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Executive Summary

Increasing the number of women in leadership roles across the community - in government, in workplaces, in sporting organisations and in other community activities - benefits individuals, organisations and the community as a whole.

The *Women on State Sporting Organisation Boards Report* captures and tracks annual progress of gender balance and female representation on Tasmanian State Sporting Organisation (SSO) boards funded by the Tasmanian Government's Sport and Recreation State Grants Program (SRSGP) and specific purpose funding agreements. The first report was produced in 2009 and has been reproduced annually over the past eight years (2014-2021). The 2021 results show continued positive improvement in gender diversity on SSO Boards and their performance comparative to National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) is well advanced.

In 2021, the proportion of women on Tasmanian State Sporting Organisation boards was 45.66 per cent, an increase of 1.16 per cent since 2020.

Since 2009, female representation on SSO boards has grown from 34.6 per cent to 45.66 per cent - a total increase of 11.06 per cent across a twelve-year period. The 4.79 per cent increase from 2019 to 2021 accounts close to half of the total improved diversity since 2009 and represents a period of rapid improvement that coincides with the introduction of Board Gender Diversity targets for recipients of funding under the SRSGP.

2021 Highlights

- On average, Tasmanian SSOs have achieved the target of 40 per cent female representation for the third consecutive year.
- It is the second time that all four tiers of SSOs (based on reported registered membership) funded through the SRSGP achieved the 40 per cent target for female representation. Prior to 2020, the distribution across tiers was varied and consistent results above 40 per cent had not been achieved.
- The average number of female SSO board members per Board was 3.33, with best practice showing at least three female members is critical for effective representation with a capacity to influence decisions and engage in leadership.
- In 2021, 16.7 per cent of SSO boards had less than 40 per cent female representatives, down from 36.67 per cent in 2020. Two of these boards are funded through the SRSGP and it is noted that since the point in time the data was collected both these boards have met the 40 per cent benchmark. Two organisations funded outside the SRSGP have less than 40 per cent female board representation and one has less than 40 per cent male representation.
- The number of female SSO Chairs has risen to 33.33 per cent, exceeding the representation of female NSO Chairs (26.67 per cent).

The 2021 results indicate good progress compared to previous reports; however, there is still more work to be done:

- The proportion of females represented as president or chair of an SSO was 33.3 per cent, This means only one in three boards has a female chair.
- Four SSO boards had less than three females indicating a small proportion of boards have an insufficient number of females to achieve a gender balanced board. Also in 2021, one board had less than three male members indicating a small proportion of boards faced challenges in attracting male Directors. This indicates the need for ongoing support to boards to attract and retain gender diverse board membership.

It is recommended that Sport and Recreation:

1. Encourage organisations yet to reach 40 per cent gender diversity to address board diversity. Sixty per cent of boards that did not meet the 40 per cent gender diversity target are funded outside of the SRSGP program which requires applicants to meet board diversity targets to be eligible under the program guidelines.
2. Maintain gender diversity target of 40 per cent for SRSGP funded organisations.
3. Continue to support organisations to embed gender diversity in board structures through constitutional and/or policy and by-law amendments that specify a board composition with a minimum of 40 per cent of each gender.
4. Continue to monitor and report board diversity annually to enable evaluation of current and future government initiatives and ensure transparency and accountability in achieving greater representation of women in leadership of Tasmanian sporting organisations.

Introduction

The Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) has consistently stated that the fundamental argument for increasing gender diversity on boards is that diversity improves the capacity of a board to deliver value to an organisation and that there is a demonstrable link between greater diversity and organisational performance (AICD, 2015).

At a corporate level, the AICD set a target for all ASX 200 companies to voluntarily reach 30 per cent female representation on company boards by 2018. After a four-year campaign, the AICD announced in December 2019 that the 30 per cent target had been reached. In 2022, 34.5 per cent of ASX200 directors were female. This figure was consistent for ASX100 and ASX50 (34.6 per cent) companies with ASX20 companies slightly higher at 36 per cent. (AICD, 2022).

The AICD now encourages all organisations to embrace a 40:40:20 model of gender diversity, where boards have at least 40 per cent women directors and 40 per cent men directors, as good practice (AICD, 2021).

In 2009, the Tasmanian Government delivered the inaugural *Women on State Sporting Organisation Boards Report* which found that women were under-represented on the boards of SSOs. Subsequent annual reports from 2014 confirmed that this trend was continuing.

Improvements in female representation over the past three years constitute close to half of the gains made since 2009, with a large gain in 2020 of 3.63 per cent and further consolidation of the growth in 2021 with an increase of 1.16 per cent.

Background

The evidence-base for gender equality is clear - improved productivity and economic growth, increased organisational performance, enhanced ability to attract and retain talent, and improved organisational reputation (Australian Women in Sport Advisory Group, 2020).

The Tasmanian Government, through the *Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2020-2025: Continuing our progress*, is committed to action to break down the barriers that produce inequities for women and girls. A component of this is the *Women on Boards Strategy 2021-2025* which seeks to increase female participation on Tasmanian Government boards to 50 per cent and 40 per cent female chairperson positions by July 2022. (CSR, 2021).

The Tasmanian Government's *Women on Boards Strategy 2021-2025* identifies four focus areas for action to encourage greater representation of women on across Government, Private and not-for-profit sectors. The four focus areas include strengthening pathways, creating contemporary systems and processes, influencing change and monitoring equity.

Recognising the link between sports governance, business capability and the achievement of high performance success, Sport Australia is committed to working with NSOs to adopt best practice governance principles across sport. In 2002 Sport Australia released its Sports Governance Principles, which were updated in 2007 and again in 2012. These principles provide best practice governance guidelines for sporting organisations to operate under.

In conjunction with these, in 2013, Sport Australia released its Mandatory Sports Governance Principles (the Principles) for the seven highest funded NSOs which included elements of the 2012 Sports Governance Principles that were considered critical to good governance.

The Principles were updated in 2015 with the number of sports subject to them increasing. Sport Australia funding to these sports is dependent on the Principles being implemented with failure to do so potentially resulting in a proportion of funding being withheld.

Principle 2.6: Gender balance on boards states that all NSOs should seek to reach the target of forty per cent representation of females on their boards (ASC, 2015).

Sport Australia has recently undertaken a body of work to update its Sports Governance Principles to deliver a resource that is applicable to the whole sport sector, not just NSOs. These evolved principles were released in July 2020.

In 2015, CSR developed Governance Guidelines for State Sporting Organisations to assist Tasmanian SSOs develop quality governance policies and procedures. These guidelines are aligned with the Principles and provide non-binding principles for all SSOs. Principle 2.8 of the guidelines state that SSOs should aim to have an equal gender balance on boards.

In 2019, a review of the State Sport and Recreation Grants Program (SRSGP) eligibility criteria lead to the introduction of gender diversity targets for funding recipients. Under the new requirements, SSOs are required to have a gender diverse Board with no less than 40 per cent representation from any one gender (sports operating under a unitary model are exempt). The requirement was phased in over the 2020, 2021 and 2022 SRSGP programs. To be eligible for funding in 2022, SSOs had to have no less than 40 per cent of any one gender or have an organisational plan in place to achieve 40 per cent over the course of twelve months.

Sport and Recreation in the Department of State Growth, works actively towards achieving and sustaining the representation of women in the sport and recreation sector through a range of activities including:

- Leading and supporting State Sporting Organisations to adopt governance structures that promote gender diversity and monitoring of the progress of the sector towards achieving gender diversity targets.
- Promoting of the Tasmanian Government Board Diversity Governance Scholarship Program offered in partnership with the AICD to support women in the sport and recreation sector to develop board-ready skills and foster emerging female leaders.
- Promoting the National Governance Principles for Australian Sport developed by Sport Australia.
- Monitoring and reporting on female representation on SSO Boards to provide relevant and up-to-date data on diversity in the sector and progress towards achieving 40 per cent gender representation over the course of twelve months.

Objectives

The *Women on State Sporting Organisation Boards Report* has four specific objectives:

1. **To report female representation on Tasmanian SSO boards.**
2. **To capture the percentage of females who chair or are presidents of Tasmanian SSO boards.**
3. **To compare corresponding NSO board membership to that of the Tasmanian SSOs in the study.**
4. **To provide a comparison of the results with previous studies.**

Methodology

The report profiles Tasmanian SSOs who are funded, or have previously been funded, through the SRSGP along with their national counterparts.

This study replicates research undertaken in a 2009 pilot study and by CSR annually since 2014.

Although the report has been produced on an annual basis since 2014, the timeframe for data collection has previously been ad-hoc and inconsistent between years. Since 2017, data for the report is collected in December and reflects the board composition of organisations at that point in time.

Organisations included in the report

Within the sport and recreation sector, there are three primary organisational structures; federated, unified and one management. Within a federated structure, the SSO is a member of the NSO, operating as a separate entity with its own board of directors. While the NSO may set the strategic objectives for the sport as a whole, the SSO is responsible for making decisions about how the sport operates within its individual state/territory.

A unified governance structure involves SSOs operating as a branch of the NSO. Finances and other services are centrally pooled in this model. Within a unified structure there may be a state/territory level committee or advisory board that provides non-binding local guidance to the national board but has no legal responsibilities.

A one management structure is a hybrid between a federated and a unified model. Within this structure, SSOs are still governed separately but a centralised services and management structure supports the organisation.

Until 2016, the Women on State Sporting Organisation Boards report has compared data on all SRS GP funded organisations, including sports operating under a unified model with no board of management in Tasmania. These sports were included in the NSO data with no comparative SSO data.

This report does not include sports that operate under a unified model that are managed by a national board. Specifically, this report does not include data on the Australian Sailing, Special Olympics Australia, AusCycling (Cycling, Mountain Bike and BMX), Australian Football League, Touch Football Australia, or Confederation of Australian Motor Sport boards.

Sports operating under a federated governance structure, or a one management model are included in this report at both state and national level.

Limitations

Due to the frequency of movement on the volunteer boards of the organisations involved in this study, it is acknowledged the accuracy of the information is limited to the point in time it was collected. It is further acknowledged that the NSO data is based only off information on the website so there is the possibility that it is not an accurate representation of the organisation at that point in time, depending how frequently the website is updated.

The original study conducted in 2009 provided SSO comparisons based on their funding tier within the SRS GP. The SRS GP was reviewed in 2012 and an additional tier level was introduced modifying the program from three to four tier levels. Consequently, the 2009 study cannot provide comparison data for the tier three and four SSOs profiled in this report.

While the report makes a comparison of data over time, it is important to note that this is not an exact comparison as the organisations included in the report have changed over this time with the addition of new organisations funded by CSR and the removal of organisations operating under a unified structure.

Another consideration when comparing tier level data is the movement of SSOs between tiers. Appendix A details a full list of sports included in this report.

It should be noted that in 2019, the required registered membership numbers across the four tier levels increased, which may have contributed to some movement from the 2018 report. (In 2019, five SSOs moved

down a tier level, one moved up a tier level and one new SSO entered the SRSGP). The full list of SSOs, tier levels and movement between tiers in 2021 is detailed in Appendix A.

Results

Table I presents data collected in 2021 from SSOs and NSOs. There were 219 board members across 30 SSO boards. One hundred of these board members were female, equating to 45.66 per cent.

There were 236 NSO board members with 109 females, 46.19 per cent.

Table I: 2021 board composition of SSOs and NSOs

	Tier One		Tier Two		Tier Three		Tier Four		All	
	SSO	NSO	SSO	NSO	SSO	NSO	SSO	NSO	SSO	NSO
Total number of organisations	8	8	6	6	7	7	9	9	30	30
Total board members	61	66	45	52	52	54	61	64	219	236
Board vacancies	4	0	2	0	4	1	1	0	11	1
Average members per board	7.63	8.25	7.50	8.67	7.43	7.71	6.78	7.11	7.30	7.87
Number of female board members	26	30	18	25	26	28	30	26	100	109
Percentage of female board members	42.62%	45.45%	40.00%	48.08%	50.00%	51.85%	49.18%	40.63%	45.66%	46.19%
Average number of women per board	3.25	3.75	2.50	4.17	3.71	4.00	3.33	2.89	3.33	3.63
Number of female presidents/chairs	3	2	1	1	3	2	3	2	10	7
Percentage of female presidents/chairs	37.50%	25.00%	16.67%	16.67%	42.86%	28.57%	33.33%	22.22%	33.33%	23.33%

SSO Board Membership

As seen in Table 2, the average number of SSO board members remained relatively stable in 2021.

Table 2: Average number SSO board members 2009 – 2021

Year	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	All SSOs
2009	7.67	8.67	7.86	-	8.14
2014	7.36	7.75	8.6	9.0	8.13
2015	7.73	8.0	9.0	8.22	8.18
2016	8.0	6.4	9.88	8.33	8.31
2017	7.56	6.86	9.22	6.5	7.68
2018	6.9	6.6	8.54	6.6	7.45
2019	7.56	6.67	8.86	6.0	7.19
2020	7.67	7.0	8.5	6.22	7.27
2021	7.63	7.50	7.43	6.78	7.30

In 2021, the average number of SSO board members ranged by 0.85 across the four tiers. On average SSO boards met the good governance standard of between five and nine directors.

As seen in Figure 1, three SSOs had more than nine directors and one had less than five directors, with 87 per cent of SSO's operating within the recommended parameters of a minimum of five and a maximum of nine directors. These figures remain unchanged from 2020.

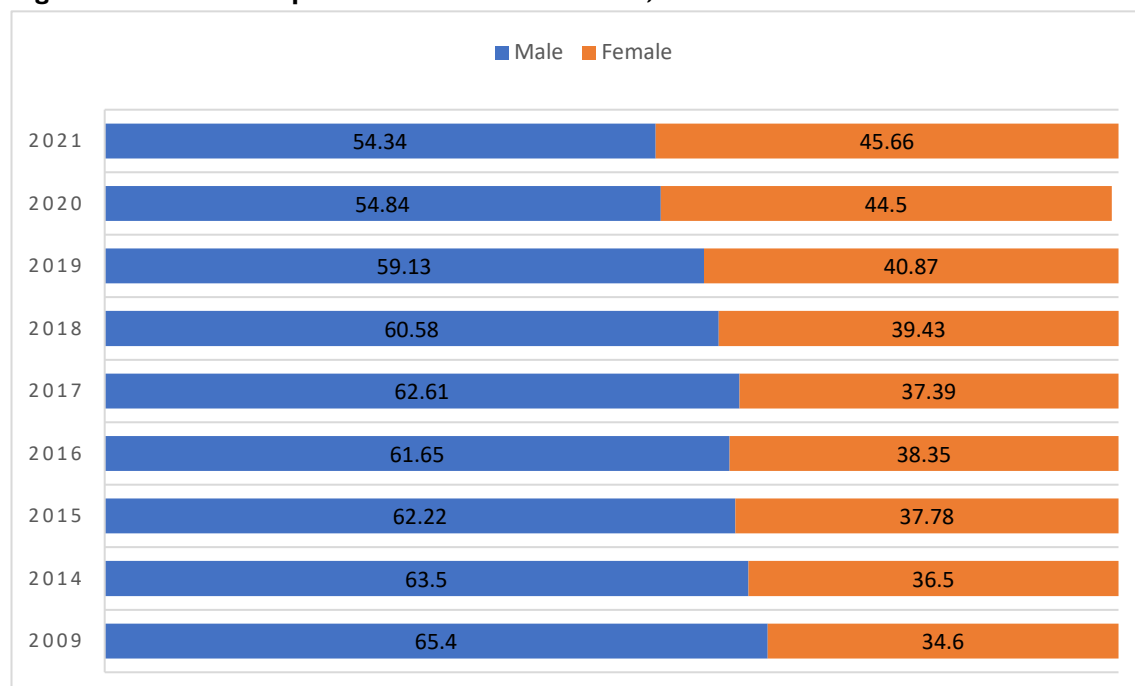
Figure 1: SSO Board adherence to good governance recommendation of 5-9 members



Gender Composition of SSO Boards

As shown in Figure 2, female representation on Tasmanian SSO boards was 45.66 per cent in 2021 and has increased 1.16 per cent since 2020 (44.50 per cent) and 11.06 per cent overall (from 2009).

Figure 2: Gender Composition of SSO Boards 2009, 2014 – 2021



In 2021, female representation on SSO boards has continued an upward trend (1.16 per cent), although growth is lower than the highest annual growth achieved in 2020 (3.63 per cent).

Table 3: Composition of SSO boards from 2014-2021 and variance between each year

Year	Male (%)	Female (%)	Change in female representation from previous year (%)
2014	63.5	36.5	N/A
2015	62.22	37.78	1.28
2016	61.65	38.35	0.57
2017	62.61	37.39	-0.96
2018	60.58	39.43	2.04
2019	59.13	40.87	1.44
2020	55.5	44.5	3.63
2021	54.34	45.66	1.16
Average			1.31

Board Gender Composition – Critical Mass

Johanne Adriaanse (2014) argues that a critical mass of female board members is necessary to achieve changes within a sporting culture. In her study into Australian NSOs, Adriaanse found that the presence of a minimum of three women on a board was a primary condition to advance gender equal governance.

Table 4 shows the average number of female members on SSO boards in 2021 was 3.33 which has increased since 2020 and is the highest recorded number since data was collected in 2009.

Table 4: SSO board composition comparison 2009 – 2021

Year	Total Members	Male Members	Female Members
2009	8.14	5.32	2.82
2014	8.13	5.16	2.97
2015	8.18	5.09	3.09
2016	8.31	5.12	3.19
2017	7.68	4.81	2.87
2018	7.45	4.52	2.94
2019	7.19	4.25	2.94
2020	7.27	4.03	3.23
2021	7.37	3.97	3.33

Additional studies supporting critical mass theory have also shown three women are required to have a significant voice and achieve greater organisational effectiveness (UN Women, 2018). As seen below, Figure 3 shows the breakdown of those SSO boards who are operating with a critical mass of females. Thirteen per cent of SSO boards have two or less females. It should also be noted that seven per cent of organisations have less than three males indicating that gender diversity needs to be a continued focus (figure 4).

Figure 3: Proportion of SSO boards operating with critical mass of females

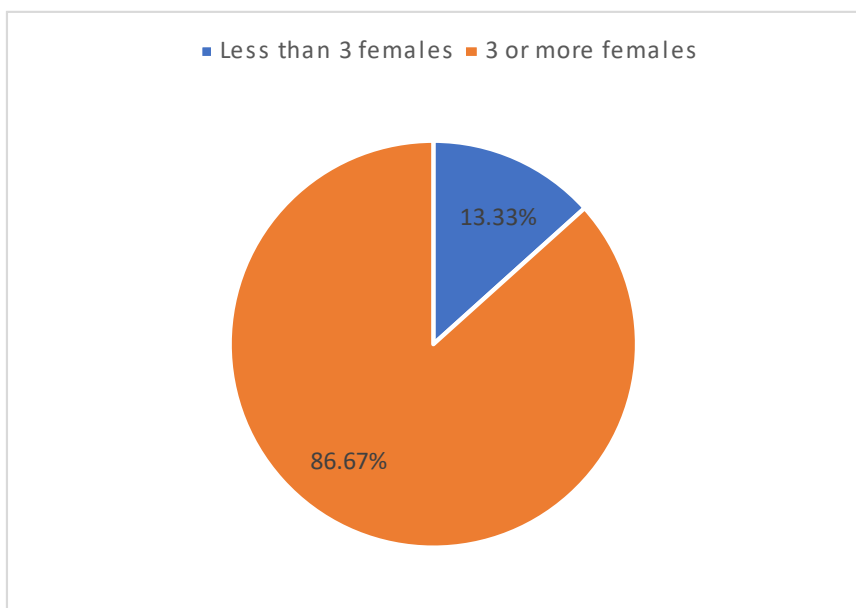
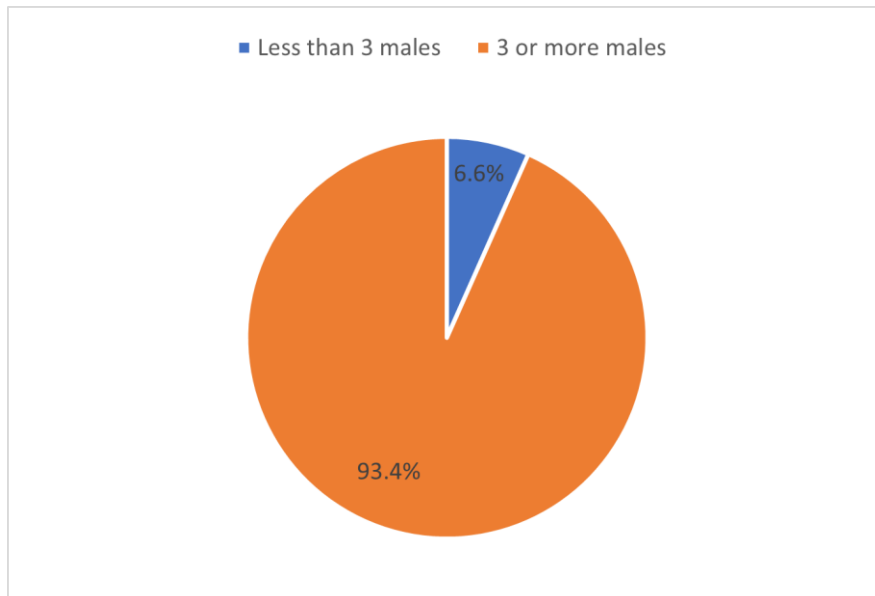


Figure 4: Proportion of SSO boards operating with critical mass of males



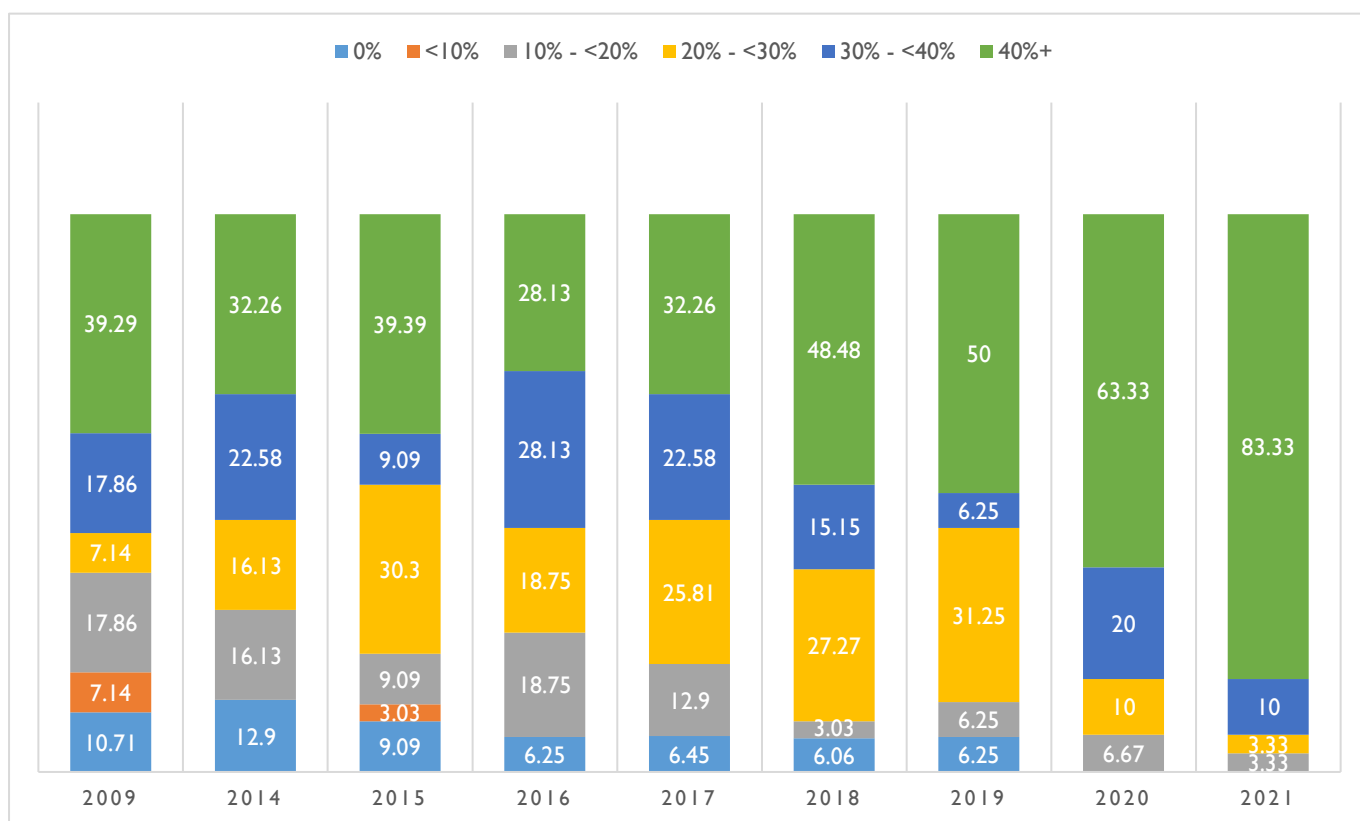
Distribution of SSO Female Board Members

A growing and compelling body of work has reinforced that gender equity on boards positively effects an organisation's performance, productivity and bottom line. Supporting Adriaanse's 2014 findings that a critical mass is required to have a cultural influence on a board, the accompanying guidelines suggest:

- 10 per cent of total board representation is tokenism;
- 20 per cent total board representation means a voice is present;
- 30 per cent total board representation means a voice or position will be heard; and
- 40 per cent total board representation brings about real influence and involvement.

As illustrated in Figure 5 below, 83.33 per cent of Tasmanian SSOs had 40 per cent or greater female representation at board level in 2021. This is a 20 per cent increase from 2020 findings and a considerable increase from previous years. 2020 was the first year that all boards had female representation.

Figure 5: Distribution of female representation on SSO boards 2009-2021



Gender Comparison of SSO Boards by Tier

As shown in Figure 6, the gender composition of SSO boards in 2021 was 54.34 per cent male and 45.66 per cent female. Across the four tiers, gender composition varied by 10 per cent.

Tier three SSO boards continue to record the highest female representation at 50 per cent and tier two SSOs had the lowest female representation at 40 per cent. In 2020 tier one SSOs had the lowest female representation also at 40.58 per cent.

In 2021, all SSO tiers had at least 40 per cent average female representation – a continuation of female representation on all tiers of SSO boards that was first achieved in 2020.

Figure 6: 2021 Gender Composition of SSO Boards by Tier

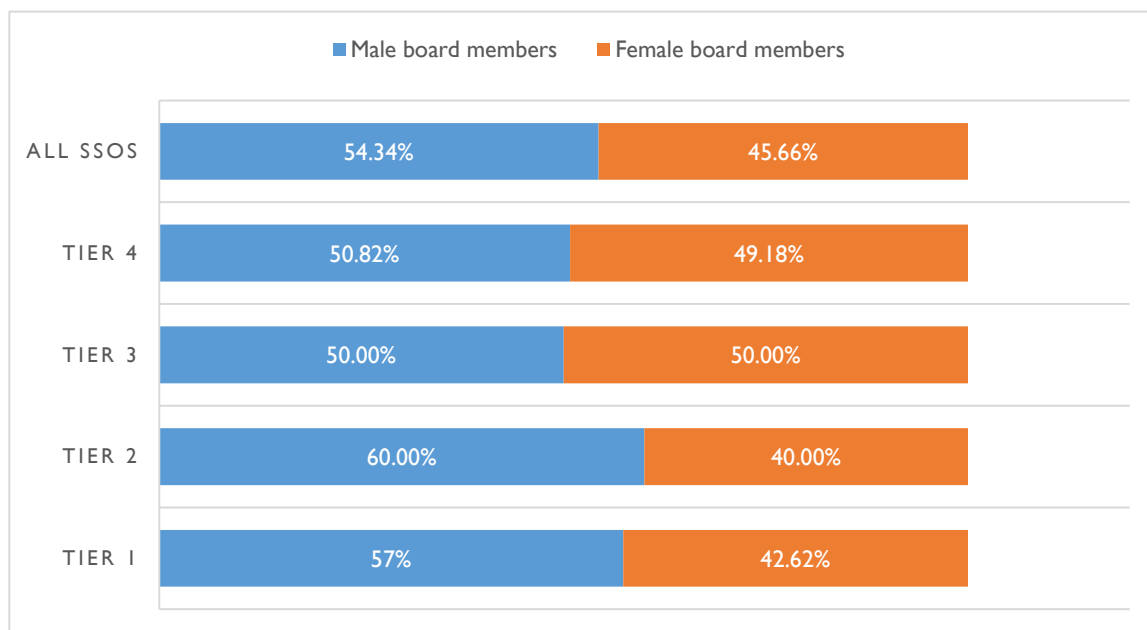
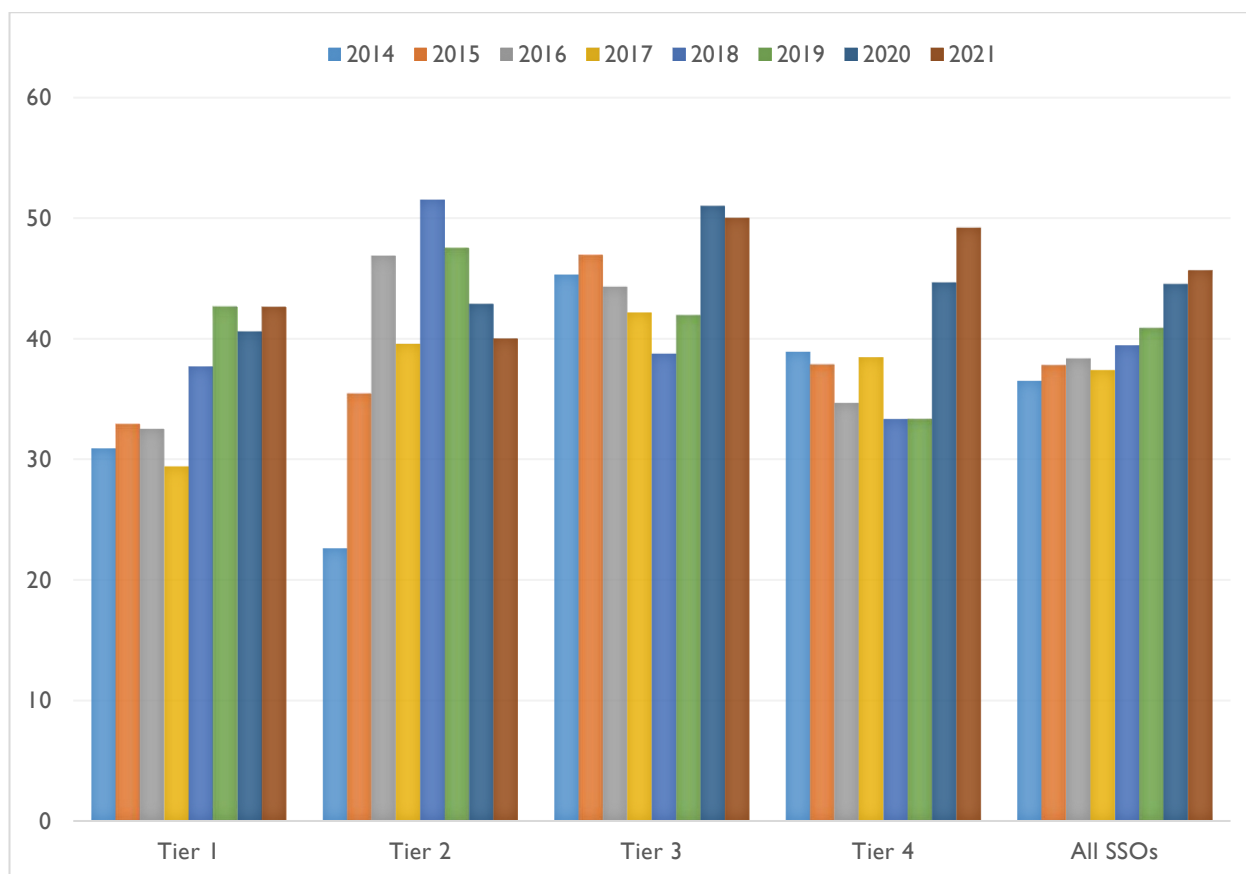


Figure 7 shows a time-series comparison of female representation of SSO boards by tier. Data from the 2009 report has been excluded given there is no comparison data for tier four SSO boards.

Figure 7: Female representation on SSO Boards by tier



Since the introduction of board diversity targets for SSOs in receipt of Sport and Recreation State Grants Program funding in 2019, female representation has grown overall by 6.23 per cent. Tier two SSOs experienced negative growth of 7.5 per cent off a high average of 47.5 per cent in 2019.

Comparison of SSO and NSO Board Composition

The number of women on National Sporting Organisation (NSO) boards was 46.19 per cent in 2021, an increase from 2020 (40.95 per cent). This figure has increased markedly (24.39 per cent) from 21.8 per cent in 2009.

Table 5: Female Representation on SSO and NSO boards 2009, 2014-2021.

Year	Females on SSO Boards (%)	Females on NSO Boards (%)
2009	34.60	21.80
2014	36.50	30.30
2015	37.78	36.39
2016	38.35	36.24
2017	37.39	39.68
2018	39.43	41.38
2019	40.87	41.39
2020	44.50	40.95
2021	45.66	46.19

As illustrated in Table 5 above, there are four noteworthy observations:

- Female representation on SSO boards has experienced modest growth (11.06 per cent) since 2009.
- Female representation on NSO boards has experienced a large increase (24.39 per cent) since 2009.
- Female representation on SSO boards experienced its highest annual growth (3.63 per cent) in 2020.
- In preceding years, NSO experienced large growth of female representation in 2015 and 2017. In 2021 NSO boards experienced large growth of 5.24 per cent.

The previous increase in female representation on NSOs boards is an interesting statistic. The obvious conclusion is that it is due to the success of Sport Australia's introduction of the Mandatory Sports Governance Principles (the principles). However, it is more likely that the introduction of the principles has encouraged all NSO boards to consider gender composition and ways to increase female representation.

Proportion of Female Presidents or Chairs

As seen in Figure 8, in 2021 the proportion of female presidents or chairs of Tasmanian SSO boards (33.3 per cent) was higher than NSO boards (26.67 per cent). This is similar trend to 2019 and 2020, although the difference between the two is greatest in 2021.

Since the first report in 2009, the number of female presidents or chairs of SSO boards has increased by 15.47 per cent and by 1.67 per cent on NSO boards.

Figure 8: SSO and NSO Female Presidents or Chairpersons 2009, 2014-2020.



Figures 9 and 10 show further analysis of female president or chairs on NSO and SSO boards. Over the nine years data has been collected for SSOs and NSOs, there is only one occurrence where the proportion of female presidents or chairs was higher than the proportion of females on the board (NSO 2009).

Figure 9: Difference between the proportion of SSO female board members and the proportion of female presidents/chairs

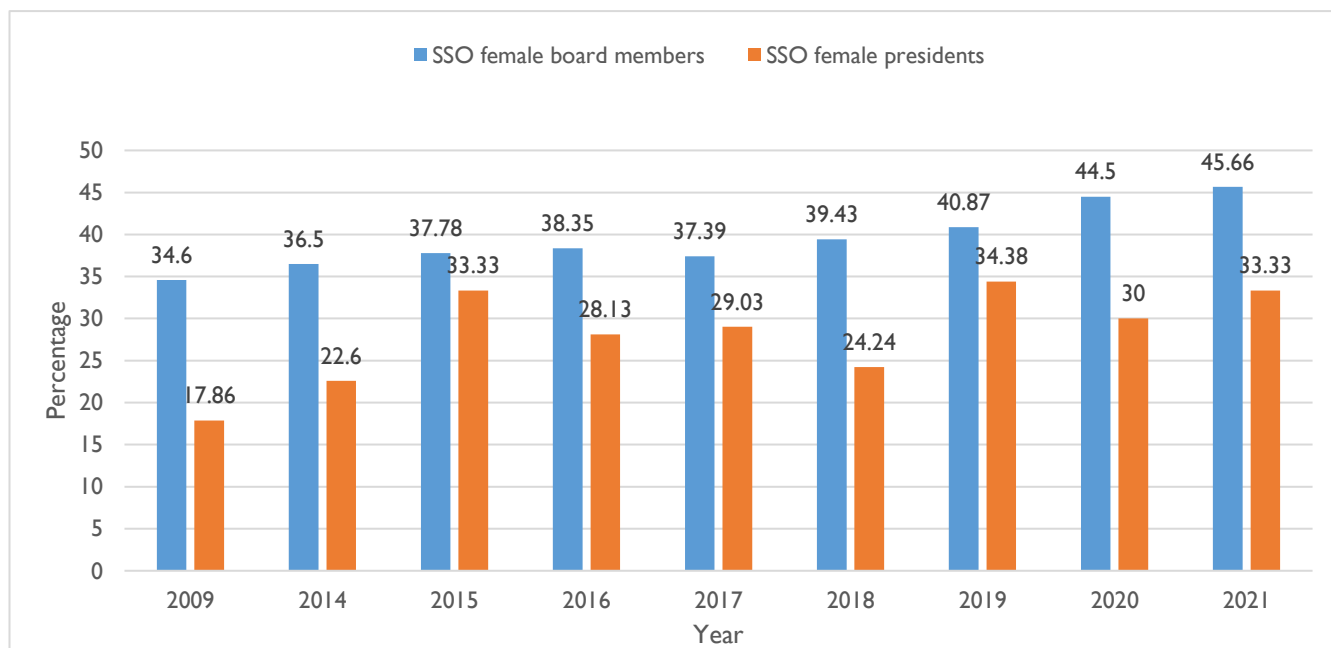
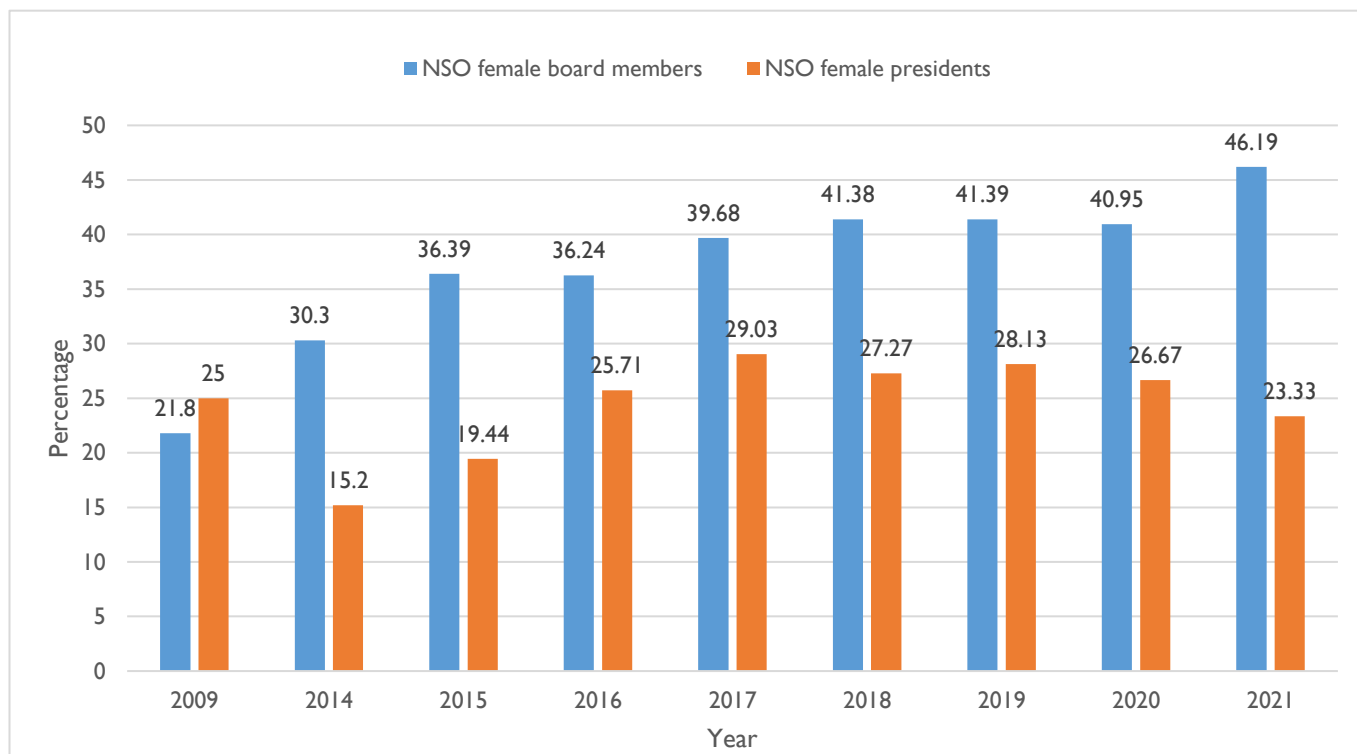


Figure 10: Difference between the proportion of NSO female board members and the proportion of female presidents/chairs



Conclusion

The *Women on State Sporting Organisations Boards Report* highlights some of the improvements towards achieving gender diversity on SSO boards. These improvements correspond with the implementation of the SRS GP phased in board gender requirements in 2019.

The proportion of females on SSO boards has been on an upwards trend since 2009 for both SSOs and NSOs.

The future focus for Sport and Recreation should be on strategies to maintain gender diversity on SSO boards and increasing the number of female president and chairs on SSO boards.

There is a small cohort of SSOs operating outside of Sport and Recreation’s Good Governance recommendations and/or failing to achieve gender diversity on their boards. Building capability through continuing to support and encourage greater representation of all genders on SSO Boards will assist in positive change and enable more SSOs to benefit from broader representation, resulting in these organisations tapping into the new or additional organisational benefits.

Using findings from this report, guidance from the Tasmanian Government’s *Women on Boards Strategy* and through the development of Sport and Recreation’s *Women and Girls in Sport Strategy*, Sport and Recreation will continue to work with the sector to improve and sustain gender diversity.

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Appendix A – 2021 Organisations

2021 State Sporting Organisations (total 30)

Tier One: over 3 501 members

Basketball Tasmania
Bowls Tasmania
Cricket Tasmania
Football Tasmania
Golf Tasmania
Gymnastics Tasmania
Hockey Tasmania
Netball Tasmania
Tennis Tasmania

Tier Two: 1 501 – 3 500 members

Badminton Tasmania**
Hockey Tasmania*
Little Athletics Tasmania
Rowing Tasmania
Swimming Tasmania
Surf Life Saving Tasmania

Tier Three: 651 – 1 500 members

Orienteering Tasmania
Pony Club Tasmania
Rugby Union Tasmania
Surfing Tasmania
Tenpin Bowling Tasmania
Athletics Tasmania*
Equestrian Tasmania*

Tier Four: 100 - 650 members

Volleyball Tasmania*
Boxing Tasmania^
Karate Tasmania
Kung Fu Wushu
Paddle Tasmania
Softball Tasmania
Squash Tasmania
Table Tennis Tasmania
Triathlon Tasmania

* Denotes an organisation that moved down a tier level

** Denotes an organisation that moved up two tiers

^ Sport did not seek funding in 2021. Retained for data continuity purposes.

2021 National Sporting Organisations (total 30)

Athletics Australia	Little Athletics Australia
Australian Canoeing	Netball Australia
Australian Karate Federation	Orienteering Australia
Australian Rugby Union	Pony Club Australia
Badminton Australia	Rowing Australia
Basketball Australia	Softball Australia
Bowls Australia	Squash Australia
Boxing Australia	Surf Life Saving Australia
Cricket Australia	Surfing Australia
Equestrian Australia	Swimming Australia
Football Federation Australia	Table Tennis Australia
Golf Australia	Tennis Australia
Gymnastics Australia	Tenpin Bowling Australia
Hockey Australia	Triathlon Australia
Kung Fu Wushu Australia	Volleyball Australia



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