



Australian Womensport
& Recreation Association

Progress or Stagnation?
Advocacy for Women's Sport
'Down Under'

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AWRA

- National volunteer advocacy organisation, incorporated in 2005
- Vision: to provide leadership and a voice for women and girls in sport, physical activity and recreation, to enable their full participation
- Board directors from around Australia

Current position of women in sport in Australia

From published data bases 2009

- Less than **30 %** of 12-24 year olds participate in non-organised activities
- Only **1:7** females in leadership positions
- Coaching: overall **35%** are women with only **15%** in high performance coaching
- Officiating: overall **65%** are women with only **13%** in high performance officiating
- Media coverage is approximately **2% - 10%**
(across print and electronic media)

2006 Senate Inquiry into Women's Sport and Recreation

Aims:

- to measure female participation (grass-roots to elite),
- evaluate the portrayal of women in sport in the media, and
- appraise the role of women in leadership in sport.



Outcomes from Senate Inquiry

Identified the barriers, which are for girls:

- Lack of self confidence
- Lack of role models
- Influence of parents and family/peers
- Decline of PE and sport in schools

Outcomes continued

Barriers to women's participation:

- Lack of time
- Work life pressures
- Cost of participation
- Lack of appropriate child care
- Lack of appropriate facilities

18 Senate Recommendations

- Need to improve cooperation and access to facilities for females – include child care
- More varied and inclusive activities focussed on participation and enjoyment, across a range of times
- More promotion of sportswomen as role models
- More leadership training
- Funding of A\$ 3million p.a. for media coverage of women's sport, for 3 years.

AWRA's National Survey 2007

**1113 on line survey of
sport agencies:**

36% response rate

Aim: to provide insight into barriers to female (girls and women) participation and identify possible solutions



1. Barriers to women participating in sport

(Confirmed Senate Enquiry outcomes for women)

Barriers	Major Barrier (%)	Significant Barriers (%)
Time – family related	14	47
Time – work related	14	36
Cost	10	26
Lack of childcare	8	19
Cultural barriers	5	16
Lack of transport	5	15
Non female environs	7	13
Timing of competition	4	10
Uniform policies	2	6

2. Strategies used by sports organisations to encourage greater participation by women in sport

(Not necessarily in tune with women's requirements)

- Promotion: sport development officer, advertising
- Trials: free 'come and try' days, 'women only' sessions and creation of females' competitions
- Education/support: push for female coaches, female coordinators
- Management support, women's committees
- Scheduling and organisation

3. Ranking by sports organisations of media coverage of women's sport

Media Coverage	Excellent %	Good %	Undecided %	Poor %	Terrible %
Media coverage of <u>female sport in Australia</u> today	1	14	10	52	23
Media coverage of women in <u>your sport</u> today	3	14	9	38	36

Crawford Report 2009

The Future of Sport in Australia

Few references to women in sport

Women referred to as one of the nine demographic groups for focus: a '**minority group**'

Most positive aspect: women should be more part of leadership – 50% of leaders – and advice to implement the recommendations from the 2006 Senate Inquiry.

However, 8 months have past – only 1 week ago a very general response to the Crawford Report – none yet to the Senate Inquiry.

Progress to 2009

outcome last 2 years

- More Australian Sports Commission (ASC) Leadership grants and scholarship grants provided for 2009
- W-league (national football) televised and Trans Tasman Netball League on digital TV
- AWRA received three major government grants: for a leadership workshop program, a media project and for web modules on leadership and media training
- AWRA received funds to translate mentoring modules into Mandarin (#1 foreign language).

Senate 2006 recommendations	Crawford 2009 recommendations	Responses to / by AWRA	Outcomes
Participation : access to facilities	Recommends sports plan (incl. national facility fund)	Advocacy for access and appropriate facilities	no government response
Leadership training	Agreed	<p>Success with grant from the Office for Women</p> <p>Translation of modules into Mandarin</p>	<p>AWRA's national leadership project</p> <p>ASC and states incl. leadership programs</p>
Increase in Media coverage	Silent	<p>Success with grant for media training nationwide</p> <p>Success with grant from Office for Women</p> <p>Coverage unchanged</p>	<p>AWRA's national media project.</p> <p>APA funded \$1mill for 2008 Paralympics</p> <p>ASC 2008-09 research project (still to be released)</p>

Conclusion

- Still much can be done ‘Down Under’: still same gap between male / female sports and media coverage - therefore

To paraphrase Kate Ellis’s (federal Minister for Sport) words:

There has been stagnation in sport for women, however the new initiatives by the federal government will address the lack of opportunity

Sydney Morning Herald, 12.5.2010



THANK YOU !