

## **FUNDING FOR SPORTING GROUPS**

*Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation*

**MR R.C. KUCERA** (Yokine - Minister for Sport and Recreation) [9.04 am]: Over the past couple of days in Albany, I have had the pleasure of meeting a number of accomplished and budding sports participants. They are men, women, boys and girls from all walks of life who well and truly recognise the benefits of an active and healthy lifestyle. Many of those people told me that sport is not only about playing the game, but also team building, leadership, commitment to a common goal, self-discipline and much more.

Having the opportunity to meet so many active locals of Albany is very timely because recently, through the Department of Sport and Recreation, the Gallop Government provided \$2 million worth of special initiatives funding for the development of sporting programs. Each year, the Department of Sport and Recreation and Lotterywest provide significant financial support to sporting bodies in Western Australia through the sports lotteries account. The package is different this year because it has been specially designed to provide funding for the delivery of targeted sporting programs, with an emphasis on increasing physical activity, which will lead to better health outcomes.

Although the funding is provided to sporting groups, we are urging them to form partnerships with local governments and not-for-profit organisations. We are looking for programs that will increase opportunities for seniors to become active and for young people- particularly those at risk- to participate and to get other groups with lower than average rates of participation moving, including women, ethnic communities and people with disabilities. This funding is a golden opportunity to genuinely build better communities. More than 120 stakeholders have already signalled their interest in the possibility of developing innovative programs that will reach people who are currently inactive.

Perhaps now more than ever, as an Olympic year is unfolding, we can all find the inspiration to participate. I thank Emma George, an Australian Olympian, for her magnificent effort in working with young people this week while she has been in Albany. It is important to remember that not all of us have to strive to win gold medals - we just need to become active. The Gallop Government is committed to ensuring that all Western Australians have fair access to a wide range of sporting and recreational opportunities. This funding package is a working example of that commitment. I hope that all my parliamentary colleagues will join me in actively marketing this funding package to their local sporting groups. Expressions of interest are currently being sought and formal applications will close on 31 May 2004.