



## **THE HON KATE ELLIS MP MINISTER FOR SPORT**

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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#### **SUCCESSFUL START TO NEW NETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP**

The Minister for Sport, Kate Ellis, has congratulated the ANZ Netball Championship for its success so far, and urged South Australians to support the Adelaide Thunderbirds in their first home game to be played tomorrow.

“Now in its fourth round, the ANZ Netball Championship is proving to be a huge success, with large crowds and a closely matched competition,” Ms Ellis said.

“It’s now South Australia’s turn to support their local team, the Adelaide Thunderbirds, as they play their first home game against the New Zealand side, Southern Steel.

“After a great win against the Melbourne Vixens last week the Thunderbirds will be primed for a big performance.

“I urge Adelaide sports fans to get along to ETSA Park tomorrow to watch these amazing athletes.”

Ms Ellis said netball, along with soccer and cricket, had one of highest participation rates of any sport in Australia.

“With the rise in popularity of the indoor version of the sport, netball is now being enjoyed by men and women of all ages.

“The success of the ANZ Netball Championship is boosting the popularity of the sport across the country.”

Ms Ellis said the Australian Government, through the Australian Sports Commission, was a vital partner to Netball Australia in the development of netball in Australia.

“We’re pleased to provide almost \$3.7 million this financial year to support netball in Australia; this is a \$1.24 million increase on the level of funding provided in 2006-07,” Ms Ellis said.

The funding will assist Netball Australia to critically review its high performance program for the development and support of elite athletes, add to the level of research undertaken in the sport and provide extra scholarships to coaches and officials.

The Thunderbirds and Steel game will tip-off at 1.00 pm at ETSA Park.

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