



# CRICKET

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## NEW SOUTH WALES

PURA CUP CHAMPIONS 2004/05

14 June 2006

Committee Secretary  
Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References  
Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Australia

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry into women in sport and recreation in Australia. Cricket NSW – like many other State Associations – experiences scant support in securing commercial funding and media commitment to our elite women's programs. The NSW State Government provides coaching and administration programs as well as contributions to funding junior development programs. However, nationally, commitment to senior elite competitions is not evident.

The World Conference on Women in Sport, to be hosted by New South Wales in 2010, is an opportunity to showcase to the world this State's prolific pool of sportswomen and sport administrators. Disappointingly, domestic commercial and media outlets fail to embrace these or give them appropriate recognition.

### HISTORY

Women's Cricket NSW Incorporated was formed in 1927. Since this time, the involvement of NSW players and administrators in State and national cricket has been outstanding. Ruth Preddey represented NSW in the first Inter-colonial game against Victoria, which Victoria and New South Wales drew at one game each, played in 1910. She was the Manager of the first Australian Women's team, held numerous positions in State and national programs and the Women's National Cricket League trophy is named in her honour. The Australian Captain of the inaugural Test series against England in 1934/35 was NSW's Margaret Peden.

New South Wales continues to demonstrate leadership in many areas of cricket in Australia.

Women's Cricket NSW Incorporated integrated its operations with the NSW Cricket Association in July 2003. Formal integration was the result of many years of negotiation and co-operation between the two Associations committing to the long term success and sustainability of women in the sport of cricket. The challenges faced when agreeing to integrate an historically and culturally male-dominated sport were significant however not impossible to overcome. In comparison to other male-dominated sports charged with integrating their activities with their female counterparts, such as golf and lawn bowls, Cricket NSW considers it has achieved significant in-roads into the acceptance and commitment to women in the sport.

One of the terms of integration was the establishment of a Women's Committee to advise the NSW Cricket Board on the conduct, organisation and management of the game. Since 2003, the functions of the Women's Committee have evolved greatly. Presently, the Women's Committee is directed by an Operational Plan which was developed on the basis of the NSW Cricket Association's Strategic Plan "BLUEPRINT 2004-07". A strategic direction drives both the Women's Committee and Cricket NSW to manage women's cricket professionally, transparently and with accountability.

A copy of *BLUEPRINT 2004-2007* is attached for your reference.

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## **SENATE ENQUIRY TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### ***Participation Numbers***

Participation information is gathered annually for the compilation of the National Cricket Census.

Between 2004/05 and 2005/06, New South Wales has recorded the following growth in girls' cricket participation:

- School cricket programs have seen a 65% increase from 10,574 to 17,401
- Modified non-traditional club programs have increased 48% from 1,762 to 2,609
- Traditional Club Cricket participation has increased 68% from 1,978 to 3,331

In terms of accessibility, Cricket NSW has resourced both metropolitan Sydney and all regional centres with development and promotions officers to reach as many girls and introduce them to the game as possible, whilst monitoring retention of players across the seasons. The various programs on offer to young girls range from purely fun, physical activity, learning about the game, basic skill development, teamwork and then later on greater access to coaching and improvement in personal skills and team dynamics.

### ***State & Federal Grants Programs***

The State is successfully providing opportunities for women in the sport with the assistance of funding support from both Cricket Australia and the NSW Department of Tourism, Sport & Recreation.

Cricket Australia assists by providing Game Development Grants covering the Milo Have-a-Go, Cric Hit and Indigenous programs as well as the administrative costs for census administration, coach and umpire training and accreditation and volunteers. In addition, the following grants were made available by Cricket Australia this season:

- an Innovation Grant to identify new methods of presenting the game to girls and women which encourage fun, participation, healthy activity and teamwork. These grants must demonstrate how the game presentation is modern, reflects demand and is sustainable for the long-term
- the Girls' Participation grant for implementing specific strategies to increase participation across the state and providing game formats and programs that will retain players season after season

The NSW Department of Tourism Sport & Recreation offers the Sports Development Program grants which currently support junior cricket. Cricket NSW has received this funding for almost a decade, most recently to support junior coach education and volunteer retention and education.

An important function in sport that is also supported by the Department is the education and development of female administrators through the Women's Sport Leadership Program. This is just one of numerous programs offered by the Department for non-participatory roles in sport. Cricket NSW directly sees the benefits of administrators, coaches and other officials who take part in these programs and actively seeks out candidates from across the state to provide them with additional support as they have an ever-increasing workload in administering sport at the local level. Programs such as these are invaluable not only to Cricket NSW but all sports, as we all require assistance communicating effectively with our various stakeholders.

### ***Elite Athletes***

As recently as 5 years ago, players representing the State were charged a subsidised fee for competing at national tournaments. Today, the financial landscape for State cricketers is vastly different. The support of Cricket NSW enables players to participate without paying any money. Clothing, equipment, transport, accommodation and meals are covered by Cricket NSW.

Members of the Australian Southern Stars team are not contracted to Cricket Australia nor paid match fees. The same situation exists at State level. Whilst the NSW State team is not paid match fees, a daily allowance is paid to cover incidentals on match days.

Cricket NSW has identified the commitment required of its senior players to assist in promoting the game to schools, clubs and corporations at various activities and functions throughout the season. These are demands on top of existing work and study commitments. Cricket NSW introduced a Grants and Scholarships scheme in 2005/06 to reimburse players for a range of expenses they incur to participate at the highest level for their State.

The lifespan of a senior State cricketer may vary from 1-12 years. Retention and attrition have not been a significant concern at the senior level in the past decade. However, succession planning of senior State and subsequently National representatives has occurred through the development of an elite female player pathway and comprehensive high performance development programs. **Attached** is a copy of the NSW Elite Female Pathway for your reference.

The greater issue is the development of a broad, experienced youth player base which currently experiences limited competition opportunities. Whilst senior squad members can hold their position for a number of years, junior players must bide their time awaiting an opportunity. Players are faced with the difficult choice of traveling interstate to a less-developed program in exchange for a guaranteed position in their squad. To date this has not been a major consideration for NSW senior players.

International fixtures and playing opportunities are governed by Cricket Australia and States would be fully supportive of moves to increase playing opportunities for not only the senior squad, but the Youth Development Squad (U23) who have been under-serviced and under-exposed to international opportunities.

National League tournaments are a vital product in the women's sport market. Not only are these tournaments a primary method of promoting sport to the wider community, but they continue to act as the pinnacle to which players moving through development pathways aspire. All sporting organisations have an obligation to develop the presentation of these national leagues/tournaments to achieve greater community and commercial awareness of their "sport product" and achieve greater local and regional media coverage. Community and regional media outlets continue to prove their commitment to covering successful athletes originating from their local area, however, the same commitment is yet to be shown by national media organisations.

The presentation of National League events is a financial burden on associations that do not have commercial sponsorship – regardless of the level of support provided by the SSO or NSO in hosting these events. An opportunity exists to assist SSO's with government funding tagged to assist in the presentation and promotion of their National League fixtures - especially National League finals.

### ***Women's sport in the Media***

Cricket Australia subsidises and schedules an amount of advertising for the Women's National Cricket League. The Cricket NSW Communications Manager will then work closely with our established media partners in print and radio to promote fixtures and results. Any additional financial commitment of paid advertising space is subject to other commercial limitations. Greater commitment to national campaigns and national support for state fixtures would assist greatly utilising the resources and contacts of the national body with national media outlets.

Cricket NSW is represented as a member of a Women's Sport Media Group (WSMG) established in Sydney in 2005/06. This group comprises representatives from the major women's SSO's and the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation with the objective of representing women's sporting organisations and assisting with their promotion and presentation of their sports in the media.

The "grass roots" objectives of this group are to assist organisations to develop their sporting "product", both the personalities and the presentation of events. Further, the group aims to improve the manner in which organisations engage the media and subsequently their chances of gaining coverage. Only then can the WSMG take action on behalf of women's sport organisations to further lobby government for assistance or regulation if change is not forthcoming.

The coverage of Women's National Cricket League competitions to date has been poor. Despite best efforts to provide quality footage, descriptive editorial or still images, the end result is often disappointing for players, administrators and supporters. Pay television is another method of disseminating information about women's sports – it should not be considered a hindrance nor the solution.

Further information on strategies to improve quality are being collated by the WSMG and will be submitted separately by the WSMG.

### **Women as leaders**

In the past 5 years the number of female-specific governance, administration and coaching positions have increased dramatically in New South Wales cricket, current positions include:

- an appointed female NSW Cricket Board Director
- full-time female State Coach
- full-time female High Performance Coach and
- full-time Girls Development Officer

Similarly, the number of female regional and State coaches has increased.

There continues to be anecdotal evidence of the difficulties experienced by women dealing with committees and long-held practices of male administrators, however, programs such as the Women's Sport Leaders Program and various Coaching programs are empowering women through education and the invaluable opportunity to network with other female administrators in a range of sports sharing strategies on how to solve common challenges. Improved communication flow within the association and to clubs has also contributed to the increase in number and quality of skills of females involved in the sport to date. *BLUEPRINT 2004-2007* addresses the recruitment and retention of ancillary personnel and the commitment to educating and empowering volunteers and honorary administrators for the long term benefit of the sport.

Cricket NSW is committed to breaking down the barriers of women supporting the sport by opening opportunities to sit on committees and boards, as well as actively participate in significant event-related activities.

In 2005/06, Cricket NSW hosted the New Years Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground and introduced the concept of a Ladies Day. This concept was acknowledged by Cricket Australia as a unique promotional opportunity to broaden the exposure of the match to the wider female community and we anticipate this will become an annual occurrence. Last season's function was held on Day 4 of the New Years Test in Cricket NSW's 'Alan Davidson Room' at the Sydney Cricket Ground. Women from commercial, sporting and community backgrounds gathered as guests of the NSW Cricket Board to watch the day's play and listen to guest speakers and mingle with Board Directors, Management and members of the NSW Women's senior State team.

In summary, Cricket NSW and the NSW Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation have enthusiastically embraced the value of women in sport participation and administration. The recognition of elite sportswomen in the media continues to be a disappointment and we invite the Government to investigate the means for State and National Sporting Organisations to gain greater benefit from Australia's vast media market. Similarly, we invite the Federal Government to increase its profile in supporting women's individual and team sports – particularly in the areas of hosting and presenting National League tournaments or Finals - so that together we can effect change in the perception and awareness of women's sport and its valuable place in the national community.

We look forward to receiving further information from the Committee about the submissions to the Inquiry and any recommendations to Federal and State Governments once the review is complete.

Yours sincerely



DAVID GILBERT  
Chief Executive

1. **BLUEPRINT 2004-2007**
2. **Elite Female Player Pathway**