



2020-21 AUSTRALIAN CRICKET

PRESS FOR PROGRESS REPORT

**TO BE THE LEADING SPORT
FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS**

WELCOME

TO THE FOURTH AUSTRALIAN CRICKET PRESS FOR PROGRESS REPORT.



First released in 2018, the Press for Progress report reflects Australian Cricket's commitment to being openly accountable in our aspiration of becoming the *Leading Sport for Women and Girls*.

The 2020-21 season was undoubtedly one of our most challenging seasons yet. The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic caused much disruption around the world, with sporting organisations and business sectors more broadly, forced to reimagine the way they work and respond to continued uncertainty.

With this being said, we maintained our focus on growing the game and were able to successfully host New Zealand in September 2020, the first cricket team to tour Australia since the start of the pandemic, in a home series. The Australian Women's Team also travelled to New Zealand in 2021, where they inspired the country by breaking the record for consecutive ODI wins.

For the second cricket season in a row, the team was named Australia's favourite team, scoring the highest Benchmark Emotional Connection Score of any national team.

We also delivered another standalone Women's Big Bash League in full, with all 59 matches being played in Sydney where our players, match officials and staff spent up to seven weeks in a hub environment in addition to quarantine periods.

From a participation perspective, whilst the pandemic halted some opportunities to play our wonderful game, we pleasingly saw a significant (27.4%) increase in girls participating in Woolworths Cricket Blast off the back of the momentum from the T20 World Cup and WBBL.

We certainly could not have done this without the support of our dedicated volunteers, players and coaches, who have driven the change over a number of years and went above and beyond to deliver the season in a COVID-safe environment.

Reporting and transparency, as well as owning our challenges, is critical in our progression towards a gender equal future. We will need to build strategies and develop comprehensive action plans to minimise the adverse effects of the pandemic on gender equality.

Heading into the final year of the Australian Cricket strategy, we know we have work to do in reaching our goal and we will continue to strive for gender equality across Australian Cricket.

We have seen through the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Final in March 2020, what is possible when we focus and work together. Now more than ever, it is important for us to keep pushing for equality in cricket and continue to accelerate the momentum we established before the pandemic.

Will you join us?

Dominic Baker
CEO, Cricket Tasmania

Nick Cummins
CEO, Cricket Victoria

Michelle Enright
CEO, ICC T20
World Cup 2022

Lee Germon
CEO, Cricket NSW

Nick Hockley
CEO, Cricket
Australia

Christina Matthews
CEO, WA Cricket

Joel Morrison
CEO, Northern
Territory Cricket

Jodie Newton
Acting CEO, South
Australian Cricket
Association

Terry Svenson
CEO, Queensland
Cricket

Olivia Thornton
CEO, Cricket ACT

CRICKET ASPIRES TO BECOME AUSTRALIA'S LEADING SPORT FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



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.



GROW WOMEN'S ELITE CRICKET

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



WOMEN AND GIRLS AS FANS

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

Similar to many organisations across the country, the COVID-19 pandemic caused disruption amongst Australian Cricket's workforce.

Now more than ever, it is vital for Australian Cricket to prioritise the progression of workforce gender diversity to achieve our aspiration of becoming the *Leading Sport for Women and Girls*.

Three key appointments across the year included Olivia Thornton as Cricket ACT's Chief Executive Officer, Michelle Enright as the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Australia 2022 Local Organising Committee Chief Executive Officer and Jodie Newton as SACA's Acting Chief Executive Officer. There are now four women in the role of CEO across Australian Cricket with Olivia, Michelle and Jodie joining Christina Matthews.

The 2020-21 season also saw the appointment of Kate Harkness as General Manager of the Adelaide Strikers.

An additional highlight from the season included the formation of the Recognition of Women in Cricket Working Group who have been tasked with addressing the imbalance of public recognition of women in cricket, both on and off the field. This includes identifying and advocating for opportunities to recognise the achievements of women in cricket through initiatives such as sculptures, artworks and the naming of infrastructure including stands and walks of honour.

We also saw success from the pilot program to support female elite players transitioning to coaching with Cricket ACT's Erin Osborne securing full-time employment within their men's pathway program. Representative courses and workshops were also held to progress the development of women as coaches.

From an Australian Cricket governance perspective, whilst there were changes in Directors across the country, gender diversity at the Director level remained consistent at 32%.

However, there was a decline in women in executive management, showcasing the need to continually provide leadership opportunities for women across Australian Cricket.

Other Management and Total Staff also saw declines due to restructures and recruitment challenges having an impact on overall gender diversity targets.

Therefore, the acceleration of gender diversity in the workforce continues to be a focus area for improvement, particularly for executive management and developing our future leaders.

ON THE RADAR:

- Dedicated female leadership programs to assist in the progression and development of our future leaders.
- The development of the new Australian Cricket strategic plan will continue to accelerate gender equity with workforce diversity as one of the key focus areas.

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

	DIRECTORS	EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT	OTHER MANAGEMENT	TOTAL EMPLOYEES
2017-18	20%	31%	31%	32%
2018-19	26%	34%	29%	34%
2019-20	32%	33%	33%	36%
2020-21	32%	31%	30%	35%
TARGET 2022	MINIMUM 40% REPRESENTATION OF MEN AND WOMEN ACROSS EVERY LEVEL OF THE AUSTRALIAN CRICKET WORKFORCE			



LEADERSHIP



GROW PARTICIPATION SUSTAINABLY

Australian Cricket continues to work towards becoming a truly gender equal sport by providing more opportunities for women and girls to play the game.

The 2020-21 summer saw more girls than ever playing Woolworths Cricket Blast (WWCB) with girls accounting for more than one in five children in our entry level program. It was pleasing to see our tremendous volunteers deliver this growth in what was a challenging year for our community clubs.

The roll out of the first year of *The Next Innings: Accelerating Female Participation* strategy also occurred this season with the ongoing and valued support from Commonwealth Bank and the legacy of the ICC T20 Women's World Cup helping us build a pathway and create better experiences for women and girls.

As part of our new strategy, we have reviewed our KPIs and have made some amendments, which includes moving away from total participation (which included girls taking part in in-school after hour programs) to registered participation. Taking cricket to girls in schools is important to us, however we believe it is important for us to report on girls choosing to play cricket. For this reason, our KPIs below now reflect our new strategy and include overall registered participation, girls in WWCB, and junior girls' club teams.

With the pandemic forcing many community sports into a 'stop/start' season, the community cricket season was particularly impacted in Victoria due to lockdown.

Female registered participation decreased with the estimated COVID impact of 25,000. The cancellation of tournaments and leagues due to the pandemic were felt most acutely in indoor cricket and organised school competitions.

Although COVID meant we saw slight declines in junior girls teams at clubs and the percentage of women and girls registered to play, girls registering for junior cricket and Blast grew by 17.5%.

The upcoming season will be important in accelerating the momentum in girls registering and getting overall participation numbers back on track, however, the possibility of COVID again impacting the season at a community level needs to be taken into consideration.

This summer's series against India followed by The Ashes, the ICC Women's World Cup in New Zealand and cricket's appearance at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham provide us with multiple platforms to build upon our aspirations of ensuring Australians consider cricket to be the sport of choice for girls.

ON THE RADAR:

- Next phase of the Next Innings strategy which includes the learnings from the customer experience research.
- Daughters and Dads Cricket program roll out.
- Social Women's program rolled out nationally, providing more playing opportunities.

	JUNIOR GIRLS' TEAMS AT CLUBS	FEMALE REGISTERED PLAYERS	PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE REGISTERED PLAYERS	GIRLS IN WWCB
2017-18	811	60K	8.5%	9.2K
2018-19	1,012	69K	10.1%	8.5K
2019-20	1,144	76K	10.7%	10.6K
2020-21	1,100	56K	10.4%	13.5K
TARGET 2022	2,500	110K	12.2%	23.2K

A record breaking consecutive one-day wins from the Australian Women's Team continued to inspire and pave the way for the next generation of elite cricketers.

Although the 2020-21 season proved to be a challenging year for Australian Cricket's pathway programs, Australian Cricket remains committed to offering talented athletes a viable professional career, supported by an expansive and structured pathway to bridge playing at a community level with playing for your country.

As part of becoming the *Leading Sport for Women and Girls*, our target is to offer more playing opportunities for female talented athletes than in any other sport.

In this respect, progress for the Elite Talent Pathway is judged by the ongoing expansion and continuous improvement, against both our own high standards and those set by our domestic and international peers.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on competitions, resulting in the postponement of the Women's U19 World Cup, the bi-lateral Australia A and India A Series and the underage National Championships. However, state-based underage pathway programs were conducted with a focus on reaffirming the National Championships in the upcoming season.

With a focus on ensuring the international and domestic seasons were played, Australia's series against New Zealand, the Women's Big Bash League and the Women's National Cricket League were able to proceed as planned as COVID safe events thanks to the efforts from our players, coaches, support staff and employees.

ON THE RADAR:

- Reaffirming pathway programs that were impacted by COVID including an Australia A series against England A, the Under-19 National Championships (scheduled to resume this season) and the Under-16 National Championships which will resume in the 2022-23 season.
- The resumption of the National Performance Squad program after a COVID impacted season.
- A two Test summer. For the first time on the Australian summer calendar, the Australian Women's Team will partake in two Tests – one against India and one against England – highlighting more playing opportunities at an elite level.

2017-18	MORE PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES than domestic and international peers	PAY EQUITY model implemented, and parity in domestic prize money	HIGHEST PAID national women's team (average \$180K)
2018-19	FEMALE National Performance Squad introduced	REINTRODUCTION of U19 international tours	NEW TEAMS and more matches added to national underage championships
2019-20	Introduction of ICC Women's U19 WORLD CUP	First COMBINED Australia and Australia A Tour	Women's T20 Cricket added to the 2022 Commonwealth Games and AUSTRALIA QUALIFIES
2020-21	POSTPONEMENT of U19 World Cup until Jan 2023 as well as 2021 underage National Championships due to COVID	DELIVERED the domestic season through the WBBL and WNCL	IN A COVID WORLD we hosted the New Zealand team and successfully toured New Zealand
TARGET 2022	MORE PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES THAN IN ANY OTHER SPORT		



ELITE TALENT PATHWAY



GROW WOMEN'S ELITE CRICKET

Australian Cricket's focus on growing women's elite cricket combines on-field success with off-field growth which includes building upon the fan base while showcasing an exciting and visible pathway.

Whilst the 2020-21 season provided many challenges to sporting codes across the world, Australian Cricket remained focused on delivering a home series against New Zealand as well as a full Women's Big Bash League season.

The all-conquering Australian Women's Team continued their extraordinary momentum from the ICC T20 World Cup, with a series win over New Zealand, that saw an average linear television audience of 235,563 for the T20Is.

The figure ensured the matches against the White Ferns represented the most-watched September series in four years, despite competing with the late-finishing winter sporting codes.

For the second consecutive cricket season, True North Research revealed the Australian Women's Team was again Australia's favourite team, scoring the highest Benchmark Emotional Connection Score of any national team.

As part of their dominance, the team also kept their #1 world ranking status across both ODIs and T20Is.

From a commercial perspective, this season we welcomed Cadbury, who joined long-time partner Commonwealth Bank, in supporting the Australian Women's Team.

Although there were crowd restrictions throughout the season, both international and WBBL matches successfully delivered COVID-safe events for fans, with the latter all being played in Sydney.

For the second year in a row, a standalone WBBL season saw the league confirm its standing as the fourth most-watched domestic league in Australia (behind only the BBL, AFL and NRL).

The 202,139 simulcast average audience on Seven and Foxtel was the sixth consecutive year of more than 200,000 people watching WBBL matches, while the cumulative WBBL audience reached 4.6 million.

The WBBL|06 Finals series saw a 26.5% increase in cumulative TV audience YoY off the back of moving to primetime finals with the Final audience of 462,940 being the second-highest rating WBBL game ever.

ON THE RADAR:

- Increased WBBL television coverage with 47 matches to be broadcast in WBBL|07. This represents an almost five-fold increase from 10 broadcast matches in WBBL|01.
- A home series against India and England ahead of the rescheduled ICC Women's World Cup in New Zealand in 2022.
- The 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham with Australia's qualification confirmed.

	WBBL STANDALONE ATTENDANCE	WBBL AVERAGE VIEWERSHIP	WORLD RANKING
2017-18	60.6K	224K	#2
2018-19	71.6K	212K	#1
2019-20	60.5K	202K	#1
2020-21	10.9K COVID-safe attendees	202K	#1

TARGET 2022

is the leading women's sports league in the world

is the largest women's sports event ever held in Australia

#1 in all formats

Please note the 2020-21 WBBL average viewership is simulcast matches only to ensure consistency with previous seasons.



WOMEN AND GIRLS AS FANS

As part of Australian Cricket's aspiration to become the *Leading Sport for Women and Girls*, providing opportunities for women and girls to enjoy the game as fans in a welcoming and inclusive environment, is just as pivotal as providing playing opportunities.

Due to the impact of COVID, the percentage of women and girls who attended matches in 2020-21 dropped, which was consistent with our research that indicated women were less likely to return to any type of live events post-COVID compared to men.

While women and girls represented 54% of attendees at women's internationals (up from 45% from 2019-20) and 56% of attendees at WBBL matches (up from 52% from 2019-20), a decrease was recorded at the more crowded men's matches.

Men's internationals and the KFC Big Bash League play a pivotal role in advocating for gender diversity across fans. There was a decrease in the representation of women at men's matches with BBL at 42% (down from 44% in 2019-20), Men's Test at 21% (down from 28% in 2019-20) and Men's T20I and ODI at 22% (down from 30% in 2019-20). This highlights the importance of gender diversity advocacy for the season ahead.

This also reaffirms the importance of understanding and differentiating the interests of women and girls as sports fans and fans interested in women's sport. While these two groups can overlap, it's important for Australian Cricket to understand how COVID has impacted the decision-making of both of these groups, so further research needs to be conducted.

Gender diversity in viewership remained consistent. The BBL (39.8%) and men's Test matches (37.7%) drew the most diverse audiences while the Women's ODI and T20I followed with 36.3% and the WBBL on 35.8%.

In 2021 cricket maintained the fourth highest number of passionate fans amongst women and girls across Australian sports with 12.7% of women proclaiming to be avid fans across both the 19-20 and 20-21 seasons.

ON THE RADAR:

- New visual identity and campaign related imagery with a family-friendly lens for WBBL.
- Continue to grow influencer strategy that speaks to women that aren't super fans.
- Continue showcasing gender inclusivity within cricket.

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

	TOTAL ATTENDEES	AVERAGE VIEWERSHIP	NUMBER OF FEMALE PASSIONATE FANS
2017-18	~39%	36-38%	#4
2018-19	38%	34-39%	#4
2019-20	39%	32-39%	#4
2020-21	35%	35-39%	#4

TARGET 2022

AT LEAST 40% WOMEN AND GIRLS

AT LEAST 40% WOMEN AND GIRLS

#1

Please note in previous years we have also reported on domestic digital unique audience. This metric has been removed from this edition due to data being unavailable for the 2020-21 season.



CRICKET
AUSTRALIA



CRICKET
ACT



CRICKET
NSW



CRICKET
VICTORIA



QUEENSLAND
CRICKET



SACA



CRICKET
TASMANIA



CRICKET
VICTORIA



WA
CRICKET



ICC
MEN'S T20
WORLD CUP
AUSTRALIA 2022