



Supporting coverage of under-represented sports

Many sports that occupy a central place in the Australian sporting landscape struggle to secure consistent coverage in the mainstream media. The under-represented sports grant, which forms part of the Government's Broadcasting and Content Reform Package, is an important step in addressing this coverage imbalance to enable sporting bodies to lift participation rates and maximise growth.

The Australian Government will provide \$30 million to Fox Sports from 2017–18 to 2020–21 to support television and online coverage of sports that receive low or no broadcast exposure: women's sports, niche sports, and those sports that command high levels of community involvement and participation.

Fox Sports' deliverables in 2017–18

Fox Sports has provided its 2017–18 Performance Report to the Department of Communications and the Arts. The report outlines Fox Sports' performance against the requirements set out in the funding agreement, including the sports that benefited from funding, breakdown of expenditure, and coverage for the selected sports.

In summary, the report shows:

- more than 4,800 hours of content covered by the funding agreement was broadcast during the 2017–18 financial year, including around 1,600 live hours
- it exceeded the forecast broadcast hours in the 2017–18 Strategic Roadmap by 24 per cent
- total coverage represented a 39 per cent increase on broadcast hours during the 2016–17 financial year
- 42 different sport competitions benefited from funding, with 26 new programs or events receiving coverage or benefiting from grant funding
- Fox Sports achieved all of its key performance indicators for the 2017–18 financial year.

Success stories in 2017–18

Fox Sports has worked closely with a range of sports bodies and rights holders to establish partnerships to assist the sports beyond just improving their coverage. Some of these include:

- Acquiring the rights and providing broadcast coverage for the Women's National Basketball League (WNBL). Fox Sports also provided media training to players, and established 'Project Leap', a team of women from different business functions who worked with the WNBL to produce broadcast coverage and on-air promotions, assist with marketing and publicity as well as improve the WNBL's digital assets. This support has enabled the WNBL to secure Chemist Warehouse as a naming rights sponsor for next three years commencing with the 2018–19 season.
- Providing a pathway for female golfers to participate in competitions forming part of the Ladies European Tour. Amy Walsh, one of Australia's best up and coming female golfers, was the first golfer to benefit from this relationship and was able to participate in the 2017 and 2018 LET Thailand Open.



- Securing a new partnership with the International Hockey Federation to broadcast its premier international events. This partnership will ensure that hockey's exposure will increase outside of the Olympic cycle.

Sports supported in 2018–19

Fox Sports will provide enhanced coverage of 11 different sports in 2018–19 (outlined below). It is expected Fox Sports will broadcast around 1,300 hours of live coverage, and around 3,000 hours of coverage in total, of women's, niche and emerging sports.

Details of the sports that will be supported through the grant in 2018–19:

Sport	Competition	Anticipated coverage increase in 2018–19*
Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W-League • FFA Cup • Tournament of Nations • Matildas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live: 100%; Delayed: 38.95%; Total: 55.38% • Live: 28%; Delayed: -21.25%; Total: -9.52% • New inclusion in grant allocation in 2018–19 (no coverage in 2016–17) • Live: -25%; Delayed: 35.71%; Total: 13.64%
Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBBL • Australian Women's Cricket Team • ICC Women's World Twenty20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New inclusion in grant allocation in 2018–19 (Fox Sports anticipates a 100% increase in live coverage in 2018–19) • New inclusion in grant allocation in 2018–19 (Fox Sports anticipates a 100% increase in live coverage in 2018–19) • Biannual event last held in 2015-16 (as such no coverage in 2016–17 or 2017–18, however Fox Sports anticipates a 100% increase in live coverage in comparison to the last event)
Rugby Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Super W • Rugby Sevens (Men's) • Rugby Seven (Women's) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No coverage in 2016–17, similar increase in coverage as 2017–18 • Live: 6.32%; Delayed: -37.74%; Total: -21.26% • Live: 12%; Delayed: -56%; Total: -33.33%
Rugby League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's Tests and State of Origin • NRL Touch Premiership • League Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live: No change; Delayed: 280%; Total: 340% • No coverage in 2016–17, similar increase in coverage as 2017–18 • Live: 57.14%; Delayed: 71.19%; Total: 69.70%
Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road National Championships • National Road Series • National Track Championships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live: 220%; Delayed: -57.14%; Total: -34.43% • New in 2018–19 (no coverage in 2016–17 or 2017–18) • New in 2018–19 (no coverage in 2016–17 or 2017–18)
Lawn Bowls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Open (Men's and Women's) • Australian Premier League • The Bowls Show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live: -33.33%; Delayed: 47.27%; Total: 15.38% (across Australian Open, Australian Premier League and The Bowls Show)



Sport	Competition	Anticipated coverage increase in 2018–19*
Surfing	• World Surfing League (Men's and Women's)	• Live: No change; Delayed: -0.96%; Total: -0.38%
	• Australian Boardriders Battle	• Live: 5%; Delayed: -47.83%; Total: -31.82%
	• mySURF.TV / Australian Surf Content	• No coverage in 2016–17, similar increase in coverage as 2017–18
Life Saving	• Ocean6 Series	• Live: -62.5%; Delayed: -0.50%; Total: -2.87%
Basketball	• WNBL	• No coverage in 2016–17, similar increase in coverage as 2017–18
	• FIBA Women's World Cup	• Quadrennial event last held 2014–15 (as such no coverage in 2016–17 or 2017–18)
	• FIBA Basketball World Cup Qualifiers (Asia)	• Quadrennial event last held 2014–15 (as such no coverage in 2016–17 or 2017–18)
Hockey	• FIH Hockey World Cup (Men's and Women's)	• New in 2018–19 (no coverage in 2016–17 or 2017–18)
	• FIH Hockey Pro-League (Men's and Women's)	• New in 2018–19 (no coverage in 2016–17 or 2017–18)
Gymnastics	• Rhythmic Gymnastics World Championships	• No coverage in 2016–17
	• Artistic Gymnastics World Championships	• No coverage in 2016–17
	• Trampoline / Tumbling Gymnastics World Championships	• New in 2018–19 (no coverage in 2016–17 or 2017–18)
	• Apparatus World Cup	• Live: 180%; Delayed: 500%; Total: 436%
	• Australian Championships	• Live: No change; Delayed: 160%; Total: 240%

*Under the funding agreement, the increase in coverage is assessed against the coverage in the 2016–2017 Financial Year. The rationale for this is that many sports events are cyclical and happen every few years and competition structures change, meaning not all years will show an increase from the previous years in terms of broadcast hours. Comparing coverage against 2016–2017 Financial Year coverage more accurately shows how the grant has provided a meaningful increase from the pre-grant period.

Sport selection

Fox Sports, in consultation with the relevant sporting bodies, in accordance with the requirements of the funding agreement, will determine the competitions and events that will receive enhanced coverage. A governance team established within Fox Sports will oversee, review and assess the sports to be funded each year and report on performance.

Benefits of the program

The increased media coverage that selected sports will receive under the program is expected to deliver a range of benefits for consumers and sports bodies alike including:

- greater media exposure will lift the profile of female athletes and produce role models for the next generation
- increased media coverage for sports that have a history of low or no broadcast exposure is expected to boost crowd attendance, community engagement and participation
- greater media exposure will provide sporting bodies with opportunities to secure commercial support, sponsorships and strengthen long term financial viability.

