



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Andrew Stunell MP  
Member of Parliament for Hazel GroveDavid Patterson  
Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
5th Floor  
2-4 Cockspur Street  
London SW1Y 5DHMonday 13<sup>th</sup> July

Dear David

Submission to the DCMS Free-To-Air Events Review

I am a strong supporter of the UK Government's protection of major sporting events through live or deferred coverage on free-to-air television. These are events of major public interest, and the general population have a right to be able to view them. It is also vital that free-to-air sport is shown in order to encourage youngsters to get involved themselves. If they don't see it, they won't play it, and we need to ensure that our youngsters are exposed to top-class sport as often as possible.

I am content with the majority of the current arrangements on the protected list, and do not especially feel there is anything that should be added to the list that is not already on it. I also agree that the "A" and "B" lists should be maintained.

I think that it is important that even if certain events aren't deemed as being important enough to be protected for live coverage on free-to-air television, they should, at the very least, have highlights shown. However, I do disagree with the distribution of events between the "A" and "B" lists, and I do feel strongly about Cricket coverage.

Currently, all cricket coverage that is protected is on the "B" list. The rights to all International and County Cricket have been sold off by the ECB to Sky. This has led to a situation where Cricket is the only major sport to have no live coverage on free-to-air television. Yes, there are highlights, but this hardly seems sufficient, particularly when we are now in an Ashes Summer. The plethora of administrative and technical reasons do not help matters either, with highlights not shown until late at night. This means that they will be viewed by only a very small audience, and is also long past the bedtime of many youngsters, meaning they may not even be able to see a highlights package, let alone live cricket.



I believe that all of the cricket coverage on the "B" list should be moved onto the "A" list, including all Cricket test matches played in England and the final and semi-final of the Cricket World Cup, as well as all games involving home nations. Even if this is deemed to be a step too far then at the very least the World Cup and the Ashes should be protected. The Ashes is one of the highlights of the sporting calendar, and within cricket is the equivalent of Wimbledon, or the FA Cup final. It is vital that it is protected. Whilst Sky has helped to invest a considerable amount of money in a great many sports, they should not be allowed to have a monopoly over any sports coverage.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Stunell". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Andrew Stunell MP