

WA COUNTRY FOOTBALL — AFL FUNDING

**836. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:**

I refer to the minister's media outrage over the AFL's decision to overlook WA country football for increased funding in favour of Victoria. Why has the minister not previously engaged with the national football body to get more funding for regional football in Western Australia?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY replied:**

It has taken a couple of years to get a question as weak as that out! I engage quite regularly with the AFL on all aspects of the sport. One thing that concerns me in particular is the use of drugs in sport and, along with that, life after sport. It is something that we are working on very, very closely because of the number of issues people have with mental health after they finish the game and move on, or have an injury and move out. As far as the country funding goes, it was great that after talking to the West Australian Football Commission, which is associated with the AFL, as the member might know, it brought someone in from the country leagues to have on its board. Previously, that had not been done. I really lobbied the WA Football Commission for that in order to make sure that the country has a say at the table that makes the decisions. Am I disappointed with the AFL and its decision to spend \$17 million on country football in Victoria? Yes, I am. Have I done anything about it? Yes, I have. I have talked to the football commission to get a joint approach to go to the AFL and get it to explain why it has done this only in Victoria and not spread it to Western Australia.