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Managing Director & CEO

1 May 2009

Hon Terry Waldron MLA
Minister for Sport and Recreation
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Dear Minister

I refer to your recent letter (your reference: 32-01719) regarding the terms of the licence under which the Western Force participates in the current Super Rugby competition.

Australian Rugby Union acknowledges the valuable support the Western Australian Government has provided our sport over a prolonged period in relation to Test matches and in respect of the establishment of the Western Force Super Rugby team and the participation of that team in the Super Rugby competition. Western Australia is an important territory for Rugby Union strategically and we are committed to growing our presence there.

As I am sure you are aware, the Super Rugby competition is owned jointly by Australian Rugby Union, the New Zealand Rugby Union and the South African Rugby Union through an unincorporated joint venture known as SANZAR.

Australian Rugby Union has a legally binding commitment to SANZAR to provide four teams for the Super Rugby competition and the Western Force is one of those teams. SANZAR in turn has a contractual commitment to broadcasters to stage the Super Rugby competition and allow those broadcasters to televise matches. SANZAR's current broadcast agreement expires on 31 December 2010 and SANZAR is in the process of determining the next iteration of the Super Rugby competition or a successor competition, to be staged after the expiration of the current broadcast agreement.

In this context I am pleased to confirm that Australian Rugby Union and Western Australia Rugby Union have in place a contract under which the Western Force participates and will continue to participate in, the current Super Rugby competition. From the perspective of Australian Rugby Union (and we are able to say from our ongoing discussions with both our SANZAR partners) there is total commitment to a team based in Perth being included in the next iteration of the Super Rugby competition or a successor competition.

In terms of the venue for the Western Force home games, Australian Rugby Union supports the development of Members Equity Stadium in accordance with the terms of the written commitments we received in November 2004 from the Premier and the Minister for Sport and Recreation (copies enclosed).



From our perspective, those commitments were integral to the decision to locate a Super Rugby team in Perth and we are excited that it appears progress is being made to bring those commitments to reality.

We understand the Government's position in respect of the development of a 60,000 seat major stadium and the desire for us to continue to stage Test matches in Perth. Rest assured that moving forward we will continue to consider Perth as a venue for Test matches as we have done in the past.

Yours sincerely

John O'Neill AO