

SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES, FUNDING

Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation

MR R.C. KUCERA (Yokine - Minister for Sport and Recreation) [2.11 pm]: First, I take this opportunity to congratulate the English cricket team on its win. We should be blaming the federal government for the Australian team losing the Ashes, but I shall not do that today. I also commiserate with Ricky Ponting's team and compliment his team on its gallant effort.

I inform the house of the status of state and commonwealth funding for sport and recreation facilities. Over the five years of the Gallop government, from 2001-02 to 2005-06, there has been funding of \$233 million for sport and recreation, with \$79.6 million of funding for 2005-06 alone. This includes some \$45 million for the government's community sporting and recreation facilities fund grants to provide financial assistance to community groups and local government authorities to develop infrastructure for sport and recreation, and approximately \$45 million in grants through the sports lotteries account.

In 2004 and 2005 state government funding and commitments to sport and recreation totalled \$271.5 million and included \$22.6 million for debt retirement for cricket, hockey and football; \$160 million for a multipurpose indoor entertainment sports facility; \$5 million for a new state netball training facility; \$31 million for Members Equity Stadium; \$3.5 million for Western Australian Institute of Sport funding over the four-year Olympic funding cycle; \$1.7 million for state indoor gymnastics; \$2.1 million for a state baseball centre; \$6.7 million for a state athletics centre; and \$15 million for camp upgrades.

This massive state government investment in sport is in vast contrast to the commonwealth's funding and commitments. Of 27 grants to sporting and recreational organisations and facilities in the most recent commonwealth budget, 23 went to two marginal coalition seats and none to Western Australia. During the time that the Howard government has been in office, it has given \$1 billion in funding to New South Wales for Olympic sporting facilities; \$300 million to Victoria for the Commonwealth Games; \$8 million for Whitten Oval in Victoria; \$12 million for North Power Stadium, \$10 million for Penrith Stadium and \$8 million for Kogarah Oval in New South Wales; and \$10 million for York Park and Bellerive Oval in Tasmania. It has not given a single cent in funding for stadium development in Western Australia. In fact, there has basically been no major investment by the commonwealth in Western Australian sport since 1962, aside from a contribution by the Keating government 10 years ago for Subiaco Oval.

Earlier this month I wrote to the federal Minister for the Arts and Sport, Senator Rod Kemp, outlining these concerns. I pointed out that Olympic and international level sporting facilities are becoming increasingly concentrated on the eastern seaboard at the expense of Western Australia and to the detriment of young Western Australian athletes, administrators, sports scientists and the general community, who consider sport a way of life. I have asked Senator Kemp to meet with me next month to discuss the infrastructure needs of Western Australia. A more cooperative approach by the state and commonwealth could provide much-needed facilities and put an end to the inequities disadvantaging WA athletes and citizens created by years of federal neglect of Western Australian sporting facilities.