

Question on Notice
No. 912
Asked on Thursday, 7 June 2007

MR DEMPSEY asked the Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport (MR FRASER)

QUESTION:

With reference to the Young Athlete Assistance Program to assist children under the age of 18 with their costs of competing at Queensland sporting championships—

- (1) Why is there no funding available to assist with the substantial extra costs when some of these children go one step further and represent Queensland at an Australian championship?
- (2) Why is 300km distance restriction from the athlete's residence calculated as a 'radial distance', when a more practical calculation, especially between country cities and towns between which there are no air flights, would be the distance by the most direct road route?

ANSWER:

(1)

The Queensland Government recognises the need to assist up and coming young athletes to attend State championships. The Young Athlete Assistance Program provides \$2 million each year to assist our children and young people to pursue their sporting dreams. This is the most generous funding program of its type in Australia, surpassing any other State or Territory Government's program.

In fact it is \$2 million more than what the Federal Government provides for young athletes.

The Young Athlete Assistance Program provides athletes with assistance to take this first step towards possible selection to national championships. Should a young athlete be selected to attend national or international championships, they are at that stage, competing at elite levels. At this national elite level, the Federal Government, through the Australian Sports Commission should be demonstrating its support for Australian athletes by funding participation in national championships.

In short, as a State Government our focus is on State championships.

I invite the Member for Bundaberg to write to his Coalition colleagues in Canberra in support of a funding assistance program at the national level.

(2)

A radial distance from the place of residence has formed part of the program's eligibility criteria since the program opened and is not a new introduction. The radial distance method provides the clearest, fairest and most unambiguous boundary for all forms of travel (air, rail and road) across Queensland. To ensure equity and transparency, all applicants are referred to a Commonwealth Government website to consistently calculate radial distances in Queensland.