

MEDIA RELEASE
21 September, 2006**Footy codes gang tackle sports fans**

Today's attack on the antisiphoning list by some footy codes is just the latest attempt to force viewers to pay for sports they currently see for free.

The CEO of Free TV Australia, Julie Flynn said "This is a gang tackle on Australian viewers by some major sporting bodies who want to have their cake and eat it too."

"They say they want to have key games on free to air television, but also be able to deal directly with pay. International experience proves you can't have it both ways."

"The English Cricket Board said the same thing to the UK Government to convince it to take cricket off the UK list. Now the only way to get cricket in the UK is on BSkyB."

"This is all part of an ongoing Foxtel campaign to replace free coverage of the best games with coverage you have to pay for."

"This debate is not about giving pay television rights to less popular sporting events on the list. In most cases they already have these rights. They want exclusive, live rights to the best AFL, NRL, and tennis matches so that Australian families will be forced to spend an average of \$90 a month to watch the games they currently get for free."

"75% of Australian viewers either can't afford or choose not to pay for sport on television. They will be the real losers if these football codes are successful in undermining the antisiphoning list."

"Viewers' interests are obviously being ignored in a grab for more money."

"For 50 years Australians have been able to watch the best of international and local sport for free. Australian viewers do not want this to change" Ms. Flynn said.

"Free TV broadcasters support the introduction of "use it or lose it" rules as long as they are fair and consider the impact on viewers if events are delisted" Ms. Flynn added.

Foxtel's campaign against the antisiphoning list does not change the facts which are as follows:

- There are only 10 sports on the anti-siphoning list, plus Olympic and Commonwealth Games
- Free TV broadcasters show all the sporting events to which they acquire rights
- There is no "hoarding" of rights
- Foxtel's so-called audits are based on a nonsense set of figures
- Of their 1300 "events" 836 are the Wimbledon and Australian Open Tennis matches and half of these are not even available for broadcast by anyone
- Using their figures an independent audit conducted by sports marketing company S.Comm on behalf of Free TV Australia reveals that Fox Sports showed just **15.5%** of the total number of matches available to it

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