



MAN UP

PRESS KIT

One man's mission to save Aussie men.

The stereotypical Australian male is strong, sporty and tough as nails. He laughs in the face of fear. And when life gets him down, he drinks a cup of concrete and hardens the fuck up. Or so the saying goes. But when we tear away these long-held notions of what it means to be a man, how is the average Aussie bloke actually faring?

Not so well, according to research which shows that Aussie men are lonelier and more disconnected than ever. Common mental health problems like depression and anxiety go untreated. And suicide is the leading cause of death for men aged 15-44 years. So why are men killing themselves? And why isn't anyone talking about it?

Enter Gus Worland: son, husband, father of three, and professional talker. Captain of Triple M's Grill Team ("the manliest show on radio"), Gus is a typical Aussie bloke who loves his sport, loves his family and loves his mates. Gus is steeped in the world of men and cares about the issues that affect them. This series will follow him on an emotional and personal journey like he's never experienced before.

In 2006, Gus lost one of his best mates, Angus, to suicide. Angus was one of the 2000 men that take their own lives in Australia every year – many of whom show little or no warning signs, sending devastating ripple effects through families, friends and society as a whole.

A decade on, Gus is still bewildered by the death of his friend, who always seemed so strong and charismatic. *"He was a hero to me. This awesome, untouchable, always positive guy. The kind of guy you went to for answers."* He can't understand why Angus didn't reach out for help.

As he looks to find out why, Gus discovers a frightening link between the stoic ideals of manhood that so many men struggle to uphold– and the unacceptably high male suicide rate in Australia.

He'll immerse himself in different worlds and movements where positive changes are underway, all the while striking the balance between darkness and light, comedy and poignancy. He'll meet people doing brave and life-changing work to get men to speak out. He'll visit schools, construction sites, boardrooms, men's sheds, and veterans' clubs to see how certain men are redefining what it means to 'man up'.

With the memory of his mate Angus and the future of his son's generation motivating him, the series concludes with Gus launching his own campaign. Gus wants to share his insights right across Australia – challenging masculine stereotypes, getting men better connected, smashing the stigma around mental health and breaking the silence around suicide.

This is Gus Worland's mission to change our minds about what it means to be an Aussie man.

EPISODE 1

Salesman-turned-radio star, Gus Worland, embarks on a rollicking journey into the hairy world of Australian masculinity: from the good to the downright ugly, from man hugs to the rise of the lumbersexual. But along the way, he uncovers a shocking truth: suicide is the leading killer of Australian men under 45, eclipsing road accidents, cancer and heart disease. Having lost a best mate and personal hero to suicide, Gus is on a mission to find out why we're losing our men.

EPISODE 2

With his teenage son on the brink of manhood, Gus' campaign to save the lives of Aussie men is about to get a lot more personal. Having learnt that the pressure to man up is fuelling a suicide crisis, Gus travels across the country to meet the men who are making a difference. From sailing the high seas with ex soldiers battling war-time trauma, to stripping down for a nude yoga class, it's a no-holds-barred look at all things men. Meanwhile, an emotional workshop at his son's school brings tears – and new hope that change is possible.

EPISODE 3

It's a call to action as Gus launches a campaign to tackle outdated ideas of what it means to be a man, in the hope that Aussie boys and men no longer turn to suicide as a solution. He enlists the help of the country's top advertising minds to get the message out, but not all goes to plan. Could he be fighting a losing battle?

PRESENTER: GUS WORLAND

Gus Worland is an Australian television and radio personality. He is best known for his series of reality television programs for Foxtel (*An Aussie Goes Barmy*, *An Aussie Goes Bolly* and *An Aussie Goes Calypso*) and A&E (*Marathon Man*). In 2009, he took up the role of co-host of Triple M's breakfast show in Sydney. Within two years *The Grill Team* doubled their ratings for this time slot, and Gus was awarded 'Best On Air Newcomer' at the 2010 Australian Commercial Radio Awards. Gus is a 46-year-old sporting tragic. He has been married for 21 years to Vicky and has three kids. Women want him to meet their mothers and blokes want to be him: Gus just wants to give them all a hug.

THE TEAM BEHIND 'MAN UP'

JENNIFER CUMMINS

Executive Producer, Man Up

Jennifer Cummins is the Principal of Heiress Films, a factual production company that specialises in programs that tell personal stories on a large scale. Some recent credits include: *Making Australia Happy* which was accompanied by a highly successful website, and has sold as an international television format, with *Making France Happy* produced for Channel M6. *Making Couples Happy* and *Making Families Happy* have also aired on the ABC to critical acclaim. The long-running *Life Series* (ABC) tracks a group of Australian children from their first year of life. *A Modern Mutiny* – a tale about Norfolk Island – was a ratings hit for SBS when it aired earlier this year as part of the Untold Australia strand. Prior to establishing Heiress Films in 2003, Jennifer was Head of Factual Development at the ABC, spent several years as a freelance director and Series Producer, and notched up ten years at the beginning of her career at the ABC.

PROFESSOR JANE PIRKIS

Advisory Board, Man Up

Professor Jane Pirkis is the Director of the Centre for Mental Health in the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health at the University of Melbourne. She is a psychologist and epidemiologist with an interest in ways of improving mental health and preventing suicide. Recently, her attention has turned to novel, media-based interventions that might be beneficial. Working on 'Man Up' has been a highlight for her, and has convinced her of the power of documentaries to change the way people view themselves and those around them.

KEY PRODUCTION CREDITS

Man Up is an Heiress Films production, principally financed by the Movember Foundation in association with the University of Melbourne, and produced in association with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

PRESENTER: **Gus Worland**

DIRECTORS: **Max Bourke, Ben Lawrence**

PRODUCER: **Danielle Bringham**

DIGITAL STRATEGIST/PRODUCER: **Jackie Turnure**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: **Jennifer Cummins**

HEAD OF PRODUCTION: **Seema Khanna**

DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY: **Toby Ralph, Nathan Barlow, Simon Morris**

SOUND RECORDIST: **Dale Nelson**

POST PRODUCER/WRITER: **Bruce Permezel**

EDITORS: **Sam Hart, Zac Grant**

NARRATED BY: **Chris Burke**

STILLS: **Mick Angus, Alex Leeway, Nigel Lough (GQ shoot), Christian Trinder**

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Peta Einberg Casting

Producer: Melanie Reardon, Exit Films

Music 'We Cry' courtesy of © Jonathan Zwartz

MEDIA CONTACTS

Publicist

Xanthe Bates

xanthe@nixco.com.au

(02) 8399 0626

Jennifer Cummins

Executive Producer, Man Up

Heiress Films

jennifer@heiress.net.au

(02) 8599 3130

0416 122 916

Jackie Turnure

Campaign Producer, Man Up

jturnure@gmail.com

0435 863 106