**8th IWG World Conference on Women & Sport to officially launch at**

**the Captains Lunch 2020, taking its place as one of the “big four” women’s sports events coming to Aotearoa New Zealand between 2021 - 2023**

**Event:**

* Captains Lunch 2020
* **Friday, 4 September 2020, 1.00pm - 3.00pm** (arrive at 12.45pm for networking)
* Eden Park, South Level 4 Lounge, South Stand, Gate G, Reimers Avenue, Auckland
* Get tickets: <https://womeninsport.org.nz/programmes/captains-lunch-2020/>

**Featuring:**

* Opening address from the **Hon Grant Robertson**, New Zealand Minister for Sport & Recreation
* Digital keynote from **Raelene Castle ONZM** (Ngāpuhi), recorded from lockdown in Australia
* Live panel discussion with leaders from across sport, business and public service, moderated by sports broadcaster **Rikki Swannell**. Panellists: WHITE FERNS Captain, **Sophie Devine**, **HE Hon Patricia Forsythe AM, Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, and one other tbc**
* Over 30 “Captains” (table hosts) will be announced during the run up to the event, including female athletes, coaches, leaders and key male allies for change. Captains confirmed include:
  + Sport New Zealand board member and Olympian, **Beatrice Faumuina**
  + Olympic silver medallist and IOC Athletes’ Commission member, **Sarah Walker**
  + Aspiring New Zealand Olympic weightlifter, **Megan Gifford (nee Signal)**
  + 2021 ICC Women’s Cricket World Cup CEO, **Andrea Nelson**
  + 2021 Women’s Rugby World Cup Tournament Director, **Michelle Hooper**
  + 2023 FIFA Women’s World Cup host, NZ Football board member, **Andrew Bowater**
  + Plus, the CEOs of **Sport NZ**, **High Performance Sport NZ**, **NZ Olympic Committee**, **NZ Cricket, NZ Rugby**, **Eden Park**, **Netball NZ**, **Triathlon NZ**, and the **Halberg Foundation**.

**Media:**

* Please register attendance with [dora.beara@buscircle.com](mailto:dora.beara@buscircle.com) | +64 21 658 431.

6 August 2020: WHITE FERNS Captain **Sophie Devine** and Minister for Sport & Recreation, **the Hon Grant Robertson**, will headline the rescheduled Captains Lunch at Eden Park on Friday 4 September, with a special digital keynote from **Raelene Castle ONZM**, recorded from lockdown over in Australia.

The Captains Lunch annually brings together more than 300 guests in celebration of female leadership in sport and business. It is staged in partnership by Women in Sport Aotearoa and Trans – Tasman Business Circle SportsConnect. This year it will officially launch the journey toward and beyond the 8th IWG World Conference on Women & Sport. A short film will debut to introduce the global theme, “Change Inspires Change,” and further detail on the digital-physical hybrid approach will be unveiled.

Taking place in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland from 5-8 May 2022, the 8th IWG World Conference is one of the “big four” women’s sports events coming to Aotearoa New Zealand, with the Cricket, Rugby and Football World Cups all here, 2021-2023. The event is the largest gathering in the world dedicated to achieving gender equity in sport and physical activity, with 2,000 expected in-person and virtually.

Following the addresses from the Hon Grant Robertson and Raelene Castle ONZM, Sophie Devine will join a panel of leaders from sport, business and public service, moderated by sports broadcaster **Rikki Swannell**. She will be accompanied by **HE Hon Patricia Forsythe AM, Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, and one other panellist. They will discuss and tell stories about the changes needed to inspire more changes across our Australasian and Pacific communities, to achieve gender equity.**

Uniquely, the event will be supported by over 30 “Captains” (table hosts), including female athletes, coaches, leaders and male allies supporting positive change. 20 “Captains” have been confirmed as attending and each will host a table of guests, consisting of a mix of senior sport and business leaders.

Raelene Castle ONZM is one of Australasia’s most well-known sports administrators. She joined Rugby Australia as the code’s first female CEO, beginning in the role in January 2018 and recently stepping down. She was previously the CEO of the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs, where she spent four years leading the National Rugby League club after six years as CEO of Netball New Zealand. Raelene, as well as with the Hon Grant Robertson, was originally giving a live address at the Captains Lunch back in May, postponed due to COVID-19. Raelene is now specially recording her keynote address in Australia.

**Raelene Castle ONZM, said:** “I am very excited to still be able to take part in the Captains Lunch, albeit digitally. We certainly live in a very different world these days, thanks to COVID-19. But the power of technology means I can still add my thoughts to the important conversation going on around improving equity for women and girls in sport and active recreation. The system has taken a significant shock. Now, more than ever, we must be focussed to ensure that women and girls do not go without.”

New Zealand Minister for Sport & Recreation, **the Hon Grant Robertson**, will also address the leaders gathered. The Minister is an avid sports fan and champion for ‘women in sport’. At the beginning of his tenure, he immediately stated that positive change for women and girls in sport and active recreation in Aotearoa New Zealand was his number one priority. Since then he has driven and supported change across the sector, launching the ‘Women & Girls in Sport & Active Recreation’ strategy, which includes a $10 million investment over 3 years, and holding the system accountable.

**Julie Paterson, Co-Chair of Women in Sport Aotearoa, said:** “We are so pleased that even after having to reschedule the Captains Lunch, we still have Raelene Castle and Minister Robertson on board with us to mark a special milestone. We will be officially launching the journey toward and beyond the 8th IWG World Conference on Women & Sport, which Women in Sport Aotearoa will stage in May 2022. As you might imagine, we have had to rethink our approach within the context of COVID-19, but it has allowed us to be very creative. We are excited to be unveiling all of this live at the Captains Lunch!”

**“Captains” confirmed as of today include:**

* Sophie Devine, Captain of the **WHITE FERNS – New Zealand Women’s Cricket Team**
* Beatrice Faumuina ONZM OLY, Board Member, Sport **New Zealand** and Olympian
* Sarah Walker, **New Zealand’s first Olympic BMX medallist; IOC Athletes’ Commission member**
* **Megan Gifford (nee Signal), New Zealand Olympic Weightlifter**
* **Peter Miskimmin, outgoing Chief Executive, Sport New Zealand**
* **Jennah Wootten, General Manager, Partnerships and Communication, Sport New Zealand**
* **Michael Scott, Chief Executive, High Performance Sport New Zealand (HPSNZ)**
* **Kereyn Smith, Chief Executive and Secretary General, New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC)**
* **Andrea Nelson, Chief Executive, 2021 ICC Women’s Cricket World Cup**
* **David White, Chief Executive, New Zealand Cricket (NZC)**
* **Michelle Hooper, Tournament Director, 2021 Rugby World Cup (women’s)**
* **Mark Robinson, Chief Executive, New Zealand Rugby (NZR)**
* **Andrew Bowater,** board member NZ Football
* Sarah Gibbs, board member, NZ Football and former Football Fern
* **Jennie Wyllie, Chief Executive, Netball New Zealand**
* **Claire Beard, Chief Executive, Triathlon New Zealand**
* **Nick Sautner, Chief Executive, Eden Park**
* **Shelley McMeeken, Chief Executive, Halberg Foundation**
* **Lynette Grace,** Paralympic Games Campaign Lead, Paralympics NZ
* Simon Kent, Leadership & Performance Coach, Olympic Weightlifting New Zealand

**About Women in Sport Aotearoa**

Women in Sport Aotearoa, Ngā Wāhine Hākinakina o Aotearoa (WISPA), is a charity that exists to transform society through leadership, advocacy and research, ensuring that all women and girls gain equity of opportunity to participate, compete and build careers in play, active recreation and sport in Aotearoa New Zealand. Its strategic vision is to see ‘women and girls valued, visible and influential in sport’. It is working toward this through delivery of insight and research, change leadership, advocacy campaigns, speaking engagements and events like the Captains Lunch and the Sport NZ Women + Girls Summit 2019 -2021. It works across Aotearoa New Zealand and currently, is also the global delivery agent for the International Working Group (IWG) on Women and Sport Secretariat & Conference 2018-2022, with the 8th IWG World Conference on Women & Sport taking place in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland from 5-8 May 2022. WISPA’s funding comes from a mix of Grants & Trusts, Donations, Fundraising & Gifts and Commercial Partnerships. Visit the website to learn more.

[www.womeninsport.org.nz](http://www.womeninsport.org.nz)

Search ‘Women in Sport Aotearoa’ on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

**About the International Working Group (IWG) on Women and Sport**

The IWG is the world’s largest network dedicated empowering women and girls and advancing sport. Established in 1994, the IWG advocates for gender equity in sport and physical activity year-round, partnering with key agencies, including UN Women and UNESCO. It developed and remains guardian of the Brighton plus Helsinki 2014 Declaration on Women & Sport, which now has almost 600 signatories, and delivers the well-respected IWG Progress Report at the quadrennial IWG World Conference. The IWG administrative function moves every four years and is currently in New Zealand.

www.iwgwomenandsport.org

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**About the Trans – Tasman Business Circle**

TTBC is a strategic growth partner for the region’s leading organisations in public and private sectors, providing opportunities to grow relationships, profile, insights and business knowledge. Its extensive and influential network in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore has assisted its clients to achieve their objectives by building strategic relationships, deepening business insights and increasing profile.