

MATILDAS WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM — REMUNERATION

Statement by Member for Fremantle

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle) [12.56 pm]: I rise to add my voice of support to the members of the Matildas Women's Soccer Team in their efforts to have their skill and ability recognised in their current pay negotiations. I am aware that a meeting was held yesterday on this, and I am not sure whether there has been a resolution at this stage, but I wanted to take this opportunity to say to the Matildas, you have friends and you have admirers. You have admirers not only of your individual and collective sporting prowess, but your individual and collective determination to be recognised and paid fair remuneration for that prowess. Who can argue that the amount you have been paid to date is not absurd and insulting? As others have pointed out, \$21 000 a year is less than a worker receives at McDonalds, and it is less than the minimum wage. Theoretically, that pay is for part-time engagement, but the reality of the effort put into a series such as the recent FIFA World Cup, is that 100 per cent commitment is required. Getting proper recognition, including pay, for women's sport, has been a long road, as this dispute highlights. In the 1970s, a number of female tennis players took a gutsy stand against their treatment. The situation in tennis has improved since then, but many sporting codes, as in the community generally, still fall far behind on equal pay. As I understand it, you have been without pay since June. You further showed your mettle when a number of you said that you would not participate in a training camp to the US. That would not have been easy, but when each Matilda received \$500 in match fees in to your knockout game with Brazil, while male players received \$7 500 for doing the same thing, something has to change. So, Matildas—stick to your guns. You have the respect of many of us, who admire not only your skills on the field, but also your determination to stand up and be counted.