, elite sportswomen may live in areas where the only competition they can get at a high enough level to benefit them is against men. In these cases mixed competition is to their advantage. In Townsville, for instance, I believe that the captain of the men's representative water polo team is a women.⁶⁰

6.7.20 As the Act is presently drafted, it would not be unlawful for sportswomen to be barred from competing in these circumstances.

6.7.21 Taking a different approach to the same issue, the Western Australian Women's Advisory Council considers it to be inappropriate that the Act should deny women the right to participate in any competitive sporting activity they wish. In their view, Section 42 should be repealed because it:

... allows the exclusion of women from sporting activities, without women themselves having the opportunity to determine whether or not they have the strength, stamina or physique to participate in such activities.⁶¹

6.7.22 The Equal Opportunity Commissioner for South Australia also argued against retaining Section 42 as it is presently drafted. In the Commissioner's analysis, the working of Section 42 has the effect of making men the sporting standard with which women are compared. This comparison readily translates, in the public's mind, into a view that women's sport 'does not have, and probably never will have, the same spectator appeal as sport played by men'.⁶²

⁶⁰ Evidence, p.S3888

⁶¹ Evidence, p.S1536

⁶² Equity for Women in Sport Seminar, pp.50-51

The Commissioner's Power to Investigate

6.7.23 The Act allows complaint about sex discrimination to be lodged by an individual, or a group, on their own behalf and/or on behalf of others. This means that an individual sportswoman, a sporting club or a group of sportswomen on behalf of others in the sport, can all lodge complaints about sex discrimination.

6.7.24 In addition, the Sex Discrimination Commissioner may choose to investigate a matter brought to her attention but which is not presented as a formal complaint.

6.7.25 As indicated above, the stresses and pressures associated with taking action can, for many women, be sufficiently prohibitive so as to ensure that no action is taken.⁶³ In these circumstances, the power of the Commissioner to launch her own investigations takes on additional significance. The main advantage of an investigation by the Commission is that the Commissioner would be able to investigate broad and general areas of discrimination in sport. This may mean that the jeopardy sportswomen would face in initiating individual and specific complaints would be minimised.

6.7.26 In evidence to the Committee, the Commissioner has identified sport as an area where women continue to suffer discrimination in opportunity and status.⁶⁴ If the Commissioner were to investigate general issues of discrimination in sport, individual sportswomen may feel less in jeopardy and be more inclined to come forward with their specific complaints.

6.7.27 One issue which has been suggested as being appropriate for such an investigation is the widespread practice of awarding of different amounts of prize money for male and female sporting events.

6.7.28 As discussed in Chapter 10, the provision to the Sex Discrimination Commissioner of adequate financial and staff resources is essential if the objects of the Act are to be satisfied. Evidence to the Committee suggests that a lack of resources is the main reason that the Commissioner has not made more use of her power to initiate investigations.

⁶³ See also the submission from Lynne-Marie Freh, (Evidence, p.S2027)

⁶⁴ Equity for Women in Sport Seminar, p.41

6.8 Summary and Recommendations

6.8.1 The evidence to the Committee indicated that women and men have very different patterns of leisure and sport. While this occurs for a variety of reasons, of concern is the lower participation rates of girls and women in sport, and at the elite level, the difficulties women's sport has in attracting sponsorship and media coverage.

6.8.2 The evidence is that girls begin dropping out of sport in high school. While the Sports Commission addresses this problem through its 'Active Girls Campaign', the prime responsibility for encouraging girls to stay involved in sport during school years lies with the State and Territory education authority.

6.8.3 In light of these issues, the Committee makes the following specific Conclusions and Recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 25

It is recommended that the Commonwealth Government, through the Sport and Recreation Minister's Council, encourage the State and Territory education authorities to reinvigorate their commitment to physical education in schools - particularly their commitment to physical education for girls. Specifically, the Commonwealth should encourage the States to:

- (a) develop common curriculum principles for physical education which recognise the need for physical education to be an integral part of every schools' educational program;
- (b) appoint appropriately qualified physical education specialists in primary and secondary schools;
- (c) appoint equitable numbers of male and female physical education teachers; and
- (d) implement strategies and programs, similar to those described by the Northern Territory Department of Education, to ensure that all schools recognise and act upon the need to provide specific and appropriate opportunities for girls to participate in sport.

RECOMMENDATION 26

It is recommended that the Australian Sports Commission:

- (a) continue its 'Active Girls Campaign'; and
- (b) ensure that the National Women in Sport Strategy currently being developed by the Women in Sport and Recreation Sub-committee or the Sport and Recreation Minister's Council:
 - (i) recognises the key role of school level activities;
 - (ii) puts into place an agreed timetable for action and mechanism for monitoring progress.

6.8.4 Much of the evidence addressed the media's coverage of women's sport. The most strident criticism related to the extent of the coverage and matters of style which it was argued concentrated inappropriately on the athlete's physical appearance and not the sporting achievement.

6.8.5 The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal has the responsibility of ensuring commercial broadcasters provide an 'adequate and comprehensive' service. Under the Broadcasting Services Bill, the anticipated successor of the Tribunal, the Australian Broadcasting Authority, focuses on a self regulatory regime based on industry codes. It is open for the Tribunal or its successor to inquire on the coverage of women's sport.

RECOMMENDATION 27

The Committee recommends that the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal inquire into whether there is an 'adequate and comprehensive coverage' of women in sport in the media and consider whether there is a need to establish a program standard for the coverage of women in sport.

RECOMMENDATION 28

It is recommended that:

- (a) the Commonwealth Affirmative Action Agency investigate and report on the equal employment policies and practices of those media companies which are covered by the Affirmative Action Act; and

- (b) this investigation focus particularly on the implementation of these policies in the sports departments of these companies.

RECOMMENDATION 29

It is recommended that the National Working Party on the Portrayal of Women in the Media develop, in consultation with media organisations and relevant employee organisations, a charter of principles and best practices to guide the coverage of women's sport in the media.

6.8.6 Lack of adequate childcare is a further disincentive to women's participation in sport. The Committee notes the Commonwealth's recent initiative to include a focus on childcare provisions in the guidelines for the Community Sporting Facilities Program, however acknowledges that further efforts need to be made. There is a particular concern that most childcare centres are closed at a time when women are most likely to be involved in sporting activities, ie nights and weekends.

RECOMMENDATION 30

The Committee recommends that any national guidelines developed for the provision of childcare be flexible enough to allow access for women involved in sporting activities on an occasional basis, particularly after-hours and on weekends.

RECOMMENDATION 31

Further the Committee recommends that the Australian Sports Commission encourage national sporting organisations to develop child care practices which are flexible enough to provide the most appropriate form of care to meet the demand, whether it be gaining places in existing centres, paying for family day care places or building their own centres.

RECOMMENDATION 32

It is recommended that the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories revise the objectives and funding guidelines of the Community Recreation and Sporting Facilities Program so as to ensure:

- (a) the fair and equitable provision of funding for women's sporting facilities; and

- (b) that provision for childcare be made in all new sporting and recreation centres funded through the Program.

RECOMMENDATION 33

It is recommended that the Commonwealth Government, through the Sport and Recreation Minister's Council, encourage other state governments to follow the examples set by South Australia and Western Australia and provide funding for childcare facilities at sporting venues.

6.8.7 There are very few women in senior positions in the decision making structures of sport or in senior coaching positions. Some of the recent steps taken by the Sports Commission and the Coaching Council have indicated a commitment to the notion of linking gender equity performance and Commonwealth funding. This link is crucial if there are to be significant and sustained improvements in gender equity in sport. The Committee believes that, if individual sports organisations cannot demonstrate a greater commitment to gender equity, the Sports Commission should reduce their level of Commonwealth funding.

RECOMMENDATION 34

It is recommended that the Australian Sports Commission follow through its commitment to help sports organisations plan for equity in sport by ensuring that sufficient resources are made available to provide the advisory services, education programs and supplementary funding required.

RECOMMENDATION 35

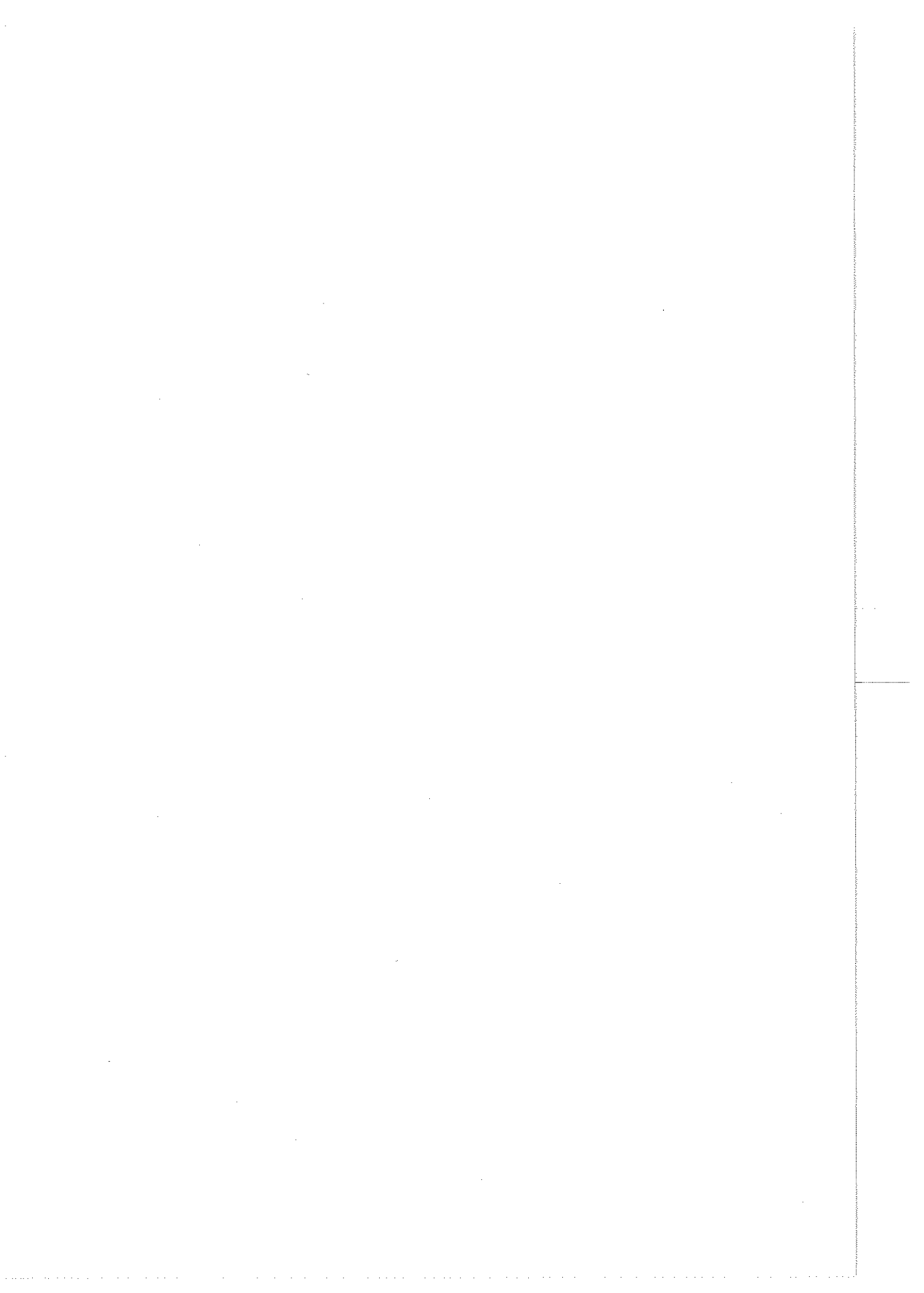
It is recommended that the Australian Sports Commission make clear in its negotiations with all sports organisations in receipt of Commonwealth funds (and explain more completely in its next edition of 'Towards Gender Equity in Sport'), the possible consequences of not making progress toward gender equity in sport.

RECOMMENDATION 36

It is recommended that the Commonwealth Government, through the Sport and Recreation Minister's Council, encourage the State sports funding agencies to adopt an approach to gender equity planning in state sporting organisations similar to that developed by the Australian Sports Commission for national sporting organisations.

6.8.8 Few women have taken the opportunity to use the provisions of the *Sex Discrimination Act* to counter discrimination in the field of sport. Evidence suggests that this is partly due to lack of knowledge of the existence of the provisions but more significantly because many sporting clubs are exempt from the SDA, under Sections 25 and 39.

6.8.9 The Committee does not agree with the suggestion that Section 42 of the Act should be amended. While accepting that, as a matter of principle, women should not be denied the opportunity to compete in mixed competitions if they so wish, the Committee considers that there are undoubted and significant benefits to be gained from separate sex competitions.



CHAPTER 7

RECOGNITION

7.1 Women's Worth - What Counts

7.1.1 Recognition is intrinsically tied to the notions of *visibility* and *value*. While defining visibility is not difficult, many submissions struggled with the question of how, as a society, Australians ascribe value. There was a deal of consensus that value and consequent status, tended to be traditionally associated with monetary worth. As a result, those non-marketed goods and services which are not given a financial cost are therefore perceived to be of less worth than those which exist in the market economy. Hence voluntary work and unpaid work involved in caring for families, children or the elderly is perceived to have less value than paid work. As Margaret Timpson, immediate past-president of the Business and Professional Women's Association expounded:

Not only do women do more of the unpaid work, but also women know that this work is not valued and we live in a society that values everything in money terms whether we like it or not.¹

7.1.2 Denis Ives, the Public Service Commissioner, further explained why women's work has traditionally been given less value than men's work:

Recognition is related to what is valued by society - something which has historically been defined by men so that the activities which women have traditionally undertaken and their associated skills are not usually ascribed high value or status.²

7.1.3 Dr Keith Butler, private citizen, similarly noted:

¹ Recognition Seminar, p.150
² Evidence, p.S3195

Because of the way Western society has developed, and Australian society even more so, males have been allowed to find self-esteem and status solely through having permanent, paid employment outside the home.³

7.1.4 Women clearly feel that they are not accorded appropriate recognition for their contribution. The frustration emanating from much of the evidence to the Committee indicates a need to institutionalise greater recognition for the contribution made by women.

7.2 Women Recognising Their Own Skills

7.2.1 Not only does society generally undervalue women's contribution but there is also clearly a need for women to recognise their own skills and attributes. Changes in respect to greater recognition for women are contingent on women gaining greater confidence in their own self-image and a concomitant effort to recognise women reflected in social institutions.

7.2.2 Building self esteem happens from the cradle. Parenting and schooling have an indelible impact on whether children develop healthy self concepts and perceive themselves capable of setting and achieving goals. Academic studies have, however, suggested that girls are socialised more narrowly and are nurtured in a more protective environment which makes them more cautious.

7.2.3 The net effect is that women appear to be more hesitant in putting themselves forward for all manner of public recognition from job promotion to the Australian Honours system. This was exemplified in a comment by Robyn Archer, singer, songwriter and educator lamenting that many women do not apply for grants and awards:

They do not recognise themselves first, and they have to recognise their own worth first before anybody else is going to recognise them.⁴

7.2.4 Geraldine Doogue, researcher and media presenter, agreed:

³ Evidence, p.S3880

⁴ Recognition Seminar, p.31

The second point concerns women's continuing ambivalence about their own role as authority figures. In my observation, some of the most talented women right now are almost congenitally incapable of believing they can cross the line to take full authority.⁵

7.2.5 Annette Knight, Mayor of the City of Albany, recognised a similar problem:

... at least one of biggest obstacles that women face in both rural and urban situations in taking up this and indeed any other challenge in public life is not a fear of discrimination but a lack of confidence in themselves and in their own capabilities.⁶

7.2.6 Dr Dale Spender argued that public recognition was a significant factor in achieving a change in attitude:

One of the most effective ways of improving the self confidence of all women, and of supporting their growth and development to their full potential is by making visible and valuable the achievements of women of the past. Both women and men need to become aware that women have been knowledgeable, creative, talented, caring and central contributors to Australian life.⁷

7.2.7 Several submissions reported on women's attempts to build self esteem, emphasising the importance of informal learning centres, networks and interest groups. The submission from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission noted the particular importance of Art and Craft Centres for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, not only as income generators but the foci for community work. Their value in building self-esteem for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women cannot be underestimated.⁸

⁵ Recognition Seminar, p.200

⁶ Recognition Seminar, p.102

⁷ Recognition Seminar, p.9

⁸ Evidence, p.S3173

7.3 Society Recognising Women

7.3.1 Katrina Harrison, from the Office of the Status of Women, reported on the views of participants discussing the issue of the need for public recognition of women at the *Recognition* seminar:

We suggest that it is imperative that we recognise the significant cultural, geographical, sexual orientation and physical diversity and sensitivity of women. It is again imperative that we value the diversity of all women and especially the original occupants, the Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders.⁹

7.3.2 Aboriginal women at the *Recognition* seminar believed that records documenting their history were being dealt with adequately at the Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies. There was agreement between both Aboriginal women and white women, that it was important that we all knew where each other's records were and had access to them and recognised our need for knowledge of them.¹⁰

7.3.3 It is clear however that further recognition of women's contribution to the development of Australian society needs to be cemented. Evidence to the Committee argued for a commitment to build a *Women's Place* as a living growing monument to women, a building dedicated to applauding women's contribution. The notion was supported by Dr Dale Spender:

I think that unless we have a more permanent place and space for women's contributions to be valued, achieved and passed on to the next generation - the testimony of what women have done - we will have very few options for the future.¹¹

7.3.4 Dr Janet Irwin, the founder of the Women's Place movement in Brisbane, outlined the concept:

⁹ Recognition Seminar, p.15

¹⁰ Recognition Seminar, p.113

¹¹ Recognition Seminar, p.21

I believe that the women of Australia are owed affirmation and, at least, we are entitled to some form of concrete recognition. The Women's Place Council would like to see a national centre, maybe, and I think most desirably, in a prestigious heritage building dedicated to the celebration of women's place in the building of our nation.¹²

7.3.5 Other ways of affording women greater public recognition were noted by historian Janet Ramsay:

We wish to see the Committee recognise the need for the preservation of women's history in Australia, and we would like to see that happen in two ways. We would like to see it happen as a written record and also as an oral record, recognising how much information about women and our stories and our memories passes in the oral rather than the written form. We would like to see that record maintained in existing mainstream institutions, for instance, the National Museum of Australia and its travelling exhibitions, and the National Library. We would like to see support, through the Committee and by other means, for women's own institutions for the preservation of our history. We particularly support the Jessie Street Foundation and its efforts to establish a Jessie Street library, and the idea of a women's place that has come from Brisbane.¹³

7.3.6 Similarly, note was made of the need to include women in all the documentation of Australia's history, an initiative already being undertaken according to Bert Zanetti from the Department of Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories. He argued that DASETT's museum acquisition policy seeks to redress the fact that women's contribution has been ignored and to redress the unbalanced view of Australian women and their achievements.¹⁴

7.3.7 Evidence to the Committee suggests that greater recognition for women needs to be written into the curriculum for both primary and secondary schools to include information about women, particularly the history of women. This needs to happen in a very specialist and detailed way and in a way which is sufficiently inclusive that it reaches young men as well as young women in their school studies.

¹² Recognition Seminar, p.26

¹³ Recognition Seminar, p.113

¹⁴ Evidence, p.S1091

7.3.8 There should also be substantial support to provide space and opportunities for women's learning, including historical learning. This should involve free post-secondary education, both formal and non-formal; child-care centres for women so that they can have access to such learning; recognition that women have a right to and a need for their own learning. Consequently, it is particularly important that women should have access to available educational structures.

7.4 Community Attitudes

7.4.1 Much of the evidence indicated that the challenge for those concerned with achieving social justice is how to ensure appropriate recognition and equality of opportunity for all women in Australia. Australia has come a long way in recognising the contribution made by women to the growth of this country but there is still a way to go. Women have made many inroads but the costs which they have had to bear need to be addressed by a combination of policy and changes in community attitudes.

7.4.2 There is clearly a need to do more research on the implications of women becoming more involved in the workforce; how to assist them better and to ascertain related social changes. Many submissions recognised the need to support on-going public education programs aimed at encouraging debate and initiatives relevant for the Twenty-first Century.

7.4.3 A significant number of submissions to the Inquiry discussed the impact of community attitudes in making career and family life problematic for women. While many alluded to significant achievements in women accessing more choices, more complained of negative community attitudes which impeded women's progress.

7.4.4 Viki Rutter, from the Equal Opportunity Practitioners in Higher Education group, implied that despite all the effort, employers still need to be convinced that inequity exists:

The issue of women is not taken seriously because it is not perceived to be an inequity. It is amazing when you see my statistics, how they could ignore that there might be inequity. But we still find at the grassroots level that there is no

understanding why women should be one of the targeted groups. There is also a tendency to allocate responsibility to those further down the line for other groups which might have influence. I believe strategies for women generally are neglected in my observations.¹⁵

7.4.5 In contrast, the Business Council of Australia's Assistant Director, Clive Speed indicated that there has been:

... a dramatic shift in public debate over the issue in the last three or four years.¹⁶

7.4.6 Others suggest that negative attitudes of employers still persist, as exemplified by the comment of Denese Gray, Equal Opportunity Officer at James Cook University, Townsville:

By and large our attitudes to date have been that for a man, marriage and children are an enhancement but for women they are a barrier.¹⁷

7.4.7 Complaints regarding direct and indirect discrimination registered with Federal and State bodies responsible for human rights and equal opportunity further verify concern.

7.4.8 While there appears to be a great deal of rhetoric about gender equity and equal access, many submissions cited evidence which indicated that a real understanding or commitment to the issue was missing. The dichotomy between rhetoric and reality is illustrated well in some research conducted by Donna McWilliam at Alanvale College in Tasmania:

When we asked both sexes, and their parents, what subjects and what careers were more suitable for girls and boys they all told us indignantly that it is equal opportunities for all and, you know, it is legislated now; everybody has to be given a chance. But, surprisingly enough, both groups of students and parents listed subjects such as child development, human biology, secretarial studies and even English literature as

¹⁵ Evidence, p.969

¹⁶ Evidence, p.161

¹⁷ Evidence, p.384

more suitable for females; and maths, manual arts and the hard sciences, physical sciences as more suitable for males.¹⁸

7.4.9 Some of the confusion as to the implications of equal opportunity may be attributed to the rhetoric, or the use and misuse of jargon which leads to conflicts in interpretation exemplified in the following comment from Babette Francis of the Endeavour Forum:

We believe in equal opportunity, but we do not believe in the elimination of sexism because we believe that the sexes are equal but different.¹⁹

7.4.10 The dilemma that this confusion creates for women is described by Gay Ochiltree from the Institute of Family Studies:

Women in our society are still caught in that problem of guilt and attitude, sometimes believing that they should be home with their children and not being able to see that when they are in good care it is actually quite good for them socially, educationally and in many ways. It is a choice but it is certainly not a thing to feel guilty about if the child is in good care. .. It is perfectly all right to leave your child at kinder but it is not very nice to leave your child at child-care. Unless you are a very strong woman, it is very hard not to get that inner conflict of guilt.²⁰

7.4.11 A similar sentiment can be imputed from Dr Watson, who in her evidence requested a professional development course for women entitled 'Guilt, Work and the Family'.²¹

7.4.12 Debate persists about the way to change community attitudes. Some submissions preferred to opt for legislative change. Helen Styles, then head of the Office of Information Bureau, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Sydney, commented that the:

... fastest way to change people's attitudes is through fear of litigation.²²

18 Evidence, p.385
19 Evidence, p.S1036
20 Evidence, p.117
21 Evidence, p.S2004
22 Evidence, p.598

7.4.13 The role of the Government in influencing community attitudes came in for some discussion. Susan Bastick²³ from the Australian Family Association and A and L Barron from the Endeavour Forum²⁴ resent any suggestion that tax payers money should be spent on community education campaigns. However the Committee noted the view presented by Gay Thompson, Women's Advisor to the Minister of Labour in South Australia, among others:

... encouraging men to take on physical and emotional work within the home has not been seen as being at all appropriate for Australian governments. Our obligations under ILO Convention 156 legitimise Government involvement in this sphere but so too do recent campaigns relating to domestic violence and child sexual abuse. ... The next step must be education campaigns about women's load and skills training for men in the domestic sphere, hand in hand with training and recognition for women in the public sphere.²⁵

7.4.14 While legislation was generally perceived as important, submissions from peak bodies and key practitioners argued for continued resourcing of education campaigns. It seems essential however to change the focus of previous campaigns to shift the burden from women to encouraging positive responsible behaviour from men. A recent initiative announced by the Victorian Branch of the Federated Clerk's union, *Sexual Harassment - Men's Business*, has adopted this approach in encouraging men to criticise the harassing behaviour of other men as being unacceptable, unfunny, idiotic and inappropriate.²⁶

7.4.15 Changes to working patterns will not be fully made without concomitant changes in social attitudes. Dr Keith Butler, private citizen noted:

Where our society has got it wrong is in prescribing this parental role as almost exclusively a female one. Australian society needs to come of age in recognising the right and responsibility of the father to develop close bonding with his pre-school aged children, and to restructure the work environment to facilitate this. Re-education of the Australian male is the most difficult of the three elements requiring change; 'humanising' of the Australian adult male needs to begin in pre-school.

²³ Evidence, p.S4017

²⁴ Evidence, p.S4308

²⁵ Evidence, p.S4034

²⁶ Evidence, p.S3577

He argued strongly for:

A real attempt to re-induct men/fathers into the emotional and social life of the family and children.²⁷

7.4.16 Any effort to change community attitudes needs to make use of women's networks, ethnic and rural and not become bogged down at the government/employer/union level.

7.5 Women in Political Life

7.5.1 Women have always been significantly under-represented in Australian political life. Since 1901 there have been 430 people elected to the Senate only 34 of whom have been women. 849 people have been elected to the House of Representatives, 16 of whom have been women. For the first 40 years of Federation, no female occupied a position in the Senate or the House of Representatives. In 1945, there were two women among members of the Senate and the House of Representatives combined. From 1950 through to 1965 there were five women but for a period of 20-odd years from the mid-1950s through to 1975 not one woman occupied a position in the House of Representatives. The situation has improved marginally from 1975 to the present: there are now 19 women in the Senate and 10 in the House of Representatives.

7.5.2 Australia-wide, there are currently 112 out of 842 elected State and Territory representatives in lower and upper Houses. This represents 13.3 per cent. The best representation occurs in New South Wales, where there are 15 women members out of 42, or 35.7 per cent, in the upper House. In contrast, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark all have representation over 30 per cent. The figures range from 34.9 per cent in Denmark to 38.5 per cent in Sweden, while Australia has a figure of 6.7 per cent; the USA, 6.7 per cent; the United Kingdom, 6.3 per cent; and Greece 5.3 per cent. The remarkable feature about Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark is the escalation from the mid-1950s to the present position and the maintenance of that position.

7.5.3 There are two explanations for the low numbers of women in Australian Parliaments. Either women are choosing not to stand for Parliament for

²⁷ Evidence, p.S3381

various reasons or political parties are not selecting women who seek pre-selection as their candidates. It would appear both explanations contain grains of truth.

7.5.4 While the Labor Party has endorsed Affirmative Action policies since 1981, Bob Hogg, National Secretary of the Party, is quick to recognise that progress is still slow:

I still go to meetings and hear the fine speeches. When I look around to see where the wives are I invariably find that they are missing, fighting alone on the front-line of domesticity. You can intellectualise prejudices away; it is much more difficult to put them aside in practice, as attitudes are so deeply ingrained.²⁸

7.5.5 Andrew Robb, National Director of the Liberal Party, illustrated the dichotomy which on one hand recognises women as a marketable political commodity while questioning their capacity on the other:

Women are less identified with the sources of strong political disillusionment that are around. They are seen as honest, not captive and better placed to understand the problems of ordinary people living through a recession. At the same time, voters and preselectors see politics as a very tough business and they wonder whether women will be tough and effective enough for the profession of politics.²⁹

7.5.6 Both Labor and Liberal administrators recognise that women candidates have to be better than men in order to succeed. Robb argues that:

Prospective women candidates face an unusually difficult challenge to establish their competency. ... It may not be fair, but it is a fact. This comes back to the reality that a political career has been seen as a non-traditional choice to women - the point I started with. It is, therefore, easier to create doubts about the legitimacy of prospective women candidates.³⁰

²⁸ Recognition Seminar, p.172

²⁹ Recognition Seminar, p.175

³⁰ Recognition Seminar, p.176

7.5.7 While Hogg concludes:

They have to be that much better than men rather than equal to them in order to be recognised.³¹

7.5.8 The number and prominence of women within the Australian Democrats, does however provide an interesting example of what can be achieved. Women comprise five of the eight Senators representing the Democrats in the current Federal Parliament, and two of the Party's four parliamentary leaders have been women.

7.5.9 The involvement of men and women in politics mirrors participation patterns in paid employment. It is clear that the current pattern of preselection and election to Parliament is more suited to a man's lifestyle and career than it is to a woman's. As Andrew Robb explained:

At a time when 30 to 40 year-old men are networking, building a track record within the Party and advancing professionally, many women are taking the principal responsibility at home.³²

7.5.10 Difficulties posed by women's dual roles affects their capacity to be involved in decision making processes in all levels of government - as illustrated by Mayor Annette Knight, Mayor of the City of Albany:

Participation by women as councillors can, of course, be restricted simply by virtue of their personal circumstances. For example, women who are employed, whilst they must still attend to their families, are at a distinct disadvantage compared to most men, who generally have much less responsibility of this kind to face outside of their normal daily employment situation.³³

7.5.11 Political commentator Maxine McKew suggests that one reason women are not attracted to politics is because:

³¹ Recognition Seminar, p.172

³² Recognition Seminar, p.178

³³ Recognition Seminar, p.100

The dominant ethic in politics is still overwhelmingly male. Women have undoubtedly influenced the agenda, but they have not yet managed to change the rules of the game.³⁴

7.5.12 She purported that men do not like women to exert power and indeed that 'women have been punished for having power'.³⁵ She cited the fall of several women politicians who had incurred the wrath of the male dominated party hierarchies. She did note however that while women were a minority in the Parliament, they had made some significant achievements:

The great success has been in policy. Issues that used to be thought of as exclusively feminist are now regarded as economic ones, child care being the best example.³⁶

7.5.13 It would appear that Australian politics is still rife with systemic discrimination which, while recognising women's skills, fails to take account of women's life patterns. Ms McKew concludes:

In terms of attitudes of real power sharing, I do not think we will see a huge difference in this place until we see a new generation of men here.³⁷

7.5.14 For those less patient Bob Hogg recommends:

We must ensure in a structural sense that the conditions are created which make political activity accessible to women.³⁸

7.5.15 This could mean women's only seats, a prospect not supported by other evidence to the Committee. Alternatively it could mean greater assertiveness on behalf of aspiring women with a concomitant effort from male colleagues, to be more supportive.

³⁴ Recognition Seminar, p.182

³⁵ Recognition Seminar, p.184

³⁶ Recognition Seminar, p.187

³⁷ Evidence, p.187

³⁸ Recognition Seminar, p.172

7.5.16 C Ross and A Hayes from the Women's Policy Committee of the South Australian Branch of the ALP recommend the need for political parties to recognise that women may wish to run party processes differently from men and according to an agenda which takes account of many women's dual responsibilities.³⁹ This would require some significant changes to political behaviour as it is currently known.

7.6 Women in Local Government

7.6.1 More women are becoming actively involved in local government than in Federal or State politics. Interestingly, they are also comparatively well represented in remote, largely male populated areas like those dominated by the primary extractive industries in Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Current figures indicate that the average level of participation of women in local government in Australian states and territories is 19.57 per cent.

**Percentage of Local Government representatives
which are women**

New South Wales	15.9
Victoria	19.6
Northern Territory	30.4
Queensland	19.9
South Australia	19.2
Tasmania	14.55
Western Australia	14.7

7.6.2 Andrew Robb, National Director of the Liberal Party, gave one interpretation as to why more women become involved in local rather than state or federal politics:

³⁹ Evidence, p.S3349

Our research suggests that women are more grassroots, community-oriented than men and it is reflected in where they seek to assert their influence, specifically at a local government level. Research shows that women tend to show a keener interest in issues such as education, health, welfare, care for the elderly, public transport, law and order and the environment - especially the local environment issues. For these reasons, I suspect we are seeing women increasingly taking a direct representative role in local government before seeking roles at other levels of government.⁴⁰

7.7 Women as Decision Makers

7.7.1 As in the political sphere, women are also under-represented in major decision making bodies in business and commerce. Sandra Triulizi, President of the Private Sector EEO Practitioners Association, reports that there are no women on the management boards of Australia's top ten companies, while only 13 per cent of membership of public service boards comprise women.⁴¹ Similarly, while women account for a third of all unionists only an estimated 11 per cent of all union officials are women.⁴²

7.7.2 Jennifer Mattila of the Women Lawyer's Association of New South Wales reported that in New South Wales:

There is only one female District Court judge out of 53 male judges and only one female Supreme Court judge out of 38 male Supreme Court judges.⁴³

7.7.3 The lack of representation in business was noted in the submission from the Department of Industrial Relations:

⁴⁰ Recognition Seminar, p.178

⁴¹ Evidence, p.S194

⁴² Exhibit No.44

⁴³ Evidence, p.S3913

Limited female presentation in supervisory and managerial positions leads to limited influence in employer and union decision making structures and limited participation in workplace initiatives. Women are under-represented in major decision making forums, and in those groups that determine the shape of micro-economic reform.⁴⁴

7.7.4 Decision making structures in most organisations are generally more suited to men than women. Women do not always feel comfortable in male dominated meeting structures. The frequency of late afternoon and evening meetings also makes it difficult for women who have responsibility for children. Organisations who complain of not being able to attract women into decision making positions often fail to recognise these inhibiting factors. Val Pratt, Director of the Affirmative Action Agency, contends that failure to attract women to these positions is to the organisation's detriment:

Organisations are not taking account of this different style and the different skills that women bring to decision making.⁴⁵

7.7.5 Geraldine Doogue, herself a member of the Board of MLC Life, alluded to the fact that while the rhetoric is thick, women are not always welcomed with open arms:

As women start to edge closer to genuine power, there is considerable resistance among the people who currently hold power, which is causing the women to rethink how much they care for the fight anyway, under current terms.⁴⁶

7.7.6 As with promotion in employment, several people who made submissions noted the existence of the same glass ceilings which prevented women's appointments to Boards. Geraldine Doogue, hinted at the consequences of this lack of mobility for women:

Heather Carmody, who is Executive Director of the Business Council of Australia's Council for Equal Opportunity, believes that we will not see a woman in charge of the top Australian companies within the next ten years. She believes that the pressures of family life, the glass ceiling preventing promotion

⁴⁴ Evidence, p.S1611

⁴⁵ Recognition Seminar, p.231

⁴⁶ Recognition Seminar, p.200

above middle management and the limited opportunities in the traditionally male-dominated industries will simply not allow women's progress to that extent. I think, instead, we will see an exodus from large organisations as women reach middle and senior levels because they see no place for them at the top.⁴⁷

7.7.7 Judy Boake, President of the Private Sector EEO Officers Association of Victoria, made the comment:

Women will not have achieved true equality until it is not newsworthy when a woman is appointed to a senior position, as is still the case.⁴⁸

7.7.8 There is clearly a need for both private and public sector boards of management to look critically at their gender composition and for women to be encouraged to put themselves forward to serve on boards. There is also a need for boards, in order to attract women, to consider women's lifestyles in decisions about both the timing and process of meetings.

7.7.9 Particular mention was made in the evidence to the involvement of Aboriginal women in decision making. ATSIK's submission noted:

While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are prominent in decision making bodies at the community level, they are noticeable in their absence in Land Councils.⁴⁹

7.7.10 Glenda Humes, Manager of ATSIK's Office of Indigenous Women, explained:

As women get more involved in the political scene of Aboriginal affairs and start to take more responsibility and more decision making roles within communities, their representation certainly diminishes, though they might be there in the background, they are certainly not the up-front people you see. I think that is of some concern, but it is a way that communities have tended to operate for some time.⁵⁰

47 Recognition Seminar, p.204

48 Evidence, p.S411

49 Evidence, p.S3161

50 Evidence, p.1787

7.7.11 A report from a NSW state conference of Aboriginal women also lamented the lack of involvement of Aboriginal women in NSW Land Councils and recommended that Aboriginal Land Councils develop, in consultation with Aboriginal women's groups, policies designed to ensure equal representation of women.⁵¹

7.7.12 The Committee was advised of the development of the data base 'Appoint' by the Office of the Status of Women. This data base is designed to be used by Ministers, departments and authorities in locating suitably qualified women to sit on public sector boards of management. As the program is only of recent origin and it is too early to judge its success, the effectiveness of the initiative will need careful monitoring.

7.7.13 The question is still raised as to where and by whom decisions are made for board appointments. Moira Scollay, the Assistant Commissioner for Peoples and Structures in the Australian Taxation Office, argued the case for mandatory representation of women on advisory bodies:

Consideration should be given to the mandatory representation of women on advisory bodies. While a 50 per cent quota reeks of tokenism, there are good grounds for considering increased participation by women in such decision making bodies or committees.⁵²

7.7.14 The National Women's Consultative Council, the peak body which represents women to the Government, was generally regarded as an important advocacy body for women. Its close relationship with the bureaucracy through the location of its secretariat in the Office of the Status of Women did cause some comment.

7.8 The Australian Honours System

7.8.1 Australia has few national accolades when compared with many other countries. Apart from popular recognition of sporting heroes, reserved more for male than female sport stars, the major avenue for public recognition in Australia is the Australian Honours System, instituted by the Whitlam government in 1975.

⁵¹ Evidence, p.S3925

⁵² Evidence, p.S308

7.8.2 Formal honours are the mechanism by which the Australia recognises outstanding contributions towards the advancement and welfare of the community. In this way, honours are a mirror of what society considers to be of great value. Since 1975, only 6.9 per cent of the most senior award of Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) and only 10.9 per cent of the award of Officer of the Order of Australia (AO), 18.1 per cent of the Member of the Order (AM), 31.7 per cent of Medals of the Order (OAM), have been given to women. Women have received only a little more than 24 per cent of all awards. Clearly, the current system rewards men far more than women, reflecting a situation which reveres men and 'male' pursuits and undervalues the contribution made by women to the community.

7.8.3 A general criticism in the evidence, of the operation of the award system is that awards tend to go to people who have already been recognised. There is a heavy preponderance of people who have imperial honours amongst the ranks of recipients of Australia's highest honour, the Order of Australia. There is also a feeling that awards are given for positions which the recipient occupied rather than personal achievement. The National Women's Consultative Council observed that:

Many men seem to obtain this recognition for service to government, public service and industry - often for doing a job for which they were well paid. Unpaid or voluntary work thus has less apparent value.⁵³

7.8.4 Sir David Smith, the then Secretary to the Council of the Order of Australia, in evidence to the Committee explained the discrepancy in awards to women:

It would appear from the figures that women are either not yet taking their place among the achievers in the community or are not yet being recognised by the community and nominated.⁵⁴

7.8.5 Former Prime Minister the Hon Gough Whitlam reiterated this view when he said at the *Recognition* seminar:

It is an unfortunate fact that the qualifications which have to be borne in mind for the Order do mean that many women have not yet had the opportunity to meet those requirements

⁵³ Evidence, p.S2060

⁵⁴ Evidence, p.S149

in as great numbers as men. For instance, the Order for the grade of Companion is awarded to persons for eminent achievement and merit of the highest degree in service to Australia or to humanity at large. The fact is that for other reasons, quite apart from the Order, there are not as many women as men who have, in fact, been given those opportunities. Again, an Officer of the Order must have had distinguished service of a high degree to Australia or to humanity at large. That is, the Companion is eminent achievement and a merit of the highest degree and the officer distinguished service of a high degree. And then Members must have given service in a particular locality or field of activity or to a particular group.⁵⁵

7.8.6 In the same vein, Chairman of the Order of Australia Association Sir Geoffrey Badger lamented:

That women are not equally represented with men at the highest levels in the professions, or in commerce and industry. It is perhaps not surprising therefore that relatively few women receive the higher awards for achievement or for meritorious service in those fields. Hopefully this will change so that more and more women will achieve the highest levels in the professions and in commerce and industry.⁵⁶

7.8.7 The same argument was put more bluntly by Alex Rigby, Immediate Past President of the New South Wales branch of the Order of Australia Association:

There are far more gentlemen involved in the commitment to Australian affairs than ladies and it automatically follows more awards would be made to gentlemen at all levels in the cross section of the community.⁵⁷

7.8.8 This observation is at odds with the evidence to the Committee, of the substantial contribution made by women in a voluntary capacity to community effort.

⁵⁵ Recognition Seminar, p.58

⁵⁶ Recognition Seminar, p.69

⁵⁷ Evidence, p.S3496

7.8.9 Evidence to the Committee outlining the massive contribution of Australia's women to the nation illustrates that women, in all walks of life, are indeed showing a 'commitment to Australian affairs'. This failure to recognise the validity of women's contribution is at the heart of the outrage and frustration expressed in the overwhelming majority of submissions.

7.8.10 Rather than accepting that women do not fit the current standards for awards, many submissions on the subject suggested that perhaps the rules should be changed so that a broader range of values and activities should be recognised with equal merit in the awards. This does not mean imposing quotas but simply looking at current procedures to ensure that the system is fair. As Barbara Horsfield, the National Secretary of the Girl Guides Association of Australia commented:

It is suggested that women do not receive appropriate recognition for their contribution to society as frequently the decision makers and the holders of power are male and female qualities such as caring are not valued by society.⁵⁸

7.8.11 Jean Tom, the then President of the Country Women's Association of Australia, expressed a similar point of view in her comment:

I do believe that the criteria around the honours system have to be changed so that the important things that are done by volunteers and people in unpaid work within the community have some recognition. Again, those are the things that do not get recognition anywhere else. It is important that they should receive it in the honours system. The honours system, to me, only recognises people who have already received an enormous amount of recognition and pay for what they have done.⁵⁹

7.8.12 The difficulty in evaluating voluntary contributions by the current board was alluded to by Sir Geoffrey Badger:

⁵⁸ Evidence, p.S216

⁵⁹ Recognition Seminar, p.84

I suggest that it is very difficult for members of the Council, who are in paid employment, to understand the difficulties, the trials and the tribulations under which the volunteer unpaid sector works, and I mean the male volunteer unpaid sector as well as the female sector.⁶⁰

7.8.13 In addition to these difficulties it is clear that women do not nominate for awards to the same degree as men. Women's possible reluctance to nominate for awards was addressed in several submissions and specifically by Dame Beryl Beaurepaire, Chairman of the Australian War Memorial, at the *Recognition* seminar:

... in 1975, in International Women's Year, and perhaps in the early days of the women's movement generally, there was a strong feeling against the recognition of achievement. It was very noble of those who did not accept honours, but clearly it did not give us the public profile that we could have enjoyed and probably built on.

Far be it from me to say that the other sex has a greater need and a greater urge for public prizes or for status. I hope that our society now has developed a maturity on behalf of our women as well which allows individuals, as individuals, to feel comfortable about being recognised and not to feel that they will be cut down because they have been set up as tall poppies.⁶¹

7.8.14 Whilst some women have been reluctant to nominate for honours, there is also a view that not all women and men are aware that they are able to nominate and of the processes involved. Despite the opinion expressed by Alex Rigby that:

A significant advertising or education program to create a better balance is quite an irrelevant proposal. If anything, it would be detrimental and would indeed cheapen the objectives of the order.⁶²

7.8.15 There was a deal of support for a program which made the Honours system more accessible to the public. There is a perception that the Honours system is inaccessible as expressed by Mr R Moran, private citizen from Queensland:

⁶⁰ Recognition Seminar, p.72

⁶¹ Recognition Seminar, p.61

⁶² Evidence, p.S3496

Nobody seems to know how to go about making submissions and I understand that the research and paperwork required is enough to deter the most ardent.⁶³

7.8.16 While this perception may be inaccurate, there is clearly a need to provide better information on who is eligible and appropriate methods for making nominations. Dame Beryl outlined some initiatives which would make the Honours system more accessible:

We need, therefore, to devise a good public relations campaign, perhaps even along the lines of a very successful Victorian first - the Life-Be-In It campaign. At least we need to explain on television and in other media, at the appropriate times, what the awards mean. Perhaps after the euphoria of the lists in January and June, suggestions could be in the press and on TV asking people if they know anyone who is deserving of an award, and then giving again the details of procedure. We people here know the ways to go about things but there would be a lot of people who I am quite sure would have a friend down the street who has given a life of service, maybe Meals on Wheels or tuckshops, and the people just do not know how to go about recommending people for awards. I think that is what we must get across throughout Australia. Maybe we should have the forms available at the Post Office.⁶⁴

⁶³ Evidence, p.S3374

⁶⁴ Recognition Seminar, p.61

7.8.17 The tendency to award honours to people towards the end of their career of service was seen as rather a disincentive to Dr Geulah Solomon, Victorian President of the National Council of Jewish Women, who argued for more awards to be made available to voluntary workers and a revamped system to allow for awards to be made:

At an age which encourages continuing contribution, not only as a reward for final years of service.⁶⁵

7.9 The National Accounts

7.9.1 The prime motivation of voluntary workers is to assist the community and those in need. In many respects, as put by Vivian Rowney, General Secretary of the Western Australian Branch of the CWA. 'The work itself is its own reward'. While this may be so, much of the evidence received by the Committee in respect of unpaid work argued for greater recognition.

7.9.2 One of the key frustrations experienced by women, as expressed in the evidence, is the feeling that much of what they do, as unpaid work, is invisible. This is reinforced in data collection exercises like the five-yearly census which, in its current form does not provide for unpaid workers to account fully for their time. According to much of the evidence, the message is none too subtle - 'volunteer or unpaid work is not real'. Jean Tom, past President of the Country Women's Association, notes the effect of excluding this group from the census:

I do believe that status has to be built into voluntarism. I do believe that the census should ask questions about unpaid work.⁶⁶

7.9.3 The inappropriateness of the current census for unpaid workers was also illustrated by rural project consultant, Cathy McGowan:

The other question about time is, 'How many hours did you work in your job last week?', and they give you a choice of 'up to 49' or '49 or over'. How many of us women in Australia worked more than 49 hours a week? Every single one of us, I suspect. And which job did you work most at?

⁶⁵ Evidence, p.S297

⁶⁶ Recognition Seminar, p.84

Your parenting job? Your paid work job? Your volunteer job?
There is just no way known that we can use this census, that
we can fill it in and have it reflect us.⁶⁷

7.9.4 Another option which would improve visibility and provide for greater recognition of the contribution of unpaid work would be to include specific questions related to unpaid work in the monthly Labour Force Statistics surveys conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

7.9.5 A pilot time-use survey recently conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and published as *Juggling Time, How Australian Families Use Time* by the Office of the Status of Women, was generally commended as a watershed report in documenting the way life is for Australian women. Given the positive reception of this pilot project, many submissions urged for major time-use studies to be undertaken on a regular basis to ensure collation of accurate data.

7.9.6 The time-use survey provided one of the first statistical analyses of women in the home. While it did not attempt to ascertain satisfaction with life's lot, the report clearly indicated that the circumstances of most home-makers prevented them from participating more fully in public life. The author of the report, Michael Bittman, told the *Recognition* seminar of his disturbing conclusion:

In the course of preparing my report on *Juggling Time: How Australian Families Use Time* I was driven more and more to the conclusion that for women, full citizenship in Australian society has not yet been achieved. I concluded that women's opportunities tended to be circumscribed chiefly by their obligations to care for others. Marriage, children, or a frail or aged spouse all lessened women's public participation. By contrast, marriage and children strengthen male attachment to the public world. Men's opportunities for advancement are not determined by reference to their relation to others.⁶⁸

7.9.7 Five yearly time-use surveys conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to measure the volume of work contributed by women on an unremunerated basis would help gauge the kind of infrastructure support which women and men require for volunteer work.

⁶⁷ Recognition Seminar, p.91

⁶⁸ Recognition Seminar, p.129

7.9.8 The Women's Electoral Lobby note that including unpaid work in the national accounts is consistent with Australia's commitment to the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies on which Australia reports to the United Nations.⁶⁹

7.9.9 Robyn Duncan, Vice-President responsible for External Policy with the Business and Professional Women's Association, notes that Canada and New Zealand are also addressing the need to include unpaid work in the nation's accounts.⁷⁰

7.10 Summary and Recommendations

7.10.1 Women are involved in a multiplicity of activities in Australian public life. Whether they be in the paid workforce or primary care givers, women are also responsible for much community activity.

7.10.2 While women fill the ranks of the volunteer workers and grass-roots organising committees, as in the paid workforce, they are rarely found in positions of power. Women are under-represented in board rooms, Parliaments and decision making fora.

7.10.3 Recognition of women's voluntary contribution is very poor. The nation's highest accolades, the Australian Honours, are dominated by men whilst women who do receive honours are more likely to be in the lower orders. In addition, official statistics compiled to record national wealth and labour patterns are silent on the contribution of workers in the home and voluntary sectors.

7.10.4 Public recognition of women's work is also inadequate. Australia's national history ignores women, and this is reflected in the nature of displays and exhibits within museums and Arts centres and much of Australian literature.

7.10.5 In the light of these issues, the Committee makes the following specific conclusions and recommendations.

⁶⁹ Evidence, p.S626

⁷⁰ Evidence, p.S768

RECOMMENDATION 37

The Committee recommends that:

- (a) public museums and institutions should be encouraged by DASET to include adequate depictions of women's history; and
- (b) the Government investigate the possibility of funding a National Women's Place which would fully acknowledge women's contribution to Australian society and provide on-going support and recognition of women's contribution.

7.10.6 The Committee was concerned over the low numbers of women receiving Australian Honours, particularly the higher orders of Awards. The Committee accepts that a significant reason for this was a general lack of public understanding as to how the Honours System works which results in fewer nominations for women, particularly those prominent in the community sector.

RECOMMENDATION 38

The Committee recommends that the Order of Australia Secretariat and/or the Order of Australia Association:

- (a) be resourced to undertake a public awareness campaign to raise awareness of the Australian Honours system, the criteria under which they are granted and encourage nominations; and
- (b) investigate making the process more accessible to the public to ensure that the contribution of women, particularly in the voluntary sector, is recognised and nominations are made.

RECOMMENDATION 39

The Committee recommends that the Order of Australia Secretariat, in concert with the Order of Australia Association investigate the order of precedence of the Awards, in particular whether Long Service Awards should take precedence over Merit Awards.

7.10.7 The Committee notes that previous campaigns on sexual harassment have focussed on informing women of their rights. While this is essential, the Committee was impressed by the initiative of the Federated Clerks Union, Victorian Branch, in developing a campaign aimed at men to raise the awareness of the full effects of sexual harassment - encompassing both loss of self esteem for women and a reduction in productivity in the workplace.

RECOMMENDATION 40

The Committee recommends that Trade Union and employer organisations in conjunction with the HREOC run ongoing campaigns amongst men to raise their awareness of the effects of sexual harassment.

7.10.8 The Committee believes that it is incumbent on political parties to redress the gender imbalance where it currently exists so that it more accurately reflects the constituency.

RECOMMENDATION 41

The Committee recommends that all political parties examine their selection procedures for systemic discrimination against women and develop appropriate affirmative action programs which would give women equal opportunity to take a greater role in the political process.

7.10.9 The Committee was concerned over the low number of women board members in both public boards and private companies. Given women's particular skills and experience, the Committee regards the omission of women from boards of management to be a waste of talented human resources. While few boards directly discriminate against women, it is clear that systemic board room behaviour is often unattractive to women. Specific initiatives need to be taken to make decision making bodies more accessible. Selection procedures and meeting processes (including time and location) particularly need to be targeted. The Committee noted the initiative of the Office of the Status of Women in establishing *APPOINT* as an aid to matching women with board room vacancies. Boards themselves also need to be more proactive in encouraging women members.

RECOMMENDATION 42

The Committee recommends that all Government Departments should be required to publish details of gender balance on portfolio boards and committees both in their annual reports to Parliament and in their contributions to the Women's Budget Statement.

7.10.10 The National Women's Consultative Council's primary role is to represent the views of Australian women directly to the Prime Minister. To adequately fulfil this role, the Council must be both truly representative of all Australian women and independent from the Government of the day. Currently the Council is serviced by a Secretariat within the Office of the Status of Women. The Office of the Status of Women's role in part has been to represent the Government to women. The Committee believes that the administrative link between the two bodies may be seen as inappropriate and that the independence of the NWCC would be enhanced by it being serviced by a Secretariat located outside the Office of the Status of Women.

RECOMMENDATION 43

The Committee recommends that:

- (a) the National Women's Consultative Council be separated from the Office of the Status of Women by it being given an independent Secretariat; and
- (b) membership of the Council must be representative of all women including those in the home and voluntary sectors.

7.10.11 The work performed in Australian homes receives no direct financial payment and even more galling for many women, it is not recorded in any official statistics. While the Australian Bureau of Statistics will undertake a time-use survey this year, this of itself will not adequately recognise and record the interdependence of the market and domestic economies. The Committee believes that official statistics should include the value of voluntary and domestic labour. This includes the monthly labour force statistics and the Census. The Committee accepts the evidence of the ABS that direct inclusion of domestic and voluntary work would be inconsistent with international standards of data collection and therefore recommends the use of supplementary reports. This would not require additional

surveys, only supplementary questions in current data collection programs. However, Australia should raise the issue of International Standards with the ILO.

RECOMMENDATION 44

The Committee endorses the proposed Time Use Survey to be conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 1992 and recommends:

- (a) the holding of similar time use surveys every five years;
- (b) ABS collect and publish statistics on the extent and value of unpaid domestic and voluntary labour to be included as a supplementary report in the monthly labour force statistics; and
- (c) the Australian Bureau of Statistics approach the International Conference of Labour Statisticians with a proposal to review international standards of data collection which would enable unpaid work to be counted on a regular basis.

CHAPTER 8

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

8.1 The Formal Sector

8.1.1 Much of the evidence to the Committee highlighted the paradox in the potential of education to both entrench and alter gender stereotypes. From primary school through to tertiary studies, girls' and boys' expectations and behaviour models are heavily influenced by a combination of curriculum and pedagogical attitudes and styles. The institutional environments of schools and universities often do little to challenge prevailing stereotypes.

8.1.2 Despite the initiatives encouraged as part of the *National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools*, it is clear that girls are tending to predominate in the 'soft' humanities and art and craft course while boys still far outnumber girls in the 'hard' sciences and trades. The *Girls in Schools 4* report highlighted the disparities:

Subject areas with predominantly male enrolments included technical and applied studies (nine tenths of enrolments were male), and physical sciences (two-thirds male). Subjects with predominantly female enrolments included home sciences (nine-tenths of enrolments were female), creative and performing arts (just under two-thirds), and language, (just under two-thirds). In addition, males tended to be enrolled to a greater extent in advanced levels of mathematics than females.¹

8.1.3 Efforts to broaden options for girls in schools differ from state to state, however some of the difficulties impeding the implementation of a gender inclusive program include:

¹ Exhibit No.94(i), p.5

- . shortage of qualified personnel to implement programs designed to provide a more conducive learning environment for girls, particularly at the regional level;
- . need to overcome piecemeal approaches with greater co-ordination and data collection and dissemination regionally, intra-state and nationally, lack of support for program development in primary schools; and
- . on-going need for professional development for staff.

8.1.4 One option to create better learning environments for girls is the gender segregated classroom or the girls-only school, both of which have some benefits for girls but also some drawbacks. Evidence suggests that girls-only classes have proved effective in encouraging girls to tackle some subjects, particularly Maths and Science, enabling girls to gain more confidence and a great deal more of the teacher's attention. Similarly, single sex schools can provide important role models and are effective at encouraging girls to diversify into other academic areas but they rarely provide options for girls to learn trade subjects.²

8.1.5 On the other hand, the socialisation provided in the co-educational school environment is also recognised as having distinct advantages, as Donna McWilliam, Senior Master, Equal Opportunities Support Group at Alanvale College in Launceston, suggested:

There is evidence to suggest that girls do better in sciences and maths in single sex classes but on the other hand there is a lot of advantage to be gained in other areas from the co-educational aspects of the education. There is a lot more to education than getting through your physics and maths.³

Curriculum

8.1.6 Only in the last fifteen years have Australian educators drawn attention to the fact that the bulk of curriculum materials in both primary and secondary schools have not yet been designed with the different needs and aspirations of boys and girls in mind. Joan Trewern of the Women's Electoral

² Exhibits Nos 10; 30(ii); 83(vi), (vii) and (viii)

³ Evidence, p.844

Lobby, in Cairns, provided a stark example of this when she cited the fact that of the 60 picture books for pre-schoolers listed in *Queensland Department of Education Film and Video Catalogue*, only two featured girls in anything other than a passive supporting role.⁴

8.1.7 Evidence to the Committee suggests that several State Departments of Education are monitoring the development of educational materials and programs and teaching and learning styles in an effort to ensure that girls are given the same status and visibility as boys. The development of national gender-neutral curricula, is being undertaken as part of a larger program now being monitored by officers attached to the Gender Equity in Curriculum Project which reports directly to the Australian Education Council.

Teacher Training

8.1.8 The success of programs to encourage girls to embark on non-traditional courses depends to a great extent on the quality of the teacher. Women teachers as role models are important but the responsibility to provide better school environments for girls has to be borne by all teachers. While teachers need training to accommodate all levels of difference, better outcomes for girls require compulsory training for teachers in handling gender issues in the classroom, in both initial teacher training and on-going professional development for classroom teachers.

Tertiary Studies

8.1.9 Despite advances made at the curriculum level in secondary schools, several submissions cautioned that the tertiary sector was not keeping pace. Lower numbers of girls in non-traditional subject areas and across the board in post-graduate studies is still a cause for concern.

8.1.10 However, several institutions reported on initiatives which they had taken to encourage women, particularly in taking up post-graduate studies. Brian Wilson, Vice Chancellor of the University of Queensland, cited for example: re-entry scholarships for women at the post-doctoral level; increased provision of on-campus

⁴ Evidence, p.S391

child care; and the possible establishment of a 'Dean of Women' as greater incentives for women.⁵

8.1.11 Issues affecting women in academic environments have also been addressed in Chapter 4 of this report.

Cost Recovery - Who bears the cost?

8.1.12 Several submissions queried the impact of fees on the numbers of women enrolled and the length of courses they undertake. While the Department of Employment, Education and Training⁶ maintain that the introduction of tertiary fees has not had an adverse impact on women, educational institutions offering courses remain to be convinced. This view was strongly articulated in the submission from Professor Alan J Lonsdale, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Deakin University.⁷

8.1.13 Similar concerns have been mooted in respect of community education and TAFE courses. Janet Durling, Equal Opportunity Officer with the Northern Territory University, described one case study which highlighted the disincentives which discourage women from undertaking community education programs:

An example of getting women's skills areas recognised is the case of the University's TAFE course, Fashion Technology. The course fee for the Certificate Course and the Associate Diploma Course is \$400. The student amenities fee is \$120 and the materials fee is \$380. Students also need their own sewing machine (\$1,000 - \$2,000), incidental tools and fabric for those garments which they keep. The Certificate students paid only half the course fee in 1991 but must pay the full fee in 1992. Almost all of the Fashion Technology students are women and most are lower middle income earners who can barely afford to study. Many of these women are from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The Head of Department believes that in 1992 these women will not be able to meet the needs of the course. If one looks at the materials used in male dominated trade areas, the costs

⁵ Evidence, p.S4327

⁶ Evidence, p.1726

⁷ Evidence, p.S4029

of the materials are not borne by the students but is historically built into the expense of running the course.

Since the women who complete the Certificate work mainly at home, they may be seen as part of the private sphere, not the public sphere, and their skills are less valued than those of, say, a carpenter. There is no subsidy available for most of these women and it is not a re-entry course which would attract funding from DEET. Therefore it has become the most expensive certificate course, by some \$180, of any run by the Institute of TAFE and it is also a course much in demand by the very women who want to earn a small living at home on completion of the course.⁸

8.1.14 The costs of undertaking study for sole parents has been partly offset by a \$200 up-front payment to be provided to any sole parent commencing or continuing full-time or part-time courses which attract AUSTUDY, in recognition of the substantial immediate costs incurred in resuming education.

Modes of Delivery

8.1.15 Involvement in education for women has as much to do with accessibility as it does about content. Location of courses and timing of sessions need to reflect the particular needs of women. Classes which necessitate women walking on isolated campuses late at night can be off-putting to women. Teaching styles which presume a level of confidence or experience in formal education also act as a disincentive especially for those women returning to study after many years. Availability of appropriate, affordable child care is also an essential requirement for many women wishing to further their education.

8.2 Vocational Training

8.2.1 Improving women's access to and achievements in non-traditional fields of employment is dependent to a large degree on the quality of and access to appropriate training. Evidence to the Committee suggests that while many

⁸ Evidence, p.S3837

initiatives have been undertaken, women are still at a disadvantage in respect of vocational training.

8.2.2 Alison Weeks, Assistant Secretary, Women's Policy, Income Support and Participation Branch, Department of Employment, Education and Training reported that:

The participation rate of females in apprenticeship is presently around 14.6 per cent for all trades and reduces to about 6.4 per cent if the traditional female trade of hairdressing is removed.⁹

8.2.3 The Australian Traineeship Scheme, a program introduced in 1985 to extend opportunities for structured work-based training in industries not covered by apprenticeships, has been more effective in attracting women. Sixty-nine percent of the 54,000 trainees, since 1985, have been women. However this figure is relatively small when compared to approximately 150,000 participants undergoing traditional apprenticeships each year.

8.2.4 On-the-job training also appears to be distributed differentially in favour of men rather than women. Across the board, training expenditure in industries dominated by women is far less than for male dominated industries. Victorian Premier Joan Kirner noted:

Women's access to training has not been and is still not equitable.¹⁰

8.2.5 Research quoted to the Committee confirms this view of inequitable access to on-the-job training. Barbara Pocock from the Women's Employment Education and Training Advisory Group claimed:

Firstly, women receive much more informal in-house training than men. Secondly, women are concentrated in shorter courses whether they are inside or outside the firm and thirdly, women receive much less employer support for their training.¹¹

⁹ Evidence, p.S4042

¹⁰ Evidence, p.S4217

¹¹ Employment Seminar, p.82

8.2.6 The implementation of the Training Guarantee Act provides an opportunity to redress this training imbalance. However, evidence to the Inquiry expressed concern that gender equity provisions need to be written into the Act and that monitoring and the collection of gender disaggregated data was essential to ensure that women gained from the training opportunities. The submission from the NSW Cabinet Office drew attention to the need to ensure training for women in low status occupations.¹²

8.2.7 The publication of *Women and TAFE, a National Plan of Action* was noted as a significant document in addressing issues of access to vocational training through TAFE programs, however it is too soon to comment on the success of its implementation. Given the shortcomings of previous national initiatives in this area, principally in regard to the *Women and Apprenticeship Report* as noted in Hon Kim Beazley's submission,¹³ the national plan for women in TAFE clearly demands greater commitment from Federal and State bodies involved in its implementation.

8.3 Community Education

8.3.1 Education programs offered through neighbourhood centres, informal adult education networks, and community centres are important in skill building. They can also be invaluable in building self esteem and confidence. Often, they are the first step towards retraining in order to re-enter the paid workforce. Whilst these kinds of community education program lack status in some eyes, they are an important vehicle for many women as Dr Don Edgar explained:

I think in education and training policies we have too many people at the policy level and in the bureaucracy and in the community generally who denigrate and who do not understand the importance of that adult education of an informal kind as an access point for women to new found confidence.¹⁴

¹² Evidence, p.S3063

¹³ Exhibit No.160

¹⁴ Evidence, p.118

8.3.2 The importance of community education initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander women and women of non-English language background was particularly drawn to the Committee's attention. For women in rural and remote communities, these kinds of programs can provide a vital link between women and indeed help consolidate a sense of 'community'.

8.4 Accreditation

8.4.1 Whilst TAFE and the formal sector have dominated the technical training area, increasingly industry is taking responsibility itself. Kathy Duffy, then the Manager of, Organisation, Development and Award Restructuring at Nissan Australia, alluded to the difficulty of accreditation for industry courses and the quality and relevance of courses provide by traditional educational institutions. Broader accreditation could allow for on-the job and in-house training programs to be credited as formal qualifications.

8.5 Summary and Recommendations

8.5.1 Education has the potential to entrench attitudinal barriers to women or break down such barriers. While this has been recognised and acted upon by government, it still remains a fact in formal education. The choice of subjects by girls and boys still reflects traditional career choices.

8.5.2 This is particularly apparent in higher and further education. Men dominate apprenticeship numbers and appear to receive more on-the-job training than women. In contrast, women have greater access to community education programs, but these carry a lower status with employers.

8.5.3 Skills recognition is an important issue for women, as many women develop useful and transferable skills in the home and voluntary sectors. With few exceptions, these skills are not recognised by employers nor often by women themselves.

8.5.4 In the light of the evidence, the Committee makes the following specific recommendations and conclusions.

RECOMMENDATION 45

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth through the Council of Ministers for Vocational Education, Employment and Training seek to ensure that adequate resources remain available for community education programs, through TAFE, neighbourhood learning centres and the like, in acknowledgment of their value as access points for women.

RECOMMENDATION 46

The Committee, in recognising that attitudes about gender are set at a very young age, recommends that:

- (a) the National Curriculum Development Project ensure that continual development of non-sexist curriculum and support for in-service training for all teachers to enhance prospects for girls are integral to all curricula; and
- (b) schools should be encouraged to structure courses and provide an environment for improving the self-image and career options for girls. The running of special programs should be supported through additional funding.

RECOMMENDATION 47

The Committee recommends that gender equity provisions be incorporated into the Training Guarantee Act to enhance women's access to training. The criteria for assessing whether training programs have met the needs of women workers should include the following:

- (a) the structure, design, location and timetabling of training programs;
- (b) the accreditation and articulation of training programs/courses;
- (c) the extent to which training provision provides career development opportunity and leads to career progression for women workers ; and
- (d) the provision of appropriate child care arrangements for workers undertaking training.

8.5.5 The Committee was concerned that despite the fact that teacher training in gender issues was recognised as a major factor in developing better environments for girls as far back as 1984, no national strategies have been developed to ensure this takes place.

RECOMMENDATION 48

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth through the Australian Education Council encourages the development of:

- (a) national strategies be developed to address the need to provide adequate teacher training and professional development for teachers to give them appropriate skills to develop more positive learning environments for girls. Strategies must be developed in consultation with state education instrumentalities.

RECOMMENDATION 49

The Committee recommends that the National Training Board work with the State Training Systems to establish a national standards and accreditation system which recognises training gained in industry and through state and private training providers.