

**AUSTRALIAN Womensport and Recreation Association Inc**

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Budget Policy Division  
Attn Penny Sirault  
Dept of the Treasury  
Langton Cres  
Parkes ACT 2600

Dear Penny,

The Australian Womensport and Recreation Association (AWRA) is pleased to have this opportunity to offer community input into the Government's first budget.

In the first instance, as an advocacy group to provide leadership for Australian girls and women in sport and active recreation, we would like to see Federal funding that supports the recommendations of the bi-partisan 2006 Senate Inquiry into Women in Sport and Recreation in Australia.

In this letter AWRA will highlight some of the Senate Report recommendations that it believes are a high priority for the new government.

**The following needs federal funding:**

- ✓ The development of a cohesive national sport policy for women, covering grass-roots to elite participation, as suggested by AWRA in its Senate submission.
- ✓ In light of the pressure on available community sporting facilities, there is the need for a separate Federal sports facility fund to assist with the construction of regional, state and national sporting facilities. *Further to this AWRA would like to see greater parity of funding for facilities used by women.*
- ✓ That the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) Sport Leadership Grants for Women be continued and that the Commonwealth increase funding for this scheme. *AWRA recommends that the funding is increased to \$1 million (now it averages \$2500 per person or organisation, totalling only \$400,000).*
- ✓ Australia has one of the worst records for media coverage of women's sport. The Australian Government needs to provide financial support, to be administered by the ASC, for initiatives that provide specific opportunities for greater ongoing coverage of

women's sport. The Senate committee believes this program should administer funding of up to \$3 million per annum, and be reviewed after approximately three years. *Further to this AWRA recommends that the ASC or other federal agency should support the development and production of a quality half hour national television program on women's sport.*

- ✓ That the government consider allocating up to \$1 million to the Australian Paralympic Committee to assist with production and associated costs of televised coverage of the forthcoming Beijing Paralympics, and that the arrangement include stipulation that a condition of accessing this funding be that there be balanced coverage of male and female athletes.
- ✓ That the Australian Government provide financial support, to be administered by the ASC, for the training of athletes and sports administrators to better utilise media opportunities.
- ✓ That the government fund the ASC to replicate in 2008–09 the surveys and analysis performed in the 1996 report *An Illusory Image*. This is essential so that media coverage of women's sport can be assessed in order to develop appropriate strategies to improve coverage.
- ✓ That there is an allocation of funds to support an Emerging Women Leaders Program or a Women on Boards and Senior Management Program and the establishment of a scholarship/mentoring program to support it.
- ✓ That there is the provision of more sport and recreation activities for women and girls with disabilities, to cater to a multitude of disabilities, not only wheelchair bound females.
- ✓ That physical education classes are compulsory for years K-10 to help alleviate the obesity problem

In concluding, AWRA seeks action on the recommendations of the 2006 Senate Report, with particular attention to the leadership and media recommendations.

Increasing the participation of women in all facets of sport and recreation benefits the individual, the organisation, the community. This responsibility rests with all levels of government and the sports industry as a whole and is not just the responsibility of women or women's units. Systemic change and action is required now, and much of the change needs to be supported by Federal Government funding and leadership.

Yours sincerely

Janice J Crosswhite OAM  
President AWRA