

Written evidence submitted by Barbara Slater

29th November 2023

Dear Dame Caroline,

Thank you once again for the opportunity to contribute to the ongoing inquiry into the future of women's sport. I hope that you, and your colleagues, found the session helpful in the process of formulating your recommendations.

I promised to follow-up on the question Kevin Brennan raised about two of the Red Roses' warm-up matches for WXV, the new international women's rugby competition that took place last month.

As outlined in our submission, the BBC covers many different women's sports but we are not able to show everything that we would like to. Indeed, these warm-up matches were only offered to the BBC late in the day with our resources already committed elsewhere. I highlighted at the session on Tuesday that even where the host feed is provided free by the rights-seller, there are still production and technical requirements that the broadcaster must meet in order to deliver an acceptable quality of service to viewers. You may also be aware that ITV secured the live TV rights to the WXV tournament, which these warm-up matches preceded.

In my time as Director of Sport I've been proud of the increased exposure we've given to women's rugby. For example, we now broadcast the Women's Six Nations Championship in its entirety across our broadcast platforms, with our contract continuing for a further two years. We have previously shown England Women's Rugby Test matches and streamed the Premier 15s competition on our digital platforms. We covered the Women's Rugby World Cup on audio and digital platforms at the end of last year too, with ITV holding the live TV rights.

Although my time at the BBC is coming to an end, I will always remain a passionate advocate of women's sport. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance to the inquiry.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Slater', written in a cursive style.

Barbara Slater
Director of BBC Sport