

# **Senate Inquiry into women in sport and recreation in Australia**

**Submission prepared by  
Netball Victoria**



**June 16<sup>th</sup> 2006**

Netball Victoria:

**Netball Victoria is the peak body responsible for the management of netball in Victoria. Netball Victoria has 242 affiliated Associations and 110,000 members across the state.**

**Netball Victoria also provides services for unaffiliated groups such as schools and universities.**

**Netball Victoria is seen as a leader in sport, not only in Victoria but across Australia.**

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## Responses to the **Terms of Reference:**

- a. the health benefits of women participating in sport and recreation activities;

Research re physical benefits is available from a number of other sources for whom this area is a key responsibility therefore we will not provide details here.

There is one important area which appears less well researched or for which the research information is not readily available. That is research in relation to the social benefits of participating in sport and recreation activities ie re connectedness but also mental health benefits. These benefits should be considered not only in terms of physical participation in the sport but also of being involved as an administrator, coach or other sport related role.

### **Recommendations:**

Funding for research in these areas.

Provision of results to sport and recreation groups as well as to funding agencies.

Provision of funding to act on research findings

- b. the accessibility for women of all ages to participate in organised sport, fitness and recreation activities, with additional reference to state and federal programs, including;
- i. the number of women actively participating in organised sport, fitness and recreation activities;

### **2005 Netball Victoria Membership Demographics**

<b>Number of Affiliated Groups</b>		
Associations - not-for-profits	215	89%
Associates - for profits	19	8%
State League Clubs	8	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>	

<b>Country/Metro Affiliated Groups Split</b>		
Country Associations	161	67%
Metro Associations	54	22%
Country Associates	4	2%
Metro Associates	15	6%
Country State League Clubs	2	1%
Metro State League Clubs	6	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>	

<b>Registered Membership Numbers</b>		
Modified - 11&Under	26,106	24.5%
Junior - 17&Under	39,788	37.3%
Senior - 18&Over	40,795	38.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106,689</b>	

<b>Country/Metro Membership Split</b>		
Country	59,839	56%
Metro	45,168	42%
Registered with NV direct	1,682	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106,689</b>	

<b>Gender Numbers Split</b>		
Female	102,518	96%
Male	4,171	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106,689</b>	

<b>Country/Metro Member Type Split</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>S</b>
Country Associations	15,084	22,602	22,153
Metro Associations	10,753	16,896	17,519
Registered with NV direct	269	290	1,123
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26,106</b>	<b>39,788</b>	<b>40,795</b>

### Netball Victoria Membership Statistics 1981 - 2005

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD
SENIOR	54500	58500	62000	54300	47300	54817	62096	59132	62687	64714
JUNIOR	33600	33500	35100	41700	40924	46801	50205	50878	52200	51157
MODIFIED										
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88100</b>	<b>92000</b>	<b>97100</b>	<b>96000</b>	<b>88224</b>	<b>101618</b>	<b>112301</b>	<b>110010</b>	<b>114887</b>	<b>115871</b>
S \$\$										
J \$\$										
M \$\$										
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD
SENIOR	64885	68163	63073	60608	51865	52873	51980	50894	49338	42025
JUNIOR	52594	52885	58780	60029	57506	57896	56845	57553	58702	37791
MODIFIED										24848
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117479</b>	<b>121048</b>	<b>121853</b>	<b>120637</b>	<b>109371</b>	<b>110769</b>	<b>108825</b>	<b>108447</b>	<b>108040</b>	<b>104664</b>
S \$\$			\$15	\$15	\$ 23	\$ 23	\$ 26	\$28	\$ 30	\$ 33.
J \$\$			\$ 8	\$ 8	\$10	\$10	\$ 13.	\$15	\$15	\$ 21
M \$\$										\$ 11.
			U17	U17	U17	U17	U17	U17	U17	17&U & 11&U
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006				
	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD				
SENIOR	41645	42081	42498	41860	40795					
JUNIOR	38160	40028	40788	40171	39788					
MODIFIED	24784	25717	26961	26400	26106					
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104589</b>	<b>107826</b>	<b>110247</b>	<b>108431</b>	<b>106689</b>					
S \$\$	\$ 35.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 38.00	\$ 38.00	\$ 42.00	\$ 42.00				
J \$\$	\$ 3.00	\$ 23.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 28.00	\$ 28.00				
M \$\$	\$ 13.00	\$ 13.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 18.00	\$ 18.00				
	17&U & 11&U	17&U & 11&U	17&U & 11&U	17&U & 11&U	17&U & 11&U	17&U & 11&U				
							AS AT 31/5/06			

### Additional information: 'known to play but not our members'

There are a number of private providers of netball competitions operating within Victoria – this includes private companies who run their own 'for profit' business netball competitions. Others are of similar structure but run modified versions of the sport ie Action Indoor Sports (where the game is played inside the nets of Indoor cricket venues.) This group has some 15,000 participants in netball type competitions each week.

Additionally, there are numbers of boys and girls who play netball within the school environment – intra and interschool competitions who do not currently participate in community netball.

Whilst netball is traditionally seen as an 'organised sport' (ie one which is club based and has formal interclub and Association competition), many of the Associations within Victoria conduct competitions that are closer to recreational/social activities ie are conducted on a team basis (groups of friends playing together) with casual entry fees and no requirement to provide umpires etc. as opposed to the formal, organised club structure.

Netball Victoria's membership would include a significant percentage of adult members who participate in this way.

Accessibility is a particular issue for those with children – access to a crèche or childcare facility at the venue is an important element in ensuring their access to the sport – as is affordability. Only a very small % of our Associations are able to provide such childcare facilities.

The ability to provide suitable care has been adversely affected by the changes to childcare legislation – sport was not initially consulted on changes to this legislation. The impact of changes in this legislation on sport was not considered. This resulted in unrealistic requirements for sports wishing to facilitate the involvement of women through the provision of onsite child care.

Accessibility should also be considered from a facilities point of view: in some areas there are insufficient appropriately maintained courts, in others the courts are appropriate but the accompanying facilities ie well lit car parking, change rooms, toilets etc are non existent or not located close to the actual court .

### **Recommendations:**

Sport must be consulted about changes in legislation that impact on its operations and the ability of women to participate in sport. Ie childcare legislation.

Facility audits need to be conducted and take into account not just 'courts' but also other amenities / facilities required for accessible and safe participation.

- ii. characteristics of women not participating in organised sport, fitness and recreation activities (including , for example, socio-economic strata, age, women with a disability, Indigenous or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) women);

It is difficult to assess the level of involvement / non involvement of the various groups – whilst we have a comprehensive data base we are not resourced to monitor the respective groups closely.

In particular, in relation to disability, Indigenous and CALD: It is difficult to quantify numbers participating from these groups as many of them elect not to indicate their specific community on their membership forms. However, it would be fair to say that the proportion of each of these populations who play netball is minimal.

socio economic – low membership costs and our volunteer management structures - comparative to other sports and forms of physical activity: including swimming and tennis lessons and the like whose coaches are generally private operators conducting a business) makes the sport of netball relatively accessible to all – the additional economic barriers are the cost of transport and childcare.

Age is not seen as a barrier for our sport in relation to physical participation – playing members range from 5 - 68 and our oldest non playing member is in their 80's.

Netball has only tackled diversity in a small way due to a range of constraints these will be discussed in 3 (c).

- iii. constraints, including strategies to overcome the constraints that may prevent these women from participating;

#### a) Cost

Historically we tend to experience a decline in paid membership in the years that membership fees are increased. For example in 1994 fees increased from \$15 - \$23 for seniors and from \$8 - \$10 for juniors, membership numbers dropped from \$120,637 to 109,371. A drop of 4,000 members occurred in 2000 and drops of 2,000 members occurred with fee rises 1997 and 2005,

The anecdotal evidence is that the individuals do not stop playing the sport, rather that the their Associations do not insist on Netball Victoria membership fees being paid. This is a particular concern in terms of risk management. The membership drop also impacts on the income of the organisation and adversely affects program delivery.

#### **Recommendations:**

If the government is seriously concerned with sustaining / increasing participation levels then it should fund sports by investing greater amounts to those sports with greater membership numbers. ie for 2005/2006 canoeing received \$2,253,000 and softball received \$2,067,000, both of these sports have significantly fewer members than netball but received \$3 – 400,000 more.

Support non Olympic sports (particularly those with a national and international profile) to the same level as Olympic sports ie for 05/06 rowing received \$5,117,000 while netball received \$1,728,000.

The focus should be on providing funding to sports which do not already have significant income from sponsorship and TV dollars ie higher funding to sports whose National bodies receive \$ from their state members rather than those who are able to provide direct funding to their state members.

Provide NSO's with support to assist their member organisations (states) to provide participation programs with a particular aim of keeping costs down.

Recognise the different structures of sport ie that the One Sport concept does not necessarily work best for all sports and therefore either fund sports to pass on \$ to member organisations/branches as required or fund State Sport and Recreation Departments to deliver the \$ to state bodies

Provide specific funding for delivery of programs to the special populations – which recognises the additional staffing and cost of delivering programs with/for these communities. Make this funding available to member organisations as well as NSO's (via NSO's if necessary)

NSO's without tv rights and major sponsorships should also be funded to support delivery of participation programs by their member organisations for sports where the NSO is not directly responsible for delivery of these programs.



b) Current equal opportunity legislation:

VCAT decisions in Victoria have highlighted the need for a review of the legislation in relation to children – in particular:

- the ages at which boys and girls play together
- what factors are taken into consider in relation to determining the ages
- the criteria for which an exemption from the Act can be obtained.

There is also a need to research these issues for adolescents girls and adult women.

VCAT decisions which are particularly relevant to the issue and to netball:

1998 Anti Discrimination List: Somers and Dowling Vs Mountain District Netball Association and Victorian Netball Association (Netball Victoria) [complaints 19 and 20, 1998]

2004 Anti Discrimination List Helen Taylor, Penny Cula-Reid and Emily Staynor vs Moorabbin Saints Junior Football League and Football Victoria Inc. Citation [2004] VCAT 158

2005 Anti Discrimination List: Justice Morris ruling re request for exemption made by Netball Victoria. Citation [2005] VCAT 1934

**Recommendations:**

Update the Equal Opportunity Act to allow for female only competition at all ages.

The above recommendation would require research about the effect on organisations and individuals in relation to current interpretations of the Act in relation to what is automatically allowed and what elements will be considered for exemption. These elements currently do not take into account the differences between boys and girls in terms of their motivation for participation, and the type of experiences they prefer – yet these factors are major determinants for girls participation.

There also needs to be research into elements which can be considered for women to seek exemption for women's only events.

The necessary research should be commissioned and funded by government.

c) Special populations (disability, indigenous and CALD):

Whilst each population has some different constraints there are some common barriers for sports to overcome in order to include these groups. —:

time it takes to build relationships with the community, to identify a 'key driver' to support your sports program.

the labour intensiveness from a sports staffing perspective: sufficient staffing levels increase the cost of delivery.

the need to provide equipment – which also adds to the cost burden for sports.

the relatively small return – numbers in programs for these groups are often quite small – which makes cost effectiveness an issue.

**Recommendations:**

Provide funding for additional staff time, and for uniform and equipment purchase (often not allowed for in funding applications)

Set realistic timelines for sustainable success – ie funding for 2 – 3 years.

Set realistic targets – outcomes often not large in terms of hard numbers – but can be very significant in terms of impact for those involved.

State and Federal governments to continuing funding to support programs such as Project Connect (ASC) and Access for All Abilities (DVC)

Funding levels need to be more realistic in terms of what can be funded and the amount of funding needs to be closer to covering the real costs.

Fund programs which are not 'tied' to 'membership' targets but instead are focussed on participation targets. Often the program which best suits the clientele don't fit the 'normal' delivery structure or membership structure of the sport.

For example, Netball Victoria provided seed funding to RMIT to conduct netball programs for day centre clients at the university with students acting as coaches as part of practicum requirements. The nature of the day time sessions did not fit the 'usual' netball delivery or membership models. The sessions did however create opportunities for hundreds of individuals to experience and enjoy our sport. The program has expanded to a second university (Victoria University) and expanded at RMIT to include a night program.

This has still not led to individuals becoming individual membership of Netball Victoria: barriers include:

How to fit this type of program within our membership structure

Keeping membership affordable for clients and at least cost neutral for Netball Victoria

Difficulties clients face in participating in programs not associated with day centres, for example carer support, travel and participation costs.

**d) Facilities:**

Issues vary from inadequate or non-existent local courts, poorly maintained courts, lack of or poor support facilities such as shelter, accessible toilets and showers etc.

There is also often an inequity of support: many of the Football Netball club facilities have upgraded /well maintained football facilities alongside poorly resourced and maintained netball facilities even though they are theoretically run by the one group and are on the same site.

**Recommendations:**

Ongoing funding programs that develop community based clubs and associations. A current example of such funding is the Country Football and Netball Program

The Country Football and Netball Program provides funding to assist country football and netball clubs to develop facilities through rural, regional and outer metropolitan councils, including:

- football, netball and umpire facilities, shared community, club and social facilities, multi-use facilities and lighting.

The Country Football and Netball Program, administered by Sport and Recreation Victoria, is delivered in partnership with the Australian Football League and is a response to the Rural and Regional Services and Development Committee's Inquiry into Country Football report, tabled in State Parliament in December 2004.

The Country Football Netball Program has established links between clubs, local council and governing bodies to consolidate resources to enable community strengthening and ensure the sustainability of country football and netball into the future.

In the 2005/2006 funding period, 75 applications were successful, providing \$2,170,168.00 funding towards local infrastructure projects valued at \$4,593,936.00.

55 projects demonstrate a direct benefit to netball, with \$1,456,503.00 funded towards projects valued at \$2,738,559.00.

Of particular note is the fact that 55/75 projects had a direct benefit for netball – as funding was directed to the areas of greatest need – it is clear that netball is significantly under resourced in the facilities area.

Co funding programs with Local, State and Federal Governments to improve infrastructure in metro and rural areas: to support projects such as the example given above, which have demonstrated particular benefits to women.

Legislation to ensure that sufficient open space is provided and that the open space includes provision for court facilities as well as football fields etc in new housing developments.(new estates or redevelopment areas.)

Fund research / feasibility study of types of alternative constructions: ie 'tin shed' buildings as a minimum for indoor facilities for sport (including netball)

Conduct additional research into alternative roofing (ie open sided, canvas big top roofing or open sided 'shed' construction) as an alternative to building enclosed stadiums is also recommended. The aim would be to provide relatively low cost facilities which would allow all year round and night use of existing courts. Roofing would also improve the standard of play through winter as it would reduce effects of wind and rain. One element which needs to be investigated is if these structures would provide sufficient shelter from wind as well as from sun and rain.

**a) women to participate; the effectiveness of current state and federal grant programs that encourage**

**Recommendations:**

Effectiveness of funding would be enhanced by making it longer term ie greater than 1 year.

Funding also needs to be available for a full financial or calendar year – some current programs ie Womens Leadership grants are only announced in Oct and the funds must be expended by June the following year. This really limits the outcomes that can be achieved, particularly for sports whose seasons generally run April – Sept.

Greater levels of funding needs to be directed to grass roots programs – support sport to deliver appropriate Junior programs that build skills and self esteem and give females confidence in sports participation that will lead to life long involvement.

Effectiveness can be enhanced if the balance of funding between \$ given to grass roots was closer to \$ spent on elite. If grass roots participation is important for health (physical and mental) as well as being important for developing talented players then it needs to be appropriately funded via sport.

Sports programs – particularly for special populations and grass roots could potentially be funded by areas of government other than the ASC –ie Health and Human Services and DET, particularly in relation to health and social outcomes. Sport needs be provided information about opportunities for funding through alternative avenues.

Funding does not always need to be large amounts – many successful programs have been conducted for smaller amounts ie Women in Sport Leadership Grants of \$2 – 5,000 (see section w (d) for example) In fact it is a strength of our sport and many others that we are able to deliver a lot with very little. That said a doubling or even tripling of this funding would see outcomes increase by significantly more ie if 100 % increase in funding a 300% increase in outcomes is likely.

Funding could be more effective if it allows \$ for existing programs – grant programs should not always require a new program to be developed as this is extra burden on sport and may lead to other programs being dropped in order to manage the new one which can attract funding.

Funding could be more effective if dollars for programs around sport were directed through sport and not through additional programs which required significant \$ to be spent on infrastructure to get them off the ground ie Active After Schools Program.

The follow up to the last point is that if the current and successive Governments are serious about creating a sustainable sport industry it needs to resource appropriately and minimise the requirement for sports to keep changing focus ie in the last 4 years we have had Active Australia, Targeted Participation, Active After Schools Program to name a few. Involvement in these often occurs at the expense of sports core business given the level of sports resources – human and dollars required to be involved.

**a. the retention and attrition trends of grass roots participation, including comparisons with male athletes at a similar level;**

Whilst we are able to assess membership figures, it is not as easy to determine attrition as it is a transient thing for those who play netball. We have many members whose membership lapses for some years then they return to the sport.

With regard to comparisons to male athletes : this is not an area which our sport (or many others) have the ability to obtain accurate figures.

**Recommendations:**

Government fund research into the area of retention and attrition (and what are the triggers for staying / leaving the sport)

Government fund research into comparative numbers of males and females within and between sports.

**vi. the remuneration, recruitment, retention and attrition of elite female athletes, including comparisons with elite male athletes;**

Remuneration for the states most elite players: those playing in the Commonwealth Bank Trophy (CBT) (National League) base payments range from \$1500 - \$15,000. They also receive meal allowances, travel and accommodation is paid for when travelling to play. A small number of players also have individual sponsorship.

The % of turnover spent on these players is greater than the % of turnover for payments to Australian Rules Football players.

**Recommendations:**

Retention could be enhanced for non professional sports if the sports were supported to employ athletes as staff members ie subsidies provided or special scholarships which enable athletes to work and train and also develop skills in administration which can be used within the sport.

Government commissions research into comparisons between sports and genders. It is extremely difficult for under resourced sports such as Netball to have the time or resources to source this type of information. This information should be readily available from the Women in Sport Unit of the ASC.

**vii. retention of athletes competing in senior and open age state and national sporting competitions, with possible strategies to retain female competitors in elite and sub-elite competition;**

Player retention is an issue at junior (15 – 17) elite / sub elite particularly in rural areas. As the time commitments and cost of travel impacts more highly on families. The level of competition can also be an issue for some rural areas – players are unable to participate in the appropriate level of competition.

Many talented athletes who live in rural and regional Victoria are not able to continue to participate at the State or National level unless they move to Melbourne. This creates significant difficulties for young athletes if they do this prior to commencing tertiary study but is increasingly so if the athlete is balancing study, part time work, training and playing away from their support network. Netball Victoria has a number of case studies of unsuccessful moves to Melbourne and very few long term success stories.

Players who must move interstate to continue to play in the National Netball competition also face enormous difficulties. Netball is not resourced, at this time, to support athletes in an appropriate way ie. Work, accommodation, support structures.

**Recommendation:**

Provide funding for regional elite / sub elite programs ie Zone Academy Program as conducted by Netball Victoria. This program allows numbers of talented young players have an opportunity for higher level coaching and skill development sessions without having to travel to Melbourne. (4 rural Academies 100 athletes, 2 Metro/outer Metro 60 athletes)

**viii. opportunities and barriers for national team members and competitors in international competition;**

The time commitment required of athletes in the Australian squad with ie week on week off training camps leading into major competitions and the subsequent impact on employment and income earning is a major issue. As the national Coach is a full time employee and the national programs continue to become more sophisticated, the demands on the players continue to increase without any corresponding increase in benefit or compensation for loss of wages. It is almost unrealistic at this time for any national squad/team member to have a full time career. The irony of this is that it is critical that players have a career because it will be a long time before netball can provide this for athletes.

The funding provided to athletes prior to the Commonwealth Games was critical to ensuring the athletes could continue to 'pay their bills' while preparing to represent Australia.

**ix. the financial status, success and viability of women's national league competitions, including strategies to improve these factors;**

Netball is 'fighting above its weight'. Netball Australia and each of the Member Organisations has managed under extraordinary pressure to keep the national netball league going. The competition would not be financially sustainable if the thousands of members of our sport (from 5 year olds to 80 year olds) didn't provide the necessary funding.

The losses sustained by Netball Victoria over the past nine years in the CBT program have been significant. The investment made in this area compared to all other areas of our sport are significantly higher and cannot be sustained in the long term. This skewed investment results in broken high performance pathways where we are not able to produce the necessary number of athletes to support two teams.

The demands from the athletes for payment have increased and any further increases cannot be absorbed by the State Sport Associations.

A full review of the national competition must be undertaken to ensure its viability. Clearly the structure of the league which has each of the teams funded by State Sport Associations is not sustainable and Netball Victoria has been negotiating with AFL clubs in an attempt to provide a professional infrastructure and the necessary funding to support the two Victorian teams.

The sport has reached a watershed. The CBT started as a development program for the players to improve the opportunities for athletes to compete for their country. The CBT must become a commercially orientated business.

**Recommendation:**

Government play a role in providing strategic advice and support to assist netball, and in particular the CBT competition to be a commercially orientated business.

**c) the portrayal of women's sport in the media, including:**

**a. the role of the government to regulate and review the coverage of women's sport in the media (print, radio and electronic);**

We believe that the Government can and should have a significant role in the regulation and review of coverage.

**b. the influence of pay television on the coverage of women in sport;**

Our sport is currently not involved in pay tv – there are three main issues –

1. affordability – netball's inability to contribute to the cost of production
2. convincing pay tv companies that there is a market.
3. Lack of sponsorship to drive the coverage.

**Recommendation:**

Provide incentives to support the production of women in sport programs ie tax breaks.

**c. the promotion and publicity of women's National League competitions,**

There is limited capacity of women's sport to pay for promotion and publicity of leagues.

The vast majority of sports journalists (any medium) are male. Generally they have little understanding of women's sport and don't seem to care. A case in point is the discussion on Fri 12<sup>th</sup> May on SEN where there was discussion re Melbourne Kestrels v Sydney Flames (netball vs basketball in the one game!). This means mixed messages for fans and potential fans and does nothing to promote the public's understanding and knowledge of the National League.

Sports inability to afford to employ experienced media personnel to manage the promotion of players, competitions and the sport also impacts greatly on sports ability to get coverage.

Lack of media coverage has additional impacts – it creates difficulty attracting any sponsorship, let alone significant sponsorships.

The commercial media arms are driven by what they believe will sell, which is often based on perception not fact or reality.

National Leagues do not attract considerable media coverage. Netball Victoria has made some inroads into expanding its coverage in magazines and radio due to the employment in 2005 of a professional media representative as a staff member.

**iv. the financial status and success of women's national leagues.**

Refer to ix. Above

**v. strategies to improve the amount and quality of media coverage for women's sport;**

Government should have in place a review mechanism so that up to date information on the amount and type of coverage is readily available. Sports would then be able to use this information to their advantage when planning, lobbying and seeking sponsorship.

Government should mandate minimum hours of women's sport coverage for free to air tv and a minimum % of cover in print and radio. (as per children's tv / Aust content regulations)

Government could support women's sport coverage by mandating a minimum amount of advertising of events/programs in the media be designated community announcements and therefore be free or reduced rates. This could be introduced as an interim measure.

There is also a need to target 'champions of the sport' in the media outlets so that those media develop an affinity with women's sport. Funding provided to make these 'champions' available to the media would double the benefit as it will assist to build the profile of the sport as well as the individual players.

Funding support for sport to employ (even part time) experienced journalists to act as media officers for the sport is critical.



- w. (d) women in leadership roles in sport, including;
- a. the number and proportion of women in coaching, administrative and officiating roles;

As a predominantly female sport, the vast majority of our 'leaders' are female.

The actual numbers involved in each area are difficult to determine – some time ago we had membership forms with boxes to tick for umpire / player / coach – these were not always completed by the members and could not be called an accurate representation of numbers. The current membership forms do not have sufficient space for collecting this extra data. We can, however, use our database to tell us who has accreditation (Coach / umpiring) and is a current member.

For 2006 we anticipate 3,700 Coaches and 12,422 umpires (memberships are still being received – this figure is based on year to date actuals with further renewals from 05 still expected)

Administrators: over 20,000.

- b. the issues associated with women in leadership roles in both elite and grass-roots activities;

age of the volunteer – difficulty in encouraging older volunteers to provide opportunities for and to empower younger volunteers

time available to contribute to volunteerism

Costs of volunteering ie petrol, phone calls becoming prohibitive – increased need for sport to find \$ to reimburse costs of individual volunteers.

- c. trends and issues for women in organisational leadership roles;

issues as per d) ii above, as well as the following:

Women are being put off by existing committee resistance to change, if they are going to give up their time, they want to be able to contribute and the help make things happen. Our demographics are such that many committee positions are 'held' by older members with a long history of involvement and a defined way of doing things. Younger women who subsequently try involvement and are unable to move the club forward are disenfranchised and walk away from involvement.

Specific issues also exist for those involved in Football Netball Leagues, often the organisation structure marginalises the women – in terms of how the committees are structured, who is responsible for planning and allocation of \$. This often results in decisions being made in the best interest of football (males) at the expense of netball (females). Ie where entry fees to grounds are collected, the funds are distributed in an inequitable manner. The netball clubs are provided with a percentage of gate takings.

There are examples of footballers being provided with free entry but netballers pay, netballers who are required to pay memberships to both the netball club and the football club but footballers only pay a membership to the football club, women running the canteen at the football for no return to the netball club (or decision making power in where the funds are distributed).

There are also issues around the committee's lack of recognition and promotion of success achieved by the netball teams and individuals as compared to the football teams and individuals.

Leadership roles undertaken by women in Football Netball Leagues are generally secretarial. Football Netball Clubs often have a more inclusive and equitable decision making process.

**d. strategies to improve the numbers of women in coaching, administration and technical roles.**

Tax incentives: ie tax rebate system for volunteers – set a sliding rebate scale for level of involvement ie committee / umpire / coach roles

Or implement a funding provision or rebate system for sport to cover costs of supporting volunteers ie travel reimbursements.

Fund programs such as High Performance Coaches Program conducted with funding from Women in Sports Leadership Grants.

The High Performance Coach Group program provides an opportunity for the more talented coaches to extend and improve their skills and therefore improve the quality of coaching provided at the elite level. It achieves this by providing a clear coach pathway and a formalised program. The program enables coaches to receive education and feedback to improve their technical skills. Therefore, In the longer term more athletes, not just those at the elite level, will be exposed to and benefit from, coaches who are more highly skilled and who are committed to continuous improvement.

Program includes workshop and observation sessions:

- Match analysis, use of statistics for elite teams

- Video analysis

- Mentoring

- Observation of other elite coaches training sessions

- Coaching pedagogy

- Observation of practical session conducted by National Coach

Role Models – ASC to be proactive in ensuring female presenters are strongly included in conferences, presentations and promotion of relevant events. This will then serve as an example to other organisations when organising and promoting conferences etc in the sport industry arena.

Provide funding to run upskilling programs – both for potential leaders (how to influence change) and for existing committee (how to pass on knowledge)

Don't require NSO's to develop 1 size fits all documents as different areas of the sport are at different levels and have different needs. Fund NSO's to develop templates and then provide them with funding to direct to member organisations to tailor the templates to their specific needs.

Provide funding to NSO's to develop sport specific on line or technology based coaching courses.

Reduce HECS fees for elite athletes of non professional sports if they are studying sports admin, coaching, management thereby increasing their involvement in the industry and supporting them toward a career during / after playing.

Provide funding for Regional Infrastructure Projects (RIP) – for example the Barwon Netball RIP currently being piloted by Netball Victoria in 2006.

The Project involves the following elements:

Conducting an audit of the Associations, the facilities, the competitions

Meeting with Association Personnel, local government and other allied agencies

Assisting Associations with the development of business and strategic plans, funding applications, updating or development of policies and operational material.

## **OTHER ISSUES:**

Lack of current support, research and resources. ASC Women in Sport unit appears not to be able to provide the level of research and resources as had been available in 1984/5. Much of the information / data in those original documents is now quite dated. The other element is that the focus of information is often on how to enable girls and women to participate in men's sport rather than research into the issues and preparation of strategies to ensure the rights of girls and women to participate in female only programs and competitions.

Inequity of funding for grass roots programs / development programs for players and administrators / coaches etc. ie men's sport receive much greater \$ in grants etc than \$ yet have greater income from other sources already ie sponsorship and tv.

The need for consideration of the differences faced by netball and those of other sports which have joint management Boards but separate male and female competition structures / management.

A lack of cohesive planning between local, state and federal government re facilities development and upkeep with particular concern around female friendly facilities and access.

Status of the sport industry in the eyes of government departments: with the focus of government on obesity levels and the subsequent attention to physical activity, 'sport' is not always recognised as having a role to play in providing physical activity opportunities. In some areas sport is actually excluded from program plans and funding. This flies in the face of what sports such as netball actually does and can provide for women in terms of providing actual physical activity opportunities as social and recreational opportunities.

The Committee invites **written submissions** from interested individuals and organisations, preferably in electronic form sent by email, to [ecita.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:ecita.sen@aph.gov.au). The email must include full postal address and contact details.

Alternatively, submissions may be sent to The Secretary, Senate Environment, Communications Information Technology and the Arts References Committee Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600, or faxed to 02 6277 5818.

Submissions must be received by no later than Friday, 16 June 2006.

*Submissions become committee documents and are made public only after a decision by the Committee. Persons making submissions must not release them without the approval of the Committee. Submissions are covered by parliamentary privilege but the unauthorised release of them is not.*

Inquiries from hearing and speech impaired people should be directed to the Parliament House TTY number (02) 6277 7799. Adobe also provides tools for the blind and visually impaired to access PDF documents. These tools are available at: <http://access.adobe.com/>. If you require any special arrangements in order to enable you to participate in a committee inquiry, please contact the committee secretary.

**For further information, contact:**

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