

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Friday 23 February 2018

### **CEOs united in pursuit of gender equality in the sports sector**

Members of the Male Champions of Change (MCC) Sport met at the Richmond Football Club recently to confirm their shared gender equality priorities for 2018, launch their latest [Progress Report](#) and announce that the CEOs of Netball Australia, Golf Australia, Rowing Australia and Geelong Football Club will also join the group from 2018.

Established in 2015, MCC Sport now has 17 members representing the key sports in terms of economic contribution, participation and influence in the Australian landscape, with a combined ~7k employees, 9m+ participants, 1m+ members and 7.5m+ social media followers.

MCC Founder Elizabeth Broderick says the group is united in its pursuit of gender equality in the sport sector, leading change within their organisations, their respective sporting codes, and collectively at a community level.

“This group recognises the immense economic, cultural, social and health benefits of having more women and girls involved in all aspects of sport in Australia – from the grass roots, to elite athletes, sports administration and governing bodies.

“The advances since 2015 have been extraordinary. In just the last year we’ve seen ground-breaking pay equity approaches for leading cricketers in Australia; the establishment of elite-level women’s competitions and teams across a number of sporting codes; and the appointment of senior women to previously male-dominated Chair and CEO positions in the sector. And while there is some way to go, I am so heartened by the significant work underway to attract, engage and advance women in our sporting environments,” Elizabeth said.

Collective outcomes for the group in 2017 included:

- Developed a practical guide to workforce flexibility tailored for sporting organisations. It aims to support take-up of workforce flexibility policies in the sector. Some 70% of MCC Sport organisations have implemented, or are in the process of implementing, fully flexible workplaces.
- Worked together to create more gender-balanced, diverse and inclusive ‘public faces’ for their organisations. This included auditing key communication channels to improve the way women and girls are represented and engaged. This work led to a new MCC report [Test the Messages you Project](#), released in late 2017 providing practical guidance on how to create a gender-balanced and inclusive public presence for organisations.
- Strengthened the [MCC Women in Sport Sponsorship Program](#), where 65 ‘high potential’ women leaders are matched with and actively sponsored by senior executives from across the sports sector.
- Supported the [Panel Pledge](#) to only participate on panels if senior women from the sector are included.
- Commenced work developing a “Pathway to Pay Equity” for elite women athletes.

The Progress Report also details each organisation’s year-on-year performance increasing women’s representation in corporate, administrative and sports management positions towards gender balance, together with MCC Sport’s 2018 priorities focused on: developing more respectful and inclusive sporting cultures; advancing more women into leadership positions; and developing pathways to pay equity for elite women athletes. <ENDS>

#### **For more information please contact:**

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Quotes from New CEOs joining the Male Champions of Change Sport program

**Australian Rugby CEO Raelene Castle joins as a Special Advisor, replacing founding member, Bill Pulver:**

*"I am both honoured and excited by the prospect of working with the Male Champions of Change Sports Group as a Special Advisor. Rugby Australia as a sporting group is in a powerful position to influence the ongoing debate on the issue of gender equality and I believe that we have the ability to actively promote and facilitate meaningful and positive change. I have seen the challenges first hand and I have a personal passion to ensure that the gender equality discussion is at the forefront across all aspects of our society."*

**New Carlton Football Club CEO, Cain Liddle will replace Stephen Trigg:**

*"There has been a significant change in the sports landscape since the Male Champions of Change Program commenced. The pioneers of this program should be very proud of their achievements in building respectful and inclusive environments across the clubs and leagues they represent. I am looking forward to making a contribution to Carlton Football Club's continued focus on building a gender equal sports industry."*

**Stephen Pitt, CEO of Golf Australia:**

*"We've commenced detailed work to strengthen the major underpinning pillars of women's golf – membership, participation, leadership, coaching and high-performance. We believe there is much we can learn, share and act on collectively with the MCC group."*

**Marne Fechner, CEO of Netball Australia joins as a Special Advisor:**

*"The MCC Sport program offers a fantastic opportunity to continue to lift overall participation of women in sport and greater success at elite levels."*

*"There is so much we can collectively do to support the development of strong, healthy and confident girls and women in Australia. We are delighted to be working collaboratively with our colleagues to advance gender equality, pay equity for women athletes while at the same time supporting more women into leadership positions in the sector."*

**Ian Robson, CEO of Rowing Australia:**

*"Involvement in the MCC program reinforces our focus on gender equality in rowing. It backs up recent investments in our high-performance program to ensure equal resources for our top male and female athletes and the opening of the Hancock Prospecting Women's National Training Centre in Penrith last year."*

**Brian Cook, CEO of Geelong Football Club:**

*"Our club has always been about embracing diversity and inclusion. In recent years we have further demonstrated our values by developing elite women's football teams and growing the diversity within our staff and management. I look forward to working with the Male Champions of Change to continue to build a sports sector where women can have thriving careers - on and off the field."*

The current MCC Sport membership is:

<b>Mark Anderson</b> CEO, Collingwood Football Club (Former CEO, Swimming Australia)	<b>Elizabeth Broderick</b> Convenor, MCC Sport	<b>Raelene Castle (Special Advisor)</b> CEO, Rugby Australia
<b>Brian Cook</b> CEO, Geelong Football Club	<b>Marne Fechner (Special Advisor)</b> CEO, Netball Australia	<b>Matt Finnis</b> CEO, St Kilda Football Club
<b>Brendon Gale</b> CEO, Richmond Football Club	<b>David Gallop</b> CEO, Football Federation Australia	<b>Todd Greenberg</b> CEO, National Rugby League
<b>Cain Liddle</b> CEO, Carlton Football Club	<b>Anthony Moore</b> CEO, Basketball Australia	<b>Kate Palmer (Special Advisor)</b> CEO, Australian Sports Commission
<b>Stephen Pitt</b> CEO, Golf Australia	<b>Ian Robson</b> CEO, Rowing Australia	<b>James Sutherland</b> CEO, Cricket Australia
<b>Giles Thompson</b> CEO, Racing Victoria	<b>Craig Tiley</b> CEO, Tennis Australia	<b>TBC</b> CEO, Swimming Australia

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