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New program to advance women in television

A new industry mentoring program unveiled on International Women's Day will boost the future representation of women in television boardrooms and management roles.

The new initiative to be managed by industry body ASTRA aims to fast-track the careers of promising future female television industry leaders by linking them with high-achieving female executives.

"The equal representation of women in television leadership positions is good business as well as the right thing to do," ASTRA chief executive officer, Andrew Maiden, said today.

"Equal representation boosts our ability as an industry to commission and broadcast content that reflects the audiences we serve.

"The subscription television sector has worked hard to attract, retain and promote women, both off-screen and on, but we must achieve better results," Mr Maiden said.

The annual initiative will see up to 40 women join small mentoring circles over a six month period to workshop challenges to their advancement in the industry.

Mentors will include Deanne Weir (Managing Director, Content Aggregation & Wholesale, Foxtel), Fiona Lang (Chief Operating Officer, BBC Worldwide Australia), Christina Allen (General Counsel & Company Secretary, Fox Sports), Kylie Merritt (Commercial Director, Sky News) and Hannah Barnes (General Manager, The Lifestyle Group, Foxtel).

The subscription television sector has beaten industry benchmarks in the representation of women. An ASTRA report issued in September 2016 found that females represented –

- 32% of directors on subscription television industry boards
- 26% of chief executives of subscription television companies
- 34% of senior executives in large subscription television companies

The Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association hosts a series of regular events for women including the ASTRA Women in Television Breakfast that attracts 700 guests each September.

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About ASTRA – The Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (ASTRA) is the peak body representing the subscription media industry in Australia. Members include television operators, independent content companies, technology companies and the industries that support them. ASTRA members produce content seen by nearly nine million Australians. In 2015/16 ASTRA members invested \$893 million in local production, creating jobs for 8370 Australians.