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Lyn Beverley
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Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform
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Dear Joint Select Committee Members

Interactive Gambling and Broadcasting Amendment (Online Transactions and Other Measures) Bill 2011

Netball Australia welcomes the Australian Parliament's wide ranging inquiries into gambling, sports betting, corruption, advertising and related matters, and is grateful for the opportunity to make a submission to the Joint Select Committee's current Inquiry.

As Australia's leading female sport, Netball Australia and the State Netball Associations are committed to the provision of innovative and sustainable netball programs to facilitate social change and empowerment of women and girls.

Netball is ranked as the leading women's participation team sport and the top team based sport in Australia for 15 to 24 year olds. Over 1.2 million participants enjoy the game nationally and Australia has been dominant on the international stage since 1963. Netball Australia has more than 330,000 registered members; 5,000 clubs nationally; 570 Associations; and eight member organisations.

Netball Australia, as a member of the Coalition of Major Professional and Participation Sports (COMPPS)[1], draws the Joint Select Committee's attention to the COMPPS submission of 30 June 2011 to this current Inquiry; along with COMPPS Members' involvement in several Federal and State Government Inquiries into sports betting, corruption, advertising and related matters.

This submission should also be read in conjunction with Netball Australia's previous submission to the Inquiry into the prevalence of interactive and online gambling in Australia and gambling advertising, dated 20 June 2011.

With due respect, the currently drafted Interactive Gambling and Broadcasting Amendment (Online Transactions and Other Measures) Bill 2011 does not address all of the complex issues that are currently being considered by sports, various Governments, the gaming and wagering industry and community groups. It is important that these current processes continue to their conclusion and the resultant findings assist to progress the next steps.

[1] The Coalition of Major Professional and Participation Sports (COMPPS) consists of the Australian Football League; Australian Rugby Union; Cricket Australia; Football Federation Australia; National Rugby League; **Netball Australia**; and Tennis Australia. One of COMPPS' roles is to provide a collective response on behalf of its member sports where their interests are aligned.

In terms of any proposed Bill, Netball Australia supports the principle that the current *Victorian Sports Betting Act* be used as a guide for nationally consistent Legislation. Netball Australia understands that the Victorian Government is currently reviewing this Legislation.

Further, Netball Australia acknowledges the recommendations in the NSW Law Reform Commission's report into Cheating at Gambling, March 2011 and draws particular reference to the need for a nationally consistent approach, specific statutory cheating offence and penalties in relation to sporting and other events.

Accordingly, Netball Australia welcomed the announcement of 10 June 2011 by the Sport and Recreation Minister's Council of a National Policy on Match-Fixing in Sport to provide the foundation for all Australian governments to work with sports and betting companies to deter and deal with corruption in sport.

A critical aspect of the National Policy is the agreement to pursue nationally consistent legislative arrangements. It is preferable that this Legislation is Federal, specific to sport, creating a criminal offence of "cheating in connection with sports wagering".

Netball Australia also welcomed the 27 May 2011 Communiqué from the Council of Australian Governments Select Council on Gambling Reform. In particular that Ministers agreed to; take action to reduce and control the promotion of live odds during sports coverage; and consult with industry as to the scope of the measures designed to reduce and control the promotion of live odds during sports coverage.

Netball Australia supports the premise that in the first instance, industry will be provided with the opportunity to address this issue through amendments to their existing industry codes. However, if satisfactory amendments are not in place by the end of June 2012, the Australian Government will consider the need for Legislation.

Netball Australia will continue working with other major sports through COMPPS in progressing policy discussions on these issues.

Netball Australia welcomes appropriate safeguards to ensure the integrity of sport and to minimize the harm caused by problem gambling.

Yours faithfully

Nadine Cohen
Head of Strategy and Government Liaison

15 July 2011