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RE : THE PROPOSITION OF A REGIONAL SENIOR TEAM PARTICIPATING IN THE SFL. (Sydney)

We have been down this road before regarding the support of a team in the Sydney Competition.

I have thought about this scenario long and hard. I was part of a club travelling and participating in Sydney in the early 1990s and it failed. **As much as I try to, I can't see any benefit for our game in this area having a regional team.** The very thought of it just spells disaster for our code.

I just see it as an immense burden to what we are here for. I will try to list some things I see as negatives to the proposal:

PROBLEM	EXPLANATION
Past Experiences	The rugby union team, the Wildfires have failed. The Basketball team has failed. The soccer team is on and off. The only team to work is the Knights and remember, they operate at a loss and yet and are very much in a rugby league area with crowds of 20,000+.
Our League	I see our job as promoting and supporting our league, our competition, our clubs. Not putting our efforts in and worrying about a stand-alone team which is only going to detract from our league with a hope and a prayer that it will succeed.
Publicity	The publicity will shift from our league to the club but if they are not successful it wont help our cause whatsoever.
Lack of Infra-structure	We do not have nor look like having the infra-structure to make this happen. Nearly all of our clubs are just a day to day proposition. Take one or two people out of the loop in each one and they may well fall over and if they have another influence to 'fight' it will make it twice as difficult.
Loyalties	You have seen what the clubs think of the regional U18 team. This senior side is no different. They will see it as opposition and whilst they may not work against it, they certainly won't work with it. People who could make this thing work are workers and the clubs don't have enough of them. Whatever centre it is located in, and Chris has suggested Newcastle, then it will squeeze the 'football' out of it to target the one club instead of 5.
General	Getting a club up and running is a mammoth job. Its not now, the euphoric time, its two and three years after the event which counts. When they are getting beaten and players see more sense in playing locally, rather than getting on a bus to get their arses kicked in Sydney, then land home at 9 or 10 at night. I can't see it ever working successfully, despite the support and shoring up it can be given. It will be seen in this league as opposition to what we have now and could well force administrators out of the game because they see it as another force to contend with, rather than supporting it and battling week in and week out. Australian football is not in the culture of this area, as much as we would like it to be and the introduction of a team here would only be divisive and an obstacle in the further promotion of our game. The successful introduction of such a team is a generation away.

Ian Granland