## 2018/19 AUSTRALIAN CRICKET PRESS FOR PROGRESS REPORT

TO BE THE Leading Sport For Women and Girls

## WELCOME TO THE SECOND AUSTRALIAN CRICKET PRESS FOR PROGRESS REPORT.

First released in 2018, this annual monitor reflects our commitment to be openly accountable for the ongoing progress towards our aspiration of being Australia's Leading Sport For Women And Girls.

In the past 12 months, important gains continue to be made: most notably, the sustained growth of girls participation and all-girls teams, the ongoing transition to a standalone rebel Women's Big Bash League, and improved gender diversity within the governance of Australian Cricket.

These achievements are joined by the inspiring ICC World T20 victory by the world champion Australian Women's Cricket Team.

Key to our commitment to accountability and transparency though, is not shying away from our challenges: overcoming the perception that cricket is still 'not for girls', continuing to draw women's elite sport into the public's consciousness, and embedding the prioritisation of workforce diversity across the country.

Ultimately, success will be achieved when cricket is viewed as a genuinely gender equal sport, aligned with this year's theme for International Women's Day: Balance for Better, which highlights that each and every one of us has a role to play in creating a gender-balanced world.

International Women's Day 2019 also marks the one year countdown to the women's final of the ICC T20 World Cup here in Australia, at the MCG. All Australians have the opportunity to create history, as we look to break the world record for the highest ever attendance at a standalone women's sporting event.

We know the role we have to play. What role will you play?

Kevin Roberts CEO, Cricket Australia

Joel Morrison CEO, Northern Territory Cricket

Nick Cummins CEO, Cricket Tasmania

Nick Hockley CEO, ICC T20 World Cup 2020 Local Organising Committee

James Allsopp CEO. Cricket Australian **Capital Territory** 

Max Walters

CEO, Queensland Cricket

Andrew Ingleton CEO, Cricket Victoria

Lee Germon CEO, Cricket New South Wales



Keith Bradshaw CEO, South Australian Cricket Association

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Christina Matthews CEO, Western Australian Cricket Association

## TO BE THE LEADING SPORT FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

That is our aspiration, set out in the Australian Cricket Strategy (2017 – 2022)

> Deepen cricket's fan base by entertaining women and girls through international cricket and the Big Bash.

> > Grow the WBBL and women's international cricket, while remaining number one in all formats.



WOMEN AND GIRLS AS FANS

> GROW WOMEN'S ELITE CRICKET

LEADERSHIP

Achieve gender equity across Australian Cricket, while developing and accelerating opportunities for women in our game.

GROW PARTICIPATION SUSTAINABLY Sustainably grow women's and girls' participation, and make sure cricket clubs are welcoming and enjoyable places to be.

ELITE TALENT PATHWAY

Offer a viable professional career for female talented athletes, supported by an expansive and structured pathway.



The Leadership pillar captures two focuses: promoting the prioritisation of our *Leading Sport For Women And Cirls* aspiration, and the gender diversity of the Australian Cricket workforce.

There is strong awareness of our commitment to improve gender diversity across all levels of the Australian Cricket workforce. The most significant gains over the past 12 months occurred at a governance level (+6%); only one Board with a single female director remains (2018: 4).

Slight gains were also observed across Executive Management, driven by improvements at Cricket Australia (+28% to 50%), and Total Employees, thanks to the rapid growth of the ICC T20 World Cup Local Organising Committee. Disappointingly, a slight decline was observed in Other Management – a key measure of emerging leaders, and a factor to be carefully monitored.

Commitment to a targeted program of activity to drive further progress is less consistent. Embedding a systematic action plan, alongside a commitment to change, remains a priority.

The Australian Workforce Gender Action Plan created by the national People and Culture leaders in 2017 has laid stronger foundations, particularly around recruitment practices. Encouraging applications from female candidates remains a key challenge. Cricket needs to improve its reputation amongst female candidates; effective recruitment practices only help if talented women are interested in considering sport – and particularly cricket – as an attractive career path.

#### **KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR:**

The introduction of the next national workforce diversity strategy from FY20.

#### **REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN**



every level of the Australian Cricket workforce



## **GROW PARTICIPATION SUSTAINABLY**

Cricket is working towards a future as a gender equal sport, where it's just as likely for a girl to pick up a cricket bat as it is for a boy. Whilst significant inroads have been made in recent years to create more opportunities to play, particularly for teenage girls, this continues to be an ongoing journey.

In the current year, total female participation is on track to grow by around 40k, with 56% of total new participants forecast to be women and girls.

2018/19 is also a year of consolidating growth from recent years, including the introduction of a new entry level program, Woolworths Cricket Blast, designed in part to increase the appeal to young girls.

Significant investment continues towards growing all-girls competitions and teams via the Growing Cricket for Cirls Fund, with the ongoing support of the Commonwealth Bank. Over 100 junior cricket associations now have all-girls competitions.

With the focus in recent years on ensuring teams exist for girls to join, the pressing opportunity is to capitalise on the increasing recognition and celebration of women's elite cricket, to move cricket higher in the consideration set for both girls and parents alike. Reality is, many Australians still do not automatically consider cricket to be a sport for girls.

#### **KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR:**

- Growing enrolments in Woolworths Cricket Blast
- Recruiting players, clubs and associations to all-girls competitions, and
- Growing organised school-based cricket.





## **ELITE TALENT** PATHWAY

Australian Cricket is focused on offering talented athletes a viable professional career, supported by an expansive and structured pathway. It is this elite talent pathway that bridges playing cricket at a community level, and playing in the WBBL and for Australia.

As part of becoming the Leading Sport For Women And Girls, cricket is focused on continually strengthening the state and national programs in place to develop the stars of tomorrow.

Our target is to offer more playing opportunities for female talented athletes than in any other sport - a benchmark that continues

2017 / 2018

2018 / 2019

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2022

to advance as the momentum for women in sport in Australia extends towards the new decade.

In this respect, progress for the Elite Talent Pathway pillar is not judged on the same measures compared year-on-year, but an ongoing expansion and continuous improvement, against both our own high standards and those set by our domestic and international peers.

#### THROUGH THAT LENS, KEY ADDITIONS IN THE PAST YEAR INCLUDE:

- The introduction of a Female National Performance Squad,
- A four-year arrangement with the BCCI to play an 'A' series,

than domestic and

international peers

FEMALE

National Performance

Squad introduced

- The first overseas tour by an Australia Under 19 team in 15 years, with yearly international tours planned, and
- New teams added to an expanded Under 18 national championship, supporting talent development in the Northern Territory, regional Victoria and leading Under-15 athletes.

Australian Cricket also continues to lobby for the introduction of an ICC Under 19 World Cup, and is a supporter of cricket's push for inclusion in the 2022 Commonwealth Games.



## **GROW WOMEN'S ELITE CRICKET**

Capturing the continued opportunity to build the fan base of the women's elite game and the importance of an exciting and visible pathway to inspire the next generation of cricketers, this priority balances progress off the field with ensuring continued success on it.

November's successful ICC T20 World Cup campaign in the West Indies was undoubtedly the year's highlight. The Australian Women's Team also regained and held the world #1 ranking throughout the year.

At home, the first dedicated national campaign for the women's game was launched. #WatchMe

challenges outdated perceptions, and was complemented by cricket's partners, particularly the Commonwealth Bank and #20NotOut.

Overall WBBL trends were positive, as the league transitions to a standalone season in 2019/20. While total attendance decreased off the back of fewer doubleheaders, standalone matches increased 38%. Similarly, while average ratings declined 5% (compared to a wider FTA market decline of 11%), ratings across fixtures on 'main channels' increased 20%.

However, progress is still hard fought, even with the ongoing

momentum in the women's sporting landscape. Continuing to cut through the wider public's consciousness, in a world with increasing competition for people's attention, remains challenging, as do new commercial conversations - elements that are key to sustainable growth.

#### **KEEP AN EVE OUT FOR:**

- WBBL's shift to its own window in the sporting landscape in October 2019, and
- The build-up to next year's ICC T20 World Cup in Australia and the world record crowd being targeted for the final on International Women's Day in 2020.

#2

in all formats





Just as opportunities to play cricket are a fundamental part of being the Leading Sport For Women And Girls, so are opportunities for women and girls to enjoy cricket as fans of the game.

Leading the way is the KFC Big Bash League, which continues to set the standard for gender equal crowds, with women and girls representing more than 45% of attendees for the fourth consecutive summer. Similarly, gender balance was observed at women's international and WBBL crowds. Men's international crowds saw a slight drop in female attendees following the previous Ashes summer, with the limited overs matches versus India particularly male-skewed. A highlight was the ODI series against South Africa in Perth, Adelaide and Hobart, which reached the ACS target of 40%.

Gender diversity in viewership remained steady, albeit with wider variation across formats. A new high in female viewership on FTA was offset by content available only on male-skewed subscription channels. Significant gains were observed in the women's formats, suggesting a growing connection with mainstream audiences. For example, the women's T20Is shifted from the most male-skewed viewership in 2017/18, to the most gender balanced of any format.

In what has been a challenging year, cricket maintained the fourth highest number of passionate fans amongst women and girls. Available research suggests avid fans remain connected to the game, however women and girls who identify as more casual or new fans remain more neutral.



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