



Tanya Plibersek MP



Minister for Housing
Minister for the Status of Women

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY AT THE CRICKET WORLD CUP

The Australian Government and Cricket Australia today celebrated International Women's Day (IWD) at the 2009 Women's Cricket World Cup match between Australia's Southern Stars and New Zealand at North Sydney Oval.

IWD on March 8 was first celebrated 98 years ago in Europe, and is now an annual occasion for women's achievements to be celebrated around the world.

"International Women's Day is an opportunity for women to celebrate and reflect how far we have come, and how far we still have to go," Minister for the Status of Women, Tanya Plibersek said.

"One important challenge for the Government is raising the profile and participation of women in sport.

"Today I am pleased to announce increased funding for women in sport in 2009-2010.

"In addition to the \$400,000 base funding the Office for Women and the Australian Sports Commission collectively contributes to the Sports Leadership Grants for Women, the Government will commit an additional \$120,000 in the next financial year, bringing the total amount of grant funding available to \$520,000.

"The grants provide women and organisations with funding for accredited training and development in coaching, officiating, governance and sports management and a chance to play a more active role in sports leadership.

"This increased commitment will provide the resources to enhance the program to include Sports Leadership Scholarships for Women.

"These scholarships are aimed at providing a pathway for women in sport to attain prominent leadership roles and management skills within their sporting organisations at state/territory and national level over a three year period.

"Women should be able to participate in every facet of our lives, and IWD is an opportunity to encourage women to see the opportunities not the barriers to achieving their goals and dreams," Ms Plibersek said.

Cricket Australia Chairman, Jack Clarke, said the first match of Australia's World Cup campaign was the perfect setting to celebrate IWD.

"Now is an exciting time for women's cricket in Australia," Clarke said.

"Australia has the chance to defend their World Cup on home soil, with a series of matches being held around Australia during March.

"We will take on India, England, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, West Indies, South Africa and Pakistan in the long tournament showcasing the best female cricketers from around the world.

"Cricket is Australia's fastest growing female sport - in the past five years, women's participation numbers have risen by about 11.5 per cent each year, with over 61,000 women and girls playing in Australian cricket competitions and programs in 2006-07."

"We are confident that staging the ICC Women's World Cup in Australia will help to further encourage Australian girls and women to be exciting about cricket, either as players or as spectators."

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