

STATE FOOTBALL CENTRE

**417. MR S.J. PRICE to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's decision to invest half of \$32.5 million, which is \$16.25 million, to build WA's first state football centre and deliver yet another job-creating project.

- (1) Can the minister advise the house what this project will mean for WA's football community, in particular, those at the grassroots level?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house how the construction of this project will support workers and businesses as the economy recovers from COVID-19?

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

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question and his advocacy on behalf of the vast community of soccer players and fans in Western Australia. I was pleased to announce on Sunday, along with the Premier, that the state government will contribute \$16.25 million towards a \$32.5 million state football centre facility to serve the rapidly growing sport of soccer. Soccer has experienced an extraordinary growth rate of 45 per cent since 2006. Those figures outstrip any other sport. The sport needs support to be able to run soccer or world football, as it is known, into the future. A lot of work still needs to be done to make sure we get it right. This exciting project will help stimulate the economy. As we know, as a result of COVID-19 we need jobs going forward. This facility was virtually job ready. The community is very well accepting of this project. A \$32 million build is certainly going to help the tradies, such as electricians, as well as the contractors, who get a spin-off from it. It was also very pleasing to hear the mayor come out in very strong support of this facility, which includes the grassroots area. He was very keen to make sure that his community has sporting facilities available for young people, not just the elite. I made that very clear in a speech during the announcement. The facility will include training facilities and pitches to support both junior and high performance development as well as grassroots and community football programs.

Having a centre that can cater for all levels of football is extremely important. At times we have seen a drift away to only the elite being catered for. This will not be the case with this centre. It will also be a home base for Football West, which has been moved to different venues over the last couple of years. It put its roots down for a while and then different things happened and it had to move on. I really appreciate the work that has been done by Football West, from the CEO through to the chair. Its programs have made sure that there has been increased participation in the sport. The facility will also have the capacity to host training camps for national and international teams, now that we are a central component of the Australia–New Zealand bid for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup. We put our hands up, and hopefully we will be able to attract some games to Perth. The elites will have an excellent facility that will be constructed on vacant land at the north of Queens Park open space in the City of Canning. The state government will work with the city to develop a master plan to revitalise the broader Queens Park precinct for community recreation as part of this project. Again, I cannot say enough how much the mayor was excited about the development. This is also fantastic news for the local area. The locals will also be able to use the facility. They will not be shut out or banned from using the facility.

One of the most exciting parts of the day we made the announcement was watching the Premier honing his skills. To kick three out of four goals on the trot was pretty good. I was concerned when I saw him hand \$50 to the goalie after the game. The Premier was up in the left corner, up in the right corner and along the ground. He absolutely wowed the crowd, not only with the election promise, but also with his skills.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, I'll give you 50 bucks if you wind this up!

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** We never know where the next champion is coming from. If we do not put the facilities out there, we will not get those champions. It was with great pleasure that I was party to that announcement.