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The principle of “use it or lose it” rules not in dispute.

Free TV Australia has dismissed the latest effort by the pay TV industry to undermine the access of all Australians to sport on free-to-air television.

Julie Flynn, CEO of Free TV Australia, said “today’s media release by the pay TV industry body, ASTRA, saying that a majority of people they polled support the introduction of ‘use it or lose it’ rules tells us nothing” .

“The principle is not in dispute. The issue is whether or not the rules are applied fairly and accurately so that viewers are not left worse off”.

ASTRA continues to use a set of misleading figures to claim that events are ‘hoarded’, even though they know these figures are nonsense.

“As we continue to demonstrate free TV broadcasters show the events that they acquire and everything else is available to pay TV – and the facts are that they don’t show all the rights to which they have access” Ms. Flynn said.

“75% of Australian viewers cannot afford or choose not to pay to watch sport on television. They should not be conned by a campaign which aims to force them to pay for sport they currently see for free”.

“Free TV Australia supports the introduction of ‘use it or lose it’ rules that look at the impact on viewers of removing events from the list and that take into account acquisition of listed sports by both free-to-air broadcasters and pay TV operators”.

“This is necessary so that the government can identify when rights usage is already being maximised across both platforms, as is the case with virtually all of the sports on the list”.

“Most importantly events that are already being covered should not be removed from the list and the ‘use it or lose it’ mechanism should not result in free coverage being replaced by paid coverage”.

“The pay TV industry is trying to manipulate the ‘use it or lose it’ rules as a stalking horse to secure live and exclusive rights to events that viewers currently see for free.

Perhaps ASTRA should have asked people if they would prefer to pay a minimum of \$50 a month for sport or see it for free” Ms. Flynn said.

For more information on how to ensure that all Australians continue to be able watch sport on television for free please visit www.savemysport.com.au.

For media enquiries, please call Julie Flynn on 02 8968 7100 or 0408 455 456.