

**WEST AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE, BROADCAST OF MATCHES BY THE AUSTRALIAN
BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

Statement by Member for Collie

MR MURRAY (Collie) [12.53 pm]: I point out to this House the injustice that would occur if the Australian Broadcasting Corporation were to drop the television coverage of Western Australian football. As most members know, football in the country forms a major part of the social fabric of country towns. The live coverage of the West Australian Football League is part of that. Many country footballers end up playing in the WAFL. In fact, over the past couple of years, the South West Football League in the Collie region has provided over 40 players to the WAFL. While not all will make the grade, it is a significant number. In fact, the town of Collie has provided several of these players, including one who won East Perth's fairest and best in 1998 and 2000 - that being Aaron Marley, who played all of his football prior to going to Perth with Mines Rovers in Collie, one of the oldest clubs in the south west. His progress in the WAFL has been closely monitored by many via the ABC television football broadcasts to the country.

A lot of country people do not have the time or the ability to travel many kilometres to watch these young footballers play the game and therefore rely heavily on the ABC to follow the progress of their local football heroes. It would be an absolute disgrace if this service to country people ceased. I am sure that the fallout from this decision will result in fewer people playing sport due to a lack of role models, thus creating further social problems. Therefore, I call on all in the Chamber today to lobby to ensure that the ABC does not stop broadcasting the West Australian Football League matches in country Western Australia.