



**THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP  
MINISTER FOR HEALTH  
MINISTER FOR AGED CARE  
MINISTER FOR SPORT**

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**Sports journalists honoured**

Minister for Sport Sussan Ley has paid tribute to respected Australian cricket journalist, Mike Coward who was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement award at the 2015 Australian Sports Commission (ASC) Media Awards in Melbourne last night.

Presenting the award to Mike Coward Ms Ley said he remained one of the world's most informative and admired cricket journalists.

"Mike has covered cricket for more than 50 years and reported on the changing face of the sport and it is fitting that he is being recognised on the eve of the historic day-night Test match in Adelaide," Minister Ley said.

"Throughout his journalism career Mike has made a significant contribution to the community as an eminent journalist and cricket writer, author and broadcaster and historian and international authority on the game of cricket. Mike is also a long-serving contributor to charities."

Ms Ley said that Mike Coward had demonstrated balance, accuracy, knowledge, erudition and wit as a reporter and commentator on Australian Test and domestic cricket from 1972 to 2011.

"His writing won him the trust and respect of generations of the world's best players and administrators across cricket playing nations.

"However, the measure of Mike's contribution to sports journalism is in how peers regard him. He will be long remembered in the industry for his tireless work mentoring several generations of cricket journalists," she said.

Ms Ley said Australia's sport-loving public has an insatiable appetite for sports journalism and the role of sport commentators cannot be underestimated in promoting sport participation across the community.

"Strong sports participation is critical for maintaining long-term elite sport performances. A strong participation pool, combined with a robust sporting system, increases the possibility of the best 'natural' talent finding their way into sport.

"This year the Australian Government launched the \$100 million Sporting Schools programme. This is the avenue for our children to begin their sporting journey, by experiencing a variety of sports at a primary school age.

"The Australian Government remains committed to sport at all levels, from children starting out in Sporting Schools to elite Olympic athletes at the top of their game.

“I believe it is important for everyone to remember that sport is about more than gold medals. As the stories told by sports journalists show, sport is about overcoming challenges and about bringing people together. It is a major unifying part of our diverse culture.

“Whether it is celebrating a sporting triumph, tackling complex issues such as racism or depression, or helping us understand a tragedy, our sports journalists have a proven ability to produce work of insight and compassion and their contribution to the promotion and adoption of sport is to be commended,” Minister Ley said.

A full list of winners can be found at [www.ausport.gov.au](http://www.ausport.gov.au)

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